

## **MASTER THESIS AT UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA**

### **CALADESI PROJECT:**

Investigation of the degree of discomfort and comfort perceived by parents and non-parents on a population of premature and full-term newborns

The link between the type of parenthood, anxiety, and depression on the perception of non-verbal signs in newborns

This research aimed to investigate the degree of discomfort, comfort, and neutrality perceived by parents and non-parents on a population of preterm and full-term newborns. More particularly, the interest was to present the relationship between the type of parenting, anxiety and depression, and the perception of non-verbal signs of newborns. The existing literature has pointed out that inadequate interaction between parents and newborns could cause pathological development (Mazet & Feo, 1996).

A population of 35 subjects judged the degree of discomfort, comfort, and neutrality on videos of newborns. In addition, they answered to several inventories including those of depression and anxiety.

The results demonstrate that depression and anxiety modify the perception of signs in newborns. Depressed and anxious subjects judged more discomfort in newborns. On the other hand, we did not find any difference in perception depending on whether the newborns were premature or at term. Moreover, parents did not present a better perception of these signs than non-parents. Finally, the anxiety or depression in parents did not modulate their judgment of discomfort, comfort, and neutrality in newborns compared to anxious or depressed non-parents. The limits and further perspectives of this research will be presented.