

## A study to assess the practices regarding newborn care adopted by mothers in selected rural areas of Ambala, Haryana

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### Abstract

**Background:** Newborn is considered as a infant up to 28 days of life<sup>1</sup>. Care practices immediately following delivery contributes to newborn's risk of morbidity and mortality.

**Objective:** The main aim of the study was to assess the practices regarding newborn care adopted by mothers in selected rural areas and to find out the association of level of practices regarding newborn care with selected demographic variables

**Result:** Most of the mothers (56.7%) in rural areas were in age group of 24-29 years Majority of mothers (78.35%) had normal vaginal delivery. Maximum of mothers (85%) had high level of practices regarding newborn care. Highest mean percentage practice score on observational checklist regarding newborn care (93.33) in the area of thermoregulation.

**Conclusion:** Mothers had better practices in thermoregulation area regarding newborn care than in feeding and skin and cord care. The age of the mothers was found to be significantly associated with level of practices.

**Keywords:** Practices, Newborn care and mothers

### Introduction

Birth of a healthy newborn is one of the finest gifts of nature. The process of birth takes place only few hours but it is the most hazardous period of life since it is associated with largest number of deaths as compared to any other phases of life. When a baby is born he/she has to adapt from fetal life to extra uterine life. With the arrival to this world, the neonate begins highly vulnerable period in which many psychological and physiological adjustments to life-outside

uterus must be made. And if they fail, it leads to mortality and morbidity.<sup>1</sup>

The newborn health challenge faced by India is more formidable than that experienced by any other country in the world. It is estimated that almost two-third of infant death occur in the 1<sup>st</sup> month of Life, of whom, more than two-third die in their 1<sup>st</sup> week, and among whom, two-third in their 1<sup>st</sup> 24 hours<sup>2</sup>.

Every newborn has the right to the best possible conditions for its growth and development, especially because children are

assets for the nation's development. As rightly remarked by W.H.O. "A healthy child is nation's pride. Motherhood is a beautiful and joyous experience to women. The mother has a pivotal role to play in the life of her infant."<sup>3</sup>

### Need of study

Health of the future citizens depends on the care we are giving to our children today. Newborn babies constitute the foundation of life. Healthy and steady babies are likely to evolve as physically and mentally strong adults with enhanced quality of human resource development.<sup>4</sup>

Data from various hospital-based studies in India suggest that perinatal hypoxia with or without birth trauma account for one-third of all neonatal deaths. Neonatal tetanus due to application of cow-dung to the umbilical stump causes septicemia and lead to neonatal death. Untreated neonatal sepsis is life threatening and therefore its early identification and treatment is essential for the child's survival<sup>5</sup>

Bottle feed is another big killer of the babies in developing countries. Bottle fed babies have up to 2-7 times increased risk of mortality compared to breast fed babies. Breast fed babies have less incidence of infective diarrhoea, respiratory infections, acute otitis media, and necrotizing enterocolitis. There is a reduced risk of eczema and milk allergies in breast fed babies. Above all there is strong evidence to suggest that breast fed babies have better cognition and IQ scores later in life<sup>4</sup>The mother's practices regarding newborn care forms the benchmark for her child care<sup>5</sup>.

### Aim and Objective

The main aim of the study was to assess the practices regarding newborn care adopted by mothers in selected rural areas and to find out the association of level of practices

regarding newborn care with selected demographic variables

### Materials and methods

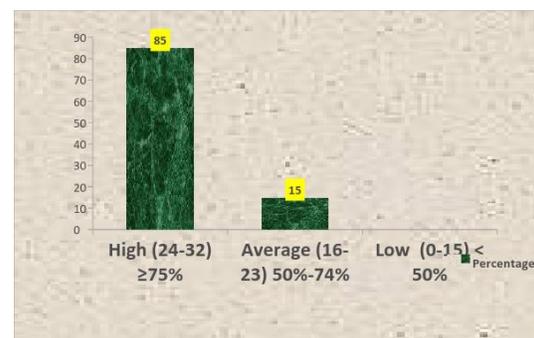
A descriptive survey research design was used. Target population was Mothers of newborn living in rural areas of Haryana and accessible was Mothers of newborn in 7 rural areas i.e Singhpura, Barara , Budiyon, Ugala, Adhoa, Kalpi, Seembla of Ambala. Purposive sampling technique was used. Reliability for observational checklist was calculated by using inter rater reliability and was found to be 0.9 and for expressed practice questionnaires was calculated by using test retest method which was found to be 0.8.

### Data collection procedure

The sample of the study comprises of 60 mothers of newborn. Purpose of the study was explained and consent was taken from the subjects. Data was collected by using Observational checklist and Interview technique was used for expressed practice questionnaire to assess the practices of mothers regarding newborn care.

### Results

Mothers had high level of practices regarding newborn care. The age of the mothers was found to be significantly associated with level of practices.



**Fig. 1: Percentage distribution according to level of practices of mothers in rural areas.**

**Table 1: Item Wise Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Practices of Mothers in Rural Areas on Observation Checklist. (N=60)**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Feeding:</b>		
Breast Feeding		
Feeds the Baby :		
<hr/>		
1. Mouth wide Open		
Yes	47	83
No	9	17
2. Lower Lip turned outwards		
Yes	37	66
No	19	34
3. Areola more visible on top rather below		
Yes	37	66
No	19	34
4. Chin touching the breast		
Yes	52	93
No	4	7
5. Clean breast before feeding with plain water/wet cloth		
Yes	46	83
No	10	17
6. Takes precaution while giving breastfeed to avoid pressing of nose.		
Yes	56	100
No	0	0
7. Feed the baby in proper position		
Yes	30	54
No	26	46
8. Burps after feeding the baby		
Yes	46	83
No	10	17
 <b>Katori (Bowl) and spoon feeding</b>		
9. Uses katori (Bowl) and spoon feeding if baby is not able to take breast feeding		
Yes	4	6.6
No	56	93
10. Washes Bowl (katori) and spoon before Feeding		
Yes	3	75
No	1	25
11. Dries Bowl and spoon before adding feed		
Yes	3	75
No	1	25
12. Gives only breast milk by Bowl and spoon		
Yes	1	25
No	3	75
13. Gives formula milk by Bowl and spoon		
Yes	3	75

No	1	25
Any other		
14. Gives bottle feed		
Yes	4	6.6
No	56	93
15. Gives breast milk through bottle		
Yes	1	25
No	3	75
16. Gives formula milk through bottle		
Yes	3	75
No	1	25

### **Thermoregulation**

17. Provides warmth to newborn with appropriate clothing according to season		
Yes	60	100
No	0	0
18. Exposes newborn to sunlight for sometime		
Yes	60	100
No	0	0
19. Checks the newborn temperature by touch		
Yes	49	81.66
No	11	18.66
20. Keeps fan, doors and window, closed		
Yes	51	85
No	9	15
21. Removes wet nappy immediately		
Yes	60	100
No	0	0

### **Skin care and cord care**

22. Washes hands with soap and water before and after touching newborn		
Yes	60	100
No	0	0
23. Changes newborn clothes daily		
Yes	35	58.33
No	25	41.66
24. Cuts newborn nails short		
Yes	44	73.33
No	16	26.66
25. Changes newborn napkin, whenever soiled		
Yes	29	48.33
No	31	51.66
26. Baby sheet changed whenever soiled		
Yes	58	96.66
No	02	3.33
27. Handles newborn in less frequency		

Yes	58	96.66
No	02	3.33
28. Changes newborn position frequently		
Yes	19	31.66
No	41	68.33
29. Tie black thread and beads around the neck and the waist of the newborn		
Yes	38	68.33
No	22	36.66
30. Applies kajal in the eyes of newborn		
Yes	19	31.66
No	41	68.33
31. Ties newborn cord with thread		
Yes	17	28.33
No	43	71.66
32. Dresses the newborn in old clothes without Washing		
Yes	5	8
No	55	92

### Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Practices of Mothers in Rural Areas on Expressed Practices:

Majority of mothers (93.%) in rural areas gave breast feed to their baby. Most of mothers (72%) had given colostrums to their baby. Majority of mothers (63%) gave first breast feed within 0-1 hrs. Most of mother (75%) had not given prelacteal feed. Majority of mothers (72%) clean their breast before breastfeeding their baby & nearly half (49%) of mothers clean their breast with soap and towel once a daily. Most of mothers (93.3%) had not given different variety of milk to their newborn. Maximum (84%) support their breast while feeding their baby. Majority of mothers (97%) gave night feed to their baby, among which (38%) mothers give 4 times breast feed at night. Most of mothers (70%) gave first bath to their baby within 24-48 hrs. & majority of mothers (82%) give regular bath to their newborn

### Discussion

The present study findings indicated that 93% of mothers breast feed their baby and

72% of mothers had given colostrum to their babies. These findings were consistent with the findings of the study conducted by V Bhatia, M Sharma, H Swami, C Magnat (2008) on newborn rearing practices among mothers in slum population, Uttar Pradesh. The results revealed that 86% of mothers breast feed their baby and 80% of newborn were given colostrum.

### Conclusion

Mothers had high level of practices regarding newborn care. The age of the mothers was found to be significantly associated with level of practices.

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