

“A study to assess the knowledge and practice of nurses regarding care of low birth weight babies in NICU of selected government and private hospitals in Bangalore, Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

“Quality is never an accident

It is always the result of intelligent effort” - John Ruskin

With Every Little Baby’s Birth God Send His Love and Joy to Earth. He Newborn is the Very Spring of Life and Hope. In hospital every delivery even if it is uncomplicated, must be considered as an emergency and every newborn even if he/she well stabilized, should considered as recovering neonate and important care should be provided to avoid unnecessary complications.

Every baby is different and low birth weight baby is very special because it needs special care. Despite advances in perinatal diagnosis and management, morbidity and mortality of low birth weight babies continues to exceed. Therefore there is a need for specialized care. The introduction of minimal standards of neonatal care in hospital had effectively lowered neonatal mortality both in and out of the hospitals.³⁵

Significant improvement was noticed in trainee’s knowledge and skills in essential newborn care followed with WHO newborn care course noted in Zambia. They recommended similar workshops and reorientation of NICU nursing staff will be a useful tool in improving neonatal care and improving neonatal care and survival. National/provincial Governments has taken major initiative in providing neonatal care training to physicians and nurses working in hospitals.¹⁴

“In pursuit of knowledge”, every individual is unique and born with talent. Nothing can match educating oneself through observing exploring and joining hands on experience. It’s what a person can learn and improve their knowledge and skill. The study was aiming to assess knowledge and practice of NICU nurses regarding care of LBW babies, which is very essential to understand the present status of nursing care and to ensure the level of standard they are following to provide quality care. Thus the objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the knowledge of NICU nurses regarding care of low birth weight babies of Government and private hospitals.
2. To assess the existing practices (performances) of NICU nurses regarding care of low birth weight babies of Government and private hospitals.
3. To find the association between the knowledge and practice score of NICU nurses regarding care of low birth weight babies of Government and private hospitals.

4. To find the association between the knowledge and practice score of NICU nurses of Government and private hospital regarding care of low birth weight babies with their selected demographic variables.

Method: A descriptive research design was used to conduct the study. Hundred and nine NICU nurses were selected by using stratified random sampling technique from Government and Private Hospitals in Bangalore city. A Structured knowledge questionnaire and an observational rating scale was used to collect the data, after prior permission from concerned authorities of hospitals.

Results: The knowledge result revealed that there was significant difference (at $p=0.05$) between Government and Private hospitals nurses, in some areas such as Establishment of Respiration - $F = 13.95$ and $p = 0.00$, prevention of infection – $F = 7.68$ and $p = 0.00$, Maintenance of Nutrition - $F = 6.59$ and $p = 0.00$, Identification and Management of complication - $F = 9.67$ and $p = 0.00$, but the area of Maintenance of Temperature was found to be non significant $F = 1.70$ and $p = 0.17$. However the overall Knowledge total score of NICU Nurses $F = 5.43$, $p=0.022$ was statistically significant at $p = <0.05$ level. Hence null hypothesis was rejected.

In the present study practice related score on all five areas of care were Fluctuating and non-significant between Government and Private hospital nurses Xii at $p=0.05$ level (Establishment of Respiration - $F = 1.71$ and $p = 0.17$, Maintenance of Temperature - $F = 1.46$ and $p = 0.23$, Prevention of Infection – $F = 1.01$ and $p = 0.39$, Maintenance of Nutrition - $F = 0.45$, $p= 0.72$, where as one area that is Identification and Management of complication care was found to be significant - $F = 4.64$ and $p = 0.00$. However the practice total score was found to be statistically significant $F=7.58$, $p=0.007$. The present study results indicated that there was difference in practice scores of Government and Private NICU nurses. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

The association between knowledge and practice scores on different areas was not statistically significant, except prevention of infection area of LBW care which was found to be significant X_2 value 4.788 $p = 0.029$. There was no association found between knowledge and practice total scores with NICU related pre-orientation, education and age were not making any significant difference. But, the in-service education had significant difference with knowledge scores of care of LBW babies. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted.

Interpretation and Conclusion: The overall finding of the study showed that there was a statistical difference in knowledge score between in-service education group and no in-service education group. The mean practice score of all areas of LBW babies care were almost similar. Association between knowledge and practice score were found to be non significant. The gross numerical difference between the knowledge and practice score of the study was indicating that only having adequate knowledge is not sufficient to perform correct practice skill.

Keywords: LBW babies, NICU nursing care, Knowledge of Nurses, Practice of Nurses, NICU Standards of care, Establishment of Respiration, Maintenance of Temperature, Maintenance of Nutrition, Prevention of Infection, Identification & Management of complication of LBW babies.