KNOWLEDGE ON WARNING SIGNS OF NEW BORN ILLNESS AMONG THE MOTHERS WITH A VIEW TO DEVELOP AN INFORMATION BOOKLET

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Abstract:

Introduction: Warning signs are the life-threatening signs of illness. Early identification of newborn warning signs by caregivers with prompt and appropriate referral serves as backbone at reduction in neonatal mortality.

Objectives: To determine knowledge of the mothers regarding warning signs of newborn illness

Method: This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted to assess the knowledge of the mothers regarding warning signs of newborn illness. They were selected through Non probability purposive sampling and data was collected by structured questionnaire related to various aspects of warning signs of newborn illness. The data was analysed using SPSS version 16 and the results expressed as proportions

Results

A total of 70 mothers were surveyed. It was found that (62%) had good knowledge. 36% of the samples had average knowledge. 1% of the samples had excellent knowledge and poor knowledge respectively.

Conclusion

Today’s small and scattered families show that most postnatal mothers have no adequate knowledge regarding the care of newborn. This inadequate knowledge tends the parents to stress and anxiety about what is or is not normal for the baby. So adequate reassurance and explanation to the mother is important to reduce anxiety.

Key words : warning signs, newborn, information booklet.

I. INTRODUCTION

The birth of an infant is one of the most awe-inspiring and emotional events that can occur in one’s lifetime. After 9 months of anticipation and preparation, the neonate arrives amid of flurry of excitement. Immediately after birth the newborn must make rapid adjustment to successfully adapt to life outside the womb.¹

In India nearly 26 million babies born in each year, accounts for 20% of global birth in which 1.2 million of these nearly die before completing 4 weeks of life. India thus contributes 30% of total 3.9 million death Worldwide and accounts for one quarter of all neonatal deaths in World.² Current mortality rate of newborn in Karnataka is 45 per 1000 live births and the main causes of newborn death are infectious disease (30-40%), preterm delivery, birth asphyxia, low birth weight, hypothermia.³

The neonates are at risk for various health problems even though they born with average birth weight. The morbidity and mortality rates in infants are high due to neonatal illness. Most of the health problems are life threatening to the neonates. They need optimal care for their improved survival. Essential newborn care is important to reduce the neonatal illness and deaths.⁴

Today’s small and scattered families show that most postnatal mothers have no adequate knowledge regarding the care of newborn. This inadequate knowledge tends the parents to stress and anxiety about what is or is not normal for the baby. So adequate reassurance and explanation to the mother is important to reduce anxiety.⁵

Poor knowledge on part of mothers can lead to disastrous results in the field of care giving. Mother has to regulate the child’s behaviour, attitudes, outlook and home environment in family, since these are the basic factors that influence the growth of newborn. If the mothers are not acquainted with a recognition and referral of newborn danger signs, it might affect the rearing of their children.⁶ early identification of newborn warning signs by caregivers with prompt and appropriate referral serves as backbone of the programmes aiming at reduction in neonatal mortality.⁷
A recent study was conducted showed that Out of 72 mothers, 29(40.3%), 16(22.2%), 10(13.9%) mothers identified difficulty in breathing, poor sucking and lethargy/unconsciousness as newborn danger signs respectively. The investigator in their daily clinical practice observed, some mothers were giving pre-lacteal fluid such as sugar syrup, honey before initiating breast feeding to their baby and they were following unhygienic practices while handling newborn which may lead to frequent infections among newborns. Hence forth the present study was undertaken to assess the knowledge of mothers on warning signs of newborn illness.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the studies are to;
1. Assess the knowledge of the mothers regarding warning signs of newborn illness
2. Find out the association between knowledge score with selected demographic variables
3. Develop an information booklet

III. METHODS

This cross sectional study was undertaken in Yenepoya medical college hospital, Mangalore, India with the acceptance from the Institutional Ethics Committee. The study population consisted of 70 sample of postnatal mothers having 1-3 days aged babies. Samples were selected for the study by a non probability purposive sampling method. Data was collected by using knowledge questionnaire. The reliability of the tool was 0.8. Pilot study was done to find the feasibility of the study. Finally to conduct the research study, the participants were briefed about the nature of the study and their willingness was ascertained by taking Informed consent and a structured questionnaire administered to them. The data was analysed using SPSS version 16.00 and summarised as proportions.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Section I: Socio-demographic characteristics of study population:

A total of 70 mothers participated in the study, of them Highest percentage 42.8% of the samples belonged to the age group of 25 to 30 years. Out of them (82.8%) of mothers had primary and secondary education. Majority (50%) of the samples were having birth order second. Most of the subjects (41.4%) were Muslims and 71.4% of the samples belong to nuclear family. 62.8% of the samples were from urban area.

A similar study was conducted in Bangalore which showed that, most of the mothers (69%) were belongs to the age group of 20 to 25 years. Most of the mothers (66%) were having primary education.

Section II: Level of knowledge score of the mothers

It was found that 43 (62%) had good knowledge. 25 (36%) of the samples had average knowledge. 1(1%) of the samples had excellent knowledge and 1(1%)of samples had poor knowledge which is concordance to study conducted by Thomas S. This revealed that 17% of mothers had satisfactory knowledge and 82% of mothers had poor knowledge.

Section iii: Association between the level of knowledge and demographic variables.

Chi square test was used to find the association between the level of knowledge of mothers and demographic variables. Analysis report revealed that there was no significant association between the knowledge of the mothers and selected demographic variables such as age, gender, educational status, birth order, religion, type of residence, and place of residence. at 0.05 level of significance.

The study was conducted in Bangalore shows that there is a significant association between age (r=0.42, P < 0.001), occupation (t= 3.81, P< 0.001).
V. CONCLUSION

Birth of the child represents one of the most important events in a family’s life. Each and every parent hopes for a healthy newborn. A mother is the first person to notice even small changes in a newborn child, identify them, and treat them at the initial stage. Effective newborn care and knowledge of mothers regarding newborn health reduces deaths of babies from illness. So the researcher was interested to assess the knowledge on warning signs of newborn illness among the mothers.

VI. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

BIBLIOGRAPHY