**Perception of Mothers Needs and Nurses Felt Needs on Nursing Care Provided by Nurses to their Neonates in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background**

Nurses are in the prime position to help parents, as they provide care not only to the sick neonates but also to the families as well. Family-centered care is very important in neonatal intensive care unit. They also play an important role in helping parents by developing therapeutic relationship, providing accurate and proper information, emotional support, giving assurance, providing comfort and allowing parents to provide care to the neonates under supervision in Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

**Objective**

The objective of the study was to assess the perception of mothers needs and nurses felt needs on nursing care provided by nurses to their neonates in the NICU.

**Method**

This was descriptive cross-sectional study in which 21 nurses and 69 mothers whose neonates admitted in the NICU were selected. Data was collected for a period of 6 months. Data was gathered using opinion-survey likert scale and was analyzed using descriptive-analytical methods using SPSS-16 and t-test.

**Results**

Subscales related to family needs, the following mean score of mothers in information need area as mean 37.7 + 3.8, comfort area with mean 32.1 + 2.8, support area with mean 38.8 + 3.4, assurance area with mean 31.2 + 2.2, proximity area with mean 21.7 + 2.8. Mean score on care provided by nurses to their neonates in information need area as mean 39.0 + 3.6, comfort area with mean 31.5 + 2.9, support area with mean 38.8 + 4.1, assurance area with mean 30.2 + 3.0, proximity area with mean 21.1+ 2.4. There is no statistical difference shown in the study. The study shows positive correlation between mother’s perceived need and nurses felt needs.

**Conclusion**

According to the study findings, nurses don’t put subjective assumption over mothers need. So, to develop nursing care plan, it is important to understand the needs perceived by the mothers.

**Key words**

Needs, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

**INTRODUCTION**

In Nepal, in the fiscal year 2014/2015, a total of 32,109 (0-28) days’ infants were treated at health facilities and PHC / ORC clinics. 1 The birth of a baby is supposed to be happy events, but for parents with a infant in the NICU, it is marked by fear, sadness, guilt and anger.2 Feeley N, discussed that most infants admitted to the NICU are born premature and have low birth weight or a medical conditions that requires intensive medical and nursing care, sometimes for several months following birth.3

So, the need of proper information, support, comfort, assurance, and proximity are very important to be addressed while planning a nursing care plan. If parents experienced communication with the NICU staff as essential to the management of their situation.4 When parents receive information, they feel less anxiety and have a better relationship with staff.5It is very important that nurses should provide the concrete information in order to better understand parents’ need for support and tries to meet their expectations, resulting in improved nursing care in neonatal intensive care units.6 Ifnurses provide emotional support to parents, promote family presence and participation in the NICU and can create a welcoming environment for families which is a part of the family-centered care.7Parents reported assurance to the parents in the NICU can enhance nursing communication and allow nurses to incorporate parents needs into families care plan.8 If parents need to ensure the development of assurance and proximity through confidence in the care provided to their child, involvement in decision-making and care giving activities.3 Victoria V, in the year 2014 in her study conclude that a competent nurse has the confidence to successfully navigate and manage the most challenging situations while continuing to view the patient in a holistic manner.5

Parents especially mother’s need must be understood by the nurses to provide quality care to

the neonate who is admitted in the NICU, to provide quality care. Determining mother’s most and least important needs allow nurses to define actual needs in NICU. The objectives of the study was to assess the perception of mothers needs and nurses felt needs on nursing care provided by nurses to their neonates in the NICU.

**METHODS**

After getting written approval from the Institutional Review Committee, Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences( IRC-KUSMS), a descriptive cross-sectional study carried out on mothers whose neonate was admitted in NICU, 48 hours before and was stable during data collection period and those nurses who worked at least 4 weeks prior to the data collection in NICU of Kathmandu University Hospital. The data were collected between 1st September 2016 to 28th February 2017. After getting permission to participate in the study, written consent was taken from mothers and nurses before collecting data.

Data were collected on a predesigned 5-points Likert scale both for mothers and nurses. Nepali version for mothers and English version for nurses after changing verbs were used. The Likert-scale consists of 40 items to measure mothers perceived needs and nurses felt needs under five categories such as information, comfort, support, assurance and proximity. Analysis was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16, frequency and percentage were calculated. T-test was performed in order to find a gap between mother’ perceived needs and nurses felt needs.

**RESULTS**

Out of 69 mothers who were enrolled in the study, the neonate born to them were between the mean gestational age was 37.3.The mean hospital stay of the neonate in 5.8 days and mean weight of the neonate was 2.3 kg. The number of male neonate was 48(69.5).

Nurses were 21 and their experiences vary from 6 months to 7 years.

Table: 1 Mean and standard deviation related to needs among mothers and nurses

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Needs | Participant | Mean | Std. deviation |
| Information | Mothers (n=69)  Nurses(n=21) | 37.7  39.0 | 3.8  3.6 |
| Comfort | Mothers (n=69)  Nurses(n=21) | 32.1  31.5 | 2.8  2.9 |
| Support | Mothers (n=69)  Nurses(n=21) | 38.8  38.8 | 3.4  4.1 |
| Assurance | Mothers (n=69)  Nurses(n=21) | 31.2  30.2 | 2.2  3.0 |
| Proximity | Mothers (n=69)  Nurses(n=21) | 21.7  21.1 | 2.8  2.4 |

Table 1 shows that there is no mean difference between mothers and nurses need

Table 2: p-value of nurses and mothers need

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Nurses(n=21) | Mothers(n=69) | p-value |
| Mean score for information + SD | 39.00 + 3.6 | 37.7 + 3.8 | 0.162 |
| Mean score for comfort + SD | 31.5+ 2.9 | 32.1 + 2.8 | 0.425 |
| Mean score for support + SD | 38.8+ 4.1 | 38.8 + 3.4 | 0.925 |
| Mean score for assurance + SD | 30. 2 + 3.0 | 31.2 +2.2 | 0.099 |
| Mean score for proximity + SD | 21.1 +2.4 | 21.7 +2.8 | 0.316 |

Table 2 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in mean score for information, comfort, support, assurance and proximity between mothers and nurses.

**Discussion**

This study reveals that the mean score of mothers in information need area was 37.7 + 3.8, in comfort area was 32.1 + 2.8, in support area was 38.8 + 3.4, in assurance area was 31.2 + 2.2, and in proximity area was 21.7 + 2.8. This shows that the mothers perceived needs have been fully understood by the nurses and the mothers are highly satisfied by the care provided by nurses to their neonates in the NICU. This is supported by the study conducted by Joseph AM where mothers rate information need as (89.07%), comfort area with mean + SD of 12.73+ 1.47, assurance area with mean + SD of 9.55 + 1.89, proximity with mean + SD of 7.53 + 1.26. In his study the mothers perceived health care needs as the most important they were highly satisfied with the care provided to their neonates by nurses.9

Unlike, Joseph AM, there are many studies which are contrasted to this study’s findings. In this regard, in a study Aemmi Z et al found that mothers- proximity (95.3%), assurance (94.1%), information (91.1%), support (79.7%) and comfort (72.8%). Nurses believed that the following items were the most important needs of the mothers-assurance (80.3%), proximity (75.2%), information (70.8%), comfort (66.3%) and support (64.8%).10 Vaskelyte A concluded that the majority of statistically significant differences between parents and nurses have found assessing the proximity( 75%) and information(72.7%) needs. Parents if compared to nurses rated these needs as more important. The assessment of support needs showed the lowest number of differences (38.9%).11 Sikorova l and Kucova J conducted study where mothers evaluated the support of nursing staff in most of these areas as high.12 In the another study also mothers rated all nursing support items as important comparatively emotional support was rated less important.13 Here, mothers scores every subscale was lower than nurses who cared for them and their children regarding nursing support.6 Parents rated assurance-type needs the highest.8 Supporting-emotionalneeds of parents of premature infants admitted in NICU.14  in the study, parents wished for proximity to infant and contacted with them.5

**Conclusion**

A complete health care of neonates admitted at the hospital is possible with a proper match between mothers’ perceived needs and nurses’ felt needs in their nursing care delivery. At this backdrop, the study concludes that there is no statistical difference between mothers’ perceived needs and nurses’ felt needs in NICU of Kathmandu University Hospital. This posits a positive correlation between their needs which shows that there is a quality care of neonates.

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