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Somali healthcare providers and mothers experience on skin-to-skin care

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Background: According WHO estimate, more than 20 million worldwide premature infants are born every year, in less developed countries due to their poverty rate and ignorance makes the figure higher. More than 2.5 million children die yearly due to prematurity and low birth weight. Skin to skin provides a suitable thermal control environment which brings good regulation of baby's heartbeat, steady oxygen rates, and breathing. This study would like to emphasize the experience for Somali mothers on skin-to-skin care for premature newborn and low-birth weight babies in Puntland.

Aim: The aim of this study was to explore barriers and facilitating factors for skin-to-skin care of premature newborn and low birth weight babies in Puntland settings, from the perspective of mothers and midwives.

Study Design: A qualitative method using semi-structured interviews with four mothers and four midwives was carried out on their views concerning facilitating and barriers factors of the skin to skin care.

Findings: The result from the interviews is summarized below in two categories: facilitator factors of skin to skin care and barrier factors of skin to skin care. Both mothers and midwives have emphasized the importance of information and education concerning the importance of skin to skin care and immediate breastfeeding of premature babies after birth, Support from both family members and midwives is also paramount for mothers to carry out skin to skin care for their babies. On the other hand, due to lack of well trained and experience midwives with enough motivation, mothers miss out crucial information which are paramount for their premature infants. With the right training most midwives would give out effective and timely services to their patients. How well midwives provide information depends on how mothers receive and act on the information provided. And lastly low socio economic status of mothers also hindered the facilitation of the care.

Conclusion: Our findings show that information and education for both mothers and midwives on the benefits of skin to skin care are the main key factors to successfully implement skin to skin method in health facilities. Another key factor that facilitates mothers to perform skin to skin care is to inform her family members on the need of the care. There is a need of standardized guidelines for midwives to use.

Biography

Mohamed Kalid Ali is a Somali national and born in 1984. He received the BSc. degree in Medical Laboratory Technology from the Dr. NTR University of Health Sciences, India, in 2008, he was awarded Islamic Development Bank Scholarship after he secured First Rank in Final BSc MLT Examination where he subsequently started the Msc Microbiology from University Putra Malaysia, and graduated in 2011. He is Epidemiologist and health systems by training. In 2011, he joined the Faculty of Medical Sciences, East Africa University (EAU), Bosaso-Somalia and currently serve as the Dean and Lecturer Faculty of Health Sciences, EAU. He is also the Director, East Africa Center for research and development. Mr. Kalid has done numerous researches and published articles.

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