**Neonatal Health Care Practices among Muslim Women**

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**Background**

Neonates are a vulnerable group and therefore need more attention and care. Nepal is predominantly rural, where household newborn care practices are poor and some of which are also harmful. Many maternal and newborn deaths can be averted through changes in household level practices regarding delivery and newborn care.

**Methods**

A descriptive design was used and the study population consisted of 89 women. Door to door survey was conducted to find out the mother having child less than five year. Non-probability purposive sampling was adopted to select the Miyapatan and Miyagaun and information on newborn care practices collected by using semi-structured questionnaire and focused group discussion among women.

**Results**

The study findings revealed that 67.4 percent delivered at home, 29.3 percent respondents practiced kangaroo mother care, 38.2 percent bathed immediately after birth. Most of (98.8%) used new blade/scissors to cut the umbilical cord and 68.4 percent applied oil/turmeric/ash etc in the stump after cutting the cord. Forty nine percent respondents’ breastfed within an hour of birth and still 44.9 percent respondents used prelacteal feeding. There is significant relationship between education, occupation, family type and residence with thermal care likewise age, occupation, family type and economic status with early initiation of breast feeding (p < 0.05%) but there is no relationship between any background characteristics with cord care practices (p>0.05%).

**Conclusions**

Only one third of respondents practiced kangaroo mother care, half of them practiced early initiation of breast feeding and still one third of respondents practiced bathing immediately after birth of neonate. Even after years of efforts from governmental and non-governmental sectors to reduce neonatal mortality; home deliveries and unhealthy newborn practices are still prevalent. Thus focus should be on the behavior change at grass root level and appropriate strategies are needed to bring the positive change in newborn care practices.

**Keywords:** cord care practice; kangaroo mother care; muslim women; newborn care practices.