Neonatal Nursing: An Unmet Challenge in India

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Newborn care or care round birth is still a challenging issue in developing countries like India. Despite all possible efforts and guidelines, certain areas of newborn care are still not practiced effectively by doctors and nurses. One of these thrust areas is Natural birthing practices and its impact on newborn's immediate as well as long term outcome. In Natural birthing, garbh-sanskar, antenatal exercises, delayed cord clamping, immediate skin to skin contact, no or minimal suctioning at the time of birth in healthy newborn are major areas of concern that needs to be explored in relation to newborn's outcome like instant and gradual neurobehavioral outcomes, impact on growth and development and overall adaptation including exclusive breastfeeding rate and many more. There is a need for strong evidence to prepare guidelines and protocols. Above all it needs process change in health care system to hardwire these practices so that it will not depend on or does not remain limited to certain people who alone are passionate for change in practices. Testing innovative ideas through small PDSA's (Plan-Do-Study-Act) on how to improve practices with available resources. There is also a need for producing evidence on strengthening nursing workforce to work independently and motivate them to lead these practices as they are the back-bone of healthcare delivery system. Midwife/Nurse led Counselling initiatives and its impact on maternal and child health outcomes need to be explored. Impact of immediate skin to skin contact, breast feeding initiation, delayed cord clamping on outcomes of babies delivered by LSCS also needs to be studied. This still not practiced widely because or there is resistance to this practice due to lack of strong evidence, data scarcity that supports its benefits with reference to neonate and maternal satisfaction on birth experiences.