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Associations between education, continuous professional development and provision of quality obstetric care during labour and neonatal care among nurses and midwives in South Africa

Provision of efficient emergency obstetric care is critical in maternal and child healthcare (MCH) services. The purpose of this paper is to determine the association between education and skills training related to MCH for the provision of adequate neonatal care in South Africa (SA). A self-administered questionnaire was used in this cross-sectional study; to assess healthcare professionals' education, continuous professional development (CPD) training, and the provision of adequate and sufficient care for the neonates in the MCH services. Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation analysis were used to analyze the data, and to ascertain the associations between the measures. Of the 193 respondents, 65.1% were working as registered nurses, whilst 30.8% were registered midwives; the remainder were either staff nurses or enrolled nurses. Certain basic and essential protocols, such as assessing and recording the Apgar score in all neonates at 2 and 5 minutes after birth, were not always conducted at deliveries. There was a significant positive correlation between a CPD training and provision of basic obstetric care for the neonate ($r=0.81$). CPD training is a critical intervention in obstetric services where updated knowledge of protocols is necessary to identify and manage high-risk pregnancies and provide efficient neonatal care. A training programme that imparts the correct knowledge and that improves the clinical skills of both registered midwives and nurses will help reduce the maternal and infant mortality rates in SA.

Biography

P Reddy holds a PhD from Maastricht University (NL), MPH from the University of Massachusetts (USA) and BSc degree in Nursing from the University of Cape Town (SA). She has supervised more than 15 PhD students. She holds several prestigious awards for academic excellence. She has conducted research as a PI in maternal and child healthcare, NCDs, tobacco control, youth risk behaviours, etc., with grants from reputable funders such as the British MRC, Wellcome Trust, CDC, and NIH RO1 grants. She has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals and has been serving as a reviewer for number of peer-reviewed journals. She has served on a number of national and international committees as a board member, including the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf), McMaster University/Maastricht University Global Health Programme; and served on expert panels for the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies of Science of the USA (IOM), National Committee for Health Research, World Health Organization Health Promotion Glossary Reference Group, International Presidential AIDS Panel established by the President of South Africa, etc.

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