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**Al-Quds University**



**Knowledge and Practices of Postnatal Primiparous  
Mothers towards Newborns' Care at Governmental  
Primary Health Centers in Gaza Strip**

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**Knowledge and Practices of Postnatal Primiparous  
Mothers towards Newborns' Care at Governmental  
Primary Health Centers in Gaza Strip**

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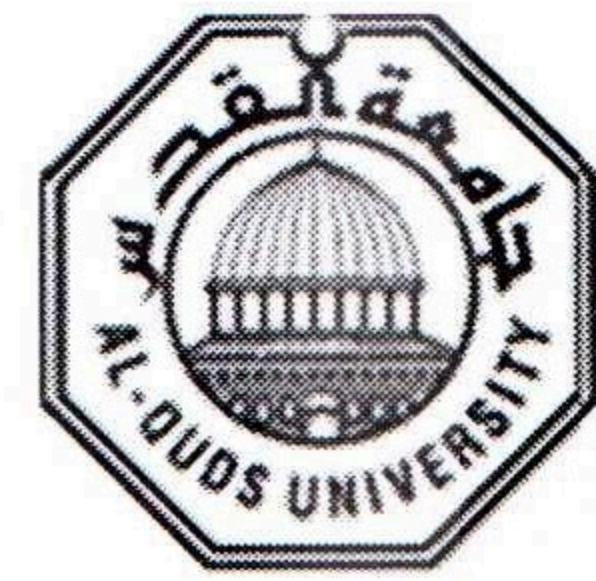
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**Thesis Approval**

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**Jerusalem – Palestine**

**1441 / 2020**

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to:

My mother,

My husband,

My brothers and sisters,

My sons and my daughter

Lastly, not least, I would like to express my dedication for all those who contributed in the completion of this study.

Fadia Jouda

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted to any other university or institution.

**Signature:**

Fadia Jouda

## **Acknowledgement**

All praises to Allah and blessing him for supporting me in the completion of this thesis. I thank God for all the opportunities, trials and strength that have been showered on me to finish writing the thesis

I would like by this occasion to express my thanks to the Al-Quds University in Gaza strip, that offered for us this chance to study for the Master degree of Mother and Child of Health Nursing, represented in the president of the university and the academic staff .

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Fadia Jouda

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## Abstract

Postnatal care (PNC) is the care given to the mother and her newborn baby immediately after the birth and for the first six weeks of life. Basic care for all newborns care includes breastfeeding, immunization, thermal care, cord care, eye care, and recognition of dangerous signs. A descriptive, cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices of postnatal primiparous mothers towards newborns care at governmental primary health centers in Gaza strip. A mixed of two techniques was considered as a sampling plan for this study; through which a combination of cluster sampling method, and consecutive sample design were used to recruit 345 primiparous mothers from 7 random selected primary health care centers (Jabalia, Sabha Al harazeen, Al Rimal, Al Zaitoon, Deer Al Balah, Khanyounis and Rafah clinics) to represent the five Gaza governorates. The response rate was 99%. A pilot study on 21mothers was done to explore the appropriateness of the study instruments. Data were collected by using interviewed-questionnaire at the time of BCG administration and time of immunization of neonatal at the 1<sup>st</sup> month. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 22 for data entry and analysis. An administrative and ethical approvals were obtained from Al-Quds University an Helsinki Committee respectively. Reliability coefficient of the study instrument was reported as good reliability (Cronbach's alpha 0.74). The results showed that the mean age of participants were young age ( $22.17 \pm 4.25$  years), mean age of thier babies  $18.60 \pm 11.7$  days, 96.8% housewives, 80.0% have family incom less than 1000 Shekels, 61.2% have secondary school, 39.1% live in Gaza governorate, 82.9% live in nuclear family, and 75.4% received information about care of newborn. The results also indicate that the overall knowledge score about care of newborn was 72.75%, that 62.9% of study participants classified as a moderate level (60 - 80%), 22.3% high level (>80%), and 14.8% low level (<60%) of knowledge. The overall average of practicing proper newborn's care was 84.9%, that 73% of the participants classified as high level, 25.5% moderate level, and 1.5% low level of practice. Furthermore, the results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation ( $r = 0.587$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) between knowledge and practice of newborns' care among primiparous mothers and statistically significant differences in levels of knowledge about newborn care related to age of the mother, age of the baby, and health care center; while there were no statistical significant differences in levels of knowledge related to mothers' work, family income, level of education, and receiving information. On other hand, there were statistically significant difference in levels of practice of proper newborn care and maternal receiving of information, while there were no statistically significant differences in other variables were reported. The present study conclude that the primiparous mothers have a moderate level of knowledge and high practice about care of their newborns. Thus, it's recommended to increase the mothers' awareness toward newborn care via education program that coupled with effective health care delivery.

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## List of Abbreviation

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>BCGCI</b> | Bacilli Chalmette Guerin Confidence Interval                                     |
| <b>DPT</b>   | Diphtheria Pertussis Tetanus   |
| <b>GS</b>    | Gaza Strip   |
| <b>HRD</b>   | Human Resources Development  |
| <b>MCH</b>   | Mother and Child Health  |
| <b>MoH</b>   | Ministry of Health   |
| <b>NGOs</b>  | Nongovernmental organizations  |
| <b>NIS</b>   | New Israeli Shekel   |
| <b>NNJ</b>   | Neonatal Jaundice  |
| <b>OPV</b>   | Oral Polio Vaccine   |
| <b>PCBS</b>  | Palestinian Central Bureau of statistics   |
| <b>PHC</b>   | Primary Health Care  |
| <b>PNC</b>   | Postnatal Care   |
| <b>PPP</b>   | Postpartum (postnatal) period  |
| <b>SPSS</b>  | Statistical Package for Social Sciences.   |
| <b>STIs</b>  | Sexually Transmitted Infections  |
| <b>UNRWA</b> | United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East |
| <b>WB</b>    | West Bank  |
| <b>WHO</b>   | World Health Organization  |

## **Chapter One:**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Background**

The mother's knowledge and practices play a crucial role in safe guarding and enhancing the newborn adaptation to new environment. Newborns are considered to be tiny and powerless, and completely dependent on other. Babies care is used by all those who interact with the neonate including the health care provider and mother and encompass breastfeeding, cord care, eye care, thermoregulation, immunization and care of the low birth weight infant. The majority of neonatal deaths occur at home where neonates lack appropriate care and mothers were lack of appropriate knowledge about their newborn caring (WHO, 2013).

The optimal development of newborn depends on the health and development of growing process, particularly in the first month of a baby's life as considered a most critical period. Over 80% of the new born babies require minimal care, which can be provided by the mother under the supervision of basic health supervisor (Kligman, 2016).

Mother is the primary care giver to provide newborn care, which one of the most critical issues felt by the researcher, is that mothers could lack of sufficient knowledge and practices about caring of their babies.

Primiparous mothers should be aware of all the components of babies' care to reduce the mortality rates and improve the health of their newborn. There are number of interventions in the essential newborn care module which can be practiced by the mother such as prevention of infection by proper hand washing, thermal protection by keeping the neonate warm early and exclusive breast feeding (Castalino, Nayak, and D'Souza, 2014). Thus, this study entailed to assess the level of knowledge and practice of mothers regarding the newborns care at governmental primary health centers in Gaza strip.

## **1.2 Problem statement:**

Newborns care remains an important issue for ensuring optimal growth and development. The quality of this care depends basically on the knowledge, skills and clinical practices of mother toward their babies; particularly if this baby is the first. On the other hand, from the researcher's observation, primiparous mothers often rely on information from parents, relatives, habits, and heritage rather than scientific information, and thus may lack of essential knowledge and practices about optimal caring of their babies as this these deliveries considered the first experience for them, which might reflected negatively on the babies health. Therefore, this study takes place to assess the knowledge and practices of the primiparous mothers towards their newborns' care at governmental primary health centers of Gaza strip.

## **1.3 Justification:**

Worldwide, neonatal mortality is still a major cause of infant deaths which can be prevented by performing the simple and effective WHO recommendation on essential newborn care practices (WHO, 2014). Several studies conducted worldwide have shown poor maternal knowledge and negative attitude and practices on essential newborn care and demonstrated that health information optimizes mother and newborn health; promote healthy behavior and health household practice (Okech, 2014; and Sines et al., 2007). Furthermore, up to the researcher's knowledge, in Gaza strip there is no previous published study spotting the light on the knowledge and practices of postnatal primiparous mothers towards their newborns care. Therefore, this study takes place as the first one of its kind in Gaza strip to identify the gaps in the knowledge and practices of primiparous mothers regarding the care of their newborns after birth.