A randomized controlled trial to assess impact of relaxation technique on stress, anxiety and milk output among postpartum mothers of hospitalized neonates in NICU, AIIMS, New Delhi

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: Hospitalization of preterm neonate in NICU can lead to increased stress and anxiety in postpartum mothers and eventually this can lead to decreased milk output. Maternal stress in NICU is a neglected area and it need to be addressed and demand some intervention in form of relaxation therapy.

Materials & Methods: Out of 160 postpartum mothers of hospitalized neonates born in 26-33 weeks gestation, 50 mothers were enrolled and randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Baseline data including socio-demographic profile, maternal stress and anxiety were collected using subject data sheet, standardized parental stress scale (PSS): NICU and perinatal anxiety screening scale (PASS) on 4±2 postpartum day. The experimental group was administered audio assisted relaxation technique followed by every day practice for 10 days, while the control group continued to receive the routine care. The impact of the relaxation technique on stress and anxiety along with milk output was assessed after 10 day of enrolment.

Result: Baseline characteristics and pre-intervention mean maternal stress (3.9±0.5 vs. 3.8±0.5, p=0.34) and anxiety scores 31.12±11.4 vs. 31.08±12.0, p=0.99) were comparable in both the groups. The intervention resulted in significant reduction in maternal stress (2.9±0.5 vs. 3.6±0.6) and anxiety scores (19.8±6.7 vs. 28.18±11.7) ($p \leq 0.05$) and improvement in milk output (69.2±19.3 vs. 54.1±22.5, $p \leq 0.05$) in experimental group as compared to control group.

Conclusion: Relaxation technique has significant role in reducing maternal anxiety, stress and in improving milk output.

Biography

Dabas S is currently pursuing her MSc Nursing and earlier she was a Registered Nurse in Neonatal Intensive Care. She has completed her Post-graduation thesis: in “reduce maternal stress with the help of relaxation technique”.

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