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Frontiers of Health Innovations and Medical Advances

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A study to assess the knowledge regarding Respectful maternity care among The Midwives at NMCH, Jamuhar

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Articalinfo

Article history: Received 22 June 2025, Revised 18 Aug 2025, Accepted 20 Aug 2025, Published Sept 2025

Keywords: Respectful Maternity Care (RMC), Midwives, Maternal Health, Patient-Centered Care, NMCH Jamuhar

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Citation: Kumar Aditya, Satyam Kumar Abhishek, Singh Kritika, Kumari Khushboo, Tripathi Ruchi, Latha. K.2025. A study to assess the knowledge regarding Respectful maternity care among The Midwives at NMCH, Jamuhar. Frontiers of Health Innovations and Medical Advances (FHIMA), 1,1.7-12. <https://doi.org/10.1000/001>

Publisher: Curevita Research Pvt Ltd

Abstract

Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) is acknowledged as a fundamental human right and a key element of high-quality maternal health services. It upholds dignity, privacy, informed choice, confidentiality, and the right to care free from discrimination, neglect, or abuse. However, despite growing global attention, disrespect and mistreatment during childbirth remain widespread, particularly in developing nations. Midwives, as primary providers in maternity care, play a vital role in ensuring the consistent application of RMC principles. The study found variations in midwives' knowledge, with some demonstrating strong understanding while others showed gaps, especially regarding informed choice, consent, and maintaining privacy. These findings underscore the need for ongoing training, sensitization, and supportive supervision to enhance midwives' comprehension and practice of RMC in clinical settings.

Introduction

Maternal health now focuses not only



on reducing mortality but also on ensuring quality, dignity, and human rights in maternity care. Respectful Maternity Care (RMC) aims to eliminate mistreatment during pregnancy and childbirth, and WHO (2023) states that every woman deserves respectful and dignified care. The study aimed to assess nursing midwives' knowledge of RMC, identify levels of understanding, and examine associations with demographic factors.

Most midwives demonstrated adequate knowledge of RMC, particularly in general concepts, communication, and professional practices, while knowledge was lower regarding challenges and solutions. Educational qualification showed a significant association with knowledge level. Overall, the study highlights the need for continuous training and supportive policies to strengthen respectful maternity care practices.

Methodology

A descriptive study was conducted among 60 nursing midwives at NMCH, Jamuhar, Bihar, using random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results and Discussion

The detailed analysis and interpretation of the data collected from nursing midwives at NMCH, Jamuhar, regarding their knowledge of Respectful Maternity Care (RMC). The findings were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean values, and chi-square tests, and were supported with tables and graphical representations.

The results show that most nursing midwives possessed adequate knowledge of RMC, particularly in the



areas of general understanding, communication, and professional practices. However, their knowledge was comparatively lower in the domain of challenges and solutions. Among the demographic variables, only educational qualification demonstrated a statistically significant association with knowledge scores, whereas age, gender, and years of experience showed no significant relationship. This suggests that advanced educational qualifications—such as B.Sc. Nursing, Post Basic B.Sc., and M.Sc. Nursing—contribute to better awareness of RMC principles.

The findings emphasize the need for ongoing training, capacity-building programs, and supportive

institutional policies to strengthen the implementation of respectful maternity care. The discussion aligns the study outcomes with the research objectives and compares them with existing literature, including studies by Singh et al. (2022), which report similar trends. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising 30 items across six domains: general knowledge, awareness of rights, communication, professional practices, behavior and attitude, and challenges and solutions. Notably, domains such as awareness, communication, and professional practices scored above 80%, indicating a strong level of understanding among the participants.

Table 1.1: Domain-wise Knowledge Scores

(N = 60)

Domain	Yes(f)	Yes(%)	No(f)	No(%)
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General Knowledge	262	87.3%	38	12.7%
Awareness of Rights	253	84.3%	47	15.7%
Communication	243	81.0%	57	19.0%
Professional Practices	257	85.7%	43	14.3%
Behavior & Attitude	247	82.3%	53	17.7%
Challenges and solutions	227	75.7%	73	24.3%

Each domain consists of 5 questions; therefore, the total domain score is out of 300 (60×5).

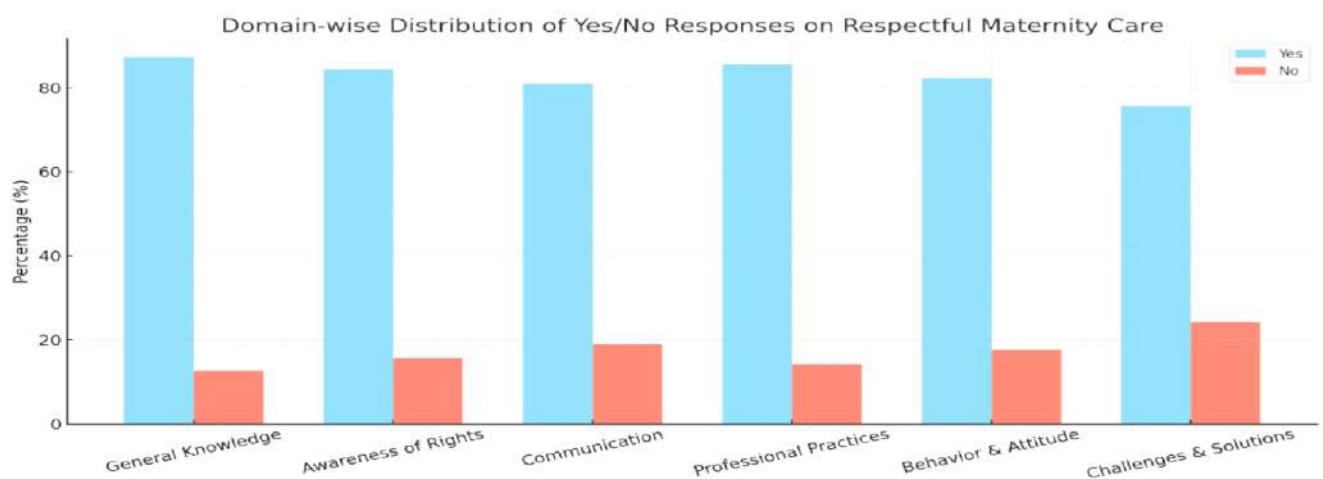


Fig 1.1:- The highest level of knowledge was seen in the General Knowledge domain (87.3%), indicating strong conceptual awareness. The lowest score was observed in the Challenges & Solutions domain (75.7%), highlighting that many midwives face practical difficulties in implementing respectful maternity care due to limited time, resources, or institutional support.

Conclusion

The study underscores the critical role of midwives' knowledge in delivering



Respectful Maternity Care, which is central to ensuring dignified, safe, and quality maternal health services. Assessing their understanding helps to identify existing gaps in awareness and practice, paving the way for targeted educational and training interventions. Strengthening midwives' capacity in RMC not only enhances maternal outcomes but also upholds the fundamental rights of women during childbirth, fostering trust and confidence in healthcare systems.

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