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Utilization of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) and influencing factors among mothers and care takers of preterm /low birth weight babies in Yirgalem town, southern, Ethiopia**Dubale dulla Koboto**

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Background: Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) is a universally available method of care, for premature babies for maintaining their body temperature. However, its prevalence is very low in Ethiopia. Thus, this study was intended to assess utilization of Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) and factors influencing among mothers and care takers of preterm /low birth weight babies in Yirgalem town, southern, Ethiopia.

Materials and Method: A community based cross sectional study was conducted of among 215 mothers of preterm/low birth weight (LBW) infants of age less than 36 months in Yirgalem town from February to March 2017. Data was collected by using interviewer administered questionnaire and analyses was accomplished using SPSS version 20. Logistic regression analyses were used to identify the association of different variables.

Results: Among all study subjects 90 (41.9%) practice KMC. Of these, 31(14.4%) started KMC immediately after birth as the

infant had been stabilized, and 59(27.4%) practice it after 24 hours. However, only sixty of the infants showed improvement after they used continuous KMC at home compared to those infants that did not use KMC. Respondents who gave birth spontaneously were 4.3 times more likely to practice KMC than those had caesarean section delivery [(AOR 4.341) 95%CI (1.435, 13.130)] and mothers who delivered at governmental hospital were 20.4 times more likely to practice KMC than those who gave birth at home [(AOR (20.458) 95%CI(2.644, 158.299))].

Conclusion: In this study only very low mothers initiated KMC immediately after birth and were practiced continuously KMC at home. Thus, it is recommended to promote KMC at home and develop studies on acceptability and applicability of the KMC and affecting factors that prevent the use of KMC at home method in Ethiopian context.

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