

ORIGINAL PAPER

Migrants' Newborns Characteristics in a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) in Greece

Despena Andrioti, PhD in Health Economics
Head, Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity Greece

Ioannis Apostolakis, PhD in Health Informatics
Visiting Professor, National School of Public Health Greece

George Planiteros, MA in Social Sciences
Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity Greece

Alexandra Skitsou, PhD in Health Services Research
Visiting Lecturer, Frederick University Cyprus

George Charalambous MD, MSc, PhD
As. Professor, Frederick University Cyprus

The work was carried out in Elena Venizelou Maternity Hospital, El. Venizelou squ.2 115 21 Athens, Greece

Correspondence: Andrioti Despena, Paritsi 67, 154051 N. Psychiko Athens, Greece. Tel. +306977327732, dandrioti@gmail.com

Abstract

Background: In Greece live large numbers of migrant women at reproductive age, originate from 215 different countries. They show higher fertility rates and may experience higher risk of preterm birth. Their needs for antenatal and postpartum services have not been very well studied.

Objectives: To investigate epidemiological characteristics of immigrant newborns in comparison with those of Greek origin, aiming at identifying key areas for future intervention strategies.

Methodology: The reference population was 484 offsprings (Greeks 47.7%, migrants 52.3%) who were born in a public maternity hospital in Athens, from 1/1-30/6/2008 and referred to its NICU, according to migrant status, gestation age, birth weight, mode of delivery, diagnosis and length of stay. We used SPSS 17.0, descriptive techniques and χ^2 independence test.

Results: A χ^2 independence test indicated that the two variables, nationality and mode of delivery are not independent (the test was found statistically significant $\chi^2=23.13$, $df=2$, $p=0.000$). Women of Greek origin experience an increased rate of caesarian deliveries

(a) χ^2 independence test between nationality and birth weight ($\chi^2=0.92$, $df=4$, $p=0.92$), nationality and gestation age ($\chi^2=3.06$ $df=4$ $p=0.55$), nationality and length of stay in NICU ($\chi^2=0.74$ $df=2$ $p=0.70$), wasn't able to reject the independence of the variables above when tested in pairs

(b) regression analysis did not reveal a statistical significant correlation between nationality, gender, gestation age and mode of delivery with congenital disorders and perinatal infections ($p>0.05$)

Conclusions: Policies should target the reorganization of maternal care in the country, the dissemination of relevant information and the empowering of migrant women. Publication of leaflets in minority languages with health information patient rights and recruitment of mediators are needed. Attending Greek language courses would help their inclusion in the society. Furthermore, education and training of health professionals on caring for users with cultural differences is an urgent matter.

Key words: neonatal morbidity, migrants, epidemiological characteristics, NICU, health services provision