

Risk factors associated with low birth weight babies in Nepal

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Background: This study was done to assess the maternal and socio-demographic factors associated with LBW (<2500 gm), a widely used indicator of maternal and newborn health in Nepal.

Methods: A hospital based unmatched case control study was performed with 159 cases and 159 controls at two hospitals in eastern Nepal. Personal interview, anthropometric measurement and abstraction of ANC card and clinical chart were used to gather information.

Results: Average birth weight in LBW group was 950 gm less than that of NBW group. More than 50% of LBW were from the mothers with height ≤ 145 cm while only 9.43% of NBW was from the mothers with that height. Finally after multivariate logistic regression analysis, Maternal height, Time of first ANC visit, number of ANC visit, Iron supplementation, Calcium supplementation, maternal education, any illness during pregnancy and hypertension were found as the significant predictors of LBW. However maternal blood group AB, Normal maternal BMI, mother's age of 30 or more years and starting ANC visit earlier were found to be protective for LBW.

Conclusion: Study findings suggest that selectively targeted interventions such as delay age at first pregnancy, improving maternal education and nutrition, iron and calcium supplementation can prevent LBW in Nepal.

Keywords: Low Birth Weight; Risk Factor; Nepal

Biography

Bhaskar RK completed his master's in Public Health as well as in Sociology from BPKIHS, Dharan, Nepal and Tribhuvan University, Nepal respectively. He has been working in health sector under the Ministry of Health and Population for more than ten years. In addition he is also involved in academic and research activities for two years.

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