

Maternal Health Care Utilization and Its Effect on Pregnancy Outcome in Nepal

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Abstract : Antenatal care (ANC) from a skilled provider is important to monitor the pregnancy and reduce the risk of morbidity for mother and baby during pregnancy and delivery. The quality of antenatal care can be monitored through the content of services received and the kind of information mothers are given during their visit. Objective: The paper tries to examine the association between ANC check-ups and size/ birth weight. It also focuses on investigating the relationship between utilization of recommended prenatal care for mothers and its effect on infant survival in Nepal. Data and methods: This paper uses data from Nepal demographic Health Survey 2011. To understand the relationship bi-variate statistical analysis and logistic regressions has been done. Maternal health care utilization include ANC check-ups i.e. the type of ante-natal care providers, the number and timing of the visit. The various components of the check-ups include intake of iron tablets/syrups, intestinal parasitic drugs, etc. Results: The results show that women who had no antenatal care visits about 40% had small sized babies at the time of birth compared to women to had at least 3 ANC check up. Women who had at least 3 check-ups 17% of the babies have a small size. It has also been found that about 50 % of the women prefer ANC check-ups during pregnancies which have resulted in lowering the infant mortality by about 40% during 1996-2011. Conclusion: Ante natal care check is care and monitoring of the pregnant woman and her foetus throughout pregnancy. ANC checks have an effect on the infant health and child survival. A woman who had at least three check-ups the possibilities of adverse effect on infant health and infant survival was significantly lower. The findings argue for a more enhanced focus on ANC check-ups for improving the maternal and child health in Nepal.

Keywords : maternal, health, pregnancy, outcome

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