

The factors associated with anaemia among pregnant women in the first trimester attending antenatal clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna

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Background and objective: Empirical evidence suggests a high prevalence of anaemia among pregnant women in Jaffna. The objective of this study was to determine the factors associated with anaemia among pregnant women in the first trimester attending the antenatal clinics of Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

Methods: This descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 204 pregnant women in their first trimester attending antenatal clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna between October and November 2019, using an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Convenient sampling method was used to collect data. The data were entered in EpiData and SPSS software was used to perform descriptive and inferential statistical analysis.

Results: Mean age of the sample was 27.8 years (range, 21 to 30 years). Mean haemoglobin level was 11.3 g/dL, ranging from 6.8 g/dl to 15.8 g/dl. The proportion of women with anemia (haemoglobin level <11g/dl) was 40.7% (95% CI: 34.1 to 47.5). Over two-thirds (68.1%) of the sample were between 21 to 30 years and among them 44.6% were anaemic. In the sample, 17.6% were underweight and among them 44.4% were anaemic. Just below half (49.5%) were primi mothers and among them 65.1% were anaemic. Only 12.3% women had heavy menstrual bleeding and among them 60% were anaemic. Age, BMI, parity, and a past history of heavy menstrual bleeding were associated with anaemia during pregnancy.

Conclusion: Anaemia among first trimester pregnant women attending antenatal clinics at Teaching Hospital Jaffna was around 40%. Anaemia in pregnancy is associated with age, BMI, parity, and a past history of heavy menstrual bleeding.

Keywords: Anaemia, Pregnancy, Iron Deficiency, Maternal Morbidity