FACTORS AFFECTING LOW BIRTH WEIGHT AMONG NEW BORN BABIES IN NORTHERN JORDAN

(A COMPARATIVE ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify and evaluate maternal factors that may affect birth weight among newborn babies in northern Jordan. A descriptive analysis of 450 mothers grouped according to the birth weight was compiled. Group 1 included 300 mothers with low birth weight (<2500 grams) while Group 2 included 150 mothers with normal birth weight (from 2500 to 4000 grams). Maternal factors before and during pregnancy were then evaluated for statistical significance by analysis of Chi-Square method and at a P value of 0.05.

The most important findings show that there is a strong association between age at marriage, age at first birth, age at current birth, past history of anemia, taking diet by doctor’s advice, Cesarean delivery, using drugs by doctor’s consent, taking fast food regularly, father’s educational level, gravidity, parity, maternal height, maternal educational level, motivation toward pregnancy, maternal work, placenta previa, preeclampsia, maternal prenatal care, taking proper diet, maternal smoking, parent’s total salary, using drugs during pregnancy, maternal weight, observing proper weight regularly and low birth weight. This result is in agreement with the hypothesis that there is a relationship between previous factors and frequency of low birth weight. On the other hand, there is no association
between age at miscarriage, father’s work, hypertension, past illnesses, previous miscarriage(s), premature rupture of membranes, history of past illnesses, breech presentation, sex of baby, time or when miscarriage occurred and low birth weight. This result is not in agreement with the hypothesis that there is an association between these factors and low birth weight.