# A Study on Factors Associated to Low Birth Weight in the New Born Babies of Bheri Zonal Hospital and Teaching Hospitals of Nepalgunj Medical College in Banke

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**Background**

The overall prevalence of low birth weight in Nepal is still at the alarming condition which should be the matter of concern for all those who are being involved in public health field. The main objective of this study was to find out the proportion of low birth weight and the factors associated to low birth weight in the selected hospitals.

**Methods**

The study design was descriptive cross-sectional in nature. The study enrolled 225 mothers admitted for delivery in Bheri Zonal Hospital and Teaching hospitals of Nepalgunj Medical College. Data were collected prospectively for the period of 42 days. Thus the sampling method was adopted purposively for the convenience. The tools for data collection were semi-structured questionnaire, equipment for measuring height and weight for mothers and children. Interview with mothers, recording of information by observation and an interview with the medical recorders and other related personnel were made while collecting the information.

**Results**

The study found that 22.7% of babies born at these hospitals were with low birth weight. The average birth weight of the babies was 2800 grams. The factors strongly associated with low birth weight were low maternal weight, short stature of mother, low educational level of mother and father, long hours of physical activities during pregnancy, inadequate food intake during pregnancy, low family income and inadequate antenatal visit. Based on the hospital record the proportion of low birth weight was 22.4% in 2054/55 and 28.0% in 2058/59. The study revealed that 42.2% of mothers with low birth weight babies perceived that their babies were small. Similarly positive predictive value for predicting normal weight at birth was 80.8% among mothers with normal weight babies.

**Conclusions**

The prevalence of low birth weight has not been reduced to the level targeted by the National Nutrition Program. Thus program activities relating to the children and mothers especially in reducing these affecting factors on low birth weight need to be more effective.

**Keywords:** babies; factors; hospitals; low birth weight; mothers; proportion.