

**Aetiology, level of anaemia and associated factors among pregnant women with anaemia referred to the Haematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna: A retrospective analysis**

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**Background and Objective:** Anaemia in pregnancy has detrimental consequences for foetal and maternal health. Iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) is known to be a common cause of anaemia during pregnancy. This study aimed to describe the aetiology, level of anaemia and associated factors among pregnant women referred to the Haematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna.

**Methods:** This institution-based cross-sectional study was carried out at the Haematology Unit, Teaching Hospital Jaffna. Data were extracted from records of all pregnant women with anaemia referred to the Haematology Unit during a six-month period (September 2019 to February 2020). The WHO classification of anaemia in pregnancy was used to categorise the level of anaemia. Chi-square and Fisher's exact test were performed on SPSS (v22). The critical level was 0.05.

**Results:** Of 126 records, over half (52.4%, n=66) belonged to pregnant women in the third trimester. A large majority (85.7%, n=108) was on iron supplements. In total, 90.5% (n=114) had a diagnosis of IDA; 19.8%, 68.3% and 11.9% had mild, moderate and severe anaemia, respectively. Mean haemoglobin and mean cell volume (MCV) were 8.6g/dl (SD 1.5), and 73.9fl (SD 12.6), respectively. Age (p=0.007), number of children (p=0.023), and compliance to treatment with haematinics (p=0.024) were significantly associated with the level of anaemia. Younger pregnant women, primigravidae and women who were not compliant with treatment with haematinics were more likely to have moderate to severe anaemia.

**Conclusions:** IDA is the most common aetiology of anaemia among pregnant women referred to the Haematology Unit at Teaching Hospital Jaffna. That the majority had IDA while on haematinics needs to be explored, particularly in light of the association with compliance. A closer follow-up of compliance to haematinics may be needed for younger primigravidae.

**Keywords:** Anaemia in pregnancy, Iron deficiency anaemia, Aetiology of anaemia, Jaffna