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MATRIKA CHAPAGAIN: IMPACT OF UTILIZATION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES ON CHILD SURVIVAL IN NEPAL. THESIS ADVISORS: PRAMOTE PRASARTKUL, Ph.D., URAIWAN KANUNGSUKKASEM, Ph.D., 71 P. ISBN 974-662-968-9

In this study an attempt has been made to assess the impact of utilization of reproductive health services on child survival in Nepal. Secondary data from the Nepal Family Health Survey 1996 has been used to study the problem. For the analysis, this study has included all 4417 live births that occurred during the three years preceding the survey, as well as 8429 mothers from 8082 nationally representative households.

Bivariate analysis with chi-square statistics was used to examine the gross effect, and logistic regression model was utilized for assessing the net effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The results from bivariate analysis proves that all of the independent variables, namely TT immunization, ANC from health personnel, number of ANC visits, place of delivery, delivery assistance from health personnel or TBA, and PNC from health personnel, have statistically significant effect on child survival. In multivariate analysis, however, the relationship of only one variable i.e., delivery assistance from health personnel or TBA remained statistically significant after controlling for all other independent as well as control variables. However, the highly significant Model Chi-square value from the model, which included all above mentioned reproductive health service variables, indicates a significant combined effect of the variables for explaining the variation in child survival in Nepal.

Some of the results from multivariate analysis were not as expected. For understanding the reality, the types and quality of data and the circumstances under which they were collected should be taken into account. In this regard, the author suggests weighing the findings from this study with the facts that the information on reproductive health services just took into consideration the number of ANC and PNC visits made by the mothers and had nothing to do with timing to receive services and quality of services. The findings of this study suggest a number of appropriate means for enhancing child survival in Nepal. Reproductive health knowledge should be provided to all women of reproductive ages. Basic reproductive health services should be provided to all pregnant women and newborns through extended health facilities and outreach clinics. Family members, especially husbands and mothers-in-law, who generally make household decisions, should be encouraged to allow and advise women to use reproductive health services.