

## Knowledge and practices on birth preparedness and complication readiness among antenatal mothers; a study from southern province

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### Introduction

Birth preparedness (BP) and complication readiness (CR) is a novel concept and studies on this area is limited in Sri Lankan context. This study was conducted to evaluate the level of knowledge and practices on BP and CR and associated factors among antenatal mothers attending antenatal clinics (ANC) of Teaching Hospital Mahamodara (THM).

### Methods

A self-administered questionnaire was applied to 200 conveniently selected 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester mothers attending ANCs in THM in a descriptive cross sectional study. The questionnaire consisted of 60 questions to evaluate the level of knowledge and practices on BP and CR. Binary logistic regression was applied to detect the factors associated with level of knowledge and practice.

### Results

Mean (SD) age of the study participants was 28.61 (5.34). Nearly 94% (187) of the pregnancies were registered before the 12th weeks of their pregnancy and 65.5% (131) had taken pre-conceptual folic acid. Majority (64.5%, n=129) knew at least 10 danger signs of pregnancy, child birth and post-partum period. BP and CR was a known concept to 88.5% (177) of study participants. Satisfactory level of knowledge on BP and CR were reported in 92.5% (185) and in 78.0% (156) of the participants respectively. Among the mothers 83.5% (167) had satisfactory level of practice on BP and CR. Advanced maternal age ( $p=0.02$ , OR=3.77, CI=1.16; 12.24) was negatively associated with level of knowledge on BP. None of the factors were associated with level of knowledge on CR. Higher educational level ( $P=0.03$ , OR=0.31, CI=0.11; 0.91) and planned pregnancy ( $P=0.008$ , OR=0.26, CI=0.10; 0.70) were significantly associated positively with level of practice on BP and CR.

### Conclusions

BP and CR is a well-known concept among majority of 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester mothers studied. The level of knowledge and practices on BP and CR were at satisfactory level. Women with advanced maternal age need to be empowered on BP and CR to enhance knowledge and to minimize the birth complications.