

Determination of Risk Factors for Pre-Eclampsia in a Tertiary Hospital of Bangladesh

Sabina Yeasmin^{1*}
M Jalal Uddin²

¹Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
Chattagram Maa-O-Shishu Hospital Medical College
Chittagong, Bangladesh.

²Department of Community Medicine
Chattagram Maa-O-Shishu Hospital Medical College
Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Abstract

Background: Pre-eclampsia is an idiopathic disorder of pregnancy characterized by proteinuric hypertension and still one of the important causes of maternal and fetal mortality. The identification of its predisposing factors before and during early stage of pregnancy will help in reducing the mortality. **Objective:** The objective of the present study is to determine the risk factors for pre-eclampsia among pregnant women in a tertiary level hospital. **Methods:** This study was conducted in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of a tertiary care hospital in Chittagong, Bangladesh, from January to June 2015. A total number of 50 pregnant women with pre-eclampsia who admitted in this hospital were selected as study group. This was hospital based descriptive study. **Results:** Most of the participants were within 21-30 years of age group and mean age 24.06 ± 3.71 . The factors that were found to be significant predictors of risk for development of PE were primigravida, low socio-economic condition, family history of PE & hypertension, past history of PE and hypertension, past history of diabetes mellitus was also associated with development of PE.

Key words: Pre-eclampsia; Risk factors; Primigravida.

INTRODUCTION

Pre-eclampsia (PE) is an idiopathic disorder of pregnancy, characterized by proteinuric hypertension¹. It is still one of the important causes of maternal and fetal mortality². WHO estimates incidence of pre-eclampsia, to be seven times higher in developing countries (2.4% of live birth) than in developed countries (.4%)³. In Bangladesh, the incidence of pre-eclampsia is alarmingly high, about 20% of maternal death associated with PE and eclampsia⁴. PE is a multisystem disorder of unknown etiology, development of hypertension with proteinuria after the 20th week of gestation in a previously normotensive and nonproteinuric patient⁵. It causes abortion, prematurity, intrauterine growth retardation and still birth⁶.

Proper antenatal care remains the important part of prevention. Estimating each woman's individualized risk allow antenatal surveillance to be directed at those women, who are most likely to develop pre-eclampsia. Such care leads to early diagnosis and intervention, both in terms of feto-maternal monitoring and timing of delivery. Hence there is a need to develop an integrated model for the estimation of patient specific risk factors for the development of preeclampsia on the basis of maternal demographic, socio-economic, obstetrics, nutritional and anthropometric parameters⁷.

Therefore, we conducted the study to determine the risk factors of PE by directly collecting the data using questionnaire schedule from admitted cases of PE patients who had given the consent.

*Correspondence to:

Dr. Most. Sabina Yeasmin
Assistant Professor
Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology
Chattagram Maa-O-Shishu Hospital Medical College
Chittagong, Bangladesh.
Mobile : +88 01914339095
Email: drsabinah@yahoo.com

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Obstetrics and Gynaecology department of a tertiary care hospital in Chittagong, Bangladesh from January to June 2015 for a period of 6 months. It was a hospital based descriptive study. A total number of 50 pregnant women with PE who admitted in this hospital and given consent were included in this study. Thorough history was taken followed by relevant clinical examination and some baseline investigations were done. Height was measured and pre-pregnancy weight was noted. For renal function urine for protein, blood for urea, creatinine and uric acid estimation were done. All informations were recorded in a pre-tested mixed type questionnaire.

This study was approved by institutional Review board and informed consent was received from all the participants.

RESULTS

In this study most of the patients belonged to 21-30 years of age group (72%). This study revealed that, 52% women were from low socioeconomic status. Education level, occupation, type of family were not significantly associated with development of preeclampsia (Table-1).

Table 1: Distribution of age and socio-economic risk factors.

Variables	No. of patients	(%)
Age in years		
≤20	6	(12%)
21-30	36	(72%)
31-40	8	(16%)
Mean±SD	24.06 ± 3.71	
Education level		
Illiterate	1	(2%)
Upto SSC	30	(60%)
Upto HSC	11	(22%)
Graduation and above	8	(16%)
Occupation		
Housewife	40	(80%)
Service holder	10	(20%)
Family income/month*		
SEC -A >BDT 30,000	2	(4%)
SEC-B >BDT 15000-BDT 30,000	6	(12%)
SEC - C BDT 6000-BDT 15000	16	(32%)
SEC - D < BDT 6000	26	(52%)
Type of family		
Nuclear	19	(38%)
Joint and extended	31	(62%)

*NMDS April 2011 (National minimum data set survey, Bangladesh)

Table 2 : Showing obstetrics risks factors.

Variables	Number of patient	(%)
Parity		
0	32	(64%)
1	18	(36%)
Gravidity		
Primi	31	(62%)
Multi	19	(38%)
Number of fetus		
Twins	1	(2%)
Singleton	49	(98%)
Duration between present and previous pregnancy		
<1 year	6	(12%)
1-5 years	40	(80%)
≥5 years	4	(8%)
History of abortion before this pregnancy		
Yes	8	(16%)
No	42	(84%)
Bad obstetric history		
Yes	1	(2%)
No	49	(98%)

Primigravida constituted 62% of total PE cases. Twin pregnancy, duration between present and previous pregnancy, history of abortion and bad obstetrics history were not significantly associated with development of preeclampsia (Table 2).

Table 3 : Showing past and family history risk factors.

Variables	Number of patient	(%)
Past history of Hypertention		
Yes	10	(20%)
No	40	(80%)
Past history of Diabetes Mellitus		
Yes	2	(4%)
No	48	(96%)
History of Hypothyroidism		
Yes	1	(2%)
Past history of preeclampsia		
Yes	19	(38%)
No	31	(62%)
Past history of Eclampsia		
Yes	1	(2%)
No	49	(98%)
Family history of Hypertention		
Yes	30	(60%)
No	20	(40%)
Family history of Preeclampsia		
Yes	31	(62%)
No	19	(38%)
BMI		
≥25	29	(58%)
<25	21	(42%)

Past history of PE, hypertension, diabetes, hypothyroidism, family history of PE, hypertension were associated with development of PE. Women with higher body mass index (>25) were risk in development of PE (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

The study was aimed to find the risk factors for development of PE. The risk factors identified that influence the development of preeclampsia included extremes of maternal age, race, socio-economic factors, change of paternity, twin pregnancy, nulliparity, increased birth interval, increased BMI, increased systolic and diastolic blood pressure in early pregnancy, increased rate of weight gain during pregnancy and the presence of gestational diabetes^{8,9,10}.

In this study incidence of PE was high among 21-30 years of patient. Similar study by Bej Puny et al and Sultana R et al^{6,11}. But many other studies i.e. Parmar M T et al showed that teenage pregnancy was the risk factors¹².

The study reveals that preeclampsia was high in primigravid patient. Similar study by Sultana R et al, Parmar M T et al and Odegard et al where they showed nulliparity as risk factors for preeclampsia. Study by Bhattacharya S & Duckitt et al also reported that primigravida was a risk factor for pre-eclampsia & eclampsia¹¹⁻¹⁵.

It was observed in our study that PE was high in women with lower socio-economic status having poor antenatal care. The reason could be illiteracy, they come to the hospital only in case of serious problems & in a large majority of patients PE remain asymptomatic & remits spontaneously, since diagnosis of PE often missed. This is consistent with literature by Parmar M T et al & Yucesoy G et al¹²⁻¹⁶.

In this study 19(38%) of the patient (Though percentage seems less but all multigravid patients had the history) were having H/O PE in previous pregnancy, most of the PE cases also having family H/O PE & obesity. Similar results observed in a study by Parmar M T et al & S Ganesh Kumar^{12,17} most of the cases were having family H/O hypertension, such results shown by Konar H^{12,17,5}.

The family H/O convulsions, i.e. eclampsia could be elicited easily while history of blood pressure was difficult to recall by patients. Severe preeclampsia is of familial origin, as has been shown by many investigators¹⁸. There is primary evidence of the genetic component in the determination of disease and implies that it would be good a practice to enquire routinely the family history of severe preeclampsia to obtain early warning of possible "high risk" cases.

It was observed that, 20% and 2% of cases had a past history of hypertension and diabetes mellitus respectively. Such study shown by Bej Puny⁶. Ros et al quoted that in diabetic women, high levels of plasma triglycerides causes endothelial cells to accumulate triglycerides leading to endothelial cells dysfunction that predisposes to develop high blood pressure⁹. The limitation of this study were first it was a hospital based study hence can't be generalised to the whole population. Second, there might be a chance of recall bias among the patient.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, primigravida, past history of PE, hypertension, diabetes mellitus family history of PE, hypertension and obesity are the major risk factors for PE. A checklist containing all the risk factors is to be asked routinely in antenatal checkup to prevent the development of PE.

DISCLOSURE

Both the authors declared no competing interest.

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