

FACTORS OF MATERNAL FOOD INTAKE AND BIRTH WEIGHT OF INFANT. Chakkaphak M.

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Seventy three pregnant women under study were registered and delivered at 3 government hospitals in Songkla Province, Southern Region of Thailand. The gathered data included their general information, pregnant status, food beliefs, food and nutrition knowledge, food habits and their newborn infants. The sampling method was purposive. The data were collected by interview questionnaires and medical records, and analysed by percentage and means. The SPSS/PC<sup>+</sup> Program was used to analyse the relationship among factors affecting the birth weight of the infants.

The study revealed that 53.4% of the pregnant women were over 20 years of age, 58.9% had acquired the education higher than compulsory level, 56.2% had up to 4 family members, 60.3% had monthly income less than 6,000 Baht, 56.2% were among the first pregnancy and 64.4% had gain weight during pregnancy at and over standard. As for the birth weight only 49.3% of the infants were born with the weight over 3,000 grams.

The food intake of the pregnant women in term of quantity could be regarded as good while the quality, particularly the protein group, was rather low as the result of their poor food habits, food beliefs and nutrition knowledge. Thus, the weight gain during pregnancy and food habits each had the positive relationship with the birth weight of the infants at .001 statistical significant level. Moreover, the factors that were positively related to the food habits i.e. educational level, food beliefs and nutrition knowledge all at .001 statistical significant level, and, the sequence of pregnancy was at .05 level.