

Associations between socioeconomic status, income, and birth outcomes: Results from the Cebu Longitudinal Health and Nutrition Survey

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Negative health outcomes have been correlated with low socioeconomic status (SES). Across generations, this association has been observed in both maternal and child health outcomes. Prior literature has linked low SES with higher risk of adverse pregnancy and birth outcomes in numerous global populations. However, there has been less research dedicated to the effects of variable SES in populations in low and middle-income countries. Data from the Cebu Longitudinal Health and Nutrition Survey (CLHNS) were used in order to assess relationships between SES and pregnancy outcomes. The sample population is located in metropolitan Cebu, Philippines and includes a cohort of over 3,000 mothers and their infants in 1983. SES was measured using an index of household assets previously validated in Cebu. Associations between SES and birth outcomes were analyzed using binary logistic regression while controlling for maternal height, maternal age, infant sex, and delivery mode. Contrary to hypotheses, SES was positively associated with incidence of birth complications. There were no significant relationships between SES and low birth weight or preterm birth. These results point to the complexities of relationships between SES and health and may encourage further research to be conducted on how SES relates to health outcomes in low and middle-income populations.