

4th International Conference on

BRAIN DISORDERS AND DEMENTIA CARE

August 14-16, 2017 | Toronto, Canada

Intrapartum risk factors of neonatal encephalopathy at the gynaeco-obstetric and pediatric hospital in Yaounde

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Statement of the Problem: Neonatal encephalopathy (NE), a clinically defined syndrome of disturbed neurologic function in new born babies, is a serious public health concern. This condition often results in serious health consequences including death, cerebral palsy, developmental delay and seizure disorder. However, the underlying causes of NE are often poorly understood, and its treatment is primarily focused on the management of its risk factors. The purpose of the study was to identify intrapartum risk factors that influence the occurrence of neonatal encephalopathy at Yaounde Gynaeco-Obstetric and Pediatric Hospital.

Methods: This cross-sectional study involved 180 neonates (90 cases and 90 controls). The case group included only the clinical elements of the Sarnat's staging. A questionnaire was used to collect data from both mother and child. The independent variables associated with intrapartum were labor conditions, membrane rupture, presentation and mode of delivery. Data were analyzed using the Chi-square test (significance level at $p < 0.05$).

Findings: The occurrence of hypoxic-ischemic encephalopathy


was significantly determined by prolonged labor ($p=0.000$), arrest of labor ($p=0.005$), prolonged membrane rupture ($p=0.007$), non-cephalic presentation ($p=0.001$), and cesarean delivery ($p=0.001$).

Conclusion & Significance: This study has shown that intrapartum is a critical period associated with several risk factors of neonatal encephalopathy. To reduce the risks and consequences of neonatal encephalopathy, health education programs should be developed to educate pregnant women about precautions to be taken during pregnancy. Moreover, doctors, nurses and related health professionals should be continually trained in the management of the NE risk factors during intrapartum period.

Speaker Biography

Hippolyte T Siyou is a Pediatrician at the Yaounde Gynaeco-Obstetric and Pediatric in Cameroon. He has more than 10 years of experience in pediatric care, research and supervision of dissertations of Medical students. He has earned a Doctorate degree in General Medicine and a specialization Diploma in Pediatrics from the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of the University of Yaounde. He has attended several post specialization trainings in France and China.

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