

Community-Wise Differences in Maternal Mortality in Uttar Pradesh

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Abstracts

Maternal mortality is a major concern in family planning health care. It is estimated that about 5 lakh women die every year from pregnancy and child birth related causes (NFHS-2) and most of these deaths occur in developing countries (WHO-1999). But maternal mortality is still a less researched area and reliable data in maternal mortality are not available for most countries, leave alone within regions/states of a country and much less so with regard to religious minority communities.

Uttar Pradesh is the biggest state of India from the viewpoint. Here 18.5 percent population is Muslim and of the total Muslim population of India 22.2 percent live in Uttar Pradesh alone. Thus, the significance of community-wise study of maternal mortality is very high.

This paper presents a study of Hindu-Muslim maternal mortality in Muslim dominated districts. The data are taken from the statistical profiles of these districts and district plans prepared by the States Planning institute. The Economic and Statistics Division also present information as family welfare status. A few independent research studies also provide some clue to the issues that are addressed in this paper.

Important research questions are: - (i). Whether the woman was pregnant when she died; (ii). Whether the death occurred during the childbirth; (iii). Whether she died within 42 days after the end of a pregnancy or child birth, and; (iv). Whether the death was due to a complication of the pregnancy or child birth.

On the basis of the analysis of district level data, this study presents the maternal mortality differences in the two communities. It also brings out the rural-urban gap and impact of cultural differences. It also looks into how the NFHS-1, NFHS-2 and NFHS-3 differed in their study of maternal mortality in Uttar Pradesh.

The differences in Hindu-Muslim maternal mortality are suggestive of the different socio-economic status of the countries. On the basis of the results of this study, useful policy conclusions have also been drawn. If implemented, these can reduce the Hindu-Muslim gap in maternal mortality ratio.