

Maternal Complications and Birth Outcomes: An overview from KBK district of Odisha

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to assess the association between physical violence during the six months before delivery and maternal complications and birth outcomes. We used empirical survey data of women who delivered live-born infants between 2002 and 2004 in rural Odisha (8 KBK districts of Odisha). Women's physical violence during pregnancy were based on self-reports of "partner-inflicted physical hurt and being involved in a physical fight." Outcome data included maternal antenatal hospitalizations, labor and delivery complications, low birth weights, and pre-term births. Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals were calculated to measure the associations between physical violence, maternal morbidity, and birth outcomes. The prevalence of physical violence (Involved in physical fight or physically hurt by husband or partner) was 11.1%, 54% reported having been involved in physical fights only and 46% had been hurt by husbands or partners. In the latter group, 70% also reported having been involved in fighting. Compared with those not reporting physical violence, women who did were more likely to deliver by cesarean and be hospitalized before delivery for maternal complications such as kidney infection, premature labor, and trauma due to falls or blows to the abdomen.

Physical violence during the six months before delivery is common and associated with adverse maternal conditions. The findings support the need for research on how to screen for physical violence early in pregnancy and to prevent its consequences.