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Agreement between maternal recall of distant first birth events with hospital birth records: a cohort study

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Background: Childbirth is a memorable event in women's lives. Birth outcomes, such as birth weight (BW) and gestational age (GA), are frequently obtained from maternal self-report. Mothers' recall of previous births is generally assumed to be medically accurate and is often relied upon for clinical decisions. This study compares distant maternal intrapartum recall of first births with hospital records.

Objective: To determine agreement of maternal recall of gravidity, parity, onset of labour, use of pain relief, delivery outcome, BW, and GA with hospital birth records.

Method: Detailed questionnaire information on delivery events of first-borns births between 1967 and 1997 was collected from a cohort of 101 women. At the time of interview women were aged 37-70 and had varied levels of education. These maternally recalled birth events, 17-49 years postpartum, were compared to hospital birth records. Agreement between the two sources was evaluated by Bland-Altman's plots and Kappa coefficients. Logistic regression modeling was used to assess predictors of inaccurate reporting.

Findings: Agreement between maternally recalled first pregnancy and first birth events was high \pm 33 years post-partum.

Discussion: Maternal recall is confirmed as a reliable source of perinatal information and sufficiently accurate for clinical use even many years after delivery.

Biography

Mindy Ebrahimoff is an Israeli qualified Nurse/Midwife with over 25 years of experience in Maternal/Infant Health Care. She is working as a Midwife in a large hospital at Tel Aviv. She provides care to a diverse group of women. She received her Master of Science degree in Midwifery and Women's Health from University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), UK, where she focused her research on primiparas' intentions and beliefs as a predictor of mode of delivery. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Midwifery at University of Central Lancashire. She teaches midwifery students both in the classroom and in the clinical setting, and is conscientious in giving knowledge to her students about physiological births with a strong emphasis on birth as a normal event in an increasingly medicalised setting.

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