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Prevalence and pattern of domestic violence against women during pregnancy in Delhi

Kamlesh Kumari Sharma and Manju Vatsa All India Institute of Medical Sciences, India

This study was aimed to determine the prevalence and pattern of domestic violence against women during pregnancy. This community based, cross-sectional study was carried out among 827 ever married urban and rural women aged up to 60 years, from Delhi selected through cluster sampling followed by systematic random sampling. Data were collected using pretested structured questionnaires and the in-depth interview guide. The descriptive and multivariate analysis was done using Stata 11.0. Analysis of the data showed that 42.8% women reported psychological violence, 17.1% reported physical violence followed by 15.6% who reported sexual violence during pregnancy. Overall 18.5% women reported physical or sexual violence and 43.2% reported any form of violence during pregnancy. Severe physical violence was reported by 14.6% of the women. In most cases, various acts of violence were ongoing and husband was the chief perpetrator. Violence was significantly higher among women with living children, low neighborhood support, negative dowry effect and an alcoholic husband. On the other hand, spousal education and dependable family support were protective against violence. Consequent to the physical or sexual violence during pregnancy, 45.2% (66/146) of women were reportedly injured. These findings highlight the need to use multipronged approach including public health interventions for an effective response to violence against women.

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