**Interview details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant ID | HKAP02E |
| Municipality | Kapilvastu |
| Occupation | Real estate broker |
| Education (grade) | 10 |
| Type of household | Joint |
| Ethnicity | Terai Dalit |
| Nb of pregnancies before this one | 0 |
| Gestation age in months | 8 |
| Start time | 12:30 |
| End time | 13:23 |
| Interviewer | Mahesh Chauhan |
| Date | 26 January 2023 |
| Name of translator | Anushka Thapa |
| Name of transcriber | Anushka Thapa |

**Background**

The interview was conducted in Nepali. The husband was interviewed in his home.

# INTERVIEWER:

What is your job?

# PARTICIPANT:

I worked in a foreign country for a while. Currently, I work in a real estate brokerage.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did you go to school?

# PARTICIPANT:

I studied in Kapilvastu.

# INTERVIEWER:

To what grade did you study?

# PARTICIPANT:

I have completed my School Leaving Certificate exam.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you studied up to class 10?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Are you single or do you stay with your family?

# PARTICIPANT:

I live with my wife and my mother. My father passed away recently so it's just the three of us.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is it your wife’s first pregnancy or do you have any other children?

# PARTICIPANT:

We have been married for 11-12 years and have had 5 miscarriages so far. I don't know if it's because of our negligence or any other reason, I don't know what to say. But now, thanks to God's blessing, she is eight months pregnant and in her ninth month.

# INTERVIEWER:

How many months or weeks pregnant is she? Do you have any idea?

# PARTICIPANT:

As she has finished her eighth month and is now in her ninth month.

# INTERVIEWER:

Has your wife attended her antenatal check-up regularly or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we regularly go to Dr. Banjade (who runs a clinic nearby) for checks. We go there every time they call us.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any idea of the type of tests carried out during these visits?

# PARTICIPANT:

Tests that indicate the child's heartbeat, the health of the baby, etc. If there is weakness, medication is taken as suggested by the doctors. If there is a weakness, we take medication as suggested by the doctors. We also have regular ultrasound scans.

# INTERVIEWER:

Has your wife had blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, all the blood tests have been done.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know what the purpose of this blood test was and why? Can you give your opinion on the matter?

# PARTICIPANT:

What is her blood type and whether she has diabetes or thyroid disease. Pregnant women are more likely to have thyroid problems. This is why blood tests are carried out.

# INTERVIEWER:

Since your wife is pregnant, what do you see as your roles and responsibilities towards her?

# PARTICIPANT:

I have a fair responsibility to her. I prayed for her to be okay. I support her and everything...

# INTERVIEWER:

So, did you help/support your wife?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I support her 100%.

# INTERVIEWER:

What kind of support do you give your wife?

# PARTICIPANT:

Do not let her carry heavy objects, do not allow her to wash clothes, rest properly, follow doctors' advice, etc.

# INTERVIEWER:

In your free time or at home, do you share health-related information with each other?

# PARTICIPANT:

We spontaneously exchange health-related information, such as what we should do, whether we should go for a walk, etc.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any knowledge of antenatal check-ups and what is done during antenatal visits?

# PARTICIPANT:

It is the first pregnancy so I don't know much about it.

# INTERVIEWER:

No problem, you can just tell me what you know.

# PARTICIPANT:

Checking on the baby at the right time, looking after them. That's all I know. The focus is on the mother and the child. Take them to the nearest health post if they have health problems, etc.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know where a pregnant woman should go for her antenatal check-up?

# PARTICIPANT:

A pregnant woman should go to a place where there are more health facilities for her.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, according to you, she can go wherever she wants?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, not just anywhere, but she can go where there are more health facilities for pregnant women. It is not possible to go everywhere, the specialists concerned can have their own practice...

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you ever accompany your wife to visit hospitals?

# PARTICIPANT:

I accompany her to the doctor Banjade to check on the baby.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you accompanied her during the consultations?

# PARTICIPANT:

We don't know what we are doing, so following the advice of health professionals is beneficial.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you always accompany your wife to check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

My sister and I accompany her accordingly. I accompany her when I am free or when a problem arises. We go to the doctor as needed. But we go immediately if there is an emergency rather than waiting a week.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now I want to have a little discussion about blood tests during antenatal checks. There is no wrong answer, so anything you say will be considered correct.

# PARTICIPANT:

The tests are for uric acid, blood type, HIV, thyroid, etc. These tests can diagnose whether or not a pregnant woman has HIV, thyroid problems and blood type. As a pregnant woman may need a blood transfusion during surgery, it is useful to know her blood type. It is important to be well-informed about all blood tests. Also, diabetes and blood pressure are checked.

# INTERVIEWER:

We also need to check the haemoglobin status in the blood during the pregnancy period.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, this should be tested too, to see if there is enough blood in the mother and the baby. Also, the health of the baby should not be compromised.

# INTERVIEWER:

During pregnancy, blood tests should also be done for sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, HIV/AIDS and hepatitis B. Testing for these diseases is good.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is good to test for these diseases. That's why we do checks so that there are no negative consequences. Even if there are negative consequences, they can be treated with a doctor’s suggestions. That is why blood tests are necessary.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you ever heard of anaemia?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I've never heard of anaemia.

# INTERVIEWER:

 If the amount of blood in our body is insufficient, we talk about anaemia. Do you want to say something about this?

# PARTICIPANT:

What does “lack of blood” mean?

# INTERVIEWER:

When there is a lack of blood in women, it is a problem that needs to be treated by doctors. It is bad that there is a lack of blood in the body. However, this problem should be discussed with the doctor and according to his suggestions, a diet that helps to increase the level of blood in the body should be consumed. Foods such as fruits, juices, etc. should be consumed.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you ever heard anyone say that they lack blood?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, never.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any idea of the symptoms associated with a lack of blood? How does it happen? And what can happen?

# PARTICIPANT:

In pregnant women, lack of blood is associated with diet. But some pregnant women may experience excessive bleeding.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is it possible to treat a lack of blood?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is. If excessive bleeding occurs, go to the nearest health post. Eat a healthy diet including apples, oranges, beetroot and pomegranates. Medication to increase the blood level will be given. But using medication alone will not work, as a healthy diet is also needed.

# INTERVIEWER:

Will the health of the baby be compromised if the pregnant mother is anaemic?

# PARTICIPANT:

Blood is a major component of the human body. If a mother suffers from a lack of blood, it will certainly affect the baby.

# INTERVIEWER:

How will it affect the baby?

# PARTICIPANT:

The baby may become weak. Internal development is disturbed. This can affect the proper development of the limbs.

# INTERVIEWER:

I would like to discuss with you three sexually transmitted diseases now: HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis B. Have you heard of HIV?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I know very little about it.

# INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell me what you know about HIV?

# PARTICIPANT:

[silent]

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you ever heard of a person infected with HIV?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, but not in Kapilvastu.

# INTERVIEWER:

So elsewhere?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, in Kathmandu.

# INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell me how HIV is transmitted?

# PARTICIPANT:

It can be through sexual contact. Some people get it through drug use. Through the use of needles. If 10 people use one needle, the virus can be transmitted from one person to another. HIV is not transmitted through clothing. It is transmitted through blood. Some are transmitted through needles. HIV is contracted through sexual contact. Sometimes HIV is also transmitted through blood transfusion.

# INTERVIEWER:

What were the symptoms of the person infected with HIV? Can you tell me more?

# PARTICIPANT:

In the case of HIV, symptoms are usually not visible. Symptoms are normally visible after the evolution of HIV into AIDS. HIV can be controlled by appropriate exercise. HIV will never be cured, it can only be controlled.

If HIV turns into AIDS in a patient, the white blood cells will die. They will kill the fighting bacteria in the blood.

# INTERVIEWER:

What health services did the HIV-positive person receive?

# PARTICIPANT:

He was in a rehabilitation centre because he was a drug addict. He got HIV from a needle. I don't know what kind of health services he was on, but he was exercising regularly. It didn't turn into AIDS because he had it under control. He had no sexual contact with anyone because he had his own family. He also did not have sexual contact with his wife because he knew he was HIV positive and that it could be passed on to his family.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know if he or she has taken any HIV medication? If so, where did he get it?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, he didn't take any medicine. I don't know if he took them without telling anybody, but I didn't see him taking any medication. What happened to him was that he stopped taking medication, he exercised, he did therapy and he kept his body free of diseases. This is how HIV is controlled. If HIV could be cured through medicine, so many people would have been cured. It can be controlled but it will not be cured.

# INTERVIEWER:

Suppose a pregnant woman is HIV-positive, what are the effects observed? Can you tell us a bit about this?

# PARTICIPANT:

If a pregnant woman is HIV-positive, the baby will also be infected. If the child is born with HIV, he or she has no future because it is a disease that cannot be cured. In addition, if her husband has sexual contact, he may also be infected.

# INTERVIEWER:

So does that mean the baby will be infected?

# PARTICIPANT:

If the mother is HIV-positive, the baby will be 100% infected through her blood.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard of hepatitis B?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have never heard of hepatitis B.

# INTERVIEWER:

Hepatitis B is a disease that affects the liver. It is transmitted through body fluids such as blood and semen.

# PARTICIPANT:

Is it transmitted through semen?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, it is transmitted through body fluids.

# PARTICIPANT:

What does it damage? The heart?

# INTERVIEWER:

No, it mainly attacks the liver, but it is transmitted through sexual contact. Just like HIV.

# PARTICIPANT:

What are the symptoms?

# INTERVIEWER:

Symptoms include a high fever, a feeling of laziness and a burning sensation in the stomach. Feeling unwell, scarring of the skin. A yellowish discolouration of the whites of the eyes. This is a wide range of symptoms. If the disease is diagnosed in a pregnant woman, it can be transmitted to the child.

# PARTICIPANT:

Is hepatitis B only transmitted to children or to other people too?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, but a positive aspect of this is that hepatitis B can be cured, unlike HIV.

# PARTICIPANT:

It can be controlled. Diabetes is something that needs to be controlled. It can be controlled but it will never be cured.

# INTERVIEWER:

But with proper and timely treatment, it is curable. However, if treatment is delayed, it can also cost you your life.

# PARTICIPANT:

Timely? How long? Weeks or months?

# INTERVIEWER:

If there are symptoms such as blisters on the skin or around the sexual organs, high fever and yellowish discolouration of the whites of the eyes. A doctor should be consulted as soon as possible. The doctor will give a brief overview of the situation and may also recommend blood tests. Only then can we know. Have you seen someone with symptoms such as high fever, a burning stomach and yellowing of the whites of the eyes?

# PARTICIPANT:

I have not seen anyone so far.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard of syphilis?

# PARTICIPANT:

What?

# INTERVIEWER:

Syphilis. It is also called “*Bhiringi*” in Nepali.

# PARTICIPANT:

I have never seen anyone who has had *Bhiringi*.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know anything about this disease? How is the disease transmitted? Any ideas?

# PARTICIPANT:

No.

# INTERVIEWER:

Should I tell you more about it?

# PARTICIPANT:

It would be nice if you could say something about this.

# INTERVIEWER:

Syphilis is a disease that is transmitted through sexual contact. In addition to the sexual organs, it affects the face, hands and lips. It appears as small blisters on the sexual organs, face, etc. It then appears on other parts of the body, such as the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, and gradually spreads to the whole body.

# PARTICIPANT:

Is it an infectious disease?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

This disease has symptoms similar to those of the flu. Do you know what flu is?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I have heard about the flu.

# INTERVIEWER:

High fever, headache, weakness, fatigue and swollen glands are the symptoms of this disease. The disease is spread mainly through sexual contact. But it can also be treated in time with appropriate medication.

# PARTICIPANT:

Is it treated with medication?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes.

# PARTICIPANT:

But it must be done in due course.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard of anyone who might have the symptoms I mentioned?

# PARTICIPANT:

No never.

# INTERVIEWER:

So why don't you tell me a little about the diseases that are transmitted through sexual contact?

# PARTICIPANT:

What should I say about sexually transmitted diseases [laughs].

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you understand what sexually transmitted diseases are?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I understand. More emphasis should be placed on hygiene to avoid sexually transmitted diseases.

# INTERVIEWER:

How is it transmitted? Do you have an idea?

# PARTICIPANT:

Sexually transmitted diseases are transmitted through sexual contact. They can be passed from one person to another. This is what a sexually transmitted disease is.

# INTERVIEWER:

What might the symptoms be? Do you have any idea?

# PARTICIPANT:

Skin lesion, wound. HIV is one of them. This is what sexual disease is all about. It is transmitted by having unsafe sex and with multiple people. That's all I know.

# INTERVIEWER:

How do you think we can prevent them?

# PARTICIPANT:

Emphasise hygiene to prevent transmission, avoid multiple sexual contacts, use protective measures when in contact.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let's talk about blood testing. In our society, there is a practice of testing several diseases in pregnant women. Do you think this is a good practice?

# PARTICIPANT:

They will not do so if they do not have adequate knowledge of the issue. Those who have adequate knowledge and are educated will get tested repeatedly. And those who do not know will do so only after receiving advice from their doctor. Those from the villages have no idea. And the educated will go and check their blood by themselves.

# INTERVIEWER:

In your opinion, should blood tests be accepted or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

In my opinion, it is a good thing to have a blood test. You have to be prepared to do it, because in the future you might regret it if a problem is not detected.

# INTERVIEWER:

What could be the reasons why some people do not accept blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT:

Because of an internal fear and a fear of the blood collection procedure. This may be the reason why she does not agree to have her blood drawn despite the doctors' suggestions.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think that pregnant women who might be short of blood would agree to have a blood test if recommended?

# PARTICIPANT:

[silent]

# INTERVIEWER:

If you doctors recommend your wife to have a blood test. Would she agree to do it?

# PARTICIPANT:

My wife will definitely do it.

# INTERVIEWER:

What about other pregnant women?

# PARTICIPANT:

I know that many blood tests are mandatory for pregnant women. And when you go to the doctor for a regular check-up, they will give you suggestions accordingly. My wife will not object to the blood tests, whatever the doctor tells us to do. We have to do what we are told. It's good for us. That's it.

# INTERVIEWER:

You seem to have good information about STIs such as Syphilis, HIV, and Hepatitis-B. If any of your neighbour show symptom of this disease, and you tell them to do blood test, do you think they will agree?

# PARTICIPANT:

None of the health workers have visited my house. We have to go to the hospital.

# INTERVIEWER:

I meant to ask, if you tell someone with STI symptoms to go for blood test, will they agree?

# PARTICIPANT:

Some people can be tested if we ask them to, but others cannot. Many do not go for fear of unexpected results. They prefer to think that if we are destined to die, we will die, rather than suffer unnecessary stress from blood tests.

# INTERVIEWER:

If we inform people about sexually transmitted diseases and related blood tests, will they agree to have blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT:

I can't be 100% sure whether they will or not. They may agree for a while if we advise them, but we don't know what they will do when their back is turned.

# INTERVIEWER:

Some people do not accept having a blood test, what could be the reason?

# PARTICIPANT:

Due to financial problems. There is no possibility of free testing. Fees are high in the private sector. Some women's husbands are employed in foreign countries. Many depend on their families to make decisions. On the other hand, some women do not have family members who can support them. Otherwise, those who are aware have their blood tested.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now I'll tell you a hypothetical situation and we can discuss it. Let's say your wife has blister-like sores on her sexual organs. She is worried about this. What suggestions would you give her when she tells you about her problem?

# PARTICIPANT:

I suggest she goes to the nearest health post.

# INTERVIEWER:

She has expressed her problem with you, but if she has to share it with other members of your family, who would she share it with?

# PARTICIPANT:

This kind of thing is shared between women. It's a different scenario from talking to the husband. She will share 100% with me. So she can talk to her mother or even her sisters. If she has sisters at home, she can share her problem. You don't have to be shy to talk about these things. There is no point in hiding your health problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

And your suggestion would be to consult a doctor?

# INTERVIEWER:

You said you would suggest that she see a doctor and have a blood test, what makes you say that?

# PARTICIPANT:

Whether it is me or my wife, if she has problems then counselling will help to alleviate her problem. If something happens in the future and we did not see a doctor, there will be regrets. I hope she will not lose her life and also will not endanger the life of the baby. That's why I said that.

# INTERVIEWER:

If you ask your wife to go, will she agree with you or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

My wife will agree. Others will not go because they are uncomfortable and others will go because of pressure from others.

# INTERVIEWER:

You said that some people might feel uncomfortable. What could be the reason for this?

# PARTICIPANT:

The reason for this discomfort is the fear of needles and blood tests. Fear of what might happen if something shows up in the blood test but there is no need to be afraid.

# INTERVIEWER:

Perhaps also because of shyness?

# PARTICIPANT:

Why should anyone be afraid to have a blood test? People may hate it for fear of finding HIV in their blood. That's the way society is in this area. If someone is ill, we try to ignore it. HIV is not transmitted through clothes, it is only transmitted through blood.

# INTERVIEWER:

In some cases, even your wife may not agree. And if so, will you advise her to take a blood test or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

By convincing or advising her. But so far, nothing of the sort has happened.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you and your wife visited the health post together. When you got there, what kind of behaviour did they show? Did they give you enough time?

# PARTICIPANT:

In the place where we go for a check-up?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes.

# PARTICIPANT:

You have to get a ticket for the visit. Then they do an ultrasound, examine the pregnant woman and do the blood tests. And when she has a procedure, a health professional has to stand by. In many cases, when she doesn't understand a lot of things, the health professionals explain to us. They give enough time for that.

# INTERVIEWER:

How is their overall behaviour?

# PARTICIPANT:

We have been going to Dr. Banjara till now for all check-ups. I like the way he treats us. He talks politely.

# PARTICIPANT:

He gives us good suggestions. Do this, do that. Do regular check-ups. He tells us these things.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let's say your wife has gone to the health post for a consultation. But she seems worried about the behaviour or what they may have said. What could be the reason for her concern? How does this happen? Because of what? Can you share your ideas?

# PARTICIPANT:

If she is worried, I will ask her personal questions. What happened? How did it happen? Why did it happen? She has to answer because worrying will not solve anything. If there is any reason, you have to go to the doctor for a new check-up, to find out what happened and what the solutions are. There is no point in worrying unnecessarily. Whatever the problem is, she may tell the family.

# INTERVIEWER:

Suppose a pregnant woman has had a blood test for sexually transmitted diseases. There is such a problem and you have to go to the hospital for a check-up. When you express your problems, how do health professionals behave towards you?

# PARTICIPANT:

Such an incident has not happened so far. We have already done the blood test and the results are good. It's not that I can't say anything, but as we haven't experienced this, I can't say anything for sure.

# INTERVIEWER:

But do you have any idea how they might react? Any idea?

# PARTICIPANT:

It depends on the health professionals. Some are from the hospital and some are..... Not everyone has the same mentality. Some behave badly while others behave exceptionally well with others. They are the ones who give you advice and suggestions. When patients do not follow what they have suggested, they get annoyed and irritated. Some doctors advise you well, while others get irritated. In many places it is different from one to the other.

# INTERVIEWER:

Fair enough. So, if one of your friends has an STD, will they share their symptoms with you since you are open-minded, or with any other family member?

# PARTICIPANT:

If someone has a sexually transmitted disease, I can advise them to tell a nurse or a relative if they don't want it to be passed on. I can tell them it's not such a big deal.

# INTERVIEWER:

Don't you think everyone should share it with their relatives?

# PARTICIPANT:

There is no benefit to sharing it. The benefit of sharing it with others is that they will suggest you go for a check-up, don't have sex at risk. But many don't express it because of shyness.

# INTERVIEWER:

And in your opinion, should other family members go for testing for sexually transmitted diseases?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, everyone should do it.

# INTERVIEWER:

In Nepal, the rate of blood testing for pregnant women is low. One way to increase the rate of blood testing is to perform all blood tests at once with one blood sample. Blood tests such as HIV, syphilis and hepatitis B should be done from a single blood sample. Once the blood sample is taken, several tests can be done at the same time. It is not necessary to take several samples for each test. The results are obtained within 30 minutes. It doesn't take long.

# PARTICIPANT:

Here, it takes a day.

# INTERVIEWER:

Maybe it depends on the health facility…

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it depends on the location. Here, the sample is sent to Butwal, like for thyroid tests. They keep it in a box and send it to Butwal (a city’s name) and from there the results are sent back and we collect it.

# INTERVIEWER:

Due to the lack of lab facilities in some places, they take even longer.

# PARTICIPANT:

In places where there are facilities, such as Butwal, the results are available quickly. It depends on the health facility.

# INTERVIEWER:

The results are available immediately within 30 minutes. However, this also depends on the willingness of the pregnant woman to be tested. If she does not consent, we will not force her to do so.

# PARTICIPANT:

We cannot force her without her consent.

# INTERVIEWER:

Results are available immediately within 30 minutes. Could you give us your opinion on this type of integrated blood test and its benefits for pregnant women and their children?

# PARTICIPANT:

It is a good thing to test your blood. In my opinion, it is a good thing that this kind of blood test is available for pregnant women and their children.

# INTERVIEWER:

Why do you think it is good? Could you clarify it?

# PARTICIPANT:

So that there are no difficulties for the child in the future. It is better to do a check-up on time. And it can be a solution to do it in time. That is all.

# INTERVIEWER:

We are almost at the end of our discussion. Would you like to add anything or share your views about something I might have forgotten?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don't have anything to ask. But in my opinion, pregnant women should take care of themselves. They should not be afraid. They should express their concerns without any doubt. That's all I have to say It would be better for both mother and the child. There is no advantage in hiding your health problems. The disease will not disappear by hiding. I think anyone who hides their disease is a fool. Health check-ups should be made timely. Pregnant women should be taken for blood tests.

# INTERVIEWER:

What is your occupation?

# PARTICIPANT:

I am a real estate broker.

# INTERVIEWER:

Construction?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I help people buy houses and lands and I do marketing for them.