**Interview details**

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| Participant ID | HKAT03I |
| Municipality | Tokha |
| Occupation | Pathao driver |
| Education (grade) | School Leaving Certificate (SLC) |
| Type of household | Joint |
| Ethnicity | Chhetri |
| Nb of pregnancies before this one | 0 |
| Gestation age in months | 3 months |
| Interviewer | Obindra Bahadur Chand |
| Date | 15/03/2023 |
| Name of translator | Merina Dahal |
| Name of transcriber | Merina Dahal |

**Interview**

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you do?

# PARTICIPANT

I work as a Pathao rider. I don't have any other job.

# INTERVIEWER:

How long have you been working for Pathao?

# PARTICIPANT

It's been about 2 to 2.5 years. I don't do it all the time. Sometimes I also have to look after my home. As it became difficult for me to do a job, I am doing it so that I can work as per my time and can earn some money for rent and family expenses.

# INTERVIEWER:

For how long have you been married?

# PARTICIPANT

It's been 3 years since I got married. We are celebrating our third anniversary this Jestha. My wife is 12 weeks pregnant.

# INTERVIEWER:

Congratulations! You are going to be a father. As I said before, today we are going to have a discussion about what roles you have played as a husband during your wife's pregnancy, what kind of difficulties are there or not, and what is your opinion on different tests done during pregnancy. It's not like a questions/answers session. It's more like a discussion on your experience about what worked for you and what didn't and whom you took help from. If you don't understand anything during the discussion or about the question, then please ask again. And if you do not wish to talk about some topic or answer some questions, you can tell me to change the subject. To begin with, how do you help your wife during her pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT

At first, we did not know about it. After a month, she had vomiting so she checked it with a pregnancy test kit. It showed red colour, so we knew about it. I was in the village at that time. When I asked her, she used to have frequent vomiting. There was even blood in the vomit so we went to a small hospital in the village. They said they could not manage such a case there so I brought her here when she was 8 weeks pregnant. They told us that it is a problem to have too much vomiting. In the village, it was considered normal. But I was worried so I brought her here in emergency. They prescribed two types of medicines.

# INTERVIEWER:

Whom did you come with?

# PARTICIPANT

I came with my wife on a bike.

# INTERVIEWER:

How long does it take by bicycle to come here from Nuwakot?

# PARTICIPANT

If I am alone, it takes one hour to reach my room in Tokha but to reach here, it takes about 1.5 hours. But I had to ride slowly with her as she is pregnant and sick, so it took around 2.5 hours. There is a little difficult road in the village. It takes around 2 hours. And after taking medicines here, she was relieved. Then, I returned back to work and she again felt sick. They told us to come for the check-up in 3 months so here we are.

# INTERVIEWER:

What difficulty did she have?

# PARTICIPANT

She had vomiting again. As I have to go to work, she might have difficulty doing the daily work and we have cattle at home.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you live with your father and mother?

# PARTICIPANT

I don't have my father. I have my mother and a brother.

# INTERVIEWER:

So there is work due to that?

# PARTICIPANT

Yes, sometimes there is more work, as we have cattle. There can be problems sometimes because of it.

# INTERVIEWER:

As you have to live here due to your work for Pathao, you are not with her. You can’t help her with daily activities, right?

# PARTICIPANT

Yes but if there is any problem, I usually can reach home in an hour. If everything is normal, I don't go. I have made some arrangements so that she can do the work more conveniently. For example, I have arranged a small pipe for the water so she does not have to carry it.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you have done it?

# PARTICIPANT

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did you do that from the beginning or after she was pregnant?

# PARTICIPANT

After she was pregnant. Earlier, she had to carry the water in *gaagri* (a vessel to carry water) for 10-15 meters. Not much distance but still around the house.

# INTERVIEWER:

Why did you do this?

# PARTICIPANT

That she should not carry heavy weights.

# INTERVIEWER:

Where did you know this from?

# PARTICIPANT

It has been said always. Also, she was having difficulty when lifting it. While carrying heavy weights, she used to more vomiting. Then, I did this before leaving for work due to this reason.

# INTERVIEWER:

As you are far from your wife due to your work, when you talk with your wife on phone or when you meet, what discussion do you have regarding her health?

# PARTICIPANT

As we have known about the pregnancy for 3 months now, I take food for her whenever I go home. I have bought a blender so she can eat soup. I buy fruits sometimes but it's not easy to store them in the village because they spoil quickly.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now, let's talk about her check-up during the pregnancy. Do you know how many times she needs to have check-ups during her pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT

We had taken suggestions about that in the health post of our village. They suggested going to Thapathali for a check-up in 3 months. Also, the FCHV gave us her number so we can contact her if we have any problems or if we have questions.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did you need to call her to ask about anything?

# PARTICIPANT

Some days ago, she had a problem with white discharge so I told her to call and ask. The FCHV told her to go for a check-up so I brought her.

# INTERVIEWER:

For that also, you are here.

# PARTICIPANT

Yes. Also, I had some firewood cut down. She carried them. I told her to carry little by little but she carried more to finish the work quicker. That's why. Sometimes, she does more work than I tell her to do. So it causes problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you go to the health post for regular check-ups and you come here in case of problems or emergencies?

# PARTICIPANT

Not just that. In our village, there are no check-up services available. We can only have general inquiries and suggestions regarding health in the health post. For check-ups, we have to come here because an operation might be needed. It is not possible in our village. If we come here later, then we won't be familiar with anything. It will be easier for us if we come here for check-ups. We will have the reports too. We come here regularly.

# INTERVIEWER:

Does it mean you only take suggestions from the health workers there? Or what kind of services do you take from them?

# PARTICIPANT

When we came to know she was pregnant, we could not know how long she had been pregnant as her periods were not regular. When we checked, we only knew about the pregnancy but not the time period. For that, we did a video x-ray in Binayak Hospital, which is located in New Bus Park. She was 6 weeks pregnant at that time.

# INTERVIEWER:

How much did you have to pay there?

# PARTICIPANT

We paid 1000 rupees for the video x-ray. And then we returned home from there. The next day, there was a free video x-ray in the health post so we went there. The pregnancy was confirmed but they did not show there. Maybe due to a lack of skilled manpower or some other reasons. We took the report from the one we did in Binayak 2-3 days ago with us. Based on that report, they gave us suggestions. But the one there did not give the result.

# INTERVIEWER:

You said you had to pay 1000 here, right?

# PARTICIPANT

No, not here, in Binayak Hospital. Here, when I brought her to the emergency, I paid around 2600 rupees including blood and urine tests and video x-rays.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you need to pay when you go to the health post for suggestions?

# PARTICIPANT

No, it's free of cost. Currently, when we visit, we have a crate of eggs, iodised salt for the nutrition of pregnant women after 3 months and a recharge amount of 100 rupees to call someone.

# INTERVIEWER:

Who provides this?

# PARTICIPANT

It is the health post in the ward office. I don't know, maybe it is given by the rural municipality or by an organization. When we were there, we saw pregnant women who met the criteria that were receiving this service.

# INTERVIEWER:

You will get it when it reaches 3 months?

# PARTICIPANT

It could be 3 or 6 months. We don't know very well about it. They said that they are providing these services but we don't know who has done it. Yes, they give it through the health post and there is also a provision of iron tablets and TT vaccines. It's not time for my wife yet.

# INTERVIEWER:

Though there have been some changes compared to the past, some pregnant women still feel hesitant to go for check-ups and blood tests. What is your experience with it?

# PARTICIPANT

I think it is due to society rather than pregnant women. Talking about myself, my mother had 13 children. Ten of us are alive. We are 5 sons and 5 daughters. My mother is still alive but my father is not. My mother says that she gave birth to these many children without going to the hospital, except for my twin sisters. All others were born at home. I am the 12th child of my parents. Now, society is more educated. In the old society, they were insensitive towards pregnant women. Such attitude can be still seen among some people in society. I have taken her for 3 check-ups until now.

# INTERVIEWER:

With you?

# PARTICIPANT

Yes, I bring her with me and take her home too. In the village, I hear that people are reacting as if my wife is making a big deal of her pregnancy. They say that it is not necessary to go for check-ups.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do people still say such things? What do you think is the reason behind these opinions of the people in the community?

# PARTICIPANT

Some people get wiser soon while some people never do. If they don't have changes in their attitude, then they will never. For any kind of change to occur, a generation has to pass. When that generation gets replaced by a newer educated and wiser generation, then such things will change. As long as the old generation exists, the situation won't change. When they fade off, such concepts will also fade off.

# INTERVIEWER:

Though they say such things in society, you have been bringing your wife for check-ups.

# PARTICIPANT

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

What is your opinion on check-ups during pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT

If I had not taken her to the hospital despite her health problems, I don't know what would have happened. Because she used to vomit every time she ate. It could lead to weakness. We got to know this after we went to the hospital. They gave her medicines. In the village, they say that one should not take medicines during pregnancy. I say that she can have medicines according to the suggestions of the doctor. I think it is good to have check-ups because it makes it easier. The pregnant woman and the child both feel easier, as I have understood it. I don't have much experience but in 3 months, I got to have this much experience.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now, let's have a little discussion on blood tests. Please tell us what you know about it without any hesitation. Don't worry if you don't know about anything. We have to talk so that it would be known what the government can do to make the husbands aware of it or what program can be launched in order to give knowledge about it to the husbands who don't know. Do you know what kinds of tests are done during the blood test of pregnant women?

# PARTICIPANT

As far as I understood, they test for HIV, hepatitis B, sugar and thyroid. If the mother has thyroid, it would be difficult for the child and there is a risk of miscarriage. If the mother has HIV, the child will also have a risk to be born with HIV. If the sugar level is abnormal then the mother or the child could have problems. I think it is good to test for these.

# INTERVIEWER:

Similar to the things you have said, while doing blood tests during pregnancy, they test for 3 to 4 diseases. In addition to what you have said, there are also tests for anaemia, which is the deficiency of iron in the blood and syphilis. Do you know anything about anaemia?

# PARTICIPANT

We used to study anaemia in Health.

# INTERVIEWER:

At school?

# PARTICIPANT

Yes, at school. I don't know about it in detail but I know that it is a disease.

# INTERVIEWER:

If you don't know about it in detail, do you know about its symptoms?

# PARTICIPANT

I think the symptom of anaemia is the deficiency of blood in the body. When this happens, there are symptoms like dizziness, fainting, and low blood pressure. I think these are the symptoms but I don't know in detail.

# INTERVIEWER:

It won't matter even if you don't know. Do you know how it can be prevented?

# PARTICIPANT

I think we should give attention to liquid and nutritious food. I think it would be good if we take care of our diet.

# INTERVIEWER:

During pregnancy, do you know anything about the problems it can cause to the health of the child? Have you had any talk about it in the health post?

# PARTICIPANT

No, we did not talk about it. What happened is that the day we visited there, there was a gathering of all the pregnant women for check-ups. That's why talking for a long time was causing difficulty for those who were waiting. We talked briefly and took the number.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now let’s continue our discussion about HIV. What do you know about HIV?

# PARTICIPANT

HIV is a disease which gets transmitted through blood and sexual activities. It can get transmitted through blood by the use of needles, razors and sharp instruments and sexual activities. It can transmit from the infected person. It can get transmitted from the infected person through sexual activity and needles and vaccines if they are not sterilized. Also, it can be transmitted through the sharing of blades for shaving beards or heads.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you known anyone in the community who has been infected with HIV?

# PARTICIPANT

There are no HIV-infected people in my community and my friend groups and I don’t know about any hidden HIV-infected individuals either.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you have any knowledge about the treatment?

# PARTICIPANT

While studying Health, I understood that it can't be treated but can be managed so that the infection does not get worse.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know about the effects it can have on health during pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT

It is said that HIV-infected women should not give birth to a child if possible. If a woman with HIV becomes pregnant, then I think they can follow the doctor's suggestions. They should take suggestions from the doctor and focus on how to protect the child from HIV infection. As far as possible, they should try to protect the child. It depends on the technology and the doctor, right?

# INTERVIEWER:

If the mother is HIV-infected, what effects can it cause to the child?

# PARTICIPANT

I don't know about that.

# INTERVIEWER:

No problem. Now let's talk about Hepatitis B. Do you know any person infected with hepatitis B?

# PARTICIPANT

No, I don't know. I have heard that if you have a fever or people with jaundice have this more.

# INTERVIEWER:

That means you don't know much about how they do the treatment and how it is transmitted.

# PARTICIPANT

Yes, I have not known anyone from my friends and the people I know with this infection.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard of syphilis?

# PARTICIPANT

I don't know that.

# INTERVIEWER:

It is also a kind of STD.

# PARTICIPANT

I don't know.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let's talk about sexual infections in general. What do you know about STDs?

# PARTICIPANT

I think STDs can be transmitted if you don't have safe sex with precautions or if you don't have sex with limited partners.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know anything about what symptoms could the STDs have?

# PARTICIPANT

I think the symptoms of STDs are different based on the disease. If there is syphilis, then there are rashes or sores, itching, and white discharge around sexual organs.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think pregnant women should agree to blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT

They should agree for the health of the mother and the child. It is important to protect themselves from the disease and to detect any infection, if present. They should do the test, it is compulsory. I think it is a good thing.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think some women may not agree with it due to various reasons?

# PARTICIPANT

I think the educated ones agree to it easily. In Nepal, it is said that they can be unidirectional if they follow the mass. Society can also have an effect on them. That's why I think if the pregnant woman and the husband are educated and aware, they can help to make society educated.

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you think is the reason behind the uneducated ones not agreeing to the test?

# PARTICIPANT

One reason is that they think our past generation gave birth to children without any tests or treatments. They also have misconceptions that they will have to pay to go to the hospital. There is also poverty, lack of education and society. People think they will have to spend a lot when visiting hospitals and they can be admitted for even a month. Also, there is news saying that some people couldn't get treatment even after spending lakhs and finally died. So some people might think that they will have to spend all their money at the hospital to die after that. That's why I think they don't agree to do the tests.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think pregnant women will want to do the blood test if they know about anaemia, as we discussed before? If we make them aware?

# PARTICIPANT

Even if we give them knowledge about it, some people show a proud attitude and pretend that they can't get any such disease. If we can give them the knowledge that it can only be detected through tests, I think it can have some impact. Also, there are many places where pregnant women feel shy to talk about their pregnancy. When someone asks them about their pregnancy, they cover their face with shyness. They can't say freely that they are pregnant.

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you think is the reason behind it?

# PARTICIPANT

The first reason is society. Nepali society usually makes fun. They make fun of the husband who has to eat the head of the chicken or the goat that is cut off for the woman who gave birth to the child. This is a way of mocking. The pregnant women are scared that society will make fun of her and her husband. In my case, I have goats at home and when I want to sell them after they are grown up, people say that I should keep one for my wife. Also, they tell me to keep the leaves of Saal [a tree] when we gather them. We take such things in a positive way but many pregnant women can take it as an insult or embarrassment.

# INTERVIEWER:

Similarly, if we tell pregnant women about HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis, do you think they will agree to do the tests?

# PARTICIPANT

I think they will agree but many don't know why the tests are done.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think there are women who won't agree to the tests?

# PARTICIPANT

Some maybe.

# INTERVIEWER:

What could be the reason behind them not agreeing to the test?

# PARTICIPANT

I think there may be fear during the first pregnancy so they would agree to it. But if they checked during the first pregnancy, they may not agree during the later pregnancies.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think they will agree to give blood for the test for STDs?

# PARTICIPANT

I think it depends on the pregnant woman. If she is of decent nature, then she might agree. Some women who have made relations with multiple persons may not agree in the fear of what their husbands might say if the result is positive. Some might feel the fear of embarrassment in society if the result comes positive because there is a practice of showing negative attitudes and behaviour towards infected people in society. Also the rich dominate the poor and the strong dominate the weak. That's why pregnant women might not agree to the test due to the fear of being mistreated if they get diagnosed with STDs.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now suppose your wife has rashes around her genitals, which we know can be the symptoms of an STD. If she tells you that she is really stressed because of it, what kind of suggestion would you give her?

# PARTICIPANT

First, we need to support her if she is suffering from such a problem. We should tell her that she should not worry and that it can be treated if we go to the hospital. Secondly, we need to go for check-ups and take the required treatment and medications.

# INTERVIEWER:

In such a condition, what suggestions would you give regarding blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT

I would tell her that blood tests are a good thing and it should be done. It can save the life of both the mother and the child.

# INTERVIEWER:

Would your wife agree to the blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT

She would obviously agree. She needs to understand first what she has not understood. When we make her understand these things, then she will surely agree.

# INTERVIEWER:

If she shows some hesitation, how would you motivate her to do the blood test?

# PARTICIPANT

I would tell her that I will go with her. She will just need to be ready; I will do all the required things. Sometimes, women don't agree due to their worry about where to go and what to do.

# INTERVIEWER:

Maybe they are also worried about what kind of behaviour the health workers might show towards them.

# PARTICIPANT

It can be seen very much. In Thapathali too, we heard about nurses misbehaving with pregnant women with labour pain. They don't allow us to go inside but those who went gave us the reviews after coming out. In such a condition, I used to think why they would do so. But in such sometimes, they need to scold the patients because some don't understand when they talk nicely. It is ok to explain nicely to one person but if many of them start making noise, then I think it is normal to get angry and talk loudly.

Some people don't reply when they are asked questions at the hospital. They can reply to one person but if many people keep asking them questions, they may get irritated. I think they don't answer sometimes. There is not just one person. There are hundreds of them who keep asking the same questions so they might feel irritated to give the same answer.

# INTERVIEWER:

What kind of behaviour do you think the health workers show to the pregnant women who go to the health post or hospital to test for the STDs?

# PARTICIPANT

They showed good behaviour when we went for the check-up.

# INTERVIEWER:

Were they male or female?

# PARTICIPANT

They were female.

# INTERVIEWER:

Oh, it is easier if there are females.

# PARTICIPANT

Yes. And I also told my wife to freely tell about her health condition and problems to them. Sometimes she forgets when she reaches there. She used to have abdominal pain at home. She also asked her sisters if it is normal to have abdominal pain during pregnancy as it is her first pregnancy. But when she reached the hospital, she forgot about it. Then I asked why there is abdominal pain. They said that it may be due to a low intake of water. She did not use to drink much water so I made her drink more water. Then the pain reduced. They gave us good suggestions.

# INTERVIEWER:

That means the abdominal pain is not just due to pregnancy but also due to low water intake.

# PARTICIPANT

If there is low water intake during pregnancy, then there is a risk of abdominal pain.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think pregnant women should tell their symptoms of STDs to others?

# PARTICIPANT

If they tell others and others are aware of it, then I think there won't be many problems. Everyone may not have knowledge about everything so if we give them knowledge about what we know, then it will be good.

# INTERVIEWER:

In Nepal, if we test for anaemia, HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis from a single blood sample and the report is given in 30 minutes. What are your thoughts on this test?

# PARTICIPANT

While counselling them, we can tell them that they need to do this for the sake of the child, even if they don't want to do it for themselves. As mothers love and care for their children, I think they would agree if we mention their child's health.

# INTERVIEWER:

I have tried to ask you many questions regarding the help and support of husbands to pregnant wives. Do you think I have left anything to ask?

# PARTICIPANT

I have felt that women need more love during pregnancy. If I don't ask her about her health due to some work or I am not able to give her time and talk to her, either at home or on the phone, then she thinks that I am not giving her time. Women can also feel that their husbands might hate them after being pregnant. There is also suspicion that the husband might be involved with some other women as many men marry for sex and they don't get to have regular sex if the wife is pregnant. But our marriage is a love marriage so she shares such doubts with me and I clear them. That's why we need to show more love, care and concern towards them. If she has a vomiting problem, then we need to ask daily if she has vomited or not. If we give them love and relieve their stress, many problems can be solved. I have understood that if the husbands of pregnant women show love to their wives, the mother and the child can both be happy.