**Interview details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant ID | MKAP03D |
| Municipality | Suddhodhan |
| Occupation | Housewife |
| Education (grade) | 0 |
| Type of household | Joint |
| Ethnicity | Terai Dalit |
| Nb of pregnancies before this one | 0 |
| Gestation age in months | 3 |
| Start time | 12:30 |
| End time | 13:50 |
| Interviewer | Kasturi Agrahari |
| Date | 27/01/2023 |
| Name of translator | Bipana Shrestha |
| Name of transcriber | Mahesh |

**Background**

The interviewer went to the home of the pregnant woman through the FCHV. When the FCHV went to the home to inform them that someone from an organization will come to talk tomorrow with the pregnant woman, her husband and her mother-in-law, they asked if the interviewer is coming for a few days. The interviewer and the FCHV went to the home of the pregnant woman where the pregnant woman, the mother-in-law, the father-in-law and two neighbours were sitting. The mother-in-law was interviewed inside the passage of the house.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you stay at home or do you work outside?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t go anywhere.

# INTERVIEWER:

You stay at home. Do you do agriculture?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we do a little bit of agriculture.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did you study?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I did not study.

# INTERVIEWER:

Didn’t you go to school?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I did not go to school.

# INTERVIEWER:

And what about the non-formal education program?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I attended it. I can only write my name.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you live together with your son and your daughter-in-law?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we all live in the same house.

# INTERVIEWER:

How many months pregnant is your daughter-in-law?

# PARTICIPANT:

She will be 3 months pregnant in Flagon-3.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is it her first pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is her first pregnancy.

# INTERVIEWER:

# Prior to this, had her pregnancy been terminated [miscarriage]?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, before this, she has a miscarriage.

# INTERVIEWER:

How many months was she pregnant when it happened?

# PARTICIPANT:

She was 3.5 months.

# INTERVIEWER:

# Did the miscarriage occur in the hospital?

# PARTICIPANT:

No.

# INTERVIEWER:

After this, did you do some check-ups or did the doctor say anything?

# PARTICIPANT:

The health workers talked to her but I don’t know what they did. I was at home.

# INTERVIEWER:

Don’t you know about that?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did not you ask the health workers which check-ups they performed?

# PARTICIPANT:

The health worker said her blood pressure is low and vomiting is happening, that’s why she has low energy. She should be given energy-giving food. Due to her cold, pomegranates and apples are not given. I only gave her eggs and milk.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know which tests were done? Did your daughter-in-law go to do ANC check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

The kit to test urine was brought home and the test was done at home. She told the doctor that she had vomited.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did she go for ANC check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, a doctor from the government hospital told her that she should eat energy-giving food.

# INTERVIEWER:

# So these symptoms appeared and you went to the hospital. There, a medical check-up was carried out. Is this correct?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

What check-ups were carried out?

# PARTICIPANT:

# Recently I took her to the health post and they only checked her pregnancy with a urine test.

# INTERVIEWER:

They only tested the urine?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, only urine was tested. Blood was not tested.

# INTERVIEWER:

How do you take care of your daughter-in-law?

# PARTICIPANT:

I take care of her normally. If any problem happened, the government hospital is nearby [in Labani]. We take suggestions from health workers in Labani first before going elsewhere. If she has health problems, we explain them to nurses and we follow their advice. We give food to her accordingly to the suggestions of health workers.

# INTERVIEWER:

How long ago did your daughter-in-law does her check-up?

# PARTICIPANT:

She did it more than 1.5 months ago.

# INTERVIEWER:

After that, did your daughter-in-law fall sick?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, she has not fallen sick after that.

# INTERVIEWER:

After that, did you go to the health post?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you talk with your daughter-in-law about pregnancy-related health?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I ask her how is her health.

# INTERVIEWER:

Then, your daughter-in-law can share it with you if she has any problem?

# PARTICIPANT:

My daughter-in-law used to say that she could not eat rice. She suffered from vomiting. Then, we bought flour to make chapati and she eats rice. She eats chapati with green leafy and other vegetables.

# INTERVIEWER:

And, does your daughter-in-law tell you if she has any health problems?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, she tells us if she has any problem and we go to the hospital to talk to female health workers. We manage food and medicines for her as per the health workers’ suggestions.

# INTERVIEWER:

When your daughter-in-law went to do the check-up, did you go with her?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, my son went.

# INTERVIEWER:

Not you?

# PARTICIPANT:

# My son took her to the hospital. He said her blood pressure was low and she was vomiting. If she has no energy, she needs to be fed. She also had a cough from a cold. We gave her milk and eggs. We thought the pomegranate would cause the cold. And if she coughs, it will be more difficult.

# INTERVIEWER:

After that, have you taken her to the hospital again?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, we have not taken her to the hospital again.

# INTERVIEWER:

And, what other tests were told to be done? Are you going to do the blood tests later?

# PARTICIPANT:

Doctor hasn’t suggested testing blood right now. The doctor has only suggested to provide nutritious food at home and to take care of her. She has given her a medicine that dissolves in water.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is it an Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS)?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is ORS. The health worker said to mix it with water and drink it. When she brought that home, she took it for 1 or 2 days.

# INTERVIEWER:

When did health workers tell you to come back for check-ups? Did not they tell you to go back now?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, they did not.

# INTERVIEWER:

Then how would you know when you should go for check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

We have to go to the health post to ask for the time of the next check-up.

# INTERVIEWER:

Who will go to ask?

# PARTICIPANT:

My son will go and I think I will ask the health worker: “Sister, three months of pregnancy have been reached. Now, what should we do?”

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes and then, you can do it according to her suggestion.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I will do it according to her suggestion.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know that some blood tests should be done during pregnancy? What is your opinion about that?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know.

# INTERVIEWER:

Don’t you know?

# PARTICIPANT:

During our time, we did not do such things. Now, there is everything. Every service is available.

# INTERVIEWER:

And, have you heard elsewhere that pregnant women should do blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have not heard of it in the village. The tests take place in the hospital. Check-ups are done in the women’s hospital.

# INTERVIEWER:

Are the checkups done in the women’s hospital? What tests are done?

# PARTICIPANT:

There is no x-ray available in the health post. X-ray only takes place in Labani, in private hospitals only.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is the hospital in Labani private?

# PARTICIPANT:

Maybe it is private. I don’t know the name.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is it Al-Shaikh Hospital?

# PARTICIPANT:

Al-Shaikh Hospital, yes, yes. X-rays and check-ups are done there. And people who are able to give birth there. The baby can be born there and there do operations too.

# PARTICIPANT:

In Labani hospital, deliveries take place. People who have a lot of problems go to Butwal, Bhairahawa [Taulihawa District Hospital]. But health workers try to do deliveries here as much as possible. When she [daughter-in-law] feels very bad, she asks me to take her to the hospital.

# INTERVIEWER:

In your opinion, which tests should pregnant women do?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know which tests should be done. I just know that when we take a pregnant woman there, injections are given to her.

In the government hospital, there is one health worker that knows us. She lives in our village. That’s why we know her. We ask with her “what should we do? It last for so many days now. She asked if she has vomiting. I told her all the symptoms and she said: “you should give her nutritious food”. Now, she reached 3 months of pregnancy.

# INTERVIEWER:

Does the nurse you know work in the hospital?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, she works there in the hospital. We ask her everything about what we should do. After 4 or 5 months, x-ray takes place. Recently, we did not meet because it is new. After they gave iron tablets, we did not go back. Now, we should ask when to come back and if we should give iron tablets. We should do things according to their answer.

# INTERVIEWER:

After asking health workers, do you give medicines according to their suggestions?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we are giving food and medicines according to their suggestions.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know other tests that should be done during pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know.

# INTERVIEWER:

When you went to the health post, did not you see other people having blood tests?

# PARTICIPANT:

I never tell my neighbour to do anything. They are smart than me, so they know better. We just listen to the health worker. (she talked about her neighbour which is not clear).

# INTERVIEWER:

You also said that after miscarriage, no tests have been conducted, right?

# PARTICIPANT:

During that pregnancy, no vomiting happened. She was having food in a better way. After one month and a half, I was thinking “why menstruation did not happen?”. I and my son went to take the urine test kit and after checking, she was pregnant. I told her, it is okay if you are pregnant now. There was no vomiting at that time. She said she will not have meat, fish, green leafy vegetables and potatoes. It would have made her vomit. At that time, we did not do anything, everything was fine.

One night, she was crying. I asked them: “You fight at night, why are you fighting? You should not fight at night.” My son got up and sat thinking. Nobody talked and she was crying. My son suddenly said: “suddenly she got her menstruation”. And I said: “It is not a situation within the capacity of the health post. Let’s take her to Bhairahawa. What the doctor of Bhairahawa will say, we will do according. There are not a lot of doctors here, that’s why nothing could have been done here. We took her there. I forgot in which hospital, she was taken. The doctor said an x-ray should be done and he said that the baby should be thrown because his heartbeat was not working. He did the check-up and he said that the heart was not working. The doctor did the check-up and said the health was not beating and she told them what to do. The doctor told them to take her home and to come back after 3 days, to do the cleanliness.

# INTERVIEWER:

Didn’t you go?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, my son took her to the hospital.

And after we brought her back from the hospital, many problems happened. She bleed a lot and when the bleeding decreased after 3 days, my son took her to the hospital to do cleanliness. He brought her back after doing the abortion. After that, her health was normal until now.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know whether blood tests are done during pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I don’t know. In our generation, nothing was there. I gave birth to 4 children, I didn’t do any such things.

# INTERVIEWER:

Nowadays, checkups should be done during pregnancy. Blood is also tested. Do you know what can be identified through blood testing?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know. I just know that if there are any problems or diseases, like the inability to talk, blood tests can reveal them.

# INTERVIEWER:

Which kind of diseases may occur?

# PARTICIPANT:

There are various diseases but we are uneducated people, so we don’t remember.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard about this?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we heard that after check-ups, diseases are identified.

# INTERVIEWER:

And through blood tests, we can identify whether there is a lack of blood or not.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, they can identify how much blood is or if there is a lack of blood. Without knowing which food or drinks are given how would they know? When the blood is checked, it is obviously known if there is a weakness or not. Blood pressure checks can reveal some weaknesses or not. When the blood pressure level is certain, then health workers say that there is weakness in the patient. And during pregnancy, if the body is swelling then there might be high blood pressure. Like, when there is sugar [diabetes]. And these things are known after the blood test is done. But when we had children, we had not done these tests. In our generation, we did not do anything. Health problems like thyroid, such things are identified when the blood is tested.

# INTERVIEWER:

What about the thyroid?

# PARTICIPANT:

Is there a fever or not? If there is a fever then it is typhoid. It could also be a normal fever. I just know that when the blood is tested, health problems are identified.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think that any sexually transmitted diseases can be transmitted during pregnancy?

# PARTICIPANT:

[No answer]

# INTERVIEWER:

You told me about different diseases, like fever, typhoid and sugar. Any sexually transmitted diseases can happen?

# PARTICIPANT:

[No answer]

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you understand what “sexually transmitted” means?

# PARTICIPANT:

No.

# INTERVIEWER:

Some diseases can be transmitted when a male and a female have physical relations.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Due to that, can any disease be transmitted?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Like when you go to the doctor, here we can talk openly. Blood tests can also detect other diseases, like sexually transmitted diseases and lack of blood. HIV, hepatitis B and syphilis can also be tested through blood tests.

Now, you can tell me what you know. There are no right or wrong answers. Don’t think: “I don’t know these things, so it would be better if I don’t say anything”.

You told me about the lack of blood. What are the symptoms?

# PARTICIPANT:

When there is a lack of blood in the body then the person does not have energy and can’t even take food properly. At night time, they don’t feel sleepy and they don’t want to eat. If someone is healthy, then work can be done in a better way. If blood pressure is low, then people want to sleep. That’s why food and drinks should be taken in a better way.

# INTERVIEWER:

A disease can be transmitted sexually.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I have heard about it. Other people say that AIDS can be caused.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard about HIV?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have not heard about HIV. I have only heard about AIDS.

# INTERVIEWER:

What type of disease is that?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know about that. We are uneducated people.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you have heard about HIV but you don’t know how it can be transmitted?

# PARTICIPANT:

What I feel is that, if the toilet is not clean, then it should be kept clean. We should also maintain the space where we cook clean. We should not throw rice and other food randomly. We should keep the food properly and no problems will occur. If we don't keep it clean then there could be problems. Also, we should not keep the door of the toilets open. If we keep the door of the toilets open then flies can fly randomly and contaminate the food. It can also create problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

Diseases can occur due to a lack of sanitation.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, diseases can occur. Good food can lead to good health. We, uneducated people, just know about this.

# INTERVIEWER:

[Laughing]. You know a lot of things, why do you call yourself an uneducated person? You should not say that, everyone has their own experiences.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes. And, when she was vomiting, she was not able to eat anything. She was sleeping all the time. And I used to tell her: “you should not always sleep”. And I told her: “if you sleep a lot then health problems will rise more. If you cannot do work, then you can walk nearby”. Then my son took her to do the checkup and he said that her blood pressure was low. All the food she take came out when vomiting. And due to this, she felt bad and felt weakness and dizziness. The doctor told me she should drink and eat properly. She told me to give her medicine for a day, not daily. I think she took the medicine three times since she started vomiting. It should only be taken when the condition is serious and blood deficiency can be improved with a good diet.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, we need to visit the doctor for a check-up and then an appropriate diet should be followed accordingly.

# PARTICIPANT:

If the pregnant woman has blood deficiency, it will impact the baby too. The child can only be healthy if the mother is healthy. If the mother is weak, then the child will also be weak.

# INTERVIEWER:

The baby can be weak and what other problems can arise?

# PARTICIPANT:

The problems can be seen in both the mother and the child. If the mother is okay, then the child can also be okay. When you feel dizzy after a blood test, it is good to have a proper diet. And low blood pressure is due to a lack of proper diet. I know that proper care is needed in that case.

# INTERVIEWER:

What other problems can happen when there is a deficiency of blood?

# PARTICIPANT:

I have heard that the baby can get fever and pneumonia even inside the mother's womb. I do not know how that can happen. I have also heard that the child can get pneumonia and fever after birth too.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let's talk about HIV now. What did you call it before?

# PARTICIPANT:

I called it the AIDS disease. I didn't know what to call it exactly. Yes, it can also be present but if there is good health, proper care and diet, then it won't be so bad. It all depends on our own fate, so we don't know what can happen. But if we follow a proper diet and are not too stressed, then we can keep being healthy. But problems can still happen because we are uneducated so we do not know how to follow proper diet or proper care. But gradually we also gain knowledge about this. Although we are not educated, we sometimes hear about the problems that can arise and we have to consider all this.

# INTERVIEWER:

You said that you have heard about AIDS. Have you ever known anyone who has AIDS?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have not known anyone who has AIDS but I have heard that it is a disease that can affect people. I heard about it but not here. I heard about it in Mumbai.

# INTERVIEWER:

Have you heard about it in India?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, this disease is seen in humans.

# INTERVIEWER:

Can you tell how this disease is transmitted?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I do not know.

# INTERVIEWER:

You can say it, it is about our own health. There is no shame to have.

# PARTICIPANT:

I have heard that when husbands go to a certain type of woman in Mumbai, they get this disease. I mean places like Mumbai or foreign countries. But there is no such disease in our village. People here work and earn their living in the village. In the past, there were no problems during pregnancy. Women even gave birth on the farm. We didn't have to go to the doctor. We didn't have blood tests or X-rays either. But today there are so many problems. There were no problems then but there are problems now.

# INTERVIEWER:

There are problems now?

# PARTICIPANT:

Look at my daughter-in-law. It has been two to two and a half months. She has been having nausea and vomiting so gradually she is not eating many foods like potatoes, spinach, meat, fish etc. I had 4 children but I never knew what it was like to have nausea, vomiting and lack of appetite. I never had vomiting even though I had 4 children. I also never knew that certain foods could not be eaten.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you have heard about it in Mumbai in India, right?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes. This disease occurs in humans.

# INTERVIEWER:

In humans? Does it mean in men?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, it happens to women too [laughs]. It is seen in both men and women.

# INTERVIEWER:

Is this disease found in India only?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is found in India.

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you think this disease, AIDS, is? What problems and symptoms occur if you are infected? How do you think people know they have AIDS?

# PARTICIPANT:

I just heard that it is a disease that you see in people. They say that diabetics can't eat potatoes or new rice but they have to eat roti. But we don't know anything about this AIDS disease, what we should eat or not eat.

# INTERVIEWER:

What are the symptoms of AIDS?

# PARTICIPANT:

Only those who have this disease can know. We have not seen it with our own eyes. They say it is also a disease, but there are only diseases like diabetes in this village. They don't eat rice, but bread. Diabetes is also a disease. And also, what I mentioned earlier, what was that? Thyroid, that is also a disease. There are different diseases in this world. But what can we do? We have to make the improvements we can. We have never heard of such diseases in our time. Nowadays we hear that there are so many types of diseases. Pregnant women face many problems and difficulties. We have never had such problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you know where people with AIDS can get treatment? Where can they get medication?

# PARTICIPANT:

As the disease is from India, I think the treatment is also available there only. I have not seen it here.

# INTERVIEWER:

You have not seen it here, but have you heard about it?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I have heard. Usually, people returning from India tell that someone in a village has been infected. I did not ask for more details as I had no interest in knowing.

# INTERVIEWER:

If a pregnant woman gets this disease, what problems may happen?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know. What I know is that if someone gets this disease, then they have a low appetite and a lack of energy. Low energy makes them feel sleepy all time and their blood pressure can also be low. They also say that pregnant women can have swollen hands and feet and that their blood pressure can be high. And they also vomit water, which can create more problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

As diseases can occur to anyone, pregnant women can also get this disease.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, they can.

# INTERVIEWER:

If a pregnant woman is infected, according to you, what are the effects on the baby?

# PARTICIPANT:

I do not know about this. I know what I know. I cannot tell you what I do not know.

# INTERVIEWER:

But what do you think? Can it occur or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

I do not think it can occur here [in Nepal].

# INTERVIEWER:

AIDS is a disease also called HIV. It is a disease that reduces our internal strength. If we have HIV, then it is difficult to cure any infection in our body. As some symptoms can be seen in the beginning, such as fever, weakness, etc., it is difficult to cure the infection. These symptoms may be seen for one or two weeks. But after a few days, the symptoms disappear. No symptoms can be seen for 1 to 3 years. It may seem that everything is fine, but gradually our body becomes weaker inside. And if the problems become severe, the patient may even die. There is no cure for this disease. If you follow treatment and medication, then it can be managed and checked-up.

# PARTICIPANT:

Does that mean it can never be cured?

# INTERVIEWER:

No, it cannot. It can be transmitted if someone has physical relations with the infected person. It is a disease which can be transmitted through sexual contact.

# PARTICIPANT:

Don't they have vomiting or stomach problems?

# INTERVIEWER:

These symptoms can be seen only for up to 1 or 2 weeks. After that, they disappear and the person seems to be fine but the disease is present.

# PARTICIPANT:

Can’t the doctor tell if there is this disease?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, they can tell after a blood test.

# PARTICIPANT:

Does everything look fine without testing?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes. How can we know without a blood test? That is why blood tests are important. But if it is not known on time, people may even die.

# PARTICIPANT:

Oh, they can even die.

# INTERVIEWER:

But if it is diagnosed on time, the lifetime can be prolonged through medications.

# PARTICIPANT:

Does it mean it can be considered a serious disease?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, it is.

# PARTICIPANT:

This is dangerous.

# INTERVIEWER:

That's why you need to know about it. Hepatitis B is also a disease. Have you ever heard about it?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have never heard about it. I am hearing about it for the first time now.

# INTERVIEWER:

It is also a sexually transmitted disease. It can also be transmitted from the mother to the child through breastfeeding. The symptoms are small raised dots present in the mouth and on other parts of the body. Then there may be rashes or wounds on the lips too, which do not heal easily. There is headache and weakness and even swelling of the neck. These kinds of symptoms usually occur. These symptoms can also be seen with syphilis.

# PARTICIPANT:

What disease is that?

# INTERVIEWER:

Both of them are sexually transmitted diseases. They can be transmitted through body fluids and also sexual contact. If it is detected on time, syphilis and hepatitis B can be treated. Do you know anyone who got infected with these diseases?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, I have not seen such symptoms anywhere. For uneducated people like us, we know only about the fever. We can only know about all the problems after visiting the doctor. We are uneducated people who simply use to have headaches, which we treat by taking medicines.

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you think we can do to control this disease?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t know.

# INTERVIEWER:

First, we need to test whether the disease is present or not through a blood test. And the doctor would give you advice according to it and you will follow it, right?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, if any kind of problem arises, I need to visit the doctor first to see if any test is required to know what is happening.

# INTERVIEWER:

As you said these diseases can be transmitted if we have sexual relations with others. What can be done to avoid transmission?

# PARTICIPANT:

These diseases do not occur in our places so we do not know how they to prevent transmission. People from places where there are such diseases may know about them. I am 50 years old. We are living well by eating properly, rice or bread. We are also keeping our children well. We do not go anywhere outside. We do farming in our own home and that’s it.

# INTERVIEWER:

Does it mean we should live in our own homes without going anywhere?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Or do you mean not having relationships with others but living in our own home with our own family?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we can be safe that way. Otherwise, if we go here and there unnecessarily, then this disease may get transmitted because we do not know who has it and who does not. As we have spent our lives since childhood, we also teach our children not to go anywhere unnecessarily and not to do unnecessary work. If I get any problem, then I need to go to the doctor. I need to go to the market when I do not have time. That is why it is better to mind your own business. It is by minding our own business that we have spent our lives so far. We give such advice to our children.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, we do not know who has the disease and who does not.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, we do not know. For example, during the COVID, they used to say that we should not touch anyone. But it has been said that if we are infected with COVID, then we suffer from cold and cough, which was common even before. But we couldn't say whether this is due to COVID or whether it's just normal as before.

# INTERVIEWER:

Now, I will tell you a story. Imagine Sarita is pregnant and she is the same age as your daughter-in-law. You are alone, everyone has gone out. You are doing your household work and she comes and sits with you having conversations. She heard on the radio that she had to go to the hospital for a check-up during her pregnancy. And she comes to you to ask for your advice on whether she should go for the check-up or not. What advice would you give to her?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would suggest she should go for a check-up because we cannot know anything without check-ups.

# INTERVIEWER:

She asks you what tests are performed during the check-up. What would you answer?

# PARTICIPANT:

In some hospitals there are X-rays. They tell us to take x-rays and then they tell us what happened. But even after taking the X-ray, uneducated people like us may not know anything. When I said that we should live and eat healthily at home, I didn't mean that we don't need to go to the hospital. Because if a big problem comes up later, then I have to go to the hospital. So it would be better if I went to the doctor early and had my check-up.

# INTERVIEWER:

So you would advise her to go to the hospital from the beginning of her pregnancy for a check-up?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, check-ups should be done from the beginning and continued until the birth of the baby.

# INTERVIEWER:

If she asks you where should she go for a consultation, what would you suggest?

# PARTICIPANT:

First of all, she can visit Labani hospital. It is a government hospital. We should follow their advice there.

# INTERVIEWER:

Should she go to the hospital alone or with someone?

# PARTICIPANT:

Not alone, going with someone would be better. But if there’s no one then you may have to go alone too. If I am at home then I will accompany her. Otherwise, she has to go no matter what the situation is. Unless someone’s there or any neighbour who is going to work in the same direction, then she has to go alone. It's okay to go alone. She can visit the health institution where they will tell her what the issues are and come back home. Otherwise, if I am at home then I will accompany her.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, you seem extremely helpful too. If someone comes and asks you how much it will cost, what would you tell that person?

# PARTICIPANT:

It is free of cost in government hospitals. Previously, you would be charged a nominal fee [Rs. 5] for the slip of paper. Now, they do not even charge that money. They would do regular checkups for headaches, and stomachache issues and would prescribe you medicine but won’t charge you any money. It doesn’t cost much in the government hospital in our area. It is only when the required facilities are not available that we are forced to go there. But despite all this, it won’t cost anything for all the services present in the hospitals. However, in private hospitals, it will cost you some money. But even if it does, I won’t hesitate in spending some money.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, necessary expenses need to be handled.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, exactly it should be. Otherwise, even a small X-ray costs between Rs.600-Rs.800.

# INTERVIEWER:

Oh! Does it cost that much?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it costs around Rs. 800-900 per ultrasound in Al-Shaikh Hospital.

# INTERVIEWER:

What would you say if Sarita comes and asks you about investigations done during antenatal check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

Blood pressure is taken. And…We are uneducated so we don’t understand anything. But when we visit the doctor and ask him for advice, then he tells us if there are any issues or not. They will give us advice and inform us too whether my issues will be resolved immediately after an ultrasound appointment, or without any investigations.

# INTERVIEWER:

What else will they advise you to check?

# PARTICIPANT:

They also advise us to immunize the mother.

# INTERVIEWER:

Anything else?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t remember when but they do advise to eat iron tablets after a certain time. They advised us to buy another medicine too that should be taken with iron tablets but that is available in private clinics only. So, we bought it from there. Doctors know better whether these medicines are suitable for pregnant women or not. We are uneducated, and we do not understand anything. If it affects the health of a pregnant woman as well as the child then, we will follow according to the doctor’s suggestion. We will try to follow whatever they tell us. Doctors tell us to eat specific food and follow their instructions. If we do not follow what they tell us, then aren’t we behaving like an uneducated person? But if the pain persists, then the person has to bear the suffering. Even we, who are the head of the family, have to bear the suffering sometimes.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, if one of our family members is facing any issues then we have to be there for them.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it will be an issue for us too.

# INTERVIEWER:

In your view, does a pregnant woman has to check her blood and urine or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

According to the doctor’s suggestions, if they suggest we check her blood and urine then we should do that. If there are any issues then we should go for a visit but if there are no issues, we should be informed too. We are not educated so if everything’s ok then we just return to our place. But if there are any issues or problems then all the blood and urine tests should be done.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let’s go back to our story. If Sarita comes to you and asks you about how long should we wait when we go for a consultation, then what would be your response?

# PARTICIPANT:

There will be a lot of people at the hospital, I am not going to be the only one who will be there. Although there are 2-3 more people there, it might take somewhere between half an hour to one hour.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, it depends upon the flow of people.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it depends upon the flow and the time they spend on each patient.

# INTERVIEWER:

Suppose you went for a routine checkup, then how long will it take for reports to come?

# PARTICIPANT:

They will give blood reports as soon as possible.

# INTERVIEWER:

Estimated how much time will it take?

# PARTICIPANT:

If they know someone personally then they hand over the reports immediately otherwise, it will take two hours.

# INTERVIEWER:

If she asks you what other facilities are available, what would you say?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would tell her that, she can come here for giving birth to your child [Laboni health post]. We don’t need to go outside the area for delivery services. Operations will happen in Al-Shaikh but if any complications arise then we must go to a place where they will have the supporting facilities.

# INTERVIEWER:

We had a small discussion about the different types of blood tests. Do you know what diseases can be identified through a blood test?

# PARTICIPANT:

Fever can be identified and if other related diseases are associated, urine tests should also be done. They will let us know if there are any issues with blood or urine tests.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, every piece of information will be communicated?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes. People even say that if there’s any disease inside our body then blood and urine tests will help in diagnosing it.

# INTERVIEWER:

Will the hospital communicate with you if there are any issues in your reports?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, they do when you go to collect your reports. They communicate with you if there are any issues present in the report.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do they communicate everything properly?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, they do. Suppose the report shows typhoid in the blood then they communicate with us that the fever is present because of typhoid. You should take this medicine and it will be cured. This kind of information is well communicated by them.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do they tell you if specific diseases are being checked?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, they don’t tell us specifically about the diseases. They will inform us whether everything is normal or not. But if I tell them that I have doubts about any particular disease, then they will let us know. But if I won’t tell them about my issues then how will they know? They will inform you after an ultrasound appointment and tell you about the baby’s condition. Whether the baby is in a normal or breach position. They will provide us with detailed information on child health and if any underlying issues are there or not.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think Sarita would take your advice and go for antenatal check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

It is her wish whether she wants to do it or not but it will be better for her if she does.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let’s assume that Sarita isn’t willing to visit and has expressed that she is scared of going. What would you tell her in such a situation?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would suggest she visit because if she won’t go now, then she may face difficulties in the future.

# INTERVIEWER:

What do you think may be the reasons for her hesitation to visit for antenatal check-ups?

# PARTICIPANT:

Maybe she fought with someone at her home. Otherwise, nowadays, people are well aware that check-ups are for your benefit. Some may even force her to visit despite her unwillingness to do so. But as a family, we should support her in every possible way.

# INTERVIEWER:

We had a conversation about HIV AIDS, hepatitis and syphilis and why they should be tested. It helps us to identify the diseases, so in your view would Sarita agree to get her blood tested for these diseases?

# PARTICIPANT:

Well, it is for her good if it was suggested by the hospital. It is her issue, not mine if she has the disease because I don’t. Then I would tell her that she may get infected with the disease, so it is good for her and her baby to go for a checkup. Similarly, there are so many diseases that we don’t know about. We should go for a checkup. Diseases won’t get cured without going to health facilities.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let’s suppose that she is well-informed about all the diseases, in that case, would she agree to go for taking a blood test?

# PARTICIPANT:

Of course, why wouldn’t she? If she won’t then we must apply some measures for it.

# INTERVIEWER:

What measures should be taken?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would tell her that if she won’t go for checkups properly then what will you do if the issue is escalated in the future? What will you do if the issue is not solved here in Labani? You might have to go somewhere far for curing it.

# INTERVIEWER:

Did you have to travel far away too?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, since I have been visiting Labani I don’t have to. Otherwise, if there are issues that may not be well attended to here, then I have to travel a bit far away.

# INTERVIEWER:

If the diseases are treated timely then no one has to travel far away. All the treatments are available here.

# PARTICIPANT:

If there are facilities to treat the disease condition but still you won’t opt for any checkups or talk about your problem then it will be difficult for you, your baby, and even your family.

# INTERVIEWER:

How will you counsel her if she is hesitating to take a blood test because she has fear of needles?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would tell her: “how will they identify diseases if blood is not drawn?” I would tell her that everyone takes blood tests, and no one will die because of taking a blood test.

# INTERVIEWER:

What else can you tell to convince her?

# PARTICIPANT:

I will try my best to convince her as much as possible.

# INTERVIEWER:

If she is your neighbour then isn’t she like your own daughter-in-law?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, of course.

# INTERVIEWER:

You would give her proper suggestions, won’t you?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, to the people of our family as well as neighbours.

# INTERVIEWER:

Imagine now that Sarita comes and told you that she has blisters-like projections around the sex organ. She is worried about her condition and has come to you to share her problem. In this case, what suggestions would you give her?

# PARTICIPANT:

I would suggest she go to the doctor. Blood tests will diagnose the disease and they will give medicine according to the disease condition. So, it would be better if she goes to the doctor. In such conditions, going to the doctor for suggestions is the most appropriate thing to do.

# INTERVIEWER:

Would you advise her to share such information with her family or not?

# PARTICIPANT:

I think she will tell her husband and may share it with other members of the family too. She may be shy when sharing it with her father-in-law. However, she may share it with other family members. She can come and talk to our neighbours too if she is comfortable with that. We will counsel her to go for a checkup at the hospital.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think Sarita would share such sensitive information as blisters like projections around her sex organ with her family members?

# PARTICIPANT:

In my opinion, she will and she should. However, it depends upon her and what she wants to do. The more she tries to hide her problem, the worse it will become. We have tried our best to give her the suggestion. I think is best for her to share it with her family too, later it might become an issue for her.

# INTERVIEWER:

Let’s suppose she is trying to hide her problems from everyone. In your view, what might be the reasons behind it?

# PARTICIPANT:

I don’t think it will happen. But if she does and feels uncomfortable sharing it with her family then she may share it with her neighbours.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think she should share?

# PARTICIPANT:

I think she will.

# INTERVIEWER:

That is also true [laughs]. Let’s suppose that she went to the hospital with the symptoms she has. If she shares her issues with the health workers, then how would the health worker's behaviour be towards her?

# PARTICIPANT:

I think if you are going to the doctor then obviously they will give you good suggestions. They will counsel you and let you know about your condition and give appropriate suggestions too. They will tell you to come and tell them about your problems.

# INTERVIEWER:

Since it is a communicable disease, then will they show any changes in their behaviour?

# PARTICIPANT:

They will give you medicine, and teach you how to take them too.

# INTERVIEWER:

Will they give you suggestions or show any discrimination towards the patient?

# PARTICIPANT:

No, doctors will not discriminate against anyone. They treat all the patients equally and give medicine for treatment. They will ask you to come back if you have any other issues. Doctors will give you the best advice according to your condition. You should always communicate openly with them otherwise it will be an issue later on. They will give you good suggestions even if you visit them alone or with other people.

# INTERVIEWER:

If Sarita has the disease then will she be able to share it with doctors? Won’t she feel shy?

# PARTICIPANT:

Well! She has to share, I don’t think she has any other choices.

# INTERVIEWER:

If she comes to you and asks you whether she should go alone or with someone else then what would you suggest?

# INTERVIEWER:

It would be best if she can go with her husband, if her husband is not here then she can go with some other family members. Otherwise, if she can then she can visit on her own too.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, is it appropriate to visit alone or with someone else?

# PARTICIPANT:

Both. If no one’s around to go then it is okay to visit the health centre by yourself.

# INTERVIEWER:

Do you think it is best to go with your husband if you have such a disease?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is better to go with your husband. Anyone from the family who can accompany her should go with her because it doesn’t matter who goes; no matter what, the doctors will give better suggestions.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, Sarita should discuss this with her family before she goes to the health post?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it would be appropriate for her.

# INTERVIEWER:

If someone from your neighbourhood comes to you, would you give her such pieces of advice?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, of course.

# INTERVIEWER:

This is the best suggestion you can give. You seem to have experience regarding these topics, so you can share your experiences with us too. In Nepal, the rate of blood tests during pregnancy is low, and because of this diagnosing disease is difficult.

# PARTICIPANT:

I have to confess that despite having four children so far, I have never taken a blood test.

# INTERVIEWER:

You did not?

# PARTICIPANT:

In the past, there was no one to tell us about taking a blood test. Everything was different before. We knew very few diseases. But you have told me a lot of interesting things. It was very new to me. I am happy to know about it now. If we keep thinking like how it was in the past then we might not be aware of the diseases that are around. We may not be able to protect ourselves in any possible condition.

# INTERVIEWER:

However, it depends upon the pregnant woman whether she wants to go for a checkup or not.

# PARTICIPANT:

I think they should. But I would strongly advise the pregnant woman to take a blood test timely as it helps to know if the health of the baby and mother is going well or not. A timely checkup without any delay is also necessary because it will eventually affect the health of the mother, baby, family, and society.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, absolutely right [laughs].

# PARTICIPANT:

There’s no alternative to it. There is no alternative solution for not taking a blood test. It won’t do any good with just an ultrasound appointment as blood tests are equally important.

# INTERVIEWER:

So, ultrasound is equally important?

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, it is.

# INTERVIEWER:

You are right. So, it is the end of the interview. Thank you so much for your time. If you have any queries or questions then you can ask me without any hesitation.

# PARTICIPANT:

I wanted to ask you which place would be a better choice for taking a blood test. In Labani or somewhere private? Where should I go?

# INTERVIEWER:

Well! If it's available here then you can take a blood test here nearby. I don’t know. I need to ask someone about it. If it's available then I shall take it in a government hospital, if not then go to Al-Shaikh. If it is at a government hospital, then it would be free of cost but it may cost some money in Al-Shaikh. I am ready to pay because it's a matter of health. I have to do it for my children.

# PARTICIPANT:

Yes, I will ask everyone about it because right now, I only have one thing on my mind and it's taking a blood test.

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes, you should. It will help you to know what your blood group is and whether you lack blood or not.

# PARTICIPANT:

Oh! Everything is discovered?

# INTERVIEWER:

Yes it does.

# PARTICIPANT:

A blood test is a priority for me right now.

# INTERVIEWER:

Also, she should take a balanced diet. It will be beneficial for her and her child. Especially green leafy vegetables as it helps to increase the blood level in our body. And heavy stuff shouldn’t be carried around.

# PARTICIPANT:

She does not carry anything that weighs more than 3kg. I even ask my son to help. My daughter-in-law was saying that she feels like throwing up then I asked my son to bring sour pickles and ever since then, her vomiting has stopped. We feed her milk every day because it is good for the health of the baby as well as herself. And then one egg per day in the morning.

# INTERVIEWER:

You have such good knowledge about food and taking care of a pregnant woman [laughs].

# PARTICIPANT:

We are uneducated so we know very few things. Every day we have milk at our house, so I convey that you should consume milk in any way that you are comfortable with. Whether it is with “roti” or with rice. But you should take it.