Interpersonal Violence and Pregnancy Outcomes: A Retrospective Study of Women in India

It has been well-documented that many women worldwide will experience interpersonal violence (IPV) throughout their lifetime. IPV is linked to increased rates of miscarriage, stillbirth, and abortion. This connection compels the field of Maternal and Child Health to focus on IPV as a prominent issue affecting women. We performed a retroactive study using data obtained in 2015 by Integrated Public Use Microdata Series-Demographic and Health Surveys (IPUMS-DHS) that describes women in India who have experienced either miscarriage, stillbirth, or an abortion. This allowed us to evaluate the relationship between IPV and change in pregnancy termination types. We suspect that our analyses will align with the well-documented relationship between physical and/or emotional violence, resulting in higher proportions of pregnancy termination. It was observed that there were increased miscarriage and abortion rates for urban and rural communities in the presence of emotional violence. Additionally, increased miscarriage and abortion rates were seen in rural communities in the presence of physical violence. This suggests that pregnancy termination type rates are influenced by the presence of IPV during pregnancy. Given that IPV is a wide-spread problem and affects countless women globally, it is important to investigate what may contribute to these changes in rates of pregnancy terminations to best address the biological and social factors that affect pregnancy outcomes. This synergism between the biological and social spheres indicates that holistic approaches to public health interventions would be the most beneficial.