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Prevalence of Postpartum Musculoskeletal Morbidity among Women who delivered their Babies in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya

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Background: The true burden of maternal morbidity is still not known, because of the difficulty in accurately measuring maternal morbidity in the absence of a generalized definition and a standard identification criterion. Also because of the inaccuracy of vital records due to inadequate health information systems in developing countries.

Objectives: This study aimed to find out the prevalence of postpartum musculoskeletal morbidity among women who delivered their babies in Teaching Hospital Peradeniya, to investigate the demographic characteristics association with the musculoskeletal morbidity, to assess the antenatal care visit and supplementation relation to the musculoskeletal morbidity and to find out the association between the postpartum complications and musculoskeletal morbidity.

Methodology: In this descriptive cross-sectional study, convenient sampling method was applied to select 230 mothers as study participants. Percentages of different musculoskeletal morbidities were calculated using standardized musculoskeletal questionnaire tool. Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated using height and the last recorded weight.

Results: Most of the mothers (84.0%) were between 25 to 29 years old. More than half of the mothers (62.6%) were having parity of 2 to 4. About 80.4% of mothers had musculoskeletal morbidity. About 79.4% mothers had muscle pain and 70.4% of mothers reported joint pain. Most of the mothers had lower back pain (70.3%). Mothers had difficulties in daily activities (11.7%), trouble in walking (12.2%), difficulty in breast feeding (5.2%) and trouble with sleep due to these musculoskeletal morbidities. There was no statistically significant relationship ($p=0.087$) between BMI and musculoskeletal morbidity, between demographic characteristics and musculoskeletal morbidity. There was no association between antenatal care visit, supplements and morbidity ($p=0.320$). There was an association ($p=0.021$) between postpartum complications and musculoskeletal morbidity.

Conclusions: The incidence of postpartum musculoskeletal morbidity was high, with lower back and upper back pain, and joint pain in knee, ankle, hip, wrist, elbow pain, and shoulder. There is no statistical association between demographic variables and morbidity. There is no association between antenatal care visit, supplements and morbidity. There is significant association between complications and morbidity.

Keywords: *prevalence, incidence, antenatal care visit, supplementation, musculoskeletal morbidity*