

Prevalence and Predictors of Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) among Pregnant Women in Rural South India

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Bacterial Vaginosis (BV), a common condition in women of childbearing age, is an imbalance in the levels of *Lactobacillus* bacteria in the vagina. Among healthy woman, *Lactobacillus* is the primary colonizing bacteria. The levels of *Lactobacilli* decrease in women who have BV. Research has found an association between BV and spontaneous abortion, low birth weight of infants, and premature rupture of the membranes. This study evaluated data from the 'Saving Children, Improving Lives-High Risk' (SCIL) program in India, which was initiated to conduct human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) testing among rural women in South India. SCIL provided antenatal care as well as HIV testing through mobile clinics. A total of 531 vaginal swabs from pregnant women were collected for this study. Vaginal smears were assessed using Nugent scoring to calculate the prevalence of BV (0-3, normal; 4-6, intermediate state; 7-10, BV). SPSS version 23 was used to examine the prevalence and risk factors of BV. The mean age of the sample was 21 years (Range: 15-41 years). The number of years of schooling among women ranged from zero to 19 years (0-7,34%; 7-14,63%; 14-19,2.5%). 82% of the women had at least one pregnancy and 96% had 2 pregnancies in their lifetime. There was a statistically significant difference between birthweight (<2500g or >4500g) ($p=0.021$ and $p=0.006$, respectively) and BV in pregnant women. Isoimmunization (Rh-) in previous or current pregnancy was also correlated with BV($p=0.049$). No statistically significant difference was found with BV and other known correlation such as multiple sexual partners, age at first menstruation, or number of husbands' sexual partners. More research is required to understand the correlation of BV among pregnant women in rural India.