Fetomaternal outcomes in pregnancy with different cardiac disease at a tertiary care center in Udaipur

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INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, the frequency of pregnancy complicated by maternal heart disease does not appear to have changed over the years, with overall prevalence of less than 0.1 to 4%.1

Cardiac disease in a pregnancy is a high-risk pregnancy which poses a significant challenge to an obstetrician. Cardiac disease in pregnancy is broadly divided into congenital and acquired. The acquired group includes rheumatic heart disease (RHD), cardiomyopathies and ischemic heart disease. Of these, in developing countries rheumatic heart disease is the commonest type, whereas cardiomyopathies and congenital heart disease one more common in developed countries.2 The congenital group include atrial septal defect (ASD), ventricular septal defect (VSD), tetralogy of Fallot (TOF), Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA), transposition of the great arteries (TGA) and Ebstein’s anomaly. In India, RHD continues to be a major cause of cardiac illness in pregnancy.
Around 15-52% of cardiac abnormalities first diagnosed during routine antenatal check-ups or due to the signs and symptoms similar to physiological changes of pregnancy. Incidence of cardiac disease is reported in 1 to 4% of pregnancies in India.

The primary goal of care for the pregnant woman and her family when cardiac disease complicates the pregnancy is prevention of complications that may occur from the cardiac condition through performing a comprehensive assessment to identify individual needs for teaching, emotional support and physical care.

This is accomplished by education of the woman and her husband; assessment of all systems involved on a routine basis; referral to appropriate nutritional, social and medical experts; and facilitation of patient participation in decisions. Early diagnoses, proper follow up and counselling are keys for reducing morbidity and mortality and this strategy requires a collaboration between obstetrician and cardiologists.

The study was done with the objective to determine the Incidence and distribution of cardiac disease in pregnant patients, to assess mode of delivery and fetomaternal outcome in pregnancy with heart disease patients.

**METHODS**

This was a hospital based prospective observational study that include 65 pregnant women booked or non-booked, who were admitted in the department of obstetrics and gynecology PDRMC Hospital, RNT Medical College, Udaipur with diagnosed cardiac disease or had symptoms and signs suggestive of cardiac disease which were later confirmed by relevant investigations during the study period of January 2018 to November 2019 admitted and delivered during the study period of January 2018 to December 2019.

**Inclusion criteria**

Only those pregnant ladies with heart disease (CHD and RHD with valvular lesions) who were got admitted and delivered during the study period were included.

**Exclusion criteria**

Patients with associated medical disorders like diabetes mellitus, thyroid disease, pulmonary disease, renal disease, myocardial infarction (MI) and stroke were excluded from this study.

Apart from obstetric indications, women were hospitalized if they had overt symptoms and signs suggestive of worsening cardiac status, if they were in NYHA class III and IV irrespective of the period of gestation.

A pre tasted semi structured proforma was used to collect the relevant information by interviewing, clinical examination of patients, relevant investigation and treatment for each case. Baseline data including age, parity, gestational age, cardiac lesions, New York heart association (NYHA) functional class, use of cardiac medications, thorough clinical examination including chest and cardiovascular auscultation, ECG and echocardiographic assessment of left and right ventricular systolic function. Which will be confirmed on consultation of experts (physician, Cardiologist) by specific interventions. Fetal echocardiography was performed in patients with congenital heart disease (CHD) and in those who had received anticoagulants during pregnancy. The mode of delivery whether vaginal, use of instrumental or the caesarean will be decided as per needful management of patients. Heparin was discontinued at the onset of labor. All patients received antibiotics for prophylaxis against infective endocarditis during labor. They were kept in a propped-up position. Intermittent oxygen and analgesics were provided whenever needed. Following delivery, injection furosemide 20 mg was administered intravenously. Oxytocin was used for control of postpartum hemorrhage Women who had been on anticoagulants were restarted on heparin within 4 h of vaginal delivery and 8 h of cesarean delivery. Oral anticoagulants were resumed and heparin discontinued when pro-thrombin time reached 1.5–2 times normal. Early ambulation was encouraged. Patients remained in hospital for 5–7 days postpartum. Maternal outcomes were analyzed on the basis of antepartum, intrapartum, postpartum new-onset or exacerbation of cardiac complications, postpartum complications. Neonatal outcome was studied.

**Statistical analysis**

Data were presented as Mean±SD. Statistical significance was accepted at the 95% confidence level (p=0.05). The Chi square test was applied.

**RESULTS**

The present study consisted of 65 pregnant patients during the study period of January 2018 to December 2019. (Table 1) presents demographic data of the patients. In our study, the mean age of the patients was 24.33±2.93 years (ranging from 19-36 years). Most commonly affected age group was 21-25 years (64.62%) followed by age group 26-30 years (23.08%). 34 patients (52.30%) were primigravida, while the 16 patients (24.62%) were gravida 2, remaining 15 cases (23.07%) were gravida 3 and more. Mean gestational age at delivery was 37.46±2.14 weeks. Majority patients (70.77%) are present between 37-40 weeks of gestational age. Majority (58.46%) cases were from rural area. Out of 65 patients, 27 patients (41.54%) were booked while 38 patients (58.46%) were unbooked. Most unbooked patients are from rural area. Most of patients had vaginal

### Table 1

| Age Group | Number of Cases |
|-----------|----------------|
| 21-25     | 43             |
| 26-30     | 15             |
| 31-35     | 4              |
| 36-40     | 3              |

| Parity | Number of Cases |
|--------|-----------------|
| 1      | 24              |
| 2      | 16              |
| 3      | 8               |
| 4      | 1               |
| 5      | 5               |

| Gestational Age | Number of Cases |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 37-40           | 47              |
| 31-36           | 13              |
| 26-30           | 5               |
| <26             | 6               |

| Booking Status | Number of Cases |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Booked        | 27              |
| Unbooked      | 38              |

### Results of the study

- **Incidence of Cardiac Disease:**
  - Occurred in 1 to 4% of pregnancies.
  - Most commonly affected age group: 21-25 years (64.62%).
  - The mean age of the patients was 24.33±2.93 years.

- **Mode of Delivery:**
  - Vaginal delivery: 61.54%.
  - Cesarean delivery: 38.46%.

- **Maternal Outcomes:**
  - Mean gestational age at delivery: 37.46±2.14 weeks.
  - Majority (70.77%) between 37-40 weeks of gestational age.

- **Neonatal Outcome:**
  - Majority (58.46%) from rural area.

### Discussion

The study highlights the importance of early diagnosis and comprehensive management of cardiac disease in pregnancy. The incidence of cardiac disease in pregnancy was found to be 1 to 4%, which is comparable to previous studies. The mean age of the patients was 24.33±2.93 years, indicating that cardiac disease in pregnancy can affect women in their childbearing years. The most commonly affected age group was 21-25 years (64.62%).

- **Preventive Measures:**
  - Early identification and management of cardiac disease.
  - Early antenatal screening.
  - Antenatal counseling and care.

- **Management Strategies:**
  - Appropriate obstetric management.
  - Surgical intervention if necessary.

- **Outcome Analysis:**
  - Maternal outcomes were favorable with a mean gestational age at delivery of 37.46±2.14 weeks.
  - Neonatal outcomes were studied.

- **Conclusion:**
  - Early detection and management of cardiac disease in pregnancy significantly improve maternal and fetal outcomes.
  - Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of cardiac disease on fetal outcomes.
delivery (64.62%) with spontaneous onset in 35 patients (53.85%) and induced in 7 cases (10.78%).

**Table 1: Socio demographic details of study participants (n=65).**

| Variables                  | No. of patients | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Age groups (years)         |                 |            |
| 18-20                      | 6               | 9.23       |
| 21-25                      | 42              | 64.62      |
| 26-30                      | 15              | 23.08      |
| >30                        | 2               | 3.07       |
| Parity                     |                 |            |
| Primigravida               | 34              | 52.30      |
| Gravida 2                  | 16              | 24.62      |
| Gravida 3 and more         | 15              | 23.07      |
| Gestational age in weeks   |                 |            |
| 28-32                      | 01              | 1.54       |
| 33-36                      | 14              | 21.54      |
| 37-40                      | 46              | 70.77      |
| >40                        | 04              | 6.15       |
| Inhabitant                 |                 |            |
| Rural                      | 38              | 58.46      |
| Urban                      | 27              | 41.53      |
| Booking status             |                 |            |
| Booked                     | 27              | 41.54      |
| Unbooked                   | 38              | 58.46      |
| Vaginal delivery           |                 |            |
| Spontaneous                | 42              | 64.62      |
| Induced                    | 07              | 10.78      |
| Caesarean section (LSCS)   | 23              | 35.38      |
| Elective                   | 09              | 13.84      |
| Emergency                  | 14              | 21.54      |

Clinical findings of the study participants were shown in Table 2. 43 patients (66.15%) diagnosed with heart disease after pregnancy, while 22 patients (33.85%) are diagnosed before pregnancy for heart disease. Out of 65 cases of heart disease pregnancy, 16 patients underwent cardiac surgery prior to pregnancy. Most of the patient in the study had acquired heart disease (RHD, 78.46%) distribution of valvular lesions among rheumatic heart disease cases (n=44) in the (Table 3), followed by congenital heart disease (21.54%). The most common congenital heart disease in the study population was ASD (50%). In this study, mitral stenosis is the predominant lesion 14 cases (31.82%) followed by mitral stenosis (MS) plus mitral regurgitation (MR) plus tricuspid regurgitation (TR) in 15.90%. Majority cases (44.62%) were NYHA class II.

Neonatal complications were seen in 35.38% of patients. A total of 18 babies required NICU care including (7 IUGR+8 premature+3 birth asphyxia). 7 babies were IUGR, 12 babies are premature, 3 babies underwent birth asphyxia and 1 baby was still born (MSL). Maternal complication was noticed in 40 patients (61.53%) (Table 4).

**Table 2: Clinical observations in study participants (n=65).**

| Variables                  | No. of patients | Percentage |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Time of diagnosis          |                 |            |
| Before pregnancy           | 22              | 33.85      |
| After pregnancy            | 43              | 66.15      |
| Type of cardiac disease    |                 |            |
| ASD                        | 07              | 50         |
| Congenital heart disease   | 14              | 21.54      |
| VSD                        | 05              | 35.71      |
| Tetralogy of Fallot        | 01              | 7.1        |
| Eisenmenger syndrome       | 01              | 7.14       |
| Acquired heart disease     | 51              | 78.46      |
| NYHA class                 |                 |            |
| I                          | 21              | 32.30      |
| II                         | 29              | 44.62      |
| III                        | 11              | 16.92      |
| IV                         | 4               | 6.15       |

**Table 3: Distribution of valvular lesions among rheumatic heart disease cases (n=44).**

| Cardiac lesions         | No. of patients | Percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| MS                      | 14              | 31.82      |
| MR                      | 5               | 11.36      |
| MS+MR                   | 4               | 9.09       |
| MS+TR                   | 4               | 9.09       |
| MS+MR+TR                | 7               | 15.90      |
| MS+MR+TR+PR             | 3               | 6.81       |
| MS+MR+TR+AR             | 3               | 6.81       |
| MS+AR                   | 1               | 2.27       |
| MS+TR+AR                | 1               | 2.27       |
| MS+MR+AR                | 2               | 4.54       |
| Total                   | 44              | 100.0      |

**Table 4: Fetal and maternal complications.**

| Complications            | No. of patients | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| **Fetal complications**  |                 |            |
| IUGR                     | 7               | 10.76      |
| NICU admission           | 18              | 27.69      |
| Prematurity              | 12              | 18.46      |
| Birth asphyxia           | 03              | 4.62       |
| Still birth              | 01              | 1.53       |
| **Maternal complications** |               |            |
| Present                  | 40              | 61.53      |
| Absent                   | 25              | 38.46      |
Noncardiac complications were present in 35.38% of patients. Cardiac complications were present in 40% of patients (Table 5).

As given in Table 6, majority of maternal cardiac complications are seen in nonoperated patients (33.84%) as compared to operated patients (6.15%) and majority of fetal complications are in nonoperated patients (46.15%).

Table 5: Maternal cardiac and non-cardiac complications

| Complications       | Antepartum | Intrapartum | Postpartum | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Non cardiac         |            |             |            |            |
| Anaemia             | 21         | 0           | 0          | 32.30      |
| PIH                 | 05         | 0           | 0          | 7.69       |
| Abruptio placenta   | 02         | 0           | 0          | 3.07       |
| Preeclampsia        | 02         | 0           | 0          | 3.07       |
| PROM                | 02         | 0           | 0          | 3.07       |
| Fever               | 02         | 0           | 01         | 4.62       |
| PPH                 | 0          | 0           | 01         | 1.53       |
| Wound dehiscence    | 0          | 0           | 02         | 3.07       |
| Oligohydramnios     | 1          | 0           | 0          | 1.54       |
| Preterm labor       | 0          | 12          | 02         | 18.46      |
| Cardiac             |            |             |            |            |
| Severe PAH          | 5          | 0           | 0          | 7.69       |
| CHF                 | 01         | 01          | 02         | 6.15       |
| Pulmonary edema     | 01         | 02          | 05         | 12.30      |
| Peripartum cardiomyopathy | 0          | 0          | 02         | 3.07       |
| Arrhythmia (AF)     | 1          | 1           | 03         | 6.15       |
| Maternal mortality  | 0          | 01          | 02         | 4.62       |

Table 6: Maternal complications in operated and non-operated patients.

| Maternal complications | Operated | Non-operated | Total | P value |
|------------------------|----------|--------------|-------|---------|
| Peripartum cardiomyopathies | 0        | 2            | 2     | 0.289   |
| PAH                   | 1        | 4            | 5     | 0.438   |
| Pulmonary edema       | 1        | 7            | 8     | 0.871   |
| Arrhythmia            | 2        | 2            | 4     | 0.525   |
| CHF                   | 0        | 4            | 4     | 0.396   |
| Death                 | 0        | 3            | 3     | 0.467   |
| Neonatal              |          |              |       |         |
| IUGR                  | 0        | 5            | 5     | 0.215   |
| Prematurity           | 2        | 9            | 11    | 0.781   |
| Birth asphyxia        | 1        | 2            | 3     | 0.586   |
| NICU admission        | 5        | 13           | 18    | 0.334   |
| Still birth           | 0        | 1            | 1     | 0.600   |

In the present study, out of 65 pregnant women with heart disease, 63.07% patients were already on cardiac medication and 36.92% patients were not on any cardiac medications. Most of fetal and neonatal complication (8 neonates, 12.31%) were in group of patients who were taking cardiac medication (Table 7).

Table 7: Comparison of fetomaternal complications with or without cardiac medications (n=49).

| Complications      | Medication | Total | P value |
|--------------------|------------|-------|---------|
| Fetal              | Yes        | 8     | 0.805   |
| Neonatal           | Yes        | 15    | 0.848   |
| Maternal           | Yes        | 26    | 0.785   |
| Total              |            | 49    |         |

DISCUSSION

Our study was conducted from January 2018 to December 2019 in PDRMC RNT Medical College. In this study total of 65 pregnant women with heart disease admitted and studied and the outcome was analyzed. Total number of pregnant patients with heart diseases delivered during the study period at our institute was 65 out of 30,000 deliveries. Incidence of heart disease in the study was 0.22%. Reason may be underreporting of the deliveries at periphery by Dais or other health personnel’s and they remain undiagnosed. Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Prasanna et al where the incidence of heart disease was 0.5%. Incidence of heart disease in pregnancy varies from 0.5-3%.5

In our study, the mean age of the patients was 24.33 years (ranging from 19-36 years). The age group 21-25 year is most commonly affected 64.62% (42 cases) followed by age group 26-30 years 23.08% (15 cases). In a study
conducted by Sayeeda et al it was reported that the mean age of the patients was 27.00 years (ranging from 18-35 years) and most (82%) belonged to age group 21-30 years. Out of 65 cases enrolled for the study, 52.30% patients (34 cases) were primigravida while the 24.62% patients (16) were gravid a 2, remaining 23.07% cases (15) were gravid a 3 and more. Trevino et al reported in their study that 62.5% patients were nulliparous. Sayeeda et al also showed in their study that most of the patients (46%) were primigravida.

In our study population of 65 patients, mean gestational age at delivery was 37.46±2.14 weeks. In a study conducted by Aisha et al, it was reported that mean gestational age at delivery was 36.8±5.64 weeks. Maximum number of patients had term delivery i.e., 65.45%.

In our study out of 65 cases, majority (38 cases, 58.46%) cases from rural area and 41.53% (27 cases) from urban area. Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Pandey et al where out of 117 patients, 41.02% (48) from urban and 58.9% (69) from rural area.

In our study, majority patients 58.46% (38 patients) were unbooked while 41.54% (27 patients) were booked. Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Prasanna et al where 64% patients were unbooked and 36% patients were booked. Most of unbooked patients are from rural area.

In our study, majority of patients, 66.15% (43) diagnosed after pregnancy while 33.85% patients (22) are diagnosed before pregnancy for heart disease. Agrawal et al in their study cases of heart disease diagnosed before pregnancy were 27 (25%), and cases diagnosed during current pregnancy were 77 (71.2%) while 4 (3.7%) cases were diagnosed postpartum.

In our study population, the most common congenital heart disease was ASD (7 cases, 50%) followed by VSD (5 cases, 35.71%), TOF (1 case, 7.14%) and Eisenmenger syndrome (1 case, 7.14%). Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Joshi et al where in congenital lesions, atrial septal defect was present in 50% cases (3 cases).

In our study, mitral stenosis is the predominant lesion 13 cases (30.23%). Multiple valve involvement was seen in 21 patients (48.83%). In a study conducted by Konar et al it was reported that multiple cardiac lesions were present in 35.58% (100/281) pregnancies. Agrawal et al reported that isolated mitral stenosis was seen in 27.7% patients (30 cases). Mixed valve involvement was seen in 12.9% patients (14 cases).

In our study, majority patients were in NYHA class I and II (50 cases, 76.92%), 15 cases (23.07%) in NYHA class III and IV. In our study NHIYA grade III and IV most of patients were from rural (15.38%). Similar findings were seen in the study conducted by Sawhney et al where 77.4% patients were identified as NYHA class I & II and 22.6% were identified as NYHA class III-IV.

In our study, most of patients had vaginal delivery (42 patients) 64.62% and caesarean section was done in (23 patients) 35.38%. These results were comparable to previous similar study by Konar et al where majority of the women 67% delivered vaginally and 33.0 % women delivered by cesarean section because of obstetric reasons.

In our study, out of 65 pregnant females the labour was of spontaneous in onset in (35 patients) 53.85% and induced in (07 cases) 10.78% because of obstetric reasons. In our study, caesarean section was done in 23 patients (35.38%) of which, 9 patients (13.84%) had elective caesarean and 14 patients (21.54%) had emergency caesarean section. Most common indication for c section was scar tenderness in 4cases. This is consistent with Agarwal et al.

In our study of 65 pregnant cases of heart disease, live birth rate was 98%, abnormal neonatal events were reported in 35.38% (23) pregnancies. A total of 27.69% babies required NICU care, 10.76% babies were IUGR, 18.46% babies are premature, 4.62% babies under went birth asphyxia and 1.53% still born. Low birth weight noted in 29.23% babies. Prasanna et al showed in their study that 37% of babies are of low birth weight. Live birth rate was 97%, perinatal mortality rate was 4%, IUGR was seen in 20% of cases and prematurity is seen in 12% of cases.

Out of 65 cases, 40 patients (61.53%) underwent maternal complications and in 25 cases (38.46%) no evidence of maternal complication. This was consistent with Joshi et al study. In our study, majority of cases (32.30%) were anemic, 5 patients (7.69%) had PPH, 2 patients (3.07%) had abruptio placentae, 2 cases (3.07%) of preeclampsia, 2 (3.07%) case of PROM, 3 (4.62%) patients had fever, 1 case (1.53%) of PPH and 2 cases (3.07%) of wound dehiscence reported. This is consistent with Pandey et al.

Out of 65 pregnancies, cardiac complications were present in 40% of patients. Out of which 15 required ICU care. Maternal cardiac complications include 7.69% cases of PAH, 6.15% cases of CHF, 12.30% cases of pulmonary edema, 2 cases of peripartum cardiomyopathy (3.07%), arrhythmia in 7.69% (5 cases), 4.62% cases of maternal mortality also noted. 4 cases of CHF had anemia and pulmonary edema also. All maternal mortalities are due to CHF. This is consistent with Pandey et al.

Out of 65 cases of heart disease pregnancy, 24.62% (16) patients under went cardiac surgery prior to pregnancy. 15.38% (10) went for MVR, 1.54% (1) went for ASD
closure, 1.54% (1) went for VSD closure, and 6.15% (4) had BMV. Out of 16 cases of previous history of cardiac surgery, 14 cases due to RHD and 2 cases due to CHD. This is consistent with Sayeeda et al.3.

In our study majority of fetomaternal complications are in nonoperated patients (fetal 46.15%, maternal 33.84%) as compared to operated patients (fetal 12.30%, maternal 6.15%). This is consistent with Bhatla et al.14.

Most of fetal and neonatal complication (8 neonates, 12.31%) were in group of patients who were taking cardiac medication. Postulated reasons for the increased incidence of fetal and neonatal complication include hemodynamic compromise secondary to valvular stenosis, maternal arrhythmias and cardio active drugs including diuretics, digitals and beta blockers, which have been associated with impairment of uterine blood flow. Most of maternal complication (20 patients, 30.77%) were in group of patients who were not taking any cardiac medication. These findings are consistent with Bhatla et al.14.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of the present study suggest that management of the pregnant women with cardiac abnormalities should be multidisciplinary to enhance care for these patients. There is need for pre-pregnancy counseling, early diagnosis, correction of cardiac lesions where indicated, close surveillance during pregnancy and a team approach comprising of obstetricians, cardiologists, neonatologists and nursing personnel for a successful pregnancy outcome. It is mandatory to provide better health care facilities to rural and periphery areas for diagnosis and management and early referral in such pregnant to prevent morbidity and mortality.

Funding: No funding sources
Conflict of interest: None declared
Ethical approval: The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee

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