

**ASSESSING THE LEVELS OF AND CONTEXTUAL
INFLUENCES ON SELF-REPORTED OBSTETRIC MORBIDITY
AND RELATED CARE SEEKING BEHAVIOUR IN
KANCHANABURI DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM
THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the prevalence and association of individual and community-level determinants with self-reported obstetric morbidity and related care-seeking behavior in the Kanchanaburi Demographic Surveillance System (KDSS), Thailand. Community characteristics have been recognized as shaping individual health, but there have been only a few studies explaining their influence on obstetric morbidity. Frequency distribution, cross tabulation, and multi-level logistic regression analysis were employed to examine the associations of community characteristics with obstetric morbidity and care among 1067 women, living in 100 villages/census blocks, who were either pregnant or had given birth in the period two years prior to the survey in 2003. Thirty-nine percent of the women reported at least one severe obstetric morbidity during pregnancy and delivery. About a half of them reported that they had sought care for the morbidity. While not working percentage and percentage of single-headed households in the villages were positive predictors of reported morbidity, not working, a lower level of education, and health insurance coverage were positive predictors of care-seeking behavior. After controlling for individual characteristics, no significant variation of morbidity and related care-seeking behavior across the villages remained unexplained. It is therefore concluded that the significant association between community characteristics with obstetric morbidity and care may be compositional not contextual. Qualitative assessment further indicated that poverty and poor social and health infrastructure of communities may be the root cause of the problem. Income generating activities and supply of health personnel and health facilities in poor communities are recommended as a means to reduce the burden of the morbidity.

KEY WORDS: CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES/OBSTETRIC MORBIDITY/CARE-SEEKING BEHAVIOR/KDSS/THAILAND

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