

**The Prevalence of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Among Women with Normal Vaginal Delivery in Zahedan City in 2013**

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:** Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition, caused by exposure to an extremely traumatic, terrifying, or tragic event. Likelihood of some mental disorders increases among women during the postpartum period. In fact, women are potentially vulnerable to mental illnesses during and after pregnancy. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of PTSD among postpartum women in Zahedan city, Iran.

**Methods:** Data in this cross-sectional study were gathered from healthcare centers of Zahedan, located in Southeast of Iran. Four-hundred people were selected among women with previous childbirth experience over the past few months; almost 6-24 weeks had passed since their delivery. We used three questionnaires in order to evaluate demographic data, PTSD symptoms, and traumatic childbirth experience.

**Results:** In total, 32% of the participants showed PTSD symptoms. Prevalence of PTSD was not significantly associated with parity, pain duration, education level, and employment status. In addition, PTSD was significantly correlated with the mode of delivery ( $p=0.013$ ), curettage ( $p=0.005$ ) and length of hospitalization. Also, prevalence of PTSD was substantially associated with the type of pregnancy (planned or unintended) ( $p=0.011$ ).

**Conclusion:** As the results indicated, women with PTSD were not significantly different from those without PTSD in terms of parity, pain duration, education level, or employment status. Previous history of curettage, episiotomy, and vacuum evacuation increased the incidence of PTSD in postpartum women. Moreover, unwanted pregnancy was more common among women with PTSD, compared to normal subjects.

**Keywords:** Post-traumatic stress disorder; postpartum stress disorder; normal vaginal delivery