

HypnoBirthing: Motives, Expectations, and Experiences of Women in India

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Abstract— The thesis is designed to gain insight into the motives, expectations, and experiences of women in India who were opting for the method of HypnoBirthing during their childbirth. Hypnosis is not all about magic or trying to find the depth about our past life. HypnoBirthing is the part of an emerging field where hypnosis is used for pain management. In terms of HypnoBirthing, hypnosis is used to reduce the perception of pain and fear during the process of childbirth. The two most common methods used during childbirth are Cesarean or a C-section and Natural/Vaginal birth. The study tried to uncover the motivations which lead today's expecting mothers of India to choose HypnoBirthing over other methods of birthing, despite mainstream ones, or other alternatives like acupuncture, aromatherapy, or massage. In order to answer this question, interviews with four expecting women, who were attending the HypnoBirthing classes, were conducted. The expectations that they had from this method were revealed through the first interview. In a second phase - post their delivery, two of the women were interviewed to collect their experience, which was further analyzed in regard to their expectations. Through the research conducted, it was concluded that women predominantly chose HypnoBirthing to get away from the fear of labor and reduce the perception of pain. Even though HypnoBirthing is gaining popularity today, many women are still unaware of the existence of this method in India. The results of this thesis may provide guidance and feedback on the benefits of HypnoBirthing and help make this method better known in India.

Keywords— HypnoBirthing, hypnosis, childbirth, drugs, expectations, experience, hormones, labor, motives, pain

I. INTRODUCTION

Hypnosis is not all about magic or trying to find out the depth about our past life. There is a lot more to hypnosis than what is interpreted by us. The Mayo Clinic defines hypnosis as "a trance-like state in which you have heightened focus and concentration" (Mayo Clinic, 2018, para.1). People generally claim to feel calm and relaxed when they are in the hypnotized state. There are many uses to hypnosis like mental relaxation, treatment of fears or phobias, helping people quit smoking, and the main focus of this paper being the management of pain (American Psychological Association, para. 5, 2008). Hypnosis has been used for the management of pain for years now and has had many success stories in the medical field (Patterson, 2004). It has been reported that hypnosis can practically ease any form of pain that is imaginable and has also been successfully used as an anesthetic for as many as hundreds of patients while they undergo surgery (Patterson, 2004). One of the developing fields where hypnosis is used as pain management would be childbirth, and the method is known as HypnoBirthing. This is an emerging field where hypnosis is used to reduce the perception of pain and fear during childbirth (Taylor, 2017). The use of hypnosis during childbirth goes back to the 1980s (Taylor, 2017).

Pain is commonly associated with childbirth. However, did the women in former times have doctors or psychologists to help them prepare for their birth? Women gave birth in caves and huts, sometimes with no assistance at all, or with the help of midwives. Midwives were mostly community-specific who assisted the women during birth. During the midcentury, around the 1940s-50s, women gave birth under the influence of strong drugs like morphine, the state often termed as "twilight sleep." Most of them did not remember anything of their experience of childbirth as an effect of the drugs. Women were kept in restraints during the entire process as they reacted very violently due to the drugs (Aron, 2018). Owing to the strong drugs, the infants were severely impacted, and the childbirth was, in fact, not at all pain-free, but only the memories of the women were affected. By the 1960s, women started moving away from this method of birthing when they realized its actual effects. They chose to embrace the pain of labor and deliver the babies naturally without using any drugs (Aron, 2018).

The birthing experience itself is influenced by the perception and the attitude of the woman herself towards the process of childbirth (Malacrida & Boulton, 2012). The perceptions may be influenced by the culture or the background to which the woman belongs. In India, many practices are considered to have positive effects on

pregnancy, and some are considered unacceptable. The traditional Indian culture dictates that every girl marries and bears a child of her own after marriage. In most of the places in India, pregnancy is seen as something natural which does not require any unnatural intervention or assistance from the doctor (Choudhry, 1997). Due to the influence of western medical practices, urbanization, and their education system, the middle and upper-class women have been coaxed to go for medical intervention, and now prefer a doctor to attend to them during their childbirth in a hospital (Choudhry, 1997). However, women of low economic backgrounds still prefer home deliveries, sometimes with no assistance at all.

Superstitious beliefs still prevail, which can go from certain food items that are considered harmful during pregnancy, to the demand for a male child. A male child is preferred over a female child as the male is expected to take care of the family once they grow up, whereas the females are only considered as liabilities who will be married off someday, which will then need the family to pay a dowry (Choudhry, 1997). Women feel much pressure to meet up to their families' expectations, in turn leading to stressful pregnancies, which can further cause painful labor.

There is so much more to childbirth than just the pain. The fear of not being able to be a good mother, complications during birth with the child, or the mother herself, can also influence the childbirth experience for the woman. With pregnancy comes in many changes in the woman's life, like the responsibilities of a child. Having to meet up to the expectations and responsibilities of bringing up a newborn can put the woman under much stress. Another essential aspect that affects the whole birthing process could be the birth plan that the woman wishes to undertake, which is the woman's expectations from the whole birthing process (Cook, 2012). A birth plan can include the place where she will give birth, the medications that will be used (if any), and deciding whom all will attend the childbirth. Failure to meet the expectations of the birth plan can lead to a disappointing and unsatisfactory birth experience. These birth plans are altered continuously, keeping in mind the well-being of the child and the mother, and through this, a constant support system for the woman is required (Cook, 2012). "Several factors contribute to women's retrospective attitudes toward their birth experience. The most prominent factors include control, choice in decision making, social support, and efficacy of pain control" (Cook, 2012, p. 159). These can include being able to make decisions for herself and the child, handle the pain, and make choices about the birthing process. Failure to meet these expectations results in the woman having a negative childbirth experience. This can lead to her doubting

her capabilities as a mother and worry more about the responsibilities of being a good parent.

Alternative methods of birthing have since been researched upon. Methods like the use of self-hypnosis (going into a state of hypnosis without the help of a therapist which in turn helps in the reduction of stress) during childbirth have been found useful (Self-Hypnosis & Hypnotherapy, 2011). It reduces stress, facilitating the natural process of birth without any interruptions or barriers, by allowing release and free flow of hormones (Self-Hypnosis & Hypnotherapy, 2011). Marie Mongan is famously known for her contribution to the field of HypnoBirthing, as she was the first-ever woman to use self-hypnosis on herself. She first used it during the birth of her third child around the late 1950s. She was influenced by the works of obstetrician Dr. Grantly Dick-Reed, who always wondered why some women had pain free labor and childbirth while few others experienced the complete opposite. This was when he realized that it was fear, which was the cause behind the pain during childbirth as fear caused tension, and tension restricted the muscles from freely relaxing, which in turn caused pain (KG HypnoBirthing, para. 5, 2000). Mary Mongan was deeply influenced by his works and decided to use his methods during her childbirth. This is from where HypnoBirthing via self-hypnosis began. Several methods of HypnoBirthing have come up since influenced by various other people. However, this paper will be specifically focusing on the Mongan method of HypnoBirthing. The sample of women who are a part of this study have learned to induce self-hypnosis with the help of visualization, breathing, and relaxation techniques, which are taught to them in their HypnoBirthing classes.

Keeping in mind the process of HypnoBirthing using self-hypnosis, this paper aims to gain an insight into the motives or reasons why women opt for this process and their expectations from this method of birthing. It will explore the beliefs of a small sample of pregnant women in India concerning this method of childbirth. Based on this, I hypothesize that women choose HypnoBirthing to get away from the fear of labor and cope with the perception of pain during childbirth, which is done by inducing a calm state through self-hypnosis. This process also helps to avoid drugs, until and unless required. The main motive of this study is to bring into light the method of HypnoBirthing and what led these women to choose it even though this is not commonly known in India. This study also offers support to the idea of HypnoBirthing and its benefits. Even though HypnoBirthing is gaining popularity today, many women are still unaware of the existence of this method in India. Instead of having to choose childbirth methods, which

include drugs to reduce pain, HypnoBirthing could be a drug-free, to a great extent, and a safer method that women can opt for if they have prior knowledge.



Figure 1: Pain during Childbirth. The figure above represents the cycle that occurs during childbirth which leads to pain.

This study will be conducted on a small sample size due to the unavailability of women who will be undergoing this method shortly. It also must be acknowledged that it is a small sample size due to the limited knowledge about HypnoBirthing in India. Due to the small sample size, the generalizability of the results will be limited. Although this is a relatively rare method of birthing, I was nonetheless able to get in touch with four women who were to use HypnoBirthing shortly. I was also able to follow-up with two women to know their experience of the method, as they gave birth during the course of this study. I would be cautious about generalizing this study as it will only be focusing on women undergoing self-hypnosis using the Mongan method of HypnoBirthing.

My sample consists of pregnant women who will be opting for HypnoBirthing during their childbirth. This sample has been chosen so that clear expectations and motives behind choosing this method can be known. If the sample would have consisted of women who have already gone through the process and then questioned their expectations, then the experience would have influenced and overshadowed the answers. Hence, this sample will help me get answers which will only focus on the expectations and will not be affected by any experience. Following this, few studies will be reviewed, specifically focusing on the topic

of HypnoBirthing. The literature review will be followed by a discussion on the methodology that will be used to conduct the study, which includes taking interviews of pregnant women. Lastly, the results and the limitations faced during this study, and conduction of the interviews will be discussed in detail.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is natural for a woman to feel fear and stress during her labor. This fear and stress lead to muscular tension, which causes pain, and this further leads to more stress/tension, and fear which again causes the woman to feel pain, making it a continuous cycle [As illustrated in Figure: 1]. HypnoBirthing does not claim to eradicate pain during labor, but it prevents the perception of pain from dominating the whole childbirth experience, reducing the negative consequences like the stress associated with it. It assists the woman during her childbirth by making her feel calm and relaxed by helping her regain control of her body (Wright, 2016).

Below, I will be analyzing articles which will help support and form a base for the study by introducing various other research done in the fields of hypnosis, HypnoBirthing, and childbirth. It will help establish hypnosis as a valid process in the medical field, especially in terms of dealing with pain. The articles also talk about various studies and experiments, which were conducted in the field of HypnoBirthing. It mentions how most women, who were a part of these studies, were able to successfully use HypnoBirthing during their childbirth and reduce the perception of pain and minimize the use of drugs. The articles also focus on hormones that help the women during pregnancy, the drugs that the women are being administered with, and how they can be harmful to the baby as well as the mother.

2.1 Validity of Hypnosis:

According to Cosio and Lin (2015), there can be four main stages of hypnosis treatment. The first stage is induction, which involves focusing the client's attention; the second stage is deepening, which is intensify the relaxation of the body. The third stage is the suggestion, which is usually done for making changes in the client's experience of pain, and the last step involves debriefing the client (Cosio & Lin, 2015). Hypnosis treatment, while dealing with pain, can involve shifting the patient's attention away from the pain or changing the sensation away from the feeling of pain to something else (Cosio & Lin, 2015).

Häuser, Hagl, Schmierer, and Hansen (2016) talk about how hypnosis is useful in terms of it being used during the reduction of pain and stress. Their study concludes that

medical hypnosis is safe to use during medical procedures and states that the perception of pain and anxiety is diminished when hypnosis was used during the procedures. Häuser et al. (2016) provide a detailed account of the successful use of hypnosis, especially in the medical field. They state that hypnosis can also help in an efficient doctor-patient conversation. Similarly, in their article, Jensen and Patterson (2014) conclude that clinicians can help their clients experience the benefits by helping reduce the intensity of chronic pain when there is the involvement of hypnosis.

Jensen et al. (2017) mention the advances in the field of hypnosis after overcoming various challenges. A few of the challenges faced in this field of hypnosis include the process being looked upon as a taboo, an unscientific method, and the inappropriate portrayal of this method in popular culture (Jensen et al., 2017). The article calls into attention few clinical trials that prove the success of hypnosis and how it helped manage various clinical symptoms (Jensen et al., 2017). Kennedy (1957) mentions how, in recent times, the medical field has developed a wide-ranging view about hypnosis. Earlier demonstrations were allowed on the public, but many of them have been restricted by the Hypnotism Act (Kennedy, 1957). The Hypnotism Act 1952, was passed in the UK to supervise the demonstration of hypnotism in public places for entertainment (Legislation.gov.uk, 1952). This gives us an insight into the views about hypnosis, which goes back to the 1950s.

These articles demonstrate that hypnosis is a valid technique to minimize the perception of pain. It mentions the use of hypnosis during childbirth, where it acts as an analgesic. Various other conditions are stated where hypnosis can be used, like stammering or intractable pain. This helps in understanding one of the motives behind using this method during childbirth, as it reduces pain. One critique of these articles is that there was not a substantial discussion with regards to dealing with pain, apart from the article by Cosio and Lin (2015), which only briefly mentions the stages of hypnosis treatment. As a result, in reviewing these articles, it was not easy to understand the working of the process whereby hypnosis is deemed valid and reliable. This prevents a clear view of how hypnosis, as a method to deal with pain, is effective. It would have been beneficial if details were given about the workings of hypnosis. This could have helped in gaining insight into the effects it has on pregnant women, which could help them deal with the pain during childbirth.

2.2 Childbirth and Hormones

Hormones play a crucial role in childbirth (Buckley, 2015a; 2015b; 2020a). Oxytocin is released during

childbirth, reducing the stress of both mother and child, inducing more muscular contractions, and diminishing the perception of pain during delivery (Buckley, 2015b). The hormones oxytocin and prolactin not only help during childbirth but also initiates milk production, and it gives the baby a calming and soothing effect as it is present in the mother's milk too. The hormone system prepares the women for labor and induces a calming effect as it activates the pleasure center in the brain. This helps in calm and stress-free labor (Buckley, 2015a). These hormones, along with Beta-endorphins, are termed as body's natural painkillers, and these are at its peak during childbirth. These induce a "nesting" feeling, in order making the mother feel that she is giving birth in a safe environment, in turn, making her feel safe overall (Buckley, 2020a).

The work by Buckley has helped in understanding the physiology of hormones during childbirth. This helps in going into depths about how hypnosis helps in childbirth. The articles talk about how these hormones are not released efficiently when the woman is under stress. Hypnosis is said to induce a calming state. This helps in understanding how if the woman is under stress, the hormones are not released, in turn, causing pain and the with the help of hypnosis, once the calm state is induced, the hormones flow in its natural manner, which reduces pain, stress, and makes the woman feel safe. It is essential to understand this in order to understand how HypnoBirthing works, as this can influence the expectations and motives of the women choosing this to a great extent. These have helped in better understanding the childbirth process and has helped me connect hypnotism and childbirth.

2.3 The Use of Drugs during Childbirth

Buckley (2020b) and Murray, Dolby, Nation, and Thomas (1981) talk about the use of drugs during pregnancy and how it can negatively affect the child and the mother most of the time. Drugs can cause changes in the mother's cardiovascular, renal, and respiratory systems (Ansari, Carvalho, Shafer, & Flood, 2016). The medications also severely affect the natural release of the hormones, which explains the adverse effects of these drugs (Buckley, 2020b). It was reported that unmedicated mothers had more sociable and easy-to-care babies (Murray. et al., 1981). These drugs, like epidurals, can lead to an instrumental delivery (delivery with the help of vacuum and forceps). This increases the chance of the baby suffering from a facial injury, skull bone displacement, and intracranial bleeding (Buckley, 2020b).

The side effects of epidural use during pregnancy have been studied in detail and are well understood. Epidurals can lead to low blood pressure, fever, and problems with

urinating. Epidurals can also cause numbness or a tingling sensation in the legs, and some medications can also lead to severe itching ([National Center for Biotechnology Information](#), 2006). The side effects of various drugs like opioids and anesthesia have also been discussed in various articles. Opioids can lead to feelings of nausea, drowsiness, vomiting, and can also affect the baby's breathing and heart rate (The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2017). Some severe side effects of epidurals can involve injury to the spinal cord and nerves.

These articles detail the various side effects of drugs that are used during pregnancy. These drugs affect not only the mother but also the baby to a great extent. This aspect of childbirth was explored as this can be another reason why women opt for HypnoBirthing. The use of drugs during HypnoBirthing is reduced to a great extent, and this can be one of the motives for the women to choose this method in order to avoid the drugs. During HypnoBirthing, the need for drugs is minimized to a great extent as the hypnosis itself induces the calm state, and in turn, the drugs are not required. Only in cases of extreme emergency, the drugs are administered by the doctor. Hence, understanding the effects of drugs on the mother and baby gives the study insight into the motives of women behind choosing HypnoBirthing.

2.4 HypnoBirthing

HypnoBirthing originates from the works of an Obstetrician, Dr. Grantly Dick Reid, as mentioned earlier. Inspired by his techniques, Marie Mongan gave birth to her third child using the method of HypnoBirthing (Graves, 2000, para. 3). The article "How Childbirth Hypnotherapy Began - History of HypnoBirthing" narrates the incident of how Mongan was not allowed to use this method for her first two childbirths by her doctors. Prior to the birth of her third child, she insisted on using the method and birthed her daughter with the process of HypnoBirthing (Graves, 2000, para. 5). It gives a substantial amount of information about the history of HypnoBirthing. However, it is more of a narrative than the steps of how Mongan went on to perform HypnoBirthing during the birth of her third child, in 1959 (Cassidy, 2007, p. 192). Mentioning the steps that she used during the process would have helped differentiate how the process was originally used and what changes has it gone through over time.

A descriptive study was conducted, where a comparison was made between 50 women who chose to use hypnosis during birth and 51 women who did not (VandeVusse, Berner, Fuller, & Adams, 2011). Similarly, a test was conducted on a group of 2954 women, where women were randomized between the hypnosis and the control group (Madden, Middleton, Cyna, Matthewson, & Jones, 2016).

Madden et al. (2016) did not mention the specific number of women in each group. In both the articles, the women who used hypnosis during the process of birth were reported using significantly fewer sedatives, anesthesia, and other drugs during their labor. These articles, to some extent, show us why women would prefer HypnoBirthing in order to have a pain free and drug free experience, this will help to support the study in terms of the expectations and motives of the women. However, these articles do not mention differences noted in other maternal outcomes like the length of labor or estimation of blood loss. This could have helped determine if HypnoBirthing also affects these aspects of attracting women to choose it. It helps give my study a different perspective on HypnoBirthing, where it might not have significant effects. The pain factor of hypnosis has already been analyzed several times before, and so this was repetitive, and other aspects could have been explored.

The use of hypnosis as analgesia during childbirth is mentioned by Cyna, McAuliffe, and Andrew (2004). They mention the decrease of alternative analgesia, like epidurals, when hypnosis was used. Their study, unlike others, also focused on the duration of the labor during childbirth. The hypnosis group had a significantly lesser labor time than the control group (Cyna, McAuliffe, & Andrew, 2004). This can help the study in terms of understanding the motivation. Reduced pain could be one of the incentives, and also lesser labor time could be another factor that would have perhaps attracted the women to choose this method. In this article too, like most others, what I found missing was how the process works. Understanding the process can help give an overall understanding of hypnosis, and lots of misconceptions can be cleared if the working of hypnosis is known.

Mehl-Madrona (2011), talks about how psychological factors can cause complicated or uncomplicated birth outcomes. The goal of this study was to reduce fear and stress related to childbirth, parenting, and other factors that could complicate the labor (Mehl-Madrona, 2011). In this study, only significant differences noted in the administration of anesthetic epidural, where the experimental group, who used hypnosis during childbirth, required less of it compared to others. Mentioning a little about the other aspects which can cause pain during childbirth, instead of assuming it is only anxiety and fear, would have been helpful. Cyna, Andrew, Robinson, Crowther, Baghurst, Turnbull, ... Whittle (2006) mention that HypnoBirthing does reduce the perception of pain during childbirth. They found that hypnosis was easy to administer and was considered a relatively inexpensive method. This can be another motive for why women would choose this method. The results that were presented in this

article were overly vague, prohibiting any firm conclusions.

Many women prefer avoiding any pharmacological or invasive methods for managing pain in labor (Smith, Collins, Cyna, & Crowther, 2006). The article compares various methods of childbirth, like acupuncture, massage, aromatherapy, acupressure, and hypnosis. Women were divided into different groups according to choice. It was concluded that acupuncture and hypnosis had the best response in reducing pain during childbirth. This study had a small sample size, which causes one to be cautious before making any concrete conclusions. This article helps bring a fresh perspective of other methods used in the birthing process. It is useful in understanding how these methods are still not widely known by people, which leads them to opt for traditional methods.

An article, from 1994, from the British Medical Journal entitled "Birth Under Hypnosis," provides insight into how some women still prefer to go through the pain of birthing and experience the process in its natural way without any interference. The article goes on to discuss why HypnoBirthing is still not widely used. "... a healthy normal mother does not expect to be relieved of labor pains, which she knows her friends and her ancestors have experienced and largely forgotten... a woman who really fears childbirth is a poor specimen" (Birth Under Hypnosis, 1994, para. 2). This forms a different point of view of HypnoBirthing for the readers. More people need to be educated about these alternative methods, as these are still uncommon. The article could have also mentioned educating the women about these alternatives. Maybe these methods were never brought to their knowledge, which is why they are still holding on to the traditional methods.

The pros and also the cons of HypnoBirthing are discussed by Vadurro and Butts (1982). Their article gives an overall idea of hypnosis and different bodily states involved in the process. One disadvantage that it mentions is the time-consuming aspect of hypnosis, where women could have to start preparing early in their pregnancy. A few more disadvantages could be the hour-long sessions, which generally began from the first trimester itself, and exclusion of the father from the entire experience, if he chooses not to attend the classes (Vadurro & Butts, 1982). The examples mentioned in the article are detailed, which helps us in understanding the process of HypnoBirthing through real-life experience.

Finlayson, Downe, Hinder, Carr, Spiby, and Whorwell (2015) talk about self-hypnosis. Their article collected data from women who have already experienced HypnoBirthing to gain an insight into the individual experiences. When describing the experience, women talked about feeling calm and confident during childbirth (Finlayson et al., 2015). This

is discussed above. This article focuses on the negative feelings too that women associated with HypnoBirthing, like frustration and disappointment. However, the study is not reflective of the population as a whole as only "white British" women, mentioned explicitly in the article, took part in the experiment. The sample should have included varieties from the population to get more diverse responses as different societies or castes may be associated with this same process of HypnoBirthing in different manners.

Abedin (2010) mentions a case study of Anna Wall, who has already gone through the process of HypnoBirthing. The experience is described as calming and relaxing, and she credits it all to HypnoBirthing. This article explains in-depth as to why the pain is caused during childbirth and how HypnoBirthing helps (Abedin, 2010, para. 1). Wall felt relaxed every day while listening to the HypnoBirthing CDs and learned breathing and visualization techniques to calm herself. She also claims that HypnoBirthing has helped her in having a son who is calm by nature (Abedin, 2010, para. 28). It is a detailed work based on the experience of a woman who has gone through the process. A little more could have been mentioned as to what was in the CDs that were provided to her. This could have given a deeper understanding of whether the CDs are personalized or is it the same for all. Other than that, this article's details were not something I found in others, as they mainly focused on group reviews and not personal experiences. This article also talks about the motives behind Wall choosing the method as it was a clam and safer approach, according to her (Abedin, 2010, para. 20).

The articles introduced above provide diverse perspectives regarding the various motives behind women choosing HypnoBirthing. These can include how HypnoBirthing reduces the perception of pain and the need for drugs. Most of the articles found were studies conducted in various countries other than India, which is my country of focus. Few studies on Indian women could have been done to know why they chose this method as it is still a new phenomenon for India. This study can encourage other women to take up HypnoBirthing. This can lead them to having a positive childbirth experience where they might not have to bear the pain.

Studies can bring into light the method of HypnoBirthing itself and help women become aware of it. Hence, through the paper, I will be conducting interviews on Indian women to know their motives. It will focus on how they found out about this method and what expectations do they have regarding this. These expectations could be based on what they could have heard from others or read somewhere. Even though this is a rarely used method in India and most people have not even heard about it, these women still chose to opt

for it, and it would be interesting to know why, which is the aspect that I will be exploring through my interviews.

III. METHODOLOGY

Below, I will discuss the sample size, materials used, how the study was conducted, how the sample was chosen, and how they were different from the general population. All personal details, including the name and location of the participants, have been kept anonymous. The materials included two sets of questions, and all the interviews were conducted over the phone after a consent form was signed. The details of the same are discussed below.

3.1 Participants:

A total of 4 pregnant women, who were planning on undergoing the process of self-hypnosis during their childbirth, were a part of the sample. They were selected based on whether they were going to use HypnoBirthing and if they were comfortable with sharing details about the same. Women who had already used the procedure earlier were not chosen as then the experience and motives would have overpowered the expectations of women. I got my sample solely with help from Mrs. Divya Deswal, a certified HypnoBirthing practitioner, and all the women in my sample have approached her for help in terms of HypnoBirthing. This is an exploratory study about India. Hence, all the participants were from India only. In terms of location within India, there was no specific location from where the participants were chosen. It was a mixed group in terms of area. For all the participants, it was their first time using self-hypnosis during childbirth, as for all of them, it was their first experience of childbirth itself. The names of the participants were kept anonymous, and each was assigned with initials. Below, the initials assigned to the participants and their month of pregnancy during the first interview are mentioned.

INITIALS ASSIGNED	AGE	MONTH OF PREGNANCY DURING THE FIRST INTERVIEW
NH	28	8
PH	34	9
VH	26	9
MH	31	9

Table 1: Participants of the First Interview.

The table presents the age of the participants and the month of pregnancy they were in during the time of the first interview.

A follow-up interview was also conducted with MH and VH to know their experience. Their details (participant's

age and the age of the baby) during the second interview are mentioned below:

INITIALS	AGE	AGE OF THE BABY
MH	31	40 days
VH	26	32 days

Table 2: Participants of the Second Interview.

The table presents the age of the participants and the age of the baby during the second interview after they had given birth.

3.2 Materials used:

For the primary data, a study was conducted in the form of an interview. A consent form and a list of questions were required, which was a point of reference for me during my interviews. The questions were viewed on a laptop. All the interviews were conducted over the phone. Hence, two cell phones were used during the sessions. One was to make the calls, and the other phone was used to record the interviews with the participants with due permission from them. I made the first interview questions with no reference taken from any site, book, journal, or any other external source. They were based on the sole purpose of conducting this research, which was to know the expectations and motives behind pregnant women choosing HypnoBirthing.

Two of the women gave birth using HypnoBirthing after the interviews of their expectations were conducted. Subsequently, another questionnaire was made by me (with no help or reference taken from any external sources) to know their experience of this method during their childbirth, and whether they were satisfied with HypnoBirthing.

3.3 Design:

The study was conducted in an interview format. It had two parts to it in term of the subject design. The initial interview of the study was in the form of a between subject design, where four women were interviewed independently. A follow-up interview was also conducted with two women, necessitating a within subject design. Questions were asked during the interview, for e.g., why did they choose this method and their expectations from the process of HypnoBirthing, and accordingly the conclusions will be made.

3.4 Procedure:

The participants were chosen based on their choice of birthing during childbirth. These were women who have not given birth yet by using HypnoBirthing, and this would be their first time using it. The sample was collected based on the availability with no particular age group or location in

mind as there were very few women who had heard about this method in India. With the help of Mrs. Divya Deswal, I got in touch with four pregnant women who had opted to use HypnoBirthing during their childbirth. I got in touch with them through text messages and fixed a time to make a call for conducting the interviews. They were made to sign the consent form online with the help of a Google Document.

The questions were sent to them before the interview, so they had an idea of what to expect and could prepare themselves accordingly. During the interviews over call, before starting with the questions, permission was taken to record the interviews. A fixed set of questions was used for all four of them [PH, NH, VH, MH], and all their answers were recorded. The five main questions that were asked to them were: 1) How did you find out about HypnoBirthing? ; 2) What attracted you to choose HypnoBirthing? ; 3) What are your expectations from this method for yourself? ; 4) What are your expectations from HypnoBirthing for your child? ; 5) Why have you chosen this method over other methods?

A different set of questions were used to interview the women who gave birth after the first interview, during the period of the study. The follow-up interview included questions like 1) Were your overall expectations from HypnoBirthing met by your experience of using the method during childbirth? ; 2) Do you think this method impacted your child in any way. Their interviews, too, were recorded, and a comparison between their expectations and experience of HypnoBirthing was made.

For the results section, firstly, five main questions that were asked to all the women during the first interview, on their expectations and motives, were taken into consideration. Individual responses were noted in the form of a table. Bar graphs were constructed for each question from the first interview, after recording the women's

frequency of the answers. This was to show the motives and the expectations behind the women choosing HypnoBirthing. For the follow-up interviews of the two women, individual responses were recorded in the form of tables. Comparisons were made between the responses given by them earlier, before they used HypnoBirthing, with the answers that they gave after they used HypnoBirthing. This was to see if their experience had met their expectations.

IV. RESULTS/ANALYSIS

This study was conducted to know the motives and expectations of women behind choosing HypnoBirthing, even though it is rarely heard of in India. It is also meant to popularize this method in India so that women are better aware of HypnoBirthing and have a safer means, which can assist in giving birth. It was seen that women mostly found out about HypnoBirthing through their friends or someone who has already experienced it. In the follow-up interviews, it was noted that the women were satisfied with HypnoBirthing and felt that it made their birthing experience a positive and comfortable one indeed. This section will briefly mention the findings of the study for two sets of interviews by representing them in the form of tables and graphs.

4.1 First Interview

Table: 3 consists of the individual responses of all the four participants based on the first interview. Questions: 1, 2, and 5 help in understanding the motives behind why the participants chose HypnoBirthing. Questions: 3 and 4 help in understanding the women's expectations from HypnoBirthing. Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 show the frequency and the diversity of the answers given by the women for all the five questions during the first interview.

<u>QUESTIONS</u>	<u>INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES</u>			
	NH	PH	VH	MH
1. How did they find out about this method?	-Friend -Birthing Center	-Own research	-Friend	-Friend
2. What attracted them to this method?	-It's connection to breathing. -It encouraging the natural process of birth without interference. -Get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain.	-Get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain. -Relaxing method of having the child.	-Get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain. -Relaxing method of having the child.	-It focuses on the mother's needs. -Get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain.

<p>3. What are their expectations for themselves from HypnoBirthing?</p>	<p>-No Expectations and just take as it comes -It makes childbirth relaxing. -Avoid medical intervention. -Make it a natural experience.</p>	<p>-Make childbirth relaxing. -Embrace natural process of birthing. -Connect with the partner. -Use the relaxation techniques later in life as well.</p>	<p>-Use the relaxation techniques later in life as well. -Make childbirth relaxing.</p>	<p>-No Expectations and just keep an open mind. -Connect with the partner.</p>
<p>4. What are their expectations from HypnoBirthing for their child?</p>	<p>-Make the baby feel relaxed. -Help the child become a relaxed individual later on.</p>	<p>-Make the baby feel relaxed.</p>	<p>-Make the baby feel relaxed.</p>	<p>-Make the baby feel relaxed. -Help the child become a relaxed individual later on.</p>
<p>5. Why did they choose HypnoBirthing over other methods of childbirth?</p>	<p>-Using alternatives along with HypnoBirthing.</p>	<p>-Not aware of/ or have enough knowledge about alternatives -Instantly felt a connection with HypnoBirthing.</p>	<p>-Not aware of/ or have enough knowledge about alternatives</p>	<p>-Instantly felt a connection with HypnoBirthing.</p>

Table 3: Individual Responses from the First Interview

The table presents the individual responses of all four women based on the questions asked during the first interview that focused on their motives and expectation from HypnoBirthing

stated that they found out about this method from their friend. One of these three women, NH [refer to Table: 3], who found out about HypnoBirthing through her friend, also heard about it in a birthing center. PH came across HypnoBirthing while she was doing her research on pregnancy and childbirth. This makes the total frequency of Figure: 2 five.

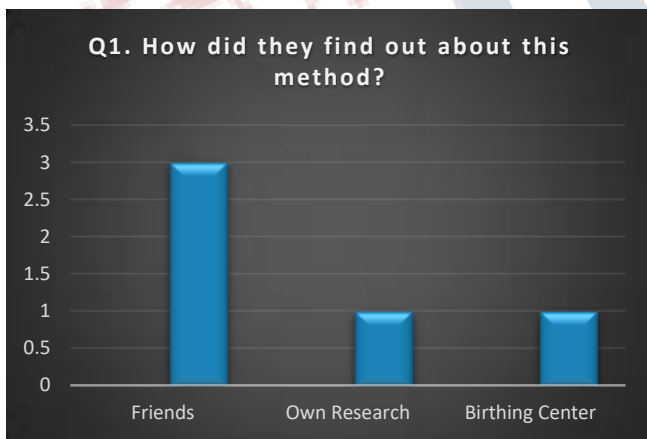


Figure 2: Frequency of Responses Question 1.

The data above illustrates the frequency of responses for Question 1 (First Interview). The total frequency of the figure is five due to the multiple responses given by the women.

Figure: 2 represents the frequency of the answers for the first question, “How did they find out about HypnoBirthing?” given by the four women during the first interview. Three women, NH, VH, MH [refer to Table: 3],

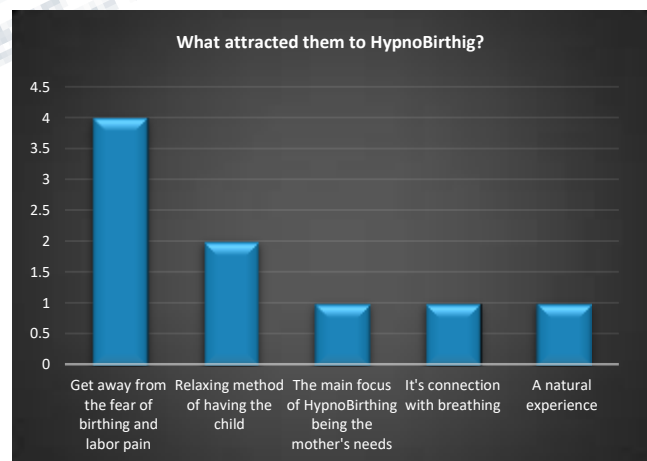


Figure 3: Frequency of Responses for Question 2.

The data above illustrates the frequency of responses for Question 2 (First Interview). The total frequency of the figure is nine due to the multiple responses given by the women.

Figure 3 represents the frequency of the women's answers for the second question, "What attracted them to HypnoBirthing?" during the first interview. All the four women, NH, PH, VH, MH [Refer to Table: 3], claimed that what attracted them the most to this method was that it would help them get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain. Two of the women, PH, VH [Refer to Table: 3], stated that this method attracted them because they thought it would be a relaxing method to give birth with. One of them, MH [Refer to Table: 3], was charmed by the fact that the main focus of HypnoBirthing was on the mother and her needs. NH [Refer to Table: 3] was fascinated by HypnoBirthing due to its connection with the whole breathing process and also because it encouraged the natural method of birthing without much interference. This makes the total frequency of the answers for Question: 2 [Figure: 3] as nine, considering all the responses given by the four women.

baby through the natural process of childbirth. NH [Refer to Table: 3] expects that HypnoBirthing will help her avoid any medical intervention unless required and keep the experience of childbirth as natural as possible. PH and VH [Refer to Table: 3] expect that the relaxation techniques they are learning during the HypnoBirthing classes will help them relax during childbirth and come to use later in life as well to get control of themselves. Two women, PH, and MH [Refer to Table: 3], also anticipate that HypnoBirthing will help them connect with their partners and give them a chance to involve their partners as well through their journey of pregnancy. Apart from all these expectations that the women have for themselves, NH and MH [Refer to Table: 3] also claimed that they do not want to keep any rigid expectations from this method. Moreover, they want to experience things as it comes their way. This makes the total frequency of the answers for Question: 3 as twelve, taking into consideration all the women's responses.

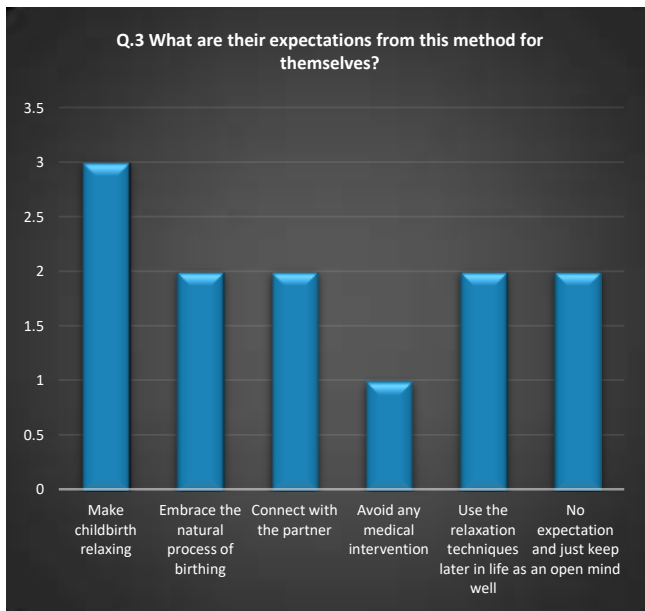


Figure 4: Frequency of Responses for Question 3.

The data above illustrates the frequency of responses for Question 3 (First Interview). The total frequency of the graph is twelve due to multiple responses given by the women.

The frequency of answers for the third question, "What are their expectations from HypnoBirthing for themselves?" during the first interview, is represented in Figure: 4. Three of the women, NH, PH, and VH [Refer to Table: 3], claimed that they expected this method to make childbirth a relaxing experience for them. NH and PH [Refer to Table: 3], also stated that they expect this method to help them deliver their

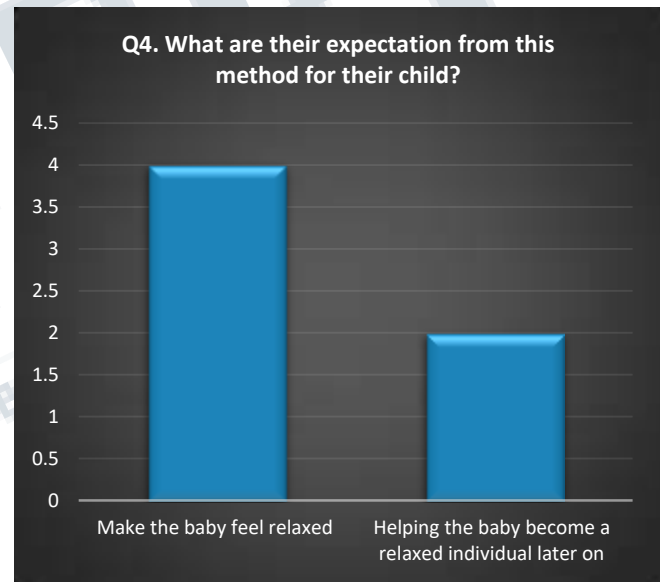


Figure 5: Frequency of Responses for Question 4.

The data above illustrates the frequency of responses for Question 4 (First Interview). The total frequency of the graph is six due to multiple responses given by the women.

Figure: 5 represents the frequency of the answers, for Question: 4 "What are their expectations from HypnoBirthing for their child?" given by the women during the first interview. All the four women, NH, PH, VH, and MH [Refer to Table: 3], expect HypnoBirthing to make the child feel relaxed during the pregnancy and also during childbirth when they perform the relaxation techniques. NH and MH [Refer to Table: 3] also felt that this method would not only help in relaxing the child while in the womb or

only during childbirth but since the child will be born in a calm and peaceful environment with the help of HypnoBirthing, they expect the child to grow up and become a calm and gentle person by nature as a result from using this method while delivery. This makes the total frequency of the answers for Question: 4 as six considering all the responses given by the women during the interview.

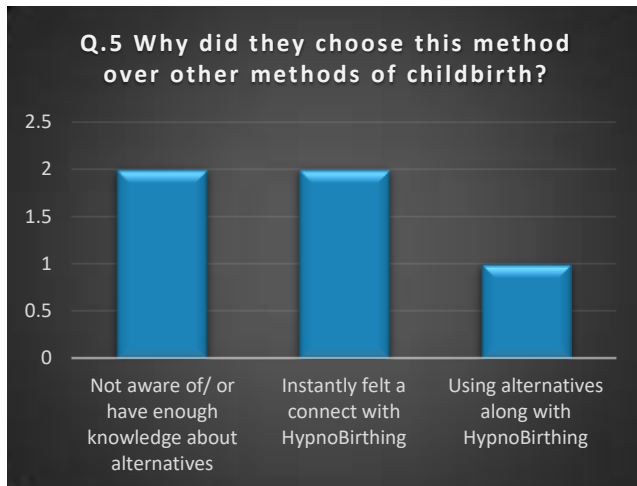


Figure 6: Frequency of Responses for Question 5.

The data above illustrates the frequency of responses for Question 5 (First Interview). The total frequency of the graph is five due to multiple responses given by the women.

The frequency of answers for the last question of the first interview, Question: 5 “Why did they choose HypnoBirthing over other methods of birthing?”, is represented in Figure: 6. Two women, PH and VH [Refer to Table: 3], claimed that they were unaware or did not have enough knowledge about other methods or alternatives that could be used in order to use them during their childbirth efficiently. PH and MH [Refer to Table: 3] claimed that their motive behind choosing HypnoBirthing over alternatives was that they felt an instant connection with HypnoBirthing and developed a sense of trust with this method. Due to this, they did not want to look up for any alternatives and trusted HypnoBirthing only to help them during their childbirth. It was also interesting to see that one of them, NH [Refer to Table: 3], was, in fact, planning on using alternatives for childbirth along with HypnoBirthing, which included a water birth and aromatherapy. This makes the total frequency of the answers given by then women for Question: 2 as five, acknowledging all the answers given during the interview.

4.2 Second Interview (Follow-up)

A follow-up interview was conducted with MH and VH as they gave birth during the course of this study, a few days after the first interview was conducted with them. The second interview was conducted to know if their expectations for HypnoBirthing were met when they used the method during childbirth.

MH- SECOND INTERVIEW	
1. Did you face any complications during childbirth?	- Yes, did face complications. - Had to undergo C-section due to a low lying placenta.
2. Were you able to use HypnoBirthing during your childbirth?	- Yes.
3.	-
4. Did HypnoBirthing have an impact (Positive/Negative) on you during childbirth?	- Yes, had a positive impact. - Helped to stay calm and relaxed even through such stressful times.
5. Do you feel HypnoBirthing had an impact (Positive/Negative) on your child during childbirth?	- Did not feel it had an impact on the child during childbirth.
6. Were your overall expectations from HypnoBirthing met by your experience of using the method during childbirth?	- Yes, overall expectations from HypnoBirthing were met by the experience. - Helped prepare for the stressful situations in advance by teaching how to stay calm.

Table 4: Responses by MH during the Second Interview.

The data above represents the individual responses for each question given by MH during the second interview.

Table: 4 represents the responses given by MH, for the five questions that were asked during the follow-up interview post-birth. The second interview with MH was conducted when the baby was 40 days old [Refer to Table: 2]. She was able to use HypnoBirthing during her childbirth and was satisfied with this method overall. MH says that she did face complications during childbirth due to which she could not have a natural vaginal birth and had to go for an emergency C-section. She said that she felt prepared and

relaxed, even during such complications and stressful times, all due to HypnoBirthing. On asking if she felt it had an impact on her baby during childbirth, she said that she did not feel it had any impact on the child during childbirth, but it helped the child relax during the term of the pregnancy and helped the child prepare for unexpected circumstances. Overall, she says, even though she did not keep any rigid expectations from HypnoBirthing before childbirth [Refer to Table: 3], it did help her get through her by pacifying her complicated childbirth experience, where the breathing techniques played a crucial role.

complications during her childbirth due to which she had to undergo a C-Section and could not have a natural vaginal birth. Her labor pains did not occur naturally and had to be induced due to the complications. She felt that HypnoBirthing had a positive impact on her and helped her stay calm and relaxed through her artificially induced labor. On asking if HypnoBirthing had any impact on the baby, she answered that it did not have any impact on the baby during childbirth. Her expectations of getting away from the fear of childbirth and labor pain and making childbirth relaxing [Refer to Table: 3], were met while she used HypnoBirthing during her childbirth.

Most of the answers given by the women had various similarities in terms of their expectations and motives behind opting for HypnoBirthing during childbirth. All of them expected that HypnoBirthing would make their baby feel relaxed during the childbirth. However, when the follow-up interviews were conducted with MH and VH, they felt that HypnoBirthing did not have any significant impact on the child during childbirth. Most of them choose HypnoBirthing as they wanted to make childbirth comforting for themselves, and this expectation was met for both MH and VH. Results will be further elaborated, and the study's limitations and future research will also be mentioned in the discussion section.

V. DISCUSSION

HypnoBirthing is the use of hypnosis during childbirth to reduce the perception of pain and allow the women to have calm and relaxed childbirth. I hypothesize that women choose HypnoBirthing, to get away from the fear of labor, and to cope with the perception of pain during childbirth, by inducing a calm state through self-hypnosis. This process also helps to avoid drugs until and unless required. A study was conducted to uncover the motivations and the expectations that led the women to choose HypnoBirthing, even though it is not commonly heard of in India. The sample for this study had opted for the Mongan method of childbirth. All of the women, who were a part of this study, were to undergo self-hypnosis during their childbirth by using breathing, visualization, and relaxation techniques, which were taught to them in the HypnoBirthing classes, conducted by Mrs. Divya Deswal. A total of four women were a part of the sample, which underwent the first set of interviews. Two women were followed up with another set of questions, as they gave birth during the course of this study. Below, further elaborations will be made on the results, followed by the limitations faced during the course of this study, ideas for future research, and the conclusion.

Through the interviews, it was observed that the sample predominantly learned about HypnoBirthing through their

VH- SECOND INTERVIEW	
1. Did you face any complications during childbirth?	- Yes, did face complications. - Had to undergo C-section due even though had prepared for a natural vaginal birth due to complications (Specific complications not mentioned).
2. Were you able to use HypnoBirthing during your childbirth?	- Yes.
3. Did HypnoBirthing have an impact (Positive/Negative) on you during childbirth?	- Yes, had a positive impact. - Helped to stay calm and relaxed throughout the labor. - Breathing techniques helped to cope up with labor pain.
4. Do you feel HypnoBirthing had an impact (Positive/Negative) on your child during childbirth?	- No, did not feel it had an impact on the child during childbirth.
5. Were your overall expectations from HypnoBirthing met by your experience of using the method during childbirth?	- Yes, overall expectations from HypnoBirthing were met by the experience. - Helped stay composed and keep a positive mindset through the childbirth process irrespective of the complications.

Table 5: Responses by VH during the Second Interview.

The data above represents the Individual responses for each question given by VH during the second interview

Table: 5, represents the individual answers, given by VH, for the five questions during follow-up interview post-birth. The second interview with VH was conducted when the baby was 32 days old [Refer to Table: 2]. VH had

friends who used it during their childbirth. Out of the three women who found out about HypnoBirthing through their friends [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 2], two of them had their friends living abroad. Out of those two, NH initially found out about this method while visiting a birthing center in the UK and was later advised to use this method by her friend living abroad. VH found out about HypnoBirthing through her friend, who had already undergone this method and was earlier under the guidance of Mrs. Divya Deswal. Furthermore, the fourth woman, PH, found out about this through her research [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 2]. This, to a great extent, shows the rarity and lack of knowledge about HypnoBirthing in India, where out of the four, only one heard about this method through someone in India, and not through a friend abroad or own research. This was one of the main motives behind writing this research paper, to make the women in India aware about the method of HypnoBirthing so that they can have a safer alternative for childbirth, which helps in the reduction of the perception of pain and helps in preventing any unnecessary drug use or intervention unless required otherwise.

The central aspect of HypnoBirthing that attracted all the four women to opt for this method was to get away from the fear of birthing and labor pain [Refer to Table:3; Figure: 3]. Hormones play an integral part in childbirth, which also influences the pain during childbirth, which was extensively discussed in the literature review. The hormone system prepares the women for labor and induces a calming effect as it activates the pleasure center in the brain. This helps in calm and stress-free labor (Buckley, 2015a). The articles by Buckley (2015a; 2015b; 2020a), mentions how these hormones are not released efficiently when the woman is under stress. Hypnosis is said to induce a calming state. This, in turn, helps in the free flow of the hormones, helping to reduce the perception of pain. This was one of the main motivations behind women choosing HypnoBirthing, to reduce their perception of pain. In their article, Cyna et al. (2006) mention that HypnoBirthing does reduce the perception of pain during childbirth. These articles help in supporting one of the main motives for women opting for HypnoBirthing.

Two of the women, PH and VH [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 3], were also attracted to HypnoBirthing as they felt it would be a relaxing method for childbirth. This aspect of HypnoBirthing was also mentioned by Anna Wall, where she described her childbirth as calming and relaxing, crediting it all to HypnoBirthing (Abedin, 2010). She not only felt relaxed during her childbirth but also during her pregnancy while she listened to the HypnoBirthing tapes and CDs (Abedin, 2010). This was also observed in the follow-up interviews with VH and MH, where both claimed

to feel relaxed [Refer to Table: 4, 5], while using HypnoBirthing techniques, even with complications during their childbirth. This article and the data from the second interview helps in supporting another reason why women were attracted to HypnoBirthing, which is to make childbirth relaxing.

A few more reasons that attracted the women to this method, stated during the first interview, were its connection with breathing and its focus on the mother's needs [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 3]. According to MH, "HypnoBirthing helps in putting the power back in your hands . . . giving the women a safe space for birth" making the experience more comfortable for the women herself. She emphasized the fact that HypnoBirthing helps in understanding the mother's needs as well and helps in making childbirth as comfortable as possible for the mother. This idea helped in understanding the mother's underlying mental state as well, who could be undergoing immense amounts of stress due to the new responsibilities that she will have to undertake. HypnoBirthing is one such method that helps reduce this stress, not only during childbirth but also throughout the term of the pregnancy, in turn catering to the mother's needs.

Madden et al. (2016) conducted the study, which concluded that women who used HypnoBirthing during childbirth used remarkably lesser sedatives, anesthesia, and other drugs during their labor, as mentioned previously in this paper. This helps in supporting the expectations that the women had for themselves from HypnoBirthing, which was concluded from the first interview, of wanting to experience the natural process of childbirth and avoid any medical intervention unless necessary [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 4]. Two of the women, MH and PH [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 4], also stated that they expect this method would help them feel a deeper connection with their partners as they too are present during the HypnoBirthing sessions. This can make the mothers feel assured that they have the constant support of their partners throughout their pregnancy, and they are not alone in this journey. This could be an essential aspect of providing mental and emotional support to women during pregnancy.

It was interesting to see that two of the women did not see this method as something that would help them only during pregnancy. They believe that this method will be something that will be of life-long use to them. As mentioned by the women who attended the HypnoBirthing classes, this method helps in learning how to connect to one's breath, take control of one's body through breathing and visualization techniques and overall attain a calm state by getting access to the inner conscience. This shows how this method can also be used in the long run during stressful

times like childbirth, and also to get a better understanding of how one can have control over their own body and mind.

The two expectations that the women had from HypnoBirthing for their child during childbirth were, to make the child feel relaxed during childbirth and to help the baby become a calm and relaxed individual later on [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 5]. This shows that the women had short-term and long-term expectations from HypnoBirthing, where they expected the method to help the baby grow up as an individual with a peaceful persona and be calm and gentle by nature. This expectation was interestingly met for Anna Wall, who says that her baby is of a peaceful nature, and it was all due to HypnoBirthing (Abedin, 2010). However, both women, VH and MH, had complications during childbirth, necessitating C-section, which could have prevented the child from feeling relaxed. This was the first expectation that the women had for their child from HypnoBirthing that was not met. Both the women stated that they did not feel HypnoBirthing had any impact as such on their babies during childbirth. VH stated that her baby had a sudden drop in her BP right after childbirth, and immediate actions had to be taken. Hence, HypnoBirthing did not seem to have any impact on her baby during childbirth. On the other hand, MH stated that more than during childbirth, she felt that this method had an impact on the baby during the term of the pregnancy while she practiced the relaxation techniques. She felt this method helped prepare the baby for the process of childbirth, rather than having any effect during childbirth.

Upon asking why did the women choose HypnoBirthing over other alternatives, varying responses were obtained during the first interview. Two women, PH and VH [Refer to Table: 3, Figure: 6], claimed that they were unaware of alternatives, and even if they knew about a few, they did not trust those alternatives enough to use them during their childbirth. The women claimed that once they heard about HypnoBirthing and attended the classes, they developed a sense of trust with this method and felt connected with this. It was interesting to observe the women's hopes and faith that had been put into this method. They trusted it enough to opt for HypnoBirthing to assist them in bringing their child into this world. Interestingly, one of the women NH plans on using alternatives along with HypnoBirthing [Refer to Table: 3], which include water birth and aromatherapy. This helps in getting clarity of how alternatives for childbirth, like aromatherapy, can be used along with HypnoBirthing, that suits the mother's needs, which can help in making childbirth a better experience. This shows that HypnoBirthing is a flexible method that can be used along with alternatives.

A follow-up interview was conducted with MH and VH

as they gave birth during the course of this study. They were both able to use HypnoBirthing during their childbirth. However, both of them also faced complications during their labor. MH had a low lying placenta, and VH too had some complications due to which both had to undergo C-section and could not opt for a natural birth. This indicates that it is not necessary that HypnoBirthing will ensure that the woman will have a vaginal delivery. It is more about how HypnoBirthing helps the mother stay calm by keeping her relaxed even during such stressful times when complications can occur during childbirth, no matter what the situation that the mother has to face during childbirth. It helps prepare the mother for all possible situations, whether good or bad and helps her stay relaxed and stress-free. Both MH and VH stated that HypnoBirthing had a positive impact on their mental health and helped them stay optimistic through their childbirth.

VH had two major motives behind opting for HypnoBirthing, which were to get away from the fear of childbirth and labor and make childbirth as relaxing as possible [Refer to Table: 3; Figure: 4], as mentioned by her in her first interview. In the follow-up interview, she confirmed that her motives and her expectations for herself were undoubtedly fulfilled. She also added that, even though she did not feel this method had any significant impact on her child during childbirth, she expected her child to be of a calm and poised nature in the long run. She stated that HypnoBirthing helped her through her eight-hour-long labor since she continuously practiced the visualization and breathing techniques, which in turn relaxed her and made her feel positive throughout. She confirmed that her overall expectations from HypnoBirthing were unquestionably met as compared to her experience of using it during her labor [Refer to Table: 5].

MH did not want to go for her childbirth with any predisposed or rigid expectations from HypnoBirthing. She wanted to experience things as it came her way and keep an open mind. However, at the back of her mind, she did have few expectations of wanting to get away from the fear of labor and pain. She also expected this method to help her connect with her partner. In their article, Vadurro and Butts (1982), talk about the con of HypnoBirthing and state that one of the major disadvantages is the exclusion of the partner from the whole experience of birthing. However, MH confirmed that she felt closer to her partner throughout her pregnancy. Her partner could attend all the classes with her and be there for her as constant support. This shows the varying perspectives of this method in terms of experience and how each individual could experience something different while using this method, keeping in mind the situation it is being used in, as compared to another. MH too

confirmed that her overall expectations from HypnoBirthing were met by her experience of using it [Refer to Table: 4], as it was a constant support for her through the complicated childbirth procedures that she had to undergo.

5.1. Limitations

In terms of limitations, for a method as rare as HypnoBirthing, it was not easy to come up with huge sample size. Nonetheless, I was able to get in touch with four women who fit the criteria and agreed for interviews. It was strenuous to get in touch with the women for the follow-up interviews and get results for the same. This was because the women had newborns to take care of, and at the same time, scheduling interviews with them was difficult to manage, keeping in mind their state as well. Nevertheless, two of them were a part of the follow-up interview, and the interviews were conducted successfully, and the results were obtained. The study was conducted on a smaller sample size due to the unavailability of the women who would be undergoing HypnoBirthing shortly, keeping in mind the limited time frame for the completion of the study. The small sample size was also due to limited knowledge about this method in India. Even after extensive research, Mrs. Divya Deswal is the only individual I could come across who is a HypnoBirthing practitioner and knew women who met the criteria for this study. While the sample size is limited, the similar expectations and responses provided by all subjects suggest this study may prove useful in understanding HypnoBirthing in India. This study only focuses on the women who have opted for the Mongan method of HypnoBirthing, which includes self-hypnosis.

5.2. Future Research

The implications and the results of this study can help spread a novel type of childbirth among women in India. The women could use a method that could have a positive impact on them during childbirth by reducing the perception of pain. This can help make childbirth better tolerable and a positive experience for the woman. Further research can be conducted on HypnoBirthing by using a larger sample and following up with the women to know their experience. A long-term longitudinal analysis can help understand how the process affects the women and, importantly, their children. Future research should focus on the specific techniques used in HypnoBirthing to ascertain which are effective, either alone or in combination. Studies can also research and mention the relaxation, visualization, and the breathing techniques used during HypnoBirthing as this was not something I found easily accessible in the current studies. The HypnoBirthing CDs that are provided and procedures taught during the classes can also be researched upon to

observe the techniques closely. Through this, the workings of the method can be known in depth, and research papers can elaborate on that. Studies can also try and alter or modify already existing visualization and relaxation techniques. This can help in suggesting whether alternative techniques can also be used as a method for relaxation. It can also be encouraged to introduce HypnoBirthing and hypnosis techniques in general birth preparation classes as well. This can help in spreading awareness in regards to HypnoBirthing.

5.3. Conclusion

This study aimed to know expectations and motives behind women choosing HypnoBirthing in India, even though it is rarely heard of here. The hypothesis for the same was that women choose HypnoBirthing to get away from the fear of labor and cope with the perception of pain during childbirth, by inducing a calm state through self-hypnosis. This method also helps to avoid drugs until and unless required. Through the conclusions made from the results that were obtained from the two interviews, it can be concluded that the study supports the hypothesis of the research paper. Women choose HypnoBirthing predominantly to get away from the fear of birthing and childbirth and to reduce the perception of pain. It was also observed that this was not a commonly known method in India, and women mostly heard about this method from their friends living abroad. The follow-up interviews did confirm that these were not unrealistic expectations which could not be fulfilled, and were indeed met for two of them who were able to use it during their childbirth. It can help women gain control of their bodies, making them feel empowered, and make the process of childbirth as natural as possible. This method can also help avoid any unnecessary medical intervention or use of drugs, as it helps in calming the woman, which in turn relaxes the muscles and allows the free flow of the natural hormones required to make childbirth better tolerable for women.

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