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Women's Perceptions of the Hypertensive Disorders of Pregnancy in Nigeria, Mozambique, Pakistan, and India: A Qualitative Evidence Synthesis of Primary Data From the Community-Level Interventions for Pre-Eclampsia (CLIP) Feasibility Study

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Perceptions of health and illness can impact health-seeking behavior and outcomes and are culturally bound. Little is known regarding these women's perceptions, including knowledge, attitudes, and practice of pregnancy complications, particularly the hypertensive disorders of pregnancy (HDPs). Following a qualitative evidence synthesis, we sought to determine women's perceptions of the HDPs utilizing data from the Community-Level Interventions for Preeclampsia (CLIP) study. Focus groups of pregnant woman, women of reproductive age, and/or new mothers from four countries were analyzed: 7 from India, 19 from Pakistan, 4 from Mozambique, and 8 from Nigeria. NVivo software was used to facilitate data analysis, and an independent reviewer participated in the analysis of a sample of transcripts. A thematic synthesis approach was utilized. Thirteen first-order categories were coded from the primary data. These categories were then regrouped into five descriptive themes from which four analytic themes were then generated, providing interpretations of the data: (1) the influence of personal experiences in understanding the HDPs, (2) interpretations of the HDPs related to natural environment, (3) interpretations of the HDPs related to socioeconomic determinants, and (4) interpretations of the HDPs related to myths and the supernatural. Culture has a substantial influence on the understanding of HDPs, and misconceptions frequently originate from traditional beliefs and myths related to health and disease. Knowledge of the HDPs is limited among women of reproductive age in these communities but may be effectively addressed by utilizing personal experiences for learning.