



# Maternal Perspectives on the Impact of Political Instability and Economic Collapse of Country on the Antenatal Period : Results of a Sri Lankan Survey

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## Introduction

- Sri Lanka experienced first-ever major political and economic catastrophe in 2022 with violent riots, energy crisis and depleted foreign reserves.
- The healthcare system of country, which has a longstanding reputation of being a cost-effective yet clinically well-productive model, wasn't spared from repercussions of the crisis.



"Despite experiencing various hardships, Sri Lankan mothers were on the front lines of protests against contemporary situation of the country" (Image credits to respective owners)

## Aims

- To evaluate effects of the country's economic turmoil on the antenatal period of women in Sri Lanka.

## Methods

- 153 pregnant women followed-up in antenatal clinic of Base Hospital Theldeniya, Sri Lanka between January 2022 and August 2022 participated in this descriptive study.
- Data was collected via a posted self-administered questionnaire.

## Results

- The response rate was 34.2% (N=153/448).
- Mean age of the study participants was 29.6 years (SD±4.8).
- 31.3% and 38.6% had late booking visit and late/no dating scan respectively.
- 58.2% had missed two or more scheduled antenatal clinic appointments.
- Routine FBE and OGTT were skipped by 31.4% and 17.6% respectively, while 22.9% couldn't attend planned growth scans. (**Chart 1**)
- 41.8% transferred their care from private to public sector entirely.
- 58.2% had experienced medicine/equipment shortage.
- The upheaval made pregnancy more stressful for majority (74.5%).
- Participants universally agreed that the healthcare cost increase was exorbitant. (**Chart 2**)

## Discussion

- Maternal health is at significant risk of compromise during socio-economic and political crisis situations.
- Restricted accessibility and affordability of healthcare along with shortage of medicine, equipment and trained medical practitioners would contribute to hardships encountered by mothers.
- Well-focused and multi-faceted approach is needed to ensure uninterrupted essential care for pregnant women despite drastic circumstances in contemporary society.
- Further research is needed to evaluate crisis ramifications on overall pregnancy outcomes.

Chart 1. Investigations missed/delayed due to crisis

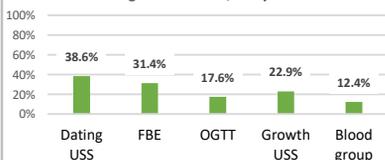


Chart 2. Crisis-related factor with the worst impact on antenatal period

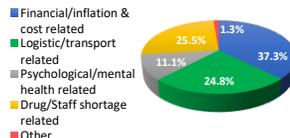
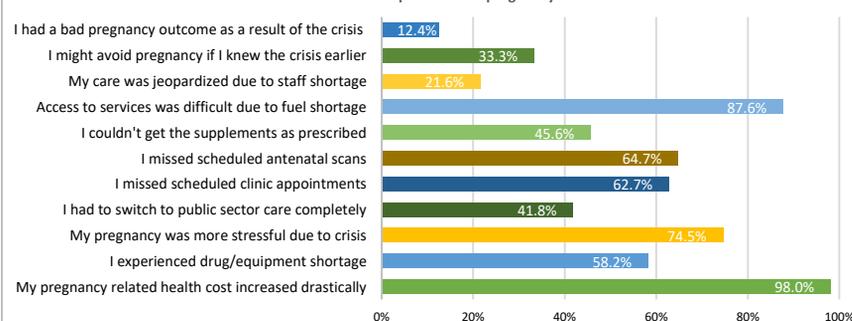


Chart 3. Maternal views on crisis impact on their pregnancy related care



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## Disclosure

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare