Over Medicalization

What was the issue?

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More hospitals are abandoning the traditional natural birth method by encouraging women to undergo surgical deliveries instead.

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What is over-medicalization?

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- Obstetrician involvement and unnecessary medical interventions in normal childbirth, without evidence of effectiveness, is called **Over-Medicalization** of childbirth.
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- The problem of over-medicalization has been generally associated with high-income countries where there is the prevalence of private institutions.
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- But now it is rapidly becoming more common in low and middle-income countries, also increasing the health costs and the risk of harm.
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What are the risks of Caesarean delivery?

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- Hospitals push women to have Caesareans since they are far costlier than natural births costing at least Rs 40,000.
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- At times, it’s not the healthcare industry to be blamed entirely.
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- There are patients who want their child to be born on a particular date, because it is auspicious. Others wish to avoid the pain of undergoing a natural birth.

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- Caesareans are also **likely to cause more infections and certain disorders**, which include blood clotting, obstruction in bowel movements, bladder infection, and, in severe cases, even hemorrhage.
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- It also increases the chances of mothers spiraling into post-partum depression and other post-traumatic stress.
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- New-born are also subject to life-threatening risks.
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- There is a possibility that they could get hurt, cut or suffocated during the procedure.
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- When the child grows older, there are greater chances of him/her suffering from obesity or respiratory disorders like asthma as well.
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- Experts claim that natural birth ensures a quicker recovery for mothers, and it gives newborns a family of microbes which strengthen their immunity.
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What is the statistics on the issue?

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- A report published by the **ICMR School of Public Health** states thst in the last decade, Telengana showed 74.8% of surgical deliveries in the private sector, Tamil Nadu showed 58% caesarean deliveries, while Kerala showed 41%.
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- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** states that the optimal caesarean birthrate should be at a minimum, not exceeding 10-15% of the overall deliveries that take place in a country.
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- Childbirth is a traumatic experience.
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- In the throes of pain, an uninformed woman will be convinced to have a surgical delivery, if her physician plants the idea.
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- In high stress situations, even a mere suggestion does the trick.
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- It is the responsibility of the parents to be well-versed in the options available to them in order to make informed choices.
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- For all reasons and purposes, natural birth is recommended.
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- Regardless of everything, it’s important that hospitals declare the number of Caesarean births that take place that a stop can be put on unnecessary caesareans.
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Source: Indian Express

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