

Jullien / Jeffery

Childbirth in South Asia

Old Challenges and New Paradoxes

Across the world, the conditions of childbirth are changing but not all in the same direction. Women in Western countries press for more home deliveries, and to confront some of the effects of the over-medicalisation of motherhood. Most developing countries, by contrast, promote deliveries in clinics and hospitals, and stigmatize women who deliver at home. Mobile phones and social media are pressed into service to identify high-risk mothers and to offer them pregnancy and delivery advice. All of the South Asian countries have been accused of neglecting childbirth and women's healthcare. The Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) prompted important new Government schemes across South Asia, designed to address the issues of safe motherhood and childbirth. The Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) now mandate further efforts to reduce maternal and neo-natal mortality. This book illustrates the continuing paradoxes as well as the new challenges linked to childbirth in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. It brings together anthropologists, historians, and sociologists who reflect on the implications of these new schemes for women's own experiences.



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