
High Income Working Women Are More Likely to Be Offered Fully Paid Maternity Leave

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Introduction

- Most employed women do not have access to paid maternity leave
 - Many women struggle to afford time off to take care of themselves and their newborns after the birth of a new child (Bell & Shepherd-Banigan, 2014).
- The Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 provides 12 weeks of unpaid, job protected leave for pregnancy, childbirth adoption and illness
 - Benefits of FMLA are useless for mothers who can't afford to take unpaid time off from work
- Higher income workers are more likely to have access to any leave and to paid leave

Background

- Seek well-baby check-ups
- Complete immunizations
- Breastfeed
- Bond with their infants
- Detect potential developmental delays sooner
- Fewer mental-health symptoms
- Reduce risk of primary cesarean deliveries
- Reduce infant mortality
- Higher rates of returning to work and an increase in working hours



Purpose of Study

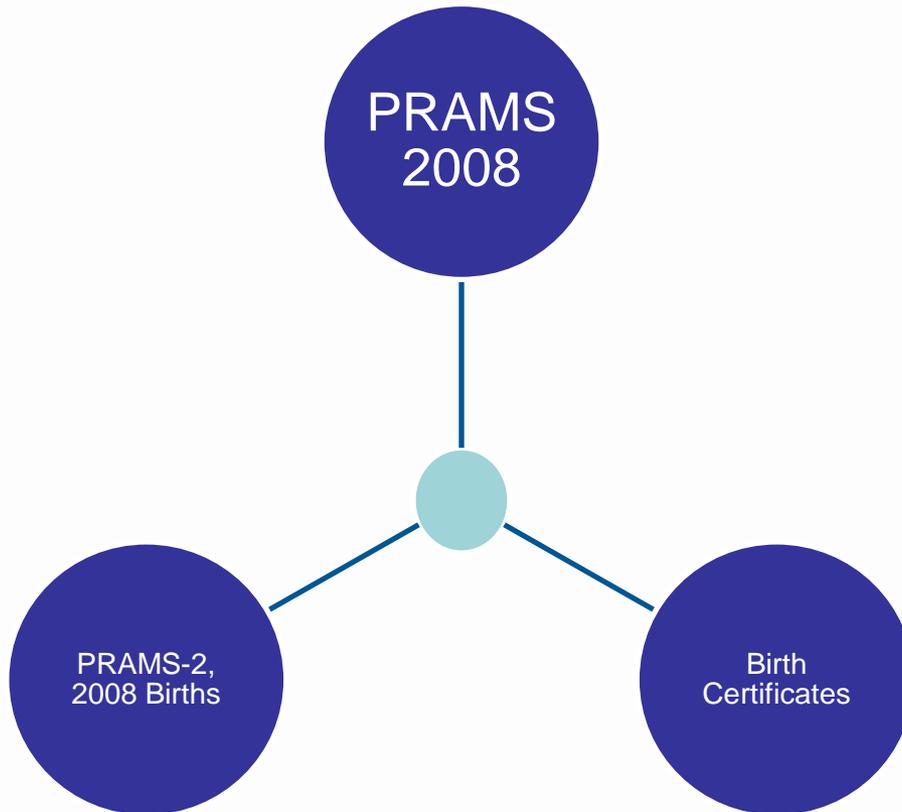
What are we doing?

- Identify maternal characteristics of Oregon women with paid, unpaid or partially paid maternity leave
- Estimate the likelihood of a woman receiving maternity leave with high income versus low income

Why are we doing it?

- More information is crucial in identifying those at greater risk for adverse maternal and infant health consequences
- Data is vital in implementing policies and programs that support state-wide paid maternity leave legislation

Methods: Data Source



- Weighted response rate for PRAMS-2 was 38.3%
- For more information about PRAMS, see (<http://www.cdc.gov/prams/>).

Methods: Study Sample

- Oregon PRAMS-2: 871 respondents with a 2008 live birth
 - The data was collected in 2010-2011
 - 43 (5.2%) women were excluded
- The analysis was performed on the 828 women who were employed during the last three months of their pregnancy, and who provided information about maternity leave offered by their job

Methods: Definition of Outcome

Outcome Variable Question

- **“What type of maternity leave did your job offer?”**
- Fully paid maternity leave
- Partially paid maternity leave
- Unpaid maternity leave

Primary Outcome Measure

- Women who were employed during last three months of pregnancy and received fully paid maternity leave

Methods: Definition of Covariates

PRAMS-2 Questionnaire

- Maternal education
- Age
- Marital status
- Household income

Birth Certificates

- Maternal Race/Ethnicity

Methods: Statistical Techniques

- SPSS statistical software package version 20
 - Univariate measures
- Stata statistical software version 13
 - Bivariate and multivariate modeling

Results

Table 1 Maternity leave offered to women who were working during last three months of pregnancy (N= 302)

Maternity Leave Type	n	Weighted %
Not Offered Maternity Leave	54	17.7%
Unpaid Maternity Leave	139	49.8%
Partially Paid Maternity Leave	66	16.3%
Fully Paid Maternity Leave	43	16.1%

Results

Table 3 Characteristics of women who worked during last three months of pregnancy and received fully paid maternity leave

Maternal Characteristic	Fully paid	Weighted %	Bivariate OR (95% CI)	Multivariate OR (95% CI)
Household Income				
FPL <300	12	8.1%	Referent	Referent
FPL ≥300	30	23.1%	3.42 (1.24-9.45)	3.57 (1.24-10.27)
Maternal race/ethnicity				
White non-Hispanic	16	16.6%	Referent	
Hispanic	7	17.1%	1.03 (0.38-2.80)	1.37 (0.44-4.24)
Asian/PI non-Hispanic	13	14.2%	0.83 (0.36-1.9)	0.83 (0.36-1.92)
Black non-Hispanic	5	9.3%	0.51 (0.16-1.59)	0.84 (0.25-2.8)
AI/AN non-Hispanic	2	3.1%	0.156 (0.03-0.77)	0.16 (0.03-0.81)
Maternal Marital status				
Married	42	18.4%	11.51 (1.46-92.41)	
All other	1	1.9%	Referent	
Maternal Age				
≤25	4	7.3%	Referent	
26-34	26	21.7%	3.54 (0.82-15.22)	
≥35	13	9.5%	1.34 (0.26-6.1)	
Maternal Education				
<16	7	10.3%	Referent	
≥16	36	20.0%	2.17 (0.70-6.72)	

Discussion

- We found that high-income women were more likely to have been offered FPML than low income women. This finding is consistent with previous studies
 - Consistent with other studies
- We found that American Indian (non-Hispanic) women were less likely to have been offered FPML than White (non-Hispanic) women
 - The CDC Survey of Family Growth found that Hispanic women were less likely to report having taken maternity leave compared with non-Hispanic White and Black women
- We found that, among Oregon women who were working during the last three months of their pregnancy, only 16.1% of women in Oregon received fully paid maternity leave
 - Difficult to compare this number with previous research because other work has included all types of family leave
- The U.S. does not guarantee paid leave for mothers in any segment of the work force and does not guarantee fathers paid paternity nor paid parental leave (Jody, Alison, & Jeffrey, 2004)
 - The U.S. lags far behind the rest of the world in paid leave policies

Strengths and Limitations

- Strengths:
 - Population-based study
 - Over-sampling race/ethnicity
 - Novel PRAMS-2 question
 - Validated, field-tested
- Limitations
 - Self-reported
 - Recall bias
 - Missing data (non response, don't know)
 - Low response rate
 - General limitations of cross-sectional study
 - Selection bias, temporal sequence

Conclusions



12 percent of employees in the United States have access to paid leave for any care of family members



Low-wage workers experience low levels of job security, fewer benefits and limited flexibility



More research is needed



Propose policies that offer job-protected leave and financial support during maternity leave

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