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Are Abortion Services Meeting Women's Needs in Madhya Pradesh, India?



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Key Objectives of the Study

- Identify obstacles to high-quality and affordable services
- Identify areas in which abortion and post-abortion services should focus attention

Study Setting

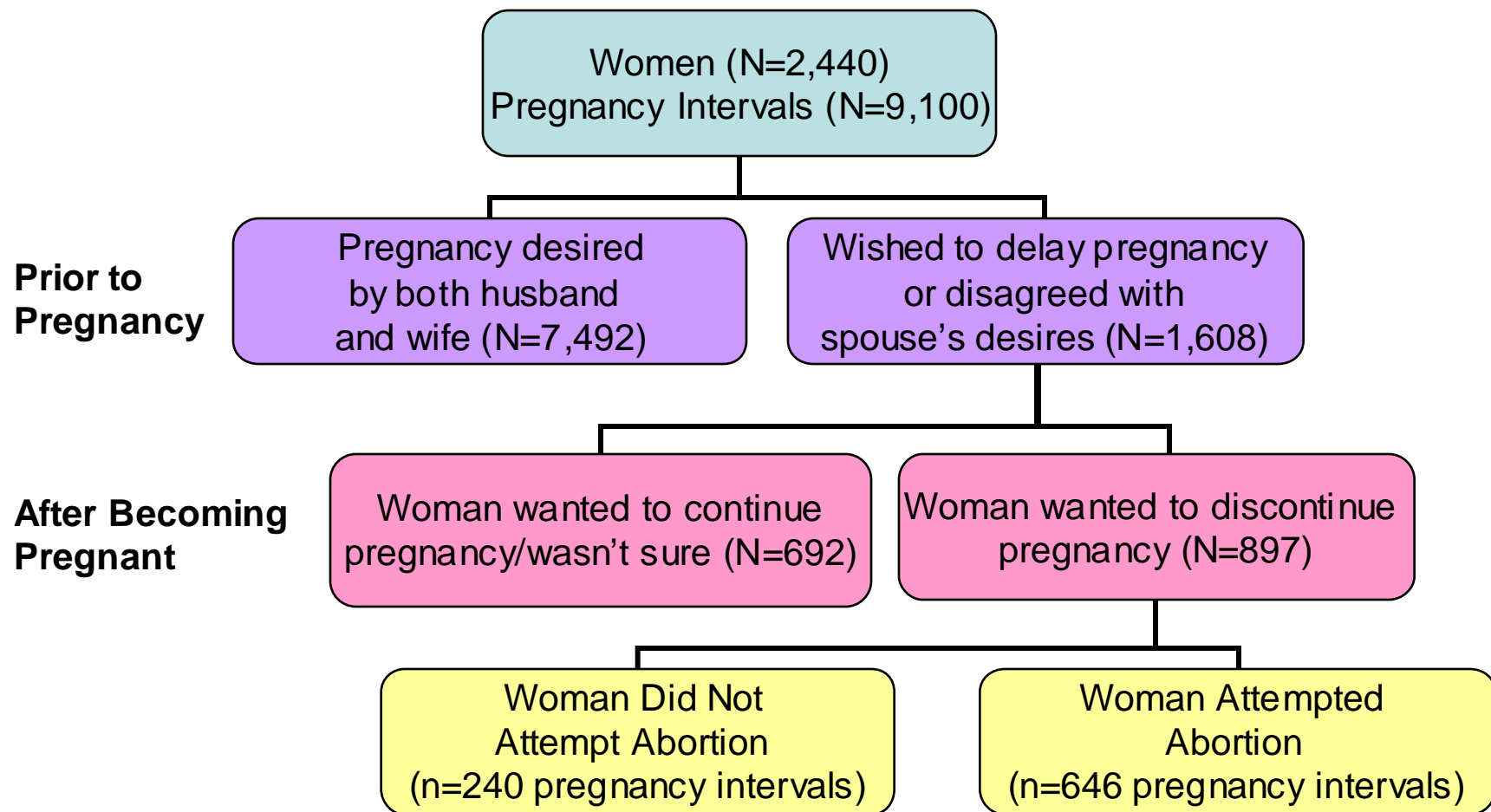
- Madhya Pradesh is one of India's poorest states
- Socially conservative and predominantly rural population
- Very low rates of contraceptive use:
 - Sterilization 38%
 - Temporary contraceptive methods 6.3% (NFHS-2)
- Only 300 medical centers offering official abortion services (5 per million people)



Study Design

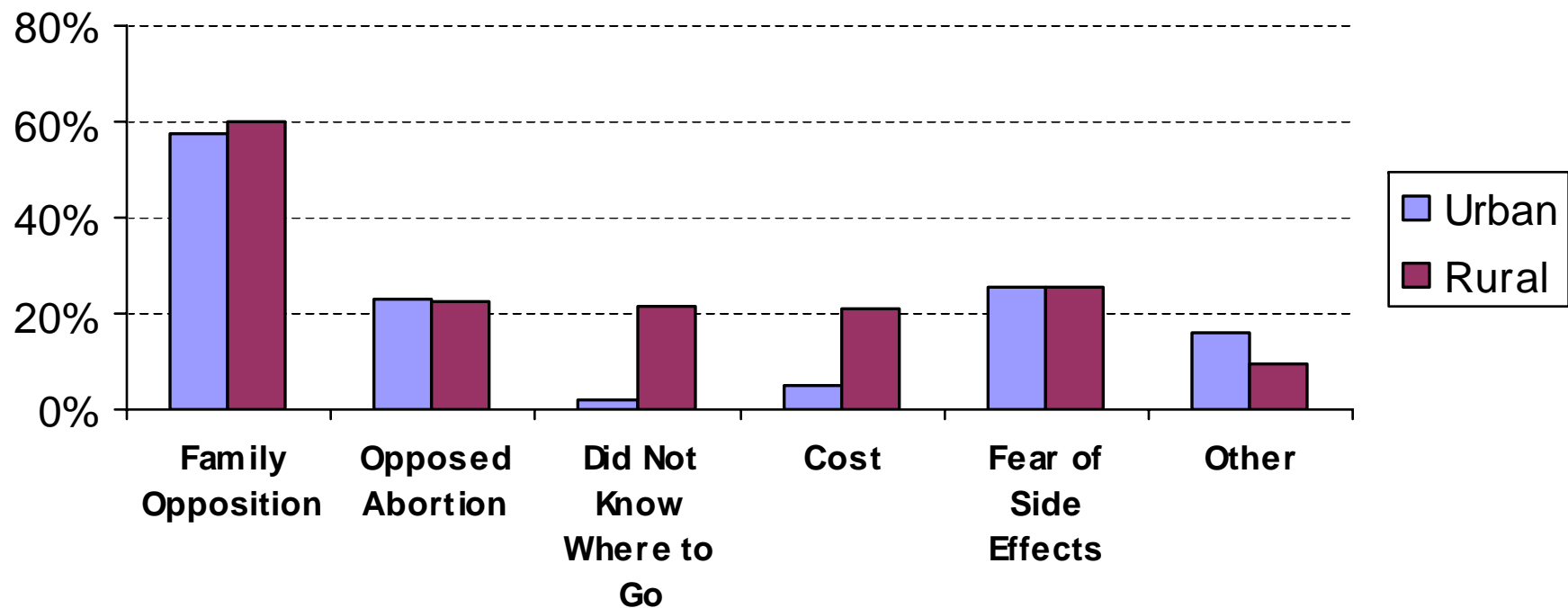
- A mixed-method data collection methodology was used to collect the data
- Data was collected from 2,440 women aged 15-39 with at least one child
- Retrospective data was collected on
 - every pregnancy experience in a woman's reproductive history (N=9,127)
 - each abortion attempt a woman made (N=1,053), including multiple attempts within a single pregnancy.

Pathways to Abortion

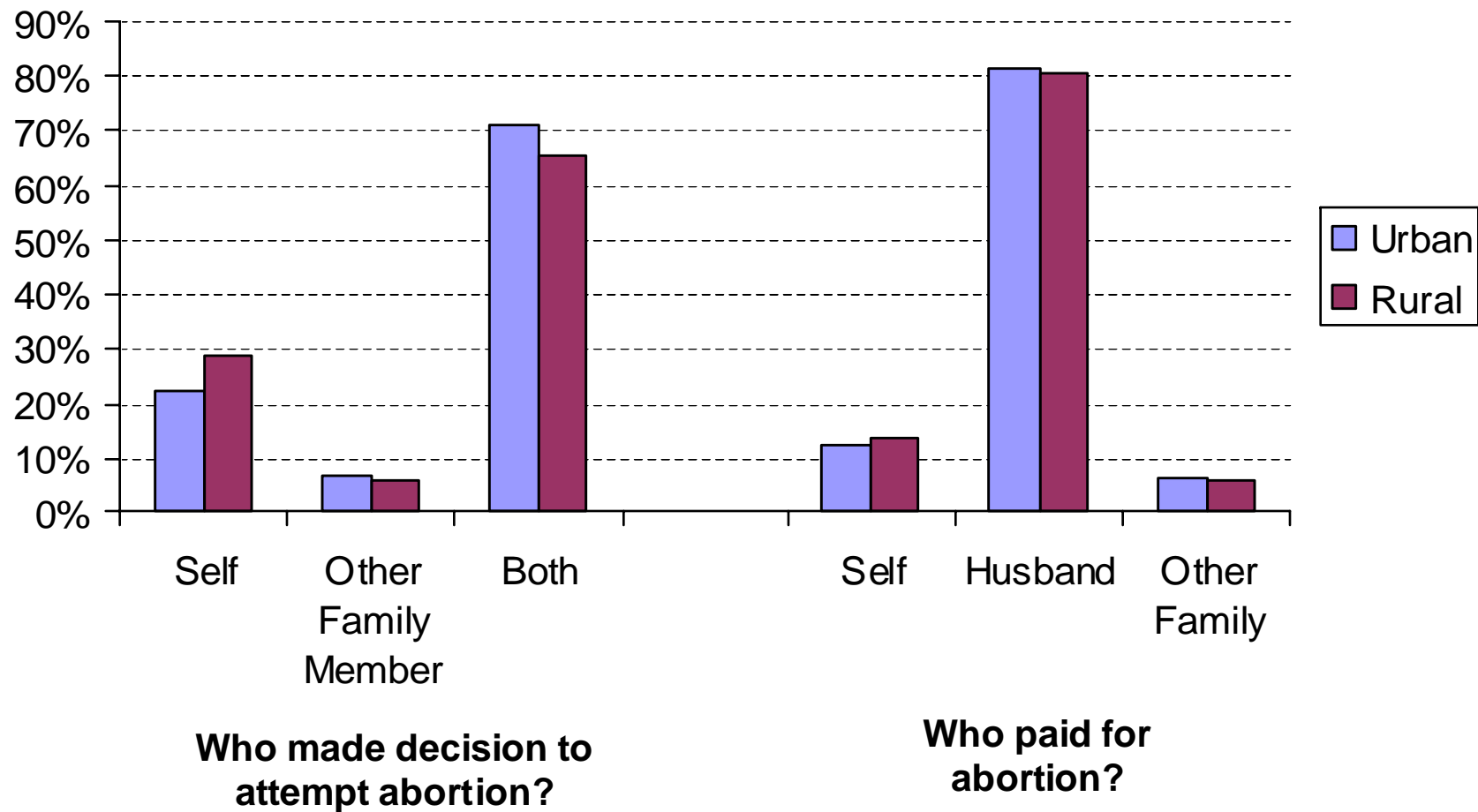


Obstacles to Attempting Abortion

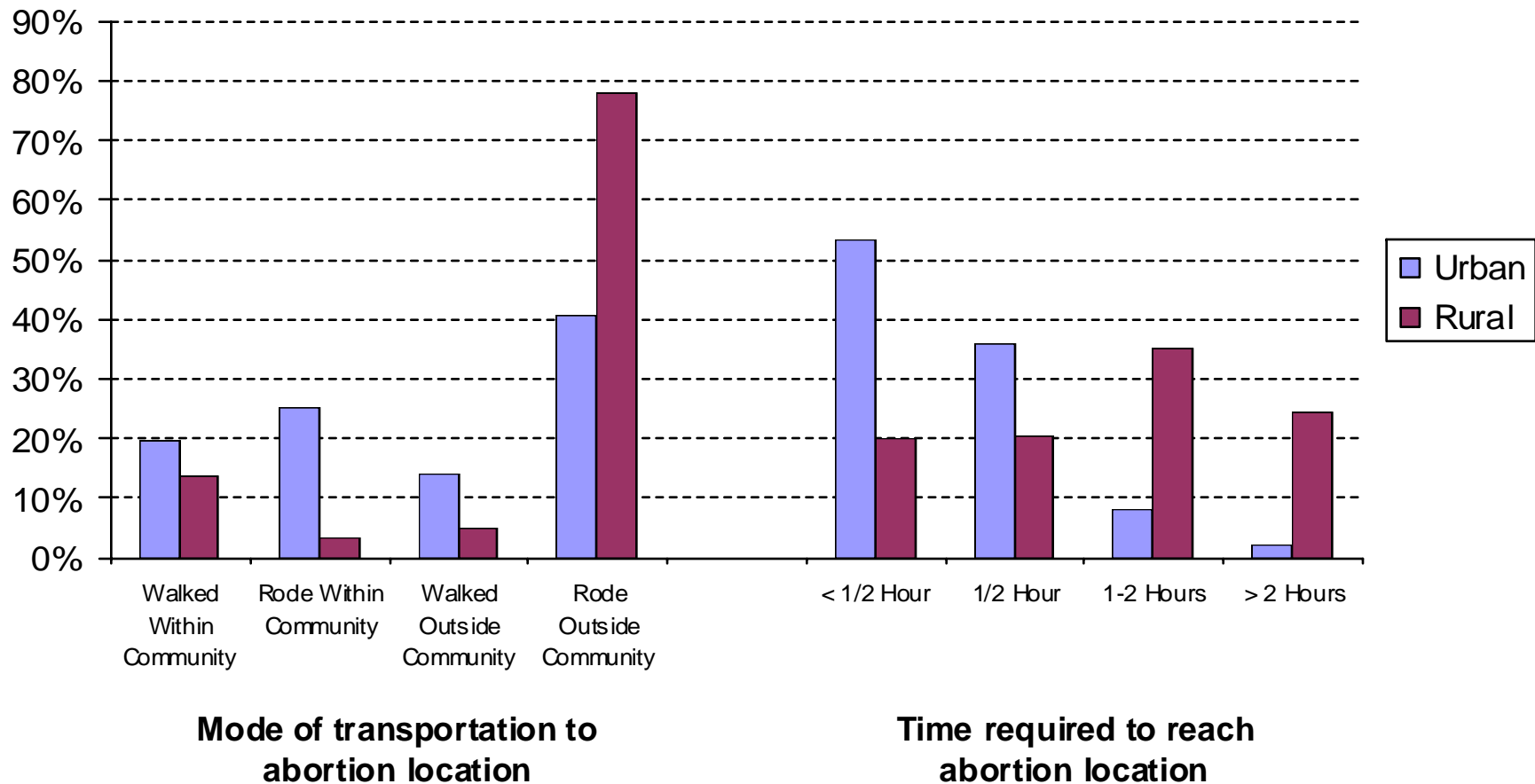
**Reasons for Not Attempting Abortion among Women
Who Wanted to End Pregnancy but Did Not**



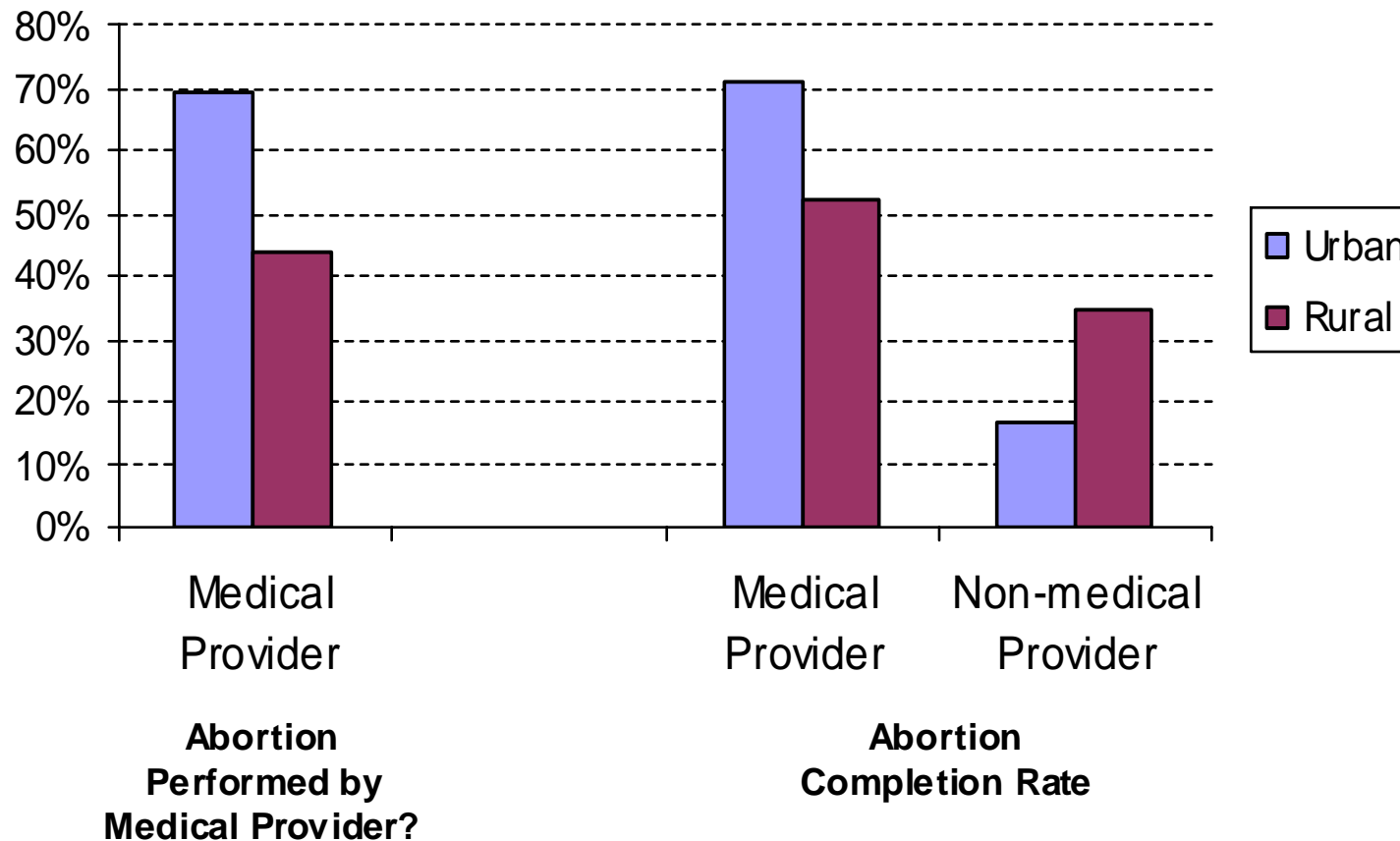
Women's Experiences with Abortion Attempts



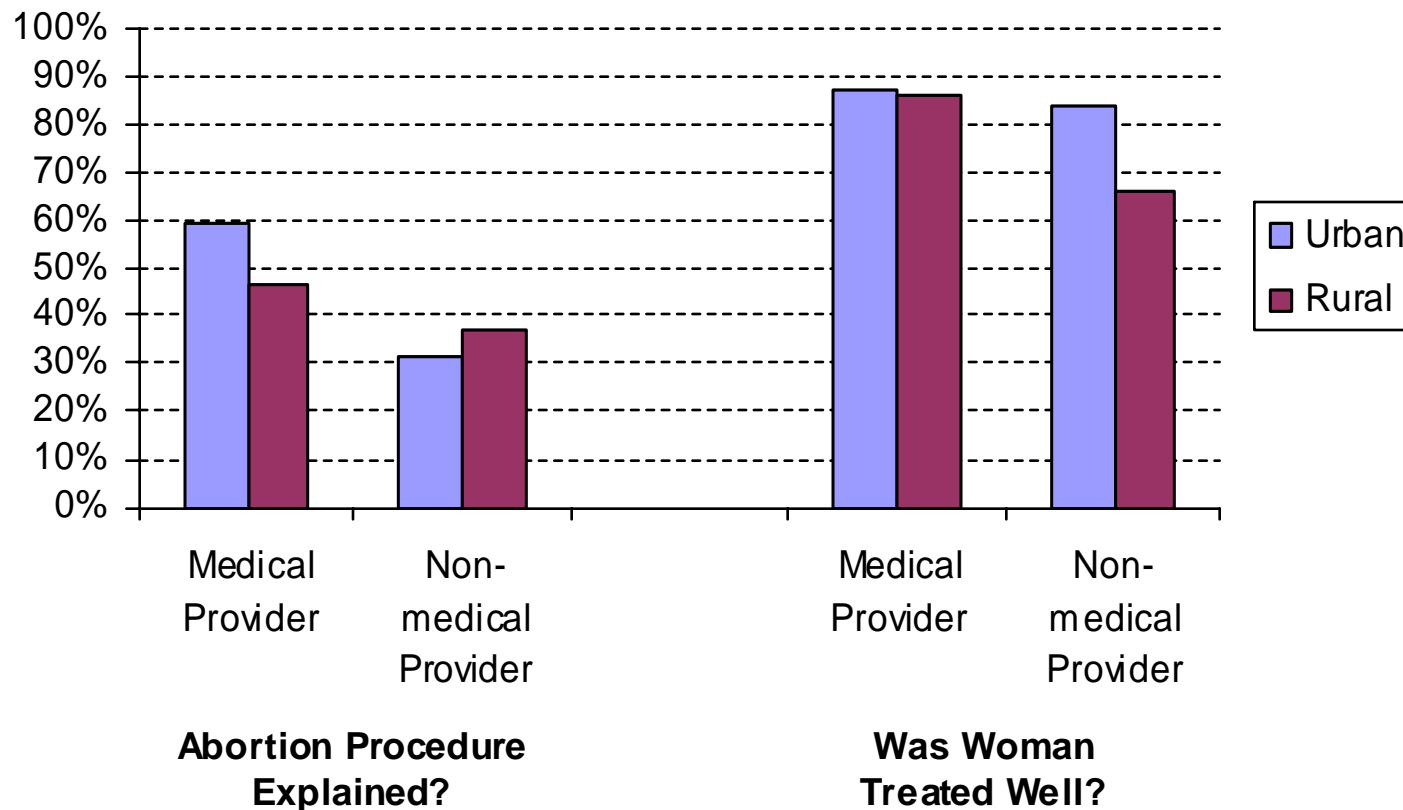
Women's Experiences with Abortion Attempts



Women's Experiences with Abortion Services



Women's Experiences with Abortion Services

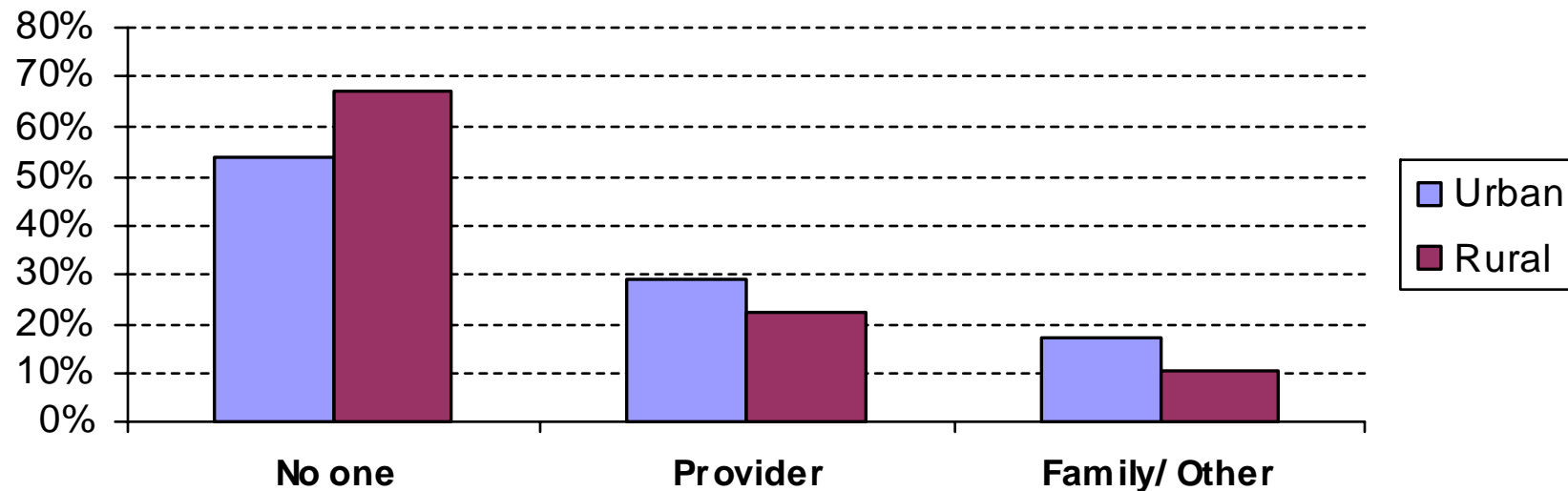


Women's Experiences with Abortion Services

- Over abortion attempts resulted in some complications, with a quarter reporting severe complications
 - Rural women had more complications, and required more bed rest
 - Severe complications were particularly common when women used 'other' abortion methods
- Morbidity high for all providers

Women's Post-abortion Experience

From Whom Do Women Receive Post-abortion Contraceptive Counseling?



Conclusions - Obstacles

- Primary obstacles to abortion in this context are:
 - family opposition
 - fear of side effects
 - distance/cost/accessibility
- All of these factors are more prominent in rural areas
- A significant proportion of women who do want an abortion do not attempt
- Many of the abortion attempts rely on ineffective and potentially dangerous methods

Conclusions – Target Issues

- Family Opposition
 - Why is there disagreement? How to reduce this?
 - What are continued factors leading to pronatalism among other family members?
 - Who is making decision?
- Cost/Accessibility
 - Government provision is woeful
- Safety
 - Morbidity in all settings high
- Contraceptive use
 - Use is low, and information is scarce