



# Midwives Or Doctors? Tradition Or Modernization?

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## INTRODUCTION

Antenatal and intra-partum care has traditionally been an art purely held by midwives. Although they form the essence of obstetrics practice worldwide, modernisation has allowed doctors, especially obstetricians to shift the equilibrium away from them.

Although midwifery led care remains an essential alternative in most countries, Malaysia has opted for a shared care based on risk factors with the obstetrician playing a more dominant role.

The objective of this study is to evaluate the intra-partum trends and outcomes between midwives and doctors in Malaysia.

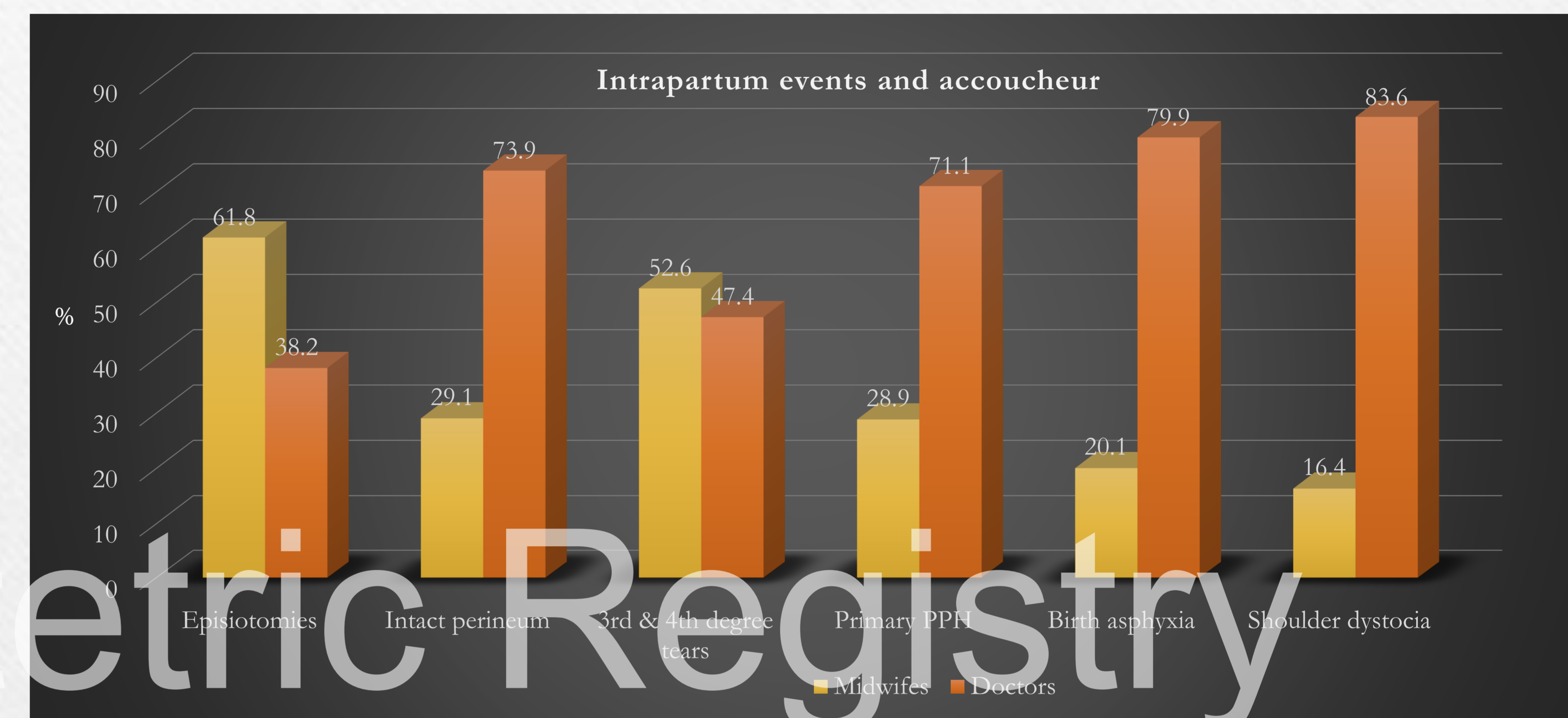
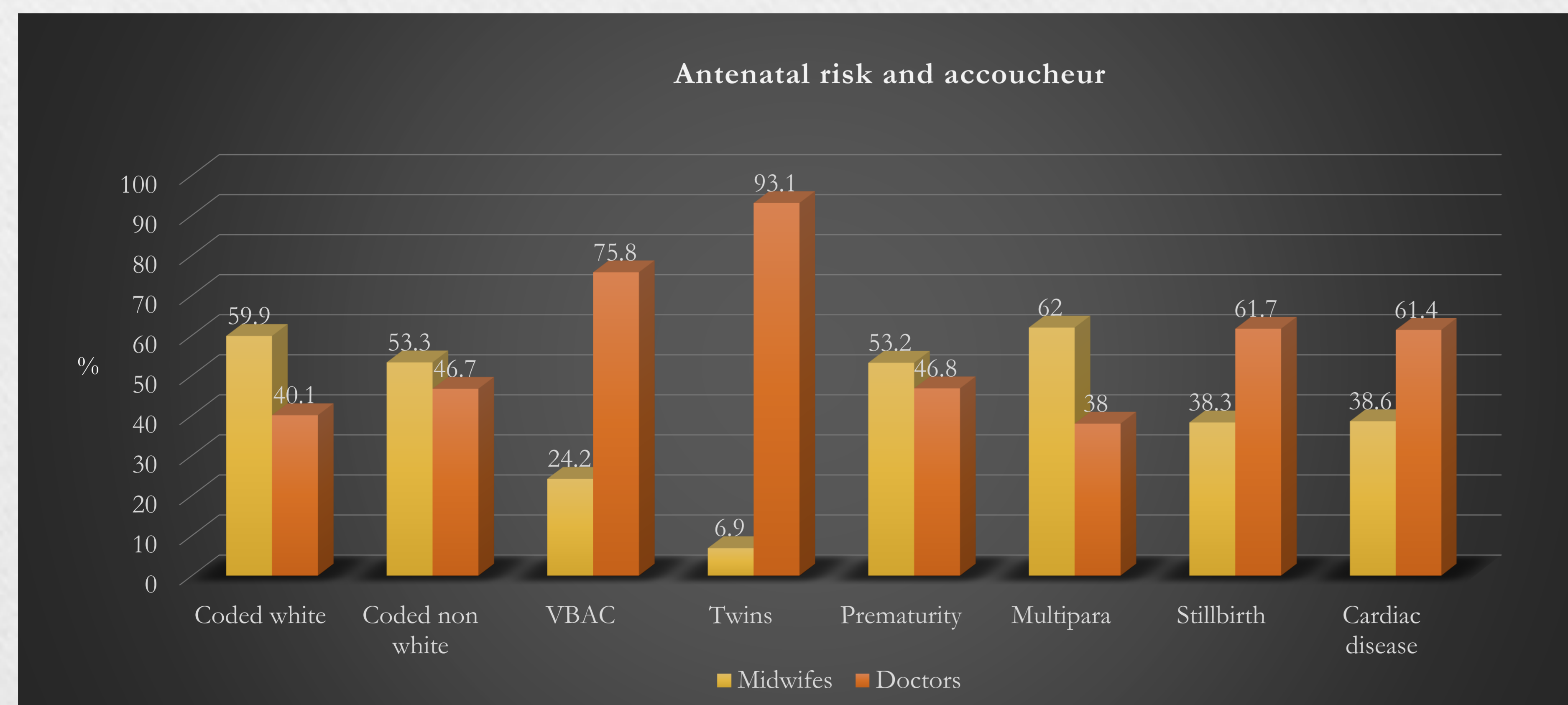
## METHODS

This is a retrospective cohort study. The study period was from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 till 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 and 399,274 deliveries were evaluated.

Specific variables were extracted from the National Obstetric Registry of Malaysia (NOR) from all the participating hospitals in Malaysia.

## RESULTS

62.4% of deliveries in tertiary hospitals were delivered by midwives



## CONCLUSIONS

The practice of Obstetrics has changed dramatically over the decades. What was once considered an art is now a science backed by evidence. The goal is towards achieving safe motherhood. However, that should not come at the price of an increased intervention and medicalization. The essence is to strike a balance between the physiological processes while preventing complications. This can only be achieved by a shared care between midwives and doctors who each have their essential roles to play and patients should be empowered to choose what they perceive as best.

Perhaps it is time to restore the glorious past of our midwives in Malaysia which is fast evading. They still play an integral role in Obstetrics in Malaysia and it is important to ensure that integrity remains preserved.

## REFERENCES

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