

Research Article

The Relationship between the Implementation of Pregnant Women's Classes and Childbirth Anxiety

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Abstract: Anxiety before childbirth is a common psychological condition experienced by pregnant women, particularly those who are primigravida. Such anxiety can be influenced by various factors, including lack of knowledge, fear of pain, and uncertainty about the childbirth process. Prenatal classes are educational programs designed to improve pregnant women's understanding, confidence, and readiness in facing labor. These classes typically provide information about pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum care, and newborn care. However, the extent to which prenatal classes effectively reduce anxiety before childbirth requires further investigation. This study aimed to determine the relationship between the implementation of prenatal classes and labor anxiety levels among pregnant women. A quantitative research design with a cross-sectional approach was used. The sample consisted of 30 pregnant women selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using standardized anxiety questionnaires administered before and after participants attended prenatal classes. The data were analyzed using the Chi-Square statistical test with a significance level set at $p < 0.05$. The findings revealed a significant relationship between participation in prenatal classes and a reduction in labor anxiety, with a $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). These results indicate that prenatal classes can play an important role in preparing pregnant women mentally and emotionally for the childbirth process. The interactive education and supportive environment provided during these sessions help participants gain confidence and reduce fear. It is recommended that healthcare providers in health facilities continue to optimize the delivery of prenatal classes by incorporating more interactive methods and involving family members. Family support, in combination with structured prenatal education, can further enhance the effectiveness of these programs in reducing childbirth-related anxiety.

Keywords: Anxiety; Childbirth; Education; Pregnancy; Women.

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1. Introduction

Childbirth is a physiological process experienced by every pregnant woman as the final stage of pregnancy. However, for most mothers, especially primigravidas, childbirth is often a source of significant anxiety (Rohmah et al., 2022). Labor anxiety can have a negative impact on the mother's physical and psychological condition and has the potential to affect the course of the labor process, such as increasing the risk of prolonged labor or medical procedures such as cesarean section (Sari & Putri, 2021). Therefore, effective efforts are needed to reduce the anxiety of pregnant women approaching childbirth.

One of the programs designed to improve maternal readiness in facing childbirth is the pregnancy class. The pregnancy class is an educational program that aims to provide information about pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, and newborn care (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). Through this class, pregnant women can gain sufficient knowledge about the labor process, so that they can reduce anxiety due to ignorance or misinformation (Handayani et al., 2023).

Several studies have shown that pregnancy classes have an important role in improving mental readiness and reducing labor anxiety. A study by Utami et al. (2021) revealed that mothers who actively attend prenatal classes tend to have lower levels of anxiety compared to mothers who do not attend these classes. This is because prenatal classes not only provide

medical information, but also emotional and social support from health workers and fellow participants.

However, the implementation of prenatal classes in various regions still faces challenges, such as lack of participation of pregnant women, limited health workers, and access constraints for mothers who live in remote areas (Pratiwi et al., 2022). In addition, some pregnant women still feel less confident in facing childbirth even though they have attended prenatal classes, which shows that the effectiveness of this program still needs to be improved (Fitriani & Lestari, 2023).

Labor anxiety that is not managed properly can have an impact on increasing levels of stress hormones, such as cortisol and adrenaline, which can inhibit the labor process (Yuliani et al., 2021). Therefore, appropriate interventions, such as prenatal classes, need to be evaluated for their effectiveness in reducing anxiety in pregnant women approaching childbirth.

This study aims to determine the relationship between the implementation of prenatal classes and labor anxiety. By knowing this relationship, it is expected that health workers can improve educational strategies in prenatal classes to maximize their benefits for pregnant women.

The results of this study are expected to be a reference for health workers in optimizing prenatal classes as an effort to reduce labor anxiety. In addition, this study can also provide insight for pregnant women and families regarding the importance of attending prenatal classes as a form of preparation for childbirth.

2. Research Methods

This study used a quantitative design with a cross-sectional approach. The number of respondents was 30 pregnant women who were selected by purposive sampling. Data were collected through anxiety questionnaires before and after attending prenatal classes. Data analysis used the Chi-Square statistical test with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Information	Frequency	Percent
Mother's Age		
<20 year	2	6.2
20-35 year	25	75.0
>35 year	3	18.8
Total	30	100.0
Mother's Education		
Elementary school	8	26.2
Junior high school	8	26.2
High school	7	18.4
Bachelor's degree	7	18.4
Total	30	100.0
Mother's Job		
Private Entrepreneur	1	4.2
Honorary	2	6.2
Civil servant	3	18.8
Housewife	25	70.8
Total	30	100.0

According to table 1. most of the mothers' ages are 20-35 years (75%). Mother's education 8 respondents graduated from elementary school (26.2%), 8 respondents graduated from junior high school (26.2%), 7 respondents graduated from high school (18.4%) and 7 respondents graduated from college (18.4%). Most of the 25 (70.8%) respondents were housewives.

Table 2. Class of Pregnant Women * Labor Anxiety Crosstabulation

Information		Labor Anxiety		Total
		Light	Medium	
Class	Aktiv	25	0	25
	Non Aktiv	0	5	5
Total		25	0	30
Uji Chi square				0.000

According to table 2. it was found that 25 pregnant women were active in the pregnancy class activities, so that anxiety was mild. 5 pregnant women were not active in the pregnancy class so that they felt moderate anxiety. The chi square test was obtained, namely $0.000 < 0.05$, which means that H_0 is rejected, H_1 is accepted, there is a relationship between the Implementation of Pregnancy Classes and Labor Anxiety.

From this study, Anxiety before childbirth is a common phenomenon in pregnant women, especially for those who lack education regarding the childbirth process (Rohmah et al., 2022). Prenatal classes are one of the educational methods designed to improve the readiness of pregnant women in facing childbirth, both physically and psychologically. Based on the data obtained from this study, it was found that out of 30 respondents, 25 pregnant women who actively attended prenatal classes experienced mild anxiety, while 5 pregnant women who did not actively attend classes experienced moderate anxiety.

The results of the chi-square test showed a p-value = 0.000, which means it is smaller than the significance level of 0.05. This shows that there is a significant relationship between the implementation of prenatal classes and the level of anxiety before childbirth. In other words, pregnant women who actively attended prenatal classes have lower levels of anxiety compared to those who are not active (Utami et al., 2021).

These results are in line with previous studies which state that prenatal classes can improve mothers' understanding of the pregnancy and childbirth process, thereby reducing anxiety due to ignorance or misinformation (Handayani et al., 2023). Pregnant women who have a better understanding of the childbirth process tend to be more mentally and emotionally prepared to face childbirth (Fitriani & Lelstari, 2023).

In addition, in prenatal classes, participants not only get information from health workers but also get social support from fellow pregnant women. This social support plays an important role in reducing anxiety, because mothers feel they are not alone in facing

childbirth (Pratiwi et al., 2022). Other studies also show that support from the surrounding environment, including partners and family, can strengthen the positive effects of prenatal classes in reducing anxiety (Sari & Putri, 2021).

High anxiety in pregnant women can trigger an increase in stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline, which can negatively impact the labor process. This increase in hormones can cause muscle tension, increased blood pressure, and disruption of uterine contractions, which can prolong the labor process (Yuliani et al., 2021). Therefore, strategies to reduce anxiety in pregnant women are very important in supporting smooth labor.

In this study, mothers who were not active in pregnancy classes tended to experience moderate anxiety. This shows that lack of education and support in dealing with childbirth can increase fear and uncertainty (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). Mothers who do not have access to accurate information are more susceptible to myths or misinformation that can increase their anxiety (Rohmah et al., 2022).

The implementation of effective pregnancy classes can provide broader benefits in efforts to reduce the incidence of problematic labor due to excessive anxiety. Studies show that mothers who attend pregnancy classes have a higher level of courage in facing childbirth and are more likely to choose normal delivery compared to mothers who do not attend classes (Utami et al., 2021).

However, the effectiveness of pregnancy classes still depends on various factors, such as the method of delivering the material, the involvement of health workers, and the availability of adequate facilities. Several studies have shown that prenatal classes that implement an interactive and experience-based approach have a more significant impact on reducing anxiety (Handayani et al., 2023).

Limited access and low participation of pregnant women in prenatal classes are still challenges in several areas. Factors such as distance, time, and busy mothers are often obstacles to their participation in prenatal classes (Fitriani & Lelstari, 2023). Therefore, innovation is needed in the implementation of prenatal classes, for example by using online methods or a combination of face-to-face and virtual meetings to reach more pregnant women.

On the other hand, motivation from health workers also plays a role in increasing the effectiveness of prenatal classes. Research shows that health workers who are active and communicative in delivering material can improve pregnant women's understanding and increase their interest in attending classes regularly (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

In addition, the role of the family, especially the husband, is also very important in supporting pregnant women in facing childbirth. Several studies have shown that husband involvement in prenatal classes can increase maternal confidence in facing childbirth and significantly reduce anxiety (Sari & Putri, 2021).

With a significant relationship between prenatal classes and anxiety levels, health workers are expected to increase the effectiveness of this program. One way that can be done is to adjust the material for the prenatal class to the needs of the participants, so that mothers feel more prepared to face childbirth (Handayani et al., 2023).

In addition, the role needs to be collaboration between health workers and local governments in improving access and the quality of prenatal classes, especially in areas with limited health facilities (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020).

Overall, the results of this study support the importance of prenatal classes in reducing labor anxiety. With a better understanding of the labor process, pregnant women can face childbirth more calmly and confidently, which can ultimately improve the safety of mothers and babies (Yuliani et al., 2021).

4. Conclusions

Based on the results of this study, it was found that there was a significant relationship between the implementation of prenatal classes and the level of anxiety before childbirth. Of the 30 respondents, 25 pregnant women who actively attended prenatal classes experienced mild anxiety, while 5 pregnant women who were not active experienced moderate anxiety. The results of the chi-square test showed a p-value = 0.000, which means it is smaller than the significance level of 0.05, so H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

Prenatal classes have been proven effective in reducing maternal anxiety before childbirth because they provide education that increases understanding of the childbirth process, as well as social support that can help reduce fear and worry. Mothers who actively attend this class are more mentally and emotionally prepared compared to mothers who are not active.

Therefore, optimizing the implementation of prenatal classes is very important to increase the readiness of pregnant women to face childbirth. Efforts are needed from health workers and related parties to increase maternal participation in prenatal classes with more interactive education methods and involving the role of the family, especially the husband, to support the physical and mental readiness of pregnant women.

The results of this study are expected to be a basis for health workers in improving the quality of maternity class services, so that they can help reduce labor anxiety and improve the welfare of mothers and babies.

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