

# Spouse's Support for the Expectant Mother's Fear of Going into Labor during the Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

Pregnant women typically experience higher levels of anxiety during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The support of the husband is one of the things that can lower a pregnant woman's anxiety level. This review of the literature aims to determine whether husbands are supportive of pregnant women's anxiety about giving birth during the pandemic. The methodology employed in the literature review is a methodical approach to data analysis using Google Scholar and Pubmed, two databases. Ten inclusions from a total of 270,338 articles were found in six Google Scholar results and ten Pubmed results. The findings indicate that ten articles discuss husbands supporting pregnant women who are anxious about giving birth in the midst of a pandemic. Three articles with correlation are the result of the analysis.

**Keywords:** anxiety, husband's support, pandemic

## BACKGROUND

The end of 2019 saw the discovery of a new virus called the Corona Virus (SARS-Cov-2), which has drawn interest and raised concerns. The virus was first identified in Wuhan, China, and it later spread and became an epidemic across the globe. Data from the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling COVID-19 Republic of Indonesia show that as of June 2, 2020, there were 26,940 positive confirmed cases and 1,641 deaths overall, with 1641 (6.1%) of those deaths being related to COVID-19. In Malang City, there were 15,085 positive cases and 1,100 Covid-19-related deaths. It was confirmed that 27 pregnant women who passed away had COVID-19. In 2019, there were 5,256,483 pregnant women in Indonesia. The quantity of expectant mothers.

Several developing countries in the world have a high risk of psychological disorders in pregnant women = 15.6% and mothers before giving birth = 19.8%, including Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe (World Health Organization, 2018). In Uganda as many as 18.2% of pregnant women experience depression or anxiety, in Nigeria as many as 12.5%, Zimbabwe as many as 19%, and South Africa 41% (WHO, 2008). As many as 81% of women in the United Kingdom have experienced psychological disorders during pregnancy. Meanwhile, in France, 7.9% of primigravida mothers experienced anxiety during pregnancy, 11.8% experienced depression during pregnancy, and 13.2% experienced anxiety and depression (Ibanez, 2018). The incidence of anxiety in pregnant women in Indonesia reached 373,000,000. Research conducted on pregnant women showed that 22.5% experienced mild anxiety, 30% experienced moderate anxiety, 27.5% experienced severe anxiety, and 20% experienced very severe anxiety (Sarifah, 2016). Meanwhile, research conducted in East Java showed that 42.8% of pregnant women experienced anxiety before giving birth (Wibowo, 2018).

Childbirth is a natural process, a normal event, but if it is not managed properly it can occur abnormally. The birthing process often results in psychological aspects, giving rise to various psychological problems for pregnant women, one of which is anxiety. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government called for the movement to wear masks when healthy or sick. This appeal resulted in restrictions for pregnant women from leaving the house. These conditions can cause psychological problems for pregnant women which can cause anxiety. Pregnant women experience anxiety and even depression and this can increase the number of deaths. The results of the study show that pregnant women who experience anxiety and even stress are caused by various kinds of problems including the economy, family, work, as well as worries about the pregnancy itself and childbirth. This can cause dangerous conditions during pregnancy, thereby affecting the condition of the mother and fetus (Durankuş and Aksu, 2020). The psychological impact on pregnant women during the Covid-19 pandemic is that it causes anxiety which can disrupt mental health.

Anxiety will have a negative impact on pregnant women from pregnancy to delivery, inhibiting growth, weakening uterine muscle contractions and so on. This impact can harm the mother and fetus (Novitasari, 2013). A study in Indonesia shows that pregnant women with high levels of anxiety are at risk of giving birth to premature babies and even miscarriage (Astria, 2019). Apart from having an impact on the birthing process, anxiety in pregnant women can also affect the child's growth and development. Anxiety that occurs, especially in the third trimester, can result in a decrease in birth weight (Shahhosseini, et al, 2015).

The right solution for pregnant women to overcome anxiety is their husband's support. A support will motivate pregnant women to prepare for birth. A positive attitude and good support from your husband will make the pregnancy process enjoyable and the fetus always healthy and strong. The impact if there is no support from the husband is that it is feared that the mother will not be able to adapt well to the discomfort before giving birth. Husband's support is the availability of resources provided by the husband to his wife in the form of physical and psychological comfort obtained through the knowledge that the individual is loved, cared for and cherished. There are 4 types of husband support, namely information support, emotional support, instrumental support and appreciation support.

## **METHODS**

A methodical approach to data analysis using two databases, namely Google Scholar and PubMed, was employed in the literature review. Ten of the 270,338 articles were included based on six results from Pubmed and ten from Google Scholar.

## **RESULTS**

According to research by Hayun Manudyaning Susilo at al, (2017) shows research results: research on the relationship between age, husband's support and anxiety facing childbirth produces a value of  $\rho = 0.482$  for age and  $\rho = 0.000$  for husband's support. Conclusion: From the variables of age and husband's support, the one that has a significant relationship is husband's support.

According to research by Tresya Pratiwi Dwiwanto, at al (2021), it shows that there is a significant negative relationship between husband's support and the level of anxiety of pregnant women before giving birth. Future research can expand the research sample to respondents from various regions in Indonesia so that a more comprehensive picture of anxiety in mothers is obtained. pregnant in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic.

According to research by Lisa Elvina, at al (2018) shows that there is a relationship between information and the psychological readiness of pregnant women (P-value= 0.016), there is a relationship between husband's support (P-value=0.009), there is a relationship between experience (P-value=0.037) and Psychological readiness of third trimester pregnant women. It

is hoped that health workers will pay attention to the psychology of third trimester pregnant women who will face childbirth by providing comprehensive pregnancy care. Apart from that, health workers, especially midwives, can continue to provide support so that pregnant women are happy because they receive attention.

According to research by Nilda Yulita Siregar, et al (2021), research results show that only 8.1% of pregnant women experience mild anxiety, while 91.9% do not experience anxiety. Pregnant women who experience mild anxiety are 20% in the at-risk age group, 20% with a diploma education, 11.5% in mothers who do not work, 60% in primigravidas, and 15.8% in mothers who do not receive husband's support. The anxiety that occurs mostly occurs in primigravidas because it is their first experience of pregnancy. Suggestions: for village midwives to further increase their role and responsibility, especially providing information about pregnancy and childbirth, especially for primigravida mothers and involving husbands in posyandu activities for pregnant women.

Based on the research results of Vivin Yuni Astutik, et al (2017), the research results show the influence of the independent variable and the dependent variable together using a varied regression analysis approach. The results of the research show that there is a relationship between pregnancy exercise and anxiety levels, there is a relationship between husband's support and anxiety levels, there is a relationship between midwife support and anxiety levels; and the husband's support variable is more dominant in the level of anxiety. It is recommended that future researchers conduct research on how to overcome the level of anxiety facing childbirth in pregnant women using relaxation techniques.

Based on the research results of Andi Tenri Lestari Dwi Wahyuni, et al (2021), based on the research results, there is an influence of husband's support on the anxiety level of pregnant women in the third trimester when facing childbirth.

Based on the research results of O. Arisukwu, C. O et al, (2021), the results show: The findings show that respondents expect and receive maximum support from their partners during pregnancy, labor and delivery. Spiritual support such as prayer and fasting is the main support that pregnant women expect and receive from their husbands during pregnancy and childbirth. Others include helping with household chores, providing finances, caring for other children, accompanying you to the delivery room, and sexual support. More than three-quarters of respondents stated that maximum support from their husbands made pregnancy, labor and delivery easier. Cramer's V shows that the relationship between husband's support and employment is 0.233 and Pearson Chi-square shows that the relationship is statistically significant  $2(2) = 27.894, p < .001$ .

Conclusion: The study concluded that partner support during pregnancy is high among rural women in South West Nigeria, and has a positive impact on their wives' pregnancy, labor and delivery. High levels of partner support must be maintained to improve family ties and development and reduce maternal and child mortality.

Meanwhile, according to the AyşeÇevik Ateşa, et al (2019) panel, research results showed that there was a significant negative relationship between the average State-Trait Anxiety Inventory score and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support score of pregnant women and their partners ( $p < 0.05$ ). Couples' anxiety levels did not differ significantly according to whether they received support from each other and from emergency nurses ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Conclusion: It was found that the level of state and trait anxiety of partners decreased as perceived social support increased. However, it was determined that the support couples received from each other and from emergency nurses was not enough in terms of reducing anxiety.

Meanwhile, according to David Onchonga et al, (2021), research results showed that 58.6% of pregnant women and 45.7% of their partners reported a high fear of giving birth, with primiparous couples having a higher fear of childbirth compared to multiparous couples. Also,

findings revealed a significant association between fear of childbirth among pregnant women and variables such as level of education ( $p = 0.022$ ), parity ( $p < 0.001$ ), previous mode of delivery ( $p < 0.001$ ), having routine prenatal check-ups. check-up ( $p < 0.001$ ), and having positive feelings about the expected delivery ( $p < 0.001$ ). For couples, education level ( $p < 0.001$ ), previous birth experience ( $p < 0.001$ ), and feelings about the upcoming birth ( $p < 0.001$ ), were significantly associated with prenatal fear. The results of the Spearman correlation test showed that there was a significant positive relationship between fear before giving birth in pregnant women and their partners ( $r = 0.182$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

Conclusion: This study found a significant positive relationship between fear of giving birth in pregnant women and their partners. There is a need to overcome the fear of childbirth not only among pregnant women but also their partners. This may help reduce fear of childbirth, given the important role men play in supporting their partners in the family as well as agents of change.

## DISCUSSION

### Anxiety of pregnant women facing the birthing process

In the results of this literature study, according to David Onchonga et al, (2021) shows a significant positive relationship between the fear of giving birth in pregnant women before their delivery. There is a need to overcome the fear of giving birth not only among pregnant women but also their partners. This might help reduce the fear of giving birth, considering the important role that men play in supporting their partners in the family and as agents of change. Emotional maturity can influence a primigravida's readiness to face childbirth. This is in line with Oktaviani N (2016) who explains that emotional maturity is a process where individuals are able to control and control their emotions in dealing with various situations, so that they can reach a level where the individual is able to control their emotions better, this is shown by developing towards independence. , able to accept reality, able to adapt, able to respond appropriately, capacity for balance, able to empathize and able to control anger. This is in line with Setyaningrum (2016) that women aged 20-35 years are physically ready to get pregnant because their reproductive organs are already perfectly formed. By being physically ready, of course psychologically pregnant women who are of sufficient age also have good mental health to maintain their pregnancy carefully. -heart. Pregnant women aged less than 20 years have feelings of anxiety and fear because their physical condition is not yet ready, while pregnant women aged more than 35 years are at higher risk of experiencing obstetric complications and perinatal morbidity and mortality. This is in line with Heriani (2016) that the severe anxiety experienced by young pregnant women (<20 years) can influence the field of perception so that a person tends to focus on something specific, specific, and unable to think about anything else. Meanwhile, pregnant women who are of age experience mild anxiety related to tension in daily life.

Another factor that influences anxiety when facing childbirth is fear of transmitting the virus. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Astuti in Musahib's (2017) research, that fear of transmitting the virus is said to influence anxiety, because mothers who are about to face childbirth, thoughts about transmission and fear can influence the mother's level of anxiety regarding the birth process. For mothers, pregnancy is their first experience of facing the birthing process during the Covid-19 pandemic, so the third trimester is felt to be even more anxious because it is getting closer to the birthing process. Mothers will tend to feel anxious about pregnancy, feel restless, and be afraid of childbirth, considering that ignorance is a contributing factor to anxiety.

When pregnancy enters the third trimester, pregnant women begin to enter the phase of thinking about the birth process they will experience. This is in line with (Fauziah and Sutejo, 2010) the experience of giving birth can also influence the level of anxiety, for mothers who have not

had the experience of giving birth, of course it is normal to feel anxiety and fear because for mothers this is a new experience so mothers tend to think a lot about things that make them afraid. Bad things happen to the baby and the mother during the birthing process. This also does not rule out the possibility that mothers who have had the experience of giving birth may experience a level of anxiety if they had a bad experience or trauma during the previous birth process.

Different from the literature that has been identified, Dewi et al (2021) state that there is no relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and anxiety among pregnant women, while different variables state that there is no relationship between husband's support and anxiety among pregnant women. There is no relationship between parity and anxiety among pregnant women. occurs because of the mother's experience of giving birth. This is in line with (Sulistiyowati, 2020) where there are pregnant women who have unresolved feelings about their first birth, so they are not as happy about giving birth to their first child and they think less about their second child during this pregnancy. . They are worried about their first child's reaction to the birth of their sibling and how their relationship with their first child will change if their second child is born. His worry will cause feelings of sadness and loss.

In general, the anxiety that occurs in women who are about to give birth is caused by several things. Pregnant women must adapt to physical and psychological changes that cause increased anxiety. This is in accordance with Usman (2016) that for pregnant women in the third trimester, the anxiety they experience is related to childbirth and the readiness of themselves and their families. Apart from that, anxiety arises because of the fear of losing the baby being born, such as the fear that the baby being born will die or be born with disabilities. Anxiety can also arise due to feelings of inability to meet the needs of the baby to be born, as well as the suspicion that giving birth will hinder daily activities.

#### **Husband's support for pregnant women in facing the birth process**

Based on the results of this literature study, based on the research results of Andi Tenri Lestari Dwi Wahyuni, at al (2021), based on the research results, there is an influence of husband's support on the anxiety level of pregnant women in the third trimester when facing childbirth.

Most pregnant women receive less support from their husbands. In Iya Farida's research (2019), the presence of a husband in meeting physical and psychological needs when a wife is pregnant is very important, especially for mothers approaching childbirth. Because for pregnant women, especially mothers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Mother Pregnants approaching delivery tend to have higher levels of anxiety, depression and aggression compared to pregnancies in adults. Therefore, husband's support is needed in pregnancy, because good husband behavior can make pregnant women feel calm during pregnancy.

The husband's relationship with pregnant women in facing the birth process from various sources or literature used by researchers shows that husband's support is very important in relation to husbands who try to provide support to pregnant women as they approach. The lowest indicator of husband's support in this study is the indicator of instrumental support. According to researchers, husband's support is a form of interaction which includes a relationship of mutual giving and receiving real protection, this protection makes someone give love, attention and feel a good connection to their partner.

#### **Husband's support for pregnant women's anxiety in facing childbirth**

According to the results of this literature study, research by Tresya Pratiwi Dwiwanto, at al (2021) shows that there is a significant negative relationship between husband's support and the level of anxiety of pregnant women before giving birth. Future research can expand the research sample to respondents from various regions in Indonesia so that a more comprehensive picture of anxiety in pregnant women in the Covid-19 pandemic era is obtained.

The results of the literature analysis have identified that there is support from husbands regarding the level of anxiety of pregnant women in facing childbirth. This is in line with

research by Mukhadiono et al (2015) where the results showed that the majority of respondents (91.1%) stated that husbands provided high support to their pregnant wives. This support can make a positive contribution to the psychological atmosphere of pregnant women, especially to reduce the level of anxiety that appears in the first pregnancy.

Yuliana (2015) said that the form of support in the form of material/instrumental was 83%, so that the majority of pregnant women in principle received good husband support before the birth period in terms of aspects of emotional, instrumental, information, assessment and overall appreciation.

This is in line with Mahmudah H (2016) that the husband's role in the form of support and affection from the husband can provide a feeling of comfort and security when the mother feels afraid and worried about her pregnancy so that pregnant women become better prepared because assistance will make the mother feel safe and comfortable. , more confident, and mom feels at peace. This is in line with Taufik (2010) that in general there are two explanations for why psychosocial support can reduce stress levels and can even maintain the mental health of the person concerned. The first explanation, namely direct effect, states that psychosocial support is a protective factor in all situations, it not only protects during periods of ongoing stress, but also at times afterward. However, this first explanation is considered incorrect and has been rejected by most psychologists from various fields of psychology. Meanwhile, the more widely accepted opinion is the explanation with the buffering hypothesis. This theory states that psychosocial support reduces stressful conditions that are pressing at that time. .Social support is needed both when the individual is suffering from stress and under normal conditions to prevent or act as a defense against the possibility of stress occurring in the individual. This is in line with Rukiyah and Yulianti (2014) that emotional support such as showing concern, attention and being sensitive to needs can influence emotional changes and calm pregnant women. So that pregnant women who receive emotional support in facing problems feel that they are not carrying the burden alone but that there are still other people who pay attention and are willing to listen to their complaints and even want to help solve the problems they face.

Apart from emotional support, husbands can provide assessment support. According to Rukiyah and Yulianti (2014), assessment support is providing the right decision for caring for the wife's pregnancy. In this study, for example, helping complete household work when the pregnancy is late and the mother cannot work too hard, this will make the mother feel happy. Support from husbands, especially husbands, plays a very important role in maintaining or maintaining a person's integrity, both physically and psychologically. A person in a state of stress will seek support from other people so that with this support, it is hoped that they can reduce stress (anxiety). Apart from playing a role in protecting someone from sources of stress, husband's support also has a positive influence on the health condition of pregnant women. Pregnant women with high levels of support will be able to handle their stress well. Husband's support involves a fairly extensive network which has a positive impact which is directly beneficial to a person's health and well-being and can reduce anxiety and helplessness. Someone who is experiencing stress (anxiety) will get positive feelings and experiences that life can run stably if they receive support from the surrounding environment. Family support (husband) can modify a person's reaction to anxiety stressors after carrying out a previous assessment. People who do not receive support from their family have a high tendency to experience the negative impacts of stress (anxiety) (Isnaniar, 2020).

Husband's support for Pregnant Women's Anxiety in Facing Childbirth from various sources and the results of this literature, according to researchers, the husband is the closest person who can play an important role for the woman who is giving birth. The husband as a birth companion can bring peace to the wife who is about to give birth and can play an active role in providing physical support and moral encouragement. Husband's support is one of the keys so that

mothers can maintain positive emotions during pregnancy. Husbands are required to have good emotional maturity in order to be able to cope. The husband's support will make the pregnancy and birth process enjoyable and the condition of the fetus always strong and healthy.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this literature study, based on the research results of Andi Tenri Lestari Dwi Wahyuni, et al (2021), there is an influence of husband's support on the anxiety level of pregnant women in the third trimester when facing childbirth.

In the results of this literature study, according to David Onchonga et al, (2021) shows a significant positive relationship between fear of giving birth in pregnant women before delivery. There is a need to overcome the fear of childbirth not only among pregnant women but also their partners. This may help reduce fear of childbirth, given the important role men play in supporting their partners in the family as well as agents of change.

According to the results of this literature study, research by Tresya Pratiwi Dwiwanto, et al (2021) shows that there is a significant negative relationship between husband's support and the level of anxiety of pregnant women before giving birth. Further research can expand the research sample to respondents from various regions in Indonesia so that it can be obtained a more comprehensive picture of anxiety in pregnant women in the Covid-19 pandemic era.

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