

ANXIETY RELATED TO PREGNANCY AMONG PRIMIGRAVIDA – A HOSPITAL BASED STUDY

Ms. Pooja V S¹

Ms. Saru Krishna A²

Lecturer, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecological nursing,

KIMS College of Nursing, Trivandrum¹

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynaecological nursing

KIMS College of Nursing, Trivandrum²

Title

A Study to Assess Anxiety Related to Pregnancy Among Primigravida Mothers Attending a Maternity Clinic in a Selected Hospital, Trivandrum District

Abstract

The study aimed to evaluate anxiety related to pregnancy among primigravida mothers attending a maternity clinic in the Trivandrum district. Objectives included assessing anxiety levels and examining associations between anxiety and socio-demographic variables. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed with 100 participants selected through consecutive sampling. Data analysis included descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Chi-square test). Results revealed that 46% of participants experienced moderate anxiety, while 54% reported severe anxiety. The highest mean subscale score was for excessive worry and specific fears (8.2 ± 4.8), followed by acute anxiety and adjustment (7.5 ± 3.9). A significant association was found between anxiety levels and the type of pregnancy, gestational age, and history of unplanned pregnancy. These findings highlight the need for early interventions to address anxiety and enhance maternal and neonatal outcomes.

Keywords

Primigravida, Pregnancy, Anxiety, Maternal health, Antenatal care

Introduction

Pregnancy is a transformative yet challenging phase in a woman's life, particularly for primigravida mothers. The novelty of pregnancy and childbirth often leads to heightened anxiety due to fear of labor, fetal well-being, and role adjustment. Anxiety during pregnancy can significantly impact maternal and neonatal health, yet it often remains underrecognized in low- and middle-income countries like India due to cultural stigma. This study addresses the prevalence of anxiety and its associated factors among primigravida women, emphasizing the need for timely interventions.

Background of the study

Anxiety is a natural response to stress, manifesting as fear, restlessness, or uneasiness. In pregnancy, anxiety can stem from physiological and psychological changes, particularly for first-time mothers. Unmanaged anxiety may lead to complications such as preterm birth, low birth weight, and poor neonatal outcomes. This study explores the

prevalence and factors influencing pregnancy-related anxiety, providing insights to improve maternal healthcare practices.

Need and significance of the study

Anxiety during pregnancy, especially among primigravida women, is a significant concern. Identifying its prevalence and contributing factors is essential for devising effective interventions. This study offers valuable evidence to guide healthcare professionals in promoting maternal wellbeing through improved antenatal care.

Objectives

1. To assess anxiety related to pregnancy among primigravida mothers attending a maternity clinic.
2. To identify associations between anxiety levels and selected socio-demographic variables

Hypothesis

H1: There is an association between anxiety related to pregnancy among primigravida mothers and their selected socio-demographic variables.

Methodology

- **Research Approach:** Quantitative
- **Design:** Cross-sectional
- **Setting:** Antenatal outpatient department, tertiary care hospital, Trivandrum district
- **Population:** Primigravida mothers in their third trimester attending antenatal OPD
- **Sample Size:** 100 participants
- **Sampling Technique:** Consecutive sampling

Inclusion Criteria:

- Primigravida mothers in their third trimester
- Willing to participate in the study

Exclusion Criteria:

- Primigravida mothers with diagnosed mental illness

Results

The study found that 46% of participants experienced moderate anxiety, and 54% reported severe anxiety. The subscale with the highest mean score (8.2 ± 4.8) was excessive worry and specific fears, followed by acute anxiety and adjustment (7.5 ± 3.9), and perfectionism, control, and trauma (6.9 ± 3.5). Findings indicated that anxiety was significantly associated with the type of pregnancy (planned vs. unplanned; $p < 0.05$), gestational age in weeks ($p < 0.01$), and history of unplanned pregnancy ($p < 0.01$). Women with unplanned pregnancies reported higher anxiety levels compared to those with planned pregnancies. Participants residing in nuclear families reported higher anxiety scores than those in joint families, possibly due to a lack of family support. Moreover, primigravida mothers with a history of infertility treatment displayed heightened anxiety related to fetal health and fear of pregnancy loss. The results also showed that younger mothers (aged 20–25 years) had slightly higher mean anxiety scores than

older participants (aged 26–30 years). Educational qualification and occupation did not significantly influence anxiety levels.

Discussion

The findings underscore the prevalence of anxiety among primigravida women and its potential impact on maternal and neonatal health. Factors such as fear of childbirth, lack of preparedness, and socio-demographic variables influence anxiety levels. Women with unplanned pregnancies or a history of infertility treatment are particularly vulnerable. This study emphasizes the importance of routine mental health screenings and culturally sensitive interventions to address stigma and improve access to care. Antenatal counselling sessions focusing on coping strategies and relaxation techniques could mitigate anxiety and enhance maternal and fetal outcomes.

Conclusion

The study concludes that anxiety is prevalent among primigravida mothers, with significant associations between anxiety and variables such as type of pregnancy, gestational age, and history of unplanned pregnancy. The findings highlight the necessity of early identification and intervention to mitigate adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes.

References

1. Shrestha S, Pun KD. Anxiety on primigravida women attending antenatal care: a hospitalbased cross-sectional study. *Kathmandu Univ Med J*. 2018;61(1):23-7.
2. Kaur MP, Tandon R, Das S, Rojra A, Kaur A, Kumar A, et al. Assessment of anxiety level related to pregnancy outcome among primigravida mothers in the third trimester. *Assessment*. 2021;5(2):30-4.
3. Gurung B, Jha A, Subedi S. Anxiety among antenatal mothers in a tertiary hospital. *J Kathmandu Med Coll*. 2019;8(29):12-7.
4. Sikarwar S, Gandhi R, Jain K. Prevalence and correlates of anxiety in pregnant women. *J Obstet Gynaecol India*. 2021;71(3):210-5.
5. Blackmore ER, Gustafsson H, Gilchrist M, Wyman C, Glover V. Pregnancy-related anxiety: Evidence from systematic reviews. *Clin Psychol Rev*. 2020;80:101875.
6. WHO. Mental health aspects of women's reproductive health: A global review of the literature. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2009.
7. Andersson L, Sundström-Poromaa I, Wulff M, Åström M, Bixo M. Neonatal outcome following maternal antenatal depression and anxiety: A population-based study. *Am J Epidemiol*. 2004;159(9):872-81.
8. Alder J, Fink N, Bitzer J, Hösli I, Holzgreve W. Depression and anxiety during pregnancy: A risk factor for obstetric, fetal, and neonatal outcome? A critical review of the literature. *Matern Fetal Neonatal Med*. 2007;20(3):189-209.
9. Glover V, O'Connor TG. Effects of antenatal stress and anxiety: Implications for development and psychiatry. *Br J Psychiatry*. 2002;180(5):389-91.
10. Dunkel Schetter C, Tanner L. Anxiety, depression, and stress in pregnancy: Implications for mothers, children, research, and practice. *Curr Opin Psychiatry*. 2012;25(2):141-8.