

MOTHER'S KNOWLEDGE OF WARNING SIGNS OF PREGNANCY, LABOUR AND PUERPERIUM

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ABSTRACT

Background: Although the birth of a child is one of the happiest event in all over the world, yet pregnancy and child birth are associated with the health risks to many women during their reproductive years.

Aims & Objective: The main objective of this study is to assess the mother's knowledge of warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.

Materials and Methods: Data was collected from 50 antenatal mothers by purposive sampling technique and questionnaire was used as a data collection tool. Result of this study shows that 36% of the mothers had poor knowledge, 24% had average knowledge, 34% had good knowledge and only 6% had excellent knowledge about warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.

Results: The overall knowledge percentage mean which was 50.73% (15.22 ± 7.15) revealed that the antenatal mothers had average knowledge about warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium. The knowledge of antenatal mothers is statistically, not associated with their age, educational qualification, parity, occupation, family income, type of family, religion, residential area and previous source of information.

Conclusion: The findings of the study will help the nursing professionals working in hospital and community areas to educate the mothers about the warning signs of pregnancy, labour & puerperium and also help the health personnel to prevent complication by identifying the warning signs as early as possible.

Key Words: Antenatal Mother; Labour; Pregnancy; Puerperium; Warning Signs

Introduction

Pregnancy is considered to be a normal phenomenon in a women's life. However, nearly 43% of pregnancies are considered high risk pregnancies affect the mother and foetal outcome. Among these, certain conditions are fatal and need early detection and immediate action. These condition may be detected during pregnancy or labour or immediately after the delivery.^[1]

WHO (2007) estimated that between 50% to 70% of deaths that occur due to various problems related to pregnancy, labour and puerperium can be prevented through early detection.^[2] The term 'warning signs' emphasizes the obstetric approach to indicate the risk conditions. To detect these conditions patients need to be screened and problems need to be identified and managed to promote optimal pregnancy outcome. The warning signs are; bleeding per vagina, premature rupture of membrane, convulsion, edema, headache during pregnancy, foul smelling discharge per vagina, fever, labour without progress for 12 hours, delayed placental delivery during labour; excessive bleeding from vagina during puerperium.^[3]

Most of the mothers had poor knowledge about the

warning signs of pregnancy induced hypertension and also that multi gravida had more knowledge compared to a primi-gravida. It is further reported that the risk is higher when the mother is ignorant of the warning signs and is not undergoing treatment.^[4]

Objectives: (1) To assess the knowledge of mothers with regard to the warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium. (2) To find the association between knowledge of mothers with regard to the warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium and their selected demographic variables.

Materials and Methods

A descriptive design with cross sectional survey approach was selected to carry out the study. The study sample comprised of all expectant mothers who attended antenatal clinics in selected maternity centers in Salem, Tamilnadu. The sample size for the study was 50 antenatal mothers. The inclusion criteria - (i) Antenatal mothers who understand and speak Tamil; (ii) Mothers who attended antenatal clinics in selected maternity centres; and (iii) Those who were willing to participate in the study. Purposive Sampling Technique was used for selecting the sample of the study. Tool used for the study

was closed ended questionnaire to assess the knowledge of warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium. Part A of questionnaire: Assessing demographic variables, Part B: warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.

Before beginning with the study, Formal administrative permission was obtained from the Principal, Vinayaka Mission's Annapoorana College of Nursing, and the City Health Officer, Salem Corporation, Salem. The study subjects were approached, the purpose of the study was explained to them and their consent for participation was obtained.

Results

The frequency and percentage wise distribution of demographic variables of samples revealed that (i) 78% of antenatal mothers were in the age group of 18-25 years; (ii) 88% were Hindus; (iii) 38% of mothers had primary education; (iv) 78% of mothers were house wives; (v) 78% of mothers belonged to nuclear families; where as 22% from joint families; (vi) 50% of Postnatal mothers were in the monthly income group of Rs 3001-5000; (vii) 76% were primi gravidas; (viii) 90% of postnatal mothers did not have any information regarding warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.

Area Wise Knowledge Scores of the Antenatal Mothers

The overall area wise mean, SD and mean percentage of knowledge scores of antenatal mothers about warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium was 15.22 ± 7.15 which is 50.73 % of the maximum score. Among each area of knowledge, the highest mean score (2.72 ± 1.524) which is 54.4% of the total score was obtained in the area of "warning signs of puerperium" and more or less similar 3.44 ± 1.856 which is 49.14.% and (9.06 ± 4.159) which is 50.3% of scores were obtained for areas of "warning sign of labour & warning signs of pregnancy" respectively . Hence it was interpreted that antenatal mothers had more knowledge regarding "warning signs of puerperium"

Level of Knowledge of Antenatal Mothers Regarding Warning Signs of Pregnancy, Labour and Puerperium

Percentage wise distribution of knowledge score shows that highest percentage (34%) of samples scored between 61 -80 which shows good knowledge towards

warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium and lowest percentage (6%) of antenatal mothers scored between 81-100 having excellent knowledge whereas 24% of mothers scored between 41-60 having average knowledge. Similar percentages (18% each) of mothers scored between 0-20 shows very poor knowledge and 21-40 shows poor knowledge respectively. Hence, it can be interpreted that highest percentage (34%) of the antenatal mothers have good knowledge regarding warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium under the study.

Table-1: Socio- Demographic profile of the antenatal mothers

Characteristics	N	%	
Age (Years)	<20	4	8
	21-25	26	52
	26-30	17	34
	31-35	3	6
Educational Status	No formal education	9	18
	Primary education	19	38
	Secondary education	10	20
	Higher education	12	24
Occupation	House wife	39	78
	Daily wages	5	10
	Self-employee	6	12
Family Income	<3000	10	20
	3001-5000	25	50
	5001-7000	9	18
	7001-9000	6	12
Type of Family	Nuclear	39	78
	Joint	11	22
Religion	Hindu	44	88
	Muslim	4	8
	Christian	2	4
Residential Area	Urban	41	82
	Rural	9	18
Previous source of information	Parents	5	10
	Nil	45	90

Table-2: Knowledge scores of antenatal mothers on warning signs

Areas	Max Scores	Scores		
		Mean	SD	Mean %
Warning signs of pregnancy	18	9.06	4.159	50.30
Warning signs of labour	7	3.44	1.856	49.14
Warning signs of puerperium	5	2.72	1.524	54.4
Overall	30	15.22	7.15	50.73

Table-3: Level of Knowledge of antenatal mothers

Level of Knowledge (%)	N	%
Very Poor (0 - 20)	9	18
Poor (21 - 40)	9	18
Average (41 - 60)	12	24
Good (61 - 80)	17	34
Excellent (81 - 100)	3	6
Total	50	100

Chi square test was used to find out the association between knowledge scores and demographic variables of the antenatal mothers. No statistical significant association was found between knowledge scores of the postnatal mothers when compared to age, educational status, parity, occupation, family monthly income, type of family, religion, residential area and the source of

information regarding warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.

Discussion

In this study, it was found that antenatal mothers had average knowledge about warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium. This is similar to the findings of Cluare MC et al. (2006), who reported that the mothers had average knowledge regarding warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium.^[5]

No significant association was found between the knowledge scores of the antenatal mothers and their age, religion, educational status, occupation, type of family, family monthly income, parity and the source of information about warning signs of pregnancy, labour and puerperium. It is also contradictory to the study conducted by Brunberg et al. (2009), who had observed in their study that there was significant association between the knowledge scores when compared to the demographic data.^[6]

IMPLICATIONS

- A structured teaching program based on the learning need of the mothers can be prepared and implemented.
- Nursing students can utilize the findings to educate the mothers in the areas of inadequate knowledge.
- The findings of the study can be utilized for conducting further research among the antenatal mothers in various settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To generalize the findings similar study can be undertaken for larger samples.
- A comparative study can be carried out to find out the knowledge of the warning signs of pregnancy, labour & puerperium among mothers in urban and rural areas.
- A similar study can be used to assess the knowledge of staff nurses.

Conclusion

The findings of the study will help the nursing professionals working in hospital and community areas to educate the mothers about the warning signs of pregnancy, labour & puerperium and also help the health personnel to prevent complication by identifying the warning signs as early as possible.

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