

Disparities of prevalence and causes of maternal antenatal anxiety among primigravida pregnant women in Egypt

Introduction

Anxiety is an all too common condition during pregnancy. The pregnant woman becomes more anxious when an unexpected threat occurs. It has been noted that anxiety often takes place when a pregnant woman expects one thing and is suddenly confronted with something quite different; sometimes may experience mood swings, a surge of energy and walking may become more difficult at the end of pregnancy, sometimes women must be worried because of minor ailments which occur during pregnancy. But if anxiety is becoming all-consuming & regularly interferes with day-to-day functioning, it's time to find a better way to deal with it.

Aim of the Study:

-Assess prevalence rate of maternal antenatal anxiety among primigravida pregnant women.

-Explore causes of maternal antenatal anxiety among primigravida pregnant women.

Research Questions

What is the prevalence rate of antenatal anxiety symptoms among primigravida women?

What are the causes for antenatal anxiety symptoms among primigravida women?

Subjects and Methods:

Design: A descriptive design was utilized for the current study.

Study Setting: The study was conducted at Egyptian University Hospitals in BeniSuef, El-Fayoum, and Benha from February to April in 2017. Each woman took approximately 30-45 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Sample:

A consecutive sample of 150 Egyptian pregnant women at the antenatal outpatient clinic and/or inpatient ward of three regional hospitals in Egypt was invited to participate in the study. Eligible women included all pregnant women of Egyptian ethnicity above 18 years of age. Women considering termination of pregnancy or having conceived through in-vitro fertilization were excluded.

Tools for data collection:

Tools of Data Collection: . It covered three main parts as follows:

The 1st part included demographic and personal data such as age, education and income adequacy.

The 2nd part included causes and risk factors of anxiety during pregnancy. The potential risk factors of antenatal anxiety were selected, based on our literature search; it consisted of five subsections;

Section (1): women life dissatisfaction including: unwanted pregnancy, body changes during pregnancy, disharmony in the family relationship, life satisfaction, marital satisfaction, sex of pregnancy, number of babies

Section (2): Associated medical disorder including anemia before pregnancy, diabetes mellitus, essential hypertension, heart disease.

Section (3): Complications during pregnancy including morning sickness, sleep deprivation, anemia during pregnancy, pregnancy-induced hypertension, gestational diabetes, prolonged sick leave during pregnancy

Section (4): Expected birth mode and birth complications including possible birth stimulation (augmentation of labor), expected episiotomy, expected vaginal and perineal trauma, expected cesarean sections

Section (5): Expected fetus's birth complications including known congenital anomalies, low birth weight, fetal growth restriction, prematurity, possible birth trauma to newborn, possible neonatal development disorder, successful breastfeeding initiation.

The 3rd part consists of 50 statements, asked the women to describe how they generally feel.

Results:

The distribution of the study subjects according to causes of antenatal anxiety. *Firstly*, the main causes among women in BeniSuef are sex of pregnancy (88.0%), expected birth mode and birth complications as expected cesarean sections (80.0%) and expected prematurity (92.0%). *Secondly*, the main causes (80.0%) mentioned by women in El-Fayoum are suspiciousness of ability to be a good mother and marital satisfaction, expected vaginal and 82.0% stated that their cause of anxiety is perineal trauma and expected prematurity. *Thirdly*, the main causes of anxiety that mentioned by pregnant women in Benha are suspiciousness of ability to be a good mother, lack of social support and sleep deprivation (90.0%), 94.0% mentioned prolonged sick leave during pregnancy. Additionally, all of them (100.0%) mentioned that they were anxious because of their suspiciousness of possible neonatal development disorder and expected episiotomy. Moreover, 96.0% expected vaginal and perineal trauma, and 98.0% expected cesarean sections.

Conclusion:

A lot of research attention is focused on postpartum depression. Relatively little attention has been paid to antenatal mental health problems specifically antenatal anxiety.

Our study showed that antenatal anxiety is more prevalent among pregnant women live in an extended family in Upper Egypt versus nuclear one in Lower Egypt, with a middle level of education, housewives, and low socioeconomic status. Additionally, pregnant women have high levels of anxiety in 1st and 3rd trimester

Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations can be derived:

Pregnancy is a time when women are more likely to face an increased level of anxiety. Anxiety during 1. pregnancy is a focus of research because it may affect developmental outcomes in the child. So, it is vital to keep or diminish antenatal anxiety from happening by enhancing the well-being status of pregnant women and reinforcing pre-birth related instruction and mental intervention.