

THE CONTRIBUTION OF FAMILY SUPPORT TO PREGNANT WOMEN'S DAILY NUTRITION AWARENESS

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Abstract

Family support plays a vital role in promoting the health of pregnant women, particularly in ensuring they meet their daily nutritional needs. This qualitative case study was conducted in Kelurahan Baru, Pasar Rebo District, East Jakarta, and focused on investigating how family support contributes to increasing pregnant women's awareness of nutritional adequacy. The study involved pregnant women and their closest family members, selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to gain a greater insight into how family support influences nutritional behavior. The findings show that husbands and mothers-in-law are perceived as the most influential sources of support. Pregnant women reported receiving emotional encouragement, help with food preparation, and collaborative decision-making, all of which increased their nutritional awareness and consistency in maintaining a healthy diet. Additionally, the study identified the family's nutrition knowledge, communication quality, and access to nutritious foods as key factors that shaped the effectiveness of support. In conclusion, the study emphasizes the importance of involving close family members in maternal nutrition efforts. Empowering families through education and encouraging their active involvement in maternal care can be a strategic approach to improving both maternal and fetal health outcomes during pregnancy.

Keywords: Family support, Daily nutritional adequacy, Pregnant women.

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1. Introduction

One of the main objectives in health development is to create a healthy life for everyone, so that the community can achieve the highest possible level of health. Posyandu (Integrated Service Post) is one form of Community-Based Health Effort (UKBM) that is organized and run by the community, with the aim

of enhancing empowerment and facilitating access to basic health services [1]. This program focuses on accelerating the reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates by providing health services tailored to the needs and conditions of the community [2].

The family plays a key role in supporting pregnant women's health,

especially in meeting daily nutritional needs. Support from husbands, parents, or others greatly influences awareness of balanced nutrition. As the closest support system, the family provides vital information and motivation, helping ensure the mother receives proper guidance to maintain a healthy diet for both her and the baby [3].

In Indonesia, pregnant women's understanding of daily nutritional needs remains low, despite crucial family support. Nutrition education coverage is still lacking. Riskesdas 2010 data shows many pregnant women have not received adequate information, affecting both maternal and fetal health. The role of family, especially husbands and parents, is vital in providing necessary education and support during pregnancy [4].

Limited family involvement in nutrition education for pregnant women can seriously impact maternal and fetal health. Around 53% of maternal and infant issues are linked to poor understanding of nutrition. This highlights the vital role of families especially husbands and parents in raising awareness. Active family support in sharing accurate nutrition information can help prevent pregnancy-related health problems [5].

The family plays a key role in enhancing pregnant women's understanding of daily nutrition. Active involvement, especially from husbands and parents, helps provide accurate information, supporting maternal and fetal health through well-informed dietary choices [6].

However, low utilization rates often stem from a lack of community awareness about these services. Factors affecting pregnant women's participation in Posyandu activities include age, education, health knowledge, attitudes, a shortage of trained staff, and limited service coverage. Thus, increased efforts are needed to raise awareness of Posyandu's importance and enhance the availability of qualified personnel to boost participation among pregnant women [7].

In 2019, around 15 million pregnant women in Indonesia, including 350,000 in DKI Jakarta, needed family support for proper nutrition. However, only about 60% received adequate support. The involvement of husbands and parents is crucial in promoting healthy eating habits and providing accurate nutrition information. Active family support can improve maternal nutrition and positively impact the health of both mother and baby [8].

In East Jakarta's Pasar Rebo District, 98 families across five urban villages actively support pregnant women. For example, Gedong has 15 supportive families, Cijantung 26, Baru 16, Kalisari 19, and Pekayon 22. This family involvement plays a key role in improving pregnant women's understanding of their nutritional needs during pregnancy [9].

In RW 02, Kelurahan Baru, East Jakarta, there are 241 pregnant women across 9 RTs, but only a few receive full family support on balanced nutrition. Family involvement—especially from husbands and parents—greatly influences nutritional awareness. This study explores the family's role in raising awareness and the factors affecting their participation. Using a qualitative case study approach, it highlights how emotional, informational, and instrumental support can shape health behaviors and help prevent nutritional issues during pregnancy.

2. Methods

This study employed a case study approach to illustrate the effectiveness of family support in enhancing pregnant women's awareness of balanced nutrition during pregnancy in the Kelurahan Baru area. Data collection methods included in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with pregnant women and their family members to obtain comprehensive insights.

This study involved pregnant women and their families, especially husbands and parents, who supported nutritional awareness during pregnancy.

Five families joined in-depth interviews, while 14 pregnant women participated in FGDs, eight from supported groups and six from the community. Conducted from November 2024 to January 2025, data from interviews and FGDs were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using qualitative software. Results are presented in narrative form, tables, and diagrams to show how family involvement helps improve pregnant women's understanding of balanced nutrition.

3. Results and Discussion

Factors Influencing Family Participation in Supporting Nutritional Awareness Among Pregnant Women

In the context of the effectiveness of family support in raising awareness about balanced nutrition among pregnant women, the factors influencing family participation are quite varied. Based on in-depth interviews, it was found that internal motivation within the families of pregnant women in Kelurahan Baru is a primary driver of their involvement. Families, especially husbands and parents, generally have a strong sense of responsibility and a genuine desire to enhance their knowledge about health, particularly concerning maternal nutrition. Active families revealed that their involvement is not only about providing support but also about learning and sharing knowledge related to balanced nutrition.

For instance, one husband of a pregnant woman stated: "I feel it's very meaningful to share information about nutrition and maternal health with my wife. We are learning together about what is best for her pregnancy."

Another family member added: "Even though I don't have a health background, I feel more confident in providing support related to maternal nutrition through the knowledge we've gained."

On the other hand, external factors also play a significant role. Support from government programs and the growing awareness among families about the

importance of maternal and child health initiatives serve as additional motivation. They realize that their role is not only to support the pregnant woman but also to contribute to broader governmental goals in building a more health-conscious society. One family member expressed:

"We want to ensure that pregnant women receive proper support regarding balanced nutrition. This is part of our contribution to promoting health within the family and the community as a whole."

Services and Programs Provided by Families to Support Nutritional Awareness in Pregnant Women

Families in Kelurahan Baru provide various forms of support aimed at increasing pregnant women's knowledge of balanced nutrition. The role of the family is crucial, especially in delivering information about nutrition, healthy foods, and ensuring that pregnant women receive adequate nutritional intake. The main activities include providing education on the importance of nutrition during pregnancy, sharing information about healthy food choices, and assisting in monitoring the nutritional intake of pregnant women.

For example, one husband stated, "*We often discuss the importance of balanced nutrition during pregnancy. We try to learn about the kinds of food that are beneficial and how to prepare them properly.*" In addition, other family members also help pregnant women manage their eating patterns and ensure that their daily nutritional needs are met. "*We also remind each other to consume nutritious and healthy food. We want to make sure the pregnant mother stays healthy and that the baby grows well in the womb,*" said a mother-in-law who actively participated in the support process.

Challenges in Raising Nutritional Awareness Among Pregnant Women Within Families

Although families play a crucial role in supporting pregnant women's nutritional awareness, several challenges remain in improving understanding and

implementing balanced nutrition. One of the main challenges is the lack of knowledge and understanding among family members regarding the importance of balanced nutrition during pregnancy. Some families feel that the information provided is not convincing enough or does not fully align with the pregnant woman's specific needs.

"I feel that the nutritional information given is not clear enough. Sometimes, I don't even know how to choose healthy and nutritious food," stated one family member. Another challenge is the lack of awareness about the importance of family support in maternal nutrition. Some families may not realize that their role is vital in ensuring that the pregnant woman receives adequate and balanced nutrition.

Additionally, external factors such as limited time and resources also present obstacles. Many pregnant women struggle to maintain a healthy diet due to a lack of time to prepare meals or long distances to access nutritious ingredients. Some family members also feel burdened by work demands or household responsibilities, which reduce their focus on the nutritional needs of the pregnant woman.

"Sometimes, because of a busy work schedule, I find it difficult to prepare healthy meals for the pregnant mother," added another family member. These challenges indicate that increasing awareness about balanced nutrition in pregnant women requires a more comprehensive approach—one that involves all family members and ensures they understand how critical their contributions are to the health of both the mother and the baby.

Strategies to Address Challenges

To address the challenges in improving awareness about balanced nutrition, families can implement more structured strategies that involve the active participation of all family members. One effective strategy is providing more personalized and continuous education. For instance, family members who have a better

understanding of nutrition can share information with pregnant women in a more comfortable setting, such as at home, using simple and relatable language.

"I try to share information gradually at home, like explaining the importance of eating healthy food and how it can affect the pregnancy. We also often discuss things together so that all family members can support a healthy eating pattern," said one family member.

Another strategy is organizing more flexible schedules for grocery shopping and preparing nutritious meals at home. Families can work together to ensure that pregnant women receive healthy meals daily. This collaborative approach helps overcome time constraints, which are often a reason for inadequate maternal nutrition.

"We try to plan grocery shopping and cooking healthy meals together, so no one feels overwhelmed. Every family member takes part to ensure the pregnant woman eats well," added another family member.

By implementing these strategies, families are expected to become more aware of their crucial role in supporting pregnant women to obtain balanced nutrition throughout pregnancy.

To address these challenges, Posyandu cadres have implemented several strategies. They adopt a continuous approach by visiting pregnant women at home and conducting more flexible group sessions. Furthermore, the cadres undergo training to enhance their skills in delivering information in a more engaging and comprehensible manner.

"We strive to overcome accessibility barriers by conducting home visits and hosting more flexible sessions. We also involve pregnant women in smaller group discussions to ensure they receive the information they need," stated one cadre during a focus group discussion.

The Impact of Family Programs on Improving Awareness of Balanced Nutrition

Family involvement has a strong positive impact on pregnant women's awareness of balanced nutrition. By providing support, information, and access to healthy food, families help improve the health of both mother and baby. Despite some challenges, such as limited knowledge, active family participation through discussions and meal planning plays a key role. With continued family-based efforts, awareness of proper nutrition can grow, creating a healthier environment for the whole family.

With the implementation of family-based strategies, it is hoped that awareness of balanced nutrition will continue to grow. The positive impact of these efforts will extend not only to pregnant women but also to the entire family, fostering a healthier environment for both mother and child.

As the first unit of support, the family has a significant influence in fostering a healthy lifestyle during pregnancy. Through good communication and continuous encouragement, families can motivate pregnant women to maintain a nutritious diet, get enough rest, and regularly attend health checkups. This support serves as a vital foundation that helps pregnant women feel valued and encouraged to care for their health, thereby improving the quality of pregnancy and the baby's well-being.

The social spirit that emerges from the family environment strengthens the empowerment of pregnant women. With full support from the family, pregnant women are more motivated to follow health advice whether from healthcare professionals or other sources of information to ensure a safe and healthy pregnancy [10].

In the context of maternal health education, low educational attainment often becomes a barrier to accessing essential information. Many pregnant women remain bound to traditional or cultural values that may not always align with modern health guidelines. However, some individuals within the family, who

understand the importance of maternal and infant health, can act as driving forces, actively educating pregnant women on balanced nutrition and proper prenatal care [11].

Community-based health services, particularly those rooted within the family environment, play a vital role in empowering maternal and infant health. In this system, families are not merely recipients of care but also actively manage and support health processes according to their needs. Family members, driven by altruism, willingly contribute to improving the health of their communities. These family "activators" often parents or close relatives play a critical role in coordinating collective efforts to support pregnant women. Family harmony is essential in facilitating effective communication and achieving shared goals in maternal care. As the core unit of society, families hold a strategic position in the development of human resources and in meeting maternal and child health standards, as highlighted by Effendy's research [12].

Family commitment to maternal health can be strengthened through opportunities for training and outreach, particularly for family members newly involved in supporting pregnant women. For those who have not yet participated in training programs, guidebooks or educational materials can serve as valuable references. These resources provide the necessary guidance to enhance the family's role in empowering maternal health [13].

Direct education about pregnancy-related health services is essential in helping family members fulfill their roles in supporting pregnant women. Training serves as a mechanism to harness external resources, enhancing their understanding and skills in maternal care. The level of training and participation in family health education significantly influences their effectiveness in carrying out these responsibilities [14].

The family's role in maternal health involves using local resources through three main functions: health motivators, educators, and service providers. Motivators encourage pregnant women to join health activities; educators share information on hygiene and healthy living; service providers help with registration, growth monitoring, counseling, vitamin A distribution, and immunizations for young children [15]. Empowerment within the family is achieved when every family member shows commitment and integrity in meeting the health needs of pregnant women and infants effectively and sustainably [16].

The analysis of this study's results shows that family involvement in supporting balanced nutrition awareness among pregnant women has both empirical and theoretical significance. Empirical findings from in-depth interviews indicate that when families actively provide emotional support and share nutritional information, pregnant women are more likely to maintain a healthy diet during pregnancy. This aligns with community empowerment theories, which emphasize the family's vital role as agents of change. Therefore, it can be concluded that the higher the level of family participation, the greater the likelihood of improved nutritional awareness in pregnant women. This involvement should be continuously encouraged through ongoing education and government support programs to create a sustainable and health-promoting environment for both mothers and their babies.

4. Conclusion

Family support is crucial in helping pregnant women understand the importance of balanced nutrition. Husbands, parents, and relatives provide information, encouragement, and healthy food, which greatly improves pregnant women's awareness of proper nutrition.

To optimize the family's role in promoting nutritional awareness, effective communication between

pregnant women and their family members is essential, especially regarding the benefits of a balanced diet during pregnancy. Additionally, both families and communities must be equipped with deeper knowledge and understanding of proper maternal nutrition.

With strong and structured family support, pregnant women are more likely to adopt healthy eating behaviors, which positively impact both maternal and infant health outcomes. Strengthening family involvement through better planning and empowerment can enhance the effectiveness of maternal health programs. Therefore, engaging all stakeholders, especially families as key agents of change, is critical in advancing healthier lifestyles during pregnancy.

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