



The Role Of Family Support In Childbirth: Implications For Maternal And Infant Well-Being

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ABSTRAK

Labor is a critical moment in the life of both mother and baby, often accompanied by physical and emotional challenges. Family support, whether emotional, physical, or informational, plays an important role in influencing the quality of the birth experience and health outcomes. This study used a qualitative approach with literature review as the main data collection technique. This study aims to explore the role of family support in the labor process and its implications for maternal and infant well-being. The literature study approach was used to identify and analyze various research, theories, and empirical reports relevant to the topic. The study results show that emotional support from family can reduce maternal anxiety, increase a sense of security, and improve the overall labor experience. Physical support, such as massaging or helping the mother move, contributes to a smoother labor process and minimizes the need for medical intervention. Informational support helps mothers understand the stages of labor and make better decisions regarding health care. In addition, family support improves the quality of care provided to the baby, helps the mother to be more responsive to the baby's needs, and supports a strong emotional bond between mother and baby. The implications of these findings emphasize the importance of family involvement in childbirth and the postpartum period to improve the well-being of mothers and infants. Health workers are advised to encourage family participation and provide adequate education on the role of family support, to ensure that mothers and infants receive optimal support.

Kata kunci: *Family Support, Infant Well-Being, Labor Process, Maternal Well-Being,*

INTRODUCTION

Labor is one of the most crucial moments in the life of a woman and her newborn as it is a time when a mother undergoes significant physical and emotional transitions (Kunang, 2023). On the one hand, labor demands great physical strength, involving intense muscle contractions and profound hormonal changes. On the other hand, labor is also an overwhelming emotional experience, during which a woman faces a mixture of feelings of hope, happiness, anxiety and fear. Labor not only involves major physical changes to the mother's body, but also poses significant emotional distress (Nurbaya, 202). Every mother will experience pain, uncertainty, and worry about the condition of herself and her baby. All of these factors make childbirth a challenging moment, where the mother's physical and psychological conditions can influence each other. In addition to physical challenges such as contractions and pain, mothers also often



face emotional distress. A frequent phenomenon is the high level of anxiety and stress during labor (Muzayyana, 2021). This anxiety can be triggered by various factors, such as fear of medical complications, concerns about one's ability to go through labor, and uncertainty about what will happen next (Sari, 2023). If not managed well, high levels of anxiety can negatively affect the labor process, prolong the duration of labor, or even increase the risk of medical interventions such as cesarean section. Therefore, stress management and psychological support during labor become very important (Maryono, 2024).

Family support has been identified as an important factor in helping mothers cope with physical and emotional challenges during labor (Aisyah, 2024). Family support, especially from a partner or husband, can provide a sense of security and calm for the mother (Simamora, 2024). Emotional support, such as providing words of encouragement, holding hands, or simply being present next to the mother, can help reduce anxiety and increase the mother's confidence in facing labor (Mita, 2023). In addition, practical support such as helping to meet the mother's physical needs during labor also plays an important role in making the mother feel more comfortable and supported. Research has shown that mothers who receive family support tend to have more positive labor experiences and better health outcomes (Annisa, 2023). This support not only impacts the mother's emotional well-being, but can also affect the physical condition and health of the baby being born. Mothers can face labor with more calm and control, so that the labor process can proceed more smoothly. This shows how important the role of family is in the birthing process, both for the well-being of the mother and the newborn. Anxiety is a natural response to stressful situations, and childbirth is one of the moments where many mothers feel a high degree of uncertainty. The presence of family members at the mother's side can provide a sense of security and protection, helping to reduce the fear that often accompanies labor (Akpor, 2023). Presence provides much-needed moral support to the mother, so that she does not feel alone in facing great challenges.

In addition to emotional support, physical support from the family also plays an important role. This form of physical support can be in the form of concrete assistance such as massaging the mother's back during contractions, holding her hand, or providing other physical comfort that helps the mother feel more relaxed. These conditions have the potential to reduce pain and speed up the labor process. Families also often play a role in providing informational support and helping mothers make important decisions during labor (Isnaniar, 2020). Families involved in this process can help mothers understand the situation and the medical options available, so that mothers can make more confident and informed decisions. Family support not only impacts the well-being of the mother, but also has important implications for the well-being of the baby (Batullga, 2021). Mothers who receive adequate support during labor tend to be calmer and better able to undergo labor, which in turn can reduce the risk of complications during labor and afterwards (Power, 2023). The presence of family can also provide a sense of security for the mother, which has an effect on

physiological processes such as the stability of blood pressure and heart rate, which are crucial for the health of the newborn (Grant, 2023).

Lack of family support during the labor process can significantly exacerbate the risk of emotional and physical complications faced by mothers (Saur, 2021). Mothers who feel isolated or less supported often experience higher levels of stress, which can affect their mental and physical health. This prolonged stress can slow down the recovery process, increase the likelihood of developing disorders such as postpartum depression, and disrupt the emotional balance that is essential for early adjustment to parenthood (Valadares, 2020). In addition, this heightened emotional and physical discomfort can affect the mother's ability to properly care for the baby, potentially triggering problems in breastfeeding and broader infant care. In this situation, a lack of family support not only worsens the mother's condition but can also negatively impact the health and well-being of the infant. This study aims to explore the role of family support in the labor process and its implications for maternal and infant well-being. By engaging the perspectives of mothers, family members, and health professionals, the study sought to provide deeper insights into how family support influences the birth experience and health outcomes. A focus on the different forms of support provided, including emotional, practical, and interpersonal relationships, will help identify the most effective support strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach with literature review as the main data collection technique. This study aims to explore the role of family support in the delivery process and its implications for the well-being of mothers and babies. The literature review approach was used to identify and analyze various research, theories, and empirical reports relevant to the topic. The steps in this literature review included searching, selecting, and critically analyzing scholarly sources that have been published in academic journals, books, and other research reports. The literature search process was conducted through academic databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, with keywords such as "family support", "labor process", "maternal well-being", and "infant well-being". Literature selection was based on inclusion criteria such as topical relevance, research quality, and recent publication date. Articles focusing on cultural context, social background, and differences in family support models were also considered to provide a broader view. The literature analysis was conducted using a thematic approach, where findings from different studies were classified based on key themes such as forms of family support (emotional, physical, and informational), the impact of support on maternal physical and mental health, and the influence of support on infant health outcomes. The data obtained from this literature was integrated to develop a comprehensive synthesis of how family support affects childbirth and maternal and infant well-being. Using this approach, the study is expected to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the importance of family support in the context

of childbirth, as well as practical and policy implications that can be drawn based on the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Role Of Family Support In Childbirth

Based on the results of literature studies, family support, especially from spouses, parents, or other close family members, plays an important role in the labor process (Mayers, 2020; Qi, 2022). Family support can be emotional, physical, or informational, and has been shown to have a significant influence on maternal well-being during and after labor (Hijazi, 2021). Mothers who receive emotional support, such as words of encouragement, physical touch, or just the presence of family members, tend to experience lower levels of anxiety during labor (Gheshlaghi, 2021). The sense of security created by the presence of family can help mothers face contractions and the birth process with more confidence (Larsson, 2022). This moral support becomes especially important when the mother has to face the physical and mental challenges that come together during the labor process. Physical support from family, such as massaging the mother, providing food and drink, or helping the mother move and reposition during labor, has also been shown to have a very positive impact. Studies have shown that mothers who receive physical support from their families tend to experience smoother labor. They also require less medical intervention, such as painkillers or surgery, compared to mothers who do not receive physical support. This positive effect of physical support is largely related to its ability to reduce maternal stress levels, which in turn helps the mother's body respond better to contractions and the labor process as a whole (Olza, 2020).

The reduction in stress due to family support not only helps the mother's body physically, but also affects the psychological aspects. Mothers who feel supported tend to be better able to maintain emotional calm, which is important in maintaining mental stability during the long and stressful labor process (Al, 2023). In some cases, a lack of emotional support can cause the mother to feel lonely, anxious, and even fearful, all of which can affect the course of labor and increase the duration and intensity of the pain felt (Alizadeh, 2023). Informational support also plays an important role. Family members who are knowledgeable about the labor process and understand the mother's needs can provide useful information (Koliandri, 2023). This information can help the mother understand the stages of labor she is going through, the options available, and the consequences of each possible choice. The knowledge possessed by the family can increase the mother's sense of control over the situation she is facing, thus reducing the feelings of fear and confusion that often arise during labor. Thus, informational support not only serves to help the mother physically, but also psychologically by providing a sense of calm and better understanding. Other studies have also found that well-informed family support can improve communication between mothers and health workers. Families who understand the labor process can act as a bridge between the mother and health workers, helping to explain the mother's condition to the doctor or midwife and convey medical information to the mother in a way that is easier to understand. This is important because effective communication between the mother and health workers can affect the quality of care received by the mother during labor. With informative family support, the mother feels more comfortable to express her wishes, participate in decision making, and get care that suits her needs (Stelwagen, 2021).

Family support can also help mothers feel more confident about decisions made during labor (Hosseini, 2020). Mothers who feel supported in decision-making tend to have higher levels of satisfaction with their labor experience. They feel in control of the situation and believe that their decisions are based on accurate information and support from those closest to them. This is very important, as feelings of control and active participation in the labor process are closely related to the mother's emotional well-being after delivery. On the other hand, family support is not only limited to the labor process itself, but also has a long-term influence on postpartum maternal well-being. Mothers who receive full support during labor tend to be better prepared for the postpartum period, including overcoming challenges such as breastfeeding, physical changes, and emotional adjustment (Dessi, 2024). Family support during this time plays an important role in helping mothers adapt to their new role as a mother, which in turn can improve their mental and physical well-being.

Family presence during labor also has strong symbolic meaning. The presence of the family reflects solidarity, love and care, which is a strong foundation in supporting the mother emotionally. In addition, the presence of the family can strengthen the bond between family members, where the labor process becomes a moment that strengthens the relationship between individuals in the family (Basly, 2020). In this context, family support not only impacts the mother, but also the family dynamics as a whole. Overall, the literature shows that family support during childbirth has a very significant influence on maternal well-being, both during labor and afterwards. The emotional, physical and informational support provided by the family not only helps the mother cope better with labor, but also improves the overall quality of the labor experience. Therefore, it is important for families to understand their role during labor and for health workers to encourage family participation in maternal care during and after labor.

2. Implications of Family Support for Maternal Well-Being

Literature shows that family support during labor has very positive implications for maternal well-being, both physically and mentally (Van, 2023). Labor, often the most stressful moment in a woman's life, can be smoother and less frightening with the presence and support of family. Research has shown that mothers who have the full support of their families during labor are more likely to have a positive experience, which directly impacts physical and mental recovery after labor (Navon, 2023). In addition, mothers who feel supported during labor have a lower risk of postpartum complications, such as bleeding or infection, as their bodies are better able to deal with the stress associated with the labor process. Emotional support provided by the family during labor also plays a very important role in strengthening the mother's mental well-being. Mothers who feel supported, valued and not alone during labor tend to experience fewer symptoms of postpartum depression (Saharoy, 2023). Several studies have shown that family support can be a strong protective factor against the development of postpartum mood disorders, such as baby blues or postpartum depression. The presence of loved ones can provide a sense of security and comfort for the mother, which is much needed during the major transition into motherhood. This sense of security helps the mother to focus more on the labor process and recovery afterwards, without being burdened by excessive worry or anxiety.

Emotional support from family can strengthen the bond between mother and baby immediately after birth. Mothers who feel calm and supported during labor tend to adapt more easily to their new role as a mother (Williamson, 2023). The confidence that grows

from family support allows the mother to focus more on baby care and establish a strong relationship with her baby. This is particularly important in the first weeks after birth, where the baby relies heavily on the mother for nutrition, warmth and affection. Research shows that mothers who have a positive birth experience are more likely to be successful in breastfeeding, which has many health benefits for both baby and mother (Nixarlidou, 2024). Family support can also help mothers overcome the initial challenges of caring for a baby. After childbirth, mothers often have to deal with major changes in daily routines, such as sleep deprivation, physical exhaustion and the emotional demands of caring for a newborn. The presence of family members who are ready to help can ease the burden of mothers in dealing with these challenges. For example, practical help in the form of baby care, household tasks, or giving mom time off can make a big difference in her well-being. With this support in place, the mother can focus more on her own physical and emotional recovery, ultimately improving overall well-being.

Not only does family support during labor have an impact on short-term well-being, it also has long-term effects on maternal mental health. Mothers who feel supported by their families during labor and the postpartum period tend to have stronger relationships with their families and feel more motivated to embrace motherhood more positively (Adhikari, 2023). Ongoing support from family also plays an important role in helping mothers cope with stress that may arise later in life, such as facing challenges in childcare or managing life stresses associated with parenthood (Kumari, 2024). Thus, family support during labor and the postpartum period provides a strong foundation for mothers to face the challenges of family life and parenting. In a broader context, family support also contributes to mothers' social well-being. Research shows that mothers who feel supported by their families are more likely to build and maintain healthy social relationships with those around them. Family involvement in the birthing process can help the mother feel more connected to her community and gain wider social support. This sense of connectedness is crucial in reducing the risk of social isolation, which is often a risk factor for the development of postpartum mental health disorders. Therefore, family support is not only important within the household, but also in building a broader social network for maternal well-being.

In addition to the emotional and social impact, family support during labor also has implications for the mother's physical well-being. Research shows that mothers who receive support during labor tend to experience faster physical recovery (Sun, 2023). Mothers return to daily routines more quickly, have better energy, and experience fewer health complications that require further medical attention. This suggests that family support not only helps reduce emotional stress, but also contributes to the mother's physical healing process after labor. Family support, whether in the form of physical assistance or emotional encouragement, plays an important role in ensuring that mothers are able to recover well and return to normal life soon after delivery. Furthermore, research shows that mothers who receive family support during labor tend to have a higher level of satisfaction with the birth experience. This positive labor experience contributes to mothers' mental and emotional well-being, which in turn impacts their overall quality of life (Chiracu, 2023). Mothers who are satisfied with their birth experience tend to have a more positive view of themselves as mothers, as well as of their ability to care for their babies. This positive outlook can help mothers feel more empowered and confident in their role as the baby's primary caregiver, which is crucial for the baby's future development.

3. Implications Of Family Support For Infant Well-Being

Family support has a significant impact not only on maternal well-being but also on infant well-being. Babies born to mothers who feel supported during labor often show better health outcomes. Research shows that emotional and physical support provided by family can help mothers feel calmer and more comfortable during labor. This contributes to the birth of babies with more optimal weight and lower stress levels (Nabwire, 2023). Babies born in a calm environment tend to experience less neonatal stress, which has a positive effect on overall health (Balabanoff, 2023). When mothers feel supported and calmer during labor, babies' health conditions also tend to be more stable. Research shows that low maternal anxiety during labor can reduce the risk of complications in the baby, such as respiratory distress or problems with birth weight (Lupu, 2023). Maternal calmness during labor contributes to a better birth experience for the baby, including reducing the likelihood that the baby will need to be admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Babies born in good health early in life have a greater chance of developing well and meeting healthy developmental milestones (Hildreth, 2023).

Family support plays an important role in facilitating maternal responsiveness to infant needs after birth. Mothers who receive emotional and practical support from family are more likely to be more responsive to the signs and needs of the baby (Thomas, 2023). Research shows that mothers who feel supported are better able to recognize infant signals, such as hunger or discomfort, and provide appropriate care. This responsiveness is important for building a strong emotional bond between mother and baby, which has a positive impact on the baby's later social and emotional development. Family support also helps mothers to focus more on infant care and breastfeeding (Walsh, 2023). With help from spouses or other family members in handling household tasks or infant care, mothers can allocate more time and energy to breastfeeding and caring for the baby.

Family support during the postpartum period also contributes to the mother's successful adaptation to her new role, which in turn has a positive impact on infant care (Shiyu, 2024). With sufficient support, mothers can manage postpartum stress and fatigue more effectively, thus being better able to focus on the needs of the baby. This support also helps mothers maintain their mental and emotional health, which is important for optimal infant care. Mothers who feel emotionally and practically supported are more likely to have the energy and motivation needed to meet their baby's needs. Infants who get good attention and care from mothers who feel supported tend to show better physical and emotional development (Treat, 2020). Family support allows mothers to provide consistent and attentive care, which is essential for the growth and development of the baby. In addition, a strong emotional bond between mother and baby, triggered by family support, can influence babies' social and cognitive development, helping them build healthy social and emotional interaction skills early on.

Family support can also influence the quality of the mother-infant relationship to form positive parenting patterns (Shieh, 2022). Mothers who feel supported tend to be more confident in their role as caregivers and are better able to establish routines that support infant development. Family support helps mothers feel more comfortable in making decisions regarding infant care, from choosing the right foods to determining the baby's sleep schedule (Zanetti, 2023). This confidence impacts the effectiveness of the care provided to the infant. Overall, family support has a broad positive impact on infant well-being. Support provided during labor and the postpartum period contributes to better infant health outcomes, higher maternal responsiveness to infant needs, and better quality of care. This support creates a healthy and supportive environment for the baby to develop

well, and helps the mother go through the adaptation process more smoothly. Therefore, it is important for families to be actively involved in the birthing and infant care process, and for health professionals to encourage and facilitate family support as an integral part of maternal and infant care.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study confirms that family support plays a crucial role in the labor process and has a significant impact on the well-being of both mother and baby. The emotional, physical, and informational support provided by the family not only helps mothers cope better with the challenges of labor but also contributes to a more positive labor experience and faster recovery. Mothers who feel supported tend to experience lower anxiety, shorter labor duration, and lower risk of postpartum depression. In addition, family support improves the quality of care provided to the baby, helps the mother to be more responsive to the baby's needs, and supports a strong emotional bond between mother and baby. The implications of these findings point to the importance of family involvement in labor and the postpartum period. Health workers should encourage and facilitate active family participation in maternal care, both during labor and after delivery, to ensure that mothers and babies get the support they need. Education and information on the role of the family during labor should be provided to ensure that family members can provide effective support.

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