

Covid-19 Related Anxiety among Antenatal Mothers

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Abstract

Background: COVID-19 is a global public health emergency and could cause devastating health issues during pregnancy. Pregnant women have a high propensity to acquire this infection due to their altered physiological and immunological function. The present study aims to assess the level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers, to find out the association between level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers and selected socio personal variables and to provide electronic self instructional module.

Materials and methods: In this non experimental descriptive study 60 antenatal mothers were selected using non probability purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using State Trait Anxiety Inventory Scale and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Result: The result showed that among 60 samples, 47(78.3%) have moderate level of anxiety, 11(18.3%) had low level of anxiety and only 2(3.3%) of samples have high level of anxiety regarding COVID 19 and age has a significant association with COVID 19 related anxiety. An electronic self instructional module regarding COVID 19 stress management provided to enable the participants to cop-up with the situation.

Key words: COVID-19 related anxiety, antenatal mothers

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I. Introduction

Pregnancy is an emotional time and anxiety is just one of many feelings that pregnant women experience¹. Recent pandemic attack of COVID-19 has created an added stress and anxiety for pregnant women all over the world. Across the world, emerging reports suggest that anxiety and stress in pregnancy are associated with complications such as preeclampsia, depression, increased nausea and vomiting, preterm labor, low birth weight and low APGAR score². Increasing mothers awareness about the transmission of Corona virus, risk factors and red flags as well as providing tele-counseling for pregnancy care and tele-triage could help to reduce their anxiety and worry³. The present study aims to assess the level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers, to find out the association between level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers and selected socio personal variables and to provide electronic self instructional module.

II. Materials And Methods

Non experimental descriptive research design was used in this study. Non probability purposive sampling technique was used to select 60 antenatal mothers attending the

Study design : Non experimental descriptive research design

Study location: antenatal OPD of selected Hospital, Trivandrum.

Study duration : 4th may 2020 to 6th may 2020

Sample size : 60

Sample calculation: The sample size was estimated on the basis of Cochran's formula . The target population from which we randomly selected our sample was considered 98. We assumed that the confidence level of 95%. The sample size actually obtained for this study was 30.118 patients. We planned to include 60 patients.

Subjects and selection method: Using non probability purposive sampling , 60 antenatal mothers attending antenatal OPDs of a selected tertiary care hospital , Trivandrum were selected for the study.

Inclusion criteria:

- Pregnant women attending antenatal OPD of KIMS hospital
- All Antenatal mothers who are willing to participate
- Antenatal mothers who are able to read and write Malayalam and English

Exclusion criteria

- Antenatal mothers with history of psychiatric illness

Procedure methodology: After written informed consent was obtained, a well designed questionnaire and anxiety inventory scale was distributed to patients. The structured questionnaire included sociodemographic characteristics such as age, education, occupation, place of residence, monthly income, number of pregnancies and source of information. The anxiety scale used was a state trait anxiety inventory by Spillberg which contain 20 items of both positive and negative emotions.

Statistical analysis:

The collected data was analysed using SPSS version 20. Both parametric and non parametric tests were used. Frequency and percentage distribution of socio personal variables was calculated. Level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers was categorized using predetermined grading. Association between level of COVID-19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers and selected socio personal variables using Chi square table. The level $P < 0.05$ was considered as the cutoff value or significance

III. Results

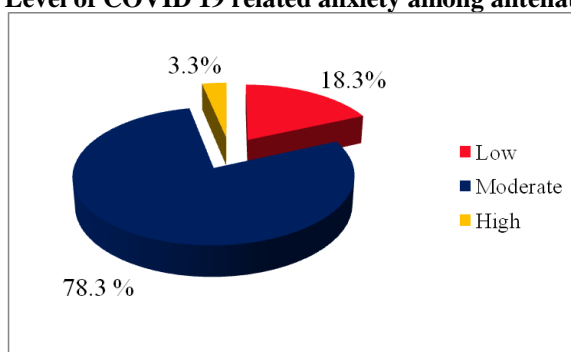
**Table 1: frequency distribution and percentage of antenatal mothers based on sociopersonal variables
n=60**

Sample characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age in years		
20-25	17	28.3
26-30	28	46.7
31-35	12	20
>35	3	5
Education		
Up to high school	1	1.7
Graduate	34	56.7
Post Graduate	24	40
Others	1	1.7
Occupation		
House wife	30	50
Govt. employee	7	11.7
Private Sector	18	30
Others	5	8.3
Place of residence		
Rural	20	33.3
Urban	40	66.7
Monthly income		
<10,000	10	16.7
10,001-30,000	36	60
>30,000	14	23.3
Number of pregnancies		

Primi	41	68.3
Multi	19	31.7
Source of information		
News paper	5	8.3
Internet	18	30
Television	21	35
Health Professionals	16	26.7

Section B:

Figure 1: Level of COVID 19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers



Section C:

Table 2: Association between sociopersonal variables and level of anxiety

Socio personal variable	Df	Chi Square	Table value	Inference
Age	6	12.857	12.592	Significant
Education	6	6.527	12.592	Not significant
Occupation	6	7.470	12.592	Not significant
Place of residence	2	0.442	5.991	Not significant
Monthly income	6	4.455	12.592	Not significant
Number of pregnancies	2	2.292	5.991	Not significant
Source of information	6	5.582	12.592	Not significant

Study concluded that among 60 samples, 47(78.3%) have moderate level of anxiety, 11(18.3%) had low level of anxiety and only 2(3.3%) of samples have high level of anxiety regarding COVID 19 . There is a significant association between level of COVID 19 related anxiety and age.

IV. Discussion

A similar study has been conducted among 360 antenatal mothers residing in China to investigate the effects of COVID 19 pandemic on depression and anxiety in pregnant women using an online survey. The study results point to an urgent need to provide psychosocial support to this population during the crisis. Otherwise, adverse events may occur during pregnancy and thus affect both mother and fetus. Only limited data have been derived regarding the psychological effects of this outbreak.

The present study revealed that there is moderate level (78.3%) of COVID 19 related anxiety among antenatal mothers.

V. Conclusion

All people are battling against the first and most powerful threat of the twenty-first century that is the COVID-19 pandemic. The entire world is focused on the global outbreak, and almost every country is affected by all aspects of this occurrence. An inevitable consequence of such a great life event is the psychological impact on vulnerable populations, such as pregnant women. Hence the necessity of psychological support for pregnant women during this crisis is a matter of great concern.

VI. Recommendations

- Similar study can be conducted among more samples in another setting.
- An exploratory study can also be conducted since the current scenario really had worsened.
- An interventional can be conducted by stress relief measures using pre test post test design.
- A comparative study can also be conducted between primi and multi parous women to assess the COVID 19 related anxiety.
- A follow up study can be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of electronic self instructional module.

Limitations

- Better generalization of the study would have been possible if the sample size was still larger.
- The study could have been more effective if conducted in various urban and rural settings.

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