



The Relationship between Husband Support and the Incidence of Postpartum Depression: Literature Review

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Abstract

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a common mental health problem in mothers after childbirth and can impact the quality of life of mothers, babies, and families. Husband support is seen as a protective factor that can reduce the risk of PPD. This study is a qualitative descriptive literature study that reviewed 11 scientific journals related to the relationship between husband support and postpartum depression. Literature searches were conducted through Google Scholar databases, PubMed, and national journal portals with the keywords “husband support” and “postpartum depression”. The selected articles met the inclusion criteria: published within the last 5 years (2018–2023), postpartum mother-based, and peer-reviewed. Data were analyzed thematically to identify the relationship between husband support and the incidence of PPD. The results of the analysis showed that husband support had a significant influence on the reduction of the risk of postpartum depression. This support includes emotional, instrumental, and informational aspects. Mothers who receive consistent support from their husbands have a lower chance of experiencing PPD than mothers who receive less support. Several factors such as breastfeeding problems, domestic violence, age, and parity can modify the effects of husband support. These findings confirm the importance of the involvement of husbands during childbirth and postpartum to maintain maternal mental health. Optimal husband support can be an effective protective intervention in preventing PPD. Husband support plays an important role in lowering the risk of postpartum depression. It is recommended that family-based education and intervention programs be developed to involve husbands in every phase of postpartum maternal care.

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Introduction

Postpartum depression (PPD) is one of the most common mental health problems experienced by

mothers after childbirth. This condition is characterized by feelings of sadness, easy crying, excessive anxiety, sleep disturbances, loss of interest, and prolonged

fatigue. Unlike the postpartum blues, which are usually mild and temporary, PPD can last longer and have a significant impact on the quality of life of the mother, the mother-baby relationship, and family harmony [1].

Globally, the prevalence of postpartum depression is estimated to reach 10–15% of all births, with higher rates in developing countries. In Indonesia, various studies report the prevalence of PPD between 11% and 23%, with variations depending on the social and cultural characteristics of the community. This shows that PPD is not just an individual problem, but a public health phenomenon that needs serious attention [2].

Various factors have been identified as determinants of PPD, including maternal age, education, economic status, previous history of depression, childbirth complications, and breastfeeding problems. However, one of the most consistent factors that emerges is social support, especially support from the husband as the closest person. Husband's support has been proven to be able to reduce stress levels, increase maternal confidence, and help the process of adapting to new roles as parents [3].

Research conducted in Aceh Besar showed that mothers who did not receive husband support had a higher risk of experiencing postpartum depression. In fact, the variable of husband support appears as one of the most dominant factors compared to education and breastfeeding methods [2]. Similar findings were also reported by in Bogor, where the lack of husband support increased the chances of postpartum depression by up to 12 times [3].

In addition to emotional support, the existence of the husband in helping to overcome breastfeeding problems also plays an important role. A study at PMB Alicia, Bogor, found that breastfeeding problems that are not balanced with partner support will increase the likelihood of postpartum depression [3]. This emphasizes that the husband's involvement is not only in the emotional aspect, but also in accompanying the mother to face technical challenges during the postpartum period.

Interestingly, research in Padang showed a close relationship between postpartum depression and domestic

violence (KDRT). Mothers who experience domestic violence are reported to be more prone to depression, especially when accompanied by the absence of their husband's support [4]. This indicates that the quality of the marital relationship plays a major role in maintaining the psychological stability of the mother after childbirth.

Several other studies have also consistently reported unidirectional results. Research at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital Yogyakarta, at the Samarinda Trauma Center Health Center, and at the Linggang Bigong Health Center, West Kutai confirmed the significant relationship between husband support and the incidence of postpartum depression [5][6][7]. These results add to empirical evidence that partner involvement strongly determines maternal mental health after childbirth.

Not only depression, but also husband support has also been shown to be related to the postpartum blues, a mood swing condition that is common in postpartum mothers. A study in Buleleng found that primigravida mothers who received husband's support experienced fewer postpartum blues than those who did not [8]. These findings are important because postpartum blues are often the gateway to postpartum depression if not treated early.

A literature review conducted by [9] also confirms the consistency of these findings. Almost all of the articles analyzed showed a negative relationship between husband support and postpartum depression. Thus, partner support can be seen as a protective factor that not only reduces the risk of depression, but also improves the quality of life of the mother after childbirth.

Based on this background, it is important to review the existing research evidence on the relationship between husband support and postpartum depression. This review is expected to strengthen the scientific basis for family-based interventions in maternal health services, as well as encourage the improvement of education programs involving husbands in every phase of childbirth up to the postpartum period.

Method

This study is a literature study that aims to identify, analyze, and summarize scientific evidence related

to the influence of husband support on the incidence of postpartum depression. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach because the main focus is to evaluate and synthesize findings from various previous studies without collecting primary data. Thus, this study focuses on the analysis of secondary data available in relevant scientific journals and articles.

Literature Search Process

- The data sources in this study are in the form of scientific journals, research articles, and peer-reviewed publications that discuss husband support and postpartum depression. Literature searches are carried out through academic databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, DOAJ, and national and international journal portals.
- Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria

- Articles published in the last 5 years (2018–2023) to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the data.
- Research that specifically addresses the relationship between husband support and postpartum depression, both through cross-sectional studies, regression analysis, and literature review.
- Articles that use samples of postpartum mothers or postpartum mothers who have experienced childbirth.
- Publication in the form of peer-reviewed scientific journals to ensure the validity and quality of the data.

Exclusion Criteria

- Articles that do not directly address husband support or postpartum depression.
- Studies that focus on conditions other than postpartum depression, such as postpartum blues without a relationship with husband support.
- Articles that are not available in full text or full text.
- Keywords Search, literature search was conducted with the following keyword combinations: “Husband support and postpartum depression”, “Spousal support and maternal mental health”, “Depression postpartum and

partner involvement”, “Husband and postpartum depression”.

- Data Collection and Analysis Procedures
- Literature Search: Literature is searched using relevant keywords on a predefined database. The articles found are then filtered based on inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- Article Selection: Only articles that meet the inclusion criteria are included in the literature review. Articles that are off-topic or do not meet peer-reviewed journal quality standards are excluded from the analysis.
- Categorization and Coding: The selected articles were categorized based on key themes, such as the type of husband support (emotional, instrumental, informational), risk factors for postpartum depression, and indicators of maternal mental health. Coding is used to organize information in a systematic manner.
- Thematic Analysis: The categorized data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns, consistency of findings, differences in results between studies, and conclusions that could be drawn about the influence of husband support on the incidence of postpartum depression.

Table 1: Characteristics of Analyzed Articles

Yes	Research Title	Sample	Method	Key Results	Time
1	The Effect of Husband's Support on the Control of Postpartum Depression.	Postpartum mothers (amount not mentioned)	Cross-sectional	There is an influence of husband support on postpartum depression	2023
2	Husband Support, Education, Breastfeeding Methods and Childbirth Methods as Determinants of Depression Incidence in Postpartum Mothers Mila Oktarina	146 postpartum mothers in Aceh Besar	Cross-sectional, logistic regression	Significant husbandry support, education, breastfeeding methods, and childbirth methods related to postpartum depression	2023
3	The Effect of Husband Support and Problems in Breastfeeding with Postpartum Depression at PMB Alicia Pamijahan Bogor in 2022 Siti Suhaebah. Indonesian Health Interprofessional Journal, Vol. 2 No. 3	41 postpartum mothers at PMB Alicia Bogor	Cross-sectional, Chi-Square & regression	Lack of husband support (OR=12.7) & breastfeeding problems increase the risk of postpartum depression	2022
4	The Incidence of Postpartum Depression and Its Relationship to Husband Support and Domestic Violence Neni Apriani, et al. Indonesian Journal of Midwifery, Vol. 16 No. 2	52 postpartum mothers at Andalas Padang Health Center	Cross-sectional	Postpartum depression is significantly associated with lack of husband support and the presence of domestic violence	2025
5	Literature Review: The Relationship of Husband's Support to the Incidence of Postpartum Depression Istiani, et al. Dohara Publisher Journal, Vol. 3 No. 5	11 articles (literature review)	Literature review	The majority of studies show a negative relationship between husband support and postpartum depression	2023
6	The Relationship between Husband Support and Postpartum Depression Rates in Postpartum Mothers at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital Yogyakarta Bella Sartika, Dita Christian. Journal of Psychological and Health Sciences, Vol. 1 No. 4	30 postpartum mothers	Cross-sectional	There was a significant relationship between husband support and postpartum depression rates	2025

7	The Relationship of Husband's Support to Postpartum Depression of Postpartum Mothers Muhammad Takdir, Sitti Nurbaya, Faisal Asdar. Student Scientific Journal & Nursing Research, Vol. 1 No. 5	50 postpartum mothers	Cross-sectional	Husband's support is related to postpartum depression in postpartum mothers	2022
8	The Relationship between Husband Support and Postpartum Blues Depression Rates in Primigravida Postpartum Mothers at PMB NTC Putu Sri Widari, et al. Midwinterslion Health Journal STIKes Buleleng, Vol. 8 No. 1	40 mothers of primigravida	Cross-sectional	There is a link between husband support and postpartum depression blues	2023
9	Age Relationship and Husband's Support for Postpartum Depression Rates at Linggang Bigong Health Center, West Kutai Dian Ekowati, Ridha Wahyuni	62 postpartum mothers	Cross-sectional	Age & significant husband support associated with postpartum depression	2021
10	The Relationship between Husband Support and Postpartum Maternal Depression Rates at the Samarinda Trauma Center Health Center Hardiyanti Wardanah, Pipit Feriani. Borneo Student Research, Vol. 2 No. 2	55 postpartum mothers	Cross-sectional	There is a relationship between husband support and postpartum depression rates	2021
11	Husband Support and Postpartum Depression Nurul Hikmah Annisa, Omiati Natalia. Indonesian Journal of Midwifery (IJM), Vol. 6 No. 1	50 postpartum mothers	Cross-sectional	Husband's support has been shown to lower the risk of postpartum depression	2023

Discussion

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a significant mental health problem for mothers after childbirth, with an impact not only on the mother but also on the baby and the family as a whole. Based on an analysis of 11 journals, husband support has been proven to be one of the main protective factors against the incidence of postpartum depression. Research by shows that there is a positive influence of husband support in controlling the symptoms of postpartum depression. Similar results were found by, who confirmed that husband support, along with educational factors and childbirth methods, was significantly related to the incidence of PPD [1,2].

The Suhaebah study (2022) emphasizes that a lack of husband support can increase the risk of postpartum depression by up to 12 times, especially if the mother also has breastfeeding problems. In addition, research in Padang by indicates that the combination of lack of husband support and the presence of domestic violence (KDRT) increases maternal susceptibility to postpartum depression [5]. Other studies at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital Yogyakarta, Samarinda Trauma Center Health Center, and Linggang Bigung Puskesmas Kutai Barat showed consistent results, confirming the significant role of husband support in postpartum maternal mental health [5-7].

In addition, the husband's support has also been shown to have an effect on the postpartum blues. Research by reported that primigravida mothers who received husband-support were less likely to experience postpartum blues, a condition that if left untreated can develop into postpartum depression [8]. A review of the literature by reinforces the consistency of these findings, where most studies show a negative association between husband support and PPD [9]. Overall, these data confirm the importance of partner involvement in the postpartum phase to reduce the risk of depression and improve the psychological well-being of the mother.

Discussion

The Role of Husband Support

Husband support has various dimensions, including emotional, instrumental, and informational support. Emotional support in the form of attention, encouragement, and understanding can lower stress levels and increase maternal confidence. Instrumental support, such as assisting with infant care and accompanying mothers in breastfeeding, has also been shown to reduce the risk of PPD. Informational support, such as providing education or guiding mothers in new roles, also contributes to maternal mental health.

Additional Risk Factors

Some studies suggest that other factors, such as domestic violence, breastfeeding problems, age, and parity, can modify the effects of husband support. For example, mothers who experience domestic violence and do not receive support from their husbands have a higher risk of experiencing postpartum depression [4]. Meanwhile, the problem of breastfeeding without

partner support increases anxiety and the possibility of depression [3].

1. Study Limitations

Variations in methodology between journals, different sample sizes, and differences in postpartum depression measurement instruments are limitations that need to be considered. Some studies use different scales to assess PPD, while others use self-report questionnaires, which can influence results and generalizations. In addition, some studies are cross-sectional so they cannot confirm causal relationships.

2. Practical Implications

The results of the study emphasized the importance of family-based interventions and the involvement of husbands in every stage of childbirth to the postpartum period. Maternal health services can integrate educational programs for husbands, including briefings on the role of emotional, physical, and practical support during the postpartum period.

Conclusion

Husband support has a significant role in lowering the risk of postpartum depression and postpartum blues. This support includes emotional, instrumental, and informational aspects that contribute to the mother's psychological stability. Lack of husband support, especially when combined with other risk factors such as domestic violence or breastfeeding problems, increases the likelihood of postpartum depression.

Suggestion

Based on the results of the literature review, it is recommended that maternal health services actively involve husbands in every stage of childbirth until the postpartum period. This involvement is not only in the form of physical presence, but also emotional, instrumental, and informational support that can help lower the risk of postpartum depression. Family-based education and intervention programs need to be developed, both through antenatal classes, postpartum counseling, and community activities at health centers or hospitals, to increase awareness and skills of husbands in providing support. In addition, follow-up research with longitudinal design or randomized controlled trials (RCTs) is needed to confirm the causal relationship between husband support and postpartum depression, so that it can be the basis for the development of more effective policies and interventions in

maintaining maternal mental health postpartum.

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