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Prevalence and factors associated with anxiety disorders during the antenatal period in a tertiary care hospital in Colombo District

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Background: Anxiety disorders during pregnancy cause adverse pregnancy outcomes, but its prevalence and risk factors among local women are not known.

Objectives: To determine the prevalence and associated factors of anxiety among antenatal clinic attendees in a tertiary care hospital.

Methods: Pregnant women (n=221) attending antenatal clinics of a tertiary care hospital were sequentially recruited and assessed by a psychiatrist until 81 women with anxiety disorder were diagnosed according to International Classification of Diseases -10 criteria. All women responded to an interviewer administered questionnaire on socio-demographic information, social stressors and other relevant information. Logistic regression analysis was used to assess the factors associated with anxiety.

Results: Mean (\pm SD) age of the women was 30(\pm 5.8) years and 53.7% were multiparous. Anxiety disorder was present in 37% of the women and (46%) of them were in the 3rd trimester, 37% of the women were in 2nd trimester and 17% were in 1st trimester. The factors associated with anxiety were lower monthly income($p=0.000$), insufficient sleep due to fatigue (OR 2.0; 95%CI 1.0- 4.3; $p=0.043$), family stressors (OR 3.5; 95%CI 1.5-8.0; $p=0.002$), difficulties due to pregnancies (OR 6.3; 95%CI 1.5-26.4; $p=0.008$), occurrence of a traumatic significant event (OR 11.0; 95%CI 1.4-85.2; $p=0.022$), physical health problems (OR4.5;95%CI 1.1-18.0; $p=0.023$), mental health problems (OR 7.0; 95% CI 1.2-40.8; $p=0.032$), loss of family support (OR 6.0; 95%CI 1.1-30.7; $p=0.03$), unplanned pregnancy (OR 4.7; 95% CI 1.1-19.8; $p=0.025$), and substance abuse by the spouse (OR 4.2; 95%CI 1.0-17.8; $p=0.039$).

Conclusions: Anxiety disorder is present across all trimesters but more prevalent in third trimester. Identifying the associated factors and detection of anxiety during pregnancy will help to implement remedial measures during the antenatal period.

Acknowledgement: This work was supported by the research grant funded by the University of Sri Jayewardenepura (Research Grant No: ASP/01/RE/MED/2017/39).