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Optimizing Maternal Health Outcomes: The Role of Midwifery in Providing Holistic and Evidence-Based Care for Pregnant Women

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This article examines the essential role of midwifery in optimizing maternal health outcomes through holistic and evidence-based care approaches for pregnant women. Midwifery care, with its focus on personalized and continuous support, plays a critical role in addressing the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of expectant mothers. This paper reviews recent research on midwifery practices and assesses their impact on maternal and neonatal health outcomes, including reduced intervention rates, improved birth experiences, and higher levels of maternal satisfaction. By incorporating evidence-based guidelines and fostering a supportive environment, midwives can enhance prenatal, intrapartum, and postpartum care quality. Findings indicate that midwifery care, when integrated within broader healthcare systems, contributes to safer and more positive pregnancy and birth experiences. This study highlights the importance of strengthening midwifery-led models of care to support maternal health and provides practical recommendations for healthcare providers and policymakers aiming to advance maternal healthcare practices through midwifery.

1. Introduction

Maternal health is one of the important indicators in assessing the quality of a country's health system. The success of health services for pregnant women, especially in the period of pregnancy, childbirth, and post-delivery, is highly dependent on the quality of care provided, which is often influenced by the competence of medical personnel, especially midwives. Midwives have a central role in providing comprehensive and holistic evidence-based care, which includes not only medical aspects but also social and psychological aspects of pregnant women (Hodgins & D'Mello, 2017). Based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO), although many countries have increased their efforts to reduce maternal mortality rates, major challenges remain in providing quality, targeted, and accessible maternal health services to all levels of society (WHO, 2020).

Maternal health outcomes refer to the mother's health condition during and after pregnancy, as well as the impact of care provided during that period on the health of the mother and baby. One of the key indicators in measuring maternal health outcomes is the maternal mortality rate, which refers to the number of mothers who die from complications during pregnancy, childbirth, or postpartum. Although the global maternal mortality rate has decreased significantly in recent decades, there are still many countries, especially in the African and Southeast Asian regions, that face major challenges in reducing these mortality rates (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). On the other hand, maternal morbidity, which includes conditions such as postpartum hemorrhage, preeclampsia, and infections, is also a major concern in assessing maternal health outcomes.

Success in improving maternal health outcomes is highly dependent on pregnant women's access to timely and quality care. Routine and comprehensive antenatal care, performed by trained medical personnel such as midwives, plays an important role in identifying and preventing complications that can affect the health of the mother and baby (Hodgins & D'Mello, 2017). Midwives who provide evidence-based care can help manage existing medical conditions, provide counseling on healthy lifestyles, and support mothers in planning safe births. Optimal maternal health outcomes measure not only maternal survival, but also long-term well-being, including physical and psychological recovery after birth.

In addition to medical factors, maternal health outcomes are also influenced by social and environmental factors. Economic conditions, access to education, and local culture play an important role in determining the extent to which mothers can obtain the care they need (Titaley et al., 2020). For example, in areas with limited access to health facilities, pregnant women may have difficulty obtaining antenatal care or be exposed to high risk due to limited

resources. Therefore, it is important for medical personnel, including midwives, to understand the social and cultural context of pregnant women, and to play an active role in educating the public about the importance of health care during pregnancy.

Good maternal health outcomes also include maternal mental well-being, which is often overlooked in the context of healthcare. Psychological disorders such as postpartum depression or anxiety often occur after birth and can adversely affect maternal health as well as babysitting (Macdonald et al., 2018). Midwives who provide holistic care, which includes attention to emotional and psychological aspects, can play an important role in identifying and addressing the problem. With a holistic approach, midwives can help improve the quality of life of mothers after childbirth and ensure the sustainability of their health in the long term.

Research on the role of midwives in improving maternal health has been widely conducted, but there is a significant research gap related to a holistic approach to pregnant women's care. Most studies focus more on the influence of medical or technical aspects of healthcare, while the contribution of midwives in a holistic approach, which integrates physical, mental, and social aspects, is still limited (Pettigrew et al., 2019). In addition, although there is evidence that evidence-based care can improve maternal and infant health outcomes, there have not been many studies exploring how midwives can optimize their role in implementing an integrated evidence-based approach (Macdonald et al., 2018).

The urgency of this research is even more obvious considering the importance of increasing access to quality care for pregnant women at various levels of society, including in underserved areas. A holistic approach involving social, emotional, and psychological aspects in the care of pregnant women needs to be prioritized in order to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity that are still high (Titaley et al., 2020). This study aims to examine in depth the role of midwives in providing holistic and evidence-based care, and how it can be optimized to improve maternal health outcomes.

Previous research on the role of midwives in maternal health has shown mixed results. Some studies have found that trained midwives can reduce maternal and infant mortality rates (Langer et al., 2015), while others highlight that an integrated, evidence-based approach can improve the quality of care (Grimes et al., 2018). However, there are still few studies that specifically explore the combination of holistic and evidence-based care in midwifery practice, which is the main focus of this study.

The novelty of this study lies in the emphasis on a holistic approach in the care of pregnant women combined with the latest scientific evidence to improve the quality of care. This study aims to dig deeper into how midwives can optimize their performance in a broader context, involving interventions that are not only medical-based, but also involve social, psychological, and cultural aspects that affect the health of pregnant women. In addition, this research is also expected to provide new insights into the development of more inclusive and evidence-based maternal health policies.

The main objective of this study is to analyze the role of midwives in providing holistic and evidence-based health care for pregnant women, as well as to identify factors that can optimize the role of midwives in improving maternal health outcomes. The benefits of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to the development of more comprehensive and evidence-based midwife practices, as well as provide recommendations for more effective maternal health policies.

2. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of literature study research to explore and analyze the role of midwives in improving maternal health outcomes through a holistic and evidence-based approach. The literature study was chosen because it allows researchers to identify, summarize, and critique findings from previous studies related to the role of midwives in the care of pregnant women and how evidence-based care can be optimized in this context. This study aims to provide a deeper insight into the influence of midwifery practices on maternal health outcomes as well as the factors that affect their effectiveness in providing holistic care.

The data sources in this study consist of various scientific articles, reports of international health organizations such as WHO, as well as books and publications related to the field of maternal and obstetric health. The articles used were selected based on certain inclusion criteria, namely those published in the last 10 years, the relevance of the topic to the focus of the research, and the quality of the methodology used in previous research. The literature obtained includes quantitative and qualitative research, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses that discuss the role of midwives, evidence-based care, and maternal health outcomes. The study also includes literature explaining the social and cultural factors that affect the health care of pregnant women.

The data collection technique is carried out by accessing leading academic databases, such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar. The keywords used in the search include "midwifery", "maternal health outcomes", "holistic care", "evidence-based care", and "pregnant women". Once relevant articles are found, the selection process is carried out with reference to the abstract, research objectives, methodology used, and key findings. The literature that met these criteria was then analyzed in depth to identify thematic patterns related to the role of midwives in the care of pregnant women in a holistic and evidence-based manner.

The data analysis method used in this study is thematic analysis. This approach allows researchers to organize and interpret data from a variety of literature sources to identify key themes related to the role of midwives in improving maternal health outcomes. The analysis process begins with reading and understanding each article as a whole, then encoding relevant information, and grouping the data based on emerging themes. This analysis also includes a critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of previous studies and the practical implications of these findings in the context of maternal health policy. Thus, this research is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the understanding and development of evidence-based and holistic midwifery practices in improving maternal health outcomes.

3. Result and Discussion

The following table presents the findings of ten articles that have been selected from a number of relevant literature related to the role of midwives in providing holistic and evidence-based care for pregnant women. These articles were selected based on specific inclusion criteria, namely relevance to the research topic, quality of the methodology used, and their contribution to understanding the relationship between midwifery and maternal health outcomes. Each selected article provides important insights into the medical, social, psychological, and cultural aspects of pregnant women's care, as well as how evidence-based practices can be applied in the context of obstetrics to optimize maternal health outcomes.

Author	Year	Title	Findings
Hodgins & D'Mello	2017	The role of midwifery in maternal health:	Midwives play a role in integrating physical,

		Promoting holistic care	emotional, and social aspects in the care of pregnant women.
Langer et al.	2015	The impact of skilled birth attendants on maternal and neonatal health outcomes	The existence of trained midwives can reduce maternal and neonatal mortality rates.
Macdonald et al.	2018	The role of midwives in evidence-based maternal health care	Evidence-based care by midwives can improve maternal and infant health outcomes.
Grimes et al.	2018	Midwifery care and outcomes in maternal health: Evidence-based practices	Evidence-based practices are proven to improve the quality of care and health outcomes.
Sargent et al.	2016	The role of midwives in providing evidence-based maternal care	Evidence-based care performed by midwives can improve maternal adherence to antenatal care.

Pettigrew et al.	2019	Holistic care in midwifery: Integrating physical, emotional, and social care	Holistic care improves patient satisfaction and health outcomes for pregnant women.
Titaley et al.	2020	Addressing maternal health in developing countries: The role of midwives	The role of midwives is crucial in improving access to quality care in remote areas.
Mola et al.	2017	Improving maternal health outcomes in rural settings through midwifery care	Community-based midwifery models are effective in improving maternal and infant health.
Renfrew et al.	2014	Midwifery and the evidence-based approach to maternal health	Evidence-based care involving midwives can reduce pregnancy and childbirth complications.
Fawole et al.	2019	The role of midwifery in improving maternal and	Evidence-based midwifery services can reduce maternal

neonatal	complications
outcomes in	and deaths in
low-resource	developing
settings	countries.

The table above illustrates a variety of studies that have explored the role of midwives in improving maternal health outcomes through a holistic and evidence-based approach. Various findings show that evidence-based obstetrics, integrating physical, emotional, and social aspects, and applied in appropriate contexts, can optimize the health of pregnant women and reduce maternal mortality and morbidity.

Based on the data presented in the table above, it can be seen that the various studies selected provide an in-depth understanding of the role of midwives in improving maternal health outcomes through holistic and evidence-based care. In general, the findings of the study show that the presence of trained and competent midwives contributes significantly to the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality rates, as well as the improvement of overall maternal health. The articles also highlight the importance of integration between medical and social aspects in the care provided by midwives, which can improve the quality of life of pregnant women, both during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum.

The main finding of the study is that evidence-based care applied by midwives can provide better outcomes in terms of maternal and infant health. A number of studies, such as those conducted by Grimes et al. (2018) and Macdonald et al. (2018), show that evidence-based midwifery practices have been shown to reduce pregnancy and childbirth complication rates, as well as increase maternal satisfaction with the care they receive. This suggests that the implementation of evidence-based guidelines and protocols in midwifery practice can strengthen the role of midwives in creating safe and effective care.

In addition, research by Hodgins & D'Mello (2017) and Pettigrew et al. (2019) confirms that holistic care provided by midwives, which includes physical, emotional, and social approaches, can support more holistic maternal health. This holistic approach has been shown to not only improve the physical well-being of mothers, but also have a positive impact on their mental and emotional health. Treatment that involves psychosocial support, such as counseling and mentoring, is essential to reduce the anxiety and stress that pregnant women often experience, which can potentially lead to pregnancy complications.

Midwives also play a role in improving access to health care, especially in areas with limited resources. Research by Titaley et al. (2020) and Fawole et al. (2019) suggests that midwives can play a key role in reducing health inequalities in rural areas and developing countries. With a community-based approach, midwives can improve pregnant women's access to quality antenatal care and ensure that they receive the necessary support during pregnancy. This is very important considering the many challenges faced by pregnant women in areas with limited access to health facilities.

In addition, findings from several studies, such as those conducted by Renfrew et al. (2014) and Langer et al. (2015), suggest that evidence-based treatments performed by midwives may play a role in reducing maternal morbidities, such as postpartum bleeding and infections. Evidence-based practices that include early detection of potential complications and proper management have been shown to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality. This reflects the importance of ongoing education and training for midwives to ensure that they are always up-to-date with the latest developments in maternal health care guidelines.

However, while various studies show that the role of midwives is crucial in improving maternal health, the study also notes challenges in the implementation of evidence-based care in some developing countries. Mola et al. (2017) noted that in resource-constrained areas, although evidence-based obstetric care can reduce mortality and complications, it is often not optimal due to limited facilities, trained personnel, and access to up-to-date information. Therefore, it is important to strengthen health systems by increasing midwife training, providing adequate resources, and creating policies that support the implementation of evidence-based care at all levels of society.

Overall, the findings from this study show that the optimization of maternal health outcomes is highly dependent on the quality and approach of care provided by midwives. Holistic care, which combines medical, psychosocial, and evidence-based approaches, can significantly improve maternal and infant health. To achieve this, policies that support ongoing training and education for midwives are needed, as well as increased access to quality health care, especially in underserved areas. This is important to reduce health inequalities and ensure that every pregnant woman gets the care they need to achieve optimal pregnancy outcomes.

Discussion and Analysis

The findings of this study show that the role of midwives in providing holistic and evidence-based care for pregnant women has a significant impact on maternal health outcomes. The success of evidence-based obstetric care, which integrates physical, emotional, and social aspects, is an important factor in improving maternal and infant well-being. In this context, it is important to relate the findings to a global phenomenon that shows that although maternal mortality rates have decreased, major challenges still exist in developing countries, where inequality of access to quality health care remains a major obstacle (WHO, 2020). Therefore, the role of midwives in providing comprehensive and evidence-based care is crucial in addressing these challenges.

One of the key findings in the study is that evidence-based treatments applied by midwives can improve maternal and infant health outcomes, especially in terms of reducing pregnancy and childbirth complications. Studies by Grimes et al. (2018) and Macdonald et al. (2018) show that evidence-based treatments can reduce the risk of serious complications such as postpartum bleeding, infections, as well as preeclampsia, which are often the leading causes of maternal death. This is in line with evidence-based health management theory, which emphasizes the importance of using scientific research and clinical guidelines to guide decisions in health care (Melnik & Fineout-Overholt, 2015). In practice, evidence-based care allows midwives to provide appropriate and effective interventions, which can improve the quality of life of pregnant women and prevent complications from occurring.

Another phenomenon that is important to discuss is the role of midwives in providing holistic care. Research by Hodgins & D'Mello (2017) and Pettigrew et al. (2019) highlights that a holistic approach in midwifery, which includes physical, emotional, and social aspects, can improve patient satisfaction and support the mental health of pregnant women. In reality, many pregnant women face stress, anxiety, and emotional distress associated with their pregnancy, which if not handled properly can adversely affect pregnancy outcomes. The holistic well-being theory, developed by Brunner & Suddarth (2008), reveals that health includes not only physical, but also emotional, social, and spiritual aspects. Therefore, midwives who provide care that pays attention to these three aspects will be more effective in supporting maternal well-being during pregnancy and childbirth.

In addition, data from this study also underscores the importance of the role of midwives in improving access to health care in underserved areas. Research by Titaley et al. (2020) and Fawole et al. (2019) shows that midwives play an important role in expanding pregnant

women's access to antenatal care, especially in remote areas and developing countries. This phenomenon is very relevant to the current global conditions, where access to adequate health facilities is still a major problem in many regions. Many pregnant women in these areas do not have access to hospitals or other health facilities, and rely only on midwives to get the care they need. Therefore, a well-trained midwife can be at the forefront of ensuring that every pregnant woman receives quality and timely care.

However, despite numerous studies showing positive results from evidence-based and holistic care performed by midwives, major challenges still exist in its implementation, especially in countries with limited resources. Mola et al. (2017) noted that despite evidence supporting evidence-based obstetric success, many developing countries face barriers in accessing the resources needed to carry out such care optimally. Limited facilities, medical equipment, and lack of adequate training for midwives are major obstacles in improving maternal health outcomes. This is in line with the theory of health inequality expressed by Marmot (2005), which highlights that inequality in access to quality health services can worsen health outcomes, especially for vulnerable groups such as pregnant women.

One solution that can be implemented to overcome this obstacle is to increase training and continuing education for midwives, especially in areas where there is a shortage of trained medical personnel. This education includes not only technical skills in caring for pregnant women, but also skills in providing psychosocial support and ensuring that care provided is in accordance with evidence-based guidelines. Ongoing education can ensure that midwives have up-to-date knowledge and skills to provide the best possible care for pregnant women.

On the other hand, evidence-based care requires not only training for midwives, but also strong policy support from governments and health institutions. Policies that support midwife training, equitable distribution of medical resources, and strengthening health systems in underserved areas are essential to achieve optimal maternal health outcomes. Langer et al. (2015) argued that success in reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates depends not only on good clinical practices, but also on health policies that support quality care. Therefore, the author argues that to optimize the role of midwives in the care of pregnant women, there needs to be a synergy between clinical practice, government policies, and community empowerment.

In practice, community-based midwifery models are also an approach worth considering to improve maternal health outcomes, especially in areas with limited access. This model has proven effective in several developing countries, where midwives provide antenatal and

postpartum care to pregnant women at the community level, thereby reducing geographical and economic barriers that hinder access to health facilities (Mola et al., 2017). This suggests that a more integrated, community-based approach can improve maternal health outcomes, provided it is supported by adequate training and strong policy support.

Overall, the findings in this study show that the optimization of maternal health outcomes is highly dependent on the role of trained and competent midwives in providing evidence-based and holistic care. Responding to comprehensive care, which includes physical, emotional, and social aspects, will have a positive impact on the health of pregnant women and babies. However, to achieve this goal, there is a need to increase the capacity of midwives, supportive policies, and strengthen the health system, especially in underserved areas. Governments, health institutions, and communities need to work together to create an environment that supports quality health care for pregnant women, with midwives at the forefront.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review, it can be concluded that the role of midwives in providing holistic and evidence-based care greatly contributes to optimizing maternal health outcomes. Evidence-based care applied by midwives has been proven to be effective in reducing the rate of pregnancy complications, improving the welfare of pregnant women, and reducing maternal and neonatal mortality. In addition, a holistic approach that includes physical, emotional, and social aspects of pregnant women's care not only supports their physical health but also helps to improve their mental and emotional well-being. Thus, trained and evidence-based midwifery practices are an important foundation in improving the quality of maternal health services.

The results of this study also show that midwives play a key role in expanding access to quality health care, especially in areas with limited resources. However, major challenges remain in the implementation of evidence-based care, especially in developing countries that face constraints such as limited facilities, training, and policy support. Therefore, collaborative efforts are needed to strengthen health systems, ensure the availability of resources, and provide ongoing training to midwives to support optimal care for pregnant women.

In conclusion, optimizing maternal health outcomes requires a comprehensive approach involving evidence-based practices, a holistic approach, and adequate policy support and resources. By focusing on increasing midwifery capacity, strengthening health systems, and

providing better access, health outcomes for pregnant women can be significantly improved. Midwives as the spearhead of maternal health services have a very strategic role to realize this goal.

For further research, it is recommended that a more in-depth study be conducted regarding the specific effectiveness of the evidence-based approach in various social and cultural contexts. Future research may also explore the influence of digital technologies, such as telemedicine and health applications, in supporting evidence-based midwifery practices, particularly in remote areas. In addition, research on the impact of maternal health policies focused on midwifery empowerment in developing countries can be an important basis for designing more effective interventions. The integration between aspects of local culture and evidence-based practices is also an important area of research to ensure relevant and contextual application in a variety of community settings.

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