

# The Relationship Between Perceived Social Support and the Psychological Well-Being of Pregnant Women Expecting Their First Child (Primigravida)

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## ABSTRACT

Psychological well-being is a very important factor in maintaining positive emotions. One way to maintain psychological well-being is through positive perception of social support, which can come from family, friends, and significant others. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between perceived social support and the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (*primigravida*). This research uses quantitative method with measuring instrument in the form of a psychological scale consisting of two parts. This study involved 154 respondents, who were pregnant women expecting their first child. The results show that there was a positive relationship between perceived social support and the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child, with a value of  $r = .423$  and a value of  $p = .000$ . The conclusion of this study is that the higher the perceived social support, the higher the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child. Conversely, the lower the perceived social support, the lower the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child.

**Keywords:** *perceived social support, psychological well-being, pregnant women expecting their first child, primigravida*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pregnancy represents a transition for women to adapt to the changes that will be experienced both physically and psychologically. These changes can include changes in body shape, sensitivity to smells, nausea, fatigue, changes in appetite, sleep patterns, as well as significant changes in feelings and emotions [1]. Women who are experiencing pregnancy for the first time are generally worried about the many changes that will occur in their lives and in general they are worried about their ability to care for their babies [2]. There is a significant increase in the amount of hormones in pregnant women, especially for the estrogen and progesterone, these hormones increase more than a normal menstrual cycle. Due to the significant hormonal changes, pregnant women have unstable emotions [3]. These unstable emotions can disrupt the psychological well-being of pregnant women. Psychological well-being refers to how a person evaluates their life in terms of cognitive, emotional and also feelings [4].

Psychological well-being is a dynamic concept consisting of many dimensions, namely subjective dimensions, social dimensions, psychological dimensions, as well as health-related behavior [5]. [6] There are six dimensions that exist in psychological well-being, namely self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth.

Social support is required to help reduce psychological well-being problems experienced by pregnant women. Social support does not merely offer the various supports that exist, but the most important aspect is how the recipient perceives the meaning of the support. This situation is related to the accuracy of the social support that is distributed, which means that the recipient of the support feels the benefits that results in relief or satisfaction from the support given to them [7]. Apart from that, the existence of perceived social support is also believed to be more useful when compared to the quantity or amount of available support. The existence of perceived social support can focus on how recipients consider the social support that is available to them, and whether that support is needed when appropriate or not [8]. Positive perceived social support can affect psychological well-being. The higher the perceived level of social support provided, the higher the psychological well-being of a person [9].

Studies on perceived social support and psychological well-being of pregnant women has been widely conducted. The results of previous studies show a positive correlation between perceived social support and psychological well-being of pregnant women (Yuksel [10], Abdollahpour & Keramat [11], Azeez & Benjamin [12], Novitasari [13], Montaser et al. [14], Astuti et al. [15]. Although there have been many studies related to perceived social support and

psychological well-being of pregnant women, this research is still being conducted. Pregnant women in this study were specifically for pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida), whereas in previous studies involving pregnant women in general, including pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida) and pregnant women who already had children before (multigravida). Based on the research background, researchers are interested in knowing the relationship between the perceived social support and the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida).

### **1.1. Problem Formulation and Problem Statement**

The formulation of this study is to find out if there is a correlation between perceived social support and the psychological well-being between pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida), while the aim of this study is to determine whether there is a correlation between perceived social support and the psychological well-being between pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida) or not.

### **1.2. Theoretical and Practical Benefit**

The theoretical benefit of this study is to add and enrich scientific references in the field of clinical psychology and developmental psychology regarding perceived social support and the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida). It is also hoped that this research could be a reference for future researchers who are interested in related topics. The practical benefit of this study is to raise people's awareness on the importance of perceived social support for the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Perceived Social Support**

Social support is not only about providing help, but the most important thing is the recipient's perception towards the purpose of the help given. This is closely related to the accuracy of the social support provided, which means that people who receive help feel the benefits of the help provided [16].

Social support is divided into two forms, namely received social support, and perceived social support. The difference between the two forms is, in received social support, the calculation of social support provided is based on the type and quantity of social support provided by others. In perceived social support, the calculation of social support is done by asking how someone perceives or believes that that person will be supported or helped by others [17].

Perceived social support defined as a way for someone to interpret assistance from people around them in verbal and non-verbal forms that aim to help recipients of support, so that they feel valued and loved by people in their environment [18].

Therefore, it can be concluded that the perceived social support is the response given by the recipients to the support (both verbal and non-verbal) which comes from the closest people around their social environment.

### **2.2. Dimensions of Perceived Social Support**

Perceived social support divided into three sources, namely family, friends, and significant others. Family is said to be a source of social support because in family relationships a trusting relationship is formed between members. Friends are said to be a source of social support because friendship is considered to be a supportive relationship that supports, takes care of each other, and provides each other with both affection and physical gifts. Significant others are a source of social support because significant others are individuals who are important to someone and greatly influence that person [19].

### **2.3. Psychological Well-Being**

Psychological well-being as a subjective term that has different meanings for each person. Even though there are times in most people's lives when they are not at their best mentally and emotionally, if they have positive psychological well-being, they are able to deal with their problems effectively. This situation also affects one's physical health [12]. Psychological well-being refers to how individuals evaluate their life in cognitive, emotional and affective aspects [4]. Psychological well-being is a social perspective in the form of togetherness with others, where human needs are met, where someone can act meaningfully to pursue their life goals, and where someone enjoys a satisfying quality of life [12].

Psychological well-being defined as the capacity of a person to feel, think, behave in a way that awakens our ability to feel life and face every problem or challenge [20]. Psychological well-being is a condition where an individual can accept themselves as they are, can create deep relationships with other individuals, has independence in passing social demands, can influence the external environment, has meaning in life, and can also realize their own abilities continuously [6].

### **2.4. Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being**

Psychological well-being is conceptualized into six dimensions, namely self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth [5]. Self-acceptance is the individual's ability to completely accept himself/herself both in the past and in the present. Positive relation with others is the capability of the individual in managing good relationships with the people around him/her. Autonomy is

the individual's ability to live independently while still being able to control themselves and maintain their life and behavior. Environmental mastery is the individual's power to control, use the opportunities available in the environment, build and influence the environment as needed. Purpose in life is defined as the individual's ability to have a real concept of his/her life's purpose and course, to have the firmness that the individual has the capability to achieve his/her life goals, and to feel that their experience has an important meaning in life. Personal growth is seeing him/herself as an individual who continues to develop [6].

## 2.5. Research Hypothesis

There is a significant and positive correlation between perceived social support and psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida).

## 3. METHODS

### 3.1. Research Type

This research is a non-experimental, quantitative correlational research. Based on the perspective and objectives, this research is classified as a correlational study because this study aims to determine or provide evidence of whether or not there is a relationship between two or more variables of a situation [21]. The two variables measured in this study are the perceived social support and psychological well-being. Quantitative research is a research method by processing numerical data with statistical methods to answer the research questions, namely the relationship between perceived social support and the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida).

### 3.2. Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this study is a non-probability sampling technique. Non-probability sampling technique is a sampling technique used when not all members of the population in this study have the same opportunity to be sampled. This sampling technique is used if several members of the population cannot be identified individually [21]. The subjects in this study were women expecting their first child aged 20-40 years who lived in Jakarta and were not easily identified individually. In using this non-probability technique, researchers used purposive sampling type, which is a non-random sampling method. Purposive sampling is a technique of collecting data through specially selected subjects according to the assessment of the researchers in order to provide the best data and information in accordance with the research conducted. This sample selection is based on thoughts and consideration that aims so that the data obtained can focus on certain goals [21]. Researchers have selected and determined individual characteristics of the subjects of this

study in detail because the researchers consider that these subjects can provide the best data and information that will complement this research.

### 3.3. Participants

Participants in this study are women aged 20-40 years who are pregnant with their first child (primigravida) from three trimesters (I, II, III), residing in Jakarta, and have no previous history of miscarriage. The subjects in this study were not limited to socio-economic, educational, marital status, religion, ethnicity and occupation. The number of participants in this study is 154.

### 3.4. Measurement

Data was collected by filling out a questionnaire containing two scales, namely the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) with 12 items developed by Zimet et al., and adapted into the Indonesian context by Winahyu et al., and the Psychological Well-Being Scale (PWB-S) developed by Ryff and adapted to Indonesian context by the Research and Measurement Section of the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Tarumanagara into 31 items.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

The sum of all data obtained from the questionnaires that have been distributed are 222 respondents, but based on the criteria of this research, it was found that 68 respondents (30.63%) out of 222 total respondents did not meet the research criteria, while 154 respondents (69.36%) fulfilled all the research criteria. The research subjects in this study were divided into 4 age groups, namely the ages of 20-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, and 36-40 years. Based on the data obtained regarding the age of research subjects, research subjects aged 20-25 years are known to be 63 respondents (40.9%), subjects aged 26-30 years are 70 respondents (45.5%), subjects aged 31-35 years are 19 respondents (12.3%), and subjects aged 36-40 years are known to be 2 respondents (1.3%). More detailed results are in Table 1.

**Table 1** Participants Data Based on Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	63	40.9
26-30	70	45.5
31-35	19	12.3
36-40	2	1.3
Total	154	100.0

Apart from being reviewed based on the age group of the subjects, another overview of the research subjects was also seen based on the trimester of pregnancy of the research subjects. Based on the data obtained, there were 44 subjects (28,6%) who were in their first trimester, 47 subjects (30,5%) in their second trimester, and 63 subjects

(40,9%) were in their third trimester. More details are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2** *Participants Data Based on Trimesters*

Trimesters	Frequency	Percentage
First Trimester	44	28.6
Second Trimester	47	30.5
Third Trimester	63	40.9
Total	154	100.0

The overview data of the perceived social support in this study uses a scale of 1-7 with the hypothetical mean of the measuring instrument of 4, while the empirical mean is 5.7992. Based on these results it can be seen that the hypothetical mean is smaller than the empirical mean. Thus, in general the perceived social support on the subjects can be considered high. It could also be seen that the lowest score of the subjects on the measurement tool for perceived social support was 2.75 and the highest score was 7.00. More details are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3** *Overview Data of the Perceived Social Support*

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Significant Others	154	2.50	7.00	6.1688	0.83523
Family	154	1.75	7.00	5.9756	0.88181
Friends	154	1.00	7.00	5.2532	1.09663
Total	154	2.75	7.00	5.7992	0.75957

The overview data of the psychological well-being in this study uses a scale of 1-5 with a hypothetical mean of the measuring instrument of 3, while the empirical mean is 3.8075. Based on these results it can be seen that the hypothetical mean is smaller than the empirical mean. Thus, in general the psychological well-being of the subjects can be considered high. The lowest score of the subjects on the measuring instrument of psychological well-being was 2.87 and the highest score was 4.74. More details are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4** *Overview Data of the Psychological Well-Being*

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Self-Acceptance	154	2.40	5.00	3.8935	0.54792
Positive Relations with Others	154	1.80	5.00	3.6195	0.66618
Autonomy	154	2.00	5.00	3.4286	0.61485
Environmental Mastery	154	1.80	5.00	3.7532	0.76519
Purpose in Life	154	2.29	5.00	3.8720	0.47399
Personal Growth	154	3.20	5.00	4.2779	0.41243
Psychological Well-Being	154	2.87	4.74	3.8075	0.39808

This study conducted normality test using the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test on perceived social support and psychological well-being. The result shows that the perceived social support has a value of  $p = 0.002 < 0.05$ , which indicates that the data is not normally distributed. Meanwhile, the psychological well-being has a value of  $p = 0.834 > 0.05$ , which indicates the data is normally distributed. More details are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5** *Linear Regression Normality Test*

Variables	P	Note
Perceived Social Support	0.002	Not normally distributed
Psychological Well-Being	0.834	Normally Distributed

This study conducted a correlation test between perceived social support and psychological well-being using the Spearman Correlation method. The choice of this method was due to one of the variable is known to not be normally distributed, which is the perceived social support. Based on the results of the correlation test, the  $r$  value obtained is 0.423 and  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ , which indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being in pregnant women who are expecting their first child (primigravida). Thus it can be said that the research hypothesis is accepted. This means that the higher the perceived social support, the higher the psychological well-being of pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida). Conversely, the lower the perceived social support, the lower the psychological well-being of women expecting their first child (primigravida). More detailed results regarding the results of the correlation test between perceived social support and psychological well-being is on Table 6.

**Table 6** *Correlation between Perceived Social Support and Psychological Well-Being*

		Psychological Well-Being	Note
Perceived Social Support	$r$	0.423	Positive, medium Correlation
	$p$	0.000	Significant

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis obtained from the Spearman correlation technique using SPSS statistical program, it was found that the correlation coefficient was 0.423 with  $P = 0.000$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). These results indicate that there is a positive relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being. This means that the higher the perceived social support of women expecting their first child (primigravida), the higher the psychological well-being of these pregnant women. On the other hand, the lower the perceived social support of these women, the lower the psychological well-being of these pregnant women. Based on the results, the hypothesis in this study is accepted.

Perceived social support affect the level of psychological well-being of pregnant women [10]. A study found that women who feel supported by their partners show a higher level of psychological well-being than women who feel less or even unsupported by their partners [21]. Another study also shows that the level of psychological well-being of pregnant women increases in line with the increasing perceived social support from family, partners and friends. The amount of adequate social support is very important in meeting the expectations of pregnant women [23].

Based on the correlation test between the dimensions of the perceived social support and psychological well-being, the dimension with the highest correlation is the family dimension with a correlation coefficient of 0.424. This is supported by the research results of Abdollahpour & Keramat which stated that there is a positive relationship between perceived social support from families and psychological well-being. Thus, increasing psychological well-being can occur in line with the increased social support that is felt from the family [11].

The correlation test between perceived social support and the dimensions of psychological well-being shows that the dimension with the highest correlation is positive relations with others with a correlation coefficient of 0.435. Social support is a source of ability or assistance provided to individuals obtained from the individual's interactions with other individuals [24]. The results of the analysis are in line with Lehman's statement which stated that the existence of positive and supportive interpersonal relationships has a major function in defending individuals from the effects of stress that cause harm and can restore physical and emotional reactions from stress, including anxiety [25].

Researchers found several limitations in this study. The first limitation is the time restrictions. The second is the limitation of the method in finding subjects. Subjects were gathered using an online questionnaire method, where researchers could not make direct observations on the research subjects. The third limitation is that the researchers did not add more control data such as marital status, socio-economic status, how often the subjects meet with family and friends, and other data.

The result of this study is the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being in

women expecting their first child (primigravida). However, this does not indicate how much influence the two variables have. Thus, this study has not described whether the high psychological well-being of the subjects is more influenced by the perceived social support, or is influenced by other factors.

### 5.1. Theoretical Suggestions

There are several suggestions that researchers would like to convey for the next research. First, for the next researchers who are interested in examining the psychological well-being of pregnant women who are expecting their first child (primigravida), they can examine other factors that influence these variables, such as marital status, socioeconomic, knowledge and educational level of the subjects.

Second, this study may shows a positive correlation between perceived social support and psychological well-being in pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida). However, this study has not shown a significant role or how much influence the perceived social support has on the psychological well-being of pregnant women. For this reason, further research can be conducted using regression analysis test to see the influence between variables, or by using qualitative methods in order to obtain a more in-depth picture of the role of perceived social support on psychological well-being in pregnant women. Besides that, further research may use a larger sample so that the data obtained is more varied and more representative.

### 5.2. Practical Suggestions

The researchers advise pregnant women who are expecting their first child (primigravida) to continue to maintain their psychological well-being. Maintaining psychological well-being can be done by always being grateful for the health of their self and their fetus, as well as having positive interactions and activities with fellow community members, family, and friends.

There are a lot of positive activities that can be done by pregnant women, for example, by regularly attending seminars and sharing activities with fellow pregnant women. Through these positive activities, they could continue to be able to properly care and raise the child in their womb. Psychological well-being also needs to be supported by positive relationships and support from family, relatives, friends, the community, and the surrounding environment. The researchers advise the people closest to pregnant women, such as their husbands, parents, friends, and their community to continue to be able to provide support for pregnant women.

Pregnant women expecting their first child (primigravida) also need supports in the form of praise and trust from their husbands and families in caring their unborn child, providing financial assistance for care costs or assistance in the pregnancy process, listening to complaints, giving positive and motivative words, or always them attention.

Thus, women who are facing the pregnancy process can be more enthusiastic and stronger in facing the process of pregnancy of their first child.

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