

Analysis of Pregnant Women's Perceptions Regarding the Quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) Services at the Taratara Community Health Center, West Tomohon

**Neni Anjelika Girsang¹, Nancy Silvia Bawiling², Deviana Pratiwi Munthe³,
Vera Diane Tombokan⁴, Tika Bela Sari⁵, Fredrik Alfrets Makadada⁶**
^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Universitas Negeri Manado

Email: nenianjelikagirsang2004@gmail.com

Abstract

Antenatal Care (ANC) services are a crucial effort in improving maternal and fetal health and preventing pregnancy complications. Pregnant women's perceptions of ANC service quality play a role in their utilization of healthcare services during pregnancy. This study aims to analyze pregnant women's perceptions of ANC service quality at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) based on the five dimensions of service quality (SERVQUAL): tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The study employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. Informants consisted of four pregnant women (primary informants) and one midwife (key informant), selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, while data validity was tested through source triangulation. The results indicate that, overall, pregnant women hold a positive perception of ANC service quality at the Taratara Community Health Center. The dimensions of tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy were perceived as meeting expectations, evidenced by adequate facilities, adherence to service procedures, healthcare worker competence, and a friendly, attentive attitude during service delivery. However, issues were identified regarding the responsiveness dimension, particularly concerning waiting time efficiency and the speed of staff response in certain situations. The study concludes that the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy should be maintained, whereas the responsiveness dimension requires improvement specifically regarding service speed and waiting time management to further optimize the quality of ANC services at the Taratara Community Health Center.

Keywords: Perception, Pregnant Women, Service Quality, Antenatal Care (ANC), SERVQUAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Maternal health services serve as a crucial indicator for improving public health standards. One strategy to reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is the provision of Antenatal Care (ANC) health services delivered to expectant mothers from the onset of pregnancy through to the approach of delivery. These services aim to monitor the health of both mother and fetus, facilitate the early detection of pregnancy risk factors, prevent complications, and ensure preparation for a safe delivery. The WHO emphasizes that high-quality ANC plays a vital role in improving maternal and infant health and preventing pregnancy-related complications (WHO, 2020). Consequently, beyond merely expanding service coverage, the quality of ANC is a critical factor in enhancing expectant mothers' satisfaction with and trust in healthcare services.

The Indonesian government has undertaken various efforts to reduce the maternal mortality rate (MMR), including improving the quality of antenatal care across health facilities, increasing the provision of delivery assistance by professional health workers, enhancing early detection of high-risk pregnancies, strengthening referral systems, and improving the quality of neonatal care (Mokoagow et al., 2020). According to the 2024 Indonesia Health Profile, national antenatal care (ANC) coverage reached 90.18%; however, disparities persist among

provinces in meeting service targets, making the equitable distribution of service quality an ongoing challenge (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024). This indicates that expanding service coverage must be accompanied by improvements in service quality to ensure the needs of pregnant women are optimally met.

The quality of healthcare services can be evaluated using the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, which comprises five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). These five dimensions are used to assess service quality based on the perceptions of service users. Pregnant women's perceptions of Antenatal Care (ANC) service quality are significant, as they can influence satisfaction, adherence to ANC visits, and the continued utilization of healthcare services.

Several previous studies indicate that the quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) services is linked to the satisfaction of pregnant women. Research by Any Mulyati and Treacy Austin (2020) reveals persistent service quality gaps across several SERVQUAL dimensions within ANC services. A study by Firdayani Haji Amin et al. (2025) also found that ANC service quality influences the satisfaction of pregnant women. Meanwhile, research by Rombon et al. demonstrates that high-quality service particularly regarding communication, staff empathy, and service reliability can enhance pregnant women's trust in and satisfaction with healthcare services. However, most of these studies employed a quantitative approach, thereby failing to deeply explore pregnant women's experiences and perceptions regarding the quality of the ANC services they received.

The Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) is a primary healthcare facility in Tomohon City that provides Antenatal Care (ANC) services to pregnant women within its service area. Data from the center's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program indicate that ANC service coverage aligns with program targets. However, preliminary observations and interviews revealed feedback from pregnant women regarding facility comfort, waiting times, and staff responsiveness during service delivery. These findings suggest that, despite the achievement of service coverage targets, an evaluation of service quality based on the perceptions of pregnant women is still necessary to serve as a foundation for improving ANC services at the Taratara Community Health Center.

This study is significant due to the limited existing research examining pregnant women's perceptions of Antenatal Care (ANC) service quality at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) using a qualitative approach. The study aims to analyze pregnant women's perceptions of ANC service quality based on the five SERVQUAL dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The research focuses on pregnant women's perceptions of ANC service quality and employs a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. The informants consisted of four pregnant women (primary informants) and one midwife (key informant), selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation, and subsequently analyzed using thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The findings are expected to serve as a basis for evaluation for the Taratara Community Health Center, helping to maintain service dimensions that are already performing well while improving those that require attention, thereby continuously enhancing the quality of ANC services.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative, descriptive approach to explore pregnant women's perceptions of the quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) services at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas). This approach was selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the women's experiences, views, and assessments regarding ANC services, based on the five dimensions of service quality (SERVQUAL): tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance,

and empathy. The study focuses on describing pregnant women's perceptions of ANC service quality in relation to these five dimensions.

The study was conducted at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) in West Tomohon District, Tomohon City, North Sulawesi Province, in April 2026. Research informants were selected using purposive sampling a method involving the deliberate selection of informants based on criteria established in alignment with the study's objectives. The informants consisted of four pregnant women (primary informants) and one midwife providing Antenatal Care (ANC) services (key informant). The criteria for primary informants included pregnant women who had received or were currently receiving ANC services at the Taratara Community Health Center, were willing to participate as informants, and were capable of providing information relevant to the study's focus.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document review. The researcher acted as the human instrument, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide to explore the experiences of pregnant women regarding the quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) services. Observations were carried out to examine the service delivery process, interactions between healthcare workers and pregnant women, and the condition of the facilities. Documentation served as supporting data, comprising records of K1–K4 visits, ANC service schedules, field notes, and other documents related to ANC services at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas).

Data validity was verified through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from pregnant women (primary informants) and midwives (key informants), as well as by cross-referencing responses among informants to assess the consistency of the information. Data analysis employed a thematic analysis approach a method used to identify patterns or themes within interview and observation data. The initial step involved repeatedly reading all interview transcripts and field notes to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the data. Subsequently, the researcher performed coding by marking significant segments of the informants' statements regarding their perceptions of antenatal care (ANC) services. These codes were then grouped into specific themes, such as staff attitude, facilities, timeliness, or information delivery. Once the themes were established, the researcher interpreted their significance and linked them to relevant theories and prior research. This entire process adhered to the qualitative data analysis steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) and the guidelines provided by Creswell and Poth (2018), ensuring the analysis results are credible and grounded in a solid scientific basis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved five informants, comprising four pregnant women as primary informants and one midwife as a key informant at the Taratara Community Health Center in Tomohon City. The research findings are presented based on the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL service quality model: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.

a. Tangible (Physical Evidence)

Interview results indicate that the majority of pregnant women consider the physical facilities at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) to be quite good. The examination rooms are perceived as clean, prenatal examination equipment is available and in good working order, and healthcare personnel maintain a neat professional appearance. However, some informants noted that the waiting area becomes uncomfortable when patient numbers rise; consequently, there is a need for additional seating and improvements to the comfort of supporting facilities.

These findings indicate that the tangible dimension has met the expectations of the majority of pregnant women, although there are still aspects requiring improvement. The results align with the study by Any Mulyati and Trecy Austin (2020), which states that physical facilities are a factor influencing perceptions of ANC service quality. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), adequate physical evidence can enhance user trust in healthcare services.

b. Reliability

The majority of informants stated that ANC services were provided in accordance with established procedures. Comprehensive prenatal check-ups were conducted, healthcare workers provided information regarding the condition of the mother and fetus, and examination results were properly documented. Informants also noted that service schedules were relatively consistent, allowing services to be received as expected.

The findings indicate that the reliability dimension is functioning effectively. The reliability of healthcare workers in delivering services according to standards is a factor that boosts pregnant women's confidence in ANC services. These results align with the study by Firdayani Haji Amin et al. (2025), which states that consistent, procedure-compliant service enhances pregnant women's satisfaction with ANC services.

c. Responsiveness

Pregnant women perceive healthcare workers as reasonably prompt in providing services and responsive to the concerns raised. Midwives allow pregnant women to ask questions about their pregnancy and provide explanations that are easy to understand. However, some informants noted that service waiting times could still be improved, particularly when the volume of visits increases.

These results indicate that the responsiveness dimension is rated favorably, although the efficiency of service delivery time remains a concern. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), staff responsiveness is a crucial indicator in shaping positive perceptions of service quality. This finding is also supported by research conducted by Winarsih and Hariyani (2024), which demonstrates that rapid staff response increases satisfaction and the likelihood of repeat visits among pregnant women.

d. Assurance

Most informants expressed confidence in the competence of the healthcare workers providing ANC services. Midwives were able to explain examination results in easily understandable language, provide education on pregnancy, and foster a sense of security during the examination. The professional attitude of the healthcare workers also boosted the expectant mothers' trust in the services provided.

These findings indicate that the assurance dimension has been effectively implemented. The competence, communication, and professionalism of healthcare workers are crucial factors in building patient trust. These results align with the SERVQUAL concept, which posits that service assurance is linked to the staff's ability to instill a sense of security in service users.

e. Empathy

The empathy dimension was the aspect that received the most positive feedback from the informants. Pregnant women reported that healthcare workers were friendly, polite, and non-discriminatory, and provided individual attention throughout the care process. Midwives also gave the women an opportunity to voice their concerns and encouraged them to attend regular prenatal check-ups.

These findings indicate that the empathetic attitude of healthcare workers is a key strength of ANC services at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas). The results align with research by Rombon et al., which states that friendliness, attentiveness, and good communication enhance pregnant women's satisfaction with and trust in healthcare services. According to Parasuraman et al. (1988), empathy is a crucial dimension in delivering patient-centered care.

Overall, the research findings indicate that pregnant women's perceptions of the quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) services at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) are positive across all SERVQUAL dimensions. The dimensions of reliability, assurance, and empathy best met the informants' expectations, as healthcare workers were perceived as professional and communicative, and provided individualized attention to the pregnant women. Meanwhile, the dimensions of tangibles and responsiveness still require improvement, particularly regarding the comfort of supporting facilities and service time efficiency during periods of high patient volume.

These findings indicate that service quality is not determined solely by the completeness of facilities but is also influenced by the ability of healthcare workers to establish communication, provide a sense of security, and demonstrate empathy toward patients. Therefore, efforts to improve ANC service quality at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) should focus on upgrading supporting facilities without compromising the quality of interaction between healthcare workers and expectant mothers. In this way, ANC services can be expected to maintain existing high-quality service dimensions while simultaneously improving those that require attention, thereby fostering continued growth in patient satisfaction and service utilization.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the perception of pregnant women regarding the quality of Antenatal Care (ANC) services at the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) is generally positive across the five SERVQUAL dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The dimensions of reliability, assurance, and empathy best met the expectations of pregnant women; this was evidenced by adherence to service procedures, the ability of healthcare workers to instill a sense of security and provide easily understandable information, and a demeanor characterized by friendliness, care, and respect for each patient's needs. Meanwhile, the dimensions of tangibles and responsiveness were also rated positively but still require improvement particularly regarding the comfort of supporting facilities, waiting room capacity, waiting time efficiency, and the management of service flow during periods of high patient volume.

The findings of this study indicate that the quality of ANC services is determined not only by the completeness of facilities but also by the professionalism, communication skills, and empathy of healthcare workers in delivering care. Therefore, the Taratara Community Health Center (Puskesmas) is expected to maintain service quality regarding reliability, assurance, and empathy, while improving aspects of tangibles and responsiveness through the upgrading of supporting facilities, the optimization of service management, and the more effective utilization of healthcare personnel. These efforts are expected to enhance satisfaction among pregnant women and encourage the sustained utilization of ANC services.

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