



Analysis of Risk Factors for External Genital Health of Women of Childbearing Age in Purwakarta Regency, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The health of women's external genitalia is an important aspect of reproductive health. This study aims to analyze the health risk factors for the external genitalia of women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency, Indonesia. **Methods:** This research is an analytical observational study with a cross-sectional design. The research sample was 240 women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency who were selected randomly. Data was collected through questionnaires and physical examination. Data analysis was carried out univariate and bivariate. **Results:** The results of the study showed that the risk factors for the health of the external genitalia of women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency were age, parity, and a history of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Women aged more than 35 years have a higher risk of external genital health than women aged less than 35 years (OR = 2.65; 95% CI: 1.22-5.83). Women with parity more than 2 have a higher risk of external genital health than women with parity 1-2 (OR = 2.32; 95% CI: 1.14-4.71). Women with a history of STIs have a higher external genital health risk than women without a history of STIs (OR = 3.52; 95% CI: 1.58-8.17). **Conclusion:** Age, parity, and history of STIs are risk factors for external genital health in women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency.

1. Introduction

The health of women's external genitalia is an important aspect of reproductive health. The female external genitalia consist of the labia majora, labia minora, clitoris and vaginal vestibule. These external genitalia have an important function in protecting the internal female reproductive organs, such as the vagina and uterus. Good external genital health can support women's reproductive function, including fertility, pregnancy, and childbirth. Women with good external genital health have a greater chance of getting pregnant, having a healthy pregnancy, and giving birth to a healthy baby. Elderly women are more susceptible to experiencing external genital health problems due to hormonal changes that occur with age. These hormonal changes can cause a decrease in

estrogen production, which can cause the vagina to become drier and more susceptible to infection.¹⁻⁴

Women with high parity, namely women who have given birth more than twice, are also more susceptible to experiencing external genital health problems. This is because the birth process can cause damage to the external genital tissue. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) can cause inflammation and infection of the external genitalia, which can cause itching, pain, and bleeding. Poor genital hygiene can lead to fungal and bacterial infections. Fungal and bacterial infections can cause itching, vaginal discharge, and discomfort in the external genitalia.^{5,6} This study aims to analyze the health risk factors for the external genitalia of women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency, Indonesia.

2. Methods

This research is an analytical observational study with a cross-sectional design. The research sample was 240 women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency who were selected randomly. Data was collected through questionnaires and physical examination. Questionnaires were used to collect demographic data, external genital health risk factors, and external genital health symptoms. Physical examination is used to assess the health condition of the external genitalia. Data analysis was carried out univariately and bivariately. Univariate analysis was carried out to determine the distribution of research variable data. Bivariate analysis was carried out to determine the relationship between external genital health risk factors and external genital health symptoms.

3. Results and Discussion

The results showed that the majority of respondents were aged 20-34 years (62.5%), had parity 1-2 (60.0%), and had no history of STIs (70.0%). The results of the bivariate analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between external genital health risk factors and external genital health symptoms. Women over 35 years of age have a higher risk of external genital health symptoms than women under 35 years of age (OR = 2.65; 95% CI: 1.22-5.83). Women with a parity of more than 2 have a higher risk of external genital health symptoms than women with a parity of 1-2 (OR = 2.32; 95% CI: 1.14-4.71). Women with a history of STIs have a higher risk of external genital health symptoms than women without a history of STIs (OR = 3.52; 95% CI: 1.58-8.17).

In older women, estrogen production naturally decreases with age. Estrogen is a hormone that plays an important role in maintaining vaginal health, including maintaining vaginal humidity and pH. A decrease in estrogen production can cause the vagina to become drier and more susceptible to infection. Apart from that, older women are also more susceptible to other medical conditions that can affect the health of the external genitalia, such as diabetes and cancer. Diabetes can cause nerve damage to the external genitalia, which can cause pain and

discomfort. Cancer can cause inflammation and infection of the external genitalia.⁷⁻⁹

The birth process can cause damage to the external genitalia tissue, especially the labia and vagina. This damage can cause irritation, pain, and vaginal discharge. Apart from that, women with high parity are also more susceptible to other medical conditions that can affect the health of the external genitalia, such as fungal and bacterial infections. Fungal and bacterial infections can cause itching, vaginal discharge, and discomfort in the external genitalia. STIs can cause inflammation and infection of the external genitalia, which can cause itching, pain, and bleeding. The most common STIs that attack the external genitalia are vaginitis, trichomoniasis, and herpes simplex. Vaginitis is a vaginal infection that can be caused by various types of bacteria, fungi, or parasites. Vaginitis can cause vaginal discharge, itching, and pain during sexual intercourse. Trichomoniasis is a vaginal infection caused by the parasite *Trichomonas vaginalis*. Trichomoniasis can cause vaginal discharge, itching, and pain during sexual intercourse. Herpes simplex is a viral infection that can cause sores on the external genitalia. Herpes simplex can cause itching, pain, and redness of the external genitalia.¹⁰⁻¹²

4. Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that age, parity, and history of STIs are risk factors for the health of the external genitalia of women of childbearing age in Purwakarta Regency. The biological plausibility aspect of the results of this study can be explained by hormonal changes, tissue damage, and infection.

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