

Childbirth Experience of a Mother Who Became Pregnant Soon After the Great East Japan Earthquake

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the interview was to learn about the experience of childbirth in order to consider how to support expectant mothers and postpartum mothers under the stress of radiation anxiety. In May 2012, first-time mothers in their 20s who became pregnant soon after the earthquake were asked, "How was your childbirth experience?" and asked them to describe their childbirth experiences through semi-constructive interviews. The husbands were also present at the interviews, and they were asked to talk freely about their thoughts on childbirth. The birth experiences were converted into data by referring to Berelson's content analysis [1]. As a result, the experiences of childbirth were categorized into the following categories: "experiences in which I was occupied with myself," "experiences in which I was supported by my husband and others," "experiences in which I was occupied with myself," and "experiences in which I worried about the effects of radiation on my child. The case study had concerns about radiation, but her husband and the people around her supported her through the birth, and she was able to positively view the birth as a good experience.

It was also suggested that it is necessary for doctors, midwives, and radiation experts at medical facilities to work together to provide continuous support to pregnant women and their husbands from the early stages of pregnancy. Furthermore, the provision of accurate and specific information via the Internet and other information devices would be useful.

Keywords

Childbirth experience, Radiation, Anxiety.

Introduction

The experience of childbirth influences the formation of maternal awareness and the process of acquiring maternal roles after childbirth, so it is said to be important to support the meaning of the experience [1-5]. Immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake in March last year, there was an explosion at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, and the newspapers and media actively covered issues related to radiation. This time, I would like to report on the birth experience of a mother who

continued her pregnancy under the stress of radiation anxiety after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and gave birth safely.

Case

The case was a first-time mother in her 20s, in her fifth month of puerperium. She delivered at term, vaginally, and the delivery time was about 16 hours. The child was a normal mature infant (2940 g).

Method

We asked them, "How was the birth?" and asked her to talk freely. The husband was also present at the interview, and talked freely about his feelings about the birth. The birth experiences were

converted into data by referring to Berelson's content analysis [6].

Ethical considerations

This interview was conducted after explaining the purpose and significance of the interview to the subjects and obtaining their consent. The interview was conducted in a private room and over the Web, and efforts were made to protect the privacy of the subject and his/her family. The content of the interview was recorded with the subject's consent, and the subject promised not to use the personal information and data obtained in the interview for any other purpose. In addition, written consent was obtained to publish the interview results as a "case report" in an academic journal.

Results

Content of childbirth experience

The experience of being occupied with oneself

- It was my first pregnancy and I had no knowledge about it, so I was worried about what would happen if my child had any problems or deformities, as any pregnant woman would be.
- As the contractions became stronger, all I could think about was the pain. I just wanted the baby to be born safely.
- I was so exhausted when I saw my child right after the birth that I thought it was finally over rather than being moved.
- My husband was more worried about the radiation, and I was not so worried.

The experience of being supported by my husband and the people around me

- Whenever I felt uneasy during my pregnancy, I consulted my husband, who listened to me and supported me.
- If I had any concerns or questions, I would go to the Internet and look at sites where pregnant women could ask for advice.
- I was encouraged by the fact that my husband's parents and my own parents were looking forward to the birth of my child.
- I was relieved to know that both my parents saw it as a normal pregnancy and delivery and encouraged me.

The experience of worrying about the effects of radiation on children

- When I found out that I was pregnant, there were a lot of reports that the radiation problem was going to get worse and worse, and I felt sorry for the child who would grow up in the polluted air and water.
- I was worried that the rate of thyroid cancer in children might increase due to the effects of radiation, but I tried to be optimistic that the radiation levels in our area were low

enough to be safe.

- My husband was worried about the effects of radiation on the mother and child until about three or four months into the pregnancy. He was especially concerned about the effects of radiation on the mother and child, and started using mineral water when he found out he was pregnant.
- My husband gathered information on the Internet, but the most frightening thing was that we did not know exactly what level of radiation was bad for the baby.
- My husband is currently breast-feeding our child, so he is concerned that the radiation may have accumulated in the child's body.

Conclusion

Although she was worried about radiation, her husband and other people around her supported her in giving birth, and she was able to look at it positively and say, "I am glad I gave birth".

It was suggested that it is necessary for doctors, midwives, and radiation experts at medical facilities to work together to provide continuous support to pregnant women and their husbands from the early stages of pregnancy. In addition, it would be useful to provide accurate and concrete information via the Internet and other information devices.

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