Abstract

Purpose   One of the antenatal care (ANC) services is counseling with health providers, good client-provider interaction provides sufficient quality counseling. However, it is difficult to find an effective approach for improving client-provider interaction in lower-resource settings. Several studies indicate that group interventions during pregnancy have advantages for empowerment of pregnant women including interactions between pregnant women and the midwife. This study aims to examine the effects of a prenatal group program in rural Tanzania on (1) improvement of knowledge about physiological symptoms of pregnancy; (2) promotion of pregnancy-related empowerment, (3) enhancement intention to self-care behaviors for safer childbirth, and (4) gaining satisfaction with ANC visits.

Methods   This study used a quasi-experimental with a comparison group conducted in two selected facilities. The midwife-led prenatal group program consisted of lecture, sharing, and review session. And the contents of the program provided physiological symptoms of pregnancy and self-care behaviors. The primary outcome was knowledge of symptoms during pregnancy. The secondary outcomes were the pregnancy-related empowerment scale (PRES), intention to self-care behaviors, and satisfaction. Data were collected using questionnaires before (baseline) and after (endline) the program for both groups. The intervention group received the group program and the control group received an individual program.

Results   There were data from 108 pregnant women analyzed in this study: intervention group ($n = 54$) and control group ($n = 54$). The primary outcome of knowledge of common symptoms during pregnancy significantly increased in intervention group compared with control group ($t = 2.677, p = 0.009$).   The secondary outcome of one of the PRES statements about midwife's respectful attitude toward women's decision significant increased in intervention group compared with control group ($U = 2.076, p = 0.038$).

Conclusion   The group intervention during pregnancy was effective for gaining knowledge of common symptoms of pregnancy and identifying favorable midwife connectedness. (300/300 words)