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Association between pregnant women's satisfaction with antenatal care services and attendance at the Tutun Sehati program: A cross-sectional study

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Abstract

Background: The global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) was estimated at 197 per 100,000 live births in 2023. High-quality antenatal care (ANC) is essential for reducing maternal morbidity and mortality. In North Sumatra, only 80.32% of pregnant women completed six ANC visits (K6). Satisfaction with ANC services may influence adherence to recommended ANC visits. A preliminary survey at Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic indicated the need for further investigation of this relationship.

Purpose: To assess the quality of ANC services and the level of satisfaction among pregnant women and to determine the associations between ANC service quality, maternal satisfaction, and adherence to ANC visits at Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic in 2026.

Method: This quantitative study employed a cross-sectional design. The sample comprised 53 pregnant women from a population of 113. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, and participants were recruited using accidental sampling. Data were collected using the SERVQUAL questionnaire, which was adopted in full from Sianipar et al. (2025). Data were analyzed using univariate analysis with frequency distributions and bivariate analysis using the Chi-square test.

Results: Of the 53 respondents, 35 (66.0%) rated the quality of ANC services as good, while 36 (67.9%) reported a high level of satisfaction. The Chi-square test demonstrated a statistically significant association between ANC service quality and adherence to ANC visits ($p < 0.001$), as well as between pregnant women's satisfaction and adherence to ANC visits ($p = 0.003$).

Conclusion: ANC service quality and pregnant women's satisfaction were significantly associated with adherence to ANC visits. These findings highlight the importance of maintaining and improving the quality of ANC services and patient satisfaction to support adherence to the recommended K6 ANC schedule.

Keywords: ANC Visit Adherence; Antenatal Care; Pregnant Women's Satisfaction; SERVQUAL.

INTRODUCTION

Maternal mortality remains a critical global public health indicator. According to WHO estimates, approximately 260,000 women died from maternal causes in 2023, corresponding to a global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of 197 deaths per 100,000 live births. Although this represents a 40% reduction from 328 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2000, the global annual rate of reduction was only 2.2% between 2000 and 2023, indicating that further efforts are needed to

achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 3.1. The largest reduction was reported in Southeast Asia, where the MMR declined by 73.6%, from 365 to 96 deaths per 100,000 live births (World Health Organization, 2025).

Recent advances in obstetrics indicate that the decline in maternal mortality is closely linked to the strengthening of evidence-based antenatal care. A primary review in *The Lancet* confirms that evidence-

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based antenatal interventions are effective in reducing the incidence of vulnerable newborns and the associated adverse outcomes. Thus, the quality of antenatal visits is a key determinant of maternal and neonatal safety, not merely the frequency of visits alone (Hofmeyr *et al.*, 2023). These findings are supported by a multinational observational study conducted in Ethiopia, India, Kenya, and South Africa, which found that recommended clinical components of antenatal care (ANC) such as physical examinations, diagnostic tests, and counseling—are still often not fully provided, even though the coverage of visits is high (Arsenault *et al.*, 2024).

A paradigm shift in contemporary midwifery also emphasizes that the success of ANC cannot be measured solely from the perspective of service providers, but must also take into account the experiences and satisfaction of service recipients (Morgan *et al.*, 2022). A recent study in Wogera, Ethiopia, reported that the satisfaction rate of pregnant women with ANC services was over 90%. However, waiting times and sanitation conditions remain sources of dissatisfaction (Belachew *et al.*, 2024). In line with this, a study in Lusaka, Zambia, found that satisfaction with the quality of ANC is directly related to pregnant women's willingness to return to the same health facility for their next visit. Thus, satisfaction is a predictor of continued use of services (Hibusu *et al.*, 2024). The determinants of overall patient satisfaction were also systematically examined by Batbaatar *et al.* (2017), who concluded that interpersonal communication between healthcare providers and patients consistently emerged as a determinant of satisfaction across healthcare settings. These findings are supported by a recent study showing that communication that supports patient autonomy and competence significantly contributes to patients' satisfaction levels and perceptions of their own health (Omuya *et al.*, 2025). In addition, patients' trust in healthcare providers serves as an important link between perceived quality of care and satisfaction levels in public healthcare facilities (Hutadjulu *et al.*, 2026).

At the national level, Indonesia has made progress in maternal health service coverage, although substantial challenges remain. According to the *Indonesia Health Profile 2024*, 4,151 maternal deaths were recorded nationally. The leading reported

causes included non-obstetric complications (1,351 cases), hypertensive disorders during pregnancy (988 cases), and obstetric hemorrhage (955 cases) (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). In 2024, national coverage of the fourth antenatal care visit (K4) reached 80.12%, while coverage of the sixth antenatal care visit (K6) reached 75.64%. Both indicators remained below the 95% target established in the National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN). In North Sumatra Province, K4 and K6 coverage reached 81.12% and 80.32%, respectively (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025).

The national trend also indicates that improvements in ANC coverage have not been consistent. K4 coverage decreased from 85.6% in 2023 to approximately 80.1% in 2024 (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). This decline contrasts with the RPJMN target and raises concerns regarding the continuity of recommended ANC visits. Although international evidence indicates that pregnant women's satisfaction with ANC services is associated with adherence to ANC visits (Hibusu *et al.*, 2024; Omuya *et al.*, 2025), increased coverage alone does not necessarily reflect the quality of care or patients' experiences with ANC services. The gap between service utilization and service quality therefore warrants further investigation, particularly from the perspective of pregnant women's satisfaction with the care they receive (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024).

Most empirical studies examining the relationship between satisfaction and adherence to ANC visits have been conducted in African settings, including Ethiopia, Zambia, Ghana, and Malawi (Hibusu *et al.*, 2024; Omuya *et al.*, 2025). In contrast, evidence from private primary healthcare facilities in Indonesia, particularly in rural–urban areas of Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, remains limited. Differences in healthcare financing mechanisms, health workforce distribution, service organization, and patient characteristics between Indonesia and the African settings studied may influence the relationship between satisfaction and ANC adherence. Consequently, the applicability of international findings to the Indonesian primary healthcare context requires further empirical investigation (North Sumatra Provincial Health Office, 2025).

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A preliminary survey conducted by researchers in February 2026 at the Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic found that, of the 113 pregnant women who had attended ANC visits in the past three months, there were no available data or scientific studies that systematically evaluated the level of satisfaction among pregnant women with the services provided, nor to what extent that satisfaction contributes to adherence to the K4/K6 standards for visits at the clinic. Thus, there is a gap between the availability of strong international evidence regarding the relationship between ANC satisfaction and adherence and the lack of equivalent local evidence at the primary clinic level in Tanjung Morawa Subdistrict.

Given this gap, the present study is important for three main reasons. First, it will provide empirical evidence on the relationship between pregnant women's satisfaction and adherence to ANC visits at the private primary care clinic level in Deli Serdang Regency, a setting that has received less research attention than public health centers and hospitals. Second, by adapting the patient satisfaction determinants described by Sembiring and Sinaga (2024)—including communication among healthcare providers, facilities, staff attitudes, midwives' competence, and adherence to ANC service standards—this study examines the relevance of these determinants in the context of private primary care clinics in Indonesia. This may contribute context-specific evidence to the midwifery literature regarding factors associated with pregnant women's satisfaction with ANC services. Third, the findings are expected to provide an evidence base for the management of Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic and relevant local health authorities to develop interventions aimed at improving ANC service quality and strengthening pregnant women's adherence to recommended visits. Such efforts are consistent with Indonesia's broader maternal health priorities and the Asta Cita development agenda, particularly its emphasis on strengthening human resources and improving the quality of health services (Government of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025). Overall, the study is expected to contribute academically by examining patient satisfaction determinants in an under-researched primary care context and practically by generating locally relevant evidence to support improvements in ANC service delivery (Karlina et al., 2024).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative correlational approach with a cross-sectional design to examine the associations between the quality of antenatal care (ANC) services, pregnant women's satisfaction, and adherence to ANC visits. The study was conducted at Tutun Sehati Clinic, Tanjung Morawa Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia, in 2026.

The study population comprised 113 pregnant women who had attended ANC services at Tutun Sehati Clinic during the three months preceding the study. The sample size was calculated using the Slovin formula with a 10% margin of error, yielding a minimum sample of 53 participants. Participants were recruited using accidental sampling. Pregnant women encountered by the researcher during ANC visits were invited to participate and were enrolled if they met the eligibility criteria and provided informed consent.

The inclusion criteria were pregnant women who had received ANC services at Tutun Sehati Clinic, had attended ANC at the clinic within the three months preceding the study, were able to understand and complete the questionnaire, and provided informed consent. Pregnant women requiring immediate medical or emergency care during data collection and respondents who did not complete the questionnaire adequately were excluded.

The independent variables were perceived ANC service quality and pregnant women's satisfaction with ANC services, while adherence to ANC visits was the dependent variable. ANC service quality was defined as respondents' perceptions of the quality of ANC services received. Maternal satisfaction referred to respondents' evaluation of the ANC services in relation to their expectations and needs. Adherence to ANC visits referred to whether respondents followed the recommended ANC visit schedule according to the study's operational criteria.

Data were collected using a questionnaire adopted from Sianipar et al. (2025), which examined the relationship between ANC service quality and maternal satisfaction at an independent midwife practice in Sawit Seberang Subdistrict, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra Province. The instrument assessed ANC service quality based on five SERVQUAL dimensions: reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness. The questionnaire was adopted without modification to its

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content, items, or structure. In the original instrument, service quality was categorized as good or poor, while maternal satisfaction was categorized as satisfied or not satisfied. In the present study, the questionnaire was administered directly to eligible participants following informed consent.

During data collection, eligible pregnant women were informed about the study objectives, procedures, voluntary participation, and confidentiality. After providing informed consent, participants completed the questionnaire based on their experiences of receiving ANC services at the clinic. Completed questionnaires were reviewed for completeness before coding and data entry. Adherence to ANC visits was determined according to the operational definition established in the study and subsequently categorized for analysis.

Data were processed through checking, coding, data entry, and statistical analysis. Univariate analysis was performed using frequencies and percentages to

describe the distribution of study variables. Bivariate analysis was conducted to examine the associations between ANC service quality and adherence to ANC visits and between maternal satisfaction and adherence to ANC visits. The Chi-square test was used for categorical variables, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for research involving human participants. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participants were informed of their right to decline or withdraw from the study without affecting the ANC services they received. The privacy and confidentiality of participants were maintained throughout the study, and the collected data were used solely for research purposes.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondent (N=53)

Variables	Results n (%)
Age	
≤ 20 years	9 (17.0)
21–34 years	43 (81.1)
≥ 35 years	1 (1.9)
Education	
Primary School	1 (1.9)
Junior High School	18 (34.0)
Senior High School	26 (49.1)
College/University	8 (15.1)
Parity	
Primipara	23 (43.4)
Secundipara	24 (45.3)
Multipara	6 (11.3)
Employment Status	
Employed	45 (84.9)
Not employed	8 (15.1)
Trimester	
First trimester	16 (30.2)
Second trimester	31 (58.5)
Third trimester	6 (11.3)

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The majority of respondents were aged 21–34 years (43; 81.1%), had completed senior high school (26; 49.1%), and were employed (45; 84.9%). Regarding parity, most respondents were secundiparous (24; 45.3%), followed by primiparous women (23; 43.4%). More than half of the respondents were in the second trimester of pregnancy (31; 58.5%), while 16 (30.2%) were in the first trimester and 6 (11.3%) were in the third trimester.

Table 2. Association Between ANC Service Quality and Pregnant Women's Satisfaction with Adherence to ANC Visits (N=53)

Variables	Adherence to ANC Visits		p-value
	Non-adherent n (%)	Adherent n (%)	
ANC Service Quality			<0.001
Poor	14 (77.8)	4 (22.2)	
Good	5 (14.3)	30 (85.7)	
Pregnant Women's Satisfaction			0.003
Not Satisfied	11 (64.7)	6 (35.3)	
Satisfied	8 (22.2)	28 (77.8)	

The Chi-square test showed a statistically significant association between ANC service quality and adherence to ANC visits ($p < 0.001$). Among pregnant women who rated the quality of ANC services as good, 85.7% were adherent to ANC visits, compared with 22.2% among those who rated the quality as poor.

A statistically significant association was also found between pregnant women's satisfaction with ANC services and adherence to ANC visits ($p = 0.003$). The adherence rate was 77.8% among women with good satisfaction, compared with 35.3% among those with poor satisfaction.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Sianipar et al. (2025), who examined the relationship between the quality of antenatal care (ANC) services and pregnant women's satisfaction at Citra Independent Midwife Practice in Sawit Seberang Subdistrict, Langkat Regency, North Sumatra. Their study found a significant relationship between ANC service quality and pregnant women's satisfaction, indicating that better perceived service quality was associated with higher levels of satisfaction (Sianipar et al., 2025). From the perspective of SERVQUAL theory, these findings can be understood through five

dimensions of service quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). The fulfillment of these dimensions in interactions between midwives and pregnant women may contribute to positive perceptions of ANC services and greater satisfaction. Conversely, when service performance does not meet patients' expectations, a gap may arise between expected and perceived service quality, potentially reducing satisfaction and willingness to continue using ANC services. Therefore, consistent attention to all five dimensions of service quality is important in creating a positive ANC experience and supporting continued utilization of maternal health services (Amanda et al., 2026).

These findings also have practical implications for the management of the Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic. Continuous and structured improvements in the quality of ANC services particularly in areas still rated as inadequate by 34.0% of respondents are expected to have a direct impact on increasing adherence to ANC visits (Dewi et al., 2024). Strategies that can be implemented include regular training for midwives, providing service facilities that meet standards, and implementing a service quality monitoring system based on feedback from pregnant women as service users (Munthe et al., 2019).

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In general, the results of this study reinforce the concept that improving the quality of ANC services and increasing pregnant women's satisfaction are two complementary strategies for improving adherence to ANC visits. Multidimensional interventions are needed, including enhancing midwives' competencies, strengthening therapeutic communication, improving facilities and infrastructure, and empowering pregnant women and their families through health education activities (Sinaga et al., 2024; Sianipar et al., 2025; Hibusu et al., 2024). These efforts are important for addressing the various barriers that may prevent some pregnant women from adhering to recommended ANC visit schedules. The findings of this study may therefore provide an empirical basis for the Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic and relevant stakeholders to develop strategies aimed at improving the quality of antenatal care services and supporting pregnant women's adherence to recommended visits. In the longer term, strengthening the quality and utilization of ANC services may contribute to broader maternal and infant health goals, including efforts to reduce preventable maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality.

CONCLUSION

Perceptions of ANC service quality and pregnant women's satisfaction are significantly associated with adherence to ANC visits at Tutun Sehati Primary Clinic, Tanjung Morawa Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia, in 2026. These findings suggest that both factors are relevant to pregnant women's adherence to recommended ANC visits.

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