

# Pregnant women's perception of fetal movement

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## ABSTRACT

The majority of women who experienced stillbirth felt a decrease in fetal movement before diagnosis. The most frequently reported change was a decrease in perceived fetal movement. Indeed, reduced fetal movement has long been associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes such as impaired fetal growth and stillbirth. The role of the mother is very important in assessing the movement of the fetus. Factors that influence the mother in calculating her fetal movement are the mother's perception, mother's knowledge and the forgetting factor. Descriptif Design, purposive sample, 30 Samples, analyze distribution frequency. Result more than half of the respondents strongly agree with each of the statements above. Pregnant women have a good perception of fetal movement. Every pregnant woman must count fetal movements and when they find that their fetal movements are lacking, immediately go to the hospital. This research is limited to the mother's perception of fetal movement. Future researchers to study about what factors influence pregnant women in calculating their fetal movements.

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## INTRODUCTION

Maternal perception of fetal movement is one of the first signs of fetal life and is considered a manifestation of fetal well-being. Movement is first felt by the mother between 18 and 20 weeks of gestation and quickly acquires a regular pattern. Fetal movement is defined as any discrete kick, flutter, swish or roll (Royal College, 2011).

One way to assess fetal well-being is from fetal movement. (Mangesi et al., 2015)(Guney & Tuba, 2019) A significant decrease or sudden change in fetal movement is potentially an important clinical sign. It has been suggested that reduced or absent fetal movement may be a warning sign of impending fetal death. Studies of fetal physiology using ultrasound have demonstrated an association between reduced fetal movement and poor perinatal outcomes (Royal College, 2011).

The majority of women (55%) who experienced stillbirth felt a decrease in fetal movement before diagnosis. A number of studies on fetal death in Norway and the UK have identified that inappropriate responses by doctors to the mother's perception of death are a common causative factor in stillbirths (Heazell et al., 2017).

The most frequently reported change was a decrease in perceived fetal movement. Indeed, reduced fetal movement has long been associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes such as impaired fetal growth and stillbirth. This is caused by placental dysfunction which is evident in reduced fetal movement. However, little is known about other aspects of perceived fetal activity, such as increased arousal, and its association with harm (Heazell et al., 2017).

Recent data from case-control studies and large international cohort studies indicate that any significant change in the usual pattern of fetal movement is a risk factor for stillbirth. How to assess fetal movement through various methods, namely maternal perception, calculation of fetal movement, palpation, auscultation, ultrasound imaging, doppler, other methods Actography, CTG. Maternal perception and calculation of fetal movement is the mother's role. Palpation and auscultation are the role of the clinician, ultrasound, Doppler, other methods using technology, Actography and CTG are Automated Technology (Stanger et al., 2017).

The role of the mother is very important in assessing the movement of the fetus. Factors that influence the mother in calculating her fetal movement are the mother's perception, mother's knowledge and the forgetting factor (Heazell et al., 2017). Based on this background, an assessment of the mother's perception of fetal movement was carried out.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This type of research is descriptive. The research sample was all pregnant women who checked themselves at Teti Herawati's Independent Midwife Practice at the time of the study and met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are: Inclusion criteria: willing to take part in the study, exclusion criteria: experiencing disturbances and complications during pregnancy. Sampling technique using a purposive sample. The number of research samples is 30 people. The research instrument is using a questionnaire. Data analysis using Frequency distribution. Data is processed using the Excel program in the form of percentages.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The characteristics of the respondents in this study can be seen in table 1 below:

**Table 1**  
**Characteristics Of The Respondent**

No.	Variable	n	%
1.	Age		
	<20	2	6,7
	20-35	23	76,7
	>35	5	16,7
	Amount	30	100
2.	Education		
	Based	7	6,7
	Intermediate	19	76,7
	High	4	16,7
	Amount	30	100
3.	Occupation		
	Housewife	27	90
	Work	3	10
	Amount	30	100
4.	Gestational		
	Age	8	26,7
	Second	22	73,3
	Trimester	30	100

	Third Trimester		
	Amount		
5	Parity		
	Primigravida	12	40
	Multigravida	18	60
	Amount	30	100
6.	Husband's		
	Age	24	80
	>20-35	6	20
	>35	30	100
	Amount		
7.	Husband's		
	Education	5	16,7
	Based	24	80
	Intermediate	1	3,3
	High	30	100
	Amount		
8.	Husband's		
	Occupation	30	100
	Work	0	0
	Doesn't work	30	100
	Amount		

Based on table 1, it can be seen that 23 people (76.7%) are mothers aged 20-35 years, 19 people with secondary education (63.3%), 27 housewives (90%), 22 people (73.3%) in third trimester of pregnancy, 18 multigravidas (60%), 24 people (80%) husbands aged 20-35 years, 24 people (80%), husband's education 30 husbands (100%) work. Meanwhile, the mother's perception of fetal movement can be seen in table 2.

**Table 2**  
Perception Of Fetal Movement

No	Statement	SS		S		R		TS		STS	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	I need information about fetal movement.	4	13,3	26	86,7	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Fetal movement begins to be felt on average at 13-25 weeks of gestation.	16	53,3	12	40	1	3,3	1	3,3		
3.	Fetal movement can provide information about the state of the fetus in the womb..	21	70	8	26,7	1	3,3	-	-	-	-
4.	Pregnant women need to monitor their fetal movements every day.	19	63,3	11	36,7	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.	At 20 weeks (5 months) of pregnancy, the mother feels the movement of the fetus is getting faster, but the movements and frequency remain regular.	8	26,7	20	66,7	2	6,7	-	-	-	-
6.	At 28 weeks (7 months) of pregnancy, the mother's movements of the fetus have started to occur frequently and	19	63,3	10	33,4	1	3,3	-	-	-	-

	sometimes her movements are like kicking or punching.										
7.	At 28 weeks of gestation, pregnant women are advised to monitor fetal movements more frequently, including the frequency of their movements.	19	63,3	11	36,7	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.	At 28 weeks of gestation, the father can already feel the movement of the fetus.	16	53,3	13	43,3	1	3,3	-	-	-	-
9.	At 36 weeks of gestation, fetal movement will slow down a little.	11	36,7	16	53,3	1	3,3	2	6,7	-	-
10.	Fetal movements that are too slow at 36 weeks of gestation need to be watched out for.	16	53,3	12	40	1	3,3	1	3,3	-	-
11.	Fetal movements that are too fast at 36 weeks of gestation need to be watched out for.	17	56,7	9	30	3	10	1	3,3	-	-
12.	One of the aims of inviting the fetus to talk is to get a response from the fetus in the form of fetal movement.	22	73,3	6	20	1	3,3	1	3,3	-	-
13.	Normal fetal movement indicates a healthy state of the fetus.	22	73,3	8	26,7	-	-	-	-	-	-
14.	Fetal movements as much as 10 times occur in approximately 2 hours.	18	60	10	33,3	2	6,7	-	-	-	-
15.	Mothers need to consult a doctor or health worker if fetal movement is lacking.	24	80	6	20	-	-	-	-	-	-
16.	Mothers need to consult a doctor or health worker if there is a significant change in the baby's movement patterns in the womb, for 3-4 days.	23	76,7	6	20	1	3,3	-	-	-	-

Based on table 2 above, more than half of the respondents strongly agree with each of the statements above. Perception is the process of understanding or giving meaning to an information to a stimulus. Stimulus is obtained from the process of sensing objects, events, or relationships between symptoms which are then processed by the brain. (Sumanto, 2014) Everyone has a different perception. Likewise with pregnant women. The mother's perception of fetal movement is felt as a result of pressure behind the abdominal wall by the movement of the fetal limbs. (Mangesi et al., 2015).

Thus, counting fetal movements is the mother's activity to perceive and count the movements/kick of the fetus that she feels with a certain duration and technique. Counting fetal movements is the only independent screening method that pregnant women can do without the help of health workers or special tools to monitor the condition of the fetus during pregnancy. Mothers who routinely count fetal movements and report to health workers if there is a decrease in fetal movements than usual, may be able to minimize the incidence of perinatal death. (Mangesi et al., 2015) Mother's perception of reduced fetal movement can be trained. The role of the mother in feeling the movement of her fetus is very important. Don't underestimate a fetus that doesn't move because fetal movement actually shows fetal well-being. A fetus that doesn't move can mean that the fetus is

not feeling well.(Dewi, 2011)(Vasra & Noviyanti, 2021) Therefore, mothers need to be given information about fetal movements.(Salehi et al., 2017)

The importance of monitoring fetal movements because the low level of awareness of mothers to undergo antenatal care makes it difficult for medical personnel to detect early if there are complications that will occur if pregnant women do not understand and understand about monitoring their fetal movements then IUFD (Intra Uterine Fetal Death) will occur or the condition of a fetus that dies in the womb after 20 weeks of gestation.(Samutri et al., 2020)

Fetal movement is one of the measurable factors that indicate fetal well-being. Decreased fetal movement associated with intrauterine growth retardation and stillbirth. Women with a stillbirth experience stated that the descent and movement of the fetus were weaker before intrauterine death (Akselsson et al., 2020).

Calculation of fetal movement aims to increase maternal awareness about fetal movement as a sign of fetal disturbances and timely reporting of decreased fetal movement can reduce the risk of fetal death. (Samutri et al., 2020) (Pisoni et al., 2021)

The movements and movements of the fetus certainly vary and depend on what the fetus is doing. The variety and frequency of fetal movement really depends on your little one. There are babies who are active and often move around and there are those who only move once a day. (Pawitri, 2019)

Fetal movement is strongly influenced by factors from the location of the placenta and body weight. If the placenta is located at the front of the uterus, it will act as a cushion between the mother and the baby, making it difficult to feel fetal movements. Meanwhile, excess body weight can add an additional layer in the stomach which can also make it difficult to feel fetal movements.(Koesno, 2019). Mother stress can effect of fetal movement. (Renny, 2019)

During the second trimester or pregnancy at week 13-26, expectant mothers can already feel the movement of the fetus in the form of kicks. However, the kicks felt faint and gentle. Generally, expectant mothers can feel this fetal movement in the 18th week of pregnancy. In the third trimester or at the 27th to 40th week of pregnancy. Fetal movements are very clear and stronger. (Pawitri, 2019)

Sometimes the movement of the fetus can surprise the mother or even make her feel sick. Just before delivery, fetal movements will decrease in intensity and not be as hard as in the previous weeks due to limited space for movement. Even so, fetal movements will still be felt with the same frequency.(Koesno, 2019)

Counting fetal movements is inexpensive, easy for mothers to do without having to go to the doctor and other health workers.(Delaram et al., 2018) Fetal movement counting is simple and can be done at home.(Mangesi et al., 2015) At 28 weeks of gestation, fetal movement will occur at least 10 times every two hours. Mothers need to count and make sure that the number of fetal movements occurs. Always count the number of fetal movements every day.(Pawitri, 2019)

In the "count to 10"(Cardiff) method, the woman is asked to count the fetal movements from a certain time each day. He is advised to report if the fetus takes longer than normal to reach 10 movements, or if there are fewer than 10 movements in 12 hours. This is taken as a warning sign that the fetus may have problems. In the Sadovsky method, a woman counts fetal movements three times a day after eat.(Mangesi et al., 2015) Cardiff "count to 10 is one how to know fetal movements and assess fetal well-being.(Kanakalakshmi et al., 2018) (De Verlozkundige, n.d.)

The greater the gestational age, the fetal movement will also decrease. This happens because the fetus is getting bigger so that its space for movement in the mother's womb becomes limited. Meanwhile, other opinions say that adrenaline levels released by the hypothalamus in third trimester pregnant women can cause blood flow to the uterus to be obstructed, and oxygen delivered by blood through the placenta to the fetus will be reduced. The consequences when the fetus is deficient in oxygen are decreased circulation in the fetal body, thus allowing fetal activity to be disrupted due to inadequate oxygen supply, and abnormalities in fetal movement or activity in the womb. (Renny,

2019) Mother can monitor their fetal movement with technology.(Dwintya Saffira Tulangow et al., 2022)(Wardhana et al., 2021).

It is also necessary to consult an obstetrician if there are significant changes in your baby's movement patterns in the womb, for 3-4 days.(Ihda, 2021) When the fetus is felt to be less mobile than before, it is a sign of danger in pregnancy. Immediately take the pregnant woman to the hospital.(Kemenkes, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

This study contributes to knowing the perception of pregnant women about fetal movements and provides information about the behavior of the mother in calculating fetal movements. The implication is that the mother is expected to have a good perception of fetal movements and always count her fetal movements. This research is limited to the mother's perception of fetal movement. Future researchers to study about what factors influence pregnant women in calculating their fetal movements.

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