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FEARS ASSOCIATED WITH PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH AMONG KURDISH WOMEN IN IRAN

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Introduction: Women may experience a variety of fears in association with pregnancy and childbirth. Fear can cause significant problem during childbirth and post partum. Fear has been associated with more reported pain in childbirth a longer first and second stage of labor and dissatisfaction with the childbirth experience.

Aims: The purpose of this study was to describe the fear and causes associated with pregnancy and childbirth among Kurdish women in Iran.

Methods: Twenty-two Kurdish pregnant women in Sanandaj (the capital of Kurdistan province in the West of Iran) were interviewed during third trimester of their pregnancy. A qualitative design was chosen and grounded theory was used for data analysis.

Findings: All women expressed at least some fears associated with pregnancy and/ or childbirth. Women's fears were related to baby's well-being, process and procedure during labor and childbirth, family life, criticism of husband's family, and attitudes of hospital personnel. The reasons for their fears included: previous negative experiences, knowledge, maternity environment and hospital personnel, baby gender and financial situation.

Conclusions: The findings suggest that childbirth education and health care services requiring more attention and exploration. The findings also highlight the need for a careful review of the existing labor and delivery units and procedures. Midwives need further training in how to meet and support pregnant women with fear related to pregnancy and childbirth.