EMPOWERMENT OF PREGNANCY CARE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN:
A CONCEPT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
Pregnant woman may experience physical discomfort related to pregnancy course as well as the first pregnancy woman that requires them to have empowerments while performing pregnancy care. The empowerment can lead women to enhance ability in caring herself and increasing decision making ability to determine the need of care. This study aim to explore the concept of empowerment in pregnancy care since the concept has not been adequately defining. The method of literature review from books and articles was performed from CINAHL, Sciedirect, and Pubmed with key words such as empowerment, pregnant women, and pregnancy resulted to fifteen related articles which were used to explore the concept based on Walker and Avant (2005) approach of analysis. The result of study yielded four defining attributes of empowerment in pregnancy care including self awareness, competency of knowledge/skill, ability to take action, and interpersonal relationship. The antecedents including support, personal growth/experience, and desirable to involve. While the consequences such as being confidence, decision making power, and sense of freedom. The constructions of cases (model, borderline, and contrary) and empirical reference were presented for demonstrating attributes and assessing the existences the concept of empowerment in pregnancy care.

Keyword: empowerment, pregnancy, concept analysis.

INTRODUCTION
Pregnancy is a time for introspection and transitions period for most the women. It is time for a general good health but also for physical discomfort, emotional fluctuation, and concerns with anticipation for birthing and parenting. In this time, the women tend to be open to learning and eager to know about childbearing process and parenting the new child. The primigravida women will face more difficulties in dealing with this transitional process during their first experience. Complete prenatal care can bring many benefits for pregnant women, particularly during first pregnancy. Component of care may include: risk assessment, educational and support, monitor the health status of the woman, provide information to foster optimal health, and encouraging women to take responsibilities of their lives (Rising, 1998a; Rising, Kennedy, & Klima, 2004).

The involvement of the pregnant women in having early and regularly prenatal care had the positive outcomes of the pregnancy and childbirth. Women who receive sufficient information as part of their prenatal care are less to likely deliver low birth weight infant (Kogan, Alexander, Kotelchuck, & Nagey, 1994; Rising, et al., 2004). The high risk pregnant women with low rate of prenatal visit were 2.5 times more likely to deliver a low birth weight infant (Jewell & Russell, 2000). Moreover, Jewell’s study found that the effect on early prenatal care to the pregnancy and birth outcomes. Mother were more likely initiate earlier prenatal care have more the prenatal visit and receive adequate utilization (63,3%), and 87% of them reported follow the program on prenatal session.

Prenatal care is a process that brings many benefits to pregnant women particularly during their first experience of pregnancy. Involvement in prenatal care leads the women to an enhanced sense of empowerment. This in turn results in the ability to share the power between pregnant women and nurse, enhance the confidentiality of their own knowledge and take increasing charge of their own care (Rising, 1998a; Rising, et al., 2004).

The concept of empowerment has been widely used but never adequate defined (Gibson, 1991; Kuokkanen, Leino-Kilpi, & Katajisto, 2003; Lee-Rife, 2010). Generally, since 1970s, empowerment has been adopted to promote the rights of ethnic and sexual
minorities in United States. Kuokkanen and Leino-Kilpi (2008) proposed empowerment as the essence of human existence. The root of empowerment came from the social action where empowerment was associated with community interest that attempt to increase the power. Empowerment also used in organizational developments where empowerment is associated with power and the subject’s opportunity to take action. Rylesh (1999) stated empowerment arose from the self awareness with rising self help as the outcomes. In a broad sense, empowerment is a process of helping people to assert control over the factors which affect their lives. Empowerment could enable people to assume the responsibility for their own health.

For the purpose of this concept analysis, enhancing the women’s empowerment in their pregnancy care is important to improve the pregnancy course and birth outcomes. Determining the empowerment concept in pregnant women has emerged due to the concept is not adequately defined. Therefore, the concept analysis of empowerment on pregnant women is considered important which analyzed based on the framework outlined by Walker and Avant (2005).

**Concept Analysis of Empowerment on Pregnant Women**

Concept analysis is a process of examining the basic elements of a concept by describing the concepts into simpler elements. It helps distinguish the concepts which expressed by words or language (Walker & Avant, 2005). Moreover, the concepts have been described as the “building blocks” of the theories. Therefore, the clarification of the meaning of a concept constitutes to the necessary perquisite of the theory construction (Chinn & Jacobs, 1983). The concept analysis was examine by using Walker and Avant’s (2005) approach. In this report, all steps of concept analysis were used are as follow: select the concept, purpose of analysis, identify use the concept, determining the defining attributes, construction of a model case, construction of an additional case, identify antecedents and consequences, define empirical referents.

**Step One: Select a concept**

The choice of empowerment as the concept analysis is important for pregnant women in dealing with their experience on pregnancy care. It is hoped by this analysis this concept will provide discussion points from them particularly in improving the ability of their involvement in prenatal care for enhancing the positive outcomes in pregnancy course and childbirth.

**Step Two: Purpose of analysis**

The purpose of receiving this analysis is to clarify the meaning of empowerment of pregnancy care for pregnant women who involves in prenatal care.

**Step Three: Identify use the concept**

Empowerment is associated with growth and development. Empowerment is an abstract concept that is fundamentally positive and refers to solutions rather than to the problem. For example empowerment suggests a growth in competencies in negotiating, expressing, and encompasses the responsibility in enabling people to assume responsibility for their own health (Gibson, 1991). The concept of empowerment is frequently used in nursing and health services and is related to the quality of care and enabling patients to achieve their maximum level of wellness (Hajbaghery & Salsali, 2005). The concept of empowerment has been explicated in various disciplines including public health (Anderson & McFarlane, 2004; 1995), health psychology (McCarthy & Freeman, 2008), Education (Hawks, 1992), Nursing and midwifery (Matthews, Anne Scott, Gallagher, & Corbally, 2006; Rising, 1998b; Stuber, 1994), Nursing administration (Kuokkanen, et al., 2003), health promotion (Falk-Rafael, 2001), and mental health (Rylesh, 1999).

Dictionary. According to the Oxford English Dictionary the words empower and empowering has definition as ‘to invest legally
or formally with power or authority; authorize, license’ (a person to do); give the power to, make able (person to do). Empowerment is defined as ‘the action of empowering, the state of being empowered’ (Hornby, 2000). Merriam Webster Dictionary (Merriam Webster online, 2011) defined the empowerment as the verb with meaning “to give official authority or legal power to someone to do something, to promote self actualization, make someone stronger and more confident in controlling their life”. Based on Etymology (Etymology Online, 2011) the root of empowerment is power which originally words from Anglo-France “Povoir” mean to be able or from Latin “Potere” (powerful) mean to be able and have the ability to choose. The synonyms for empowerment are ‘make possible, commission, permit, invest with power, authorize, allow, facilitate’, and for empowered ‘powerful, authoritative’.

According to Jack (1995) empowerment has two quite distinct meaning: enablement and empowerment. To authorize, license or make able is a process whereby someone uses the power to enable someone else to do something; what that something is nature, goals and extent- is control by enabler. Jack (1995) assert the process of enablement is circumscribed by the power of the enabler and does not involve giving power over that process to the enabled. The empowerment described as the process by which individual, group, or community able to take control of their circumstances and achieve their own goals. Thereby, the community is able to work toward maximizing the quality of their live.

Theory. The empowerment as a theory is proposed by Michel Foucault’s (Foucault, 1980) theoretical concept. According his theory, the empowerment is defined as disciplinary power or knowledge. The disciplinary power requires the cooperation of the subject that gained from the professional or institutional exercising their powers.

The empowerment also can be distinguished into different theoretical approach including: critical social theory, organizational and management theory, and social psychological theory. Critical social theory is associated with improving the living conditions of underprivileged group such minorities, workers, women etc. This theory was inspired by Marxism and Hegelian philosophy emphasized on change and movement. By this point, the assumption of empowerment is when people have the capability for self-reflection and need to act independently (Gibson, 1991). Furthermore, empowerment on organizational and management theory is described as a process. Power is most frequently associated with standing and it is distributed within the organizational hierarchy from the top to down. Empowerment in organizations leads to increased productivity and effectiveness, and encouraging individuals to assume responsibility and to act in line with the organization’s goals. Meanwhile, the social psychological theory describes empowerment from the point of view of the individual. Empowerment is seen as a process of personal growth and development of individual which influenced by characteristic of beliefs, views, values, perceptions, and environmental. The environmental may include: race, sex, leisure interests, and roles (Kuokkanen & Leino-Kilpi, 2000).

The middle range theory of community empowerment is proposed by Persily and Hilderbrandt (2008). Empowerment is defined as the process of developing problem-solving capacity and self competence of people to gain mastery over their live. This community empowerment theory provides the effective interconnection between individual and community. This theory was designed to enables people to increase their knowledge and health care decision-making capability.

Education. The empowerment in educational discipline defines as the interpersonal process with two or more people to providing resource to develop and increase the ability to reach the education’s goal. The empowerment on education can be demonstrated through problem solving ability, improved communication and leadership skill, enhance self esteem, autonomy and responsibility (Hawks, 1992).
Psychology. In the psychology area, the empowerment can be defined as the individual empowerment which addresses on perception of control, participation with others to achieve goals and awareness of factors that hinder or enhance one’s effort to exert control in one’s life (Zimmerman & Warschausky, 1998). The outcome of psychological empowerment is to increase the locus of control and sense of self. This would make people to perform the appropriate behavior (Falk-Rafael, 2001). The empowerment is a sense of personal control and efficacy to willingness to make change. The personal control is the result from the linkage between internal cognitive factors and action to change (McCarthy & Freeman, 2008).

Nursing. In nursing literature, empowerment defined as independent, responsibility, and autonomy in decision making (Bäcker, Costello-Nickitas, & Mason-Adler, 1994). Empowerment also used for community development. This empowerment emphasizes on community participation to improve problem solving ability (Anderson & McFarlane, 2004).

**Step Four: Determine the defining attributes**

Defining the attributes is the effort in trying to cluster attributes which are most frequently associated with the concept and that allow to analyze insight the concept and helps to differentiate with other concepts (Walker & Avant, 2005). Gibson (1991) and Hajbaghery & Salsali (2005) indicated that the empowerment is a complex and multidimensional concept which could conceptualize into attributes related to individual, collective, and organizational. However, this empowerment analysis focuses on the pregnant women as the individual with some attributes related to pregnancy period. Those attributes are as follow:

Self awareness. The ability to produce the empowerment of a person influenced by their personal value such self awareness. This value leads person to understand the individual’s sphere as well as the influence from other. Self awareness promotes the authority of the person to empower themselves and enhance self confident in performing empowerment (Hajbaghery & Salsali, 2005., Haltiwanger, 2010).

Prior and during early of the pregnancy, women seek the information related to pregnancy from health provider particularly nurse. This action seems to be the awareness of the pregnant women. In this time the nurse can encourage women to improve self awareness related to pregnancy by helping women to learn more about pregnancy. The nurse can facilitate this learn ability with develop trust during the process for stimulating women capability to perform self care during pregnancy.

Competency of knowledge and skill. Empowerment requires knowledge and skill to mastery one’s own condition. When knowledge is right the skill it seem to follow (Hajbaghery & Salsali, 2005; Haltiner, 2010). The development of knowledge and skills ability can be achieve by providing concrete and practical information for the women to enhance the ability and utilization the resources (knowledge and skill). Sufficient knowledge and skills lead the women to perform the problem solving ability their health condition (Kang, Choi, & Ryu, 2008).

Prenatal care helped mother to acquire some knowledge and skill about pregnancy. The nurse can enhance mother’s knowledge and skill in caring themselves during pregnancy by using some strategy such as: identification the problem and cause during pregnancy, selecting the solution, and having the practice plan. Practical information is useful for women. This information can be offer from nurses by leads the discussion, demonstration or offering the information using booklet or leaflet. Developing the competency of pregnant women can help them to feel comfortable to asking more questions related to pregnancy. Women also can build their confidence by having a validation of the priority of knowledge and skill during pregnancy. This competency enhances power based on women’s understanding and able to know what they could do further during pregnancy.

Ability to take action. The empowerment as the expansion of women’s ability to make
strategic life choice, control resources, and take decision that affecting their important life outcomes. This ability is the accumulation of experience represents the culmination of agency and resources. The agency is the ability to define and act upon a goal and resources such education to enable women to their exercise their ability (Lee-Rife, 2010).

Interpersonal relationship. Interpersonal relationship built between nurses and client is classifying as the sense of empowerment (Hadjagbery & Salsali, 2010). This relationship will improve pregnant women’s sense personal power who leads them to be more confidence to involve in prenatal care. The nurses can help women to empower themselves by offering positive regards to worth and dignity of women. This will help women to share their experience of self care ability and gain more motivation to follow the health advises.

The defining attributes of empowerment on pregnant women were found in the following articles:

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<th>No.</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ability to take action</td>
<td>Haltiwanger, 2010; Kang, Choi &amp; Ryu, 2008; Lee-Rife, 2010; Kuokkanen &amp; Leino-Kilpi, 2008; Hermansson (Article in Press).</td>
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Step Five: Construction of a model case

According to Walker & Avant (2005) model cases offers a real life example of a concept and includes all the critical attributes or stated as a paradigmatic example. The paradigmatic case is follow:

Model Case: Mrs A, 38 years old married and has first pregnancy on 20 weeks of gestation. During the pregnancy, Mrs A feels got headache for sometimes. From her family, Mrs A knows it is may be something wrong happen on her pregnancy. Mrs A feels worried about her pregnancy condition particularly due to her got married at the older age. Her husband suggests Mrs A to examine the pregnancy in health care services. Mrs A wants to start her check up. When she meets the nurses in antenatal care, the nurses introduce her and willing to help Mrs A to know about her pregnancy condition. The nurses offers the knowledge about pregnancy; informs her to have regularly check up in every trimester at least 1 time in 1st and 2nd trimesters and 2 times in 3rd semester. The nurses also teach Mrs A about some practices that should maintain during pregnancy. The practice may include: having less salty diet, eat appropriate diet, regularly check blood pressure, regularly exercise, and perform relaxation technique. Mrs A decides to do those activities during her 2nd trimester with her husband encouragement. In the next meeting, nurse found that Mrs A’s condition is very well. Her blood pressure was normal and no reporting on headache. The nurse observes that Mrs A was enjoy the prenatal care and look very active to know her health progression. Mrs A feels secure on her pregnancy outcomes and very happy due to able to care her pregnancy.

This case includes all four attributes on empowerments: Mrs. A was aware for having check up her pregnancy, her husband support her to do so. The interpersonal relationship was happen between nurse and Mrs A resulting for offering the appropriate information. This leads Mrs A to have decision to take control in her pregnancy by practicing some advises from nurse. Finally, Mrs A feels secure and happy on her pregnancy outcomes.

Step Six: Construction of additional cases

Additional cases are the cases to test out the defining attributes that most closely represent the concept or it might be are not exactly the same as concept. The purpose of
formulating additional cases is have better judgments about which defining attributes have the "best fit" with the concept of interest. Additional cases could classify into borderline cases, related cases, and contrary cases. Borderline case and related cases are an example that contains most of the defining attributes but do not contains all of them, while contrary cases are example of “not the concept” (Walker & Avant, 2005).

Borderline Case: A mother after having normal childbirth had a red vaginal discharge on her first postpartum day. This mother feels worried then maintains immobile in her bed particularly after her sister told about their relative experience. Her sister explained one lady in their family had experience got hemorrhaged (bleeding) and almost lost her life after deliver baby two years ago. The nurse wants to help the mother for out of bed and starting her first personal hygiene activities. The nurse also explains early mobilization is important for stimulating normal uterus involution with the symptoms it could be occur such having a red vaginal discharge. The mother denied for having personal hygiene for some unexplained reasons and decided want to do later.

This case shown to have two defining attributes: interpersonal relationship and competency (knowledge and skill). The nurse performed the interpersonal relationship and willing to help mother. Nurse also provides some important information for mother. However, the mother is not aware and feel worried of her condition due to the weak support from her sister. This leads mother feels doubt in exercising what nurse advises and lack ability to take care of themselves for stating her personal hygiene.

Contrary Case: Mrs B was 25 years old have her first baby. She is very happy with her normal delivery and her baby condition. After discharge from hospital, Mrs B found that her baby was crying all times and think that it may be her baby was hungry due to only receiving breast feeding. Mrs B started to give blended banana to her baby as the custom belief. The baby looks quiet and sleeps all day. Mrs B maintains this activity for more than one week. Suddenly, at the next week the baby looks very sick and had belly rigid. After having medical examination, physician found some problem with baby’s digestive due to early having solid food. Mrs B very sad with this unwanted problem and blame her selves for not aware about infant care and did not visit to the community health care center nearby her house.

This case is an example of what the empowerment concept is not. Mrs B did not aware of her new roles with infant that leads her to have lennessed effort in finding appropriate information. Mrs B did the action to solve problem without enough knowledge or skill on the problem resulting a pitiful outcomes. Mrs B realized her ability in take care of her baby should improve.

Step Seven: Identify antecedents and consequences

Antecedents. Antecedents are the situations or conditions that happen prior to the occurrence of a concept. Antecedents are identified underlying about the concept being studied (Walker & Avant, 2005). The empowerment as the process encompasses individual involvement in health care in enabling responsibility for their health (Gibson, 1991). Empowerment ability requires the personal factors such self esteem, self efficacy and personal growth which can be enhanced by having support from other (Rilesh, 1999). The experience is important for exercising the power ability with influenced from the accumulation of personal growth (Charter, 2003). The effective of empowerments could achieve by strengthening the desirable of the involvement (Kang, Choi, & Ryu, 2008). Empowerment which expressed by pregnant women at any given time of their involvement in prenatal care is part of their experience. For example, pregnant women who have experience of having in satisfaction prenatal care will leave women on disempowered feeling for the further prenatal care (Lee-Rife, 2010).

Consequences. Consequences are those event or incidences that occur as the result of the occurrence of the concept or the outcomes
of the concept. They are used to determine often neglected ideas, variables, or relationship that may yield fruitful new research directions (Walker & Avant, 2005). The consequence of empowerment is confidence. Confidence is important for dealing with difficult relationship which may occur between health provider and client (Rilesh, 1999). The result of empowerment is having greater autonomy, decision-making power ability, and sense of freedom (McCarthy & Freeman, 2008). Empowerment also depends on having appropriate knowledge and skills as well as confidence of such application of competency (Hadjagbery & Salsali, 2010). The antecedents and consequences of this concept analysis were shown in the following figure:

Step Eight: Define empirical referents

Empirical referents are determined for the critical attribute of the concept which used in instrument development. Empirical referents are extremely useful in instrument development because they are clearly linked to the theoretical base of the concept. They are also very useful in nursing practice because provide clear and observable phenomena, by which determining the concept (Walker & Avant, 2005). The empowerment concept can be used in vary discipline and influence the construction of the measurement in such discipline. In women and child health area, some instruments were developed to measure the empowerment such as: Breast Feeding Empowerment Inventory (Kim & Park, 2004), or The Perception of Empowered in Midwifery Scale (PEMS)(Matthews, Scott, & Gallagher, 2009). The breast feeding empowerment inventory is used to measure the mothers’ empowerment feeling on breastfeeding, while the PEMS was used to assess midwives’ ability in performing their empowerment.

For the literature review of this analysis, none measurements were found to measure empowerment of pregnancy care for pregnant women. Most the articles were qualitative research or systematic review study. Therefore, further research should be done on this area of interest particularly in designing further research or formulating measurement empowerment of pregnancy care for pregnant women.

Implication for Nursing

The concept analysis of empowerment provides understanding the meaning of empowerment. The empowerment is a broad term which has been widely used in many discipline, as well as nursing discipline. Further analysis is required to generate by nurses to defining the utility of the concepts particularly in pregnant women to achieve the positive outcomes on their normal circumstances and formulating the specific instrument to measure the women empowerment ability in involving on pregnancy care.

CONCLUSION

The concept of empowerment is a useful umbrella concept which explicated broadly in many aspects including in nursing. It is crucially important to properly define the concept on specific area such in pregnant women to gain more understanding about the meaning of empowerment in this group. The meaning of empowerment is the authority or ability to do something in controlling the pregnant women’s life and enabled them to concern on their transition process due to pregnancy. The critical attributes frequently associated with empowerment are self awareness, competency of knowledge and skills, ability or opportunity to take action, and interpersonal relationship. Support, experience, personal growth, and desirable to involvement are the importance antecedents of empowerment of the pregnant women. Meanwhile, by having empowerment, the pregnant women will develop greater autonomy and confidence, decision-making power or problem solving ability, and sense of freedom in involvement on the pregnancy process. Nurses can stimulate the empowerment ability for the pregnant women. Increasing the women’s awareness about pregnancy condition, fulfill them with appropriate knowledge and skill regarding pregnancy and promote
women’s action to overcomes their circumstances in pregnancy course are the activities to establish empowerment for pregnant women.

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