e-ISSN : 2987-0836 DOI : https://doi.org/10.59585/ijhs

Publish : Association of Indonesian Teachers and Lecturers
International Journal of Health Sciences (IJHS)
Journal Homepage : https://jurnal.agdosi.com/index.php/IJHS/index
Volume 4 | Number 3 | September 2026 |

Analysis Of Factors Influencing Pregnant Women's Decision To Give Birth With A Traditional Midwife In The Service Area Of The Cibeber Community Health Center In 2026

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Abstract

The choice of traditional birth attendants (paraji) as childbirth assistants is still common in the community and is influenced by social and cultural factors, as well as access to health care. To analyze the factors influencing the choice of traditional birth attendants (paraji) as childbirth assistants based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Informants included mothers who had given birth with the assistance of a traditional birth attendant, family members, midwives, and stakeholders. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. The choice of a traditional birth attendant was influenced by three dimensions of the TPB. Attitude was reflected in feelings of comfort, calmness, trust, prior experience, and traditional practices. Subjective norm was influenced by the husband, family, and social environment. Perceived behavioral control was related to distance, transportation, road conditions, cost, and the availability of health care providers. The choice of a traditional birth attendant is influenced by positive attitudes, social support, and perceptions of the ease and barriers to accessing health services.

Keywords: Traditional Birth Attendant, Childbirth, Theory of Planned Behavior, Laboring Mothers, Phenomenology

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Resive : 02 September 2026
Revised : 09 September 2026
Accept : 09 September 2026
Publish : 09 September 2026

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e-ISSN : 2987-0836 DOI : https://doi.org/10.59585/ijhs

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Volume 4 | Number 3 | September 2026 |

1. Introduction

Childbirth is a crucial stage in maternal health that requires assistance from competent personnel. Although the use of health workers in childbirth continues to increase, the use of traditional birth attendants (paraji) is still found in several regions of Indonesia (Syolohin & Susanti, 2024). The existence of paraji is inseparable from community trust in traditional practices, social proximity, previous experience, and ease of access to assistance (Admasari et al., 2025). Research in Indonesia shows that traditional practices and the high presence of traditional birth attendants (TBA) can influence the utilization of maternal health services (Ajzen, 2020). The choice of paraji as a birth attendant is not only related to health considerations, but is also influenced by social and cultural factors. Qualitative research in Indonesia shows that cultural beliefs, family decision-making patterns, the paraji's closeness to the community, and attachment to traditional practices are factors that drive preference for paraji. Geographical factors, transportation, and economic conditions can also interact with cultural factors to hinder delivery in health facilities (Fitriah & Saputera, 2023).

Furthermore, families play a role in determining the choice of birth attendant. Decisions regarding pregnancy and childbirth in some communities still involve husbands, parents, in-laws, and other family members. This situation indicates that a mother's decision to choose a birth attendant is not always an individual one, but can be shaped by the norms and expectations of her social environment (Prameswari et al., 2023). Accessibility is also a factor in determining the place and person of birth. Distance from home, road conditions, transportation availability, cost, and concerns about not receiving timely assistance can influence a mother's perception of the ease of obtaining health services. (Nanur et al., 2020)Research in Indonesia shows that geographic and transportation barriers are among the factors that can cause delays in obtaining maternal services.

In this study, the choice of paraji was analyzed using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) approach. TPB explains that behavior is influenced by three main components: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. (Ajzen, 2020). These three components can be used to understand how individual attitudes, social environmental influences, and perceptions of factors that facilitate or hinder a behavior play a role in decision-making (Nurlaili, 2023). The application of TPB to women's health behavior in Indonesia also shows that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are related to health behavior (Nanur et al., 2020). Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the factors that influence the selection of paraji as a birth attendant based on three dimensions of the Theory of Planned Behavior, namely attitude, subjective

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Volume 4 | Number 3 | September 2026 |

norm , and perceived behavioral control , in the Cibeber Community Health Center work area.

2. Research Methods

This study used a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore the experiences and reasons for mothers in choosing paraji as their birth attendant. The study was conducted in the Cibeber Community Health Center (Puskesmas). Research informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique according to predetermined criteria. Informants consisted of mothers who had given birth with the help of paraji as the main informant, family members as supporting informants, and midwives and stakeholders as key informants. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to obtain information about mothers' experiences in choosing paraji and the factors that influence these decisions based on three dimensions of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): attitude, subjective norm , and perceived behavioral control. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing and verifying conclusions. Data validity was carried out through source triangulation by comparing information obtained from mothers, families, paraji, and health workers. This study has also passed the research ethics review conducted by the Health Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Respaty University in Yogyakarta, under No. 113.3/FIKES/PL/VIII/2026.

3. Research Results and Discussion

The following are the results and discussion of the research conducted with the research informants:

a. Research result

1) Attitudes Toward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants

The results of the study indicate that mothers tend to have positive attitudes toward paraji. This attitude is reflected in the comfort, calm, trust, and positive experiences they experience while receiving help from paraji. The practice of jampe and massage is considered to provide calm and comfort for mothers. Previous childbirth experiences are also a factor in determining their choice. These positive experiences foster confidence that paraji are capable of providing assistance according to the mother's expectations. Furthermore, traditions that have been passed down through generations make paraji viewed as part of a well-known birthing practice within the community. Thus, positive attitudes toward paraji are shaped by experience and belief in the benefits they perceive. Comfort, emotional closeness, traditional practices, and previous experiences are all factors that contribute to mothers' decision to choose paraji.

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2) Subjective Norms Toward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants

The research results show that the decision to choose a paraji does not come entirely from a mother's personal perspective. Husbands, parents, in-laws, family, neighbors, and social circles all play a role in determining the choice of birth attendant. Some mothers choose a paraji due to encouragement from their parents or husbands. The family's previous experience using paraji services also informs their choice. Furthermore, parajis are seen as well-known and trusted figures in the community, so their opinions or recommendations influence pregnant women. These findings suggest that childbirth decisions are strongly socially woven. Support and expectations from those closest to them can strengthen a mother's inclination to choose a paraji as her birth attendant.

3) Perceived Behavioral Control Toward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants

The research results showed that perceptions regarding the ease and barriers to accessing health services influenced the choice of birth attendant. Distance, transportation, road conditions, cost, concerns about giving birth while traveling, and the availability of health workers were some of the considerations raised by informants. Although some informants considered the condition of roads and health facilities to be quite good, there was a perception that access to health facilities could be difficult when labor progresses quickly. Parajis located close to home were also perceived as easier to contact when a mother began to experience signs of labor. On the other hand, the presence of midwives and available health facilities makes it easier for mothers to undergo prenatal checkups. Partnerships between midwives and paraji (health workers) also offer the potential to connect mothers and their families with health services. Paraji, who are close to the community, can play a role in providing information, encouraging prenatal checkups, recognizing danger signs, and directing mothers to seek help from health professionals

b. Discussion

1) AttitudeToward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants

The results of the study indicate that feelings of comfort, calm, trust, previous experience, and traditional practices are the basis for the formation of mothers' positive attitudes toward paraji. These findings suggest that the decision to choose a paraji is based not only on considerations regarding their ability to assist with childbirth, but also on the mother's subjective experience during the service. These findings align with research by Nasir et al., which showed that preference for TBA in Indonesia is related to the paraji's closeness to the community and adherence to

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Volume 4 | Number 3 | September 2026 |

traditional practices. (Nasir et al., 2020)The study also found that cultural beliefs were a barrier to utilizing health facility-based birthing.

The results of Aryastami and Mubasyiroh's research also show that traditional practices influence the utilization of maternal services in Indonesia (Aryastami & Mubasyiroh, 2021). The high prevalence of TBA is associated with low utilization of certain maternal services, making traditional practices an important aspect to consider in increasing the utilization of health facilities. From the TPB perspective, attitudes are formed based on individual beliefs regarding the outcomes or consequences of a behavior. In this study, the perceived positive experiences, comfort, and calmness obtained from paraji shaped positive assessments of that choice (Nasution et al., 2020). Thus, as long as mothers perceive paraji to provide benefits according to their expectations, positive attitudes toward paraji tend to be maintained. These findings indicate that increasing the number of births attended by health personnel is not sufficient simply by providing information about the risks of births with paraji. The approach needs to consider the community's experiences and beliefs about paraji [13]. The involvement of paraji in education and strengthening referrals can be an approach that is more appropriate to community conditions.

2) Subjective Norm Toward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants

The research results show that family and social environments influence mothers' decisions in choosing a paraji. Husbands, parents, in-laws, and other family members can provide support and guidance in a mother's choice. This suggests that decisions regarding childbirth in the community are still influenced by the social and cultural relationships that develop within the family environment. This finding aligns with research by Nasir et al., who found that decision-making regarding pregnancy and childbirth has strong social and gender dimensions. (Nasir et al., 2020). The study showed that cultural norms, family decisions, and community preferences for TBA interact to shape childbirth choices (Penelitian et al., 2023).

Aryastami and Mubasyiroh also found that family structure is related to the utilization of maternal services (Aryastami & Mubasyiroh, 2021). This suggests that the family environment is an important context in maternal health-seeking behavior. When linked to the TPB, subjective norms reflect an individual's perception of support or expectations from significant others (Laksono et al., 2023). In this study, husband and family support for the use of paraji can strengthen the mother's decision. Conversely, if the family environment encourages the mother to use health professionals, this social norm can be a factor supporting delivery in a health facility (Afad, 2024). Therefore, health interventions should not be directed solely at

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pregnant women. Husbands, parents, in-laws, families, cadres, and community leaders need to be involved in education about safe childbirth. An approach involving the social environment is expected to shape norms that support childbirth with health professionals.

3) **Perceived Behavioral Control Toward the Selection of Traditional Birth Attendants**

The study's findings indicate that distance, road conditions, transportation, cost, concerns about delivering while traveling, and the availability of health workers are factors that influence the choice of a paraji. Informants considered parajis easier to reach because they are located close to their homes and can be quickly called when labor is imminent. This finding aligns with research by Nasir et al., which found that geographic, transportation, and financial factors interact with cultural factors to inhibit delivery in health facilities. (Nanur et al., 2020). TBA's closeness to the community is one of the factors that makes people continue to choose paraji services (Rizkianti et al., 2020).

Aryastami and Mubasyiroh also explained that geographical and transportation barriers can be part of the delay in obtaining maternal services. (Aryastami & Mubasyiroh, 2021)This shows that access to health facilities is not only determined by the availability of facilities, but also by the community's ability to reach them. From the TPB perspective, perceived behavioral control relates to an individual's perception of factors that can facilitate or hinder a behavior (Habibah Umar et al., 2019). In this study, the proximity of the paraji and ease of contact were factors that increased the perceived ease of choosing a paraji. Conversely, distance and transportation barriers could decrease the perceived ease of choosing a health facility.

The application of the TPB in women's health research in Indonesia also demonstrates the importance of perceived behavioral control in explaining health behaviors. Research on women of childbearing age in Kuningan Regency showed that perceived behavioral control and attitude were positively associated with health behaviors, while subjective norms also had an indirect influence. (Trisasmita, 2024). Therefore, increasing the use of health workers in childbirth needs to be accompanied by efforts to reduce barriers to access perceived by the community. In addition to strengthening midwifery services, partnerships between midwives and parajis can be considered as a community-based approach. Research by Nasir et al. also recommends increasing collaboration between community-based health workers and TBAs as a strategy to overcome cultural barriers and improve delivery in health facilities (Yarifard et al., 2025).

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Overall, the three TPB dimensions demonstrate an interrelated relationship in the choice of a birth attendant. Positive attitudes toward a birth attendant, family and social support, and perceptions of ease of access can all contribute to a mother's decision to choose a birth attendantThis section contains the conclusion of the activity and suggestions for the program's sustainability. A single paragraph is sufficient to explain the results of the activity.

4. Conclusion

The selection of a paraji as a birth attendant in the Cibeber Community Health Center (Puskesmas) is influenced by three dimensions of the Theory of Planned Behavior : attitude , subjective norm , and perceived behavioral control . A positive attitude is formed from comfort, calmness, trust, previous experience, and traditional practices known to the community. Subjective norms primarily originate from husbands, parents, family, and the social environment. Meanwhile, perceived behavioral control relates to perceptions of distance, transportation, road conditions, cost, availability of health workers, and ease of access to services. These three dimensions are interrelated in shaping a mother's decision to choose a paraji. The Community Health Center (Puskesmas) needs to strengthen education for pregnant women and their families about safe childbirth by involving influential parties in decision-making. Partnerships between midwives and paraji also need to be strengthened so that the paraji's close relationship with the community can be utilized to encourage prenatal checkups, recognize danger signs, and refer mothers to health workers.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgements

The author extends sincere gratitude to everyone who supported the writing of this article, as well as to the academic supervisor from Respati University of Yogyakarta for their guidance and time. I also wish to express my deep appreciation to all the informants who agreed to participate in this study.

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article. All authors contributed to the study, participated in the preparation of the manuscript, approved the final version, and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work. The research was conducted independently without any financial, personal, or institutional relationships that could have influenced the study's design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or reporting.

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Statement of informed consent

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in this study. Participants were informed about the study objectives, research procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality of the collected data, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate and provided written informed consent before the interviews were conducted.

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Volume 4 | Number 3 | September 2026 |



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