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Perceptions towards Birth Companions: A Review Paper

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Abstract: ***The Birth companionanyperson chosen by the pregnant woman according her choice to give continuous support during labour and childbirth. Whom she trust greatly .The person maybe pregnant woman's husband ,family member ,healthcare provider, community member. The objective of this review paper to assess andexplore perceptions and experiences of pregnant women, health care providers (obstetrics and gynecology specialists, residents, and midwives), female birth companions, volunteer birth companion. The review paper emphasizes birth companionsencourage and support given to pregnant women during labour and child birth and make communication bridge between pregnant women and healthcare team. Birth companions providenon-pharmacologicalmeasure to pregnant mother for pain relief. Acceptance ofa birth companion by healthcare providers one of the cause develop role and responsibilities of birth companion . Birth companions play a very important rolefor witness during disrespectful and abusive behavior to women in labour. Health professionals have knowledge about benefit ofbirth companions. But it is not routine practicedue to lack of adequate space and difficulty to ensure privacy. In this article, more over discuss continuous and effective support to the parturient women,bybirthcompanion is important that she increase their knowledge regarding birth that will help the future another pregnant women ,her family and the health care staff.***
Keywords: Perceptions, Birth Companions, Labour, Support, birth

I. INTRODUCTION

Women are the glory of creation. Pregnancy and childbirth are special events in women's lives. It can be a time of hope and joy, but it can also be a time of fear, anxiety, and pain. Anxieties can be reduced with appropriate guidance and support. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which have replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), are specially targeted at the reduction of the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030[1]. A birthcompanion is defined as a person chosen by the mother who remains in constant presence with her and supports her during labour and childbirth.[2]To improve labour outcomes and pregnant women's satisfaction regarding birth experiences, WHO (2015) recommended continuous companionship during labor.[3]The World Health Organization's (WHO) vision is Birth companions are a key element of quality care for pregnant women and newborns.[4]To improve pregnant women's capability of giving birth. Every pregnant woman received psychologicalsupport. Arandomised controltrialrevealed thatthose womenwho had a birthcompanionandtook childbirth educationwere moresatisfiedduring labourandchild birth.[4]Variousrandomizedcontrolledtrials revealed birthcompanion improve maternaland neonatalOutcomes and birth companions gives provideinformational support, emotional support, andpracticalsupport.[5]ACochranesystematicreviewconductedbyKidist Gizachewet al(2022) showed birth companionreduce intrapartumanalgesia, operativebirth,dissatisfaction during childbirthexperiences.[6] WHO emphasized about benefit ofbirthcompanions[7]. According to WHO Birth companions as a key element for quality of care of pregnant women and newborns[8].Companions provide bridging the communication gap between the pregnant women and health care provider.[9]Abuja, Nigeria (2017) conducted a descriptive cross-sectional quantitativestudytoassesschildbirthpainreduce bypregnant women'spartner presence during child birthaccording midwives' perception. Study findings revealed maximum (90%) pregnant women'spositive view that her pain reduce due to presence her partner and his emotional and psychologicalsupport.[10] Various studysuggests that companions overcome limitations regarding maternitycare anddecrease the pressure onthe service provider by bridging the communication gap between pregnant women and health care provider during delivery room delivery room.[11] Hilana Dayana Dodou et al(2014) conducted a mixed method study, to assess perceptionofpost partum mother regardingcontribution of a birthcompanion during delivery and birth. Normal delivery20 (11multiparousandnineprimiparous) puerperalwomenwhoselectedanddata collectedbyrecordedsemi-structured interviews cheduled. Resultshowed majority56.3%of paternalparticipationand43.7%femaleparticipationasbirthcompanionduringdelivery. Women feltmoreconfidentandsafety, emotional andphysicalsupport,meettheparturient'sneedsduetoThepresenceofknownpeopleduringdelivery,individualnecessitiesofeach parturient,

Therefore, continuous and effective support to the parturient women bybirth[12] Women'sexperiencesduring childbirthareanimportantindicator oftheuseofmaternalhealthcare services. [13]

II. DISCUSSION

JoyV Summertonet al(2021) conducted a cross-sectionalstudyt o assess the experiences and perceptions of birth companions who present support given ofpregnant womenduringlabour in a rural hospital. 73 birth companionsselected by purposive sampling. A birth companion feedback book used for data collection. Result showed Seventy-one (71)birth companions gave positive responses about the birthing experience . Maximum 71 female birth companions . (58) birth companionswere relatives and 13 were volunteer birth companions. Birth companions expressed about competency of the healthcare provider during respectful care given to pregnant women in labor room and positive attitudesabout birth companions of health care staff, Birth companionsencourage and support given to pregnant women during ambulation in first stage labour, described purpose of labour, when women failed confidence regarding birthing process. Birth companions were prepared a communication bridge between pregnant women and healthcare team. Birth companions communicate to health care provider regarding progress of labour of pregnant women and the feelings, needs and desires of thepregnant woman in labour to the healthcareteam. and also communicate regarding non-pharmacologicalmeasure to pregnant mother for painrelief. Acceptance ofa birthcompanion By healthcare providers one of the cause developed role and responsibilities ofbirth companion. They improve their knowledge, skill by attending antenatal education classes. In this study very few male birth companions reveled positive experiences: Birth companions play a very important rolefor witness during disrespectful and abusive behavior to women in labour and they preventthis disrespectful behavior. Positive experiences and perceptions about role of birth companions controlled by behavior and attitudesofhealthcare whenbirthcompanionshelp and supportofpregnant women during labour.Birth companion witness healthcare provider's behaviortowards pregnant women.[14]

Kidist Gizachew et al(2021) conducted a mixed method study to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice ofhealthcare providers aboutbirthcompanions during child birth. About 51 health care providers(include obstetricsand gynecologyspecialists, residents, and midwives) randomly selected who were on dutyof the labor ward during the study period in SPHMMC. In-depth interviews tool used for qualitative data collection from 7 health care providers.Self-administered structured questionnaires used for data collection of the perception and practice of health care providers of birth companions in labor wards. Result showed39.2 % were knowledgeableand90%haspositiveattitudetowardsinvolvementofbirthcompanions.82.4%disagreetoallow laborcompanionsduringthe labourinlabour room.

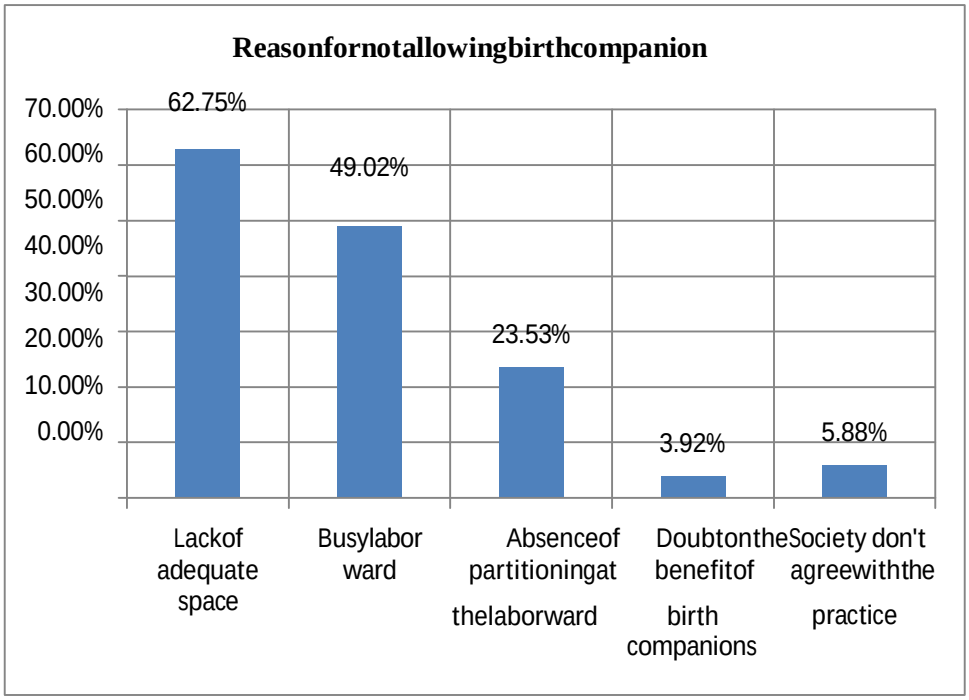


Figure 1Bar diagram showingpercentage of Reasons for not allowing birth companions according health care provider.

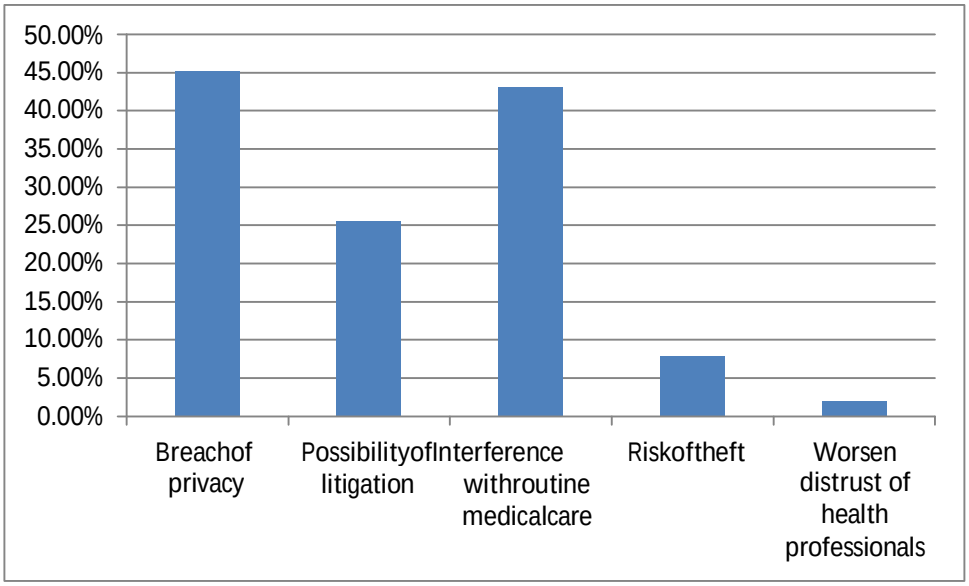


Figure2 Bardiagramshowingpercentageofdisadvantagefornotallowingbirthcompanions according health care provider.

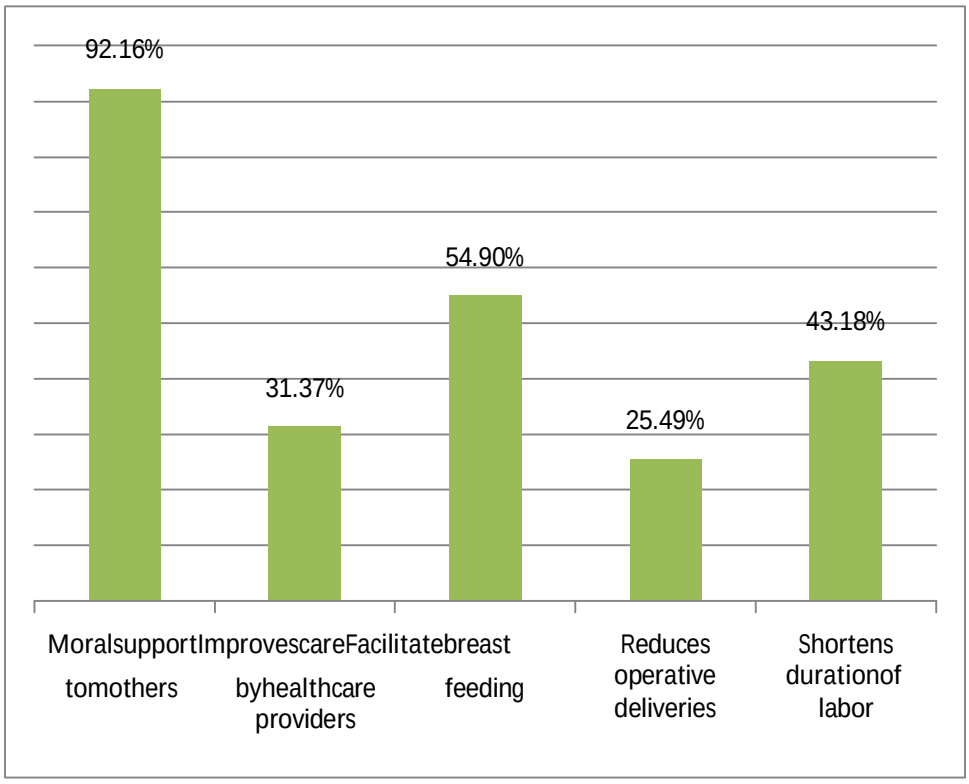


Figure 3Bardiagram showingpercentage of Benefits ofbirthcompanions inform byhealthcare provider.

Birth companions is not the part of routine practice in SPHMMC.Health professionals have knowledge about benefit of birth companions. But it is not routine practicedue to lack of adequate space and difficulty to ensure privacy.[15]

Kidist Gizachew et al (2021)conducted a cross-sectional study to assess the perception of postpartum mothersabout birth companions during child birth. About 393 post-partum women selected systematic random sampling. Data collected by interviewing. Result showed -

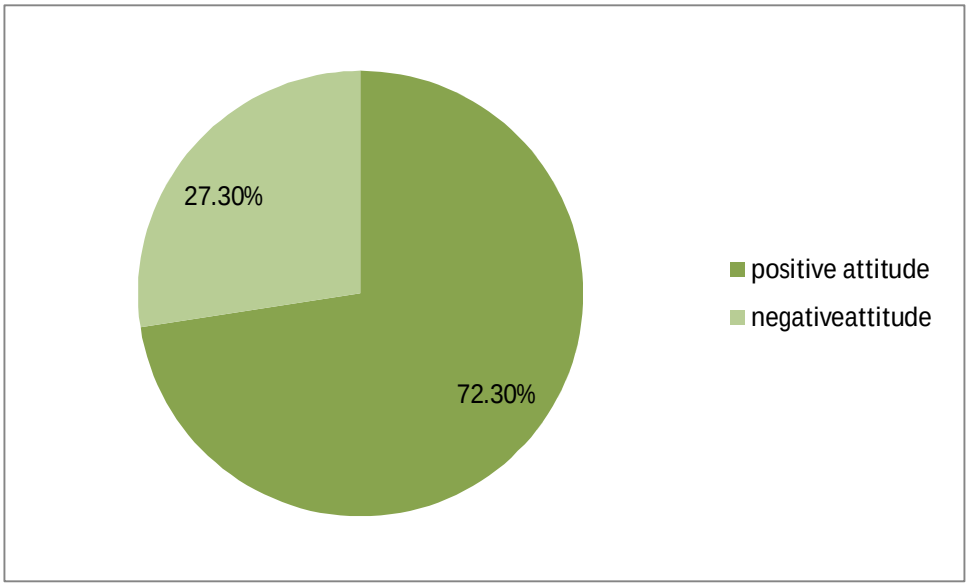


Figure 4Pie diagram showingpercentage of post post-partum womenattitude towards birth companions.

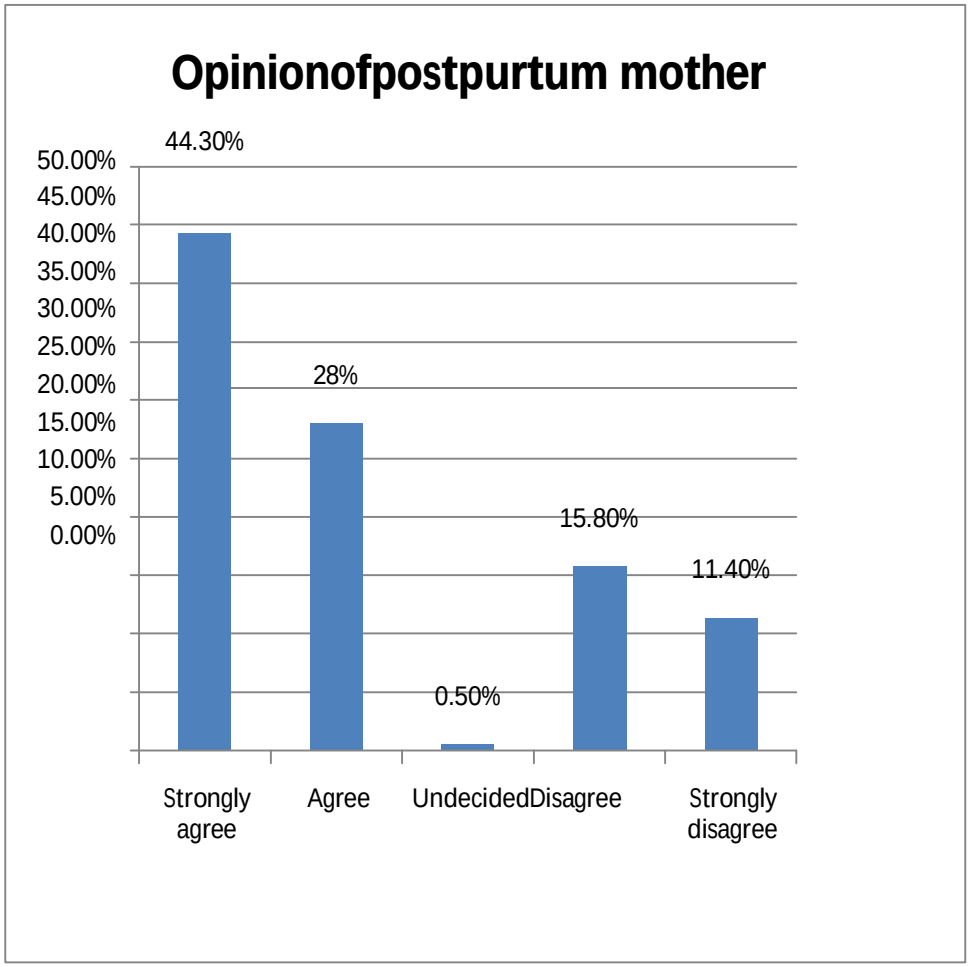


Figure5Bardiagramshowing percentageof post-partumwomen'sopinionaboutroutine involvement of birth companions.

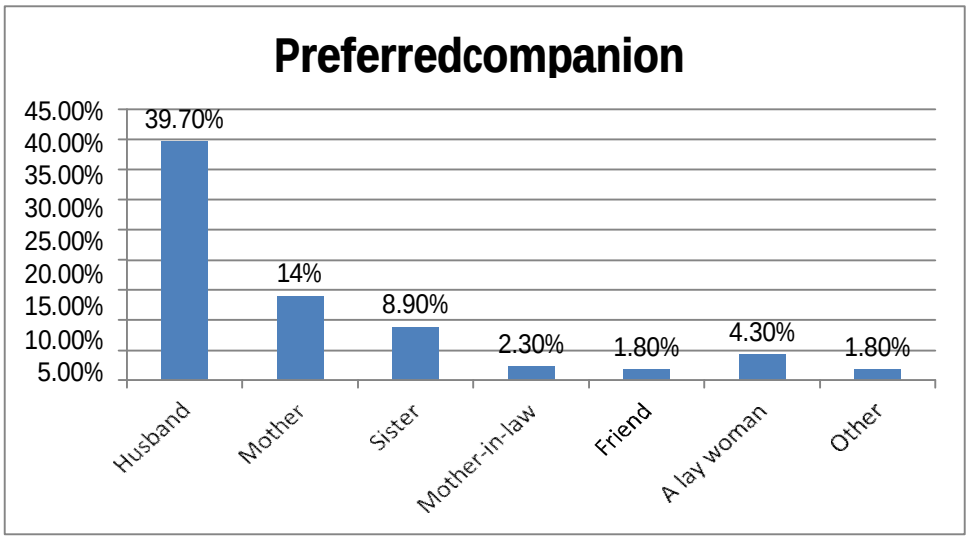


Figure6Bardiagramshowingpercentageof Preferredlaborcompanionbypost-partumwomen

The study showed that birth companionship during labour reduce the women who had intrapartum analgesia, operative birth, or dissatisfaction about childbirth experiences.[16]

Roshni Shah et al (2021) conducted a qualitativestudy in napal to explore the students' experience and perceptionregarding the presence of birth companions with pregnant woman during delivery in the birth centre. About 6 Bachelorin Midwifery Sciences students studying in their 2nd year and PCL Nursing students, selected as sample by purposive sampling. Heideggerian hermeneutical phenomenology approach was used in this study. Semi structured interview guide was used for data collection. Result showed from two main themes (a) midwife student's experience ,(b).Pregnant woman's view on experiences of companionship

Pregnantwoman'sviewonexperiencesofcompanionship Sub theme I: Choice of birth companion

Study result revealed that pregnant woman's husband present during labor as birth companion, that helped child birth process

SubthemeII:birthcompanion'sactivities Birth companionship was presentact as non-pharmacological pain relief measures. Holding hands,back massage and , breathing and relaxation techniques all helped the pregnant women.

SubthemeIII:responsesofbirthcompanion Result showed that maximum pregnant women's husband gladly accepted to birth companion ship.

SubthemeII:viewsofhealthcarestudents' onbirthcompanion presenceofbirthcompanionswere helpful

Analysis of data,conclude that most of pregnant women wished her husband will birth companion. Birth companion more important both Both care receivers and the care provider . sensitizationwas needed for changing the attitude and values ofhealth care provider towardthe birth companionship.[17]

A mixed-methods study conducted by Patience Afulani et al. (2018) on companionship during facility-based childbirth in Kenya had the objective of assessing the prevalence and determinants of birth companionship, and the perceptions of care providers and womenregarding companionship .To select a sample, a multistage sampling approach was used. In this study, datawerecollectedbysurvey, tocollect qualitativedata, weusedfocusgroupdiscussions with recent postnatal mothers and in-depth interviews with health care providers who work in maternityunits. For focus group discussions, 58 eligible mothers were purposefully chosen from one in each sub-country. Each focus group consisted of six to ten women and lasted 90 minutes; the discussion was audio recorded (24).Maternity providers were chosen for in-depth interviews based on their superior delivery performance, and 49 interviews were conducted with maternity providers from 18 facilities. Here, we used both closed and open-ended questions for an hour regarding their perception of continuous support during labour and delivery and its barriers in their facilities and audio recordings.

Qualitative data analysis using the Braun and Clarke approach (2006) and quantitative data analysis using descriptive analysisThe majority of survey respondents, 88 percent, were accompanied to the health facility by someone.Only 6% of respondents disagreed with being accompanied during labour and delivery; 29 percent were accompanied bya partner, 28% bya mother-in-law, and 29% wanted continuous companionship during labour and delivery; only 6% disagreed with being accompanied during labour and delivery.

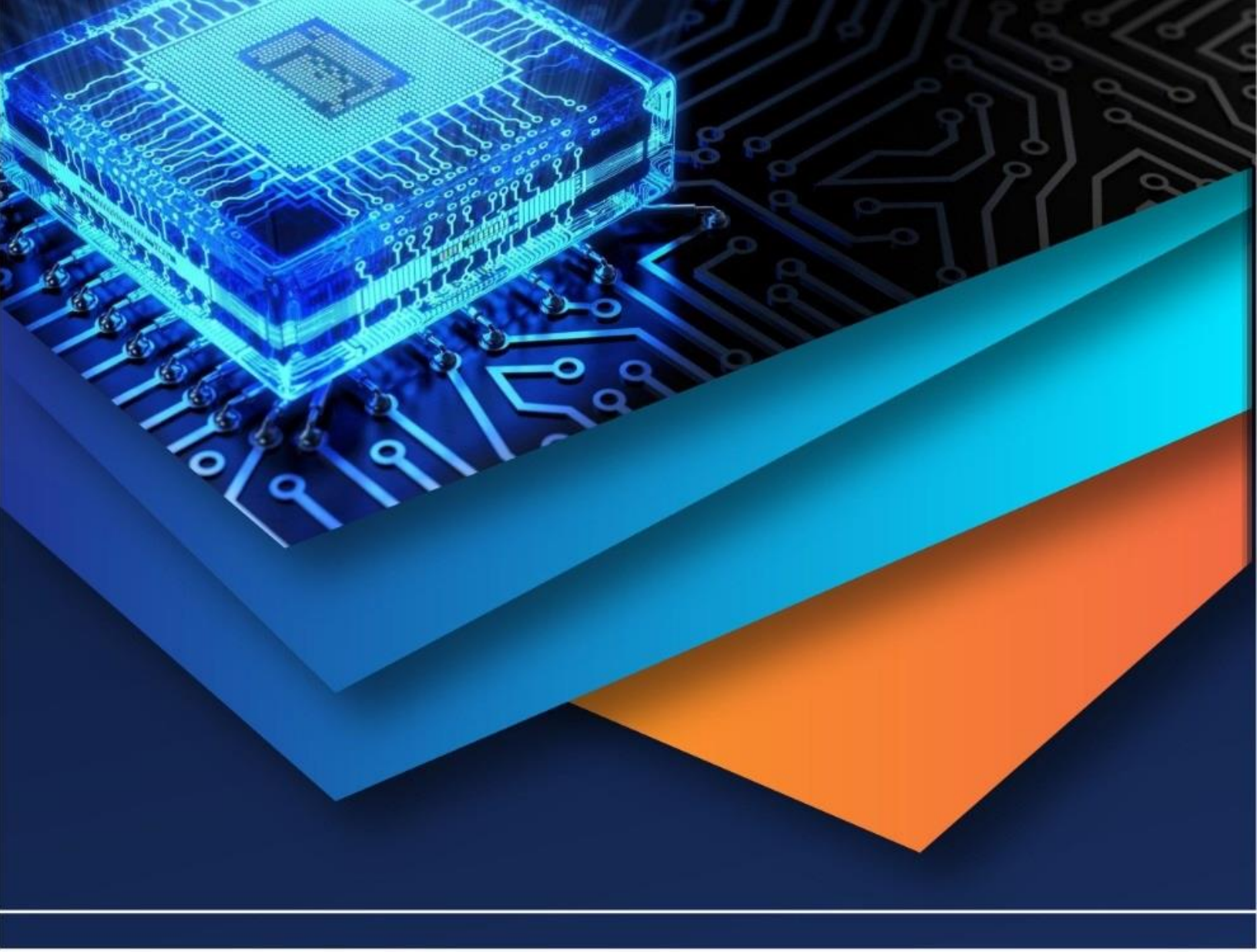
In this study, it was reported that younger, educated, employed, and wealthier women wanted continuous labour support.The majorityof working women preferred to be accompanied by their sisters and sisters-in-law.Wealthier and more educated women wanted to accompany their partners. Most of the women were happy because their partner was with them during their labor. The reason for continuous support was emotional support. Some women felt embarrassed because their birth companion discussed private matters.[18]

III. CONCLUSION

This review focuses on the advantages of birth companionship as chosen by pregnant women during labour and childbirth, and it can be used in low-resource settings. The late antenatalperiod is ideal for educating the primigravid mother and her companion about childbirth.. As a result, primi gravidae must pay more attention during childbirth. In low resource settings.The World HealthOrganization(WHO) has recommended women have a companionduring birth. A companion can be any person chosen by the woman to provide her with continuous support during labor and childbirth for improving labor outcomes and women's satisfaction with care. Birth companions are recognized as a key element in the WHO vision of quality of care for pregnant women and newborns, yet it is practiced only in some ofthe co-located birth centers the women's right of birth companionship should be available to all the childbearing women.For women's rights, health care provider are must help a companion to encourage participation during child birth which improve the quality of care and positive childbirth experience of an expected couple. Pregnant women, health care providers (obstetrics and gynecology specialists, residents, and midwives), female birth companions, volunteer birth companion, every body positive attitude towards birth companion. birth companionship increases vaginal delivery , decreasescaesareandeliveries, decreasesthe need for pain medicationduring labor, and shortens the duration of the second stage of labour.

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