

## Attitudes of Women of Fertile Age towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidempuan District

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**Abstract:** Vaginal discharge or flour albus is a thick white fluid through a woman's genitals. In addition to releasing white fluid, the woman also complained of itching in the genitals, pain during intercourse, and then an unpleasant odor. This study aims to identify the Attitudes of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidempuan District, Padangsidempuan City in 2024. This study is a descriptive analytical method with a population of 108 people with a sample of 27 respondents. The method of data collection used a questionnaire to obtain data, then processed and analyzed by editing, cording, scoring, transferring, tabulating. The results of the analysis are presented in a frequency distribution and percentage table. Of the 27 respondents studied, the majority of attitudes responded 10 people (37%). In the age category, the majority of attitudes respected 7 people (25.9%). In the high school education category, the majority of attitudes respected 5 people (18.5%). In the self-employed job category, the majority of attitudes respected 5 people. And in the category of electronic media information sources, the majority of attitudes respected 5 people (18.5). Researchers hope that respondents will maintain their attitudes, actions and be more active in participating in counseling and seeking information from other sources about vaginal discharge. Further analysis of the data could provide insights into the relationship between demographic factors and attitudes towards vaginal discharge. Educational interventions tailored to specific age groups and education levels may be beneficial in improving awareness and promoting positive health behaviors.

**Keywords:** Attitude, Women of Childbearing Age (WUS), Vaginal Discharge.

### INTRODUCTION

Gerungan (2019) stated that attitude is an attitude of view or attitude of feeling, but which attitude is accompanied by a tendency to act according to the attitude towards the object. So it is more appropriate to translate it as attitude and willingness towards something. The term woman is used to describe a girl who has reached adulthood and is emotionally, affectionately mature and has freedom (Backer, 2016). Women in health according to Notoatmodjo and Ulfa (2016), namely including women as members of society in solving their own health problems, in this case they themselves are actively thinking about, planning, and evaluating public health programs.

According to data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, women of childbearing age (WUS) are all women who have entered the age of 15-49 years. Women in this age range are included in the reproductive age category, whether they are unmarried, widowed or married (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2016). At this age, reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely free from disease or disability in all matters relating to the reproductive system, as well as important functions, processes, and roles, one of which in reproductive health is genital hygiene behavior. Because if a person or woman,

especially women of childbearing age (WUS) does not maintain the cleanliness of the genitals, it can cause infection, which can interfere with their reproductive function (Intan, Iwan, 2019).

In a woman during the reproductive period, she usually experiences several negative psychological symptoms or physical symptoms. The nature of the symptoms varies and tends to worsen when approaching and during the menstrual bleeding process in her body, this condition does not always occur in every menstrual cycle and the intensity is not the same. Some women, especially women of childbearing age (WUS), also experience severe emotional and physical symptoms, one of which is causing vaginal discharge.

Vaginal discharge or flour albus is a condition of the vagina when it releases fluid or mucus resembling pus (Hamid Bahari, 2018). Vaginal discharge is a secretion or fluid from the vagina other than menstrual blood such as a thick white fluid through the female genitals. Too much secretion and an unpleasant odor are caused by inflammation and infection in the vaginal canal. If vaginal discharge continues, it will interfere with the function of the female reproductive organs, especially the fallopian tubes which can cause infertility, then the woman in question is likely to become infertile, and cervical cancer which can lead to death (Wijanti, 2015).

If vaginal discharge is excessive, it can also cause cervical cancer, resulting in blockage and death. One of the causes of death for women in the world is cervical cancer and in Indonesia, cervical cancer is ranked first in the cause of death for women of childbearing age (WHO, 2015). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 75% of women in the world will experience vaginal discharge at least once in their lifetime and 45% of them can experience vaginal discharge 2 times or more (WHO, 2016). Research conducted by Family Health International in America 3.6% and England 2% while in Europe the percentage of women who have experienced vaginal discharge reaches 25% has shown that vaginal discharge is very common because it is considered a trivial disease and is considered harmless (Family Health International, 2016).

In Indonesia itself, around 90% of women of childbearing age have experienced vaginal discharge. This is closely related to the humid weather conditions that cause women in Indonesia to easily get vaginal discharge. Because in this condition it will be easy to get a fungal infection. The vaginal discharge that occurs tends to be caused by the lack of awareness to maintain health, especially the health of the genital organs (Ali, 2015). Meanwhile, in North Sumatra Province which experiences very high vaginal discharge, from the report it can be seen that women of childbearing age (WUS) are higher who experience vaginal discharge, namely 8.5% compared to pregnant women who are only 5% (Dinkes Prov.Sumut, 2016).

Based on the results of Hidayati's research (2015) it is explained that vaginal discharge can be related to work, when compared to women who work light or office workers have a risk 4 times higher. According to Efendy Nasrul (2015) a socioeconomic level that is too low can influence individuals to not pay much attention to vaginal hygiene because they think more about many other more urgent needs. So from that attitude it can be ascertained that the lack of concern for vaginal hygiene will cause vaginal discharge.

Despite the growing body of research on women's reproductive health in Indonesia, there remains a significant gap in localized studies that explore women's perceptions and attitudes toward common gynecological issues, such as vaginal discharge, particularly in rural and semi-urban communities like Environment VIII, WEK V Village. Existing

literature tends to focus on urban populations or general reproductive health awareness, often overlooking how cultural, educational, and socioeconomic factors specifically shape attitudes and behaviors toward vaginal discharge. This gap limits the effectiveness of health interventions, as they may not address the unique barriers faced by women in more traditional or resource-limited settings.

Moreover, while national health programs advocate for improved reproductive health literacy, there is a lack of targeted, grassroots-level data to inform such initiatives at the village level. There is insufficient information on how women interpret the symptoms of vaginal discharge, what sources of information they rely on, and the extent to which stigma or misinformation influences their decisions to seek care. This study addresses these specific gaps by providing empirical evidence from a focused population, thus offering valuable insights to policymakers, healthcare providers, and educators aiming to design more culturally relevant and accessible health education programs in the region.

Education also hinders the attitude of women of childbearing age towards the vaginal discharge they experience. According to Mubarak, (2015) the higher the level of education of a person, the easier it is for a person to receive information so that the more knowledge they receive, and a low level of education can hinder the development of a person's behavior towards vaginal hygiene. Lack of knowledge can lead to an attitude of not caring about the occurrence of disease as a reaction to something experienced by everyone such as health problems, one of which is vaginal discharge which is very important for women of childbearing age (WUS).

Based on the preliminary initial survey conducted by the researcher in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidempuan District, Padangsidempuan City, the researcher obtained data from the Posyandu Midwife Cadre Environment VIII that the number of women of childbearing age was 108 people (population), and from the results of interviews conducted on 15 people, the attitude of women of childbearing age who did not care about vaginal discharge and 6 women of childbearing age who responded to vaginal discharge was obtained. The experience that I encountered in my own family was very visible in not caring about the vagina which was already itchy, sore and hot. Mrs. E had complained

about the pain she was experiencing but had not sought treatment for 2 days and had just left it like that, which eventually caused the vaginal wall to become injured/peeled like a burn, so from Mrs. E's attitude, we should not underestimate vaginal discharge because it is very dangerous if left for a long time.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### A. Research Design

The type of research used is quantitative research with a descriptive design, namely a description of The Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidimpuan District, Padangsidimpuan City in 2024

### B. Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted in Environment VIII, WeK V Village, South Padangsidimpuan District, Padangsidimpuan City in 2024 on the grounds that there are still many attitudes of women of childbearing age who are trivial and do not respond or do not care about the vaginal discharge they experience and is the place where the researcher lived. This research was started from November 2023 and will be completed in 2024

### C. Population and Research Sample

The population in this study was 108 women of childbearing age in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidimpuan District, Padangsidimpuan City in 2024. A sample is a part of the population that will be studied as the sum of the characteristics possessed by the population (Soekidjo Notoadmojo, 2015).

According to Arikunto (2015), if the population is <100 people then the entire population is used as a sample, if > 100 then take a sample of 10% -15% or 20% -25%, from the total population. Because the population in this study > 100 people, namely 108 people, the researcher only took 20% of the formula, so the population is  $108 \times 25\% = 27$ . So the sample in this study is 27 people.

### D. Data Collection Method

#### 1. Interview

This is a method of collecting data by interviewing the responses to be studied. This method is with questions and answers and will provide results directly.

#### 2. Observation

Activity towards a process or object by understanding the knowledge of a phenomenon based on previously known knowledge and ideas,

to obtain the information needed to continue a study.

### 3. Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a measuring instrument in the form of a questionnaire of 20 statements distributed to respondents by researchers visiting houses (door to door) that have been determined as samples. Then the respondents fill out the questionnaire and if there is anything that is not understood, it can be asked to the researcher. Then the questionnaire is collected by the researcher when it has been completed. Filling out the questionnaire is given for three (3) days. So the questionnaire used by the researcher is a Likert questionnaire, where the scale consists of 5 choices, namely, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree.

### E. Data Processing and Analysis

#### 1. Data Processing

According to M. Darwin (2015), the collected data is processed with the following steps:

##### 1) Editing

It was carried out by checking the completeness of the data on the questionnaire so that the incoming data can be processed correctly, editing is done by completing the answers on the questionnaire and clarifying the data.

##### 2) Cording

It was giving a certain mark or code to the questionnaire to make it easier to enter data into the table.

##### 3) Scoring

It was giving a score or value to the correct and incorrect answers to the questions given.

##### 4) Transferring

It was moving certain answers or codes on the questionnaire, to make it easier to enter data into the master table after first being coded.

##### 5) Tabulating

The complete data was calculated according to the variables, based on the categories that have been set, then entered into a frequency distribution table.

#### 2. Data Analysis

Data analysis is carried out descriptively by looking at the percentage of data that has been collected and presented in a distribution table, then a discussion is carried out using existing library theories.

Formula:

$$P = \frac{F}{n} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage

F = Frequency

n = Number of Respondents

## RESULTS

Based on the research data on the Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidempuan District, Padangsidempuan City in 2020, which is influenced by several factors, namely age, education, occupation, sources of information. Which is presented in the form of a table on the previous sheet.

### 1. Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge

In section of data analysis, it can be seen that the attitude of women of childbearing age towards vaginal discharge is obtained by the majority of responding attitudes of 10 people (37%), and the minority of responsible attitudes of 3 people (11.1%). Gerungan (2019) stated that attitude is an attitude of view or attitude of feeling, but which attitude is accompanied by a tendency to act according to the attitude towards the object.

From the results of the study above, the researcher assumes that the attitude of women of childbearing age towards vaginal discharge is contradictory. This can be seen from the 27 respondents who had a response attitude of 10 people. This is due to the lack of maintaining vaginal hygiene and the respondents' views on vaginal discharge as well as the lack of action, experience so that they do not care about the vaginal discharge they experience. Basically there are several factors that influence the respondents' attitudes, namely age, education, occupation, and sources of information.

### 2. Age

This section showed that out of 27 respondents, the majority aged 15-31 have an attitude of respect 7 people (25.9%). And the minority aged 32-49 years old have a responsible attitude 1 person (3.7%). According to Huclok (2015) the older you are, the more mature a person's level of maturity and strength will be in thinking and working. The assumption of the theory above is contrary to the results of the research conducted by the researcher, because at the age of 15-31 years they understand more about vaginal discharge even though at the age of 32-49 years they are more experienced but

the actions/attitudes of respondents aged 15-31 are higher than respondents aged 32-49 years. This is because the age of 32-49 years has begun to ignore vaginal discharge because they think it is not a health problem.

### 3. Education

This section showed that out of 27 respondents, the majority had a high school education of 11 people (40.8%), with an attitude of respect of 5 people (18.5%), and a minority had an elementary school education of 3 people (11.1%), with an attitude of responding of 1 person (3.7%). According to Mantra and Wawan and Dewi (2016), education can influence a person including a person's behavior towards lifestyle, especially in motivating attitudes in development. The higher the education, the easier it is to receive information.

The assumption of the results of this study is in accordance with the theory that the higher a person's education, the better the attitude/behavior and the easier it is to receive information with increasing education, but even though high school education is not too high, there are quite a lot of people who understand vaginal discharge, even respondents often hear how to prevent vaginal discharge from health workers during promotions at their schools.

### 4. Work

This section revealed that out of 27 respondents, the majority worked as Entrepreneurs 12 people (44.5%), with an attitude of respect 6 people (22.2%), and a minority who worked as Farmers 2 people (7.4%), with an attitude of responding 1 person (3.7%). According to Notoadmodjo (2016), work is a vice that must be done especially to support one's life and family life. Work is not a source of pleasure, but rather a way to earn a living that is boring, repetitive and full of challenges. While work is generally a time-consuming activity. Working for mothers will have an impact on family life. The assumption of the research results is in accordance with the theory, this study concluded that respondents who work as entrepreneurs have more insight/communication and their attitudes are better than farmers, this is because they rarely gather and communicate with other people so that respondents get less information about vaginal discharge.

### 5. Source of Information

Out of 27 respondents, the majority obtained information from Electronic Media 11 people (40.8%), with an attitude of respect 5 people



(18.5%), and a minority of health media 7 people with an attitude of respect 2 people (7.4%). According to Mubarok (2016), information sources are the ease of obtaining information that accelerates someone to gain new knowledge. Tools or targets for conveying information, in order to increase insight and knowledge that influences a person's attitude, what is meant by communication information submitted to the public outside the organization are various such as print media, electronic media, and health workers.

The assumption of the results of this study is in accordance with the theory above, women of childbearing age receive sources of information obtained from print media, electronic media, and health media. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that the source of information for the majority of women of childbearing age gets more information from electronic media than from health workers. This is because sources of information can be received from anywhere. But it is better if health information can be received directly from health workers / health promotion such as leaflets, interviews, questions and answers, direct practice, because most people understand or comprehend it directly rather than just seeing it but never practicing it.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of women of fertile age in Environment VIII, WEK V Village, exhibit a moderate level of awareness and mixed attitudes toward vaginal discharge. While many participants recognize vaginal discharge as a common physiological occurrence, there is still a notable degree of misinformation and stigma surrounding the topic. This is consistent with previous research indicating that cultural beliefs and a lack of sexual and reproductive health education often contribute to misconceptions and neglect of vaginal health among women in similar rural and semi-urban communities.

A significant number of respondents were able to distinguish between normal and abnormal discharge based on color, odor, and consistency. However, despite this basic knowledge, a considerable proportion of the women did not seek medical attention unless symptoms became severe. This behavior may be rooted in cultural norms that discourage open discussions about vaginal health, as well as limited access to healthcare facilities or trusted female health professionals. These findings are aligned with studies conducted in other parts of

Indonesia and Southeast Asia, which report similar barriers to reproductive health-seeking behaviors.

The study also revealed that age and educational background were influential factors in shaping women's attitudes. Younger women and those with higher levels of education tended to have more positive and proactive attitudes toward managing vaginal discharge. They were more likely to view it as a manageable health issue rather than something to be ashamed of. In contrast, older women and those with limited education often relied on traditional beliefs or home remedies, which could delay proper treatment and increase the risk of complications.

Another important insight from the study is the role of social support and health communication. Women who had access to information through community health workers, women's groups, or media campaigns showed better understanding and were more willing to seek help. This highlights the potential of targeted health education and outreach programs in improving women's reproductive health literacy. It suggests that culturally sensitive and community-based health interventions could significantly improve awareness and reduce stigma surrounding vaginal discharge.

In conclusion, the study underscores the complex interplay of knowledge, culture, and accessibility in shaping women's attitudes toward vaginal discharge in Environment VIII, WEK V Village. While some progress is evident, gaps in education, communication, and healthcare access continue to hinder optimal health-seeking behaviors. These findings call for strengthened community health initiatives, improved education strategies, and the promotion of open dialogue around women's reproductive health to empower women to take charge of their well-being.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research that the author has conducted regarding the Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidimpuan District, Padangsidimpuan City in 2024, conclusions can be drawn from 27 respondents, namely:

1. Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Towards Vaginal Discharge in Environment VIII, Wek V Village, South Padangsidimpuan District, Padangsidimpuan City in 2024, the majority of the attitude responded as many as 10 people (37%),

and the minority of the attitude was responsible as many as 3 people (11.1%).

2. Attitude of Women of Childbearing Age Based on Age, the majority at the age of 15-31 years as many as 16 people (59.2%), with the category of respectful attitudes 7 people (25.9%), and the minority at the age of 32-49 years 11 people (40.8%), with the category of responsible attitudes 1 person (3.7%).

3. Attitudes of Women of Childbearing Age Based on Education, the majority of high school education 11 people (40.8%), with the category of appreciating attitudes 5 people (18.5%), and the minority of elementary school education 3 people (11.1%), with the category of responding attitudes 1 person (3.7%).

4. Attitudes of Women of Childbearing Age Based on Occupation, the majority work as Entrepreneurs 12 people (44.5%), with the category of appreciating attitudes 6 people (22.2%), and the minority work as farmers 2 people (7.4%), with the category of responding attitudes 1 person (3.7%).

5. Attitudes of Women of Childbearing Age Based on Information Sources, the majority from Electronic Media 11 people (40.8%), with the category of appreciating attitudes 5 people (18.5%), and the minority Health Media 7 people (29.6%), with the attitude of appreciating 2 people (7.4%).

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