



Patient Satisfaction in Perineal Laceration Topics Provided by the “Spesialis Keliling” (Speling) Program: A Cross-Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: Perineal laceration is a prevalent complication of vaginal delivery and may lead to adverse maternal outcomes when postnatal care and education are inadequate. In Indonesia, unequal access to specialist obstetric services remains a challenge. The Spesialis Keliling (Speling) program was introduced to enhance access through community-based outreach. This study aims to assess patient satisfaction and examine associated factors with the Speling program in obstetric and gynecological services.

Methods: An observational cross-sectional study was conducted among women aged ≥ 18 years who received Speling services, including counseling on birth canal trauma, in Surakarta, Central Java, in 2025. A total of 34 participants were included. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Chi-square or Fisher's exact tests.

Results: Overall patient satisfaction was reported by 58.8% of participants. Satisfaction was significantly higher among participants reporting easy access to services, good provider communication, and adequate understanding after counseling ($p < 0.001$ for all). No significant association was found between satisfaction and history of perineal laceration ($p = 0.295$).

Conclusion: The Speling program achieved a favorable level of patient satisfaction. Accessibility, effective communication, and patient understanding emerged as key determinants, underscoring the importance of patient-centered and educational approaches in outreach-based obstetric services.

Keywords: *Community-Based Specialist Services; Health Service Accessibility; Maternal Health*

INTRODUCTION

Perineal laceration is one of the most common complications in vaginal delivery and may result in both short-term and long-term impacts on maternal health.^[1] Perineal pain, bleeding, infection, disruption of wound healing, sexual dysfunction, and impairment of quality of life may be the consequences that can arise if postpartum management and care are inadequate.^[2-4] In addition to clinical factors, mothers' understanding of the type of perineal laceration, wound care, warning

signs, and the importance of follow-up care contributes to recovery and the prevention of complications.^[5]

Indonesia has diverse geographical and socioeconomic characteristics and faces a big challenge in ensuring equitable access to specialized health services, especially in peripheral and rural areas.^[6] Health inequality is still an issue that requires special attention. The community health outreach approach may provide a wider range of health services to the community.^[7] As an effort to increase equitable access to health services, the

Governor of Central Java established a “Spesialis Keliling (Speling)” program to transfer knowledge from Gynecology Specialists, Lung Specialists, Internal Medicine Specialists, Pediatric Specialists, Mental Health Specialists, and/or other Specialists.^[8]

Patient satisfaction with health services refers to patients’ perceptions and experiences of the services they receive.^[9,10] Patient satisfaction is one of the most important indicators of the quality of health services. This satisfaction reflects the extent to which the health services provided meet or exceed patient expectations and is closely related to adherence to treatment, continuity of care, and overall health outcomes.^[11] Patient satisfaction in the context of Speling is an important aspect to evaluate because it reflects how well the services provided meet patients’ needs and expectations. Effective education and counseling on perineal laceration are expected to improve the service experience, increase maternal compliance with medical recommendations, and strengthen patient trust in health services. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate factors related to patient satisfaction with Speling services in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Surakarta City, Central Java. The results of this evaluation are expected to serve as a basis for continuously improving service quality, strengthening the Speling program, and enhancing the health and well-being of postpartum mothers.

METHODS

Study design

This study is an analytical observational study with a cross-sectional design. The study was conducted among participants in the Spesialis Keliling (Speling) healthcare program in Obstetrics and Gynecology, focusing on counseling on birth canal trauma and targeting residents of Mojolaban and Kartasura, Central Java, in 2025.

Study subjects

The research population comprised all participants who attended Speling services during the study period. The sample was selected using a total sampling method. A total of 34 respondents were included in the analysis. Participant criteria included age ≥ 18 years, receipt of health services through the Speling program, and agreement to participate by providing written consent and completing a questionnaire. Participants with incomplete questionnaires or data were excluded.

Data collection

Data were collected via a self-administered questionnaire following receipt of Speling services. The questionnaire included items on demographic characteristics, perceptions of service access, health workers’ attitudes and communication, participants’ understanding after participating in the program, and satisfaction with the services received. The questionnaire was written in Indonesian.

Data analysis

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 29 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize participant characteristics. Categorical variables are presented as frequencies and percentages [n (%)], while numerical variables are reported as mean $\pm$ standard deviation (SD). The relationship between variables and participant satisfaction was analyzed using Fisher’s Exact test. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULT

A total of 34 women of reproductive age were included in the analysis. The median age of participants was 30 years. Most respondents had a high school or lower level of education (64.7%), were not formally employed (64.7%), and were married (82.4%). Regarding access to the Spesialis Keliling (Speling) program, most participants reported that the services were

easy to access (73.5%). Furthermore, most respondents perceived the attitudes and communication skills of healthcare providers as good (73.5%). More than half of participants (52.9%) reported a good understanding of the health information provided after attending the Speling program (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic and Service Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	n (n = 34)	(%)
Age (years)	29 ± 3.351 [†]	
Educational level		
≤ High school	22	64.7
Higher education	12	35.5
Employment status		
Unemployed	22	64.7
Employed	12	35.5
Marital status		
Married	28	82.4
Unmarried	6	17.6
History of perineal laceration		
Yes	23	67.6
No	11	32.4
Accessibility of services		
Difficult	9	26.5
Easy	25	73.5
Hospitality and communication of health workers		
Poor	9	26.5
Good	25	73.5
Post-program understanding		
None/partial	16	47.1
Yes	18	52.9

[†]Saphiro-Wilk

Patient satisfaction levels are presented in Table 2, with the majority of respondents (58.8%) expressing satisfaction with the services provided.

Table 2. Satisfaction Levels of Speling Program Participants

Variable	n (n = 34)	(%)
Satisfaction level		
Not satisfied	14	41.2
Satisfied	20	58.8

Cross-tabulation analysis examining the association between the studied factors and patient satisfaction is presented in Table 3. A history of perineal laceration was not associated with satisfaction with the Speling services ($p = 0.295$). In contrast, service accessibility was significantly associated with participant satisfaction ($p < 0.001$), with a higher proportion of satisfied participants among those who reported easy access to services (80.0%). Similarly, the hospitality and communication skills of healthcare providers were significantly associated with satisfaction levels ($p < 0.001$). All participants who reported a good understanding of the program after the intervention were satisfied with the services (100.0%), whereas most participants with no or only partial understanding were dissatisfied (87.5%) ($p < 0.001$).

Table 3. Cross-Tabulation of Factors Associated with Satisfaction Levels Among Speling Program Participants

Variable	Satisfaction level		p-value
	Satisfied n (%)	Not Satisfied n (%)	
History of perineal laceration	12 (52.2)	11 (47.8)	0.295 [‡]
Yes	8 (72.7)	3 (27.3)	
No			
Service accessibility	0 (0.0)	9 (100.0)	< 0.001 [‡]
Difficult	20 (80.0)	5 (20.0)	
Easy			
Hospitality and communication of health workers	0 (0.0)	9 (100.0)	< 0.001 [‡]
Poor	20 (80.0)	5 (20.0)	
Good			
Post-program understanding	2 (12.5)	14 (87.5)	< 0.001 [‡]
None/partial	18 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	
Yes			

DISCUSSION

This study evaluates patient satisfaction with the Spesialis Keliling (Speling) service, which emphasizes counseling on perineal tears among women

of reproductive age. Overall, the findings showed high satisfaction, with more than 80% of participants reporting positive perceptions of the service. These results suggest that Speling serves as an effective platform for delivering reproductive health counseling, particularly for conditions related to childbirth trauma, such as perineal tears.

Perineal tears during vaginal delivery are among the most common complications that significantly affect maternal health and quality of life postpartum. This complication occurs in approximately nine out of ten women and has both physical and emotional consequences.^[12] Perineal tears are classified into four degrees of severity: first-degree tears involve superficial lesions of the vaginal mucosa; second-degree tears extend to the perineal muscles; third-degree tears involve the anal sphincter; and fourth-degree tears extend to the rectal mucosa.^[13] Patients' education influences the success of preventing and managing perineal tears. Limited maternal understanding and knowledge regarding postpartum perineal wound care may increase the risk of infection and complications. Therefore, education on perineal wound care is crucial for optimal wound management, infection prevention, and accelerated healing.^[14] However, equitable distribution of health education across all segments of society remains a challenge. Indonesia continues to face significant barriers in ensuring equal access to specialized healthcare services, particularly in peripheral and rural areas.^[6] In response to this challenge, the Governor of Central Java initiated the "Spesialis Keliling (Speling)" program.^[8]

The Speling program has been implemented in Surakarta, Central Java. In implementing this program, patient satisfaction is one of the most important indicators of service quality. The findings of this study indicate that ease of access to services, communication and interpersonal relationships with healthcare providers,

and post-service understanding are key factors influencing patient satisfaction with Speling. This is consistent with previous reviews indicating that patient satisfaction with healthcare services is influenced by multiple factors, including healthcare providers' interpersonal or social skills, technical competence, infrastructure and facilities, environmental comfort, service accessibility, continuity of care, and service outcomes.^[15] Communication represents a key component of healthcare delivery—the quality of communication, particularly active listening skills, empathy, and information clarity. Sufficient consultation time has been shown to improve patient satisfaction significantly and perceived quality of care.^[16] A mixed-methods study by Abdulai (2025) further demonstrated that improvements in healthcare providers' communication competencies were significantly associated with higher patient satisfaction scores.^[17] Patient education and knowledge enhancement also play a critical role in improving clinical outcomes and patient satisfaction. Personalized educational approaches can enhance patient engagement, motivation, and empowerment to actively participate in their care and therapeutic decision-making.^[18]

The findings of this study emphasize that the effectiveness of Spelling-based perineal tear counseling depends not only on service availability but also on the quality of counseling delivery. Ensuring easy access, strengthening providers' communication skills, and prioritizing patient comprehension should be central components in program development.

This study has several limitations. The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between variables. Additionally, data collected through self-reported measures may be subject to response bias. Furthermore, focusing solely on satisfaction does not capture long-term outcomes such as behavioral changes or

clinical improvements. Future studies employing longitudinal designs or qualitative methods may provide deeper insights into the long-term impact of counseling about perineal tears on maternal outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The “Spesialis Keliling” Program (Speling), which provides counseling on perineal tears, achieved high patient satisfaction levels among women of reproductive age. Satisfaction is significantly related to ease of access, good communication from health workers, and increased understanding after the program. These findings emphasize that effective, accessible, and patient-centered counseling is essential to optimize Speling services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge the Kartasura and Mojolaban Sub-District Office for facilitating access to relevant data and providing administrative support.

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