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**PERINATAL ANXIETY SCREENING SCALE (PASS): A VALID TOOL TO DETECT ANXIETY AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN**

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**ABSTRACT**

Anxiety disorders during pregnancy are not routinely assessed, despite being common and causing adverse pregnancy outcomes. Early detection using simple questionnaires and management are likely to improve pregnancy outcomes. We aimed to determine the validity of Perinatal Anxiety Screening Scale (PASS) to detect anxiety among Sri Lankan pregnant women. A cross sectional study was conducted in antenatal clinics of Colombo South Teaching Hospital. Pregnant women (n=221) were sequentially recruited and assessed by a psychiatrist until 81 women with anxiety disorder were diagnosed according to International Classification of Diseases -10 criteria-(gold standard). PASS was administered to all recruited pregnant women, including 139 women without anxiety. Psychiatrist's assessment and PASS administration were blinded to each other. Each woman's PASS score was tabulated against the psychiatrist's diagnosis. Performance of PASS against the psychiatrist's diagnosis was assessed using sensitivity, specificity and predictive values. Receiver-Operating-Characteristics-(ROC)analysis was performed. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Mean age of the women was 30±5.8 years. Most (68%) had completed primary education and 53.7% were multiparous. Psychiatrist diagnosed anxiety disorder in 37% of women while PASS at its optimal cut off of 20, classified 37.5% of women as having anxiety. Sensitivity, specificity and positive and negative predictive values of PASS were 93%, 90%, 88% and 93% respectively. Area under the ROC curve was 0.96 [95% CI:0.94-0.99]. Internal consistency was very high [Cronbach's alpha = 0.95]. PASS is a valid and reliable instrument to screen for anxiety disorders in antenatal women in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: PASS, Sri Lanka, valid instrument, anxiety, pregnancy

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