

**Deanship of Graduate Studies**  
**Al-Quds University**



**Attitudes of Healthcare Providers and Mothers  
toward the Attendance of A companion During  
Labor at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza City**

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**M. Sc. Thesis**

**Jerusalem- Palestine**

**1440 / 2018**

**Attitudes of Healthcare Providers and Mothers Toward  
the Attendance of A companion During Labor at Al  
Shifa Hospital in Gaza City**

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for  
the Degree of Master in Maternal and Child Health (MCH)  
Nursing - Faculty of Health Professions - Al- Quds University

**1440 / 2018**






**Thesis Approval**

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A companion During Labor at Al Shifa Hospital in Gaza City**

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**Jerusalem – Palestine**

**1440 / 2018**

## **Dedication**

I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to my husband and my children who encouraged me all the way through this study ... without their encouragement and support, this thesis wouldn't come to the end ...

All the kind feelings to my father and my mother who were praying for me all the time ....

Special thanks to my brother for his support which provided me with extra energy to complete my study ....

I would like to express my appreciations to all my colleagues in Al Shifa Maternity Hospital who contributed to the completion of this thesis.

Bothaina A. Al Raheem Shaikh Khalil

## **Declaration**

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

### **Signed:**

Bothaina A. Al Raheem Shaikh Khalil

...../...../.....

## **Acknowledgement**

First of all, praise to Allah, the lord of the world, and peace and blessings of Allah be upon our prophet Muhammad, all thanks for Allah who granted me the capability to accomplish this thesis.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to the academic staff at Al Quds University for the knowledge and skills they provided through my study.

I had the great fortune to complete this study under the supervision, guidance and valuable instructions of Dr. Hamza Abdeljawad.

I would like to convey my warm thanks to all the obstetricians and midwives at Al Shifa Maternity Hospital for their cooperation during data collection.

To my friends, and all those who contributed to the completion of this study, thank you very much.

Bothaina Shaikh Khalil

December, 2018

## **Abstract**

Presence of a companion by a family member during labour may enhance labour process by providing continuous emotional support and reassurance to the mother. The purpose of the study was to assess the attitudes of mothers and healthcare providers toward the attendance of companions during labour at Al Shifa Maternity Hospital in Gaza city. The researcher used descriptive cross-sectional analytic design. The sample of the study consisted of 272 mothers in labour and 134 healthcare providers (37 physicians and 97 nurses and midwives). For data collection two questionnaires developed by the researcher to assess the healthcare providers' attitudes towards companion during labour, and mothers' attitudes towards companion during labour. The results indicated that mean age of mothers was 25.51 years, 92.6% are housekeepers, and 73.5% had low monthly income by less than 500 New Israeli Shekel, 38.2% were primiparous, and 96% had normal delivery. The results indicated that 87.9% of mothers prefer to have a companion during labour, and about 90% of women prefer to have their mothers as a companion during labour. The results also indicated high positive attitudes toward presence of a companion with overall mean score 4.021 out of 5 and weighted percentage 80.42%, and the results revealed lower attitudes among older women and higher attitudes among low income mothers. The results also indicated insignificant differences in attitudes toward having a companion during labour related to level of education, work, number of deliveries, and status of current delivery.

For healthcare providers, the results showed the attitudes toward having a companion during labour was with mean score 3.45 out of 5 and weighted percentage 69.0%. In addition, midwives and obstetricians had higher positive attitudes toward having a companion during labour compared to General Practitioners and nurses, and there were insignificant differences in attitudes toward companionship related to qualification, gender, age of healthcare providers, and years of experience. The study concluded that the majority of women in labour preferred to have their mothers as a companion during childbirth, and women in labour have higher positive attitudes toward having a companion during labour compared to healthcare providers (80.42 vs. 69.0).

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## **List of Abbreviations**

<b>CBR</b>	Crude Birth Rate
<b>CS</b>	Cesarean Section
<b>GPs</b>	General Practitioners
<b>GS</b>	Gaza Strip
<b>JDs</b>	Jordanian Dinars
<b>ICM</b>	International Confederation of Midwives
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>NIS</b>	New Israeli Shekel
<b>NVD</b>	Normal Vaginal Delivery
<b>PNA</b>	Palestinian National Authority
<b>PCBS</b>	Palestinian Center Bureau of Statistics
<b>SMC</b>	Shifa Medical Complex
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for the Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
<b>WB</b>	West Bank
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization