

TABIB, M., HUMPHREY, T., HOLLINS-MARTIN, C., FORBES-MCKAY, K. and MCVICAR, S. 2023. *The influence of a single antenatal relaxation class (ARC) on perinatal psychological wellbeing and childbirth experience: an observational study*. Presented at the 2023 Lothian health and care professions research conference: achieving impactful healthcare research through clinical academic collaborations, 7 November 2023, Edinburgh, UK.

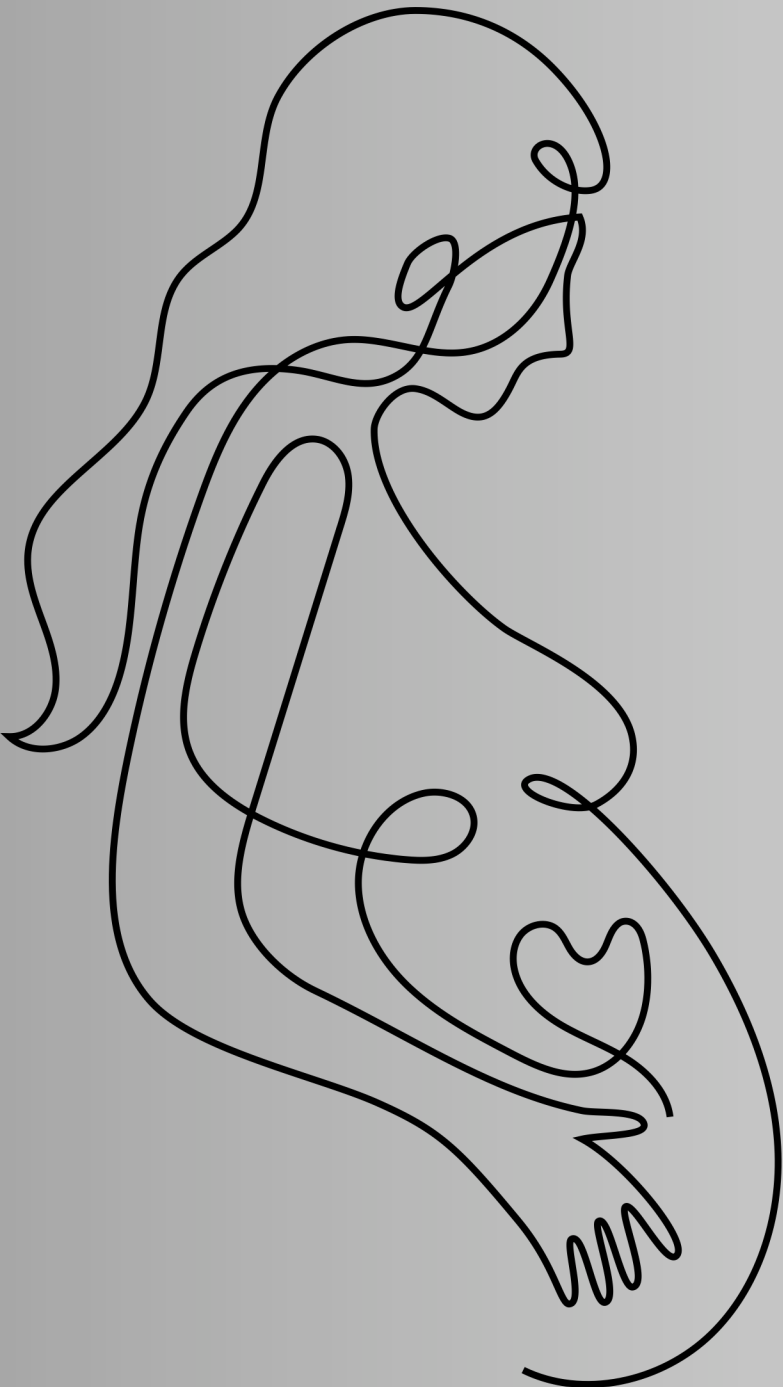
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2023

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The Influence of a Single Antenatal Relaxation Class (ARC) on Perinatal Psychological Wellbeing and Childbirth Experience; an observational study



Mo Tabib

Supervisory Team: Professor Tracy Humphrey, Professor Caroline Hollins-Martin, Dr Katrina Forbes-McKay & Dr Sonya McVicar

With special thanks to Iolanthe Midwifery Trust

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY

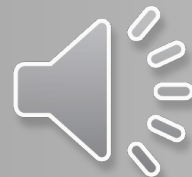


 **ROBERT GORDON**
UNIVERSITY ABERDEEN



**University of
South Australia**

BACKGROUND



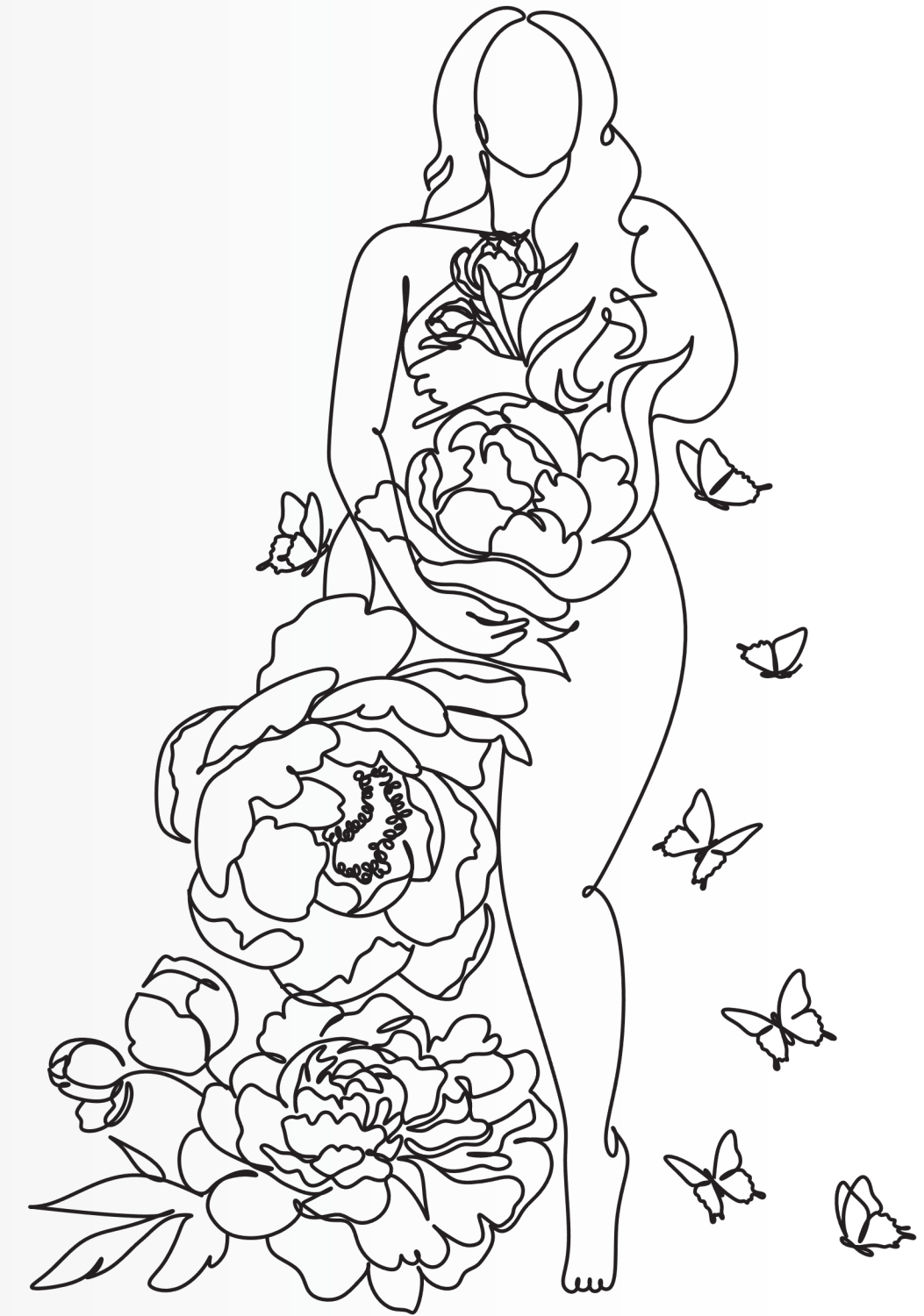
AIM

To examine the influence of a single Antenatal Relaxation Class (ARC) on perinatal psychological wellbeing and childbirth experiences.



ARC

- An established initiative in a Scottish Health Board
- A single 3-hour class (online)
- Facilitated by midwives
- Free of charge for participants
- Estimated cost for NHS is £5.00 per participants (Down et al. 2015)

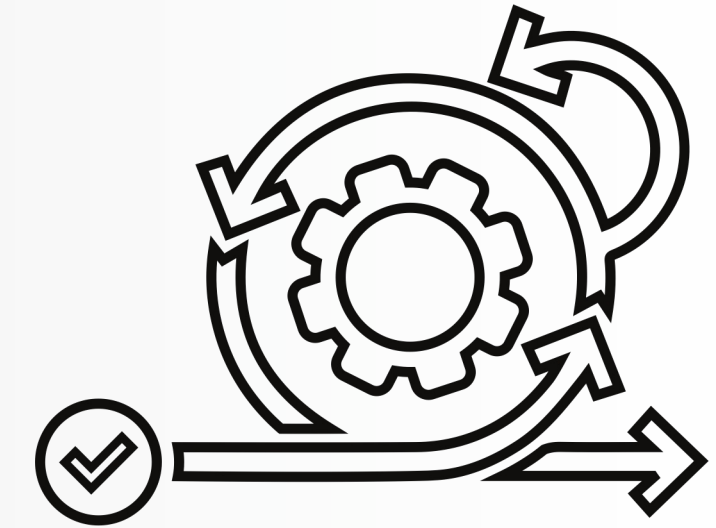


ARC CONTENT

- Theory of psychophysiological processes
- A range of relaxation techniques
- Positive birth stories
- Handouts & audios for home practice

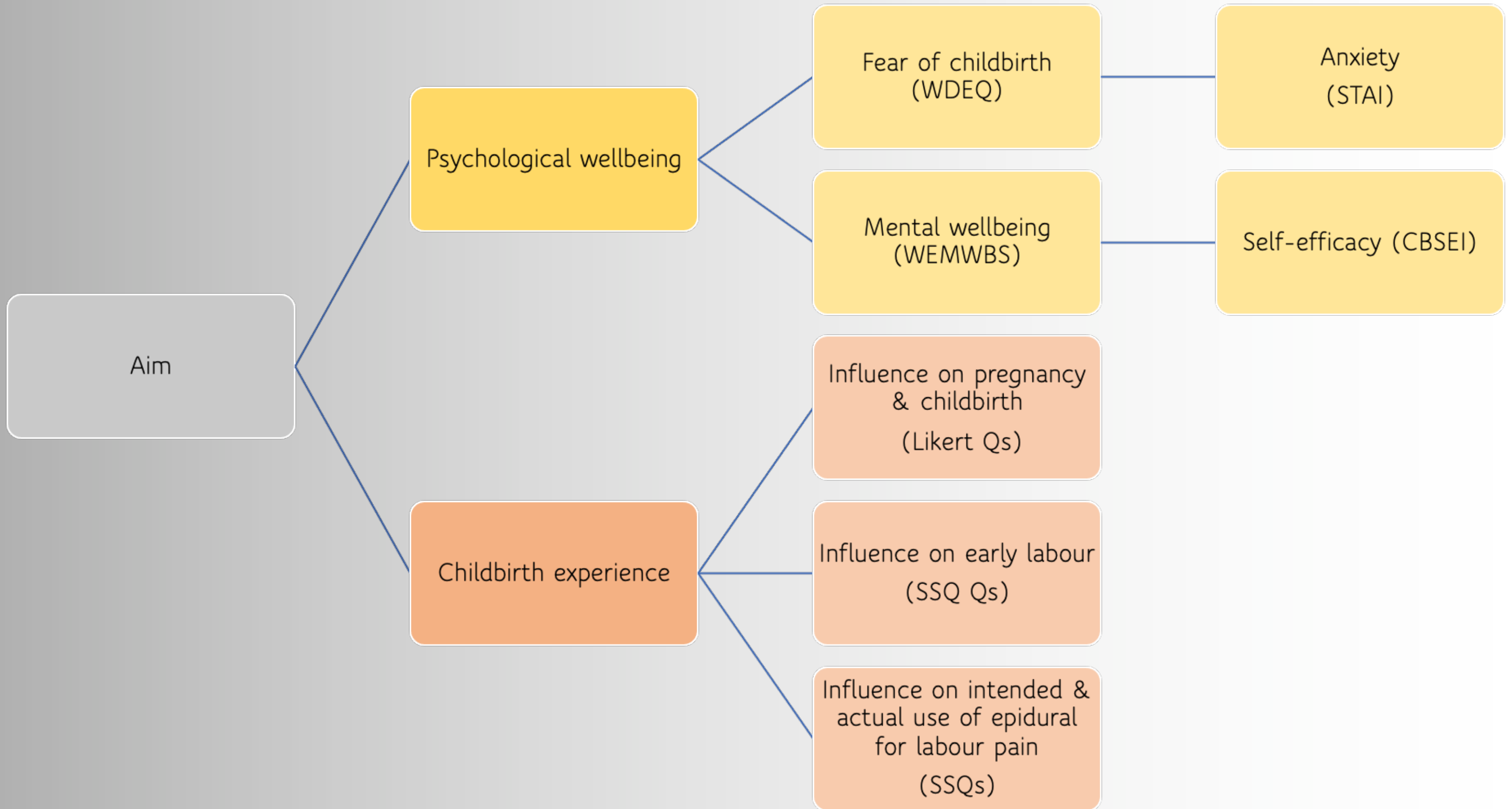


METHOD



- An observational approach using a prospective longitudinal cohort design
- A convenient sample of 91 childbearing women (78 primiparous and 13 multiparous)
- Three sets of online surveys at pre-class, 2 weeks post-class and 4-8 weeks post-birth

METHOD





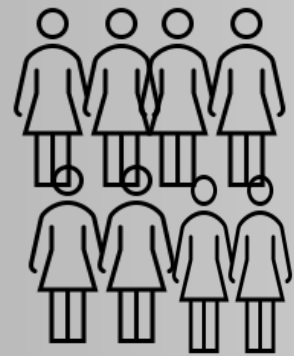
RESULTS

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

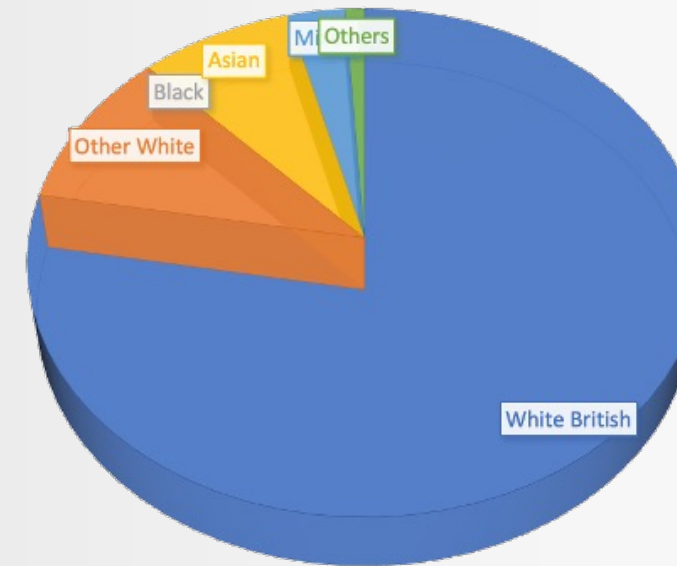
Size: 91 women

Aged 21 to 41 ($M = 31$, $SD = 3.6$)

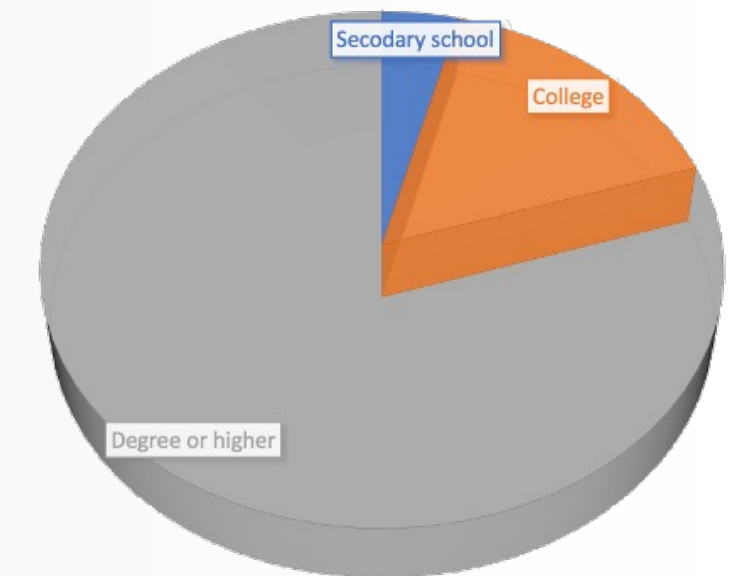
Parity: primiparous & multiparous



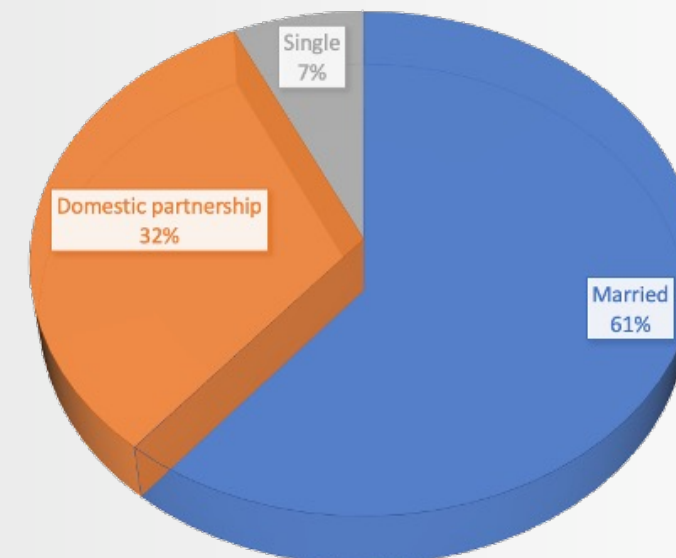
Ethnicity



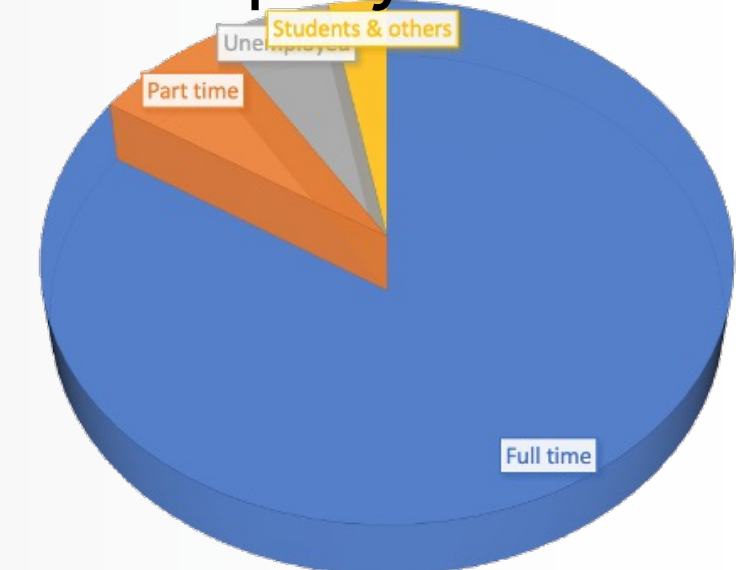
Education



Marital status



Employment



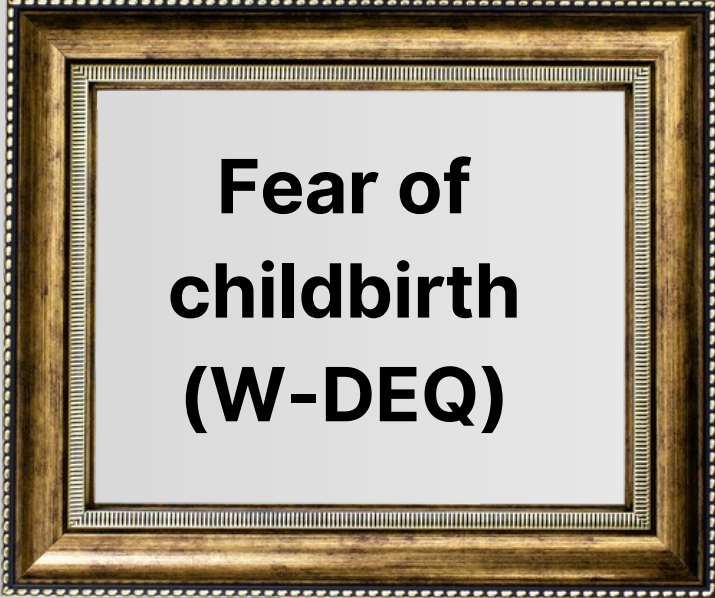


Psychological wellbeing


PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING



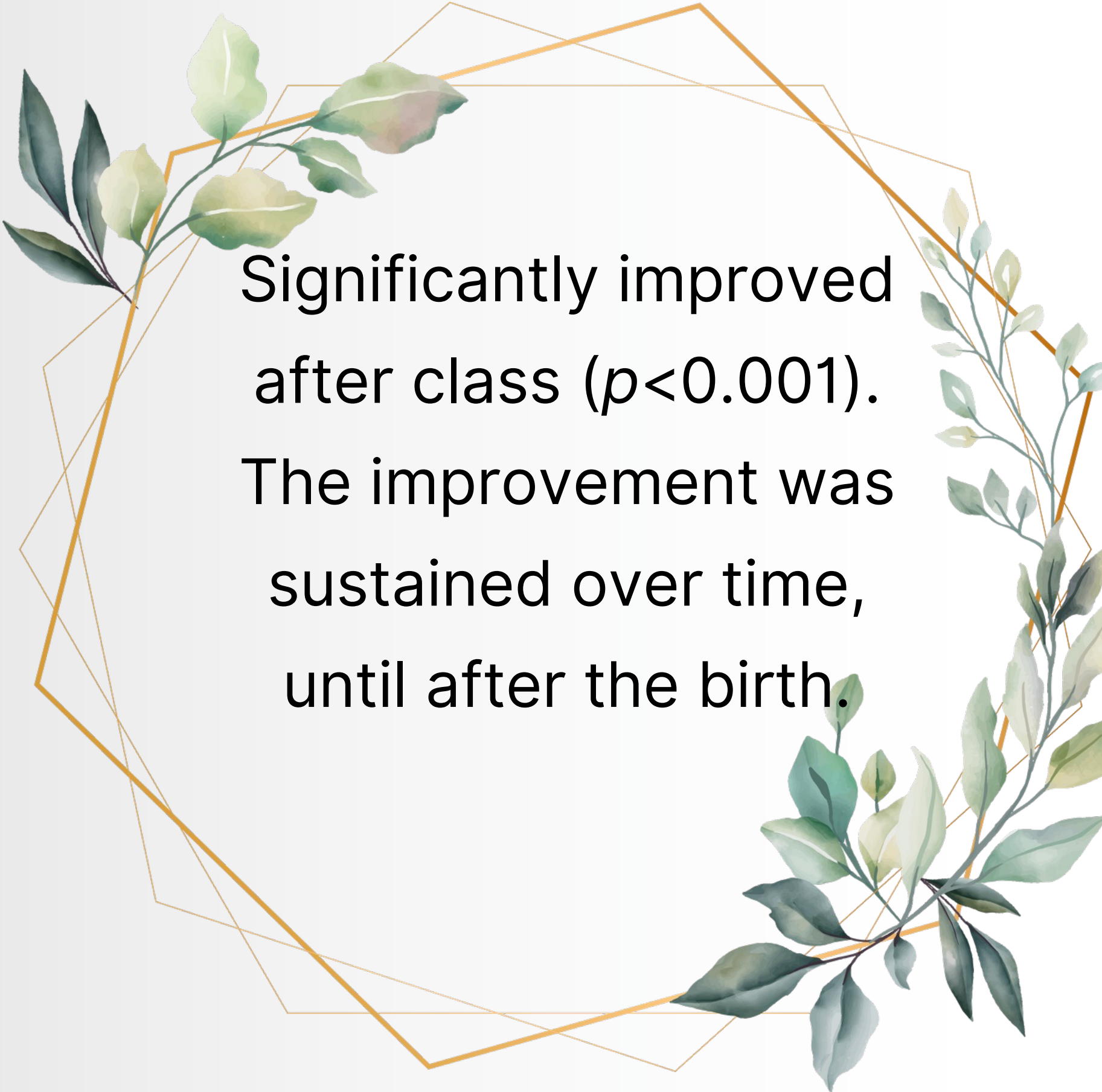
**Mental health
(WEMWBS)**



**Fear of
childbirth
(W-DEQ)**

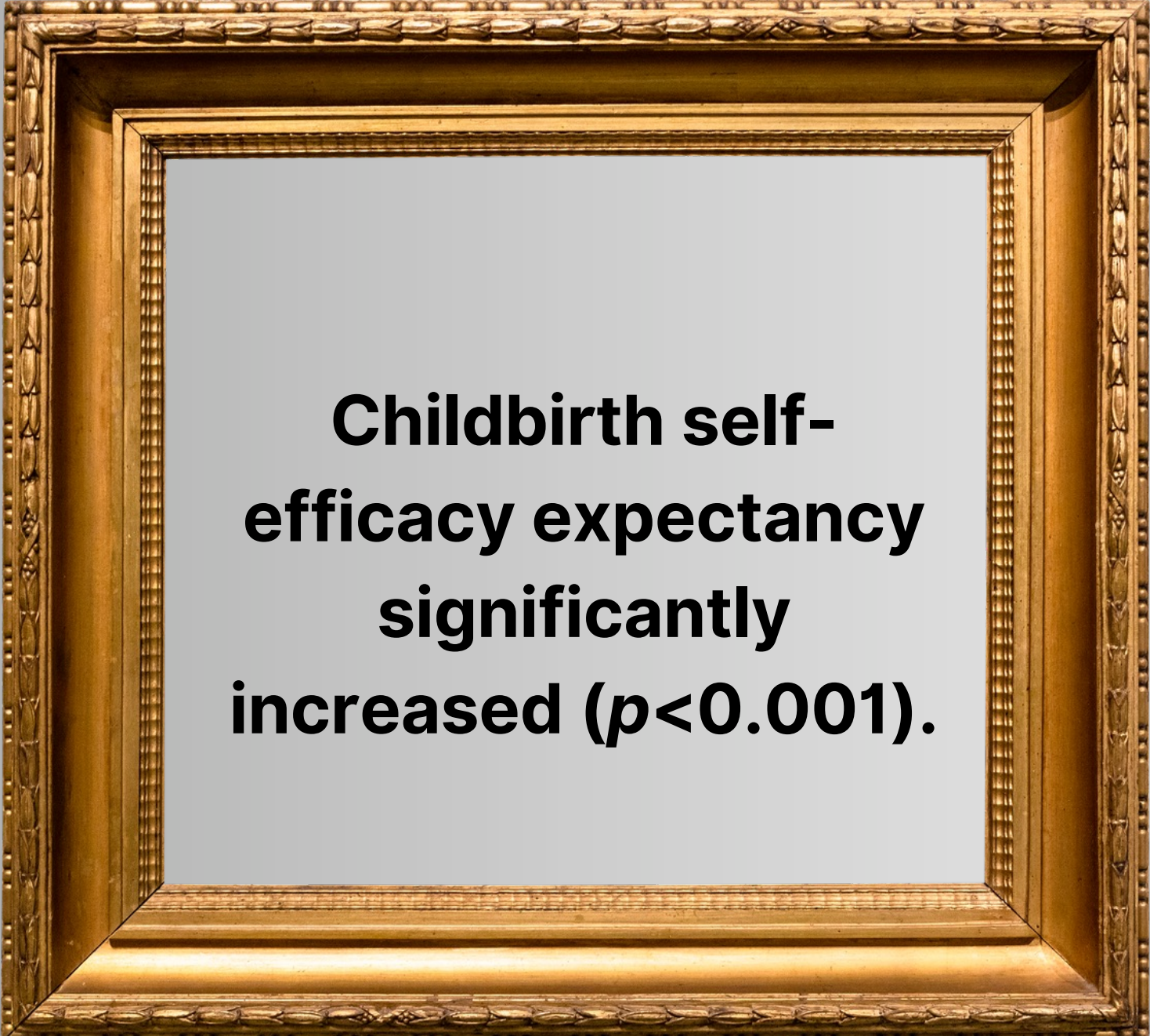


**State & trait
anxiety
(STAI)**

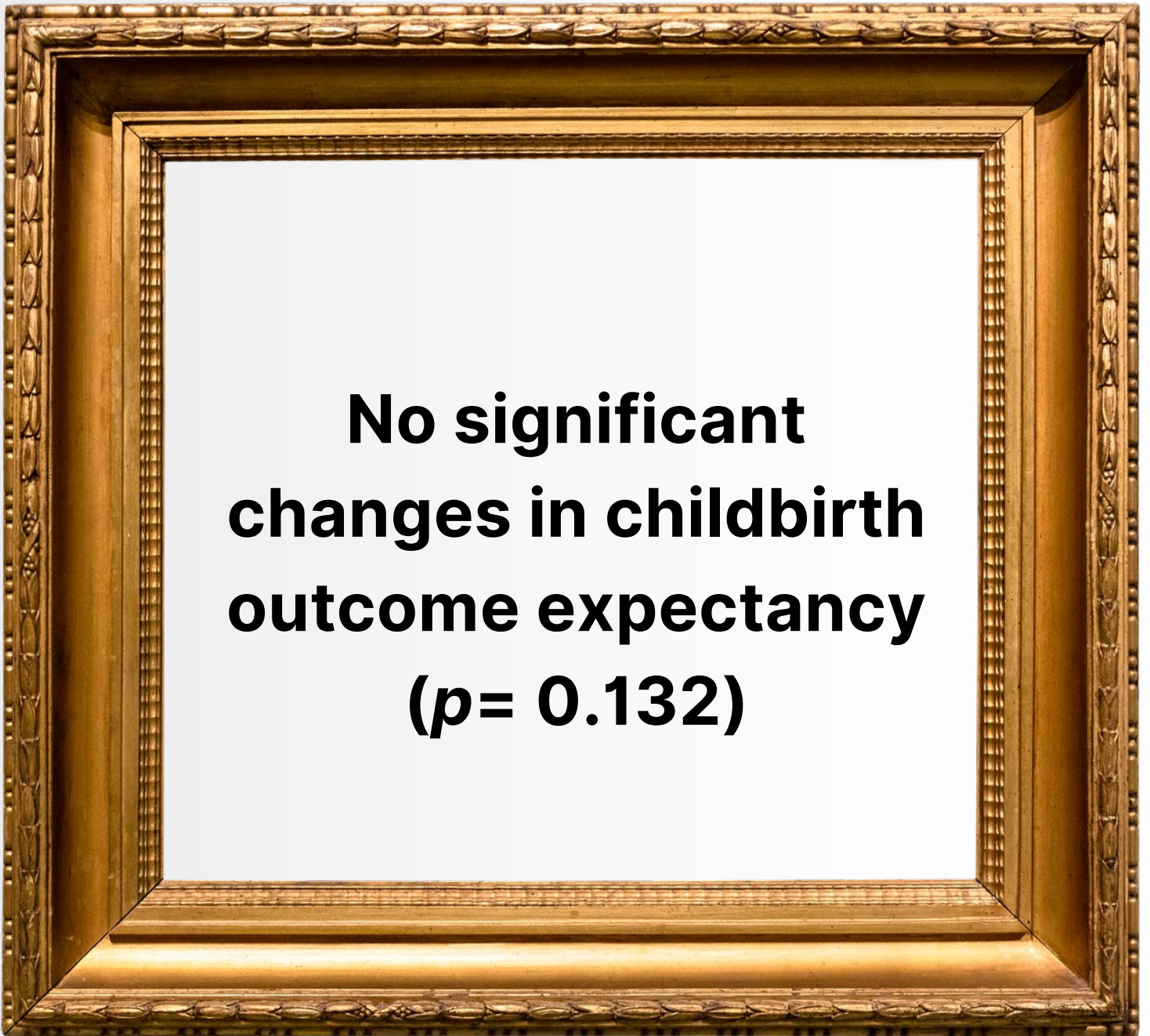


Significantly improved
after class ($p < 0.001$).
The improvement was
sustained over time,
until after the birth.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

An ornate, multi-layered gold frame with intricate carvings and a beaded inner border, set against a light gray background.

**Childbirth self-
efficacy expectancy
significantly
increased ($p < 0.001$).**

An ornate, multi-layered gold frame with intricate carvings and a beaded inner border, set against a white background.

**No significant
changes in childbirth
outcome expectancy
($p = 0.132$)**



Childbirth Experience

CHILDBIRTH EXPERIENCE

In pregnancy:

- Relaxation techniques were used by 95.2%.
- The influence of ARC was perceived as positive by 97.6%.



CHILDBIRTH EXPERIENCE

During childbirth:

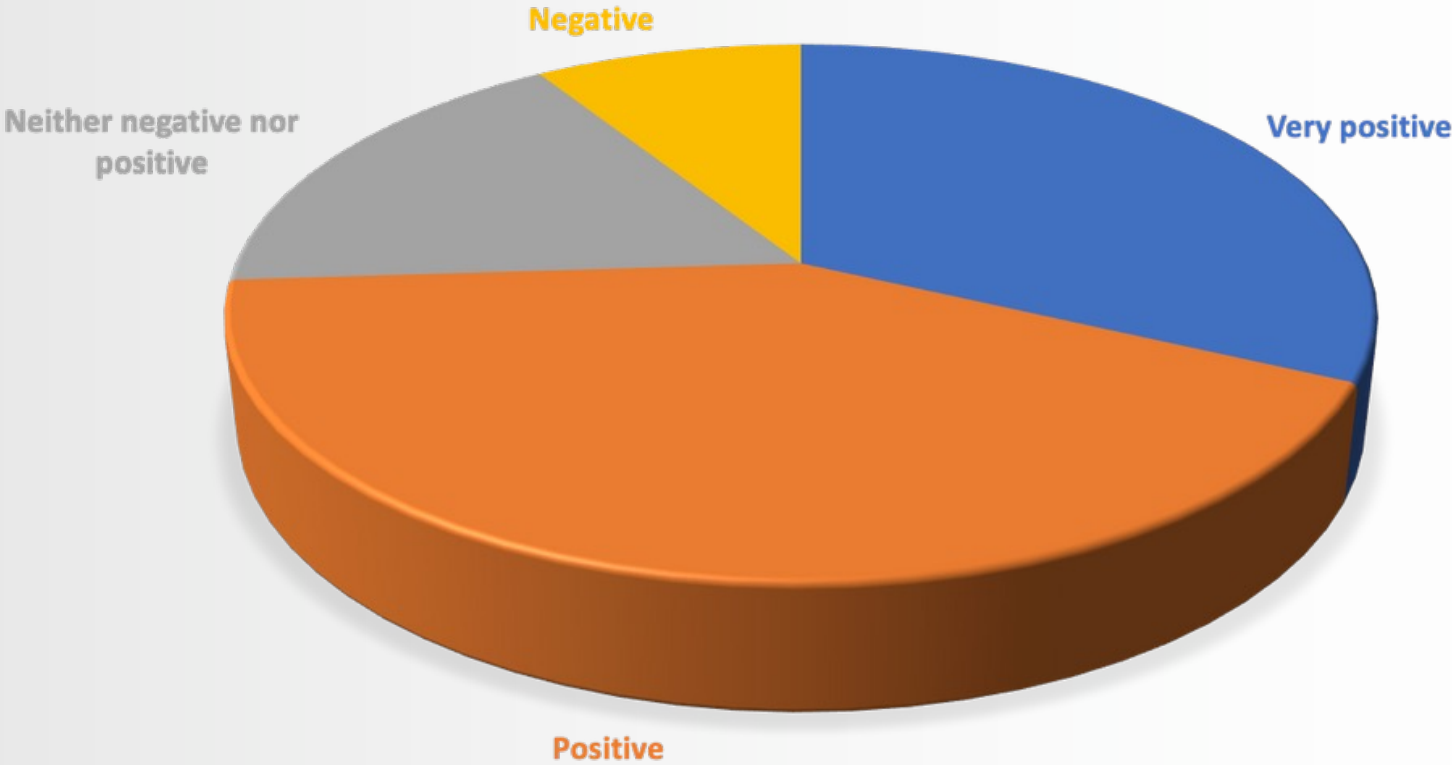
- Relaxation techniques were used by 94%.
- The influence of ARC was perceived as positive by 84.5%.



CHILDBIRTH EXPERIENCE

'Overall childbirth experience'

was perceived as positive by 74% and negative by 9%, despite 2/3rd not meeting their expectations in terms of mode & place of birth.



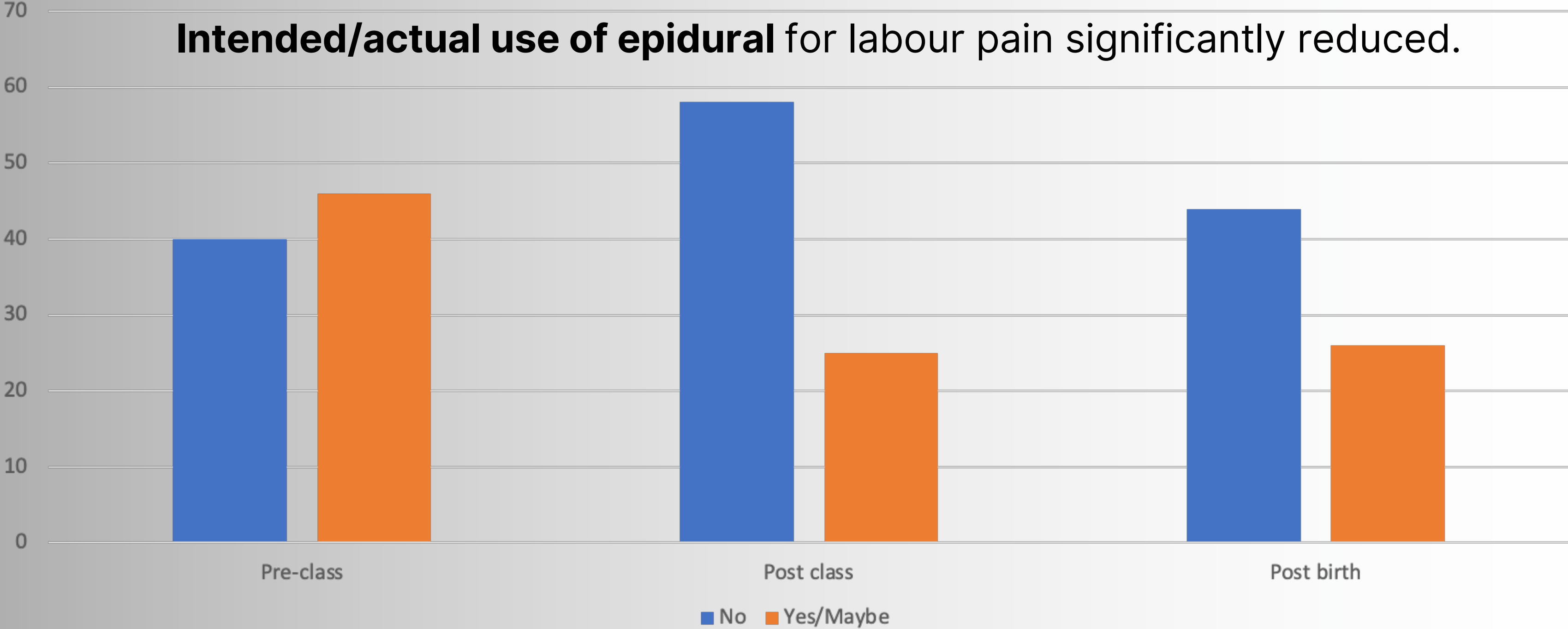
CHILDBIRTH EXPERIENCE

Early labour at home

- Time spent at home during labour: 7.5 hours (Mean)
- Sixty four percent were admitted to hospital in established labour, with 11% being in 2nd stage.



CHILDBIRTH EXPERIENCE



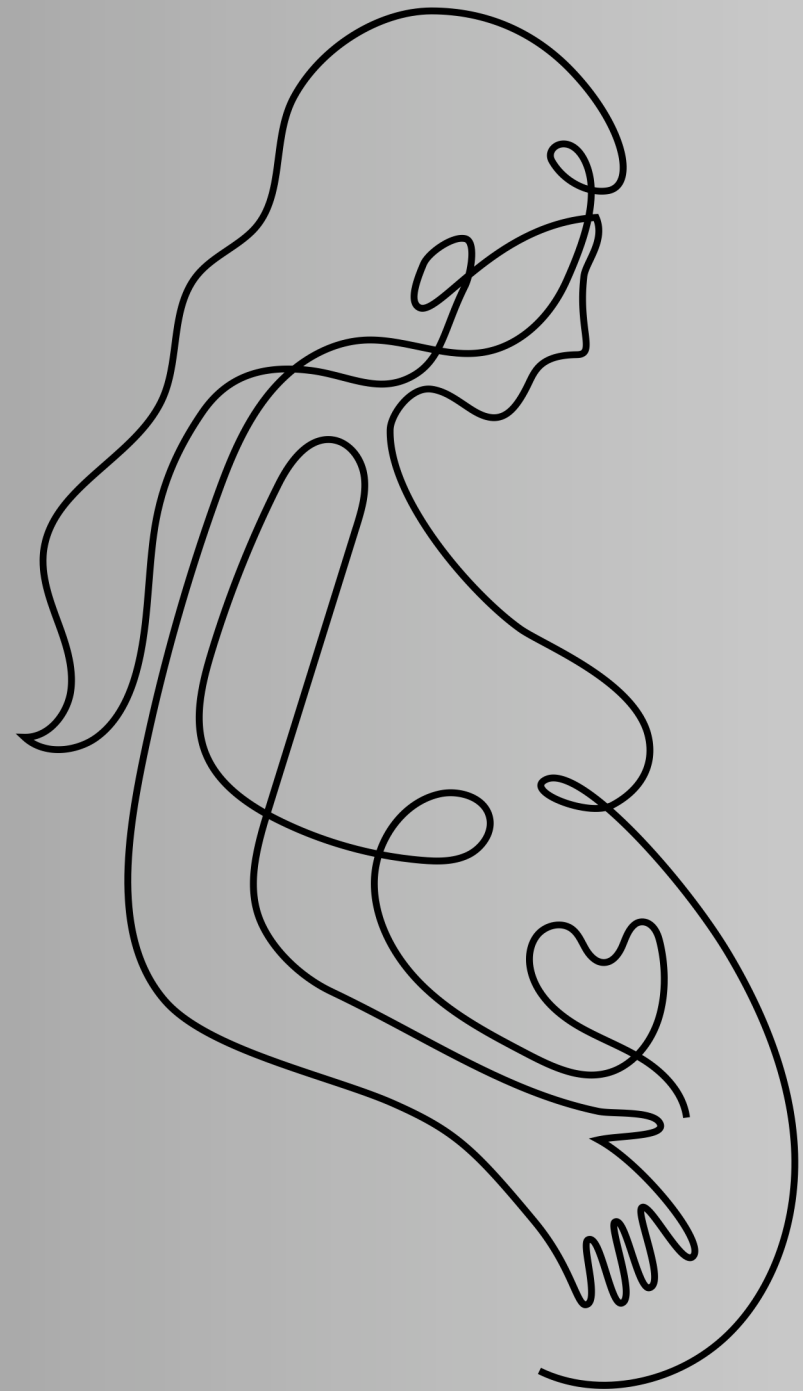
CONCLUSION

Education on psychophysiological processes and relaxation practices can motivate use of such practices as a self-care behaviour during pregnancy and childbirth, positively influencing maternal emotions and childbirth experiences. Therefore, maternity services should consider reforming current antenatal education in line with this evidence.





Next steps...



Thank you for
listening ... any
questions?