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Pregnant and Postpartum Women Stress During COVID 19

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ABSTRACT

During this pandemic period, a lot of people were affected globally and most especially vulnerable groups like pregnant and postpartum women. There has been a report of high elevated post-traumatic stress, nervousness, and depression since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a global survey, postpartum and pregnant women have accounts of increased anxiety, depression, and stress. High levels of all these combinations could negatively affect the foetus growth and women's health. These unique difficulties have been a focus of concern to most medical practitioners, although no research has explored other factors associated with increased stress and depression. This current research aims to assess the persistence and causes of increased postpartum during the pandemic.

Keywords: *Pregnancy, Postpartum, Stress, Depression, Pandemic, COVID 19*

1. INTRODUCTION

During this pandemic period, a lot of people were affected globally and most especially vulnerable groups like pregnant and postpartum women. There has been a report of high elevated post-traumatic stress, nervousness, and depression since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a global survey, postpartum and pregnant women have accounts of increased anxiety, depression, and stress. High levels of all these combinations could negatively affect the foetus growth and women's health. These unique difficulties have been a focus of concern to most medical practitioners, although no research has explored other factors associated with increased stress and depression. This current research aims to assess the persistence and causes of increased postpartum during the pandemic.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has also established the significant stress that pregnant and postpartum women face during the pandemic. According to (Goyal et al., 2020), the care of this vulnerable group is essential to know women at high risk and safe delivery of a child. Any delay could be disastrous. Therefore, it is necessary to address this issue adequately. Previous research has shown a high prevalence of post-traumatic stress and anxiety among pregnant and postpartum women. (Guvenc et al., 2021) argues that pregnancy is not attacked by the virus, although proper care during and after delivery is crucial if a risk arises.

The normality of social distancing, wearing of masks postpartum and expecting mothers should be adhered to as per the guidelines. This ensures the safety of all people individuals and more care to pregnant women. According to (Pariante et al., 2020), the emergence of COVID-19 should not stop pregnant and postpartum women from seeking help whenever they feel emotional stress or for quality care. The timing of labour and delivery should be carried out individually to assure the safety of all mothers visiting the hospitals.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We conducted this research study on pregnant and postpartum women registered at a health facility where they facilitated the research work. We gathered the data through an online questionnaire. The healthcare providers in the clinic used text messages and emails to invite a sum of 600 women to carry out the analysis. Only 450 females showed up and participated in the research from the invitation. Of the 450 participants, 250 were expecting mothers, while 200 were postpartum women.

The respondent percentage was at 70%. The ones who responded to the invite were handed a consent form, following a link to the questionnaires set to be done online. The inclusion criteria of the research were an absence of psychological disorder, informed

consent, postpartum or an expectant mother (Yan et al., 2021). The questionnaires were carried out effectively to determine the outcome. Working papers together with online articles were also considered eligible evidence. Peer publications were also reviewed to critically analyze the severity of mental health crisis on postpartum and pregnant women during COVID 19 pandemic.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

We analyzed the data using Stata software version 12.0(Stata Corp LP, College Station, United States). For all required calculations, we carried them out using the irregular effects model. A distinctive model is considered more suitable than the fixed one. There was a sensitivity analysis that we carried out where there was the omission of mental disorders, and the remaining were carried forward to conduct the investigation. There was also subgroup research, where they were categorized in terms of their gestation period, employment conditions, level of education, location of study, and the severity of their mental illness.

5. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

We yielded the research using 150 publications, of which 60 were included in the study. There was an increase in stress levels, depression, and anxiety in pregnant and postpartum mothers before and during COVID 19. Expectant mothers were found in the high risk and severe stress than those who were not expecting. Pregnant and postpartum mothers who had contracted the virus had varied guidelines on delivering and breastfeeding consecutively.

There was an increase in domestic violence after significant lockdowns that could accelerate the emotional instability of both pregnant and postpartum women. There was a decrease in prenatal visits from pregnant and postpartum women. Healthcare facilities were strained, making it difficult for this delicate group of women to receive their needed care. There was a high probability of women losing their jobs than men, and working mothers struggled to support their families.

6. CONCLUSION

This systematic research was conducted to obtain results on pregnant and postpartum women stress and anxiety during the COVID19 pandemic. The emergence of the pandemic could have brought a lot of stressors, social and economic. The outcome of the results was that the stress came from the well-being of the mother and the financial status of the pregnant and postpartum women. Therefore, COVID19 has primarily impacted the lives of vulnerable groups like expectant mothers who deserve adequate care. An increased risk of distress and mental hardships during pregnancy and postpartum among females has increased although, significant evidence is yet to be presented regarding this issue.

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