

Post Partum Depression
Exploring A Maternal Unmet Health Need

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Abstract

The postpartum period is a time in women's life when many of them are vulnerable to major physical, mental and social stresses. Psychiatric disturbances are very common after delivery, 50%- 90% of all postpartum women experience some degree of psychiatric disturbances. Postpartum depression complicates 10% to 15% of all deliveries and a staggering 26% to 32% of all adolescent deliveries. While some believe PPD to be a biological problem, and others contend that it is psychological, most agree that the effects of PPD are detrimental, and that it should be prevented if possible. The current study is a cross-sectional one, aiming at assessing the magnitude of post partum mental disorders and finding out the possible risk factors affecting the occurrence of post partum mental disorders. A total of 239 mothers, 6 weeks after delivery, were recruited for the study. Their mean age was 26.47 ± 5.26 years of age. Findings of Edinburgh Post Natal Depression Scale (EPDS) proved that half of the studied mothers (55.2%) suffered from postnatal depression. The majority of mothers complaining from physical ailments as insomnia, fatigue and headache were found to suffer from depression. Results show that mothers discriminated by the EPDS as depressed recorded a statistically lower self-esteem and lower parenting index scores than those not depressed. Besides, it is evident that there is positive correlation between the results of EPDS and the total score of the physical ailments complained by mothers, the mothers' age and order of the baby. While, a negative correlation exists between the results of Edinburgh scale and the results of both the Rosenberg self-esteem scale and the parenting index. Logistic regression produced a three step model revealing that high birth order, adverse maternal physical status and low self esteem significantly predict the occurrence of PPD. This module has a sensitivity of 64.6% and a specificity of 59.1%. Conclusion: It is important that simple diagnostic tools be available for primary care clinicians to screen post natal mental disorders and a well planned referral system organized for mothers needing professional advice.