

Knowledge, Practice and Beliefs of the Nurses Regarding Postpartum Depression: Literature Review

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11486889>

Published Date: 22-May-2024, Amendment Date: 05-June-2024

Abstract: Postpartum Depression (PPD) is one of the most unrecognized childbirth problems that affecting mothers and their babies. Nurses are the primary healthcare providers who are in direct contact with postnatal women and have major role for the early detection of vulnerable women. This review aims to explore previous researches related to nurses knowledge, practice, and beliefs regarding PPD. **Method:** in this review, researcher used free databases to review prior studies using PPD, Knowledge, Beliefs, and Practices as key search words. **Results:** We include 17 articles. We found that nurses knowledge and beliefs about PPD is correlated and influence their practices, however, in Saudi Arabia, we found limited updated studies,

Keywords: Postpartum depression, knowledge, beliefs, practice, screening.

I. INTRODUCTION

Universally, Postpartum Depression (PPD) is one of the most unrecognized childbirth problems that affecting mothers and their babies (Alshikh Ahmad et al., 2021; Adeyemo et al., 2020). Postpartum depression is unrecognized early because most of the nurses did not implement postpartum depression screening either during pregnancy or after delivery due to lack of nurses' knowledge, beliefs and practice in detecting this problem while the mother in the hospital (Taybeh, 2021; Aldossary et al., 2018; Elshatarat et al., 2018). Additionally, most of signs and symptoms of postpartum depression appeared after the woman discharge from the hospital. These signs could be observed when the woman at hospital if the nurses give attention to it. **However**, due to insufficient knowledge, practice will be affected (Clevesy et al., 2019; Elshatarat et al., 2018).

1. Knowledge of Nurses about Postpartum Depression

In the early detection and timely treatment of PPD, nurses are crucial. When a mother appears to be in a bad mood or there is an emergency, the nurses should have good psychological qualities like optimism, joy, and a stable mood so they can offer real and competent care. They are supporters as well as carvers. All moms should be questioned by nurses about their sleep patterns, hunger, and mental health. The nurse should inform the moms on maintaining a life style, balanced diet, getting enough rest as well as sleep, managing stress, speaking up if symptoms arise during postpartum, and the dangerous effects of being untreated for sickness (Sabry Shehta et al., 2023).

Descriptive study design was carried out by Gurung, Shah, & Lamichhane, (2019) to find out the knowledge regarding postpartum depression among nurses. Results revealed that (54%) respondents had low knowledge regarding PPD, and (50%) of respondents knew postpartum depression (PPD) is a type of mood disorder associated with childbirth.

A descriptive, cross-sectional design was used by Elshatarat, Et al., (2021) to address lack of knowledge about assessment and management of postpartum depression (PPD) among nurses and midwives in Saudi Arabia. Nurses and midwives lacked

International Journal of Novel Research in Healthcare and Nursing

Vol. 11, Issue 2, pp: (67-70), Month: May - August 2024, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

knowledge about various aspects of PPD, including its definition, prevalence, symptoms, risk factors, screening tools, and treatment. Only one third of participants were confident in their ability to provide education for women about PPD.

A cross-sectional study conducted by Kang, Mohazmi, Ng, & Liew, (2019) to determine nurses' level of knowledge, beliefs and practices regarding PPD. They found that 55.6% nurses scored above the median total knowledge score. Only 25.9% had ever practiced PPD screening, which was associated with beliefs concerning screening taking too much time.

Kang, Mohazmi, Ng, & Liew, (2019) reported participants did better in the risk factor, symptoms and complications of PPD domains, but poorer in the general information and treatment of PPD domains.

Gurung, Shah, & Lamichhane, (2019) found 80% of the respondents knew PPD can be identified by observation and antidepressant drug (88%) and psychotherapy (83.78%) are medical management of PPD. Majority of respondents knew nursing management of PPD are maintaining close observation of mother (93.24%), maintaining safe environment (86.48%) and family counseling (83.78%). Eighty-one percentage respondents knew poor mother infant attachment is main consequence of PPD in child and poor relationship (54.05%), suicide (33.79%) and harm to baby (12%) in mother. Fifty four percentages had low knowledge regarding PPD.

2. Practice of Nurses about Postpartum Depression

The study conducted by Elshatarat et al. (2018), they mentioned that Regarding PPD's definition, prevalence, symptoms, risk factors, screening methods, and treatment, nurses and midwives lacked both knowledge and practice. Of the participants, just one-third felt confidence in their capacity to inform women about PPD. The degree of participants' knowledge regarding PPD assessment and management was substantially connected with their level of confidence in their ability to educate women about PPD. Health care practitioners should continue their education to increase their understanding of PPD. To ascertain the impact of educational interventions on enhancing knowledge, practice, and self-confidence on PPD, more research is required.

In addition the study performed by Kadhila and Moongo, (2022), A quantitative descriptive research design was used for this investigation. This study evaluates the third-year nursing students' understanding and application of PPD. Also, this study found that participants had high knowledge, practice, and understanding of postpartum depression.

Moreover, providing intrapartum and postpartum mental care can be difficult and calls for the clinician to have a solid knowledge base in order to identify and help disturbed women. In this study, prenatal and postpartum depression knowledge, practice, and learning requirements among Australian midwives were evaluated. Also, this study underlined the critical need for ongoing training for midwives to enhance their expertise in identifying and treating depressed women (Jones et al., 2011).

The nurse is in a primary *position* to identify *women* who are at high risk for postpartum mood disorders before delivery. Legere et al., (2017) state that protocols should be in place to direct both educational policies on how to train professionals and policies on when to screen moms. Women often suffer in quiet, therefore it can be challenging to diagnose them. Lack of commitment by providers to ongoing education and professional development reduces their capacity to recognize symptoms, which in turn reduces the provision of high-quality care to moms with PPD. The absence of formal education in perinatal mental health and the necessity for ongoing education were frequent complaints from providers (Legere et al., 2017). The study also claimed that regardless of the method used to give prenatal education, the provider's self-assurance and expertise will rise (Legere et al., 2017).

3. Beliefs of Nurses about Postpartum Depression

The study applied by Kang et al., (2019) conducted among nurses from seven governments MCH clinics in Malaysia used universal sampling. A self-reported questionnaire was used to collect data between March and April 2016. Also, this study showed that more than half of the nurses had total knowledge scores above the median and were supportive of PPD screening. Poor PPD screening procedures as well poor practice, on the other hand, were a result of their attitudes toward duty and time.

International Journal of Novel Research in Healthcare and Nursing

Vol. 11, Issue 2, pp: (67-70), Month: May - August 2024, Available at: www.noveltyjournals.com

While the study performed by Trop et al., (2018) which concluded that inadequate PPD knowledge, insufficient maternal PPD identification skills, a lack of formal PPD assessment, and management challenges such patients' refusals to reveal symptoms and preferences for complementary medicine prevented the nurses from effectively managing PPD. These studies did not, however, provide a quantitative evaluation of nurses' knowledge, beliefs, and actions.

In a similar line, a cross-sectional study was carried out to find out how nurses and midwives in Saudi Arabia felt about their roles in providing PPD care. The recruitment of 141 midwives and 181 nurses was done through convenience sampling. Data were gathered using a questionnaire that was self-administered. Participants lacked prior knowledge of diagnosing, treating, and counseling moms with PPD regarding their health. Participants also miscalculated the significance of their contributions to preventing PPD risk factors as well as identifying, evaluating, and managing PPD. Results reveal major disagreements between nurses' and midwives' perspectives, with nurses' ideas about their roles in caring for PPD patients more frequently shared than those of midwives. For nurses and midwives to gain more information, skills, and awareness of their roles in assessing and managing PPD, continuing health education programs are advised (Saleh et al., 2020). Because most of signs and symptoms of postpartum depression did not easy to be detected, most of the nurses faced difficulties to implement screening for postpartum depression which related to many reasons including the short time of presence of mother in the hospital and workload. Also, the culture stigma regarding psychological problems may also affecting early detection of this problem by the husband and family.

II. CONCLUSION

The relation between knowledge, practice and belief of nurses regarding PPD

Most of the previous studies focus on how the knowledge and attitude influence the nurses to practice PPD screening for the women after delivery found positive correlation between knowledge of the nurses regarding postpartum depression and their practice and belief in implementing PPD screening for all women. The study of Owolabi et al., (2023) revealed that more than half of the respondents had good knowledge and attitude towards PPD screening and management skills while only half of the respondents were willing to partake in screening and management of women with PPD.

In the study of Kang et al., (2019) showed that more than half of the nurses' good knowledge score and had positive beliefs towards PPD screening, but the practice of PPD screening was poor. Another study conducted by Fiaivor et al., (2022) reported that Nurses and midwives have significant knowledge of Postpartum Depression identification but have low knowledge of screening and management practices of PPD, while their attitudes towards screening and management of the condition were poor. Furthermore, Branquinho M, Canavarro MC, & Fonseca A. (2019) found that good level of knowledge and positive attitudes about postpartum depression correlate with the practice of nurses regarding using PPD screening tools. Furthermore, there are limited studies conducted in Saudi Arabia.

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