

PREVALENCE OF POSTPARTUM BLUES AMONG MOTHERS

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Abstract

An exploratory survey approach was adopted to assess the prevalence of postpartum blues. The population consisted of all postnatal mothers admitted in selected hospitals of Indore (M P). Purposive sampling technique was utilized to select 100 postnatal mothers during 3-10 days of postnatal period based on certain predetermined criteria. The investigator used a Rating Scale consisting of 40 items to assess the presence and degree of postpartum blues. Reliability was calculated using split half method and the 'r' value was 0.81. The findings revealed presence of postpartum blues is 55% of the mothers. Most of the mothers 38 (38%) suffered mild, 14 (14%) had moderate and 3 (3%) experienced severe form of post partum blues. The findings also showed that there is significant association between postpartum blues and the mode of delivery, education level of the mothers, number of previous children especially number of previous female children. Nurses working in hospitals as well as community setups need to screen and identify mothers with maximum risk for postpartum blues and educate them to prevent occurrences of depression in the postpartum period.

Key words: Postpartum Blues (PPB), Post Natal Mothers.

Background

Health is the most sought after aspect by all in the world today. And where health is concerned, care of a mother and child assumes greatest importance. Their wellbeing determines the present health of the family and the community and future health of the population. Care of the mother and child occupies a paramount place in our health service delivery system and merits special attention. Mother and child comprise approximately two thirds of the population in developing countries.

Psychological conditions have implications on the health of the mother and the newborn. These conditions can interfere with family integration and restrict attachment with the newborn. Some conditions may threaten the safety and wellbeing of the mother and the newborn. Postpartum depression affects approximately 10-15% of all mothers in Western Societies (**Kumar and Robson,**

1984; O' Hara and Swain, 1996). The duration of postpartum blues is usually around 10 days, however, the duration of Post Partum Depression may last for years, if left untreated.

Pregnancy is not a cause of psychiatric illness. However, the psychological and physical stresses relating to pregnancy and obligations of motherhood may produce an emotional crisis that may further get complicated by a pre-existing mental illness.

The emergence of emotional stress is called either postpartum blues or baby blues. The 'pink' period surrounding the first day or two after birth, characterized by heightened joy and feelings of well-being is often followed by a 'blue' period.

Need of the Study

Recent epidemiological inquiries have reported prevalence rates for postpartum depression of 15.8% in Arab women (**Ghubash and Abou-Saleh, 1997**), 11.2% in Chinese women (**Lee, Yip, Chiu, Leung and Chung, 2001**), and 23% in Goan women in India (**Patel,**

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