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Epidemiology of postpartum depression in urban mothers: implications for healthy childhood development

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Background: Pregnancy is a challenging phase of women life, requiring additional physical, mental and social support. Depression in peri-natal period is often the most neglected area of public health significance. Depression during peri-natal period can adversely impact both the mother and the child. Yet, there is very limited research on depression among pregnant mothers in India. The study aimed to assess the prevalence of depression among post natal mothers visiting urban area hospital in Hyderabad district of Telangana, South India. This was a cross sectional facility based study among mothers from urban communities. Mothers who had institutional delivery within a period of six months during the data collection period, visiting the outpatient units of post natal clinics of the urban public health facility were conveniently selected (N= 130) and interviewed for the study. Age of the participants ranged between and socio demographic data was collected by structured questionnaire and depression was assessed by Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS). Findings highlighted that majority of mothers (68.5%) were recorded for possible depression and 12.2 % were with high possibility for depression and 10.8% with depression and only 8.5% were ruled out for depression. . Young age of the mother, lack of family and husband's support, family pressure on the sex preference of the child, earlier Misconceptions and workload were some of the prominent

predictors for depression among mothers. Conclusion: The high prevalence of postpartum depression affects both the women and child health. Early identification of depression during antenatal period will reduce the risk by timely and appropriate interventions to address the risk and predictors of depression in mothers. Involving spouse and family of mothers in antenatal care will be a positive strategy to reduce the risk. Considering the need, prenatal depression should be addressed as part of the national mental health programs and at primary and community level and augmented research to understand and implement strategies to reduce postpartum depression for positive maternal and child health outcomes in India.

Biography

Varalakshmi Manchana is an Assistant Professor at the School of Medical Sciences, University of Hyderabad, India. With extensive academic and clinical experience since 1993, she specializes in nursing, public health, and socio-behavioral health research. Manchana's research interests include non-communicable diseases, healthy and cognitive aging, adolescent health with gender perspectives, and maternal mental health including postpartum depression. She actively contributes to public health research through behavioural intervention strategies and has published numerous research articles and book chapters. Manchana also plays a key role in teaching undergraduate, postgraduate, and MPH programs, as well as mentoring PhD scholars in health sciences.