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KNOWLEDGE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND POST PARTUM BLUES AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN IN WESLEY GUILD HOSPITAL, ILESA, OSUN STATE, NIGERIA.

Ohaeri Beatrice M., Owolabi Beatrice O. and Chiemerigo A. Onyeneho

ABSTRACT

Post-partum women experience changes in their mental health while trying to adapt to the role of parenting. These changes have caused disruption in the women's mental wellbeing and if not well examined can lead to psychological distress and post-partum blues during the post-natal period. Hence, this study aims at assessing the knowledge of psychological distress and post-partum blues among pregnant women. A cross sectional descriptive study design was employed with a random sampling technique to select 150 women attending antenatal clinic in Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesa. The instrument for this study is a structured questionnaire with a reliability co-efficient score of 0.76. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean, frequencies and percentages. Findings from the study shows that the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are between 20-29years and 30-39years. Findings further showed that majority of respondents are mostly Christian and all of them are married. Majority of the respondents are Yoruba and the family setting are monogamy and the level of education attained by respondents are tertiary institution. Majority of the respondents are either civil servant or business class. majority of the respondents have either one or two children are at present are in their second or third trimester of pregnancy. Lastly, majority of the respondents earn below N500,000 per annum. The study observed that respondents are knowledgeable about the risk factors and symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blue. Findings also revealed that respondents are knowledgeable about the management and prevention of psychological distress and the level of

psychological distress among respondents is very low, 12% using the Kessler-10 distress level scale. There is need to assess psychological distress among post-partum women and to provide psychological support by health care workers and family members, thereby further reducing its occurrence among them. An intervention package should be designed to facilitate prevention of psychological distress.

Keywords: Knowledge; psychological distress; post-partum blues; pregnant women.

INTRODUCTION

Mental illness has shown to be a significant contributor to global health burden of disease. Post-partum women experience changes in their psychological function during the post-partum period as they adapt to their role which leads to psychological distress and postpartum blues (Bener 2013). Psychological distress is seen as a state of emotional suffering associated with stressors and demands that are difficult to cope with in daily life (Arvidsotter, Marklund, Kylene, Taft, & Ekman, 2015). Post-partum blue is comparably milder in nature and is most common form of mental health sickness in child-bearing women. Post-natal blues is a transitory state experienced by 50 – 80% of women depending on parity. It has been identified as antecedent to depression following child birth. The onset typically occurs between day 3 and 5 post-partum, but may last up to one week or more (Marshall, & Raynor 2014).

Studies have shown that pregnant and post-partum women have knowledge on risk

factors to post-partum blues and psychological distress. Some of the risk factors linked to the development of psychological distress are hormonal changes, socio-cultural factors like want of a particular sex, economic conditions like poor financial income in the family, relationship conflicts, lack of emotional and physical support from the husband, friends and family, unhealthy marital relationship, death of a loved one, stress of household chores and work place (Manjunath, & Venkatesh, 2011). Also, as seen from our society, several other factors could be implicated like poor preparation of the girl child for marriage. Furthermore, adjusting to new roles, having sleepless night in caring for the baby leads to psychological distress. Hence, the need for spousal and family support and counselling on how to deal with the situation by giving encouragement regarding care of the baby to the family.

Knowledge on symptoms of psychological distress and postpartum blues has further been investigated and reported as anxiety, inability to sleep properly, low energy, loss of appetite, feeling of vulnerability, weepiness, excessive laughter, sadness, irritability, and somatic symptoms such as insomnia, headaches and lack of energy (Smith, Jeane & Giezer 2018; Drapeau, Marchand & Beaulieu-Prevost, 2012; Manjunath, & Venkatesh 2011; Mirowsky, & Ross, 2002).

However, if psychological distress is not assessed and prevented can alter mother-infant relationship which might impair the growth and cognition of the child (Odinka, Odinka, Ezeme, Ndukuba, Amadi, Muomah, Nwoha & Nduanya 2019). Hence, the need for this study which aimed at assessing the knowledge of psychological distress and post-partum blues among pregnant women attending ante-natal clinic in Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesa, Osun State.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge of respondents on risk factors associated with psychological distress and post-partum blue.
2. To determine the knowledge of respondents on symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blues.
3. To assess the knowledge of respondents on the management & prevention of psychological distress and post-partum blue.
4. To assess the respondents level of psychological distress.

METHODOLOGY

Design: A cross sectional descriptive study design was employed in this study.

Target Population: Women attending antenatal clinic in Wesley Guild Hospital, Ilesa.

Sampling Technique: A simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 respondents.

Instrument: A structured questionnaire was used for this study. It was divided into sections:

Section A: Data on socio-demographics.

Section B: Knowledge of risk factors, symptoms and post-partum blues.

Section C: The level of psychological distress.

Section D: Management and prevention of psychological distress and post-partum blues. Kessler (K-10) scale was used for level of psychological distress among the pregnant women.

The responses were assigned scores as follows false= 0, true= 1 respectively. The mean of these responses were gotten and is 0.5 which served as the cut off mark for judgment. The mean of each item that assessed knowledge on risk factors, symptoms, management and prevention of psychological distress and post-

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. Findings reveal that 44.7% of the participants are within 20-29years, 48% are within 30-39years, 2% are within 40-49years and 5.3% are 50years and above. 92% of the participants are Christians while 6% are Muslims, 2% are traditional worshipers and all participants are married. Study showed that 88.7% of the participants are Yoruba, 5.3% are Igbos and 6% are Hausas. 74% are monogamy and 26% polygamy. 20% of the participants attend secondary schools while 80% attend tertiary institutions. Result further observed that 5.3% are civil servants, 40.7% are business class and 24% are self employed. The parity revealed that 9.3% has none 44% has 1 child, 35% has 2 children, 8% has 3 children while 3.3% has 4 children. Further findings observed that 25.3% are in first trimester

of pregnancy. 36% are in second trimester while 38.7% are in third trimester. Finally, 78.7% of participants are earning below N500,000 per year while 15.3% are earning 1-3 million per year and 6% are earning over 2 million per year. This study implies that the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants revealed that the age group of the participants are between 20-29years and 30-39years. Their religion is mostly Christian and all of them are married. The ethnic group of majority of the participant is Yoruba and the family setting is monogamy and the level of education attained by participants is tertiary institution. Majority of the participants are either civil servant or business class. majority of the respondents have either one or two children in the second or third trimester of pregnancy. Lastly, majority of the participant earn below N500,000 per annum.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of participants

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Age Group Mean Age = 31.98 SD = 6.94	20-29years	67	44.7
	30-39years	72	48.0
	40-49years	3	2.0
	50years & above	8	5.3
Religion	Christian	138	92.0
	Islam	9	6
	Traditional	3	2
Marital status	Married	150	100.0
Ethnic group	Yoruba	133	88.7
	Igbo	8	5.3
	Hausa	9	6
Family setting	Monogamy	111	74.0
	Polygamy	39	26
Level of education	Secondary	30	20.0
	Tertiary	120	80
Occupation	Civil servant	53	35.3
	Business	61	40.7
	Self employed	36	24.0
Parity	Nil	14	9.3
	1.00	66	44.0
	2.00	53	35.3
	3.00	12	8.0
	4.00	5	3.3
Age of pregnancy	1st trimester	38	25.3
	2 nd trimester	54	36
	3 rd trimester	58	38.7
Annual Income	Below 500,000	118	78.7
	1-2 million	23	15.3
	Over 2 million naira	9	6

Table 2 reveals that 47.3% of the respondents agreed that chronic diseases are not associated with psychological distress and post-partum blue while 52.7% disagreed with the mean score of 0.53. 86.7% of the respondents agreed that unwanted pregnancy can lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue while 13.3% disagreed with the mean score of 0.83. This study also showed that 96% of the respondents agreed that good relationship with one's husband is not a risk factor for psychological distress and post-partum blue while 4% disagreed with the mean score of 0.96. 73.3% of the respondents agreed that lack of physical and financial support from the family is a good source of psychological distress and post-partum blue while 26.7% disagreed with the mean score of 0.73. 20.7% of the respondents agreed that lack of physical and financial support from the family is a good source of psychological distress and post-partum blue while 26.7% disagreed with the mean score of 0.73. 20.7% of the respondents agreed that Living with in-laws should be made compulsory as it prevents psychological

distress and post-partum blue, either they accept you or not while 79.3% disagreed with the mean score of 0.79. 42% of the respondents agreed that the death of a loved one cannot induce psychological distress and post-partum blue while 58% disagreed with the mean score of 0.58. 52% of the respondents agreed that the want of a particular sex cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue while 48% disagreed with the mean score of 0.46. 54% of the respondents agreed that the stress of household chores and workplace without a helper cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue while 46% disagreed with the mean score of 0.46. 32% of the respondents agreed that infertility cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue while 68% disagreed with the mean score of 0.68. This study implies that women are knowledgeable about the risk factors of psychological distress and post-partum blue with weighted grand mean of 0.68 which is greater than the mean cut off mark 0.5 and average score of 56%.

Table 2: Knowledge on Risk Factors Associated with Psychological Distress and Post-Partum Blue

Variables	True	False	Mean \pm SD
1. Chronic diseases are not associated with psychological distress and post-partum blue	71(47.3%)	*79(52.7%)	0.53 \pm 0.50
2. Unwanted pregnancy can lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue	*130(86.7%)	20(13.3%)	0.87 \pm 0.34
3. Good relationship with one's husband is not a risk factor for psychological distress and post-partum blue	*144(96.0%)	6(4.0%)	0.96 \pm 0.20
4. Lack of physical and financial support from the family is a good source of psychological distress and post-partum blue	*110(73.3%)	40(26.7%)	0.73 \pm 0.44
5. Living with in-laws should be made compulsory as it prevents psychological distress and post-partum blue, either they accept you or not	31(20.7%)	*119(79.3%)	0.79 \pm 0.40
6. The death of a loved one cannot induce psychological distress and post-partum blue	63(42.0%)	*87(58.0%)	0.58 \pm 0.50
7. Want of a particular sex cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue	*78(52.0%)	72(48.0%)	0.48 \pm 0.50
8. Stress of household chores and workplace without a helper cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue	81(54.0%)	*69(46.0%)	0.46 \pm 0.50
9. Infertility cannot lead to psychological distress and post-partum blue	48(32.0%)	*102(68.0%)	0.68 \pm 0.47 Weighted grand mean=0.68

Table 3 reveals showed the respondents knowledge of symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blue 80.7% agreed that when a pregnant woman is anxious, looking worried and unable to sleep, it is a sign of psychological distress while 19.3% stated false with mean score of 0.81. 68.7% agreed that when a woman start crying suddenly after birth without any reason, it is a sign of post partum blue while 31.3% stated false with mean score of 0.69. This study observed that 34% agreed that restlessness is not a symptom of psychological distress and postpartum blue while 66% stated false with mean score of 0.66. 93.3% agreed that headache and heavy headedness after delivery should be reported in

the hospital for prompt attention while 6.7% stated false with mean score of 0.93. 92.7% agreed that unnecessary anger, irritability and impatience are among the signs of psychological distress and post-partum blue while 7.3% stated false with mean score of 0.93. 90.7% agreed that excessive laughter and mood swing after delivery should be reported in the hospital for prompt attention while 9.3% stated false with mean score of 0.91. This study conclude that the respondents are highly knowledgeable about the symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blue with the score of 76% and weighted mean of 0.82 which is greater than the mean cut off mark 0.5.

Table 3: Knowledge on Symptoms of Psychological Distress and Post-Partum Blue

Variables	True	False	Mean ± SD
1. When a pregnant woman is anxious, looking worried and unable to sleep, it is a sign of psychological distress	121(80.7%)	29(19.3%)	0.81± 0.39
2. When a woman start crying suddenly after birth without any reason, it is a sign of post-partum blue	103(68.7%)	47(31.3%)	0.69 ± 0.47
3. Restlessness is not a symptom of psychological distress and post-partum blue-	51(34.0%)	99(66.0%)	0.66 ± 0.48
4. Headache and heavy headedness after delivery should be reported in the hospital for prompt attention	140(93.3%)	10(6.7%)	0.93 ± 0.25
5. Unnecessary anger, irritability and impatience are among the signs of psychological distress and post-partum blue	139(92.7%)	11(7.3%)	0.93 ± 0.26
6. Excessive laughter and mood swing after delivery should be reported in the hospital for prompt attention	136(90.7%)	14(9.3%)	0.91 ± 0.29 Weighted grand mean=0.82

Table 4 observed the knowledge of the management & prevention of psychological distress and post-partum blue. The study showed that 24.7% agreed that if a woman is observed to have post-partum blue, it is not good to take the woman to the hospital for treatment while 75.3% stated false with mean score of 0.75. 9.3% agreed that the herbalist or spiritualist has a better cure for post-partum blue while 90.7% stated false with mean score of 0.91. 82.7% agreed that counselling is not the only way to assist a woman with psychological distress while 17.3% stated false with mean score of 0.83. This study showed that 38% of respondents agreed that counselling will only make her see her problem without providing solution while 62% stated false with mean score of 0.62. 30% agreed that when psychological distress and postpartum blue is severe, it is not good to use drugs while 70% stated false with mean score of 0.70. 96.7% of respondents agreed that Husband and wife should give financial support to one another to prevent strain in their relationship while

3.3% stated false with mean score of 0.97. 98% of respondents agreed that The sex of the baby should be accepted without gender bias while 2% stated false with mean score of 0.98. 90% of respondents agreed that When there is financial constraint, other source of income like petty trading can be looked into while 10% stated false with mean score of 0.90. 91.3% of respondents agreed that Death of a loved one should be accepted with courage without jeopardising one’s health while 8.7% stated false with mean score of 0.91. 24% of respondents agreed that On the arrival of the new born, husband should be neglected to care for the baby alone while 70% stated false with mean score of 0.76. Lastly, 21.3% of respondents agreed that carving out couple time to discuss is a waste of time while 78.7% stated false with mean score of 0.79. The Findings of this study summarized that the women are knowledgeable on management and prevention of psychological distress and postpartum blue with the score of 55% and weighted grand mean of 0.82 which is greater than the mean cut off mark 0.5.

Table 4: Knowledge of the Management & Prevention of Psychological Distress and Post-Partum Blue

Variables	True	False	Mean ± SD
1. If a woman is observed to have post-partum blue, it is not good to take the woman to the hospital for treatment	37(24.7%)	113(75.3%)	0.75± 0.43
2. The herbalist or spiritualist has a better cure for post-partum blue	14(9.3%)	136(90.7%)	0.91± 0.29
3. Counselling is not the only way to assist a woman with psychological distress	124(82.7%)	26(17.3%)	0.83± 0.38
4. Counselling will only make her see her problem without providing solution	57(38.0%)	93(62.0%)	0.62 ± 0.49
5. When psychological distress and post-partum blue is severe, it is not good to use drugs	45(30.0%)	105(70.0%)	0.70 ± 0.46
6. Husband and wife should give financial support to one another to prevent strain in their relationship	145(96.7%)	5(3.3%)	0.97 ± 0.18
7. The sex of the baby should be accepted without gender bias	147(98.0%)	3(2.0%)	0.98 ± 0.14
8. When there is financial constraint, other source of income like petty trading can be looked into	135(90.0%)	15(10.0%)	0.90 ± 0.30
9. Death of a loved one should be accepted with courage without jeopardising one’s health	137(91.3%)	13(8.7%)	0.91 ± 0.28
10. On the arrival of the new born, husband should be neglected to care for the baby alone	36(24.0%)	114(76.0%)	0.76± 0.43
11. Carving out couple time to discuss is a waste of time	32(21.3%)	118(78.7%)	0.79± 0.41
			Weighted grand mean=0.82

Table 5 observed the level of psychological distress using kessler (K-10) psychological distress scale. The study showed that 6.7% stated that in the past 4 weeks, they feel tired out for no good reason all the time while 8% stated most of the time, 24.7% stated some of the time, 20.7% a little of the time and 40% stated none of the time. 4% of respondents stated that in the past 4 weeks, they feel nervous while 15.3% stated most of the time, 21.3% stated some of the time, 26% a little of the time and 33.3% stated none of the time. 14% stated that In the past 4 weeks, they feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down while 2% stated most of the time, 9.3% stated some of the time, 16% a little of the time and 58.7% stated none of the time. The result of this study showed that 10.7% of the respondents In the past 4 weeks, feel hopeless while 2% stated most of the time, 2.7% stated some of the time, 10.7% a little of the time and 74% stated none of the time. 4.7% stated that In the past 4 weeks, they feel restless or fidgety while 6.7% stated most of the time, 5.3% stated some of the time, 26.7% a little of the time and 56.7% stated none of the time. 10.7% stated that in the past 4 weeks, they feel so restless

and could not sit still while 4% stated most of the time, 2.7% stated some of the time, 20% a little of the time and 62.7% stated none of the time. This study also observed that 4% of respondents stated that in the past 4 weeks, feel depressed while 6% stated most of the time, 10% stated some of the time, 18% a little of the time and 62% stated none of the time. 4% of the respondents In the past 4 weeks, feel that everything was an effort while 6% stated most of the time, 11.3% stated some of the time, 24.7% a little of the time and 54% stated none of the time. 4.7% of respondents stated that in the past 4 weeks, feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up? while 4% stated most of the time, 1.3% stated some of the time, 24% a little of the time and 66% stated none of the time. 4.7% of respondents stated that in the past 4 weeks, feel worthless? while 2% stated most of the time, 2% stated some of the time, 6.7% a little of the time and 84.7% stated none of the time. This study implies that the level of psychological distress among respondents is very low, 12% using the Kessler-10 distress level scale.

Table 5: Level of Psychological Distress using Kessler (K-10) Psychological Distress Scale

Variables	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	A little of the time	None of the time
1. In the past 4 weeks, about how often did you feel tired out for no good reason?	10(6.7%)	12(8.0%)	37(24.7%)	31(20.7%)	60(40.0%)
2. In the past 4 weeks, about how often did you feel nervous?	6(4.0%)	23(15.3%)	32(21.3%)	39(26.0%)	50(33.3%)
3. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel so nervous that nothing could calm you down?	21(14.0%)	3(2.0%)	14(9.3%)	24(16.0%)	88(58.7%)
4. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel hopeless?	16(10.7%)	3 (2.0%)	4(2.7%)	16(10.7%)	111(74.0%)
5. In the past 4 weeks, about how often did you feel restless or fidgety?	7(4.7%)	10(6.7%)	8(5.3%)	40(26.7%)	85(56.7%)
6. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel so restless you could not sit still?	16(10.7%)	6(4.0%)	4(2.7%)	30(20.0%)	94(62.7%)
7. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel depressed?	6(4.0%)	9(6.0%)	15(10.0%)	27(18.0%)	93(62.0%)
8. In the past 4 weeks, about how often did you feel that everything was an effort?	6(4.0%)	9(6.0%)	17(11.3%)	37(24.7%)	81(54.0%)
9. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel so sad that nothing could cheer you up?	7(4.7%)	6(4.0%)	2(1.3%)	36(24.0%)	99(66.0%)
10. In the past 4 weeks, about how often did you feel worthless?	7(4.7%)	3(2.0%)	3(2.0%)	10(6.7%)	127(84.7%)

Table 5.1: Summary of level of Psychological Distress

Variables		Composite Scores	Frequency	Percent
Kessler-10 Distress Level	Low	0-24 (< 50%)	125	83.3
	High	25-50(50%)	25	16.7
	Total		150	100.0

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study aims at assessing the knowledge of psychological distress and post-partum blues among pregnant women. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 31.9 ± 6.9 years, the writers observed that this is not least expected as this is within the child-bearing age. This study revealed that the majority of respondents are Christians and all of them are married. This study further showed that majority of the respondents are Yoruba and the family setting are monogamy. The level of education attained by respondents is tertiary institution and majority of the respondents are either civil servant or business class. Majority of the respondents have either one or two children and at present are in their second or third trimester of pregnancy. Lastly, majority of the respondents earn below N500,000 per annum.

The result of this study shows that the respondents are knowledgeable about risk factors associated with psychological distress and post-partum blue. This study is not in line with Amr, Bala & Moghannum (2011) who observed that their respondents showed deficit knowledge on risk factors of postpartum depression. This study support Afolayan, Onasoga, Rejuaro & Yusuf (2016) who observed that the level of education of respondents have effect on knowledge. The writers opined that it is not far-fetched on why the women have good knowledge of the risk factors as most of the women had tertiary level of education. Health education given during the

ante-natal clinic could further be implicated as the study was conducted when the women came for ante-natal clinic and these can further be looked into as to ascertain whether health education during ante-natal is a factor to knowledge level.

Our study report that the respondents are highly knowledgeable about the symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blue. This study support O'Hara & Swain (1996) and Singh, Andipatin, & Roomaney (2018) who observed high knowledge about symptoms of psychological distress and post-partum blues among their respondents. The writers suggest that this could be reiterated to their educational level and good health education in antenatal clinic. There is the need to further strengthen the educational intervention in antenatal clinics of hospitals or in schools regarding psychological distress and post-partum blues.

The Findings of this study observed that the women are knowledgeable on management and prevention of psychological distress and postpartum blue. The writers posited that despite the fact that the women have good knowledge of the management, some reported that when psychological distress and post-partum blue is severe, it is not good to use drug which is contrary to the management of psychological distress as pharmacological intervention that can be used.

This study revealed that the level of psychological distress among respondents is very low, 12% using the Kessler-10 distress level scale. This study support the findings of the study contradicts the study of Vanderkruik, Barreix, Chou, Allen, Say, Cohen (2017) on

post natal blues who reported that transitory experienced by respondents is 50% to 80% depending on parity. The writers perceived that it has been identified as antecedent to depression following child birth. This study opposes the study of Manjunath & Venkatesh (2011) who noted that in India the occurrence rate of Postpartum blue is in the range of 50% and 60%. This study does not support Singh, Andipatin, & Roomaney (2018) who revealed high prevalence of psychological distress among their respondents. However, the writers observed that the difference in level of psychological distress could be as a result of the different types of psychological distress scale used as this study employs Kessler (K-10) Psychological Distress Scale. Although, Vanderkruik, Barreix, Chou, Allen, Say, Cohen (2017) reported paternal denial of baby has been implicated to cause psychological distress for pregnant women. The writers therefore suggests that it is important to find out if spousal acceptance of baby is implicated to causing this low level of psychological distress among this group of women.

CONCLUSION

Findings have shown that the women attending the antenatal clinic have knowledge of the risk factors, symptoms and prevention and management of postpartum blues. Also, majority of the women report low level of psychological distress, however, some participants report a high level of psychological distress. It is therefore important that assessment of psychological distress using standard scale of assessment be done for every woman attending the clinic to identify those at risk, and those who have psychological distress to ensure proper management.

RECOMMENDATION

The study therefore recommends that:

1. Assessment of psychological distress and post-partum blues be done for every woman attending ante-natal and post-natal clinics.
2. Health care professionals especially nurses should health educate women attending antenatal clinics on the risk factors and symptoms of post-partum blues to further enhance the knowledge of the women and also, on the need to seek health care when faced with this health problem.
3. Husbands and family members should be encouraged to provide psychological support to their pregnant wife so as to prevent them from coming down with psychological distress.

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