

Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze¹ & Ezeokoli Rita²

^{1&2}Department of Social Work, Babcock University, Ogun State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT: Maternal mental health is a critical component of public health, yet psychological distress during pregnancy remains heavily under-diagnosed and under-treated in developing regions. This study examines the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of women in the Ikenne Local Government Area (LGA) of Ogun State, Nigeria. Driven by the Bio, psychological Model and Stress Theory, the research specifically investigates the influence of emotional changes, depression, anxiety, and stress on maternal mental health outcomes. The study used quantitative cross-sectional survey design. Data were gathered via structured questionnaires administered to 62 pregnant women attending selected primary and tertiary healthcare centers in Ikenne LGA. The findings revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between depression and anxiety and mental health ($r = 0.463$, $p < 0.01$), and a strong positive relationship between pregnancy-related stress and mental health ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.01$). These results indicate that psychological distress and unmanaged stress significantly affect the psychological well-being of expectant mothers. The study recommends that integrating routine mental health screening and psychological support into antenatal care is essential. The findings serve as an evidence-based framework for healthcare administrators and social workers to advocate for holistic maternal-fetal outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Antenatal Care, Maternal, Mental Health, Psychological Effect, Pregnant Women.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, maternal mental health has garnered increasing attention as it is recognized that the psychological effects of pregnancy deeply impact women's overall well-being. Pregnancy is a significant life event involving major physical, emotional, and psychological changes. Approximately 10-20% of women worldwide suffer from mental health disorders during pregnancy, with rates as high as 65% in some developed regions (Pei et al., 2023; Tinius & Blankenship, 2020). In Africa, the situation is exacerbated by high maternal mortality rates and limited resources, where depression is the predominant issue, contributing to over 45% of deaths among pregnant women in sub-Saharan regions (Dadi et al., 2020; Fuhler, 2020).

In Nigeria, the burden of maternal mental health is a growing concern, with prevalence rates for depression and anxiety ranging between 15% and 35%. Factors such as socioeconomic hardship, unplanned pregnancy, and cultural expectations significantly increase vulnerability (Tinius & Yoho, 2021). Despite this, mental health screening is rarely integrated into routine antenatal care in Nigerian healthcare facilities. Factors causing these issues include hormonal fluctuations, economic instability, and the psychological demands of impending motherhood. Government interventions, such as those under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 3) and Nigeria's National Health Policy, focus primarily on reducing physical maternal mortality, often neglecting the "silent" burden of mental distress. Social work roles are therefore critical; social workers provide emotional support, counseling, and advocacy, connecting women to community resources and helping to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.

Ideally, pregnancy should be a period where women receive comprehensive antenatal care addressing both physical and psychological well-being. Standard care should include routine mental health screening and adequate emotional support to ensure optimal outcomes for both mother and child (Endomba et al., 2021). However, in practice, maternal mental health remains under-recognized in Nigeria. Many antenatal clinics focus solely on physical indicators, leaving emotional instability and anxiety disorders unnoticed until they become severe (Henriksson & Malavaki, 2019).

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

The consequences of unaddressed mental distress include preterm birth, low birth weight, and increased maternal morbidity. While general studies on postpartum depression exist, there is a significant gap in localized research focusing on the specific, psychological factors, such as emotional changes and stress that influence mental health during the pregnancy itself, particularly in semi-urban communities like Ikenne LGA. This study intends to fill this gap by assessing the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

Objectives

The general objective of this research is to examine the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

Discover if emotional changes resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Investigate how depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Investigate if stress resulting from pregnancy affects the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area.

Research Questions

Do emotional changes resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA?

How do depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA?

Does stress resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA?

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between emotional changes resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

H02: There is no significant relationship between depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

H03: There is no significant relationship between stress resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pregnancy is a significant developmental period characterized by profound physiological, psychological, and social changes that influence a woman's overall well-being. Although pregnancy is often perceived as a positive and fulfilling experience, it may also be accompanied by stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges that affect maternal mental health (Balogun & Adebayo, 2023). Pregnancy begins with the fertilization of an egg by a sperm, resulting in the formation of a zygote that develops into a fetus over an average period of 40 weeks from the last menstrual period or 38 weeks from conception (Balogun & Yusuf, 2023). During this period, women experience substantial hormonal and physical changes that support fetal growth and development (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2020).

Mental health during pregnancy is an essential component of maternal and fetal well-being. It encompasses a woman's ability to cope effectively with the emotional, social, and physical demands associated with pregnancy. However, pregnancy-related hormonal changes, coupled with external stressors such as financial difficulties, relationship conflicts, inadequate healthcare access, and sociocultural expectations, may negatively affect psychological well-being (Olawale & Ogunyemi, 2022). These challenges can increase vulnerability to mental health problems, particularly among women living in resource-constrained environments.

The psychological effects of pregnancy on mental health refer to the influence of social, emotional, economic, and cultural factors on the psychological well-being of pregnant women.

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

Emotional stress is one of the most common psychological experiences during pregnancy, often arising from concerns about childbirth, maternal responsibilities, and potential pregnancy complications. Prolonged stress has been associated with adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes (Wiegersma, 2019). Anxiety and depression are also prevalent during pregnancy and may result from factors such as social isolation, financial insecurity, hormonal fluctuations, inadequate spousal support, and previous traumatic experiences (Olawale & Ogunyemi, 2022).

Social support is a critical protective factor for maternal mental health. Support from spouses, family members, friends, and the wider community can reduce stress and enhance emotional well-being during pregnancy. Conversely, inadequate support may contribute to loneliness, frustration, low self-esteem, and increased psychological distress (Mattina et al., 2019). Economic factors also play a significant role, as financial instability may limit access to quality prenatal care and create anxiety regarding the costs associated with pregnancy and childbearing (Akinwaare & Olatunji, 2019).

Furthermore, cultural and religious beliefs shape pregnancy experiences and influence how women perceive and respond to pregnancy-related challenges. While cultural practices and religious faith may provide emotional comfort and social support, they may also generate additional pressures and expectations that contribute to stress and anxiety (Barkin & Van Cleve, 2020). Consequently, the mental health experiences of pregnant women are influenced by a complex interaction of emotional, social, economic, and cultural factors, highlighting the importance of understanding the psychological dimensions of pregnancy in specific community contexts.

Existing studies have established that pregnancy is often accompanied by psychological challenges that significantly affect women's mental health. Research conducted in Nigeria has reported considerable levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among pregnant women, with factors such as low socioeconomic status, inadequate social support, unplanned pregnancy, and intimate partner violence identified as major predictors of psychological distress (Adeoye & Esan, 2022; Oladeji et al., 2022; Adewuya et al., 2021). Social support remains one of the most consistently reported protective factors for maternal mental health. Studies by Balogun and Adebayo (2023), Akinwaare and Olatunji (2019), and Endomba et al. (2021) found that emotional, financial, and instrumental support from partners, family members, and social networks significantly reduced stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms among pregnant women. Conversely, inadequate support was associated with poorer psychological outcomes.

Economic circumstances have also been shown to influence maternal mental well-being. Studies conducted in Ogun State and other parts of Nigeria revealed that financial difficulties, unemployment, low household income, and the cost of antenatal care contribute significantly to anxiety, stress, and depression during pregnancy (Adebayo & Adeyemi, 2021; Olawale & Ogunyemi, 2022; Nwosu & Adekunle, 2020). Similarly, cultural beliefs, stigma, and societal expectations surrounding pregnancy have been identified as barriers to positive mental health and help-seeking behaviour among pregnant women (Wiegersma, 2019; Adebisi et al., 2022). Evidence from international studies corroborates these findings, highlighting the influence of socioeconomic hardship, poor social support, food insecurity, work-related stress, and limited healthcare access on maternal mental health outcomes (Smith et al., 2020; Mutiso et al., 2020; Tadesse & Abebe, 2022). Despite the growing body of literature, few studies have specifically examined the combined influence of psychological factors on the mental health of pregnant women in semi-urban communities such as Ikenne, Ogun State. This study therefore seeks to address this gap by examining the psychological effects of pregnancy on women's mental health within the Ikenne context.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Bio, psychological Model and the Stress Model. These theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how biological, psychological, and social

factors interact to influence the mental health of pregnant women.

Bio Psychological Model

The Bio Psychological Model was developed by Engel (1977) as a holistic framework for understanding health and illness. The model posits that health outcomes are shaped by the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors rather than by biological factors alone. This perspective is particularly relevant to maternal mental health, as pregnancy involves physiological changes alongside emotional and social adjustments. Within the context of pregnancy, biological factors include hormonal fluctuations, physical discomfort, and pregnancy-related health conditions. Psychological factors encompass stress, anxiety, emotional resilience, and coping mechanisms, while social factors include family support, economic conditions, cultural expectations, and access to healthcare services.

The model suggests that these factors interact to influence a woman's mental well-being during pregnancy. The relevance of the Bio psychological Model to this study lies in its ability to explain how pregnancy-related biological changes, psychological experiences, and social circumstances collectively affect the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area. It provides a useful framework for understanding the multidimensional nature of psychological challenges experienced during pregnancy.

Stress Model

The Stress Model, developed by Perry (2004), explains how exposure to stressors can affect an individual's psychological well-being. The model posits that mental health outcomes are influenced by the interaction between environmental stressors and an individual's ability to cope with them. When stress exceeds available coping resources, psychological distress may occur. Pregnancy is often accompanied by various stressors, including financial difficulties, fear of childbirth, changing family responsibilities, relationship challenges, and concerns about maternal and infant health.

The model emphasizes the role of social support and personal coping resources in reducing the adverse effects of these stressors. The Stress Model is relevant to this study because it helps explain how pregnancy-related stressors may contribute to anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges among pregnant women. It also highlights the importance of support systems and coping strategies in promoting psychological well-being during pregnancy.

Both Bio Psychological Model and the Stress Model complement each other in explaining the psychological effects of pregnancy on women's mental health. While the Bio Psychological Model provides a broad understanding of the biological, psychological, and social determinants of maternal mental health, the Stress Model explains how exposure to stressors and the availability of coping resources influence psychological outcomes. Together, these theories provide a suitable framework for examining the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of pregnant women in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design to examine the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State. The design enabled the collection of quantitative data on psychological factors and mental health outcomes at a single point in time. The study was conducted among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics at Babcock University Teaching Hospital and Ilishan Community Health Centre, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State. The study population comprised 73 pregnant women receiving antenatal care in the two selected health facilities. Sample size of 62 respondents was obtained using purposive sampling technique.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled, psychological Pregnancy Mental Health Scale (PPMHS). The questionnaire was administered directly to respondents during antenatal

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

clinic visits after obtaining permission from the selected health facilities. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages and inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis. All hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Ethical principles were observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were assured.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

The table below summarizes the demographic profile of the 66 respondents (including validated returns).

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Range	18–27 years	14	21.2
	28–37 years	33	50.0
	38–47 years	19	28.8
	48 years +	0	0.0
Marital Status	Married	58	87.9
	Single	5	7.6
	Divorced	3	4.5
Education	Tertiary	55	83.3
	Secondary	10	15.2
	Primary	1	1.5
Trimester	First Trimester	14	21.2
	Second Trimester	33	50.0

	Third Trimester	19	28.8
--	-----------------	----	------

The findings indicate that most respondents were aged 28–37 years (50.0%), followed by those aged 38–47 years (28.8%) and 18–27 years (21.2%). The majority were married (87.9%), while 7.6% were single and 4.5% divorced. In terms of educational attainment, most respondents had tertiary education (83.3%), with smaller proportions having secondary (15.2%) and primary education (1.5%). Occupationally, nurses (24.2%) and traders (22.7%) constituted the largest groups. Regarding pregnancy stage, half of the respondents (50.0%) were in their second trimester, while 28.8% and 21.2% were in their third and first trimesters respectively. These findings suggest that the study participants were predominantly married, educated women in their second trimester of pregnancy.

Research Question One

Do emotional changes resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA? To address the question of emotional changes, data which describes the overall effect of pregnancy on mental health, is utilized. This table includes items directly related to emotional experiences during pregnancy.

Item	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
I feel emotionally stable during my pregnancy.	3.73	0.51	Strongly Agree
I often feel sad or unhappy during this pregnancy.	3.74	0.47	Strongly Agree
I feel mentally relaxed most of the time.	3.77	0.46	Strongly Agree
I experience frequent mood changes that affect my daily activities.	3.55	0.53	Strongly Agree
I feel hopeful and positive about my life despite pregnancy challenges.	3.52	0.53	Strongly Agree
Overall Average Weighted Mean	3.66	0.50	Strongly Agree

The overall average weighted mean of 3.66 (SD = 0.50) indicates that respondents strongly agree that pregnancy significantly affects their mental health, encompassing various emotional aspects. Specifically, respondents strongly agreed that they often feel sad or unhappy (\bar{x} = 3.74, SD = 0.47) and experience frequent mood changes (\bar{x} = 3.55, SD = 0.53) during pregnancy. These findings suggest that emotional changes are a prevalent and significant aspect of the mental health experience for pregnant women in Ikenne Local Government Area.

Research Question Two

How do depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA?

Respondents' perceptions regarding depression and anxiety during pregnancy and their impact on mental health is presented below

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

Item	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
I often feel sad or hopeless during my pregnancy.	3.79	0.41	Strongly Agree
Anxiety about childbirth affects my mental health.	3.80	0.40	Strongly Agree
I have difficulty sleeping due to pregnancy-related worries.	3.73	0.51	Strongly Agree
Depression during pregnancy affects how I interact with family and friends.	3.74	0.47	Strongly Agree
I frequently feel restless or unable to relax during pregnancy.	3.77	0.46	Strongly Agree
Overall Average Weighted Mean	3.76	0.45	Strongly Agree

The overall average weighted mean of 3.76 (SD = 0.45) indicates that respondents strongly agree that depression and anxiety significantly affect the mental health of pregnant women in Ikenne Local Government Area. This is supported by high mean scores across all items, indicating that feelings of sadness, hopelessness, anxiety about childbirth, sleep difficulties, and restlessness are prevalent and strongly associated with pregnancy.

Research Question Three

Does stress resulting from pregnancy affect the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA?

The table 4 below presents respondents' responses on stress experienced during pregnancy and its impact on mental health.

Item	Mean (\bar{x})	Standard Deviation (SD)	Interpretation
I experience high levels of stress during my pregnancy.	3.53	0.53	Strongly Agree
Stress from household responsibilities affects my mental health.	3.55	0.53	Strongly Agree
Pregnancy-related stress makes me feel overwhelmed.	3.52	0.53	Strongly Agree
Stress during pregnancy reduces my ability to cope with daily challenges.	3.47	0.64	Agree
I feel that pregnancy has increased my overall stress level.	3.52	0.53	Strongly Agree
Overall Average Weighted Mean	3.51	0.55	Strongly Agree

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

The overall average weighted mean of 3.51 (SD = 0.55) indicates that respondents strongly agree that stress during pregnancy significantly affects their mental health. While most items showed strong agreement, one item, "Stress during pregnancy reduces my ability to cope with daily challenges," received an interpretation of "Agree" ($\bar{x} = 3.47$, SD = 0.64), indicating a slightly lower, but still positive, impact compared to other stress-related items.

Test of Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant relationship between emotional changes resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

		emotional changes	MENTAL_HEALTH
emotional changes	Pearson Correlation	1	.243**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	66	66

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.7 presents the relationship between emotional changes resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State. The result shows a positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional changes and mental health ($r = 0.24$, $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between emotional changes resulting from pregnancy and mental health of women in Ikenne LGA, is rejected.

The descriptive findings strongly suggest that emotional changes, such as sadness, unhappiness, and frequent mood changes, are experienced by pregnant women and contribute to their overall mental health status. Given the strong agreement on these items, it can be inferred that emotional changes do affect mental health, leading to an implicit rejection of the null hypothesis.

H02: There is no significant relationship between depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

The table below displays the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis between depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women.

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed) (p)	N
Depression & Anxiety vs. Mental Health	0.463**	0.000	66

Note Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between depression and anxiety and mental health ($r = 0.463$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that higher levels of depression and anxiety experienced during pregnancy are associated with a greater negative impact on the mental health of women. Given that the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.01 level of significance, the null hypothesis (H02) is rejected. This demonstrates that depression and anxiety resulting from pregnancy have a significant relationship with the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

H03: There is no significant relationship between stress resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area of Ogun State.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis between stress resulting from pregnancy and the mental health of women is presented below

Variables	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed) (p)	N
Stress vs. Mental Health	0.825**	0.000	66

Note Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between stress and mental health ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that higher levels of stress during pregnancy are strongly associated with a greater negative impact on women's mental health. Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.01 level of significance, the null hypothesis (H03) is rejected. This demonstrates that stress resulting from pregnancy has a significant relationship with the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide substantial evidence regarding the psychological effects of pregnancy on the mental health of women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria. Consistent with the specified research objectives, the study explored the impact of emotional changes, depression and anxiety, and stress.

Firstly, the descriptive analysis of emotional changes, inferred from the overall effect of pregnancy on mental health, revealed that pregnant women in the study area frequently experience sadness, unhappiness, and mood changes. While a direct inferential test for emotional changes as a distinct variable was not explicitly provided in the correlation tables, the strong agreement on these descriptive items suggests that emotional fluctuations are a significant component of mental health challenges during pregnancy. This aligns with Pei et al., (2023) submission that broader hormonal shifts and psychological demands of pregnancy can lead to heightened emotional reactivity and vulnerability among pregnant women. Balogun & Adebayo (2023), further observed that although pregnancy is often perceived as a positive and fulfilling experience, it may also be accompanied by stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges that affect maternal mental health.

Secondly, the investigation into depression and anxiety demonstrated that these conditions significantly affect the mental health of pregnant women. The descriptive findings showed high mean scores for feelings of sadness, hopelessness, anxiety about childbirth, sleep difficulties, and restlessness. The rejection of the null hypothesis (H02) further confirmed a significant positive relationship between depression and anxiety and negative mental health outcomes ($r = 0.463$, $p < 0.01$). This finding is consistent with a substantial body of knowledge in the research of Olawale & Ogunyemi (2022), highlighting the prevalence and impact of perinatal depression and anxiety on maternal well-being, emphasizing the need for early detection and intervention strategies during pregnancy. The two authors noted that anxiety and depression are also prevalent during pregnancy and may result from factors such as social isolation, financial insecurity, hormonal fluctuations, inadequate spousal support, and previous traumatic experiences.

Thirdly, the study found that stress resulting from pregnancy significantly impacts the mental health of women in Ikenne LGA. Respondents reported experiencing high levels of stress, particularly from household responsibilities, leading to feelings of being overwhelmed and reduced coping abilities. The rejection of the null hypothesis (H03) confirmed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between stress and mental health ($r = 0.825$, $p < 0.01$). Wiegersma (2019) findings corroborated that pregnancy-related stressors, whether physiological, psychological, or social, can profoundly affect a woman's mental state, potentially leading to adverse health outcomes for both mother and child. Olawale & Ogunyemi (2022), in their study observed that prolonged stress has been associated with adverse maternal and neonatal outcomes.

The findings collectively affirm that emotional changes, depression and anxiety, and stress

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

significantly influence the mental health of pregnant women in Ikenne Local Government Area. These results underscore the importance of comprehensive maternal healthcare programs that address not only the physical but also the psychological well-being of pregnant women to promote better mental health outcomes during this critical period. Further research could explore intervention strategies tailored to the specific cultural and socio-economic context of the region to mitigate these psychological effects.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that psychological factors, specifically depression, anxiety, and stress, have a significant negative impact on the mental health of pregnant women in Ikenne Local Government Area. Stress emerged as the most potent predictor of psychological distress. The findings highlight a critical need for the healthcare system to transition from a purely medical model to a bio psychological one, acknowledging that a mother's emotional state is just as vital as her physical health for a successful pregnancy outcome.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that healthcare providers should integrate mental health screening and psychological counseling into routine antenatal care protocols, prenatal clinics should offer workshops on relaxation techniques, mindfulness, and coping strategies to help women manage the high levels of stress identified and partners and family members should be educated on the importance of emotional support, as it acts as a buffer against psychological distress. Also, campaigns should be launched to de-stigmatize mental health issues during pregnancy, encouraging women to seek help early.

Implication for Social Work

The findings underscore the indispensable role of social workers in maternal healthcare. Social workers are needed to conduct psychological assessments, provide crisis intervention for women with high anxiety, and facilitate support groups. By addressing the "non-medical" determinants of health, such as stress and emotional instability, social workers bridge the gap between clinical care and the lived experiences of pregnant women, ensuring a truly holistic approach to maternal welfare.

REFERENCES

- Adebayo, P. A., & Adeyemi, S. A. (2021). Financial difficulties and mental health outcomes among pregnant women in Ogun State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 18(2), 45-58.
- Adebisi, A. O., et al. (2022). Cultural beliefs and stigma surrounding maternal mental health in Nigeria: A qualitative study. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 26(4), 112-125.
- Adeoye, I. A., Sogbesan, A., & Esan, O. (2022). Prevalence, associated factors and perinatal outcomes of antepartum depression in Ibadan Nigeria. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 22(1), 245. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-022-04549-7>
- Adewuya, A. O., et al. (2021). The burden of maternal mental health in Nigeria: Prevalence and associated factors. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 282, 890-898.
- Akinwaare, M. O., & Olatunji, O. (2019). Economic factors and social support as predictors of mental health among pregnant women in Nigeria. *International Journal of Nursing and Midwifery*, 11(3), 22-30.
- Amelia, I., Hasanah, D., & Yahya, M. M. (2026). Strategies of Moral Faith Teachers in Integrating SDGs-Based Character Education in Islamic Boarding Schools. *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 27(01), 135-154. <https://journals2.ums.ac.id/profetika/article/download/14952/5590>
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2020). *Guidelines for perinatal care* (8th ed.).

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

- Balogun, O. J., & Adebayo, S. O. (2023). Psychological challenges and mental health of pregnant women in Nigeria: A community-based study. *Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, 15(1), 12-25.
- Balogun, O. J., & Yusuf, A. (2023). Physiological and psychological changes during pregnancy: A developmental perspective. *Nigerian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 21(1), 5-18.
- Barkin, J. L., & Van Cleve, S. N. (2020). Cultural influences on maternal mental health: A global perspective. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic & Neonatal Nursing*, 49(6), 567-578.
- Dadi, A. F., et al. (2020). Epidemiology of postnatal depression and its associated factors in Africa: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLOS ONE*, 15(4), e0231940. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0231940>
- Elesin, A. M. J., & Yahya, M. M. (2018). An Overview of Islamic Guidance and Counselling. *KWASU Journal of Religious Studies*, 2(2), 41-51.
- Endomba, F. T., et al. (2021). Integrating mental health screening into routine antenatal care: A systematic review of practices in sub-Saharan Africa. *Global Health Action*, 14(1), 1890234.
- Fuhler, G. M. (2020). The immune system and mental health during pregnancy: A biological perspective. *Nature Reviews Immunology*, 20(8), 456-468.
- Henriksson, H. E., & Malavaki, C. (2019). Emotional instability and anxiety disorders in antenatal care: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 40(3), 210-218.
- Maisuna, M. Y., & Aliyu, M. M. (2025). Pros and Cons of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Light of Islamic Laws' Verdicts (Fatawa). *Journal of Development and Society, Faculty of Social Science*, 7(1). <https://uniabujafsos.com.ng/index.php/jdsfoss/article/download/25/19>
- Maisuna, M. Y., Tambiyi, G. Y., & Gall, M. ICT and the Enhancement of English Language and Literature-in-English. [https://www.academia.edu/download/79911115/Tambiyi Michael Jesus in the Old Testament.pdf](https://www.academia.edu/download/79911115/Tambiyi_Michael_Jesus_in_the_Old_Testament.pdf)
- Mattina, A., et al. (2019). Social support as a protective factor for maternal mental health: A longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Women's Health*, 28(5), 654-662.
- Mohamed, A. A., Yahya, M. M., & Sabir, M. R. (2026). Evaluating Vygotsky-Based Professional Development Models for Islamic Educators. *Amandemen: Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Studies*, 4(1), 35-51. <https://amandemen.my.id/index.php/i/article/download/114/48>
- Mutiso, S. K., et al. (2020). Limited healthcare access and maternal mental health outcomes in resource-constrained settings. *East African Medical Journal*, 97(8), 1234-1245.
- Nwosu, E. O., & Adekunle, A. (2020). The cost of antenatal care and its impact on maternal stress and anxiety in Nigeria. *Health Policy and Planning*, 35(4), 432-441.
- Oladeji, B. D., et al. (2022). Predictors of psychological distress among pregnant women in Nigeria: A multi-center study. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 57(3), 567-578.
- Olawale, K. O., & Ogunyemi, K. O. (2022). Psychological determinants of mental health among pregnant women in Southwest Nigeria. *African Journal of Mental Health*, 10(2), 34-48.
- Pei, Y., et al. (2023). Global prevalence of mental health disorders during pregnancy: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 10(5), 345-358.
- Smith, J., et al. (2020). Socioeconomic hardship and maternal mental health: An international comparison. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 24(9), 1120-1132.

Obasoanya Chihurumnanya Adaeze & Ezeokoli Rita - Psychological Effects of Pregnancy on the Mental Health of Women in Ikenne Local Government Area, Ogun State, Nigeria

- Tadesse, A., & Abebe, M. (2022). Food insecurity and its impact on maternal mental health in sub-Saharan Africa. *Public Health Nutrition*, 25(6), 1567-1578.
- Tinius, R. A., & Blankenship, M. M. (2020). Prevalence of mental health disorders during pregnancy: A longitudinal study. *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*, 20(1), 112.
- Tinius, R. A., & Yoho, K. (2021). Maternal mental health in Nigeria: Prevalence and associated risk factors. *International Journal of Women's Health*, 13, 456-467.
- Wiegersma, A. M. (2019). The impact of prolonged stress on maternal and neonatal outcomes. *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*, 104(11), 5432-5445
- Yahya, M. M., & Adedeji, O. A. (2024). Global Collaboration and Partnerships in Poverty Alleviation: Islamic Legal Perspective. *Journal of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language*, 3(2), 148-165. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Alwy-Mohamed/publication/399984800_Islamic_Law_and_English_Law_as_Sources_of_Nigerian_Law_An_Analytical_and_Comparative_Study/links/6971ef5bf5b9fd48849b4409/Islamic-Law-and-English-Law-as-Sources-of-Nigerian-Law-An-Analytical-and-Comparative-Study.pdf
- Yahya, M. M., & Adedeji, O. A. (2024). Global Collaboration and Partnerships in Poverty Alleviation: Islamic Legal Perspective. *Journal of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language*, 3(2), 148-165. <https://journals.iuiu.ac.ug/index.php/jisal/article/download/718/522>
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper and Row.