



# Effects of Postpartum Depression on Mothers and Children



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## Abstract

**Objective:** Analyze how postpartum depression affects children's behavioural and cognitive development.

**Design:** Non-Experimental, Observation

**Setting:** Hays Medical Center

**Participation:** Postpartum mothers

**Results/conclusion:** Postpartum depression negatively effects children's cognitive and behavioural development

## Introduction

Postpartum depression plagues many women in today's society. This complication after birth is known to have devastating effects on the mother. Some women may be more prone to this due to an increase in risk factors such as major depression before pregnancy or not having as much support after the baby's arrival (Slomian et al., 2019). The researchers would like to dive deeper into how this can affect their baby. Many factors can play a role in a child's development (Holopainen & Hakulinen, 2019). Do children with mothers that experience postpartum depression suffer from greater developmental setbacks than infants whose mothers do not?

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this nonexperimental study is to determine if women diagnosed postpartum depression negatively affect the cognitive development of their children within the age of one to three years of life.

## Key Terms

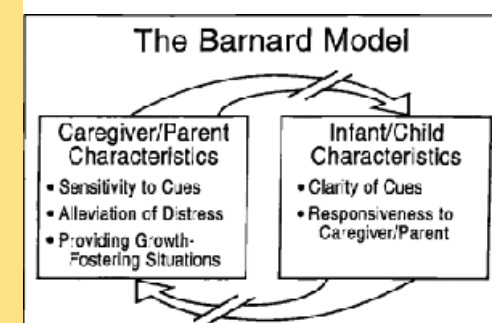
Postpartum/Postnatal depression: Depression that occurs after having a baby (CDC, 2023).

Child development: Behavioural, and cognitive development (Slomian et al., 2019).

Maternal-Infant relationship: The bonding that occurs between a mother and an infant in the first year of life (Holt et al., 2021).

## Framework

The nursing research model used in the development of this research project was a middle range theory. Middle range theories are known to have clear variables that have easily defined relationships among one another. The specific theory used was the Parent-child interaction theory by Kathryn Barnard. It measures the relationship between caregivers and early childhood development (Kelly et al., 1996).



<https://pmhealthnp.com/kathryn-barnard-child-interaction-theory/>

## Methodology

### Proposed RQ

Do women with postpartum depression affect children during their development in the first years of life?

### Research Design/Interventions

This research will be collected from the obstetrics clinic and pediatric clinic at Hays Medical Center in Hays, Kansas. The nurse will perform the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EDPS) on the mother to try to catch signs early. This will be performed during all postpartum clinic visits for continued monitoring for the mother.

**IV:** Postpartum Depression

**DV:** Behavioural and cognitive development of children.

### Literature Sources

A nonexperimental observational study on the effects that a mother with postpartum depression has on her children in the first 1-3 years of life. PPD will be gauged in follow-up appointments using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (Boyd et al., 2005). Therefore, if a mother has postpartum depression, she should be treated so that her child does not experience the negative effects of the impacted mother-infant relationship (Holt et al., 2021).

### Data Collection

N= 150 children

n= 75 mothers with postpartum depression

n= 75 mothers without postpartum depression

### Sample

The sample for this research includes 150 children ages 1-3, 75 mothers with postpartum depression, and 75 mothers without postpartum depression for comparison.

### Ethical Considerations

Requesting a full review from Hays Medical Center and Fort Hays State University Institutional Review Board.



<https://pharmaceutical-journal.com/article/ld/postnatal-depression-recognition-and-diagnosis>

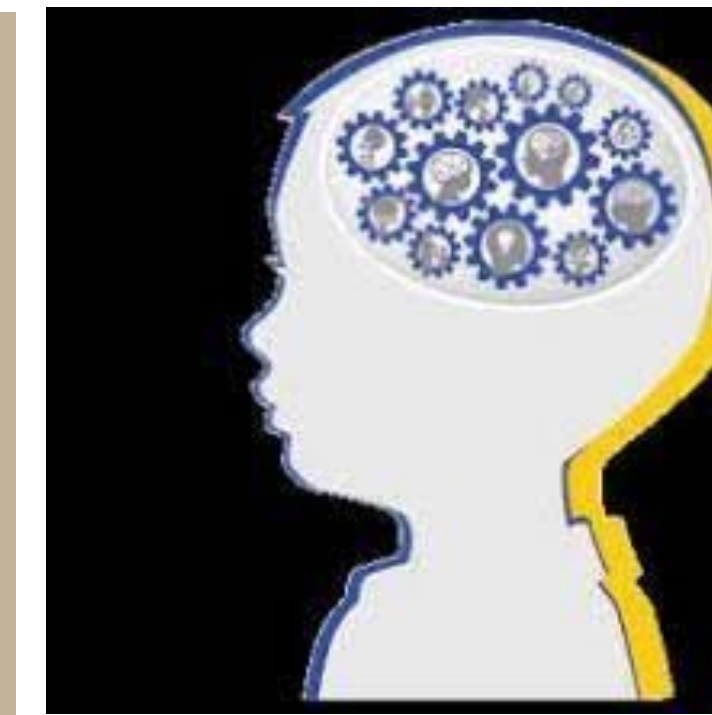
## Results/Findings

### Projected Data Analysis Method

To compare the effects that postpartum depression has on the behavioral and cognitive development of children an independent T-test will be used to compare the development of children who have a mother with postpartum depression against those children who were raised by a mother without postpartum depression.



<https://veryspecialtales.com/reasons-behavior-problems-children/>



<https://www.pgpedia.com/c/cognitive-development>

### Literature Findings

Women who suffer from postpartum depression often exhibit signs that nurses can monitor for. These symptoms may include hopelessness, pessimism, irritability, loss of interest in hobbies and activities, insomnia or hypersomnia, thoughts of suicide or suicide attempts, feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or an empty mood (CDC, 2023). It is also believed that many women who develop postpartum depression are very reluctant to report that they are feeling negative emotions since they are supposed to feel happy after giving birth which is why it is very important for depression screenings to be conducted during postpartum clinic visits (Takács et al. 2020).



<https://www.hoag.org/featured-news/when-postpartum-depression-shows-up-as-intense-anger/>

## Discussion

The anticipated outcomes for this study include fewer cases of negatively affected child development, reviews from mothers that suffered from postpartum depression, but were influenced positively by the nursing interventions done to assist them, and an overall decrease in the number of maternal-infant relationships or bonds that were negatively impacted due to postpartum depression.

## Conclusion

There have been many studies conducted that show postpartum depression not only affects the mother, but their child's development as well.

Future research should focus on continuing to examine all outside factors that contribute to postpartum depression and how early screenings, and support groups can help the mother and the development of her child.

## References

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