

Factors Predicting Postpartum Depression in Adolescent Mothers

Kinnaree Chaisawan, RN, MNS,* Yaowalak Serisathein, RN, DNS,*
Chaweewan Yusamran, RN, PhD,* Nopporn Vongsirimas, RN, PhD *

Abstract:

Purpose: This study was to determine the predictive power of age, perception of maternal competency, child care stress, and social support on postpartum depression in adolescent mothers.

Design: Correlational predictive design.

Methods: The participants consisted of 84 adolescent mothers who came to postpartum clinics or well baby clinics for the vaccinations during the postpartum period of 6-8 weeks in hospitals affiliated to the Ministry of Defense. Data were collected by using five questionnaires comprising of the Demographic Data Questionnaire, Parenting Sense of Competence Scale, Child Care Stress Questionnaire, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression Scale. Multiple regression was used for data analysis. According to an initial analysis, 5 cases with outliers found in child care stress score were deleted. Thus, the total number of subjects included in the data analysis was 79.

Main findings: The study results indicated that 41.67% of the adolescent mothers had postpartum depression. Age, perception of maternal competency, child care stress, and social support could explain 50% of the variance of postpartum depression in adolescent mothers ($R^2 = .50$, $p < .001$). The factors that significantly predicted postpartum depression in adolescent mothers were perception of maternal competency ($\beta = -.39$, $t(78) = -4.45$, $p < .001$) and child care stress ($\beta = .41$, $t(78) = 4.29$, $p < .001$), while age and social support did not.

Conclusion and recommendations: The research findings indicate perception of maternal competency and child care stress as factors influencing postpartum depression in adolescent mothers. Therefore, nurses should assess maternal competency and child care stress in adolescent mothers. When risks to postpartum depression are found, proper care should be given to prevent the depression.

Keywords: adolescent mothers, postpartum depression

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Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor Chaweewan Yusamran, Faculty of Nursing, Mahidol University, Bangkok 10700, Thailand; e-mail: nscys@mahidol.ac.th

* Faculty of Nursing, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand