The Prevalence of Maternal Depression in Rural South African Communities

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Introduction
- The prevalence of Maternal Depression is understudied within rural populations
- Worldwide the prevalence of postpartum depression is between 10% and 20%

Objective of the Study
- The purpose of this research is to code survey results in order to explore trends and the prevalence of Maternal Depression using data from the Eastern Cape Randomized Control Trial.

Methods
- The data used for this research comes from a longitudinal survey given to expecting mothers to track both maternal and child health from before birth to 24 months after birth
- Focusing on data from baseline, 3 month, and 6 month surveys
- The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression scale, developed to identify women who may be experiencing postpartum depression, was used to measure depression. Scores of 13+ indicate likely depression

Results
- Out of a total sample of 894 participants 9.28% had an EPDS score signifying likely depression
- There was a higher percentage of participants with antenatal depression than postnatal depression
- The average baseline EPDS score for depressed participants is 16.18 over 4 times the average EPDS score of all participants
- The average EPDS score for non-depressed participants seems to decrease 3 months after the birth of the child
- The EPDS scores of participants with high baseline scores follow no single pattern
- There is a trend of no responses from participants who are depressed at the baseline survey
- The majority of participants with a baseline EPDS score of 18+ have either antenatal depression or are always depressed when assessed

Discussion
- Half of the individuals who scored as suicidal were not depressed and had minimal risk factors
- More research should be done to identify strong predictive variables of increased EPDS scores
- Missing participants skew results due to missing data

Questions
- What factors determine a woman’s risk of both postnatal and antenatal depression?

Conclusion
- The results indicate a prevalence of maternal depression that is lower than the worldwide prevalence. However, in this sample antenatal had a higher prevalence than postnatal depression.

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