



Psychoeducational Groups and Mental Health Outcomes Among First-Time Mothers in South African Hospitals: A Perspective from Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

First-time mothers in South African hospitals are at risk of developing mental health issues such as postpartum depression and anxiety. The study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys ($n=200$) \wedge *qualitative interviews* ($n=25$). Participants were randomly assigned to either the psychoeducational group intervention or a control group. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, inferential statistical tests, and thematic content analysis. Participants in the psychoeducational groups reported significantly lower levels of depressive symptoms compared to the control group ($p<0.05$), with an average reduction of 20% in depression scores over six weeks. Psychoeducational groups provided a supportive environment that positively impacted first-time mothers' mental health outcomes, particularly reducing symptoms of depression. Further research should explore the long-term effects and cost-effectiveness of psychoeducational groups for first-time mothers. Implementation strategies in healthcare settings are recommended based on these findings. Postpartum Depression, Anxiety, Psychoeducation, First-Time Mothers, South Africa

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, AfricanPsychosocialSupport, CrossSectionalStudy, MentalHealthStigma, GroupIntervention, EthnoculturalDifferences*

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