

A Review of the Literature on the Effect of Postpartum Depression on Child Language Development: Risk Factors and Intervention

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Abstract

Language is one of the most important acquisitions made during childhood. Several factors play a key role in a child's acquisition of vocabulary such as environmental factors, socio-economic status and interaction with parents. Postpartum depression is one of the frequent disorders in a pregnant woman and it may affect the neurodevelopment of their children. It is common in both developed and developing countries. Post-partum can cause functional impairment at a time when the mother is performing tasks vital to her infant's growth and development. This article reviews recent research investigating whether there is an association between postpartum depression and infant language development.

We studied this relationship because of increased number of mothers with post-partum depression required researches to found how these psychological changes affect the child development especially the development of language. The limited number of researches, especially those in the Arabic language that talk about this relationship, risk factors affecting and the role played by the speech language therapist.

A search was made using articles published from 1986 to 2019 and the results were examined for relevance and quality. This review discusses the contributing factors to postpartum depression which can play a role in child language development such as child gender, maternal age, timing of mother depression and how long it lasts, the number of her children (number of sibling for the newborn), home environment, routine and economic situation, mother's Intelligence Quotient (IQ), gestational diabetes, mode of delivery and mother mental health. Research findings and recent articles provide suggestive evidence of a negative association between maternal depression, and child language development. Conclusions and clinical implications of the research are discussed and suggestions for future research are provided.