



Investigating the effect of social support on improving mental health in women

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Abstract:

Background:

Social support is recognized as a key factor in improving mental health and is particularly important for women who have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV). IPV is considered a public health problem that can lead to serious mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Research shows that women who have experienced IPV face multiple psychological and physical challenges, and social support can act as a protective shield against these adverse effects. In this regard, examining the relationship between social support and mental health in women, especially in traumatic situations such as IPV, is of great importance.

Method:

This study was conducted based on methods available in the scientific literature. In the first article, a cross-sectional study was conducted, including 1152 women between 18 and 65 years of age from family care clinics. In this study, clinical interviews were conducted to screen for IPV and assess physical and mental health status. In the second article, a meta-analysis of 64 studies in Iran between 1996 and 2015 was conducted to examine the effect of social support on mental health. A systematic review was performed of databases (PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus) of these studies published from December 2019 onward.

Results:

The results of the first study showed that IPV was associated with poor mental health, substance abuse, and PTSD symptoms. Specifically, high social support was associated with a reduced risk of cognitive and physical health problems. In the second paper, the effect size of social support on mental health was 0.356 and 0.330 in the fixed and random models, respectively.

Conclusion:

The results of these studies suggest that social support can act as a protective factor against the adverse effects of IPV on women's mental health. Therefore, providing social support to affected women can help improve their mental health. Clinicians, families, and friends can be critical in providing this support. Also, strengthening social support, especially for women and vulnerable groups, should be on the agenda of policymakers and public health planners.

Key words: Social support ,Mental health ,Women



Investigating the impact of social inequalities on mental health in women

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Abstract:

Background:

Social inequalities, particularly in the areas of economics, gender, and access to health resources, have profound effects on women's mental health. Numerous studies have shown that women in societies with high levels of inequality are more likely to experience mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress. Research suggests that a variety of factors, including poverty, gender discrimination, structural violence, and educational constraints, can severely impact women's mental health.

Method:

This study was conducted using a systematic review and qualitative content analysis. The data used were extracted from several reputable international studies, all examining the relationship between social inequalities and women's mental health. Sampling methods in the studies above included random and convenience sampling. Data collection tools included standardized mental health questionnaires, structured interviews, and field surveys. A systematic review was performed of databases (PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus) of these studies published from December 2019 onward.

Results:

Research shows that social inequalities have a direct and significant impact on women's mental health. Women living in poor economic conditions are three times more likely to suffer from depressive disorders. Women with lower levels of education and limited access to support resources also report higher rates of mental health problems. Gender discrimination and structural violence have also been identified as aggravating factors.

Conclusion:

The findings of this study clearly show that social inequalities play a decisive role in women's mental health. To improve this situation, we need comprehensive policies that both reduce structural inequalities and facilitate women's access to mental health services. Planning for public education, creating support networks, and confronting gender discrimination can be practical steps toward improving women's mental health.

Key words: Social inequalities ,Mental health ,Women



Studying the effect of stress management on reducing the risk of heart disease in women

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Abstract:

Background:

Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) remain a leading cause of mortality among women worldwide. Chronic stress has been identified as a significant risk factor contributing to hypertension, inflammation, and endothelial dysfunction. Women, particularly those balancing work and family responsibilities, often experience higher stress levels, which may increase their susceptibility to CVD. Previous studies suggest that stress management interventions—such as mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), and relaxation techniques—can improve cardiovascular health by reducing stress-related physiological responses.

Method:

A systematic review of peer-reviewed articles from PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science was conducted, focusing on studies published between 2010 and 2023. Keywords included "stress management," "cardiovascular disease," "women," and "psychological interventions." Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and longitudinal studies assessing stress reduction techniques (e.g., meditation, yoga, biofeedback) and their effects on CVD biomarkers (e.g., blood pressure, cortisol levels, heart rate variability) were included. Data were analyzed to evaluate the correlation between stress management and CVD risk reduction. A systematic review was performed of databases (PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus) of these studies published from December 2019 onward.

Results:

Findings from multiple studies indicate that stress management interventions significantly improve cardiovascular health in women. A 2021 randomized controlled trial (RCT) demonstrated that mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) lowered systolic blood pressure by an average of 5 mmHg in women with high-stress levels. Additionally, yoga and meditation were associated with reduced cortisol levels, improved heart rate variability, markers of reduced stress, and better autonomic nervous system function. Furthermore, women participating in structured cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) programs showed a 30% reduction in self-reported stress and improved endothelial function.

Conclusion:

Stress management interventions, including mindfulness, yoga, and CBT, demonstrate significant potential in reducing CVD risk among women by mitigating stress-related physiological damage. Incorporating these strategies into women's preventive healthcare could improve cardiovascular outcomes. Further research is needed to establish long-term efficacy and optimal intervention frameworks.

Key words: Stress management ,Heart disease ,Women



Investigating the impact of economic inequalities on women's mental health

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Abstract:

Background:

Socioeconomic inequalities are recognized as an essential determinant of mental health, especially among women. Several studies have shown that economic factors such as income, education, and access to health resources can significantly impact individuals' mental health. For example, a study conducted in Tehran (Hosseini Shokoh et al., 2021) found that the level of education, health behaviors, and non-smoking were positively and significantly associated with women's mental health.

Method:

In a study conducted in Tehran, data were collected through standardized and researcher-made questionnaires. This cross-sectional study was descriptive-analytical and used multistage (stratified-cluster) sampling methods. The sample consisted of 650 households, and the data were analyzed using regression models. In the Finnish study, individual data from health surveys and regional income data were combined, and probit models were used to analyze the association between income inequality and health. A systematic review was performed of databases (PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus) of these studies published from December 2019 onward

Results:

The results showed that women with higher education and better health behaviors had better mental health. Also, non-smoking and social capital were positively associated with women's mental health. Regional income inequality did not show a significant effect on women's mental health. In this study, regional income inequality has a different impact on the mental health of women and men.

Conclusion:

Socioeconomic inequalities can have different impacts on women's mental health. While some studies (such as the Tehran study) do not show a direct link between income inequality and women's mental health, other research (such as the Finnish study) suggests that women, especially young women, are at greater risk.

Key words: Economic inequalities, Women's mental health



Explaining the Concept and Dimensions of Health-Promoting Behaviors in Postmenopausal Women

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Abstract

Background: Considering that women's health is critically important throughout their lives, particularly during menopause, health-promoting behaviors in this period should be given special attention. The current study aimed to elucidate the concept and dimensions of health-promoting behaviors in postmenopausal women.

Method: A qualitative study with a content analysis approach using the Graneheim and Lundman model was conducted in Shiraz in 2022-2023. The study setting included educational therapeutic centers and health clinics in Shiraz. The study included a sample of postmenopausal women (n=15) and a group of key informants (n=10). Participants were selected through purposive sampling with maximum diversity in age, duration of menopause, education level, employment status, and economic status. Participants' willingness to withdraw from the study was the only exclusion criterion. Data collection tools included an interview guide. Interviews began with a few general and related questions to the research aim, such as "What is your (postmenopausal woman) understanding and experience of health?" and then the interview process continued based on the participant's responses while

considering the research objectives. Immediately after each interview, the conversations were transcribed verbatim and then coded. Initial coding began simultaneously with the start of the interviews. Summarized meaning units were reviewed and named with primary codes. During this phase, concepts were also discovered. Similar phenomena concepts were categorized into one category. With the emergence of categories, similar categories were conceptualized into themes.

Results: Data analysis resulted in approximately 1316 initial codes. After reviewing and categorizing the initial codes, 201 merged codes were extracted. Themes derived from qualitative data in interviews with postmenopausal women (89 merged codes) were categorized into 26 subcategories, 8 categories, and 4 themes, including optimal living, health promotion, sexual quality of life enhancement, and menopause acceptance. Themes from qualitative data in interviews with key informants (112 merged codes) were categorized into 26 subcategories, 8 categories, and 4 themes, including lifestyle modification, self-care, sexual quality of life improvement, and adaptation to menopause. Therefore, health-promoting behaviors in postmenopausal women are a multidimensional concept encompassing all significant aspects of their lives. These behaviors are efforts to modify lifestyle and accept menopause as entering a new life phase, requiring the promotion of behaviors that lead to self-care and improvement of sexual quality of life.

Conclusion: Health-promoting behaviors in postmenopausal women have diverse and different dimensions, with significant similarities and overlaps from the perspectives of postmenopausal women and key informants. Observing such phenomena not only shows the extent of progress in postmenopausal women's knowledge but also highlights that by emphasizing the findings of this study, the healthcare system can enhance health behaviors in postmenopausal women. Therefore, it is recommended that policymakers and planners in this field consider all these dimensions to achieve optimal results.

Keywords: Women, Menopause, Health-Promoting Behaviors, Qualitative Study



Caring for the Mind in Pregnancy: Evidence-Based Interventions for Enhancing Perinatal Mental Health

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Abstract:

Background: Mental health during preconception and pregnancy is vital for favorable maternal, neonatal, and familial outcomes. Severe mental disorders elevate risks of unintended pregnancy, perinatal complications, and disrupted mother-infant bonding. Absence of effective interventions may cause enduring intergenerational psychological harm. This study systematically reviews these issues and offers evidence-based risk reduction strategies.

Method: A comprehensive and targeted systematic search was conducted using relevant keywords including "pregnancy," "mental," and "care" across reputable international databases such as PubMed, Web of Science, Wiley, and Google Scholar, as well as domestic databases including Magiran, Irandoc, and Elmnet to ensure exhaustive coverage of both domestic and international scientific literature. From an initial identification of 207 studies, duplicate records, studies lacking full text, previous reviews, and publications older than five years were excluded according to the rigorous PRISMA framework and predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Reference management was performed using EndNote software, followed by a critical appraisal of study quality. Ultimately, 15 studies were selected that examined the impact of mental disorders on pregnancy, maternal and fetal health outcomes, and effective interventional approaches.

Results: This study clearly emphasizes the critical need for a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach to managing pregnant women with severe mental disorders. Mental health during this sensitive period is essential for healthy fetal development and maternal emotional stability, with neglect potentially causing lasting physical and psychological effects. Poor planning and education increase perinatal risks and negatively impact maternal mental health and infant outcomes. Key care components include careful psychotropic medication management to avoid sudden discontinuation and relapse, preconception counseling, management of comorbidities like obesity and diabetes, and ongoing psychosocial support. Effective collaboration among psychiatrists, general practitioners, midwives, and healthcare providers, along with personalized education and attention to socio-economic and cultural contexts, is vital to improve care quality and prevent intergenerational psychological harm.

Conclusion: In conclusion, psychological care and support effectively improve mental health outcomes in pregnant women, limitations such as cultural and social disparities, insufficient longitudinal data, and incomplete coverage of vulnerable populations highlight the need for broader, targeted research to enhance care quality and develop tailored intervention strategies.

Key words: Pregnancy, Care, Mental



Transforming the Lives of Women: A Systematic Review of Mental Well-being, Quality of Life, and the Efficacy of Psychiatric Interventions

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Abstract:

Background: Psychiatric disorders contribute significantly to the global burden of disability and profoundly impact the quality of life of affected women. Mental health in women plays a critical role in their physical, psychological, and social well-being. Therefore, the aim of this systematic review is to evaluate the quality of life and mental health status of women with psychiatric disorders to provide a foundation for designing therapeutic interventions and enhancing mental health services.

Method: A systematic and targeted search was conducted using the keywords "Quality of life," "Mental," and "Women" in reputable international databases, including PubMed, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Wiley, as well as domestic databases such as Magiran, Irandoc, and Elmnet. Initially, 726 articles were identified. After removing duplicates, articles without full-text access, review studies, and research published more than five years ago, 17 studies were included in the final analysis. The quality of the selected studies was assessed using validated tools. These studies explored various dimensions of quality of life in women with psychiatric disorders and elucidated the relationship between mental health status and individual and social health components.

Results: The findings revealed that women with psychiatric disorders, particularly those with co-occurring personality disorders, experience a significantly lower quality of life. This reduction in quality of life affects physical, psychological, and social domains, leading to challenges in maintaining family relationships, performing daily tasks, and self-care. Early identification of mental disorders is essential for improving the condition of these women. Furthermore, providing ongoing psychological support, including specialized counseling and support groups, can alleviate psychological distress. Designing comprehensive treatment programs that integrate pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy, and coping skills training can substantially enhance quality of life. Finally, establishing social support networks and improving access to mental health services can have a significant impact on improving the overall health of this population.

Conclusion: In conclusion, psychological support is effective in improving the mental health of pregnant women, limitations such as restricted sampling, inadequate coverage of vulnerable populations, and cultural differences highlight the need for more extensive research and targeted psychological interventions.

Key words: Quality of life, Mental, Women



Bridging Healing Pathways: A Systematic Review of Integrated Strategies to Enhance Mental and Physical Health in Women with Breast Cancer

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Abstract:

Background: Breast cancer is among the most common and significant cancers affecting women. Despite advances in treatment that have improved survival rates, patients frequently experience severe psychological issues across various disease stages, including anxiety, depression, distress, sleep disorders, and diminished quality of life. These mental health consequences are often overlooked. This systematic review aims to evaluate effective interventions to improve mental health in this vulnerable population.

Method: A comprehensive systematic search was conducted using the keywords “Women,” “Mental,” and “Breast cancer” across reputable international databases including PubMed, Web of Science, Wiley, and Google Scholar, as well as domestic databases such as Magiran, Irandoc, and Elmnet to ensure extensive coverage of both local and international scientific literature. From an initial pool of 552 studies, after rigorous screening based on inclusion and exclusion criteria, removal of duplicates, exclusion of studies without full text, prior reviews, and those published over five years ago, 18 eligible articles were selected for final analysis. These studies reflect the psychological challenges faced by women with breast cancer and diverse intervention strategies focused on mental health aimed at enhancing patients’ quality of life.

Results: Women with breast cancer confront significant care challenges, including delayed diagnosis with advanced tumors, limited access to essential diagnostic tests such as mammography and biopsy, and suboptimal treatments like chemotherapy and radiotherapy that increase mortality risk. Interventions involving ongoing collaboration among psychiatrists, oncologists, primary care providers, and specialized nurses, alongside qualitative interviews to deeply understand patient needs, can enhance early diagnosis, expand screening coverage, and ensure treatment completion. Such comprehensive support not only improves cancer treatment quality but also accelerates mental health recovery by reducing anxiety, depression, and other psychological problems, thereby fostering greater motivation and adherence to treatment. This integrative approach simultaneously strengthens physical and psychological health.

Conclusion: In conclusion, offering a relatively comprehensive overview of care disparities in women with severe mental illness and breast cancer, limitations such as the absence of detailed clinical data, severity of psychiatric symptoms, social support levels, and motivations behind treatment decisions challenge result interpretation. Hence, prospective mixed-method studies are recommended.

Key words: Women, Mental, Breast cancer



From Fear to Hope: A Systematic Review of Mental Health Boosters for Women with Cancer

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Abstract:

Background: Cancer remains one of the most challenging diseases of the modern era, with women experiencing unique psychological and social burdens. Particularly in advanced stages, cancer in women is associated with significant psychological distress and reduced quality of life. These psychological complications can adversely affect treatment adherence, tolerance to side effects, and clinical outcomes. This systematic review aims to identify prevalent psychiatric disorders and evaluate effective interventions to improve the mental health of this patient population.

Method: A comprehensive and targeted search was conducted in major international databases including PubMed, Web of Science, Wiley, and Google Scholar, alongside national sources such as Elmnet, Magiran, and IranDoc, using keywords “Cancer,” “Women,” and “Mental”. From an initial yield of 658 articles, duplicates, inaccessible full texts, reviews, irrelevant studies, and publications older than five years were excluded, resulting in 20 studies meeting strict inclusion criteria. These studies focused specifically on the psychiatric morbidity among women with cancer, psychological burden of disease, and the efficacy of psychotherapeutic and supportive interventions in enhancing mental well-being.

Results: Women with cancer, especially at advanced stages, frequently suffer from severe psychological challenges including anxiety, depression, fear of disease progression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), all of which substantially impair their quality of life and treatment compliance. Targeted psychological interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), supportive group therapies, and mindfulness- and acceptance-based approaches have demonstrated efficacy in alleviating this psychological burden. The utilization of digital health technologies and online platforms facilitates accessible, continuous, and remote psychosocial support, particularly benefiting patients hindered by physical symptoms or geographic limitations from attending face-to-face sessions. Professional training for healthcare providers in early recognition of psychiatric symptoms and fostering a non-judgmental therapeutic environment, integration of psychosocial care within comprehensive oncology management, and strengthening family support and peer self-help groups play critical roles in improving patient quality of life, adherence to treatment, and clinical outcomes.

Conclusion: In conclusion, despite the demonstrated benefits of psychological interventions for women with cancer, limitations such as socio-cultural heterogeneity highlight the need for broader, longitudinal studies and personalized approaches to optimize the quality and responsiveness of care.

Key words: Cancer, Women, Mental



Investigating the use of group emotion-focused therapy (EFT) in reducing anxiety and depression in adolescent girls who have experienced social trauma

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Abstract

Introduction and Problem Statement: Social traumas such as abuse, rejection, or lack of social support in adolescent girls can lead to anxiety and depression and jeopardize their mental health. Group emotion-focused therapy (EFT) with a focus on processing and integrating emotions is an effective approach to reducing psychological symptoms. By creating a safe space for expressing emotions, this therapy helps improve emotional regulation and reduce distress. However, the use of group EFT in reducing anxiety and depression in adolescent girls who have experienced social trauma has been less studied. This study aimed to investigate the use of group emotion-focused therapy in reducing anxiety and depression in this group.

Research Method: This was a quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design and a control group. The statistical population included adolescent girls aged 14 to 18 years old who had experienced social harm (such as harassment or rejection) and referred to counseling centers in Karaj in 1404. A sample of 60 people (30 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group) was selected by cluster random sampling. The experimental group underwent 10 90-minute emotion-focused group therapy sessions that included emotional processing exercises, self-awareness enhancement, and group support. The research instruments included the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II). The data were analyzed by univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

Research findings: The results showed that group emotion-focused therapy significantly reduced anxiety ($p < 0.001$) and depression ($p < 0.001$). The experimental group showed a 34% reduction in

anxiety scores and a 37% reduction in depression scores at post-test compared to the control group. These changes were statistically significant.

Conclusion: Group emotion-focused therapy is an effective approach to reduce anxiety and depression in adolescent girls who have experienced social trauma. This therapy helps improve the mental health of this group by enhancing emotional processing and group support.

Keywords: Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), anxiety, depression, adolescent girls, social harms.



Investigating the Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Improving Life Satisfaction, Reducing Anxiety, and Alleviating Depression in Female Entrepreneurs with High Occupational Stress

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Abstract

Introduction and Problem Statement: Female entrepreneurs often face high occupational stress due to the pressures of the business environment and multiple responsibilities, which can reduce life satisfaction and exacerbate symptoms of anxiety and depression. Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), with its emphasis on processing and managing emotions, is considered an effective approach for improving mental health. However, the application of this therapy in female entrepreneurs experiencing high occupational stress has been underexplored. This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of EFT in enhancing life satisfaction and reducing anxiety and depression among female entrepreneurs with high occupational stress.

Method: This quasi-experimental study employed a pretest-posttest design with a control group. The statistical population consisted of female entrepreneurs aged 25–45 years with high occupational stress in Karaj in 1404 (Persian calendar). A sample of 60 participants (30 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group) was selected through cluster random sampling. The experimental group underwent 10 sessions of 90-minute EFT, which included exercises on emotional self-awareness, emotion processing, and stress management techniques. The research instruments included the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), and Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II). Data were analyzed using univariate analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

Findings: The results indicated that EFT significantly increased life satisfaction ($p < 0.001$), reduced anxiety ($p < 0.001$), and improved depression ($p < 0.001$). The experimental group showed a 32%

increase in life satisfaction, a 35% reduction in anxiety, and a 33% reduction in depression compared to the control group in the posttest.

Conclusion: Emotion-Focused Therapy is an effective approach for improving life satisfaction and reducing anxiety and depression in female entrepreneurs with high occupational stress. By enhancing emotional processing, this therapy contributes to stress management and mental health improvement in this population.

Keywords: Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT), Life Satisfaction, Anxiety, Depression, Female Entrepreneurs, Occupational Stress.



The effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy in reducing symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome and improving psychological well-being in women

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), as a common psychosomatic disorder in women, is associated with physical symptoms and psychological distress that reduce psychological well-being. Psychological factors such as stress and anxiety play a role in exacerbating IBS symptoms, and stigma associated with mental health can hinder treatment. Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is known to be an effective approach for managing IBS and improving mental health due to its focus on modifying thought and behavioral patterns. However, the role of moderating variables such as social support in the effectiveness of CBT has been less investigated. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of CBT treatment on reducing IBS symptoms and improving psychological well-being in women and to analyze the role of social support as a moderating variable.

Research Method: This quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design and a control group was conducted in Kerman in 1403. The statistical population included women aged 20 to 45 years with IBS (predominant diarrhea or constipation). The research sample included 60 women (30 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group) who were selected through purposive sampling. The experimental group received CBT intervention in 10 60-minute sessions, while the control group did not receive any intervention. The research instruments included the IBS Symptom Severity Questionnaire (IBS-SSS), the Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire (PWB), and the Social Support Scale (MSPSS). Data were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and moderator analysis in SPSS-26 software.

Results: The results of the analysis of covariance showed that CBT significantly improved the severity of IBS symptoms ($F(1,57)=17.89$, $p<0.01$, $\eta^2=0.32$) and psychological well-being ($F(1,57)=13.42$,

$p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.28$) in the experimental group. Moderator analysis showed that social support enhanced the treatment effect ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.05$), such that women with higher levels of social support showed greater reduction in IBS symptoms and greater improvement in psychological well-being.

Conclusion: CBT treatment is an effective approach to reduce IBS symptoms and improve psychological well-being in women, and social support as a moderating variable enhances its effectiveness. It is suggested that CBT interventions be integrated with strengthening support networks to optimize treatment outcomes.

Keywords: Cognitive-behavioral therapy, irritable bowel syndrome, psychological well-being, social support, women.



Investigating the effect of coping skills training on reducing anxiety and improving physical health in women during menopause

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Abstract

Background and purpose of the study: Menopause in women is accompanied by hormonal and psychological changes that can lead to increased anxiety and decreased physical health. Anxiety during this period often exacerbates physical symptoms such as hot flashes, fatigue, and chronic pain, which are known as psychosomatic problems. Coping skills training is known as a psychological approach to managing stress and improving mental and physical health. However, the role of moderating variables such as social support in the effectiveness of this intervention has been less studied. This study aimed to investigate the effect of coping skills training on reducing anxiety and improving physical health in women during menopause and to analyze the role of social support as a moderating variable.

Research Method: This quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design and a control group was conducted in Kerman in 1403. The statistical population included women aged 45 to 55 during menopause. The research sample included 50 women (25 in the experimental group and 25 in the control group) who were selected through purposive sampling. The experimental group received a coping skills training program (including stress management, problem solving, and emotional regulation) in 8 90-minute sessions, while the control group did not receive any intervention. The research instruments included the Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI), the Physical Health Scale (SF-36), and the Social Support Questionnaire (MSPSS). Data were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and moderator analysis in SPSS-26 software.

Results: The results of the analysis of covariance showed that coping skills training significantly improved anxiety ($F(1,47)=15.67$, $p<0.01$, $\eta^2=0.30$) and physical health ($F(1,47)=12.89$, $p<0.01$, $\eta^2=0.27$) in the experimental group. Moderator analysis showed that social support enhanced the effect

of the intervention ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.05$), such that women with higher social support showed greater reduction in anxiety and greater improvement in physical health.

Conclusion: Coping skills training is an effective approach to reduce anxiety and improve physical health in menopausal women, and social support as a moderating variable increases its effectiveness. It is suggested that this intervention be combined with strengthening support networks to optimize results.

Keywords: Coping skills, anxiety, physical health, menopause, social support.



Investigating the role of self-efficacy in accepting treatment and improving mental health in women with chronic physical illnesses

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Chronic physical illnesses such as diabetes, arthritis, and heart disease in women are often accompanied by mental health challenges including anxiety and depression. Self-efficacy, as an individual's belief in their ability to manage their condition, can affect treatment acceptance and mental health improvement. Women with chronic illnesses may resist treatment acceptance due to psychological stigma and social barriers. This study aimed to investigate the role of self-efficacy in treatment acceptance and mental health improvement in women with chronic physical illnesses and to analyze social support as a moderating variable.

Research Method: This quasi-experimental study with a pretest-posttest design and a control group was conducted in Kerman in 1403. The statistical population included women aged 30 to 55 years with chronic physical diseases (type 2 diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis). The research sample included 60 women (30 in the experimental group and 30 in the control group) who were selected through purposive sampling. The experimental group received a self-efficacy training program (based on Bandura's model) in 8 90-minute sessions, while the control group did not receive any intervention. The research instruments included the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), Treatment Acceptance Questionnaire (ATR), Mental Health Scale (GHQ-28), and Social Support Questionnaire (MSPSS). Data were analyzed using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and moderator analysis in SPSS-26 software.

Research findings: The results of the analysis of covariance showed that self-efficacy training significantly improved treatment acceptance ($F(1,57)=16.23, p<0.01, \eta^2=0.31$) and mental health ($F(1,57)=13.95, p<0.01, \eta^2=0.29$) in the experimental group. Moderator analysis showed that social

support enhanced the effect of the intervention ($\beta=0.39$, $p<0.05$), such that women with higher social support showed greater treatment acceptance and mental health improvement.

Conclusion: Self-efficacy plays a key role in treatment acceptance and mental health improvement in women with chronic physical illnesses, and social support enhances this effect. It is suggested that self-efficacy enhancement interventions be integrated with social support programs to optimize treatment outcomes.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, treatment acceptance, mental health, chronic physical illnesses, women.



Estimating the Direct Medical Costs of Smoking-Attributable Non-communicable Diseases in Northeastern Iran From 2015 to 2023

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Abstract

Introduction: Cigarette smoking remains a major public health concern and a significant contributor to non-communicable diseases (NCDs), particularly in low- and middle-income countries. While smoking prevalence is higher among men, its impact on women's health is often underestimated. This study aimed to estimate the direct medical costs of smoking-attributable NCDs in hospitals affiliated with Mashhad University of Medical Sciences from 2015 to 2023, with a focus on gender-specific disparities.

Methods: A cross-sectional descriptive-analytical study was conducted, including all hospitalized patients aged 35 and older with smoking-attributable NCDs. Hospital records and cost data were extracted from the Hospital Information System (HIS), and the smoking-attributable fraction (SAF) was calculated using prevalence data and relative risks stratified by gender and disease category. Costs were analyzed using Microsoft Excel 2019 and STATA 14.

Results: Women comprised 44.1% of the study population, yet accounted for only 6.6% of the total direct medical costs attributable to smoking-related NCDs. The average annual cost for female patients was \$0.7 million, peaking at \$0.9 million in 2017. Although lower than in men, attributable risks among women were notable for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (13.7%, peaking at 26.7% in the 65–74 age group), lung cancer (14.9%), and coronary heart disease (2.2%). The most significant cost components for women were cardiovascular diseases (3.7% of total costs), respiratory diseases (2.4%), and cancers (0.6%).

Conclusion: Despite lower smoking prevalence among women, smoking-attributable diseases impose a measurable health and economic burden on this population. These findings highlight the necessity of gender-sensitive tobacco control strategies, including targeted prevention, cessation programs, and awareness campaigns aimed at reducing smoking-related harms among women. Addressing these disparities can improve women's health outcomes and reduce healthcare expenditures in the long term.

Key words: smoking, noncommunicable diseases, cost of illness, cost analysis, Iran



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران

Title of the Abstract: Social-managerial explanation of the causes of Induced Abortion with social participation

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Abstract:

Background: Induced Abortion is a common problem in most countries, including Iran. The purpose of this study was to Socio-managerial explanation of the causes of Induced Abortion with social participation in Ardabil city.

Methods: This study was conducted by action research method and social participation during 10months in Ardabil city. The study population was 33 married women aged 15-54 who were willing to have an induced abortion, identified by neighborhood health volunteers. People were investigated using open and semi-structured interviews. The interviews with the investigated people were recorded and then written down and analyzed based on the content analysis method.

Results: The results of data analysis led to the extraction of 3 main classes: individual, family, and social. The individual class was classified into 3 subclasses: mental, belief, and awareness, the family class was classified into 2 cultural and financial subclasses, and the social class was classified into 2 political and managerial subclasses.

Conclusion: The results showed that a set of individual, family and social factors determine the causes of Induced Abortion among married women.

Keywords: Social Participation, Induced Abortion, Social Management



Needs assessment among girls about puberty adolescent health

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Abstract:

Background: This study aimed to investigate the educational needs of 10–14-year-old girls about adolescent puberty health in Ardabil City in Iran, the matter of adolescent puberty health is one of the most important health priorities, especially for girls.

Method: This cross-sectional descriptive-correlational study was performed on girl students through stratified-cluster sampling in Ardabil city. The data gathering tool was a self-reported researcher-designed questionnaire consisting of 10 demographic questions and 35 self-care questions in 5 domains of self-care awareness, self-efficacy, enablers, enhancers and behaviors, based on the reviewed articles and resources. Descriptive statistics and chi-square test, correlation coefficient and regression were used to analyze the quantitative data.

Results: The mean age of the girls was 12.98 ± 4.67 . There was a significant relationship between the mother's level of education ($p < 0.001$) and students' knowledge about puberty and between mother's age ($p < 0.002$) and students' awareness of self-care behaviors during adolescence. The results of this study showed that 73.8% of girls were aware of puberty and menstruation problems. About 74.3% of girls had poor self-efficacy. About 77% of female students in the study did not have access to the required educational resources and classes that are one of the most important enablers of behavior formation. Eighty-eight percent of the families did not talk about the hygiene practices related to their children. The most common source of information about maternal health related practices was from mothers (64.8%). Correlation test between adolescents' health behavior and awareness ($r = 0.12$ $p < 0.007$) and between self-efficacy and health behaviors ($r = 0.14$, $p < 0.001$) revealed significant and positive relationships.

Conclusion: There is a need among adolescent girls for information about adolescent health and related health behaviors. Currently there is lack of adequate and accurate information. The role of mothers is the most important source of information for adolescent girls and educational approaches for mothers and adolescents should be designed.

Keywords: Adolescent health, Adolescents, Educational needs, Girls



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران



Breast cancer screening in women over 40 years of age on Kish Island in 1403 and its impact on the mental health of sufferers

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Abstract:

Introduction: Breast cancer, as one of the most common cancers among women world wide, poses serious health concerns. Early detection through effective screening programs plays a vital role in increasing the chances of successful treatment, improving quality of life, and reducing mortality.

Methods: This descriptive-analytical, cross-sectional study aimed to assess the level of participation in breast cancer screening programs among women aged over 40 years residing in Kish Island in 2024 (Iranian year 1403) and to evaluate the psychological outcomes of this process in women diagnosed with benign and malignant conditions. Data were collected through structured clinical interviews and review of medical records.

Results: Regular screening for breast cancer in women over 40 years old in Kish Island is significantly associated with the identification of disease cases at early stages and a substantial reduction in breast cancer treatment costs, as well as a decrease in anxiety and depression among affected women (both benign and malignant). These findings highlight the importance of health and psychological policy-making in women's health.

Conclusion: Initial results indicate that regular and informed implementation of screening, despite the initial stress caused by the diagnosis process, is associated with a significant reduction in anxiety and depression levels among affected women in the long term. These findings emphasize the need to integrate physical and mental health services into comprehensive women's health programs, especially in strategic areas such as islands and special regions.

Keywords: Screening, breast cancer, mental health, women, Kish Island, early detection, clinical interview.



Diet, Nutrition, and Women's Mental Health

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Abstract:

Background: A healthy diet plays a crucial role in maintaining and improving women's mental health. Mental, neurological and substance-use disorders presently represent the greatest global burden of disease. Likewise, depression and other psychopathologies are elevated risk comorbidities of other health hazards, such as obesity.

Nutrition has been implicated in behaviour, mood and in the pathology and treatment of mental illness.

The consequences of a poor diet also impact on a further global health hazard: obesity. Alzheimer's disease and depression are comorbidities of obesity, leading to the theory that vascular impairments may have a role in the development of dementia and psychiatric pathologies.

Nutrient-rich foods, particularly those high in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals, can support brain health and help regulate mood. Conversely, diets high in processed foods and low in essential nutrients may contribute to mental distress and exacerbate existing conditions.

Over the past decade, there has been a steady increase in epidemiological studies investigating the relationships between dietary patterns and mental states.

Many studies have shown that the more one eats a Western or highly processed diet, the more one is at risk for developing psychiatric symptoms, such as depression and anxiety.

Conversely, the more one eats a Mediterranean-style diet, the more one is protected from developing a mental disorder¹. In terms of direction of causality, in several studies, the dietary pattern has been shown to precede the onset of psychiatric symptoms.

The mechanisms of nutritional impact on the brain are likely to be many, complex and compound. However, recent research has focused on adult hippocampal neurogenesis. The hippocampus is a brain region associated with learning, memory and mood and is one of two structures in the adult brain where neurogenesis persists. The degree of neurogenesis in the hippocampus has been linked directly to cognition and mood, thus modulation of hippocampal neurogenesis by diet has recently emerged as a possible mechanism by which nutrition may impact on brain plasticity, function and mental health.

Conclusion:

Diet plays a vital role in women's mental health. A balanced, nutrient-rich diet, combined with regular exercise, can significantly support emotional well-being and help manage or prevent mental health conditions.

It's important to consider individual dietary needs and preferences, and to work with a healthcare professional or registered dietitian to create a personalized plan.

Key words: Diet, Nutrition, Women, Mental Health



Relationship between emotional intelligence, quality of life, and infertility stigma in infertile woman: A descriptive-correlational study

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Abstract:

Background: Infertility is one of the major crises in couples' lives, affecting both mental and physical health. One of the most significant consequences of infertility is stigma; moreover, emotional intelligence and women's coping style with these consequences can affect the quality of this disorder. This study aimed to investigate emotional intelligence, infertility stigma, quality of life, and the relationship between these variables in infertile women.

Method: This descriptive-correlational study was conducted from April 2023 to February 2024 on 349 infertile women referred to “Hazrat Maryam Infertility Center in Shahid Beheshti hospital” and “Isfahan Fertility and Infertility Center” in Isfahan, Iran. Sampling was done using a convenience sampling method, and tools included 4 questionnaires, a demographic and midwifery information form, the quality of life questionnaire, the female-infertility-stigma-questionnaire, and the SchutteEmotional-Intelligence scale.

Results: The results showed that the women's mean age was 35.08 ± 7.60 yr. The mean score for emotional intelligence was 109.06 ± 6.12 , and the infertility stigma's was 56.1 ± 14.73 . The results indicated a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and infertility stigma ($r = 0.13$, $p < 0.001$). Only the mean score of social well-being and general health dimensions had a significant relationship with the total score of emotional intelligence ($r = 0.037$, $p < 0.02$).

Conclusion: Infertile women have a lower quality of life and experience higher stigma. Since the quality of life and overall mental health affect the treatment process, also emotional intelligence plays an important role in human life, educational sessions and counseling should be considered in the treatment programs to improve the quality of life, thereby facilitating the treatment process with greater ease and speed.

Key words: Infertility, Quality of life, Emotional intelligence.



The role of telemedicine via WhatsApp group in education and follow-up of pregnant mothers after discharge: A practical experience in a teaching hospital

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Abstract:

Background: Continuity of care and education during pregnancy and the postpartum period is crucial for maternal and neonatal health. However, access to regular follow-up and reliable information is often limited. WhatsApp, a widely used messaging platform, presents a practical solution for telemedicine and peer support in such settings. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feasibility, effectiveness, and user satisfaction of a WhatsApp group as a tool for education, follow-up, and peer communication among pregnant and postpartum women after discharge from a teaching hospital.

Method: This prospective, observational study was conducted in a teaching hospital. Pregnant and postpartum women who were admitted to the hospital for outpatient care or discharged from the obstetrics unit were invited to join a moderated WhatsApp group. The group provided daily educational materials on antenatal and postnatal care, nutrition, warning signs, newborn care, and breastfeeding. It also enabled participants to ask questions to healthcare providers and engage in peer-to-peer discussions. The platform was moderated by obstetricians and midwives. Data were collected over a 6-week period through pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, activity logs, and satisfaction surveys.

Results: A total of 380 women (245 antenatal, 135 postnatal) joined the group, with 346 (91%) completing the 6-week follow-up. High satisfaction was reported by 92% of participants. Significant improvement in knowledge scores was observed post-intervention ($p < 0.01$). Peer-to-peer interactions accounted for 38% of total message exchanges, reflecting a strong sense of community and support. Common topics included birth preparation, managing pregnancy discomforts, breastfeeding challenges, and infant care. The intervention also led to increased compliance with follow-up appointments (85% vs. 60% historical control). Several minor complications were identified early through group discussions and timely provider response.

Conclusion: A WhatsApp-based telemedicine group is a feasible and effective method for providing education, follow-up care, and peer support to both pregnant and postpartum women. This approach enhances knowledge, improves care compliance, and fosters a supportive community, making it a valuable model for maternal healthcare, especially in resource-limited settings.

Key words: telemedicine ,postpartum ,pregnancy ,WhatsApp



Providing Short Educational Content, Including Podcasts and Infographics, to Educate Pregnant and Postpartum Mothers Through a Virtual Platform

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Abstract:

Background: Timely, accessible, and comprehensible health education is vital for ensuring the well-being of pregnant and postpartum mothers. Traditional methods often fail to engage modern audiences or overcome barriers such as distance, time constraints, and limited health literacy. Virtual platforms offering multimedia content may provide an effective alternative. The aim of this study was to assess the feasibility, effectiveness, and maternal satisfaction of using short educational content—specifically podcasts and infographics—delivered via a virtual platform to improve knowledge and engagement among pregnant and postpartum women.

Method: This observational, prospective study was conducted at a tertiary teaching hospital. Pregnant and postpartum women were enrolled and provided access to a virtual platform (via mobile application and web portal) offering short, structured educational content. The materials included weekly podcasts (5–10 minutes) and infographics on topics such as prenatal care, nutrition, danger signs, delivery preparation, breastfeeding, and newborn care. Engagement metrics were tracked through the platform, and knowledge acquisition was assessed via pre- and post-intervention quizzes. User satisfaction was measured using a standardized survey at the end of a 6-week period.

Results: A total of 380 women (245 pregnant, 135 postpartum) participated in the study. Completion rate for the 6-week program was 94%. Knowledge scores improved significantly post-intervention (mean increase of 24%, $p < 0.001$). Podcasts had an average listen-through rate of 82%, while infographics were viewed by 91% of users. Participants rated the content as highly useful (96%) and easy to understand (93%). Many appreciated the flexibility and clarity of short-format content, especially among those with lower literacy levels or limited free time. Feedback suggested increased confidence in managing pregnancy and newborn care.

Conclusion: Delivering short, focused educational content—such as podcasts and infographics—through a virtual platform is a feasible and effective method for educating pregnant and postpartum mothers. This approach enhances knowledge, supports informed decision-making, and is well-received by users. It represents a scalable, low-cost strategy for maternal health education, particularly in settings where access to traditional in-person services is limited.

Key words: educational content , postpartum , pregnancy , virtual



Out-of-Pocket Expenditures and Utilization Patterns of Psychological Consultation Services among Households with Reproductive-Age Women in Iran

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Abstract:

Background: Women of reproductive age (15-49 years) demonstrate particular vulnerability to psychosomatic disorders due to the bidirectional relationship between physical and mental health. Despite recognized needs, utilization of psychological and psychiatric consultation services remains substantially low in Iran. This study aimed to evaluate utilization patterns, out-of-pocket expenditures, and socioeconomic disparities in these specific services among Iranian households with reproductive-aged women.

Method: This cross-sectional analysis used data from the 2022 national Household Income and Expenditure Survey. We assessed household-level utilization of psychological and psychiatric consultation services and calculated associated out-of-pocket expenditures. Multivariate Poisson regression identified factors associated with service utilization, while economic inequality was measured using the Erreygers-normalized concentration index based on household wealth quintiles. All analyses incorporated survey weights and accounted for complex sampling design.

Results: Among 25,232 households, only 230 (0.54%, 95% CI: 0.42-0.65%) reported utilizing psychological or psychiatric consultation services. Users had mean annual out-of-pocket expenditures of 14,051,439 Iranian Rials (IRR) (SD: 23,700,000 IRR) with skewed distribution (median: 6,000,000 IRR; IQR: 3,600,000-13,560,000 IRR). Minimal economic inequality was found (concentration index: 0.005, $p < 0.01$). Regression showed significantly higher utilization among wealthier quintiles: second (IRR=2.23, $P=0.009$), third (IRR=3.36, $P<0.001$), fourth (IRR=2.74, $P=0.002$), and richest (IRR=5.84, $P<0.001$) versus poorest. Higher utilization also characterized male-headed households (IRR=4.37, $P=0.019$), households with children (IRR=2.26, $P=0.015$), urban residents (IRR=1.83, $P=0.002$), and those spending more than 10% of their real income on out-of-pocket health expenditures (IRR=1.92, $P=0.015$). Lower utilization was observed among households with heads aged 36-45 years (IRR=0.62, $P=0.036$) compared to those aged ≤ 35 years, and among households with heads who had income but were not employed (IRR=0.16, $P=0.026$) compared to employed heads.

Conclusion: This study reveals critically low utilization of psychological services among Iranian households with reproductive-aged women. Out-of-pocket expenditures are moderate, reflecting underutilization rather than absent need. Protective effects among middle-aged and economically inactive household heads suggest complex sociocultural barriers beyond financial constraints. While wealthier households show higher utilization, minimal overall inequality indicates non-financial factors primarily drive access patterns. These findings underscore the urgent need for interventions addressing mental health literacy, stigma reduction, and improved service accessibility rather than focusing solely on financial barriers.

Keywords: Psychological consultation services, Out-of-pocket expenditures, Reproductive health, Health disparities, Healthcare utilization, Iran



The effect of wormwood vaginal gel on depression in women of reproductive age with sexual dysfunction: A randomized controlled clinical trial

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Abstract:

Background: Regarding to the relationship between depression and sexual dysfunction and its negative effects on quality of life, this study was performed aimed to investigate the effect of wormwood vaginal gel on depression in women of reproductive age with sexual dysfunction.

Method: This two-group, triple- blinds randomized clinical trial study was performed in 2021 on 76 women referred to the gynecological clinic of Ghaem Hospital in Mashhad. The study tools included: Demographic Information, Female Sexual function Index (FSFI), and the DASS-21 Depression questionnaires. At first, the subjects were randomly divided into the intervention and placebo groups and used vaginal gel for 4 weeks. Sexual Function and DASS-21 questionnaires were assessed in two groups before and 4 weeks after the intervention. Data were analyzed by SPSS software (version 25) and Independent t, Mann-Whitney, Paired t, Wilcoxon and chi-square tests. $P < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Results: Before the intervention, there was no statistically significant difference between the mean score of total sexual function ($P=0.562$) and depression ($P=0.140$) in the intervention and placebo groups. Four weeks after the intervention, the mean score of sexual function significantly increased in the intervention group compared to the placebo group and the mean score of depression significantly decreased in the intervention group compared to the placebo group ($P<0.001$). The women with moderate or mild depression before the intervention had mild or no depression after the intervention.

Conclusion: Wormwood gel effectively improves depression in women with mild to moderate depression and sexual dysfunction.

- **Key words:** Depression, Sexual dysfunction, Wormwood



It is a hard decision': a qualitative study of perinatal intimate partner violence disclosure

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Abstract:

Background: Perinatal intimate partner violence is a hidden under reported and difficult to identify problem which has negative effects on mother and child. The present study aimed to explore barriers and facilitators of perinatal intimate partner violence disclosure.

Method: This qualitative study was carried out from October 2019 to January 2021 in Mashhad, Iran. Participants included 23 abused women (11 pregnant and 12 after birth) which were selected via purposive sampling. Semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussion were conducted until the data saturation was achieved. The data analysis was performed based on conventional content analysis adopted by Graneheim & Lundman.

Results: The main themes “barriers to disclosure” and “facilitators of disclosure” were emerged as the result of data analysis. Barriers to disclosure included negative disclosure consequences and protection of family privacy. Facilitators of disclosure included maternal self-efficacy, threats to security, and formal and informal supportive networks.

Conclusion: Most abused women did not disclose violence despite routine screening for perinatal intimate partner violence in antenatal care. Recognizing the barriers to and facilitators of violence disclosure play an important role in eliminating barriers, strengthening facilitators, providing effective supportive services for abused women, and reducing perinatal violence. Focus on the barriers to and the facilitators of disclosure will be useful to policymakers, health program planners, and health care providers to identify and manage intimate partner violence, appropriately.

Key words: Intimate partner violence, Disclosure, Barriers, Facilitators, Perinatal, Qualitative study



Workplace Stress and Burnout in Female Intensive Care Unit Nurses

Code: whc2025-00580391

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Abstract:

Background: Burnout and workplace stress represent major occupational health problems for intensive care unit (ICU) nurses worldwide. Female nurses, who make up the majority of the ICU workforce, are particularly vulnerable due to the dual pressures of professional demands and gender-specific societal expectations. High stress levels not only compromise mental health but also negatively affect quality of care, staff retention, and patient safety. Despite extensive global research, there is limited synthesis of evidence regarding the mental health outcomes of female ICU nurses, especially in contexts such as Iran and other low- and middle-income countries.

Method: A narrative review of the literature was conducted using PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science databases for articles published in the last 10 years. Search terms included “workplace stress,” “burnout,” “female nurses,” and “intensive care unit.” Inclusion criteria were peer-reviewed studies focusing on female ICU nurses, examining stress, burnout, and related mental health outcomes. Studies not specific to ICU settings or not addressing female nurses were excluded. A total of 169 global studies and 69 Iran-specific studies were screened; 15 global and 11 Iran-based studies met the inclusion criteria and were synthesized thematically.

Results: Across global studies, burnout prevalence among female ICU nurses ranged from 30% to 70%, with workload, night shifts, and lack of organizational support identified as primary stressors. Iranian studies reported comparable or higher prevalence rates (45–65%), highlighting additional challenges including staffing shortages, inadequate compensation, and limited psychosocial support systems. Protective factors identified across settings included social support, coping strategies, and resilience training. However, interventional research remains scarce, and longitudinal evidence is limited.

Conclusion: workplaces stress and burnout among female ICU nurses constitute a critical occupational and public health issue. Evidence demonstrates consistently high prevalence rates across global and Iranian contexts, with cultural and systemic factors amplifying the burden in Iran. There is a pressing need for organizational reforms, targeted interventions, and policy-level strategies to address burnout and protect the mental health of female ICU nurses. Addressing this challenge can enhance nurse well-being, improve patient care, and strengthen health system resilience.

Key words: Workplace Stress; Burnout; Intensive Care Unit; Female; Nurses.



The Barriers and Solutions to Effective Management of Bipolar Disorder During the Perinatal Period: A Thematic Review

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Abstract:

Background: Bipolar disorder (BD) in the perinatal period (pregnancy and postpartum) poses significant challenges due to physiological, hormonal, and psychosocial changes that increase vulnerability to mood instability. Effective management is essential for maternal and infant well-being, yet numerous barriers complicate care.

Method: This thematic review followed PRISMA guidelines to synthesize literature (2015–2025) from major databases and clinical guidelines, focusing on barriers and solutions for perinatal BD management. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were included. Data extraction, quality assessment, and thematic analysis were conducted independently by multiple reviewers.

Results: Four main barriers hinder effective management of perinatal BD: (i) Diagnostic difficulties due to overlapping symptoms with normal perinatal changes, causing misdiagnosis and delayed treatment; (ii) Treatment issues, such as concerns about medication safety and lack of specialized care, which increase relapse risk; (iii) Psychosocial barriers, including stigma, limited support, and stress from new maternal roles, which reduce help-seeking; and (iv) Poor communication among providers, resulting in fragmented care. These barriers harm both mothers and infants, leading to higher relapse rates and poor bonding. Solutions include improvements in diagnostics, clinical management strategies, patient education and empowerment, support systems, and policy considerations. However, knowledge gaps persist about long-term outcomes, psychosocial stressors, and optimal screening.

Conclusion: Managing perinatal BD requires multidisciplinary, individualized, and integrated approaches addressing clinical, psychosocial, and systemic barriers. Expanded research, provider education, and policy reform are critical to improving outcomes for mothers with BD and their families during the perinatal period.

Key words: Bipolar Disorder, Perinatal Care, Psychiatric Health Services Accessibility, Patient Education, Psychopharmacology



The relationship between Nomophobia and Netlessphobia in Girls high school students of Ardakan city in 2024

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Background and Aim: In the digital era, adolescents increasingly experience nomophobia (fear of being without a mobile phone) and netlessphobia (fear of lacking internet access). This study examined their relationship among female high school students in Ardakan, Iran (2024), assessing prevalence, correlations, and demographic patterns to inform mental health interventions.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional correlational design was employed with 162 female students (grades 10–12) selected via multistage cluster sampling. Validated scales measured nomophobia (8-item NoMoPhobia Questionnaire, $\alpha = 0.943$) and netlessphobia (12-item NetlessPhobia Questionnaire, $\alpha = 0.885$). Data were analyzed using SPSS-26, with Pearson's correlation testing associations ($p < 0.05$).

Results: Participants exhibited moderate nomophobia ($M = 21.30$, $SD = 6.98$) and higher netlessphobia ($M = 27.71$, $SD = 8.31$). A strong positive correlation was found ($r^* = .734$, $*p < .001$), explaining 54% shared variance. Most reported moderate smartphone use (1–6 hours/day; 92%), but 8.1% exceeded 6 hours. Age and grade distributions were balanced (16-year-olds: 53.7%).

Conclusion: Findings underscore the need for school-based digital wellness programs and policy reforms to address technology-related anxieties. Future research should expand to diverse populations and longitudinal designs.

Keywords: Nomophobia, Netlessphobia, Digital anxiety, Girls, Iran.



The Effectiveness of Pulmonary Exercise Programs on Post-Mastectomy Symptoms

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Abstract:

Background: Breast cancer is a common pathology of females throughout the world. Modern methods of breast cancer treatment include: radiotherapy; chemotherapy; hormone therapy; and immunotherapy. Nevertheless surgery still remains the primary intervention. Despite increasing survival rates, the disease and subsequent treatment continue to burden survivors with adverse sequelae, such as: lymphedema; limited shoulder motion; shoulder pain; muscle weakness; decreased functional capacity of the upper extremity; fatigue; depression; and cardiovascular and pulmonary complications. Previous studies reported that breast cancer survivors often experience activity-related dyspnea, impaired lung diffusion, and exercise intolerance. At the same time, it is emphasized that rehabilitation programs should be individualized for all breast cancer patients according to their preferences, and physical activity level. The purpose of this review study was to determine the effectiveness of pulmonary exercise programs aimed at the improvement of the functional state of the respiratory system in women with post-mastectomy syndrome.

Method: : Different databases including pubmed, Science Direct, OVID, MEDLINE, CINAHL, EMBASE, proquest, and Google Scholar were searched. The keywords used were: “pulmonary function” AND “respiratory function” And “lymphedema” And “postmastectomy” AND “pulmonary training”. After removing duplicated and irrelevant studies, at the end, 6 relevant articles were remained to be reviewed.

Results: Results from this systematic review of randomized controlled trial indicated that individualized physical rehabilitation programs targeted at improving the function of the respiratory system could produce a feasible therapeutic effect upon females with PMS. Improvement in respiratory function for patients with PMS is important, and exercise is a suitable option for breast cancer survivors to reduce breast cancer-related lymphedema.

Conclusion: The results suggest that individual exercise programs of moderate intensity improve pulmonary function. with post mastectomy lymphedema can undertake some forms of exercise without exacerbating their condition. It is well established that lymph propulsion and clearance is increased by varying total tissue pressure and that one of the most effective ways of varying tissue pressure is through musculoskeletal movement. Pressure differentials created by the diaphragm are also shown to influence lymph flow, helping to propel lymph centrally for drainage into the thoracic lymphatic ducts.

Combined deep breathing and gentle arm exercise represents an easy to implement and cost effective regime that can be utilized by women with secondary edema in the home environment. These results also suggest that other forms of exercise that incorporate deep breathing and arm exercise, such as Tai Chi, Qi Gong and Yoga may also be beneficial for post-mastectomy lymphedema sufferers. Further, these exercises may be useful as adjunct treatment along with CDT.

To sum up exercise may be an effective non-pharmacological method of attenuating the harmful effects of breast cancer therapies on the cardiovascular system, fatigue, and cancer-related lymphedema. The use of exercises should be carefully monitored.

Key words: pulmonary function, respiratory function, lymphedema, postmastectomy, pulmonary training.



The association between depressions, anxiety, and quality of life in women with PFD.

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Abstract:

Background: The pelvic floor represents one of the main pillars for the health and well-being of every woman: it is the center of femininity, sexuality, emotions and birth. It is an intimate area, which is nevertheless given little attention and is often not even treated. ON THE OTHER HAND Mental health is an essential component of well-being and quality of life. The etiology of female mental health disorders is multifactorial, including family history, exposure to stress, traumatic experiences, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions, lack of sleep.⁷ and presence of medical comorbidities such as pelvic floor disorders (PFD). There is a link between PFD and the worsening of mental health conditions. Female PFD includes a range of different and often overlapping symptoms classified within the diagnoses of chronic pelvic pain (CPP), urinary incontinence (UI), pelvic organ prolapse (POP), constipation, and/or fecal incontinence (FI) syndromes. The presence of these pelvic floor disorders and the impact of their symptoms reduce health-related quality of life (HRQoL) in women; likewise, they have direct negative consequences on physical, psychological, sexual, and social health. These disabling problems lead to social isolation, affect the performance of tasks, cause loss of personal and intimate relationships, and reduce participation in leisure activities. So this study aimed to survey the association between depressions, anxiety, and quality of life in women with PFD.

Methods

We proceeded stepwise using five databases: Google Scholar, PubMed, Cochrane, *CINAHL*, and Science direct to search for relevant studies. We narrowed the search from 2000 to 2025. In each database, we used the search terms: Pelvic Floor Disorders OR Urinary incontinence OR fecal incontinence OR pelvic pain OR pelvic organ prolapse OR constipation) AND Women OR female AND mental health OR depression OR depressive disorder OR anxiety OR anxiety disorders OR mental disorders AND quality of life OR health-related quality of life.

Results: The findings of this review have significant implications for healthcare professionals. It emphasizes the close relationship between pelvic floor disorders and anxiety/depression/ low quality of life underlining the need for comprehensive medical care that considers the physical and emotional dimension. Therapists should be aware of this relation when treating women with PFD, adapting therapeutic approaches according to individual needs. Additionally, this study may motivate additional research to better understand how these conditions are related, which could lead to more effective interventions in the future.

These women have a worse perceived quality of life in all dimensions. The scores obtained in previous HRQoL research differ depending on sociodemographic, socioeconomic, and gender characteristics, among others. In addition, some studies have shown that a low HRQoL score has been related to modifiable factors such as lifestyle, physical exercise, being overweight, sleep quality, among others.

Conclusion: In conclusion, Women with pelvic floor disorders have a worse perceived quality of life in all dimensions. The prevalence of anxiety and depression in women suffering from PFD is high based on our evidence. The therapist must to consider a multidimensional treatment plan to address all their symptoms so that these women can have a better perception of their health on a physical, mental and social level.

Key words: Pelvic Floor Disorders, Women, mental health, depression, anxiety, mental disorders, quality of life.



Relationship between glass ceiling and job promotion of women working in health centers

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Background: Women as half of these valuable resources in their professional development path face challenges. The glass ceiling is introduced as an obstacle to the progress of competent individuals, especially women within organizations. The glass ceiling is a metaphorical reference to the systemic barriers created in the workplace and by preventing minority groups from achieving high leadership and management, they are blocking their socio-economic progress. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between the glass ceiling and the job promotion of women working in health centers.

Methods: The present study is a descriptive-analytical study of correlation. 142 female employees working in the health centers of Shahrekord were studied as a census. Data were collected using two Smith Glass Ceiling Questionnaires (2012), a job promotion questionnaire in Chow organizations. Data analysis was performed with descriptive and inferential statistics tests (Pearson correlation) with 24SPSS software.

Results: Pearson correlation test results showed that there was a negative and significant relationship between the mean score of the glass ceiling with the job promotion of women working in health centers ($R = 0.732$ and $0.001.001$).

Conclusion: According to the findings of the study, the glass ceiling can prevent women's progress in health centers. Women, especially in health care professions, play a key role, therefore, the Ministry of Health and the officials of the health centers should emphasize the meritocratic system, regardless of gender, and provide serious support for women. Therefore, it is suggested that the Ministry of Health and health centers officials emphasize the meritocratic system and take serious support from women who have shown the necessary capabilities in managerial posts.

Keywords: Glass ceiling, Job promotion, Women.



How Do Iranian Women See Their Bodies? "Associations Between Perceived Body Image and Weight Status"

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Abstract:

Background: Body dissatisfaction is a public health concern, even in apparently healthy women, although limited knowledge exists about perceived body image and relevant factors in Eastern Mediterranean countries. This study explored the relationship between perceived and actual body size among Iranian women

Method: A total of 165 healthy premenopausal women aged 20-48 were recruited from health centers in Tehran. Subjective Stunkard's body scale was used to identify participant's self-perceived and desired body image size. Measurements of height, weight, and waist circumference were taken to determine general and abdominal obesity.

Results: The general overweight and obesity and abdominal obesity prevalence were 72.7 and 52.1 respectively. 57.6 percent of the participants had a correct self-perceived body size, while 30.3 and 12.1% of women had overestimation and underestimation of body size, respectively.. A high rate of body size dissatisfaction (87.9%) was found as only 12.1% of the participants had the same self-perceived body size and desired body size, showing no body discrepancy; 5.5 % had a positive discrepancy, while 82.4 % had a negative discrepancy and wished to be thinner. Among those who wanted to be thinner, 18.4 % had normal weight. The prevalence of body image satisfaction was significantly higher in women with normal weight and waist circumference in comparison to those who had general (OR:5.091, CI:1.920,13.500) and abdominal (OR: 3.797, CI: 1.310,11.002) obesity.

Conclusion: Body image dissatisfaction and misperception were highly prevalent among Iranian women, even those with normal weight, reflecting deep sociocultural pressures beyond physical size. Alongside tackling overweight and obesity, empowering women with self-image and realistic body image must be a priority to advance women's health and well-being. body image should be addressed in mental health promotion programs integrated with obesity prevention.



The Effectiveness of Memory Therapy on Self-Criticism and Rumination of Elderly Women

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Abstract:

Background: This research was conducted with the aim of determining the effectiveness of memory therapy on self-criticism and rumination of elderly women.

Method: The research method was semi-experimental with a pre-test and post-test design with a control group. The statistical population of the research was all the elderly women of Dezful city in 1403. The sample size of the research included 30 of these elderly women, who were selected by the purposeful sampling method and according to the entry and exit criteria of the study. The experimental group received 12 90-minute sessions per week. The questionnaires used in this research included self-criticism and rumination. Data were analyzed by multivariate and univariate analysis of covariance using SPSS version 22 software.

Results: The findings showed that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of self-criticism and rumination ($p < 0.001$). In other words, memory therapy reduced self-criticism and rumination.

Conclusion: According to the findings of the present study, memory therapy intervention can be suggested as an effective method to reduce self-criticism and rumination in elderly women

Key words: Memory therapy, self-Criticism ,rumination ,Elderly women



Survey of factors affecting the tendency towards childlessness and voluntary single-childhood in couples in Babol city

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Abstract

Background: Global fertility rates have declined significantly in recent decades, with voluntary single-childedness and childlessness (VSCC) emerging as a major social and policy challenge. These trends are particularly evident in urban Iran, yet regionally specific data from areas such as Babol remain scarce. This study aimed to identify the personal, social, and economic factors influencing married couples' VSCC tendencies in Babol, northern Iran.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted in urban Babol between November 2023 and February 2024. A total of 452 married couples aged 15–49 years were recruited using convenience and snowball sampling methods. Eligible participants were biologically capable of childbearing and not actively seeking pregnancy. Data were collected using the validated 22-item Questionnaire on the Contributing Factors of Tendency toward VSCC (QFT-VSCC). Descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests, and one-way ANOVA were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: The mean VSCC tendency score was 43.0 ± 11.8 . Among the five domains, the highest mean scores were observed for Occupational and Social Insecurity for the Child (63.4 ± 17.6) and Inappropriate Familial Context for Childbearing (49.1 ± 11.9), while the lowest was found for Social Modeling of Childlessness (30.6 ± 19.4). Women exhibited a significantly greater tendency toward VSCC compared to men ($p = 0.001$). Younger participants perceived greater barriers to childbearing, while no significant association was found between educational attainment and VSCC tendencies. Additionally, 70.3% of respondents reported perceived spousal betrayal as influencing their childbearing decisions, whereas only 14.2% acknowledged media influence. Moreover, 55.5% of participants expressed fears of reduced spousal attention following childbirth.

Conclusion: In urban Babol, concerns about balancing parenthood with educational and career aspirations, alongside worries about future security for children, are primary drivers of VSCC tendencies, particularly among women and younger couples. To support confident reproductive decision-making, policy interventions should prioritize the provision of affordable, high-quality childcare; flexible education and career pathways; gender-equitable parenting support; and targeted couple-based counseling programs.

Keywords: Voluntary childlessness; Single-child; Fertility intentions; Social determinants; Economic insecurity; Babol; Iran.



The Relationship Between Emotional Suppression and the Onset of Autoimmune Diseases in Women: A Systematic Review

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Abstract:

Background: Autoimmune diseases, such as Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis, and Hashimoto's thyroiditis, are chronic conditions that predominantly affect women. Recent research highlights the role of psychological factors—particularly emotional suppression and chronic stress—in the development and progression of these diseases. While genetic and hormonal factors are well-known contributors, psychological factors such as emotional suppression, inability to express emotions, and chronic psychological stress have also been implicated in immune system dysregulation. This systematic review aims to examine the scientific evidence regarding the impact of emotional suppression on autoimmune diseases in women.

Method: The protocol of this systematic review followed the PRISMA guideline. Due to the methodological heterogeneity of the included studies, a meta-analysis was not performed. An extensive search was conducted from January 1, 2010, to May 31, 2024, using current articles in databases such as PubMed, CINAHL, Web of Science, Scopus, and Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) with keywords “Emotional Suppression,” “Chronic Stress,” “Autoimmune Diseases,” “Rheumatoid Arthritis,” “Lupus,” “Hashimoto's thyroiditis”. All English and Farsi-published clinical trials that met the inclusion criteria were included in this study. Review articles, theses, letters to the editor, and reports were excluded from this study.

Results: The databases retrieved a total of 1018 articles; however, through the evaluation of titles and abstracts, this number was reduced to 107 articles. Finally, after conducting a comprehensive review of the full literature, we identified 16 articles that met our study criteria. Chronic emotional suppression activates the Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis, leading to increased cortisol secretion, immunoregulation, and increased inflammatory responses. Research suggests that stress and emotional suppression are associated with increased proinflammatory cytokines such as IL-6 and TNF- α . Based on the results, it was found that psychological interventions such as mindfulness-based therapies and acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) showed promise in reducing symptoms and inflammation in autoimmune patients ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Current evidence suggests that emotional suppression affects not only mental health but also immune function. Integrating psychological interventions into the holistic care of autoimmune patients, especially women, is recommended to improve both mental well-being and physical health outcomes.

Key words: Emotional Suppression· Chronic Stress· Autoimmune Diseases ·Women



A Scoping Review on the Impact of Psychosomatic Disorders on Menstrual Health in Adolescent Girls

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Introduction:

Menstrual health in adolescent girls is influenced by a complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors. Psychosomatic disorders—conditions where psychological distress manifests as physical symptoms—are increasingly recognized as contributors to menstrual irregularities and associated mental health challenges. Adolescents experiencing dysmenorrhea, premenstrual syndrome, or cycle irregularities often report heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and stress. This scoping review systematically maps the evidence on how psychosomatic symptoms affect menstrual health and overall well-being in adolescent girls, identifying key patterns and gaps in current research.

Methods:

This scoping review was conducted in July 2025, following the Arksey & O'Malley framework to systematically explore the relationship between psychosomatic disorders and menstrual health in adolescent girls. The five-stage process included: defining the research question, identifying relevant studies, selecting eligible publications, extracting data, and synthesizing findings. Searches were performed across PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar using keywords such as “psychosomatic symptoms,” “menstrual disorders,” “adolescent girls,” “mental health,” and “quality of life.” From an initial pool of 417 articles, 10 studies published between 2010 and 2025 were selected based on relevance. In line with scoping review methodology, no studies were excluded based on quality assessment.

Results:

Findings from the 10 studies were categorized into six thematic domains:

- Mental Health and Menstrual Disorders (6 studies):

Dysmenorrhea and menstrual irregularities were consistently associated with increased anxiety, depression, and psychological stress. Some evidence also suggested a link to suicidal ideation, though findings were inconclusive.

- Lifestyle Factors (1 study):

Regular physical activity was linked to reduced psychosomatic complaints, while excessive screen time correlated with increased psychological distress.

- Social Support and Daily Habits (1 study):



Support from family and peers during menstruation was associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression. Healthy eating and sleep hygiene contributed positively to mental well-being.

- Menstrual Disorders and Quality of Life (2 studies):

Dysmenorrhea and premenstrual syndrome were found to negatively impact school attendance, social functioning, and emotional stability.

- Chronic Illness and Menstrual Health (1 study):

Conditions such as Type 1 diabetes and other chronic illnesses were linked to delayed menarche and menstrual irregularities.

- Attitudes Toward Menstruation (2 studies):

Despite experiencing severe symptoms, some adolescents maintained a positive outlook toward menstruation. The need for educational programs to improve menstrual literacy and coping strategies was emphasized.

Conclusions:

This review highlights the multifaceted impact of psychosomatic disorders on menstrual health in adolescent girls. The findings underscore the importance of integrated interventions that address both physical and psychological dimensions of menstrual well-being. Enhancing social support, promoting healthy lifestyle habits, and implementing targeted educational programs may mitigate the adverse effects of psychosomatic symptoms. Future research should explore culturally sensitive care models and longitudinal outcomes to better support adolescent menstrual health.



A Scoping Review on the Structure and Function of Youth-Friendly Centers

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Introduction: Youth-friendly centers (YFCs) are designed to address the multidimensional needs of adolescents by offering safe, accessible, and empowering environments that promote physical, mental, and social well-being. These centers aim to foster trust, confidentiality, and active youth participation through multidisciplinary approaches and community integration. Despite growing global interest, the structure, implementation, and sustainability of YFCs vary widely across contexts. This scoping review synthesizes original empirical evidence on the design, function, and impact of youth-friendly centers, with a focus on identifying key components, barriers, and opportunities for scale-up.

Methods: The scoping review was completed in August 2025, following the Arksey & O'Malley framework to systematically map original empirical evidence on the structure and function of youth-friendly centers. The review followed five key stages: formulating the research question, identifying relevant studies, selecting eligible publications, extracting data, and synthesizing findings. A comprehensive search was conducted across PubMed, Scopus, and ScienceDirect using keywords such as "youth-friendly centers," "adolescent health," "community-based youth services," "multidisciplinary care," and "youth empowerment." The initial search yielded 312 records. After screening for relevance, duplication, and methodological rigor, 11 original empirical studies published between 2012 and 2024 were included. These studies were conducted in diverse settings, including Sweden, Spain, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia, and South Korea. In accordance with the principles of scoping reviews, no studies were excluded based on quality assessment. All selected publications involved primary data collection and addressed structural design, accessibility, youth participation, implementation challenges, or sustainability of youth-friendly centers.

Results: Findings were organized into four thematic domains:

Structural Design and Accessibility

Effective YFCs featured multidisciplinary teams, youth-informed spatial design, and trust-



building mechanisms. Accessibility was enhanced through co-created environments and culturally responsive staff practices.

Operational Barriers and Implementation Challenges

Common barriers included lack of privacy, insufficient staff training, low adolescent awareness, and infrastructural limitations—particularly in rural and underserved regions. Parental consent requirements and stigma further hindered service utilization.

Youth Engagement and Empowerment

Youth participation in planning, decision-making, and peer-led initiatives was associated with improved health literacy, civic responsibility, and community impact. Youth-led research and feedback mechanisms strengthened program relevance and responsiveness.

Sustainability and System Integration

Long-term success depended on policy support, resource allocation, and integration into primary health care systems. Community outreach and intersectoral collaboration were critical for maintaining service continuity and equity.

Conclusions: Youth-friendly centers play a pivotal role in promoting adolescent health and social development. The evidence underscores the importance of participatory design, structural inclusivity, and sustained investment in youth-centered models. In countries like Iran, where pilot initiatives and youth empowerment programs have emerged in recent years, scaling up these centers and embedding them within national health and social strategies could significantly enhance adolescent well-being and engagement.



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

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شیراز-ایران



The Correlation between Female Internship Nursing Students' Mental Health and their Spiritual Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract:

Background: Confronting serious illnesses, such as the coronavirus pandemic, represents a significant crisis in an individual's life. Each crisis often encompasses a spiritual dimension, resulting in a unique experience that affects not only physical health but also psychosocial and spiritual well-being. In recent years, spirituality and spiritual health have emerged as vital components in the enhancement and promotion of mental health. Consequently, this study was designed to explore the relationship between the mental health of female nursing internship students (final year of undergraduate degree) at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences and their spiritual health during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was a descriptive - analytical one. The study included 52 final-year nursing students who, as part of their internship, were involved in patient care and met the entry criteria for participation selected through census sampling. The data collection instrument included a questionnaire containing standard DASS-42 questionnaire and spiritual well-being questionnaire of Pultzin and Alison. The data were analyzed by SPSS 16 using descriptive and analytic statistics.

Results: The average total spiritual health score is 88.76 with a standard deviation of 6.16. Also, their average depression score is 17.8 (3.25), stress is 14.76 (3.14), and anxiety is 15.69 (3.45). Pearson's correlation coefficient showed statistically significant relationships between spiritual well-being and stress ($P = 0.01$, $r = -0.62$), anxiety ($P = 0.02$, $r = -0.59$), and depression ($P = 0.01$, $r = -0.67$) in participants.

Conclusion: The study's findings highlight the positive impact of spiritual health on reducing stress, anxiety, and depression among the students examined. Therefore, it is recommended to implement educational programs and interventions that promote spiritual well-being, as these can help students better manage mental health challenges, especially during crises like the coronavirus outbreak.

Keywords: COVID-19, Mental health, Spiritual well-being, Female, Internship Nursing Students



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The Relationship between Quality of Life and Spiritual Well-being in Female Nursing Faculty in COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

Background: In recent years, spirituality and spiritual well-being (SWB) have emerged as significant factors in enhancing quality of life (QoL). Spirituality offers individuals a sense of strength that enables them to cope with life's challenges, which, in turn, contributes to an improved QoL. This study aimed to explore the relationship between QoL and SWB among female nursing faculty during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was a descriptive-analytical investigation involving 75 female faculty members from the nursing departments at Isfahan Medical Sciences University and Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch, selected through census sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising three sections: demographic information, the SF-36 questionnaire to assess health-related quality of life, and the SWB questionnaire by Polutzin and Alison. The data were analyzed with SPSS version 16, using both descriptive and analytical statistics.

Results: Pearson test showed statistically significant relationships between SWB and subset of SF36. It means that relationships between SWB with social health ($P < 0.01$ and $r = 0.56$), SWB with mental health ($P < 0.01$ and $r = 0.68$), SWB with social relations ($P < 0.01$ and $r = 0.74$), SWB with health Environment ($P < 0.01$ and $r = 0.76$) were statistically significant. Also, total score of female nursing faculty' QoL were significantly correlated with SWB ($P < 0.01$ and $r = 0.59$).

Discussion and Conclusion: Our research findings reveal that the SWB and QoL among the female nursing faculty participants in this study were notably good. Moreover, we observed a significant correlation between SWB and QoL; specifically, those female nursing faculty members who reported higher levels of SWB also indicated higher QoL. This suggests that enhancing SWB could be crucial in promoting better overall well-being among female nursing educators.

Keywords: COVID-19, Quality of Life, Spiritual well-being, Female Nursing Faculty



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The Relationship between Spiritual well-being and Mental health in Female Nursing Faculty in COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

Introduction: Spirituality serves as a source of comfort, support, and meaning, fostering a sense of belonging and existential interconnectedness that enhances mental health. This is particularly evident in stressful circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, where faith and spirituality appear to have a beneficial impact. The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between spiritual well-being (SWB) and mental health among Female Nursing Faculty as they navigated the challenges of teaching students in hospitals designated for COVID-19.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was a descriptive - analytical one, conducted on 75 female faculty members from the nursing departments of Isfahan Medical Sciences University and Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch using a census sampling method. The data collection instrument included a questionnaire containing three parts (demographic information, standard DASS-42 questionnaire and SWB questionnaire of Paltun and Alison). The data were analyzed by SPSS 16 using descriptive and analytic statistics.

Results: Pearson's correlation coefficient showed statistically significant relationships between SWB and stress ($P < 0.001$, $r = -0.68$), anxiety ($P < 0.001$, $r = -0.69$), and depression ($P < 0.001$, $r = -0.64$) in participants. The two aspects of SWB (existential health and religious health) were also significantly correlated with stress, anxiety, and depression.

Conclusion: Our findings indicate that female nursing faculty who exhibit higher levels of SWB experience reduced stress, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize strategies that enhance SWB to improve mental health among nursing faculty.

Keywords: COVID-19, Mental health, Spiritual well-being, Female, Nursing faculty



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Survey the Stress, Anxiety and Depression among Female Nursing Faculty during the Coronavirus Pandemic

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Abstract:

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic placed nursing faculty at the forefront of the fight against the virus, all while they continued to educate nursing students. The psychosocial impacts of the pandemic on health professionals, especially female nursing faculty, are considerable, as females tend to be more vulnerable to psychological stress. Recognizing the critical importance of mental health for female nursing faculty, this study sought to explore the levels of stress, anxiety, and depression experienced by these educators while teaching students in designated COVID-19 hospitals.

Methods: This cross-sectional descriptive-analytical study involved 75 female faculty members from the nursing faculties of Isfahan Medical Sciences University and Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch. Participants were recruited through a census sampling method, specifically targeting those who expressed interest and met the eligibility criteria. The data collection instrument consisted of demographic information and the DASS-42 questionnaire. Data analysis was performed at a 95% confidence level using SPSS version 16 software, employing both descriptive and analytical statistical methods.

Results: The prevalence rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among female faculty members were 25%, 35%, and 28%, respectively. Additionally, 15 female faculty members (20%) experienced extremely severe anxiety, 12 (16%) faced extremely severe depression, and 10 (13.33%) reported extremely severe stress. The study also revealed a statistically significant correlation between marital status and both depression ($P = 0.01$, $F = 2.90$) and anxiety ($P = 0.02$, $F = 2.60$), as well as stress ($P = 0.04$, $F = 2.80$). Married people had lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. However, there were no statistically significant correlations between depression, anxiety, or stress and other demographic variables such as age, educational level, income, or residence ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: The present study indicates that in the COVID-19 pandemic stress, anxiety, and depression were prevalent and significant issues among nursing faculty members. It is crucial to focus on developing mental health management workshops to aid their professional development and alleviate psychological stress. Additionally, in critical situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, offering training on the proper use of personal protective equipment during these workshops can effectively help mitigate feelings of depression, stress, and anxiety.

Keywords: COVID-19, Stress, Anxiety, Depression, Female Nursing Faculty.



Prenatal exposure to ambient air pollution and risk of fetal overgrowth: Systematic review of cohort studies

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Abstract:

Background: Fetal overgrowth has detrimental effects on both the mother and the fetus. The global issue of ambient air pollution has been found to contribute to fetal overgrowth through various pathways. This study aimed to identify the association between prenatal exposure to ambient air pollution and the risk of fetal overgrowth.

Method: We identified articles between January 2013 and February 2024 by searching the Web of Science (WoS), PubMed, Proquest, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases. Quality assessment was performed using the Newcastle Ottawa scale. This review was provided based on the PRISMA guideline and registered with PROSPERO, "CRD42023488936".

Results: The search generated 1719 studies, of which 22 cohort studies were included involving 3,480,041 participants. Results on the effects of air pollutants on fetal overgrowth are inconsistent because they vary in population and geographic region. But in general, the results indicate that prenatal exposure to air pollutants, specifically PM_{2.5}, NO₂, and SO₂, is linked to a higher likelihood of fetal overgrowth (macrosomia and large for gestational age). Nevertheless, the relationship between CO and O₃ pollution and fetal overgrowth remains uncertain. Furthermore, PM₁₀ has a limited effect on fetal overgrowth. It is essential to consider the time that reproductive-age women are exposed to air pollution. Exposure to air pollutants before conception and throughout pregnancy has a substantial impact on the fetus's vulnerability to overgrowth.

Conclusion: Fetal overgrowth has implications for the health of both mother and fetus. fetal overgrowth can cause cardiovascular diseases, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other diseases in adulthood, so it is considered an important issue for the health of the future generation. Contrary to popular belief that air pollution leads to intrauterine growth restriction and low birth weight, this study highlights that one of the adverse consequences of air pollution is macrosomia or LGA during pregnancy. Therefore, governments must focus on implementing initiatives that aim to reduce pregnant women's exposure to ambient air pollution to ensure the health of future generations.

Key words: Fetal macrosomia, Large for gestational age, Fetal overgrowth, Air pollution, Pregnancy.



Coping Strategies of Iranian Women to Maintain Mental and Sexual Health during the COVID-19 Pandemic: a qualitative study

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Abstract:

Background: Coping strategies influence individual responses to crises like COVID-19. The study examines coping strategies among married women, to their pivotal role in protecting family well-being and promoting mental and sexual health during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Methods: Recent research utilized qualitative content analysis at Kashan University of Medical Sciences during the sixth Covid-19 wave. An initial sample of 300 married women was selected in healthcare centers of Kashan University of Medical Sciences, including 150 women with and 150 women without a history of COVID-19. Their mental and sexual health status was determined using General Health Questionnaires (GHQ-12), 6-item Female Sexual Function Index (FSFI-6), and a Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX). In the next stage, for purposeful sampling, women whose average scores in the three questionnaires were one standard deviation higher or lower than

the mean were invited to the interview sessions. The final sample included 60 women. Data was collected through individual interviews using open-ended questions. Participants signed a consent form and approved recording. Trust was built, and exploratory questions were used. Each interview lasted 35 to 55 minutes. Data collection ended after 27 interviews when saturation was reached. Data analyzed using MAXQDA (version 2020) through a conventional content analysis approach and based on the method proposed by Zhang & Wildemuth in eight steps.

Results: From the analysis of the interviews with 27 participants, 67 codes, 10 secondary themes and 3 main themes were obtained. The age range of the interviewed participants was 25-50 years. Most of the participants' level of education was bachelor. 14 of the participants had a history of COVID-19 infection and 13 had no history of infection. The coping strategies used by married women with and without a history of COVID-19 to improve their mental and sexual health included the following: a) expanding personal-social communication: 27 primary codes in this category were classified into five category of Internet and virtual space management, return to social system, family relationship management, expanding relationships between couples, and seeking social support.

b) Enhancing self-management: This theme summarized 23 cases of primary codes, which included category like promoting physical health, practicing psychological self-management, and choosing behaviors to prevent the disease of Covid-19.

And c) turning threats into opportunities: 17 primary codes in this group were extracted in two category of spending free time for personal growth and performing religious activities.

Conclusion: Since epidemic diseases can have many negative effects on different social groups, a preventive program in line with coping strategies should be designed and presented to society by health workers.

Keywords: Coping strategy, COVID-19, women, Sexual health, Mental health.



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران

The incidence rate and trends of physical violence by firearm among Iranian women: An ecological study

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Poster presenter: Alireza Dehghani

Abstract:

Background: Physical violence involving firearms remains a major public health and social concern worldwide, with severe consequences, particularly for women. Understanding its long-term trends is essential for effective prevention. This study aimed to investigate the incidence rate and trend of Physical violence by firearm in Iranian women from 1990 to 2021 using joinpoint regression.

Method: The incidence rate of Physical violence by firearm in Iranian women from 1990 to 2021, standardized by age, was collected from the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) website and entered into Excel software. Then, using Joinpoint software, Joinpoint regression was employed to determine the trend of Physical violence by firearm, annual percentage changes (APC), and average annual percentage changes (AAPC) along with their confidence intervals. The significance level of the tests was considered 5%.

Results: In 2021, the lowest incidence rate of Physical violence by firearm in women was 6.370 per 100,000 people. The highest incidence rate occurred in 1990, with 8.021 per 100,000 people. The incidence rate of physical violence with firearms among decreased significantly from 2013 to 2019 (APC = -2.73 (-2.83, 2.64)) but decreased non-significantly from 2019 to 2021 (APC = -0.012 (-0.359, 0.298)). Overall, the age standardized incidence rate of Physical violence by firearm during the study period (1990 to 2021) decreased by an average of 74.0%, this decrease was statistically significant.

Conclusion: The incidence of firearm-related violence among Iranian women significantly declined, especially between 2013 and 2019, with a slower, non-significant decrease thereafter. These findings suggest positive impacts of policies and interventions but underscore the need for continued efforts to address underlying factors and sustain the downward trend.

Key words: Physical violence by firearm, Incidence, Women, Ecological study



The incidence rate and trends of Physical violence by sharp object among Iranian women: An ecological study

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Poster presenter: Alireza Dehghani

Abstract:

Background: Physical violence by sharp objects is a serious public health concern, particularly among women, with severe consequences. Understanding its long-term incidence trends is essential for planning effective preventive measures. This study aimed to investigate the incidence rate and trend of Physical violence by sharp object in Iranian women from 1990 to 2021 using joinpoint regression.

Method: The incidence rate of Physical violence by sharp object in Iranian women from 1990 to 2021, standardized by age, was collected from the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) website and entered into Excel software. Then, using Joinpoint software, Joinpoint regression was employed to determine the trend of Physical violence by firearm, annual percentage changes (APC), and average annual percentage changes (AAPC) along with their confidence intervals. The significance level of the tests was considered 5%.

Results: In 2020, the lowest incidence rate of Physical violence by sharp object in women was 31.520 per 100,000 people. The highest incidence rate occurred in 1990, with 39.504 per 100,000 people. The incidence rate of Physical violence by sharp object among women in Iran decreased significantly from 2013 to 2019 (APC = -2.35 (-2.44, -2.28)) but decreased non-significantly from 2019 to 2021 (APC = -0.06 (-0.358, 0.192)). Joinpoint regression indicates 5 joinpoints. Overall, the age standardized incidence rate of Physical violence by sharp object during the study period (1990 to 2021) decreased by an average of 71.5%, this decrease was statistically significant.

Conclusion: The incidence of sharp-object-related physical violence among Iranian women declined significantly between 2013 and 2019, with a slower, non-significant decrease thereafter. These findings highlight the possible impact of prevention policies and social interventions, though persistent rates emphasize the need for continued, targeted efforts to sustain and accelerate this decline.

Key words: Physical violence by sharp object, Incidence, Women, Ecological study



The relationship between domestic violence and pregnancy symptoms and experience: a biopsychosocial perspective in Iranian pregnant women

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Abstract:

Background: background of study and State the study objective precisely.

Introduction: Domestic violence is a significant social determinant of maternal health and has negative physical and psychological impacts in pregnancy. The aim of the present study was to investigate the association of domestic violence with pregnancy symptoms and general pregnancy experience among pregnant Iranian women.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study conducted during 2024 using a two-stage cluster sampling. Four hundred and fifteen pregnant women under coverage of the public health centers in Urmia, Iran, were enrolled. Data were obtained with the WHO Domestic Violence Questionnaire, the Pregnancy Symptoms Inventory (PSI) and the Pregnancy Experience Scale (PES). Adjusted general linear models were used to estimate the relationship between each type of violence and maternal outcomes in multivariate analysis.

Results: The prevalence of emotional, physical, and sexual violence was 86.0%, 67.7%, and 79.5% respectively. Mean (SD) score for PSI was 49.45 (14.38), happiness was 14.32 (6.48) and worry was 16.21 (2.51). All three types of violence—emotional, physical, sexual—were strongly associated with more severe symptoms of pregnancy ($p < 0.001$ for all levels). Furthermore, women abused sexually and emotionally reported a statistically significant lower happiness during pregnancy ($p < 0.05$) whereas sexual and emotional abuse were both significantly associated with a higher level of worry about pregnancy ($p < 0.01$).

Conclusions: Since domestic violence during pregnancy is strongly related to negative physical and emotional experiences, there is an urgent need for integrated biopsychosocial strategies to screen, prevent, and minimize the consequences of violence in maternal health. Prenatal care can be enhanced by psychosocial screening and supportive interventions, which may have beneficial pregnancy and health outcomes.

Keywords: Adolescent, Teenage Pregnancy, Biopsychosocial, Domestic Violence



Effectiveness of a comprehensive empowerment program on reducing stress and improving mental and physical health indicators in women aged 18 to 45

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Abstract:

Background: Women in the reproductive age group suffer from numerous psychological and physical problems impacting their well-being. The current study was conducted to examine the impact of an empowerment program that included healthy lifestyle instruction, psychological skill, and self-care on decreasing stress and health outcomes in women between the ages of 18-45 years.

Methods: Pretest-posttest control group design was used within this quasi-experimental study on 80 women referred to Tehran's integrated health centers. There were two groups of intervention ($n = 40$) and two groups of control ($n = 40$) which were randomly allocated to participants. The intervention group underwent 8 sessions of education on nutrition, physical exercise, mindfulness, and stress coping. The information was gathered through generic questionnaires DASS-21 (Anxiety, Stress, and Depression) and WHOQOL-BREF (Quality of Life) and were analyzed with independent t-tests, paired t-tests, and analysis of covariance.

Results: The mean age of the intervention group participants was 31.5 ± 6.2 years and the control group was 30.9 ± 5.8 years, and these differences were not significant ($P = 0.4$). After intervention, the stress score was significantly decreased in intervention group from 25.4 ± 6.7 to 15.3 ± 5.9 ($P < 0.001$), but it remains unchanged in control group (24.9 ± 6.4 to 23.7 ± 6.1). The patients in the EG had a better chance than those in the CG in QoL, 58.3 ± 7.5 to 72.6 ± 8.1 ($P < 0.001$) and no significance was found on the QoL of the patients on the CG. Physical signs, such as activity and blood pressure, also improved, though changes in BMI were not statistically significant ($P = 0.08$).

Conclusions: A comprehensive women's empowerment program can be an efficient instrument in reducing stress and in improving the physical and psychosocial health of the women. The results will help further inform evidence-based health policies and action plans regarding women health.

Keywords: Empowerment; Stress; Indicators; Health.



Psychosocial predictors of childbirth self-efficacy and fear of childbirth in adolescent and adult pregnant women: a cross-sectional study in Iran

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Abstract:

Background: Adolescent pregnancy is an increasing public health issue and is associated with unique challenges to maternal psychological well-being. Although several aspects of adolescent pregnancy have been examined, childbirth preparedness self-efficacy and fear have been largely overlooked. The purpose of this study was to analyze the differences in childbirth self-efficacy and fear of childbirth levels in adolescent and adult pregnant women, as well as identify their psychosocial predictors.

Methods: The present comparative cross sectional study was conducted in 2020 in health centers of Urmia, Iran. In all, 360 pregnant women (adolescents and adults) were recruited by two-stage cluster sampling. Instruments included the Childbirth Self-Efficacy Inventory and the Wijma Delivery Expectancy/Experience Questionnaire. Data were analyzed with Pearson's correlations, independent t-tests, and adjusted general linear models.

Results: The mean (SD) FOC score was significantly higher in adolescent women [114.7 (14.1)] than in adults [108.1 (23.1), $p= 0.001$]. Adolescent women also had lower childbirth self-efficacy ratings in the active phase and second stage of labour when compared to adult women. In second phase, total self-efficacy was 203.5 (32.1) for adolescents and 212.0 (26.5) for adults ($p= 0.008$). Pregnancy in adolescence continued to significantly predict greater fear of childbirth and lower self-efficacy, even after adjustment for sociodemographic variables.

Conclusion: Adolescents pregnant women showed greater fear of childbirth and lower self-efficacy than the pregnant adult women. These psychosocial disparities underscore the importance of prenatal interventions targeted to emotional readiness, particularly among adolescents. Adding mental health support to standard antenatal care may enhance mothers' experiences of birth and improve key maternal outcomes among high-risk age groups.

Keywords: Childbirth, Pregnancy, Self-Efficacy, Fear, Psychosocial



Assessing the risk of cardiovascular diseases in women and men in the primary health care: A case study in Ardabil, Iran

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Abstract:

Background: In Iran, half of all deaths and 79% of deaths from non -communicable diseases are attributed to cardiovascular diseases. This study was conducted with the aim of determining the status and trend of providing cardiovascular disease risk assessment services by gender, in order to carry out the necessary interventions in the comprehensive health service centers of Ardabil province, Iran.

Method: The present descriptive study was conducted in Ardabil University of Medical Sciences. It used the data available in the registration system of the Health Network. The research population consisted of all men and women aged between 40 and 80 who visited the comprehensive health service centers to perform risk assessment of cardiovascular strokes in the province from 2018 to the end of 2022. The data were entered into Excel software. FORCAST function was used to predict the future through a linear regression analysis. To compare the final results, which is actually a reduction in mortality due to cardiovascular diseases, the difference test of two mortality rates due to cardiovascular diseases was used in 2018 and march 2023.

Results: The results showed a relatively high prevalence of some risk factors for cardiovascular diseases including history of hypertension, diabetes, abdominal obesity, suspected diabetes, lipid disorder, body mass index of 30 and above in women. Also, the results of the study showed that 38.3% of men and 61.72% of women were at the risk level of 10 -20%, 34.8% of men and 65.2% of women were at the risk level of 20 -30%, and 28.9% of men and 71.1% of women were at the risk level above 30%.

Conclusion: Women were more at risk of cardiovascular diseases and complications than men. Knowing the common risk factors in the region helps to focus interventions on effective prevention and treatment measures and to adopt evidence - informed policies in order to reduce these risk factors.

Key words: Risk Assessment, Cardiovascular Diseases, Primary Health Care, Ardabil



Relationship between the educational phase of the PRECEDE model and the quality of life among postmenopausal women referred to the clinics of Asadabad city in 2021

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Abstract:

Background: Identifying the factors affecting the quality of life in postmenopausal women will help to design and implement the quality-of-life improving interventions tailored to these women's needs. This study aimed to determine the relationship between the educational phase of the PRECEDE model and the quality of life among postmenopausal women.

Method: The present cross-sectional study was conducted on 240 postmenopausal women in Asadabad in 2021. The data collection tool included demographic information, the menopause-specific quality of Life questionnaire (MENQOL), and a questionnaire based on educational phase constructs of the PRECEDE model about menopause and behaviors related to the control of menopause complications. Data were analyzed using the SPSS software version 16.

Results: The mean score of quality of life in the women was 72.72 ± 23.15 . Perceived self-efficacy ($\beta = -0.367$, $P < 0.001$) and attitude ($\beta = -0.155$, $p = 0.009$) were significant predictors of quality of life. The educational phase constructs of the PRECEDE model explained about 33.6% of the variance of quality of life among the postmenopausal women in Asadabad.

Conclusion: Educational phase constructs of the PRECEDE model are useful for identifying the factors affecting the quality of life in postmenopausal women, and designing educational interventions in this area. It is recommended promoting self-efficacy (to perform behaviors related to the control of menopause complications) and improving attitude toward menopause to be integrated into all educational interventions designed and implemented to improve the quality of life in postmenopausal women.

Key words: PRECEDE model, quality of life, postmenopausal women



The effect of lemon balm, chamomile, and orange blossom on postpartum depression and fatigue: A systematic review

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Background: Postpartum depression and fatigue are common problems that affect the mental health and quality of life of mothers. Given the increasing trend towards complementary and herbal treatments, this systematic review was conducted with the aim of examining the existing evidence on the effectiveness of lemon balm, chamomile, and tangerine on reducing postpartum depression and fatigue.

Methods: In this systematic review, published studies on the effects of lemon balm, chamomile, and tangerine on postpartum depression and fatigue were searched and reviewed from reliable databases. Inclusion criteria included clinical, quasi-experimental, and animal trials that examined the effects of these plants individually or in combination on postpartum depression or fatigue indicators. After extraction and quality assessment, the data were analyzed descriptively and comparatively.

Results: Based on the available evidence, aqueous and alcoholic extracts of lemon balm leaf showed a significant reduction in immobility time (an index of depression) in animal models of postpartum depression, with this effect being stronger at higher doses and with the alcoholic extract. The possible mechanism of this effect is attributed to the active ingredient verbascoside. For chamomile and bitter orange, no direct evidence from human or animal studies on postpartum depression or fatigue was found in the available literature, but previous studies have pointed to the sedative and anti-anxiety effects of these plants (inference based on common knowledge). There are also studies on other complementary interventions such as reflexology and auriculotherapy that show the effectiveness of reflexology in reducing postpartum fatigue, but auriculotherapy did not have a significant effect on postpartum depression.

Results: Based on the available evidence, aqueous and alcoholic extracts of lemon balm leaf showed a significant reduction in immobility time (an index of depression) in animal models of postpartum depression, with this effect being stronger at higher doses and with the alcoholic extract. The possible mechanism of this effect is attributed to the active ingredient verbascoside. For chamomile and bitter orange, no direct evidence from human or animal studies on postpartum depression or fatigue was found in the available literature, but previous studies have pointed to the sedative and anti-anxiety effects of these plants (inference based on common knowledge). There are also studies on other complementary interventions such as reflexology and auriculotherapy that show the effectiveness of reflexology in reducing postpartum fatigue, but auriculotherapy did not have a significant effect on postpartum depression.

Keywords: Postpartum Depression, Postpartum Fatigue, Lemon balm, Chamomile, Systematic Review, Traditional medicine.



The Effect of Health Awareness Promotion with Stress Management-based Consultation on Anxiety and Reproductive and Sexual Self-care in Women with Human Papillomavirus: A Controlled Clinical Randomized Trial

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Abstract

Background: Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a sexually transmitted infection that, due to concerns about the risk of cervical cancer, is often associated with psychological disorders such as anxiety and stress. This study aimed to examine the effect of health awareness counseling with a stress management approach on anxiety and reproductive and sexual self-care in women with HPV.

Method: This randomized controlled clinical trial was conducted on women attending the oncology clinic at Al-Zahra Hospital (a specialized referral center in East Azerbaijan Province, Tabriz, Iran) from February to May 2024. Participants in the study were women over the age of 18 who tested positive for HPV and were willing to undergo an interview-based administration of the Spiel Berger State Anxiety Inventory questionnaire. Women with anxiety scores between 32 and 64 were included in the study. After obtaining written informed consent, participants were randomly assigned to either the intervention or control group using stratified block randomization (4- and 6-block design) based on low-risk and high-risk HPV types, with a 1:1 ratio, using RAS software. Demographic-obstetric, reproductive, and sexual self-care questionnaires were completed for both groups before the intervention. The intervention group received six counseling sessions focused on awareness and stress management, each lasting 60-90 minutes, held in a room at Al-Zahra Hospital's clinic. Four weeks after the intervention, post-test questionnaires, including the Spiel Berger State Anxiety Inventory and reproductive self-care assessments, were completed through interviews. ANCOVA statistical analysis was used to compare the mean scores between the two groups, adjusting for baseline scores.

Results: The results of this study indicated that compared to the control group and after counseling, the average overall score of anxiety [AMD, Adjusted Mean Difference: -14.42, 95% CI: -17.54 to -11.30, $p = 0.001$] significantly decreased in the intervention group and reproductive and sexual self-care [AMD: 32.93, 95% CI: 21.02 to 44.84, $p = 0.001$] significantly increased in the intervention group.

Conclusion: Health promotion with stress management-based counseling can effectively reduce anxiety and enhance reproductive and sexual self-care performance in women with HPV. However, further randomized clinical trials are needed before making a definitive conclusion.

Keywords: human papillomavirus (HPV), stress management, health awareness, anxiety, self-care



The effect of counseling on psychological issues in students with premenstrual syndrome

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Abstract:

Background: Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) is a common issue among women worldwide, and one of the most prevalent problems during the reproductive years, which can have a negative impact on daily normal life. This study investigated the effectiveness of counseling interventions in addressing psychological issues related to PMS among students.

Methods: A randomized trial study with two parallel arms was done on 100 university students aged 18 to 38 at Babol University of Medical Sciences. The participants were randomly divided into two groups intervention and control. The data collection tools included questionnaires on demographic-fertility characteristics, the Premenstrual Symptoms Screening Tool (PSST), the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS), and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-14). The data were assessed using chi-square, t-student, ANOVA repeated measure, and linear regression tests. A significance level of $P < 0.05$ was considered for the analysis.

Results: The results of the study showed that the intervention decreased the PMS severity and most psychological factors so in the intervention group, counseling was able to significantly reduce anxiety, depression, and perceived stress after intervention ($P < 0.001$). Based on multiple linear regression analysis, the most predictors of HADS was the PSS ($\beta = 0.285$, $p = 0.009$).

Conclusion: The counseling could reduce the severity of symptoms and psychological factors in students. Therefore, a counseling intervention is recommended to manage their PMS.

Keywords: Premenstrual syndrome, Depression, Anxiety, Stress



The role of midwives' spiritual intelligence in management job stress

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Abstract:

Background: The role of midwives in promoting the health and fertility of women in society is very important. Strategies to reduce midwives' stress will facilitate this. This study aimed to investigate the role of midwives' spiritual intelligence in management job stress.

Methods: A cross-sectional study was done with 143 midwives in Babol, Iran. The sampling method was non-random and convenience samples were used. Amram and Dreyer's spiritual intelligence and health and safety executive occupational stress questionnaires were used.

Results: The results of the study showed that the response rate of subjects was 90.51%. The most predictors of job stress were total spiritual intelligence ($\beta = 0.507$, $p = 0.001$) and the ratio of midwives to patients on the night shift ($\beta = -0.224$, $p = 0.033$).

Conclusion: Midwives should provide women's reproductive health services with more motivation and energy. High levels of spiritual intelligence in midwives are associated with low levels of stress, which can help them perform their reproductive health duties effectively.

Keywords: Reproductive health, Spiritual intelligence, Midwife, Job stress



Comparative Effect of *Thymus vulgaris* and Ibuprofen on primary dysmenorrhea

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Abstract:

Background: Dysmenorrhea is a common gynecological problem in reproductive age in women. The prevalence of dysmenorrhea in adolescent girls is 60 to 90 percent. Due to several problems that dysmenorrhea causes in personal and social life of women, we decided to investigate the impact of *thymus vulgaris* and ibuprofen on primary dysmenorrhea.

Methods: This triple-blind clinical study was conducted on 84 students of Babol University of Medical Science with primary dysmenorrhea. Students were randomly assigned to three groups receiving

thymus vulgaris, ibuprofen and placebo. In all three groups, with the beginning of pain 200 mg capsules

and 25 drops of essence oil were given every 6 hours for two consecutive cycles. Each person recorded

her pain intensity using the visual scale (VAS) before treatment, an hour after each dose for 24 hours and 48 hours after starting medication. Data were analyzed using SPSS 18. Chi-square, kruskal-wallis test, Wilcoxon and Tukey test were applied to analyze the data. A significance level of $P < 0.05$ was considered for the analysis.

Results: The results of the study showed that both *thymus vulgaris* and ibuprofen were effective to reduce the pain severity of dysmenorrhea. Before treatment using a linearly-visual pain scale, the mean

pain intensity in *thymus vulgaris*, ibuprofen and placebo groups were 6.57 ± 2.02 , 5.30 ± 2.23 and 6.18

± 1.78 respectively and after treatment decreased to 1.21 ± 1.06 , 1.48 ± 1.62 and 3.54 ± 2.26

respectively. According to Tukey test, reduction of pain severity was not statistically significant between the two medications; however it was significant for each drug compared with placebo ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: The counseling could reduce the severity of symptoms and psychological factors in students. Therefore, a counseling intervention is recommended to manage their PMS.

Keywords: *Thymus vulgaris*, Primary dysmenorrhea, Ibuprofen



Psychological Impacts of COVID-19 on Parental Self- efficacy: Mediation Effects of Postpartum Depression

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Abstract:

Background: The global COVID-19 infection could potentially result in adverse health status especially among susceptible population, including women and children. However, little is known about the psychological impacts of COVID-19 on parenting self- efficacy.

Method: The objective of this study was using path analysis model considering the indirect impacts of COVID-19 on parenting through the direct effect on maternal mental health among 956 women 2-8 weeks after birth who recruited in Mazandaran primary health centers (PHCs) (May 2020). The prevalence of postpartum depression (PPD) and Parental self-efficacy (PSE) status using Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) and Parental Expectation Survey (PES) were also assessed.

Results: The prevalence of PPD and mean parenting self-efficacy were reported to be 21.7% and 9.10 ± 1.11 . There was a significant association between experiencing of COVID-19 and depression symptoms ($P < 0.05$) while, it had no significant effect on parenting. While depressed mothers experienced low parenting self-efficacy, path analysis model did not present a good fit considering the indirect impacts of COVID-19 on parenting self- efficacy through the direct effect on parental depression.

Conclusion: COVID- 19 had significant negative impact on women mental health after giving birth. Depressed women may impairment in the daily lives of their children during the period of social isolation. Timely intervention and support are needed.

Key words: COVID-19, Mental Health, Parental Self- efficacy, Path analysis



Depression in pregnant women: a systematic review

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Abstract:

Background: Pregnancy is one of the most remarkable experiences in a woman's life, which is often associated with emotional and mood changes. Depression is the most common mental disorder that reduces the ability of people and hinders the growth and development of the individuals. This study aimed to identify Depression in pregnant women.

Method: A systematic review was conducted to identifying depression during pregnancy in Scopus, PubMed, Science Direct and Web of Science database in 2024. Search terms were formulated using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) and key terms had been developed using different Boolean operators 'AND' and 'OR'. Data extraction used Microsoft Excel and finally content analysis was used.

Results: 6538 articles were extracted. 1047 articles were duplicates and were removed, and then 5391 articles were removed based on the review of the titles. Factors significantly associated with depression included unplanned pregnancies, low social support, low income, previous history of depression, intimate partner violence, and history of abortion.

Conclusion: This study Showed that, Unplanned pregnancy, low social support, low income, previous history of depression, history of abortion, and intimate partner violence are determinants of depression. The government and stakeholders should develop policies that incorporate counseling during pregnancy follow-ups. Improving the quality of life for pregnant women is crucial for the well-being of families, communities.

Key words: * Depression *, Woman * pregnant*



The dimensions of job burnout among female health care worker: a systematic review

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Abstract:

Background: Female healthcare workers are particularly vulnerable, often facing compounded pressures from the dual demands of their professional duties and domestic responsibilities and they report higher levels of job burnout. Burnout is a job-related syndrome increasingly recognized as a critical factor. Burnout influences social, physical, cognitive and professional aspects, which can be effect on quality of life. Therefore, the aim of this study was to identify the dimensions of job burnout among female healthcare worker.

Method: A systematic review was conducted to identifying the dimensions of job burnout among woman in Scopus, PubMed and WOS database until 1, July 2025. Search terms were formulated using Medical Subject Headings (MESH) and key terms had been developed using different Boolean operators 'AND' and 'OR'. Data extraction used Microsoft Excel and finally content analysis was used.

Results: Burnout prevalence data were extracted from 3875 studies. 897 articles were duplicates and were removed, and then 2853 articles were removed based on the review of the titles. Factors significantly associated with burnout included low personal accomplishment, Individual personality such (age, geography), the person's family status such (The moral status of the spouse, History of separation or divorce and Family financial situation) and Difficult work situation.

Conclusion: Identifying the dimensions of job burnout among female staff can provide vital information to policymakers in the health field.

Key words: * job burnout *, female * health care worker *



The Role of Artificial Intelligence Assistants in Enhancing Self-Care During Pregnancy: Benefits, Challenges, and Future Perspectives

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Abstract

With the expansion of digital technologies, artificial intelligence (AI) assistants have emerged as innovative tools for enhancing personal health, particularly during pregnancy. This study examines the role of these technologies in improving self-care among pregnant women. Findings indicate that AI assistants can enhance the quality of prenatal care by providing personalized information, continuous health monitoring, medication reminders, and reducing anxiety caused by lack of awareness. However, challenges such as privacy concerns, data accuracy, unequal access to technology, and overreliance on these tools also exist. Looking ahead, it is expected that with improved algorithms, ethical regulations, and increased digital health literacy, the use of these tools will expand. This review emphasizes the necessity of designing user-centered and evidence-based AI to support the health of both mother and fetus.



The interconnection between physical and mental health in women

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Abstract:

Background: The relationship between physical and mental health is increasingly recognized as a critical aspect of women's health. Women often face unique health challenges influenced by biological, psychological and social factors. Understanding this interconnection is essential for healthcare providers to offer holistic care that addresses both physical and mental well-being.

Method: This study utilizes a systematic review of literature from 2018 to 2023, focusing on research that explores the link between physical and mental health specifically in women. We analyzed qualitative and quantitative studies that examine how conditions such as depression and anxiety can affect physical health outcomes, including chronic illnesses. Additionally, we evaluated ethical considerations related to the treatment of women's health issues, emphasizing the importance of a patient-centered approach in clinical practice.

Results: The review indicates a significant correlation between physical and mental health in women. For instance, women suffering from chronic physical conditions like obesity or diabetes often experience higher rates of depression and anxiety. Conversely, mental health disorders can exacerbate physical health issues, leading to a cycle of declining health. Ethical concerns were identified regarding the under diagnosis and under treatment of mental health conditions in women, highlighting the need for integrated care models that consider both aspects of health.

Conclusion: Addressing the interplay between physical and mental health in women is crucial for improving overall health outcomes. Healthcare providers must adopt a holistic approach that recognizes the ethical imperative to treat both dimensions of health concurrently. Future research should focus on developing integrated care strategies that prioritize women's unique health needs, ensuring equitable access to comprehensive healthcare services that foster both physical and mental well-being.

Key words: Physical health ◊ Mental health ◊ Women's health ◊ medical ethics◊ Holistic care



Bidirectional relationship between physical health and mental health in infertile women

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Abstract:

Background: Infertility affects approximately 10-15% of couples globally, with significant psychological and physical consequences, particularly for women. The stress of infertility can lead to anxiety, depression and psychosomatic disorders, while pre-existing mental health conditions may exacerbate reproductive dysfunction. This bidirectional relationship highlights the need for a holistic approach in managing infertile women, addressing both physiological and psychological factors.

Method: A literature review was conducted using PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar, focusing on studies from 2010-2023. Keywords included "infertility," "mental health," "psychosomatic disorders" and "women." Clinical studies, meta-analyses and systematic reviews were prioritized to evaluate the interplay between psychological distress and physical health in infertile women.

Results: Research indicates that infertile women experience higher rates of depression 30-40% and anxiety 20-25% compared to fertile counterparts. Chronic stress disrupts the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, potentially worsening ovarian dysfunction. Conversely, conditions like polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and endometriosis contribute to emotional distress, creating a vicious cycle. Psychosomatic manifestations, such as chronic pelvic pain and functional gastrointestinal disorders, are prevalent, further complicating treatment outcomes.

Conclusion: The bidirectional relationship between physical and mental health in infertile women necessitates integrated care models. Routine psychological screening, stress management interventions and multidisciplinary collaboration (gynecologists, psychologists, and endocrinologists) are essential to improve both reproductive and mental health outcomes. Future research should explore targeted therapies addressing this complex interplay.

Key words: Infertility , Mental health , psychosomatic disorders , Women's health, Bidirectional relationship



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران



Spirituality in the Lives of Older Women: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Background: The elderly population in Iran and the world is increasing, so it is important to pay attention to their health and, consequently, to improve the quality of life of this age group. One of the dimensions of health is spiritual health. This study aimed to investigate the role of spiritual health in elderly women.

Methods: This qualitative study was designed to explore the meaning and impact of spirituality on older women. A total of 33 older women over 60 years of age participated in semi-structured interviews.

Results: Based on the results of thematic analysis, three main themes emerged: the concept of spirituality, spiritual practices, and the impact of spirituality. The results indicate that participants believe that spirituality plays a significant role in both their worldly and afterlife lives and can help them clarify the meaning of life, cope with negative situations, and provide hope.

Conclusion: Given that the elderly are a more religiously committed age group and see themselves as in the final stages of life, spirituality plays an important role in their behavior and lifestyle, affecting their individual, family, and social lives. It can also help them experience positive emotions and cope with stress.

Keywords: Spirituality, Older Women, Health



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران



The correlation between Female Internship Nursing Students' quality of life and their spiritual health during the COVID-19 pandemic at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract:

Background: In recent years, psychological researchers have recognized spirituality and spiritual health as key factors in enhancing overall quality of life (QoL). From the standpoint of positive psychology, spirituality empowers individuals, ultimately contributing to an improved QoL. Consequently, this study was designed to explore the relationship between the QoL of female nursing internship students at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences and their spiritual health during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was descriptive-analytical in nature and involved 52 final-year female nursing students who participated in patient care during their internship and met the eligibility criteria for inclusion. The data collection involved a questionnaire comprising the World Health Organization Quality of Life Questionnaire Short Form (WHOQOL-BREF) and the spiritual health questionnaire by Polutzin and Alison. The WHOQOL-BREF evaluates four quality of life domains: physical health (score range: 7-35), psychological health (score range: 6-30), social relationships (score range: 3-15), and environment (score range: 8-40). The data were analyzed using SPSS version 16, employing both descriptive and analytical statistical methods.

Results: The average score for the physical health aspect was 24.62 (SD = 4.01), the average score for the psychological health aspect was 19.02 (SD = 3.02), the average score for social relationships was 10.20 (SD = 5.21), and the average score for the environment aspect was 25.85 (SD = 4.25). The overall quality of life score averaged 7.45 (SD = 1.95), with scores ranging from 2 to 10. Higher scores typically reflect better QoL and overall health. Additionally, the total QoL score for female nursing internship students showed a significant correlation with spiritual health ($P = 0.01$, $r = 0.69$).

Conclusion: The study's results highlight the importance of enhancing the spiritual health dimension as a key factor in improving students' QoL. It suggests the need to design suitable educational programs and interventions base on spirituality for students during times of crisis.

Keywords: COVID-19, Quality of Life, Spiritual health, Female, Internship Nursing Students



چهاردهمین کنفرانس بین المللی

سلامت زنان

۱۶ و ۱۷ مهر ۱۴۰۴

شیراز-ایران



Investigation of the Spiritual well-being in Female Nursing Faculty during the Coronavirus

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Abstract:

Background: Spiritual well-being (SWB) has been recently considered as one of the main aspects of human life. Nursing Faculty competence in providing spiritual care is directly related to their (SWB). Spirituality was found to aid health care providers in coping with stress, encourage recovery, resilience and reduction in burnout. Recognizing the essential role of SWB for nursing faculty, this research focused on examining the SWB that these educators experience while teaching students in hospitals designated for COVID-19.

Methods: This study looked at 75 female faculty members from the nursing departments of Isfahan Medical Sciences University and Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch. We selected participants through a census sampling method, focusing on those who showed interest and met the eligibility requirements. We collected data using a spiritual well-being questionnaire of Polutzin and Alison. We analyzed the data at a 95% confidence level with SPSS version 16 software, using both descriptive and analytical methods.

Results: The results indicated that the average score for the religious aspect of spiritual well-being (RWB) was 46.62 ± 8.52 out of a possible 60, while the average score for the existential aspect of spiritual well-being (EWB) was 40.72 ± 10.09 out of 60. The overall score for SWB was 87.35 ± 17.11 out of a total of 120. The findings revealed a statistically significant relationship between SWB and marital status ($P < 0.001$), indicating that married individuals experienced higher levels of SWB. However, no statistically significant correlations were found between SWB and other demographic factors, such as age, educational level, income, or residence ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: The results indicate that the SWB of female nursing faculty exceeds average levels. In order to enhance the quality of nursing care, it is essential to prioritize the strengthening and promotion of the SWB of nursing faculty as a key policy initiative for the Ministry of Health. It is also suggested that a similar study be conducted on male academics and the results of those studies be compared with the present study.

Keywords: COVID-19, female nursing faculty, Spiritual well-being



Investigating the relationship between body image and maternal-fetal attachment in pregnant women referred to selected comprehensive health centers in Isfahan

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Background: In recent years, the discussion of maternal-fetal attachment in relation to mental health of individuals has gained great importance. Given the contradictory results in studies on the relationship between pregnancy body image and maternal-fetal attachment, as well as the cultural dependence of these two issues, the present study was conducted with the aim of determining the relationship between pregnancy body image and maternal-fetal attachment in pregnant women in the third trimester.

Methods: In this cross-sectional study, 245 pregnant women referred to selected comprehensive health service centers of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences in 1403 in the third trimester of pregnancy, who met the inclusion criteria, were randomly selected using a stratified-cluster method. The instruments used in this study included a questionnaire on personal characteristics and fertility, a questionnaire on maternal-fetal attachment, and a questionnaire on body image in pregnancy. The obtained data were analyzed using independent t-tests, one-way analysis of variance, Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression using SPSS software version 27.

Results: The mean body image score during pregnancy in the participating women was 73.21 ± 17.62 , which was reported at an average level. The mean maternal-fetal attachment score was 95.15 ± 9.67 . There was a significant relationship between the body image score during pregnancy and maternal-fetal attachment ($P=0.001$).

Conclusion: Based on the results of the present study, it is suggested that educational programs focusing on adapting to pregnancy changes be implemented to enable pregnant mothers to evaluate their bodies more positively during pregnancy, adopt behaviors to improve their health during pregnancy, and increase prenatal attachment. This will contribute significantly to improving the health of mothers and infants.

Keywords: Body image, pregnancy, maternal-fetal attachment



Bridging Mind and Body: Anxiety and Chronic Pain Interactions in Women - A Narrative Review

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Abstract:

Background: Chronic pain is a prevalent and debilitating condition among women and is closely linked to psychological disorders, particularly anxiety and depression, leading to markedly reduced quality of life. Psychological factors can amplify pain perception, affect coping strategies, and influence treatment response, especially in conditions such as fibromyalgia, endometriosis, and chronic pelvic pain. This review aimed to synthesize recent evidence on the interactions between anxiety and chronic pain in women.

Method: This narrative review included systematic reviews, meta-analyses, cohort studies, and cross-sectional studies published between 2020 and 2025. Searches were conducted in PubMed and Google Scholar using the keywords: (“chronic pain”) AND (“anxiety” OR “mental health”) AND (“women” OR “female”). Reference lists were screened for additional articles. Eligible studies specifically evaluated the psychological impact of chronic pain in women.

Results: Women with chronic pain show high rates of anxiety and depression, with prevalence often exceeding that of the general population. Around 50–60% of women with fibromyalgia, endometriosis, or chronic pelvic pain report clinically significant psychological distress, frequently mediated by internalized stigma and maladaptive coping mechanisms. Chronic pain was also linked to sleep disturbances, reduced quality of life, and central sensitization. Hormonal fluctuations and psychosocial stressors further contributed to symptom severity. Multidisciplinary interventions—including cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness-based approaches, and stigma-reduction programs—demonstrated promising effects on reducing psychological burden and improving pain outcomes, though long-term efficacy requires further study.

Conclusion: Psychological factors play a critical role in exacerbating chronic pain in women through biological, social, and behavioral mechanisms. Incorporating mental health assessment, CBT, and stigma-reduction strategies into comprehensive pain management may significantly improve quality of life and help reduce the global health burden of chronic pain in women.

Key words: Chronic Pain, Anxiety, Women, Mental Health



Psychological Stress and Its Impact on Irritable Bowel Syndrome in Women: A Narrative Review

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Abstract:

Background: Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) is a chronic functional gastrointestinal disorder characterized by abdominal pain, bloating, and altered bowel habits, with women disproportionately affected. Psychological stress has been shown to worsen IBS symptoms and reduce quality of life, largely by disrupting the gut–brain axis, altering motility, permeability, microbiota composition, and visceral sensitivity. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for optimizing management strategies for women with IBS. This narrative review synthesizes current evidence on the impact of psychological stress on IBS outcomes in women.

Method: A narrative literature review was conducted using PubMed and Google Scholar for studies published between 2020 and 2025. Search terms included (“Irritable Bowel Syndrome” OR “IBS”) AND (“stress” OR “psychological stress”) AND (“women” OR “female”). Systematic reviews, clinical trials, cohort studies, and meta-analyses examining the stress–IBS relationship in women were included. Reference lists of selected studies were manually screened for additional relevant articles.

Results: Psychological stress is highly prevalent among women with IBS and strongly influences symptom severity and quality of life. Up to 60% of women with IBS experience high levels of stress and anxiety, significantly more than men. Chronic stress, particularly when rooted in early life adversity, appears to increase the risk of IBS by sustaining activation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis. Dysregulation of this axis, elevated cortisol, stress-induced gut microbiota changes, and low-grade intestinal inflammation contribute to visceral hypersensitivity. Stress-targeted therapies such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), and gut-directed hypnotherapy have been shown to reduce symptoms and improve quality of life. Women’s heightened visceral sensitivity and maladaptive coping strategies may further amplify the negative effects of stress on IBS. While short-term improvements are well documented, long-term efficacy of stress-focused interventions requires further investigation.

Conclusion: Psychological stress exacerbates IBS in women through interconnected biological and behavioral pathways. Incorporating routine stress assessments and tailored interventions such as CBT and MBSR into standard IBS care could significantly improve clinical outcomes and quality of life for this vulnerable population.

Key words: Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Psychological Stress, Women, Mental Health



Invisible Wounds: Physical and Mental Health Impacts of Domestic Violence Against Women

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Abstract:

Background: Domestic violence—defined as a recurrent pattern of coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse by an intimate partner—severely compromises women’s safety and autonomy. Gendered power imbalances, socioeconomic dependency, and cultural stigma heighten women’s vulnerability and hinder help-seeking. Physically, domestic violence leads to acute injuries, chronic pain, cardiovascular complications, and immune dysregulation. Psychologically, survivors frequently experience depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and substance misuse. This narrative review aimed to synthesize current evidence on the physical and mental health impacts of domestic violence against women.

Method: A narrative literature review was conducted using MEDLINE/PubMed and Scopus for studies published between 2020 and 2025. Search keywords included (“domestic violence” OR “violence” OR “spouse abuse”) AND (“health”) AND (“mental health”) AND (“female” OR “woman”). English-language, full-text original studies focusing on female participants were included, and reference lists were manually searched. Studies that were non-English, inaccessible, or lacking gender-specific data were excluded.

Results: Eleven studies met inclusion criteria. Acute injuries, such as bruises, fractures, and traumatic brain injury, were documented in nine studies, while seven reported chronic musculoskeletal pain and functional impairment. Cardiovascular complications, including hypertension and increased ischemic risk, were noted in five investigations, though two found these associations attenuated after controlling for lifestyle factors. Immune dysregulation, evidenced by elevated inflammatory markers, appeared in six studies. Psychologically, all studies linked domestic violence exposure to depression and anxiety, with nine also identifying PTSD symptoms, and four describing increased substance misuse. Notably, two studies observed that strong social support networks buffered some mental health impacts, highlighting the protective potential of targeted interventions.

Conclusion: Domestic violence imposes widespread physical and psychological harms, including acute injuries, chronic pain, cardiovascular risk, immune dysregulation, depression, PTSD, and substance misuse. Strengthening social support, integrating tailored mental health services, and expanding healthcare screening and community-based interventions are critical to mitigate these impacts and support survivors’ long-term well-being.

Key words: Domestic Violence, Mental Health, Women, Physical Health



The Paradox of Family Support: Sustaining or Suppressing Women's Mental Health: A Narrative Review

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Abstract:

Background: Family support—including emotional comfort, practical assistance, and health or caregiving guidance—is a critical determinant of women's mental health throughout life. Strong familial bonds can reduce isolation, enhance coping skills, and mitigate depression, anxiety, and stress, particularly during biologically sensitive periods such as pregnancy and the postpartum phase. Yet, when family involvement is conditional or overly controlling, it may undermine autonomy and worsen psychological distress. This narrative review aimed to explore how family support influences women's mental health, identifying both its protective and harmful aspects.

Method: A narrative literature review was performed using MEDLINE/PubMed and Google Scholar for studies published between 2020 and 2025. Keywords included ("family support" OR "family assistances") AND ("mental health") AND ("female" OR "woman"). English-language, full-text original articles focusing on women were included, and reference lists of selected papers were manually screened. Exclusion criteria eliminated non-English studies, inaccessible full texts, and those not isolating female participants.

Results: Thirteen studies met inclusion criteria. Findings showed that emotional support from spouses and family members was strongly associated with lower depression and anxiety, especially during pregnancy and postpartum periods. Practical assistance, such as sharing childcare duties and household chores, strengthened self-efficacy and improved coping skills, while informational support, including reliable health guidance, further reduced stress. When family support was consistent, nonjudgmental, and freely offered, it significantly nurtured women's mental health. In contrast, conditional or overprotective involvement intensified psychological pressure, undermined autonomy, and was linked to heightened distress. These findings highlight that the quality and balance of family support determine whether it acts as a protective or harmful factor.

Conclusion: Consistent, nonjudgmental family support reduces depression and anxiety in women, whereas conditional or controlling involvement can increase distress. Interventions should promote clear communication, equitable sharing of caregiving and household tasks, and the implementation of family education programs and regular family check-ins to safeguard women's mental health.

Key words: Family Support, Mental Health, Women, Emotional Well-Being



Social Media a Digital Double-Edged Sword for Women's Mental Health: A Narrative Review

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Abstract:

Background: Social media exerts both positive and negative influences on women's mental health. While it fosters global connectivity and peer support, it also increases the risk of body dissatisfaction, anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. These effects arise from algorithm-driven feeds that promote social comparison and unrealistic beauty ideals, particularly on visually oriented platforms like Instagram. Women's greater vulnerability reflects biological factors such as hormonal fluctuations—which intensify mood responses to cyberbullying—and sociocultural pressures, including appearance ideals and unequal domestic responsibilities. Conversely, participation in empathetic online communities can reduce loneliness and stress. This narrative review aimed to synthesize current evidence on the impact of social media on women's mental health.

Method: A narrative literature review was conducted using MEDLINE/PubMed and Google Scholar for studies published between 2020 and 2025. Search keywords included (“social media” OR “social exposure”) AND (“mental health”) AND (“female” OR “woman”). English-language, full-text original studies focusing on women were included, and reference lists of selected papers were manually screened. Studies not isolating female participants, non-English publications, or inaccessible full texts were excluded.

Results: Fourteen studies met inclusion criteria. Findings showed that women spending more time on social media reported significantly higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress, with prevalence ranging from 14–48% for depression and 7–48% for anxiety. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook often triggered harmful social comparisons, increasing body dissatisfaction and disordered eating behaviors through negative thought patterns. Excessive use, including prolonged screen time and continuous diet or fitness tracking, reinforced these effects. In contrast, supportive online communities, interaction with empathetic peers, and setting healthy time limits were associated with reduced psychological distress and greater emotional resilience.

Conclusion: Excessive social media use is strongly linked to higher depression, anxiety, and stress in women, largely driven by harmful comparisons and compulsive tracking behaviors. To mitigate these effects, women are encouraged to set usage goals, impose time limits, curate supportive communities, and engage mindfully, transforming social media into a potential source of support and resilience.

Key words: Social Media, Mental Health, Women, Anxiety, Depression



Efficacy of Social Support in Preventing Depression among Women: A Narrative Review of Relational Contexts and Gendered Vulnerability

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Abstract:

Background: Social support—encompassing emotional reassurance, tangible assistance, and social connectedness—acts as a critical protective buffer against depression in women. This protection operates through neurobiological pathways (e.g., hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal axis regulation) and psychosocial mechanisms (e.g., stress-appraisal moderation). Women experience heightened vulnerability to depression due to gendered stressors, including caregiving burdens, socioeconomic inequities, and hormonal fluctuations. This review aimed to evaluate the efficacy of social support in preventing depression among women.

Method: A narrative literature review was conducted using MEDLINE/PubMed and Google Scholar for studies published 2020–2025. Keywords included (“social support” OR “perceived social support”) AND (“depression” OR “depressive disorder” OR “major depressive disorder”) AND (“female” OR “woman”). English-language, full-text original articles focusing on women were included. Reference lists of included papers were also screened. Studies that were non-English, inaccessible, or not isolating female participants were excluded.

Results: Thirteen studies met the inclusion criteria. Findings showed that emotional reassurance from partners and close relatives was consistently linked to reduced depressive symptoms, though some evidence indicated the benefit was smaller when prior mental health status was controlled. Hands-on assistance, such as sharing childcare and household tasks, also contributed to lower depression levels, yet these improvements were less pronounced when caregiving demands became overwhelming. A strong sense of social connectedness often aligned with better mood and resilience, but this effect varied with cultural context and social norms. Overall, support provided by partners and immediate family members emerged as the most reliable protective factor compared with broader community networks.

Conclusion: Social support plays a pivotal role in preventing depression among women. The strongest benefits derive from emotional reassurance and hands-on partner/family assistance, though caregiving overload and conditional support can limit efficacy. Effective interventions should strengthen close relationships, culturally adapt programs, and promote shared caregiving responsibilities to address gendered vulnerabilities.

Key words: Social Support, Depression, Women, Mental Health



Gender differences in adherence to the Mediterranean diet in patients with myocardial infarction

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Abstract:

Background: Survivors of Myocardial infarction (MI) are at an increased risk of recurrent MI, which shows these people are 4 or 5 times more at risk than people who don't have CAD and are at the same age. Adherence to the Mediterranean diet can reduce the incidence of coronary heart disease and recurrent MI. A major unmodifiable factor that may be associated with patients' adherence to care behaviors is gender. This study aimed to compare adherence to the Mediterranean diet in patients with MI based on gender.

Method: In this analytical cross-sectional study, 230 patients with MI were assessed using the convenience sampling method. Data were collected from Dr. Heshmat hospital in Rasht city, the only specialized referral center in Guilan province (North of Iran), through demographic and adherence to the Mediterranean diet in cardiovascular patients' questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS-V.26 software, and descriptive and inferential statistics at a significance level of $P \leq 0.05$.

Results: The mean score of patients' adherences to the Mediterranean diet was 8.54 ± 2.06 out of 13. 20 (8.7%) had poor adherence (inappropriate), 129 (56.1%) moderate, and 81 (35.2%) had high adherence. Mean score of adherences in men and women was 8.57 ± 2.06 and 8.50 ± 2.07 , respectively. In examining the relationship between adherence score and gender, there was no statistically significant relationship ($P > 0.05$). Although no significant relationship was observed, the percentage of patients with poor adherence was higher in women than in men (10.4% vs 7%).

Conclusion: Contrary to popular belief, women fared worse than men, and this difference should be considered in planning their care.

Key words: Mediterranean diet, Myocardial infarction, Patients, Gender



Body Image, Anxiety, and Depression in Women with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome: Interventions and Clinical Implications

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Abstract:

Background: Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a prevalent endocrine disorder affecting the reproductive and psychological health of approximately 6–10% of women of reproductive age. In addition to its reproductive and metabolic consequences, PCOS significantly impacts psychological well-being. Therefore, this study aims to explore the association between body image, anxiety, and depression in women with PCOS and to summarize effective intervention strategies.

Method: A comprehensive systematic search was conducted between April and June 2025 in accordance with PRISMA guidelines across databases including PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. MeSH terms and relevant keywords such as “Polycystic Ovary Syndrome,” “body image,” “anxiety,” “depression,” and “psychological interventions” were used. Studies were screened independently by two reviewers based on predefined inclusion criteria: peer-reviewed original articles in English, published between 2015 and 2025, focusing on adult women with PCOS and assessing body image and psychological outcomes. Exclusion criteria included non-original papers, studies without full-text availability, and irrelevant topics. Of the 417 records identified, 61 full texts were reviewed, and 20 studies met the eligibility criteria.

Results: Findings revealed a consistent association between negative body image and increased levels of anxiety and depression in women with PCOS. Contributing factors included hirsutism, obesity, menstrual irregularities, and acne. The psychological burden significantly affected quality of life and self-esteem. Interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), lifestyle modification programs such as diet and exercise, peer support groups, and online self-help platforms demonstrated moderate to substantial improvement in body image satisfaction and mood, particularly in studies with longer follow-up durations.

Conclusion: Negative body image is a significant psychological burden in women with PCOS, contributing to higher rates of anxiety and depression. Early screening, multidisciplinary management, and tailored psychological interventions are essential for improving both mental and reproductive health outcomes in this population.

Key words: Polycystic Ovary Syndrome , Body Image , Depression , Anxiety , Psychosocial Interventions



Association of quality of life with marital satisfaction, stress, and anxiety in middle-aged women

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Background

Marital: satisfaction is one of the important components of quality of life. Women's marital satisfaction is affected when they enter the middle age period, due to the mental and emotional tensions caused by the physical changes. In this regard, the present study aimed to investigate the association of quality of life with marital satisfaction, stress, and anxiety in middle-aged women referring to health centers of Ahvaz city, Iran.

Methods: This cross-sectional descriptive-analytical study was conducted on 1,000 middle-aged married women (30–59 year of age) under the auspices of health centers of Ahvaz city, Iran. The subjects were selected by simple random sampling method, and were asked to complete demographic characteristics, quality of life questionnaire, Enrich marital satisfaction questionnaire, Holmes-Raheh stress questionnaire, and Spielberger state–trait anxiety inventory. The data were analyzed by using SPSS 0.22 software through mean, standard deviation, frequency, Pearson correlation and regression ($p = 0.05$).

Results: Based on the results, 42.4% of the participants were between 40 and 50 years of age, 35.6% had a high school diploma, and 50% of them were housewives. Also, the results of Pearson's correlation showed a positive and significant relationship between quality of life and marital satisfaction ($r = 0.178$) ($p < 0.001$). However, quality of life had a negative and significant relationship with anxiety ($r = -0.552$) ($r < 0.001$) and stress ($r = -0.188$) ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Given the positive and significant relationship between quality of life and marital satisfaction, appropriate trainings are highly recommended for couples to increase the quality of life and marital satisfaction of middle-aged women and thus strengthen the health of family and society.

Keywords: quality of life, marital satisfaction, stress, anxiety, middle-aged women



The effect of educational intervention on sexual performance and marital satisfaction in postmenopausal women

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Abstract

Background: This study was conducted with the aim of investigating the effect of educational intervention based on Precede–Proceed model on sexual performance and marital satisfaction in postmenopausal women.

Methods: This research is a semi-experimental study that was performed on 160 postmenopausal women under the coverage of rural healthcare centers in Fasa County, Iran in 2021-2022. Data collection was done using the structural assessment of the Precede–Proceed model, as well as the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Index of the Female Sexual Function.

Results: The results showed that before the educational intervention, there was no significant difference between the two test and control groups regarding the constructs of the model, dimensions of sexual performance, and dimensions of marital satisfaction($p>0.05$). Four months after the educational intervention, the test group showed a significant increase in each of the mentioned variables ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusions: The present study showed that the design and implementation of an educational program based on the Precede-Proceed model can create a significant difference in the level of knowledge and attitude of postmenopausal women, and this shows the necessity and importance of using planned educational interventions in the direction of Promotion of predisposing factors.

Keywords: Educational Intervention, Precede–Proceed Model, Sexual Performance, Marital Satisfaction, Postmenopausal Women.



The effect of educational intervention on the domestic violence coping skills in women referring to comprehensive rural health service centers

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Abstract

Background: Domestic violence, in addition to the destructive effects it brings to the mother of the family, also has a strong impact on the children. According to the evidence obtained, coping strategies have been successful in tackling this issue. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of education on coping skills with domestic violence based on the health belief model (HBM) in women referring to comprehensive rural health service centers in Marvdasht City, Iran.

Methods: This semi-experimental study was conducted on 120 women affected by domestic violence who were referred to rural health centers in Marvdasht City in 2022. The multi-stage cluster sampling method was used for assigning people to two experimental and control groups (60 people in each group). The data collection tool was a questionnaire based on the HBM and a coping strategies questionnaire that was completed before and two months after the intervention by both groups. After entering SPSS 24, the data were analyzed by paired t, independent t, and chi-square statistical tests.

Results: Before the intervention between the two groups in terms of the constructs of awareness ($P = 0.45$), attitude ($P = 0.23$), behavior ($P = 0.67$), perceived sensitivity ($P = 0.10$), perceived severity ($P = 0.84$), perceived barriers ($P = 0.31$), perceived benefits ($P = 0.21$), perceived self-efficacy ($P = 0.10$), and cues to action ($P = 0.19$), no significant difference was observed, while after the intervention, a significant difference was observed between the two groups in terms of the structures expressed ($P < 0.05$). Likewise, before the intervention between the two experimental and control groups in terms of the ability to receive and send messages ($P = 0.73$), emotional control ($P = 0.22$), listening skills ($P = 0.65$), insight into the communication process ($P = 0.15$), communication combined with assertiveness ($P = 0.98$), and coping skills ($P = 0.21$), no significant difference was observed, while after the educational intervention, there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of skill components ($P = 0.001$).

Conclusion: In the current study, education based on the HBM with a focus on coping skills led to the improvement of the skills of women who have experienced violence, their attitude and awareness, perceived sensitivity and perceived severity, and finally the benefits and barriers they receive from using coping skills.

Keywords: Educational Intervention; Coping Skills; Health Belief Model; Violent Women