

Examining the Relationship between Fear of Childbirth, Maternal-Infant Attachment, and Postpartum Depression


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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence "Pregnancy is regarded as a significant source of stress..." could benefit from a more comprehensive discussion of factors contributing to pregnancy stress, such as financial strain or lack of support systems, as outlined in existing literature.

The sample selection process is described but lacks justification. Including a rationale for choosing multi-stage cluster sampling would strengthen the methodology section.

The term "appropriate statistical analyses" is vague. Consider specifying the types of analyses used to assess the tool's validity and reliability for improved clarity.

The description of the Postnatal Attachment Scale mentions variations in response options. Clarifying whether these differences affect scoring or interpretation could prevent reader confusion.

The choice of SPSS software is standard, but it would be helpful to state the specific tests used in the analysis, such as ANOVA or Pearson correlation, to give more insight into the statistical approach.

The presentation of descriptive statistics lacks a discussion of the skewness and kurtosis values presented. Explaining these values would help readers understand data distribution and the appropriateness of parametric tests.

The link between fear of childbirth and maternal behaviors like eye contact and caregiving is insightful. Adding evidence from attachment theory literature would further contextualize these behaviors.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The reference to the Iranian postpartum depression rate at 22.2% is helpful; however, it would be stronger if accompanied by comparative statistics from other countries, providing context to global relevance.

This citation needs a clearer link to the sentence it supports. Consider explicitly stating how this reference connects to the subsequent discussions on the physiological and psychological challenges of pregnancy.

The sentence "Fear of childbirth is a persistent anxiety disorder..." lacks specificity regarding the diagnostic criteria. Specifying whether this fear meets DSM-5 or ICD criteria would add scientific precision.

In the discussion of maternal attachment, the article mentions "cultural and environmental factors" but does not elaborate. A more detailed examination of these factors would enhance the reader's understanding of attachment variability across populations.

Table 2 presents regression results but omits an interpretation of the R-squared values, which could enhance understanding of how much variance in the dependent variables is explained by the predictors.

The statement "childbirth fear explained 32.1% of the variance in maternal-infant attachment" would benefit from discussing how these predictors might theoretically influence each other, adding depth to the statistical results.

The statement "higher fear levels contribute to increased depression symptoms" lacks a theoretical underpinning. Citing theoretical models, such as cognitive-behavioral frameworks, could strengthen this claim.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.