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MATERNAL DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS AS PREDICTOR OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL DZIMAULI COMMUNITY, SOUTH AFRICA

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Research in developing countries suggests that poor maternal mental health, in particular maternal depression, may be a risk factor for poor growth in young children. Women are particularly prone in the postpartum period because of the hormonal changes associated with child birth and stressors associated with parenting. The combination of women's vulnerability to depression, their responsibility for childcare and the high prevalence of maternal depression in developing countries means that maternal mental health in these countries could have a substantial influence on growth during childhood. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of maternal depressive symptoms on infant child development in a rural community of South Africa. The Self Reporting Questionnaire-20 (SRQ-20 developed to screen for depressive symptoms was administered at 6 and 24 months, baseline demographic and socio-economic data was collected at month 0 using a standardized questionnaire and Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development III (BSID-III) was used to assess child cognitive, language, motor and social development at 6 and 24 months of age. Six months maternal depression remained the only significant predictor of infants' later development. Maternal depressive symptoms showed a strong negative relationship with child cognition ($p<0.029$), expressive language ($p<0.021$) and fine motor ($p<0.024$). Only maternal depressive symptoms emerged as a significant predictor of poor child development.

Biography

Angelina Maphula is a qualified clinical Psychologist. Her expertise is in child development and improving the health and wellbeing of children. Between 2009-2017 she was part of the MAL-ED project team in the South Africa site as a team member and as a psychology component supervisor from 2012 - MAL-ED Network (comprising sites in Brazil, Peru, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Tanzania) in which among others looked at the impact of enteric infections/diarrheal diseases that alter gut function and impair children's nutrition, growth and development. Maphula was also part of the VHEMBE Study – CERCH supervising neuropsychological assessments. Her strongest attribute is visible through collaboration and her expertise on child assessment in a rural setting continues to grow.

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Notes:

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