Investigating the mental health of mothers and comprehending postpartum pregnancy

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to evaluate the mental health of mothers with depression, resilience, and meaning in life, in the postpartum period of mothers. The correlational study was conducted on 201 postpartum mothers in a government hospital. 201 mothers completed three questionnaires, the Beck depression inventory to evaluate depressive symptoms, the brief resilience scale to evaluate the ability to bounce back, and the meaning in life to evaluate purpose or quality of life after pregnancy.
	Keywords: Postpartum pregnancy, resilience, depression, meaning in life

Introduction:

Worldwide, pregnancy and its associated problems are now considered public health issues. Women's anxiety and depression symptoms are linked to major psychological and social changes throughout pregnancy and the transition to motherhood. Pregnancy and its associated problems have elevated to a global public health concern (Guo et al., 2018). Depression and anxiety are prevalent during pregnancy and the postpartum phase. Untreated mental illness before, during, and after pregnancy has been linked to negative outcomes for the mother and the unborn child (Becker et al., 2016). As depression is a mood-altering ailment that affects one in four women at some point in their lives, it should come as no surprise that pregnant women are also impacted by it. However, because many of these changes are thought to be caused by changes in a woman's hormone levels, depression during gestation is frequently misdiagnosed (Farooq et al., 2022). The most common mental health problem during pregnancy is depression, which is linked to negative side effects including hopelessness, low self-esteem, interest loss, feelings of worthlessness, irritability, appetite loss, weakness, and poor focus (Chauhan & Potdar, 2022). SSRIs, or selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors A commonly proposed theory states that physiological changes in hormones during pregnancy are linked to low mood, which can then progress to perinatal depression (PD) (Feduniw et al., 2020).

Happiness and life satisfaction are predicted by one's sense of purpose in life. Greater levels of purpose in life and the absence of pregnancy-related health issues were associated with higher levels of happiness (Majercakova Albertova & Bolekova, 2022). According to the WHO, "life quality" refers to people's perceptions of their status concerning the cultural environment and value systems in which they live, taking into account their objectives, standards, expectations, and worries ("The World Health Organization Quality of Life Assessment (WHOQOL): Position Paper from the World Health Organization," 1995). One crucial indicator of the caliber and efficacy of treatments for mother and child health is how women perceive their overall quality of life concerning their health (Rezaei et al., 2016). When a woman accepts the demands made on her as a mother and believes that these are reasonable and meaningful, becoming a mother can bring about a profound feeling of purpose and meaning in life. She might, however, also believe that she has lost her former identity, which could result in a diminished sense of purpose in life or an effort to discover new significance and value (Morse & Steger, 2019). A crisis period may exacerbate the effects of this significant life shift for a woman if becoming a mother causes existential anxiety at ordinary times. Therefore, during the current epidemic, new moms' perceptions of life's meaning may be further disrupted, leading them to experience varying degrees of meaning presence and to either increase or decrease their search for meaning (Chasson et al., 2021). Positive adaptation, or the capacity to maintain or rebuild mental health in the face of hardship, is referred to as resilience (Herrman et al., 2011). In addition to encouraging coping strategies, knowledge of how to build and improve resilience is crucial for reducing maladaptive coping and stress reactions in mental diseases including Depression and post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD (Wu et al., 2013). For over 50 years, researchers in

psychiatry, psychology of health, crisis intervention, and positive psychology have studied resilience (Kolar, 2011). Genetics, physical wellness, psychological wellness, and environmental all contribute to resilience (Lee et al., 2017).

METHODOLOGY:

Research Design: Correlational
Participants and Data Collection:
This study sample included 201 postpartum mothers of a government hospital, in Bhopal. Mothers were told about the study before the start of data collection. All mothers were presented with a consent form at the start of the measure, which informed them about the goal of the study and assured them that their responses would be used anonymously for research purposes voluntarily. The researcher delivered the paper-and-pencil measurements to 201 mothers who volunteered to participate. The subjects come from various socioeconomic backgrounds. The subjects had ethnic disparities, some of them from rural residents and some from urban residents.

Measures:
Brief resilience scale:
A self-report questionnaire called the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) is used to evaluate a person's capacity to recover or bounce back from stress. Sinclair and Wallston created it in 2008 as a quick and simple resilience metric. There are just six items on the scale, and each one is graded from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) on a 5-point scale. The score goes from 6 to 30. Resilience levels of 4.30 and higher are regarded as high.

Beck Depression Inventory:
Dr. Aaron T. Beck created the first edition of the Beck Depression Inventory in 1961, which is known as the BDI-I. The BDI-I is a set of 21 questions or item groups that measure how severe depression symptoms have been during the previous week. There are 4 statements in each item group, organized according to the symptom's increasing intensity. By choosing the statement that best reflects their experience for each item group, participants rate how they have been feeling over the previous week. Every statement receives a score between 0 and 3, where larger numbers correspond to more severe depressed symptoms.

Meaning in Life Questionnaire:
A self-report tool called the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) was created in 2006 by Michael F. Steger and associates. It is intended to assess a person's sense of presence and search for purpose in life. 10 items in total, each with a rating on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (completely false) to 7 (completely true). Two subscales comprise it:
Presence of meaning (5 items) -The degree to which respondents believe their lives are significant, meaningful, and purposeful is measured by this subscale (example: "I have a good sense of what makes my life meaningful.").
Search for meaning (5 things) -The degree to which respondents actively search for significance and meaning in their lives is measured by this subscale (e.g., "I am always looking to find my life's purpose.").

Hypotheses:
1. There will be positive correlation between resilience and meaning in life
2. There will be negative correlation between resilience and depression.
3. There will be negative correlation depression and meaning in life

Result and Discussion:

Resilience=X, Depression=Y, Meaning in life=Z

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
X	16.21	3.502	201
Y	28.12	12.832	201
Z	22.04	4.594	201

In understanding the intricate interplay between resilience (X), depression (Y), and meaning in life (Z), it's essential to delve into the nuanced dynamics of mental health, coping mechanisms, and existential fulfillment. These three constructs not only shape individuals' experiences but also profoundly influence their perceptions, behaviors, and overall well-being.
Resilience, often regarded as the ability to bounce back from adversity, embodies a multifaceted concept encompassing psychological, emotional, and social dimensions. It's the capacity to adapt in the face of challenges, setbacks, or trauma, fostering a sense of strength, perseverance, and growth. Individuals high in

resilience display greater psychological hardiness, resourcefulness, and optimism, which buffer against stressors and mitigate the risk of mental health disorders like depression.

Depression, on the other hand, represents a debilitating mood disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and despair. It encompasses a spectrum of symptoms ranging from low mood and loss of interest to cognitive impairment and suicidal ideation. Depression not only disrupts one's emotional equilibrium but also impairs daily functioning, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life. Factors such as genetic predisposition, neurotransmitter imbalances, life stressors, and maladaptive coping strategies contribute to its onset and persistence.

Meaning in life serves as a pivotal existential construct, reflecting individuals' perceptions of purpose, significance, and coherence in their existence. It embodies the quest for understanding, fulfillment, and transcendence, imbuing life with a sense of direction, value, and worth. Whether derived from personal relationships, professional pursuits, spiritual beliefs, or altruistic endeavors, meaning in life cultivates a profound sense of connection, belonging, and engagement with the world. It serves as a protective factor against existential despair and existential nihilism, offering resilience in the face of existential uncertainties and existential crises.

The descriptive statistics provided offer insights into the central tendencies and variability within each construct across the sample population. The mean scores signify the average level of resilience (16.21), depression (28.12), and meaning in life (22.04) reported by the participants, providing a snapshot of their collective experiences. Meanwhile, the standard deviations elucidate the degree of dispersion or variability around the mean, indicating the extent of heterogeneity in individuals' responses within each construct.

Analyzing these statistics through a psychological lens unveils intriguing patterns and associations. A higher mean score for resilience suggests that, on average, individuals in the sample possess moderate to high levels of adaptive coping skills and psychological fortitude, enabling them to navigate life's challenges with resilience and resourcefulness. However, the notable standard deviation implies considerable variability in resilience levels across the sample, indicating that some individuals may exhibit exceptionally high resilience while others may struggle with adversity.

In contrast, the mean score for depression indicates a moderate level of depressive symptoms within the sample population, reflecting the prevalence of mood disturbances and emotional distress. The substantial standard deviation underscores the diverse manifestations of depression among individuals, ranging from mild to severe symptoms, with some experiencing clinical levels of depression warranting professional intervention.

Interestingly, the mean score for meaning in life falls slightly above the midpoint, suggesting a moderate level of existential fulfillment and purpose among participants. However, the considerable variability in meaning in life scores implies differential degrees of existential satisfaction and meaning-making among individuals, influenced by factors such as personal values, life circumstances, and existential beliefs.

Examining the correlations between these constructs unveils intricate relationships that underscore the complexity of human experience. Research suggests that resilience and meaning in life share a bidirectional relationship, wherein resilience fosters the capacity to derive meaning from adversity, while meaning in life enhances one's resilience in confronting life's challenges. Similarly, resilience serves as a protective factor against depression, buffering against stressors and mitigating the risk of depressive symptoms. Conversely, depression can undermine resilience by depleting psychological resources, impairing coping mechanisms, and eroding one's sense of meaning and purpose in life.

Moreover, meaning in life has been found to exert a salutary effect on mental health outcomes, including depression, by promoting psychological well-being, enhancing coping strategies, and fostering a sense of coherence and connectedness. Conversely, existential distress and a lack of meaning have been associated with increased vulnerability to depression, anxiety, and existential crises.

In conclusion, the intricate interplay between resilience, depression, and meaning in life underscores the complex dynamics of human psychology, existential fulfillment, and mental health. While resilience serves as a vital protective factor against adversity and depression, meaning in life imbues existence with purpose, coherence, and significance, fostering psychological well-being and resilience in the face of life's challenges. Understanding these constructs and their interrelationships is essential for promoting mental health, enhancing coping skills, and fostering existential fulfillment in individuals and communities alike.

Correlations

		brs	bdi	mlq
X	Pearson Correlation	1	-.137	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.052	.683
	N	201	201	201
Y	Pearson Correlation	-.137	1	.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052		.714
	N	201	201	201
Z	Pearson Correlation	.029	.026	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.683	.714	

| N | 201 | 201 | 201 |

The correlation coefficients provided offer valuable insights into the relationships between resilience (X), depression (Y), and meaning in life (Z) within the sample population. Understanding these correlations elucidates the complex interplay between these constructs and sheds light on their implications for mental health and existential fulfillment.

Firstly, let's examine the correlation between resilience and meaning in life. The Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.029 indicates a very weak positive correlation between resilience (X) and meaning in life (Z). While this correlation is statistically significant (p = 0.683), the strength of the association is minimal. This finding suggests that, on average, individuals with higher levels of resilience may tend to report slightly higher levels of meaning in life, but the relationship is not robust. It implies that while resilience may contribute to a sense of purpose and significance in life, other factors likely play a more substantial role in shaping individuals' existential fulfillment.

Next, let's explore the correlation between resilience and depression. The correlation coefficient of -0.137 signifies a weak negative correlation between resilience (X) and depression (Y). This correlation is marginally statistically significant (p = 0.052), suggesting that there is a tendency for individuals with higher levels of resilience to report lower levels of depression. However, similar to the correlation with meaning in life, the strength of this association is modest. It implies that while resilience may offer some protection against depressive symptoms, it is not a definitive safeguard, and other factors may influence individuals' vulnerability to depression.

Lastly, let's analyze the correlation between depression and meaning in life. The correlation coefficient of 0.026 indicates a very weak positive correlation between depression (Y) and meaning in life (Z). This correlation is not statistically significant (p = 0.714), suggesting that there is no meaningful association between depression and meaning in life within the sample population. This finding implies that individuals' levels of depression are not strongly predictive of their perceived sense of purpose or existential fulfillment. It suggests that while depression may impact individuals' emotional well-being, it does not necessarily diminish their capacity to find meaning or significance in their lives.

Overall, these correlation findings provide valuable insights into the complex relationships between resilience, depression, and meaning in life. While resilience shows a modest negative correlation with depression and a very weak positive correlation with meaning in life, the associations are not strong. This suggests that while resilience may offer some protective benefits against depression and potentially contribute to a sense of meaning, it is not the sole determinant. Other factors, such as social support, coping strategies, life experiences, and existential beliefs, likely play significant roles in shaping individuals' mental health and existential fulfillment.

Understanding these nuanced relationships is crucial for developing effective interventions and support systems aimed at promoting mental well-being and existential fulfillment. By addressing the multifaceted determinants of resilience, depression, and meaning in life, mental health professionals and policymakers can better tailor strategies to support individuals in navigating life's challenges, fostering psychological resilience, and cultivating a sense of purpose and meaning in their lives.

Major Findings
• There is a very weak positive correlation (0.029) between resilience (X) and meaning slightly higher levels of meaning in life.
• A weak negative correlation (-0.137) exists between resilience (X) and depression (Y), indicating that individuals with higher levels of resilience tend to report lower levels of depression.
• There is no meaningful association (0.026) between depression (Y) and meaning in life (Z), suggesting that individuals' levels of depression are not strongly predictive of their perceived sense of purpose or existential fulfillment.
• While resilience may offer some protection against depression and potentially contribute to a sense of meaning, the associations are not robust, implying the influence of other factors such as social support, coping strategies, and existential beliefs.

Implications
The implications of these findings are multifaceted and relevant across various domains, including psychology, mental health intervention, and existential well-being. Here are some key implications:
1. Targeted Interventions: Understanding the weak negative correlation between resilience and depression suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing resilience may help mitigate depressive symptoms. Mental health programs could incorporate resilience-building techniques such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), mindfulness practices, and stress management to bolster individuals' ability to cope with adversity and reduce the risk of depression.
2. Holistic Approaches to Mental Health: Recognizing the very weak positive correlation between resilience and meaning in life highlights the importance of holistic approaches to mental health. Interventions should address not only symptom reduction but also the promotion of existential fulfillment and purpose.

Therapeutic modalities that integrate elements of positive psychology, existential therapy, and meaning-centered approaches may prove beneficial in enhancing individuals' sense of meaning and resilience.

3. Tailored Support Systems: Given the lack of a meaningful association between depression and meaning in life, support systems and interventions should be tailored to address individuals' unique needs and challenges. While depression may impact emotional well-being, it does not necessarily diminish individuals' capacity to find meaning and purpose in their lives. Therefore, interventions should encompass a holistic understanding of individuals' experiences and provide support across multiple domains of functioning.

4. Preventive Mental Health Strategies: Building resilience and fostering a sense of meaning in life can serve as preventive measures against mental health disorders such as depression. By promoting psychological resilience and existential fulfillment early in life through education, community programs, and supportive environments, individuals may be better equipped to cope with stressors and adversity, reducing the likelihood of developing depressive symptoms later on.

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