

# **An investigation into how first generation Nigerian mothers living in the UK experience postnatal depression: An interpretative phenomenological analysis**

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## **Background/Objectives:**

According to UK census statistics, people who identify as black Africans are now the largest black community group in Britain (ONS, 2015) and 2.3% of UK immigrants are Nigerian-born (Migration Observatory, 2017). This study is the first to investigate first generation Nigerian mothers' (FGNM) postnatal depression (PND) experiences in the UK. The study aimed to explore how FGNMs living in the UK experience PND, their experiences of available resources/treatment and the way they manage and cope with PND.

Design/Method: Interview data was analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Participants included six FGNMs aged between 30 and 45 who reported being formally diagnosed with PND by their GPs.

## **Findings:**

Three main themes were generated: Sociocultural Factors, Neglected Nurturer, and Loneliness and Coping

## **Conclusions:**

The study suggests that the FGNMs encountered difficulties with their diagnosis, treatment and access to services for PND. Mothers felt a sense of cultural pressure and expectation to present as strong and resilient which impacted on early help-seeking. Mothers narrated concerns and negative experiences about how they were treated by healthcare professionals when they sought help and how their psychological needs were neglected, which contradicts previous research suggesting that BME groups do not seek support and are hard to engage. These findings could promote understanding and inform professionals about how to better support these mothers.

## **Relevance to clinical practice:**

These findings suggest the need for a culturally-specific and psychosocial intervention rather than a predominantly medical model for treating the FGNMs with PND. It indicates the need for healthcare professionals to provide equal and unbiased services and follow guidelines for care and appropriate referral in order to effectively treat the mothers.

## **Keywords:**

Postnatal depression; first generation; Nigerian mothers; experience of treatment; IPA; Counselling psychology