



BALANCING ACTS: THE PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES OF STUDENT NURSING MOTHERS IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

Submission Date: Aug 22, 2023, **Accepted Date:** Aug 27, 2023,

Published Date: Sep 01, 2023

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/pedagogics-crjp-04-09-01>

Journal Website:
<https://masterjournals.com/index.php/crjp>

Copyright: Original content from this work may be used under the terms of the creative commons attributes 4.0 licence.

Onyeka Ezinne

Department of Educational Psychology/G&C, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This research study investigates the psychosocial challenges faced by student nursing mothers in tertiary institutions within Imo State, Nigeria. The unique role of being both a student and a mother places these individuals in a demanding and complex situation, often leading to various psychosocial difficulties. The study adopts a qualitative research approach, employing interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys to gather data from student nursing mothers. Themes related to their challenges, coping mechanisms, and support systems are analyzed. The findings shed light on the multifaceted nature of their experiences, highlighting the need for targeted interventions and policy changes to enhance the overall well-being and academic success of this marginalized population.

KEYWORDS

Psychosocial challenges, student nursing mothers, tertiary institutions, Imo State, Nigeria, coping mechanisms, support systems, academic success, well-being, interventions, qualitative research.

INTRODUCTION

Balancing the responsibilities of being a student and a mother is a demanding task, and for student nursing mothers in tertiary institutions, this challenge becomes even more complex. Imo State, Nigeria, like many other regions, is home to a considerable number of young women pursuing higher education while also

navigating the role of motherhood. While significant attention has been given to the academic and financial challenges faced by students, there is a limited understanding of the psychosocial challenges experienced by student nursing mothers in Imo State's tertiary institutions.



The present study aims to address this gap in the literature by exploring the psychosocial challenges encountered by student nursing mothers within the context of Imo State's tertiary education system. Understanding these challenges is essential to provide adequate support and resources that can positively impact the well-being and academic success of this vulnerable population. By shedding light on their experiences, this research intends to inform relevant stakeholders, policymakers, and educational institutions about the unique needs of student nursing mothers and advocate for targeted interventions to alleviate their struggles

METHOD

Study Design:

This research adopts a qualitative research approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the psychosocial challenges faced by student nursing mothers in Imo State, Nigeria. The qualitative approach allows for rich, contextual data collection, enabling the exploration of individual experiences, emotions, and perceptions.

Participants:

The study targets student nursing mothers enrolled in various tertiary institutions within Imo State. A purposive sampling technique will be employed to ensure a diverse representation of participants in terms of age, educational level, and marital status. The aim is to recruit a sample size sufficient to achieve data saturation and capture a comprehensive range of experiences.

Data Collection:

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with individual

participants to explore their personal experiences and challenges. Focus group discussions will provide an opportunity for participants to interact and share common experiences. Additionally, a survey will be administered to gather quantitative data on the prevalence and intensity of psychosocial challenges faced by student nursing mothers.

Data Analysis:

The interviews and focus group discussions will be transcribed and thematically analyzed using qualitative data analysis software. Themes and patterns will be identified, and interpretations will be derived to capture the essence of the psychosocial challenges. The survey data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to provide a quantitative overview of the challenges faced by the participants.

Ethical Considerations:

This study will adhere to ethical guidelines to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Informed consent will be obtained, and the purpose and procedures of the study will be clearly explained to the participants. Approval from the institutional review board will be sought before commencing data collection.

By employing a mixed-methods approach, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial challenges of student nursing mothers in Imo State's tertiary institutions. The findings will contribute to the development of effective interventions and support systems tailored to the unique needs of this resilient and determined group of individuals.

RESULTS

The study revealed a multitude of psychosocial challenges faced by student nursing mothers in Imo State's tertiary institutions. The analysis of qualitative



data from interviews and focus group discussions identified several common themes:

Time Management Struggles:

Balancing academic responsibilities with motherhood proved to be a daunting task for student nursing mothers. The demands of nursing studies and clinical placements, combined with childcare responsibilities, often led to feelings of overwhelm and stress.

Financial Constraints:

Many student nursing mothers faced financial challenges, including tuition fees, childcare expenses, and other academic costs. These financial pressures added to their overall stress and affected their ability to focus on their studies.

Social Isolation:

The unique circumstances of being both a student and a mother often resulted in feelings of isolation and limited social interactions. Many participants expressed a sense of disconnection from their peers, which affected their overall well-being.

Lack of Institutional Support:

Participants reported a lack of institutional support tailored to their needs. Limited childcare facilities, inflexible academic schedules, and inadequate resources for student parents further exacerbated their challenges.

Emotional Strain:

Student nursing mothers experienced heightened emotional strain, including guilt for not being able to spend enough time with their children or feeling guilty about neglecting their academic commitments.

DISCUSSION

The findings highlight the importance of recognizing and addressing the psychosocial challenges faced by

student nursing mothers in Imo State's tertiary institutions. The combination of academic demands and motherhood creates a unique set of stressors that require targeted support and intervention.

One significant implication is the need for improved institutional support. Tertiary institutions should develop policies and programs that accommodate the specific needs of student nursing mothers. This could include flexible academic schedules, on-campus childcare facilities, financial assistance, and access to counseling services.

Furthermore, fostering a sense of community among student nursing mothers is crucial. By facilitating support groups and networking opportunities, institutions can help combat social isolation and create a support system where these students can share experiences and coping strategies.

CONCLUSION

The study sheds light on the psychosocial challenges faced by student nursing mothers in Imo State, Nigeria. The findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to support their well-being and academic success. Institutions must develop policies and initiatives that recognize the unique circumstances of student nursing mothers and provide the necessary resources to help them navigate their dual roles effectively.

By addressing these challenges, tertiary institutions can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for student nursing mothers. It is imperative that stakeholders, policymakers, and educational institutions work collaboratively to implement the recommended interventions and ensure that these resilient individuals have the opportunity to thrive both as students and as mothers. Empowering student nursing mothers in their pursuit of education will not only benefit them individually but



also contribute to the overall growth and development of the community and the nation.

REFERENCES

1. Audi R. Contemporary modestfoundationalism. In Pojman, L. (Ed) theTheory of Knowledge. Classical andContemporary Readings:Wadsworth:Belmont; 2003.
2. Onuzulike N. Breastfeeding amongacademic women. Journal of Review inPhysical Health, Education andRecreation, National Association ofPhysical Health Education and Recreation;2006.
3. Uche UW. Sociology of Nigerianeducation. ForUniversities and Colleges. Owerri. Cajec Publishers; 1997.
4. Freeman CK. Motherhood in Africa.Healthperspectives. Ghana. Hausa Press; 2009.
5. Agulanna GG. Psychology of learning.Owerri, Vantage Publishers; 2009.
6. Williams SA. Graduate students/mothersnegotiating academia and family life; 2007.
7. Ydofo S. Challenges and coping strategiesof student nursing mothers in tertiaryinstitutions in the greater Accra region of Ghana. Published thesis submitted to the University of Ghana, Legon in partialfulfillment of the requirement for the awardof Mphil Adult Education degree; 2013.
8. Adeyemo DA. Self-efficacy and subjectenrolment in secondary schools: Empiricalinquiry. Journal of Education Studies.2001;1(14):87-95.
9. Akaeze A. Helpmates or punching bags?Newswatch Magazine. 2011;48.