

# Scoping Review: Risk Factors Contributing to Perinatal Psychological Distress among First-time Fathers

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## Abstract

**Background:** Historically, researchers, policymakers, and healthcare professionals have centered maternal mental health during the perinatal period. International studies establish that fathers also experience psychological distress during the perinatal period of their partners, but understanding and addressing paternal perinatal mental health seems to be taken for granted. There is a knowledge gap about the experiences of Pakistani first-time fathers who may face mental health challenges during their wives' perinatal period. To date, these fathers' experiences have neither been explored nor reported.

**Purpose:** Identify factors that contribute to development of perinatal psychological distress among first-time fathers.

**Methods:** Arksey & O'Malley's approach, PRISMA extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR), and Covidence review management software were used to conduct a scoping review. The Population, Concept, and Context framework was used to define the research question.

**Results:** Title and abstract of 9931 studies were screened. Full-text of 113 articles were screened and 95 were excluded with reasons. Four articles were added from hand-search. Data extraction was completed on 18 studies, conducted in 7 different countries. All included studies were published in English since 2000. A quantitative approach was used for 16 studies. Instruments used in studies were not specifically designed for measuring symptoms level and screening risk factors contributing to perinatal psychological distress among first-time fathers.

**Conclusion:** Development of a culturally and linguistically sensitive instrument is needed for measuring and screening perinatal psychological distress among first-time fathers in Pakistan. For this purpose, qualitative research for exploring men's experiences of becoming a father for the first-time in Pakistan is required.