**Bir Zeit University**

**Faculty Of Pharmacy and Nursing and health professions**

**SEMINAR IN NURSING RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE**

**NURS334**

**The effects of pregnancy on academic performance for pregnant students in universities.**

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# Abstract

The objective of this study is to find out how pregnant female students perform at universities. Do they perform badly or do they perform well according to university standards? Another aim of this research is to find out whether these students perform any differently from each other depending on their situation (if they have any support system if they have fewer credits taken in this semester). Our research question is as follows: Does pregnancy influence the academic life of female students at universities in Palestine?. This research will be conducted using quantitative methods and the data collection will be via questionnaire. Participants will be recruited online. Our participants will be from pregnant female students roughly be about 50-70 participants are from four different universities ( Beirzeit university based in Ramallah, Bethlehem university based in Bethlehem, Jerusalem – Abu Dis- university based in Jerusalem, and  Alquds Open University) and the data from these participants will be collected in two weeks. Data will be analyzed using the statistical package for the social sciences SPSS the latest version

Contents

[Abstract 0](#_Toc88414552)

[Introduction 1](#_Toc88414553)

[Background and significance 2](#_Toc88414554)

[Literature review 2](#_Toc88414555)

[Operational/Conceptual framework 2](#_Toc88414556)

[Aim/objectives/hypothesis/research questions 4](#_Toc88414557)

[Methods 5](#_Toc88414558)

[Design 5](#_Toc88414559)

[Population and sample 5](#_Toc88414560)

[Settings 6](#_Toc88414561)

[Instrument/tool of data collection 6](#_Toc88414562)

[Variables 6](#_Toc88414563)

[Procedure/fieldwork/administrative part 7](#_Toc88414564)

[Ethical considerations 7](#_Toc88414565)

[*Consent form* 7](#_Toc88414566)

[Data analysis plan 8](#_Toc88414567)

[Dissemination plan 8](#_Toc88414568)

[Role of the research team 8](#_Toc88414569)

[Budget 8](#_Toc88414570)

[Appendices 8](#_Toc88414571)

[*Questionnaire* 8](#_Toc88414572)

[*Time table for research implementation* 8](#_Toc88414573)

[*The Group CV’s* 9](#_Toc88414574)

[Results 10](#_Toc88414575)

[Outcome 1 10](#_Toc88414576)

[Outcome 2 10](#_Toc88414577)

[Discussion 10](#_Toc88414578)

[References 11](#_Toc88414579)

# Introduction

   Pregnancy to humans is to bear a fetus or an embryo in the woman's womb for nine months, roughly about 38-40 weeks (Davis,2021). It is an important phase through the female life and it needs attention and support physically and emotionally. This time period in the female’s life is very difficult as it is. The physiological changes that occur in the woman’s body vary from one woman to another. For example, some women could suffer from morning sickness which occurs in the first trimester(Pillitter[i](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1SQJL_enPS924PS924&sxsrf=AOaemvLk7-XRURUQNOGoab75TpUP7CU-mw:1637232231284&q=Adele+Pillitteri&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LVT9c3NEzONTUwNTdIU-LSz9U3MK1MyirK0pLJTrbST8rPz9YvL8osKUnNiy_PL8q2SiwtycgvWsQq4JiSmpOqEJCZkwOSLcrcwcoIAL-YD-hRAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjfhbus3aH0AhXVQkEAHUZtAAoQmxMoAXoECBQQAw),1992). In the second trimester, some women start to gain extra weight(Pillitter[i](https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1SQJL_enPS924PS924&sxsrf=AOaemvLk7-XRURUQNOGoab75TpUP7CU-mw:1637232231284&q=Adele+Pillitteri&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LVT9c3NEzONTUwNTdIU-LSz9U3MK1MyirK0pLJTrbST8rPz9YvL8osKUnNiy_PL8q2SiwtycgvWsQq4JiSmpOqEJCZkwOSLcrcwcoIAL-YD-hRAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjfhbus3aH0AhXVQkEAHUZtAAoQmxMoAXoECBQQAw),1992). In general, these changes could make the day-to-day life tasks somewhat challenging, most women could go on with their lives with these challenges, but for some, it might be hard. We picked this research subject, as the number of pregnant female students is rising in our university. We noticed that these students might have some struggling with their studies without special care for them, as pregnancy is a stressor on females. We wanted to see how pregnancy would influence the academic performance of female college students. This research question states as follows “ does pregnancy influence the academic performance of pregnant female students at universities in Palestine?. The purpose of this study is to identify what challenges do female students go up against in universities while being pregnant and whether these challenges make the academic life of pregnant female students more troubling and do they get any special treatment from the educational institutions. Another aim of this research is to suggest an appropriate solution to help the pregnant go through this phase without much trouble. We hypothesis the following statements :

1- The higher the academic level of pregnant female students the less the academic performance.

2- Absence from lectures and exams is associated with the presence of maternal illness.

3- The higher the number of antenatal care visits the lower the academic performance.

4-         Students with advanced gestational age would study less by themselves.

# Background and significance

Other researchers found that most pregnant female students in different universities struggle to keep up to standard academic performance(Khothasane,Makhene &Matlala, 2019). These studies found what most of these students struggle with is financial problems in college, problems with attending classes and lectures, some universities even forbid pregnant students from taking classes while being pregnant, other face universities with much psychosocial stress that overwhelms them(Asare & Esia-Donkoh, 2014). We hope when we finish this study we will be able to identify the problems that pregnant females face in Palestine specifically as most studies are done in different locations which might have different environments that would affect the challenges and change them, we also hope to know if we could make it any better on them.

## Literature review

# Operational/Conceptual framework

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Independent Variable  | Operational | Conceptual |
| Pregnancy | A stage where a female is bearing a child in her womb from week 1 till she gives birth. | It’s the state of carrying and developing an embryo or fetus within the female body (Davis,2021) |
| Gestational age |                     How much time has she been p                  Pregnant? | Is the common way to measure how far along a pregnancy is, and it’s measured in weeks from the last day of the last menstrual period (Hersh,2018).  |
| Parity | How many times before this current pregnancy did the woman give birth to? no matter how long the previous pregnancy was. | The number of times that the woman has given birth to a fetus with GA of 24 weeks or more, regardless of whether it was alive or stillborn (Tidy,2019) |
| Residency | Where does the participant live “college dorm, dependent dorm, with a partner, with family, alone? | The state of living in a particular place (Oxford dictionary). |
| Obstetric history | Did the pregnant female have any issues regarding this current pregnancy or issues during a previous pregnancy  | Asking questions about the patient’s current and previous pregnancies (Potter,2021) |
| Antenatal care visits  | How many times did the pregnant student visit the doctor or clinic to check up on herself and her baby | the routine health control of presumed healthy pregnant women without symptoms (screening), to diagnose diseases or complicating obstetric conditions without symptoms, and to provide information about lifestyle, pregnancy, and delivery (Beke & Sand, 2019 |
| Support system | Does she have close people to support her like family, friends, partner | A group of people who provide an individual with practical or emotional support (Oxford dictionary). |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Dependent Variables | Operational  | Conceptual |
| Academic Performance. | The GPA and the grades in classes, exams, assignments. | The knowledge gained is assessed by marks by a teacher and educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a specific time (Narad & Abdullah, 2016). |
| Credits Taken. | The number of courses the participants take in the semester. | College credits measure the number of applied hours that are recognized for the successful completion of a particular course of study(Kots,2020) |
| Practical training.  | The practical part of the study is done in workspaces “hospitals, companies, banks, schools &, etc…). | The practical aspects of something involve real situations and events, rather than just ideas and theories, Training is the process of learning the skills that you [need](https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/need) for a particular [job](https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/job) or activity       (Collins Dictionary). |
| Class Attendance. | The commitment of participants to attend all of their classes. | a measure of the number of students who attend school and the amount of time they are present (Collins Dictionary). |
| Self-study | The number of hours that the participants spend studying on their own at home for their classes. | A way of learning about a subject that involves studying alone at home, rather than in a classroom with a teacher (Cambridge dictionary). |

# Aim/objectives/hypothesis/research questions

**Research Title**

The effects of pregnancy on academic performance for pregnant students in universities.

**Research question**

Does pregnancy influence the academic life of female students at universities in Palestine?

**Research Hypothesis**

1- The higher the academic level of pregnant female students the less the academic performance.

2- Absence from lectures and exams is associated with the presence of maternal illness.

3- The higher the number of antenatal care visits the lower the academic performance.

4-         Students with advanced gestational age would study less by themselves.

**objectives/ Aims**

our objective is to identify how well or badly do pregnant students perform in their academic life, specifically knowing what challenges do they face and how bad is it and if there is any special treatment, they get during this period.

# Methods

## Design

 In this research, the research team agreed upon using the quantitative method. A great deal on why the research team picked this method since this study will be conducted online on pregnant female students, and they will be picked from four different universities as mentioned before, is to save time, money, and effort.

## Population and sample

 Pregnant female students at universities in Palestine, this population will be collected from four main universities, Birzeit university based in Ramallah, Bethlehem university based in Bethlehem, Jerusalem (Abu Dis) university based in Jerusalem, and Alquds open university. The sample for this study will be collected online via Facebook groups and other social network apps. This population will include about 50-70 participants, although this sample might be small in size and it is because the Palestinian society is somewhat conservative, and people usually do not get married at college age. However, there is a small portion of students who get married at this young age and they might get pregnant. All pregnant female students will be included, from all majors and specialties. No pregnant students will be excluded to help add to the sample size.

## Settings

 This study will be conducted in Palestinian universities only, in four major universities in Palestine, Birzeit university based in Ramallah, Bethlehem university based in Bethlehem, Jerusalem Abu-Dis university based in Jerusalem, Alquds open university based in Ramallah. This study will be conducted online to collect the data from the participants in those universities

## Instrument/tool of data collection

## Variables

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Independent variables** | **Dependent variables** |
| Pregnancy | Academic performance |
| Gestational age | Credits taken |
| Support system | Clinical training |
| Parity | Class attendance |
| Residency | Self-studying |
| Specialty |   |
| Age |   |
| Academic level |   |
| Obstetric history |   |
| Antenatal care visits |   |
| Admission year |   |

## Procedure/fieldwork/administrative part

## Ethical considerations

 In this study and research, the students who are going to participate are going to be protected by not taking any information that might give away their identity, such as their name, student ID number, and phone number unless needed. If any of these data were to be collected they won’t be used but for a scientific reason, only the research team would have access to this data and other information, and no one else. Another point is to give the participants the right to quite answer the questionnaire at any time they want if they feel uncomfortable with any question.

### *Consent form*

الباحثين : نحن خمس طلاب في جامعة بيرزيت من تخصص التمريض في سنتنا الدراسية الرابعه، واسمائنا هي : عدنان ابو عرقوب، جهان برغوثي، دانيا القصاص، لانا الخطيب، رافت سويطي. نقوم بعمل بحث التخرج بموضوع تاثير الحمل على الاداء الاكاديمي للطالبات الحوامل في الجامعات في فلسطين، وهدف البحث معرفه كيفية تاثير الحمل على الاداء الاكاديمي سواء اكانت إيجابيه أو سلبية. ستكون مشاركتك في هذا البحث مشاركة طوعية بلا مقابل، استخدام اجاباتك ومعلومات فقط للبحث العلمي وسيتم المحافظه عليها بكل سرية ولن تشارك هذه المعلومات الا للاشخاص المتعلقين بهذا البحث. يحق للمشارك الانسحاب او الرفض بالمشاركة بالاجابة على الاسئله المتعلقه بالبحث في اي وقت ترغب به، مده الاجابه عن الاسئله المتعلقة بالبحث هي 5-6 دقائق،  يحق للمشارك التواصل مع اي طالب من المشاركين في البحث للاستفسار عن اي سؤال بخصوص البحث.

## Data analysis plan

 Using SPSS latest version, our variubales will be measured, and analyzed, to explore the relationship between them. This research wants to explose the relationship between pregnancy and academic performance and other variables such as: Gestational age, economical status, residency, academic level, antenatal care vists, and others.

## Dissemination plan

 Our research results and disscution will be proposed on a poster at the faculty building for the nursing doctors and teatchers, as well as a sleceted amount of family members. All of the group members will present and discuss a selected topic at that day.

## Role of the research team

All the research team will work together, no sections or work will be divided, from collecting the data and analyzing it, to finalizing the research paper.

In this proposal, most of the work was done as a group, except for the literature review it was done by Adnan + Jehan, References were done by Adnan.

All other sections in this proposal were made and written by the group as a collective.

## Budget

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item  | Price Range |
| Transportation (2 way trip) | From Ramallah to Bethlehem 42shekels (pr indivisual) |
| Poster  | 80-100 shekels  |
| 50-60 Questionnaires  | 80-100 shekels  |

## Appendices

### *Questionnaire*

Currently, we have no ready questionnaire, we are looking for one and by containing researchers who studied this type of relationship, if not the group will formulate a brand new questionnaire.

### *Time table for research implementation*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tasks to be done  | Time  |
| Assembling what have we done so far, Proposal, questionnaire, literature reviews. | 1st week of the spring semester |
| Hunting for participants, and explain to them the research and what it is about | Week 2-4 of the spring semester |
| Collecting data & questionnaire. | Week 4-6 of the spring semester |
| Analyzing the data collected. | Week 7-8 of the spring semester |
| Assembling and discussing the results | Week 9-10 of the spring semester |
| Finalizing the research paper  | Week 11-12 of the spring semester  |
| Presenting the research to the committee  | Week 13-14 of the spring semester |

### *The Group CV’s*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Researcher  | About  |
| Adnan Abu Arqoub | A 22-year-old nursing student at Bir Zeit Universite, Graduated from Access in Amideast back in 2015, has 4 honors in BZU, a guy with passion, excitement and hope for life, communication skills, computer skills, leadership skills, works well under pressure and with teamwork, takes responsibility Speaks three languages: Arabic (mother tongue), English, Hebrew head president of the nursing club for its period 2021-2022 Contact info: 0559849888, Email: Adoosh.123.85@gmail.com  |
| Lana Alkhateeb | A 21-year-old nursing student at Bir Zeit University, Speaks two languages: Arabic and English, Contact info: 0569520157, Email: lana.khatib284@gmail.com  |
| Jihan Barghouthi |  |
| Rafat Sweity | A 23-year-old nursing student at Bir Zeit University, Representative of the student council at the university Speaks Arabic and English Contact info: 0594154170 Email: Rafatsweity@gmail.com.  |
| Dania Qassass | A 21-year-old nursing student at Bir Zeit University, photography enthusiastic Speaks Arabic and EnglishContact info: 0569590157 Email: Dania.qassas@gmail.com.  |

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# Results

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## Outcome 1

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## Outcome 2

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# Discussion

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