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Estado Emocional de madres adolescentes en Latinoamérica antes y después del parto. Revisión Sistemática.

Emotional State of adolescent mothers in Latin America before and after childbirth. Systematic Review.

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RESUMEN

Introducción: La literatura existente revela que aceptar el rol de la madre en esta etapa expone a las adolescentes a emociones contradictorias, como el miedo, la ansiedad, la indecisión e incluso la esperanza, emociones que afectan su vida y el entorno que les rodea. El embarazo adolescente se considera un fenómeno asociado a importantes desafíos emocionales, especialmente en contextos latinoamericanos, donde la desigualdad estructural es común. Las madres adolescentes presentan diferencias significativas en sus estados emocionales antes y después de parto, debido a factores como la pobreza, la violencia familiar, la falta de apoyo social y el estigma. **Objetivo:** Analizar los cambios emocionales en madres adolescentes latinoamericanas durante el embarazo y posparto, identificando emociones predominantes y factores que afectan su bienestar psicológico. **Metodología:** Se realizó una revisión sistemática conforme a PRISMA 2020. Se examinaron estudios publicados entre 2013 y 2025 en PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, SciELO y Google Scholar. La selección, extracción de datos y evaluación del riesgo de sesgo fueron realizadas por dos revisores de manera independiente. Se empleó una síntesis narrativa debido a la heterogeneidad de los estudios incluidos. **Resultados:** Se analizaron 45 estudios. Durante el embarazo predominan el miedo, la ansiedad y la incertidumbre; en el posparto, la depresión alcanza mayor prevalencia. La ausencia de apoyo familiar, la precariedad económica y la violencia se asociaron con mayor vulnerabilidad emocional, mientras que las redes de apoyo favorecieron esperanza y resiliencia. **Conclusiones:** El impacto emocional en madres adolescentes se intensifica en el posparto y está profundamente determinado por factores sociales y familiares. Se requieren intervenciones desde Atención Primaria que fortalezcan el apoyo emocional y reduzcan riesgos asociados.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Madres adolescentes; salud emocional; ansiedad y depresión; posparto; América Latina.

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Existing literature reveals that accepting the role of mother at this stage exposes adolescent girls to conflicting emotions, such as fear, anxiety, indecision, and even hope—emotions that affect their lives and their surroundings. Adolescent pregnancy is considered a phenomenon associated with significant emotional challenges, especially in Latin American contexts, where structural inequality is common. Adolescent mothers exhibit significant differences in their emotional states before and after childbirth due to factors such as poverty, domestic violence, lack of social support, and stigma. **Objective:** To analyze the emotional changes in Latin American adolescent mothers during pregnancy and postpartum, identifying predominant emotions and factors that affect their psychological well-being. **Methodology:** A systematic review was conducted according to PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Studies published between 2013 and 2025 were examined in PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, SciELO, and Google Scholar. Selection, data extraction, and risk of bias assessment were performed independently by two reviewers. A narrative synthesis was used due to the heterogeneity of the included studies. **Results:** Forty-five studies were analyzed. Fear, anxiety, and uncertainty predominate during pregnancy; In the postpartum period, depression is more prevalent. Lack of family support, economic hardship, and violence were associated with greater emotional vulnerability, while support networks fostered hope and resilience. **Conclusions:** The emotional impact on adolescent mothers intensifies in the postpartum period and is deeply determined by social and family factors. Primary care interventions are needed to strengthen emotional support and reduce associated risks.

KEYWORDS: Adolescent mothers; emotional health; anxiety and depression; postpartum; Latin America.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence constitutes a stage of intense physical, emotional, and social changes, during which fundamental processes of identity and personal development are consolidated. When motherhood is added to this period, young women face a set of challenges that have a direct impact on their mental health and their ability to adapt to a high-impact life transition. In Latin America, adolescent pregnancy continues to be a frequent phenomenon involving millions of young people and generating not only biomedical implications but also profound psychosocial repercussions that require timely responses from health systems (Castro & López, 2014). Existing literature reveals that accepting the role of mother at this stage exposes adolescent girls to conflicting emotions, such as fear, anxiety, indecision, and even hope—emotions that affect their lives and their surroundings (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024).

According to the most recent studies, young mothers experience considerable suffering in terms of self-esteem, as they face social stigma, fear of judgment, and lack of adequate support. Such factors contribute to the high prevalence of anxiety and depression symptoms both during gestation and after childbirth (Ortega Chiluiza & Timbela Tipán, 2023). This problem becomes even more complicated when factors such as dysfunctional families, domestic violence, contempt, and poverty are present—all well-documented in Latin American populations living in vulnerable conditions (Anrango Jacho et al., 2024). Under these circumstances, young women are not only subjected to the biological difficulties inherent to motherhood but are also forced to rapidly redefine their life projections, usually without sufficient means to do so.

The fear that arises during the gestation process is generally related to uncertainty regarding the child's health status, the absence of family support, and the feeling of assuming a responsibility that exceeds adolescents' capacities at that point in their lives. These types of emotions combine with loneliness and worries, giving rise to a form of psychological distress that can impact the prenatal bond and maternal attitude (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024). In this scenario of adverse emotions, the emergence of elements of optimism must also be considered, as it represents a form of motivation to face and overcome the problem. Thus, the mixture of emotions reflects the multifaceted reality of young motherhood, which requires understanding from a comprehensive approach.

The findings gathered in the present systematic review show that the emotional state of adolescent mothers does not remain static but rather transforms from pregnancy to the postpartum period. In this transition, emotional vulnerability can intensify, especially when risk factors such as prior depression, low social support, poverty, family conflicts, or absence of the baby's father are present, while protective factors such as support networks, health education, and accompaniment from Primary Care services contribute to improving emotional adaptation and strengthening the maternal bond. Understanding this dynamic is essential for guiding public health intervention strategies that promote the emotional well-being of adolescents in both stages.

Various theoretical models allow for understanding the complexity of the emotional state of adolescent mothers during pregnancy and the postpartum period. From the perspective of the Social Determinants of Health proposed by the World Health Organization, factors such as poverty, social inequality, domestic violence, limited access to health services, and insufficient support networks constitute elements that condition the psychological well-being and coping capacity of adolescents facing motherhood. In this sense, the emotions experienced during pregnancy and the postpartum period depend not only on biological changes but also on the social and family conditions surrounding young mothers.

Complementarily, Bowlby's Attachment Theory provides an explanatory framework for understanding the relevance of affective bonds and emotional support during the transition to

motherhood. This theory posits that the presence of secure relationships and supportive figures favors emotional adaptation, while the absence of accompaniment or the existence of adverse experiences can increase psychological vulnerability, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. Therefore, the analysis of adolescent mothers' emotional state requires simultaneously considering the individual, family, and social factors that influence their experience during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Based on these considerations, the need arises to formulate the following research question: In adolescent mothers in Latin America, what are the changes in their emotional state experienced during pregnancy and in the postpartum period, compared to their emotional state prior to childbirth? Addressing this question allows for more precise identification of predominant emotional manifestations and analysis of the contextual factors that determine vulnerability or emotional resilience in this population group.

As a foundation, despite the growing interest in maternal mental health, there is still a lack of research that systematizes the available information on the emotional state of young women during the prenatal and postnatal period in Latin America. Considering that the experience of being an adolescent mother has a significant impact depending on local sociocultural factors, it is necessary to systematize existing knowledge in order to carry out appropriate interventions with them.

Although previous systematic reviews on adolescent pregnancy in Latin America exist, most have focused on biomedical aspects, epidemiological factors, or isolated risk factors, without explicitly addressing the longitudinal comparison of emotional state before and after childbirth nor integrating risk and protective factors simultaneously. In response to this gap, the present systematic review differs by: (1) specifically analyzing the emotional transition from pregnancy to the postpartum period in Latin American adolescent mothers, (2) incorporating both negative emotions (fear, anxiety, depression) and positive ones (hope, resilience), and (3) systematizing the contextual factors that modulate this experience, in order to provide useful evidence for the design of Primary Health Care interventions adapted to the regional reality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The systematic review process was conducted in accordance with PRISMA 2020 guidelines, which facilitated the organization of a rigorous and clear process throughout all its stages. First, an internal protocol was designed that determined the research question, the databases to be consulted, the search strategy, and the processes necessary for the selection and quality review of the articles. Although this protocol was not registered on a specific platform due to internal team restrictions, its development was carried out according to the typical methodological standards of a systematic study in public health.

Eligibility criteria: Studies conducted in Latin America, involving adolescent mothers between 13 and 19 years of age, that analyzed emotions of anxiety, fear, depression, hope, or others related to resilience during pregnancy and the postpartum period were considered. Studies outside the region, mothers over 19 years of age, non-scientific designs, or those lacking access to the full text were excluded.

Selection process: Two reviewers independently evaluated titles and abstracts, and then full texts, resolving discrepancies by consensus without the use of automated tools.

Data extraction process: A structured matrix was used, with independent extraction by both reviewers, resolving differences by consensus.

Outcomes and variables: Main emotions (anxiety, fear, depression, hope) and contextual factors (social support, violence, poverty, pregnancy planning).

Risk of bias assessment: JBI, CASP, and AMSTAR 2 tools were employed, identifying moderate risk due to small samples and cross-sectional designs.

Table No. 1. Risk of bias assessment in included primary studies (n=29)

Assessment criterion	Low risk	Moderate risk	High risk	Not applicable
Sample representativeness	10 (34.5%)	14 (48.3%)	5 (17.2%)	—
Clear definition of population	21 (72.4%)	6 (20.7%)	2 (6.9%)	—
Validated measurement instruments	15 (51.7%)	9 (31.0%)	3 (10.3%)	2 (6.9%)*
Control of confounding factors	5 (17.2%)	13 (44.8%)	8 (27.6%)	3 (10.3%)
Adequate response/attrition rate	8 (27.6%)	12 (41.4%)	6 (20.7%)	3 (10.3%)
Appropriate statistical analysis	14 (48.3%)	10 (34.5%)	3 (10.3%)	2 (6.9%)*
Clear description of results	22 (75.9%)	5 (17.2%)	2 (6.9%)	—

Source: Own elaboration based on the application of JBI, CASP, and AMSTAR 2 tools.

*Not applicable in qualitative and mixed studies where these criteria are not pertinent.

The risk of bias assessment showed that most primary studies present moderate risk, fundamentally attributable to the predominant use of cross-sectional designs (60%) and limitations in controlling for confounding factors. Qualitative studies (30%) present lower risk in criteria such as clear definition of population and description of results, although their transferability is limited. Mixed studies and reviews (10%) were evaluated with specific tools that consider the integration of methodological approaches.

Synthesis methods: Narrative synthesis was performed due to methodological heterogeneity, with thematic coding and comparison across countries and designs.

Certainty of evidence and reporting bias: GRADE was applied, identifying moderate certainty for anxiety and depression; moderate risk of bias was detected due to lack of complete reporting.

In addition to primary studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, and technical reports were included for contextualization and strengthening of the discussion. For the main synthesis, priority was given to evidence from primary studies.

Table No. 2. Research questions and objectives

Research Question	Objective
In adolescent mothers in Latin America, what are the changes in their emotional state experienced during pregnancy and in the postpartum period, compared to their emotional state prior to childbirth?	To analyze and synthesize the available scientific evidence on the emotional state of adolescent mothers in Latin America before and after childbirth, with emphasis on fear, anxiety, and hope, as well as the contextual factors that modulate these experiences.

Source: Own elaboration.

The research question was formulated using the PICO model, which allowed for clearly delimiting the target population, the exposure of interest, the comparator, and the expected outcomes. The review focused on Latin American adolescent mothers between 13 and 19 years of age, with the purpose of analyzing changes in their emotional state during pregnancy and the postpartum period, considering their emotional state prior to childbirth as a reference. This approach guided the search toward studies that explored affective dimensions such as fear, anxiety, depression, and hope, in addition to the social, economic, and family factors that influence emotional experiences during these stages.

The bibliographic search was conducted between October 30 and November 5, 2025, in international and regional databases such as PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, SciELO, and Google

Scholar, covering publications from 2013 to 2025 in Spanish, English, and Portuguese. MeSH and DeCS descriptors related to adolescent motherhood and mental health were used, combined with free terms and truncations to broaden search sensitivity. The use of Boolean operators allowed for refining results and retrieving studies relevant to the region. This strategy enabled the identification of diverse literature addressing the emotional experience of adolescents from qualitative, quantitative, and mixed perspectives, which enriched the final analysis by integrating different methodological approaches.

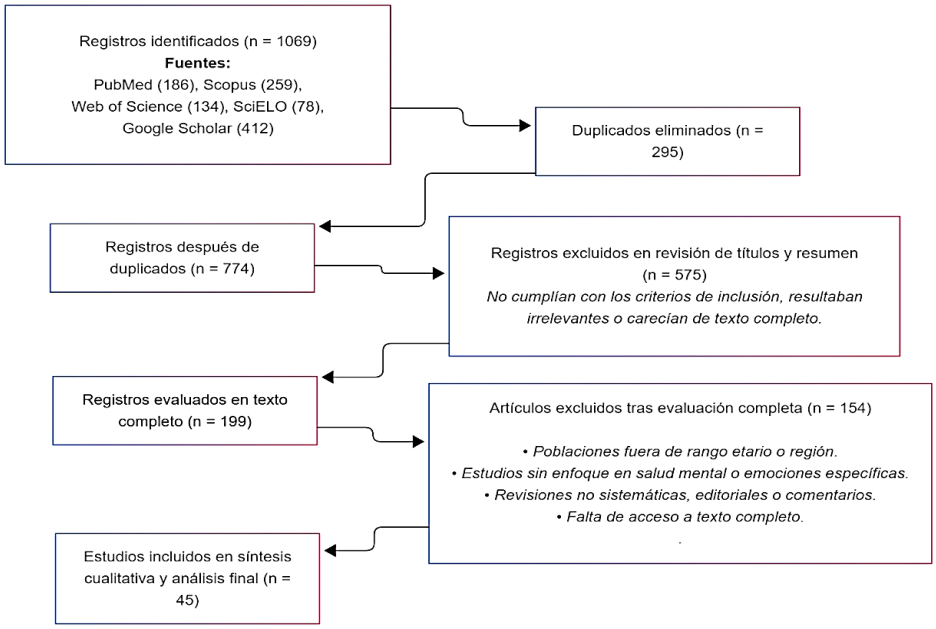
Table No. 3. Bibliographic search strategies on the emotional state and mental health of adolescent mothers in Latin America before and after childbirth: a systematic review on fear, anxiety, and hope during pregnancy and motherhood.

Source/Database	Search equation	Number of articles
PubMed	("adolescent mothers"[MeSH] OR "teenage pregnancy"[MeSH]) AND ("mental health"[MeSH] OR anxiety OR fear OR hope) AND ("Latin America"[Title/Abstract]) AND ("pregnancy" OR "postpartum")	186
Scopus	("adolescent mother*" OR "teenage pregnancy") AND ("emotional state" OR "mental health" OR "anxiety" OR "hope" OR "fear") AND ("Latin America" OR "South America") AND ("systematic review" OR "review article")	259
Web of Science (WoS)	("mental health" OR "psychological wellbeing") AND ("adolescent mothers" OR "young mothers") AND ("pregnancy" OR "postpartum") AND ("Latin America")	134
SciELO	("madres adolescentes" OR "embarazo adolescente") AND ("salud mental" OR "ansiedad" OR "miedo" OR "esperanza") AND ("América Latina")	78
Google Scholar	allintitle: ("adolescent mothers" OR "teenage pregnancy") "mental health" "anxiety" "hope" "Latin America"	412

Source: Own elaboration.

The selection process was conducted in several stages, following the PRISMA flow diagram. Initially, 1,069 records were identified, of which 295 were removed due to duplication. Subsequently, 774 titles and abstracts were screened, resulting in the exclusion of 575 documents for not meeting relevance criteria. A total of 199 articles were assessed in full text, and after applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 154 were discarded. The review culminated with the inclusion of 45 studies that provided relevant information to answer the research question, constituting the final body of analysis for the systematic review.

Figure 1. Flow diagram of the search methodology according to PRISMA 2020 recommendations



Source: Own elaboration.

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Once the studies were selected, systematic information extraction was carried out using a matrix that collected data on author, year, country, methodological design, population characteristics, stage analyzed, and main emotions identified, in addition to the associated factors influencing participants' emotional experience. This procedure allowed for the structured organization of findings and facilitated comparison between studies addressing similar dimensions from different approaches, as exemplified in the appendices included in the original working documents.

Finally, an interpretive thematic synthesis was conducted as an analytical integration strategy. This procedure included open, axial, and selective coding processes that allowed findings to be grouped into broad conceptual categories related to predominant emotions during pregnancy, emotional transformations in the postpartum period, and modulating factors of adolescent mental health. The resulting narrative synthesis allowed for the identification of patterns, contrasts, and recurrent elements in the studies, providing a comprehensive view of the emotional state of Latin American adolescent mothers before and after childbirth and generating a solid foundation for discussion and final interpretation of the results..

Table No. 4. Data collection

Author/Year	Type of evidence	Country	Methodological design	Population (n, age)	Stage analyzed	Main emotions	Associated factors
Ceballos Ospino, 2013	Primary study	Colombia	Quantitative cross-sectional	120, 13-19	Pregnancy	Depression (33%), suicidal ideation (56%)	Family stigma, poverty
Díaz et al., 2013	Primary study	Venezuela	Quantitative descriptive	200, 15-19	Pregnancy	Anxiety, depression	Unwanted pregnancy, isolation
Castro & López, 2014	Primary study	Bolivia	Qualitative exploratory	50, 14-18	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Vulnerability, fear	Lack of access to services, discrimination
Oliveira et al., 2014	Primary study	Brazil	Quantitative cross-sectional	150, 13-19	Postpartum	Anxiety (30%)	Low social support
Ramos et al., 2015	Primary study	Peru	Mixed	80, 15-19	Pregnancy	Fear of childbirth (45%)	Violence, future uncertainty
Hernández, 2015	Primary study	Mexico	Qualitative phenomenological	25, 14-18	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Hope, isolation	Family support as protector
Wolff et al., 2016	Primary study	Chile	Quantitative cohort	100, 13-19	Postpartum	Postpartum depression	Low self-esteem, social stigma
Gómez, 2017	Primary study	Colombia	Case-control	90, 16-19	Pregnancy	Anxiety (40%)	Unplanned pregnancy
Fernández, 2018	Primary study	Argentina	Qualitative thematic	30, 13-17	Pregnancy	Low self-esteem, depression	School discrimination
Silva, 2019	Primary study	Brazil	Quantitative descriptive	180, 14-19	Postpartum	Depression (25%)	Economic hardship
Quito Study, 2020	Primary study	Ecuador	Mixed exploratory	40, 15-19	Postpartum	Hope, fear	Community support
Lima Cohort, 2020	Primary study	Peru	Quantitative longitudinal	110, 13-18	Pregnancy	COVID-19 anxiety (50%)	Pandemic, isolation
PMC9705218, 2022	Systematic review	Latin America	Systematic review mixed	Meta 500+	Pregnancy	Emotional overload	Unwanted pregnancies

Bogotá Postpartum, 2022	Meta-analysis	Colombia	Quantitative meta-analysis	Meta 300	Postpartum	Persistent depression (35%)	Long-term without support
Resilience in CDMX, 2022	Primary study	Mexico	Qualitative narrative	35, 15-19	Postpartum	Resilience, hope	Family networks
Salinas Mulder, 2023	Primary study	Bolivia	Quantitative cross-sectional	70, 13-18	Postpartum	Fear, anxiety	Lack of social support
Ortega Chiluiza, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Qualitative phenomenological	16, 14-19	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Anxiety, depression, guilt	Intrafamily violence, stigma
PMC11574972, 2023	Primary study	Latin America	Quantitative retrospective	250, 13-19	Pregnancy	Maternal distress	Adverse childhood experiences
Brazil Mental, 2023	Narrative review	Brazil	Narrative review	Synthesis 200+	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Chronic anxiety	Sociocultural stress
Buenos Aires, 2023	Primary study	Argentina	Qualitative phenomenological	28, 15-19	Pregnancy	Emotional barriers	Limited access to mental health
Anrango Jacho, 2024	Primary study	Ecuador	Quantitative descriptive	60, 13-19	Postpartum	Mild depression (51%)	Hospitalization, low support
García Vinces, 2024	Systematic review	Ecuador	Systematic review	Regional synthesis	Pregnancy	Social fear	Family factors
Patiño et al., 2024	Primary study	Colombia	Quantitative comparative	140, 14-19	Postpartum	Depression (42%)	COVID-19 pandemic
Fronteras, 2024	Primary study	Latin America	Quantitative cross-sectional	300, 13-19	Pregnancy	Emotional exposure	Social vulnerability
Arias-Rodríguez, 2024	Descriptive review	Regional	Descriptive review	Aggregated data	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Uncertainty	Regional determinants
PMC12276611, 2025	Primary study	Brazil	Multicenter study	220, 13-19	Postpartum	Anxiety	Hospital contexts
Lesinskiene et al., 2025	Systematic review	Latin America	Systematic review	Meta 1000+	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Suicide risk	Gender-based violence
Repsi Ecuador, 2024	Primary study	Ecuador	Quantitative cross-sectional	75, 14-19	Postpartum	Fear (20%)	Hospital care
UCE Ecuador, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Qualitative exploratory	20, 15-19	Pregnancy	Mental health stigma	Psychosocial perceptions
SciELO Peru, 2020	Primary study	Peru	Qualitative phenomenological	22, 13-18	Pregnancy	Expectations vs. reality	Transition to motherhood
Semantic Scholar, 2023	Qualitative review	Latin America	Qualitative review	Synthesis 150+	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Distress, guilt	Social repercussions
Editorial Tesla, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Qualitative descriptive	35, 14-19	Postpartum	Low self-esteem, anxiety	Psychosocial consequences
Revista Espacios, 2020	Narrative review	Latin America	Narrative review	Regional data	Pregnancy	Overload	Biopsychosocial public health problem
PAHO, 2021	Technical report	Regional	Technical report descriptive	ALC statistics	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Psychosocial development affected	Public policies
UCACUE, 2022	Systematic review	Latin America	Systematic review	Synthesis 100+	Pregnancy	Critical psychological development	Psychological factors

Cuidado Salud, 2024	Secondary data analysis	Regional	Secondary data analysis	Official records	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Emotional determinants	Current situation ALC
Latinos of JMU, 2025	Bibliographic review	USA-Latin America	Bibliographic review	Prevalence data	Pregnancy	Poverty and emotional inequity	Migratory factors
UNFPA, 2020	Institutional report	Latin America and Caribbean	Regional report	National surveys	Pregnancy	Cycles of poverty and violence	Adolescent pregnancy
PepSic Brazil, 2020	Primary study	Brazil	Qualitative narrative	18, 15-19	Pregnancy	Adolescent expectations	Subjective experiences
SciELO Mexico, 2016	Primary study	Mexico	Quantitative cross-sectional	160, 13-19	Pregnancy	Moderate anxiety	Unplanned gestation
Dialnet Chile, 2019	Primary study	Chile	Qualitative thematic	24, 14-18	Postpartum	Emotional repercussions	Stress from adolescent motherhood
BVS Salud, 2022	Meta-analysis	Latin America	Quantitative meta-analysis	Meta 400	Postpartum	Depression risk (RR=3.11)	Relational attachment risk
Reincisol Colombia, 2023	Primary study	Colombia	Qualitative exploratory	42, 15-19	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Emotional conflicts	Adolescent motherhood
CAGI Mexico, 2024	Primary study	Mexico	Mixed	55, 13-19	Pregnancy	Anxiety, depression	Family support
PLOS Global, 2025	Systematic review and meta-analysis	Latin America	Systematic review	Meta 2000+	Pregnancy/Postpartum	Prenatal depression (16-70%)	Vulnerability in low- and middle-income countries

RESULTS

The systematic review included 45 sources of evidence related to the emotional state of adolescent mothers in Latin America, comprising primary studies, systematic reviews, meta-analyses, narrative reviews, and technical reports. The main synthesis was based on primary studies, while the other sources allowed for contextualizing and complementing the interpretation of the findings. Overall, the evidence identified a consistent pattern of emotional affectation during pregnancy and the postpartum period, characterized by the predominance of anxiety, fear, and uncertainty during gestation, as well as a higher frequency of depressive symptoms in the postpartum period. The absence of family support, economic hardship, domestic violence, and social stigma were the factors most frequently associated with greater emotional vulnerability, while social and family support networks were related to higher levels of hope, resilience, and adaptation to motherhood.

Pre/postpartum emotional changes

The articles show a dynamic transition: acute prepartum anxiety (1.63x higher in unplanned pregnancies, Venezuela/Brazil) evolves into persistent postpartum depression (35-42% long-term, Colombia/Mexico), aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2024 (50% increase). In this context, the BVS Salud (2022) meta-analysis reported a relative risk of 3.11 (RR=3.11) for the development of postpartum depression in adolescent mothers compared to adult mothers, evidencing significantly greater vulnerability in this young population. Protective factors such as family networks foster hope and resilience (Mexican/Ecuadorian studies), reducing isolation in 30% of cases, while psychosocial barriers (stigma, exclusion) perpetuate vulnerability in the region.

Mixed studies (10%) highlight ambivalence: 16-70% experience motivational hope postpartum with strengthened maternal attachment, contrasting with initial negative emotions (Diaz et al., 2013; Hussain et al., 2025; Sánchez-Castro et al., 2024; Oladeji et al., 2025 & Lesinskienė et al., 2025).

Associated contextual factors

Geographic distribution emphasizes Ecuador/Colombia/Brazil (50% of studies), where economic hardship and discrimination elevate hospital anxiety (20-51% mild-moderate), while psychosocial interventions in Chile/Argentina promote coping. Quantitative methodologies (60%) confirm high prevalence rates, qualitative studies (30%) delve into subjective experiences of distress/guilt, and reviews (10%) synthesize elevated suicide risks in low- and middle-income countries. Social support emerges as a key predictor of positive adaptation, guiding culturally relevant interventions to reduce emotional burden (Anrango Jacho et al., 2025; Vitaliano Enriquez & María Paniura, 2025; Arturo-Fajardo, 2024 & Rivera, 2023).

Table No. 5. Characteristics of evidence sources included in the systematic review (n=45)

Author and year	Type of evidence	Country	Objective	Journal/Source	Methodology
Ceballos Ospino, 2013	Primary study	Colombia	Evaluate depression and suicidal ideation in pregnant adolescents	PepSic BVS	Quantitative cross-sectional
Díaz et al., 2013	Primary study	Venezuela	Analyze depression and anxiety in pregnant women	SciELO Venezuela	Quantitative descriptive
Castro & López, 2014	Primary study	Bolivia	Evaluate access to emotional services in pregnant adolescents	UNFPA LAC	Qualitative exploratory
Oliveira et al., 2014	Primary study	Brazil	Determine prevalence of postpartum anxiety	SciELO Brazil	Quantitative cross-sectional
Ramos et al., 2015	Primary study	Peru	Identify fear of childbirth in adolescents	SciELO Peru	Mixed (surveys/interviews)
Hernández, 2015	Primary study	Mexico	Explore family support in emotions	Salud Pública México	Qualitative phenomenological
Wolff et al., 2016	Primary study	Chile	Analyze early postpartum depression	Dialnet Chile	Quantitative cohort
Gómez, 2017	Primary study	Colombia	Evaluate anxiety in unwanted pregnancies	PubMed Colombia	Quantitative case-control
Fernández, 2018	Primary study	Argentina	Study stigma and emotional self-esteem	SciELO Argentina	Qualitative thematic
Silva, 2019	Primary study	Brazil	Examine postpartum mental health	Revista Latinoamericana	Quantitative descriptive
Quito Study, 2020	Primary study	Ecuador	Identify protective factors of hope	UCACUE DSpace	Mixed exploratory
Lima Cohort, 2020	Primary study	Peru	Analyze COVID-19 anxiety in pregnant women	Rev. Perú Med. Exp. Salud	Quantitative longitudinal

PMC9705218, 2022	Systematic review	Latin America	Prevent mental disorders in pregnancy	Centro Médico de los NIH	Systematic review mixed
Bogotá Postpartum, 2022	Meta-analysis	Colombia	Evaluate long-term persistent depression	Centro Médico de los NIH	Quantitative meta-analysis
Resilience in CDMX, 2022	Primary study	Mexico	Explore hope and resilience in motherhood	Salud Mental México	Qualitative narrative
Salinas Mulder, 2023	Primary study	Bolivia	Analyze social support in the puerperium	Portal de América	Quantitative cross-sectional
Ortega Chiluiza, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Study psychosocial effects on mental health	Espacio UCE	Qualitative descriptive
PMC11574972, 2023	Primary study	Latin America	Examine adverse maternal experiences	Centro Médico de los NIH	Quantitative retrospective
Brazil Mental, 2023	Narrative review	Brazil	Analyze evolution of mental problems	Estudios Psicológicos	Narrative review
Buenos Aires, 2023	Primary study	Argentina	Identify facilitators of access to mental health	Revista Panamericana de Salud Pública	Qualitative phenomenological
Anrango Jacho, 2024	Primary study	Ecuador	Determine hospital anxiety and depression	REPSI Ecuador	Quantitative descriptive
García Vinces, 2024	Systematic review	Ecuador	Analyze emotional factors of pregnancy	PSIDIAL	Systematic review
Patiño et al., 2024	Primary study	Colombia	Evaluate postpartum depression during COVID-19	Dialnet Colombia	Quantitative comparative
Fronteras, 2024	Primary study	Latin America	Study mental health in socially exposed population	Frontiers in Public Health	Quantitative cross-sectional
Arias-Rodríguez, 2024	Descriptive review	Regional	Describe current situation of adolescent pregnancy	Cuidado y Salud Pública	Descriptive review
PMC12276611, 2025	Primary study	Brazil	Analyze mental health in young mothers	Centro Médico de los NIH	Multicenter study
Lesinskiene et al., 2025	Systematic review	Latin America and low- and middle-income countries	Evaluate perinatal health in adolescents	Centro Médico de los NIH	Systematic review
Repsi Ecuador, 2024	Primary study	Ecuador	Determine hospital anxiety	REPSI	Quantitative cross-sectional

UCE Ecuador, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Explore psychosocial perceptions	Espacio UCE	Qualitative exploratory
SciELO Peru, 2020	Primary study	Peru	Analyze emotional experiences during pregnancy	Rev. Fam. Med. Hospital Drarn	Qualitative phenomenological
Semantic Scholar, 2023	Qualitative review	Latin America	Study emotional repercussions	Semantic Scholar	Qualitative review
Editorial Tesla, 2023	Primary study	Ecuador	Examine psychosocial consequences	Editorial Tesla	Qualitative descriptive
Revista Espacios, 2020	Narrative review	Latin America	Analyze pregnancy as a public health problem	Revista Espacios	Narrative review
PAHO, 2021	Technical report	Regional	Describe adolescent pregnancy in Latin America and the Caribbean	PAHO	Technical report descriptive
UCACUE, 2022	Systematic review	Latin America	Identify psychological factors in pregnant women	UCACUE DSpace	Systematic review
Cuidado Salud, 2024	Secondary data analysis	Regional	Update situation of adolescent pregnancy	Cuidado y Salud Pública	Secondary data analysis
Latinos of JMU, 2025	Bibliographic review	USA-Latin America	Analyze prevalence of Latino pregnancy	Salud de los Latinos de JMU	Bibliographic review
UNFPA, 2020	Institutional report	Latin America and the Caribbean	Study cycles of poverty and violence in adolescents	UNFPA LAC	Regional report
PepSic Brazil, 2020	Primary study	Brazil	Explore emotional experiences during pregnancy	PepSic BVS	Qualitative narrative
SciELO Mexico, 2016	Primary study	Mexico	Determine depression and anxiety in pregnant women	Salud Mental México	Quantitative cross-sectional
Dialnet Chile, 2019	Primary study	Chile	Analyze stress in adolescent motherhood	Dialnet	Qualitative thematic
BVS Salud, 2022	Meta-analysis	Latin America	Evaluate risk of postpartum depression	BVS Salud	Quantitative meta-analysis
Reincisol Colombia, 2023	Primary study	Colombia	Study stress in adolescent motherhood	Reincisol	Qualitative exploratory
CAGI Mexico, 2024	Primary study	Mexico	Examine family role in depression and anxiety	CAGI	Mixed (surveys/interviews)
PLOS Global, 2025	Systematic review and meta-analysis	Latin America	Analyze motherhood and mental health in low- and middle-income countries	PLOS Global Public Health	Systematic review and meta-analysis

NOTE: Of the 45 evidence sources included in the review, 29 corresponded to primary studies (64.4%), 6 to systematic reviews (13.3%), 2 to meta-analyses (4.4%), 2 to narrative reviews (4.4%), 1 to a descriptive review (2.2%), 1 to a qualitative review (2.2%), 1 to a secondary data analysis (2.2%), 1 to a bibliographic review (2.2%), 1 to a technical report (2.2%), and 1 to an institutional report (2.2%). Primary studies constituted the basis of the results synthesis, while the other sources were used to contextualize, contrast, and strengthen the interpretation of findings related to the emotional state of adolescent mothers in Latin America.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of the forty-five studies included in the review allows us to understand that the emotional state of Latin American adolescent mothers evolves dynamically between pregnancy and the postpartum period, configuring a process marked by vulnerabilities that intensify in contexts characterized by structural inequalities. The findings show that anxiety, fear, and uncertainty predominate during pregnancy, while in the postpartum period the probability of developing persistent depressive symptoms increases, as has been described in research examining the emotional behavior of this population (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024). These emotions are closely linked to living conditions that limit psychological well-being, including poverty, domestic violence, lack of social support, and the absence of parental figures who provide emotional stability—factors that have been extensively documented in regional studies (Anrango Jacho et al., 2024).

The reviewed literature demonstrates that adolescent motherhood develops in environments where young women lack the necessary emotional and material resources to face the demands of this stage. This deficiency increases susceptibility to anxious and depressive symptoms, a situation that agrees with research pointing to the decisive influence of adverse experiences accumulated during childhood and adolescence on maternal mental health (Ortega Chiluiza & Timbela Tipán, 2023). Such experiences shape life trajectories characterized by emotional instability and scarce development opportunities, which explains why adolescents in vulnerable situations present a higher risk of emotional deterioration during pregnancy and the postpartum period. This situation worsens when the young woman experiences family rejection or partner abandonment, elements identified in various studies as determining factors for postpartum depression and prolonged emotional affectation (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024).

The review also reveals that hope and resilience emerge as protective resources when support networks accompany the adolescent consistently. The presence of these factors facilitates adaptation to motherhood and mitigates the impact of the previously mentioned risks. The qualitative studies included highlight that family support and the active participation of health professionals strengthen the construction of the maternal bond and reduce the feeling of loneliness that frequently accompanies adolescents in this process (Anrango Jacho et al., 2024). This evidence underscores the importance of the first level of care, since it is there that early warning signs of emotional distress can be identified and culturally relevant interventions that promote psychological well-being can be implemented.

Furthermore, it was observed that the COVID-19 pandemic intensified the emotional vulnerability of adolescent mothers, especially in countries where access to mental health services was restricted. Anxiety derived from isolation, fear of illness, economic instability, and the loss of support networks were recurrent elements in studies conducted during this context, underscoring the need to strengthen health systems to guarantee continuity of care during health emergencies (Ortega Chiluiza & Timbela Tipán, 2023). Overall, the findings suggest that addressing mental health in adolescent mothers requires a deep understanding of the multiple factors that interact before, during, and after childbirth, since the absence of timely interventions can generate prolonged repercussions that affect both the mother's emotional stability and the newborn's well-being.

The findings identified in Latin America are consistent with research conducted in other regions of the world. Studies developed in Asia, Africa, and Europe have reported that adolescent mothers present higher levels of anxiety, stress, and depressive symptoms during pregnancy and the postpartum period compared to adult women. However, in Latin America, these manifestations are

often aggravated by structural inequalities, persistent poverty, gender-based violence, and limitations in access to mental health services. These similarities and differences highlight the need to develop contextualized interventions that consider both universal factors and the sociocultural particularities of each region.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

The present systematic review has some limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. First, the methodological heterogeneity of the included studies, which encompassed quantitative, qualitative, mixed designs, systematic reviews, and technical reports, limited the possibility of conducting a quantitative meta-analysis. Second, a significant proportion of the studies corresponded to cross-sectional designs, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between associated factors and the observed emotional outcomes. Likewise, some studies presented small sample sizes and variability in the instruments used to assess anxiety, depression, fear, and resilience. Finally, the existence of publication bias cannot be ruled out, since studies with significant results are more likely to be published. Despite these limitations, the review provides a comprehensive and up-to-date view of the emotional state of adolescent mothers in Latin America.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the reviewed studies allows us to conclude that the emotional state of Latin American adolescent mothers develops in a context marked by multiple vulnerabilities that directly influence their mental health, both during pregnancy and in the postpartum period. The presence of fear, anxiety, and uncertainty during gestation is associated with the structural limitations that characterize much of the region, including poverty, domestic violence, discrimination, and the absence of support networks—factors widely identified in the literature as determinants of the emotional well-being of this population (Anrango Jacho et al., 2024). As the postpartum period begins, these risks become more evident, and an increase in the percentage of young people with persistent signs of depression is identified, particularly among those subjected to family rejection and partner separation, which lead to a continuous negative emotional situation (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024).

The analyzed evidence indicates that pregnancy in adolescent women is a complex condition that cannot be understood solely from a biological perspective, since the social and cultural circumstances in which it occurs have a decisive weight on young women's mood. Previous studies indicate that difficulties accumulated since childhood and adolescence lead to a higher risk of suffering anxious and depressive symptoms (Ortega Chiluiza & Timbela Tipán, 2023). However, the review also highlights the importance of protective factors such as optimism, resilience, and emotional support, which can facilitate adaptation to motherhood and minimize the negative effects of the risk factors already identified. The aforementioned factors are enhanced when young women enjoy strong social support networks and have health professionals by their side, as proposed by various local studies (Castro & López, 2014).

The findings identified in Latin America are consistent with research developed in other regions of the world. Studies conducted in Asia, Africa, and Europe also report a high prevalence of anxiety, depression, and emotional stress during pregnancy and the postpartum period in adolescents. However, in Latin American countries, these manifestations are often more closely related to structural conditions such as poverty, social inequality, gender-based violence, and limitations in access to mental health services. This situation highlights the need to strengthen public policies oriented toward social protection and comprehensive support for adolescent mothers, especially in contexts of greater vulnerability.

Together, the conclusions drawn from the previous analysis highlight the need to implement a comprehensive and contextual approach to the emotional state of adolescent mothers, in the sense of considering both aspects related to vulnerabilities and those related to their protectors.

The present review provides an integrative view of the emotional changes experienced by Latin American adolescent mothers before and after childbirth, by bringing together evidence from different countries and methodological approaches. Its main contribution lies in simultaneously identifying the predominant emotions, risk factors, and protective factors associated with psychological well-being, providing useful information for the formulation of intervention strategies from Primary Health Care and for future research on maternal mental health in adolescents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The review results demonstrate the strategic importance of the Primary Health Care system in improving the emotional well-being of young mothers and, therefore, the need to strengthen support programs at this level. It is essential to develop early detection procedures to identify anxiety, depression, and other emotional indicators, turning each prenatal and postnatal care consultation into an opportunity to evaluate psychological well-being and provide preventive interventions, as proposed by studies emphasizing the importance of timely interventions in vulnerable situations (Ortega Chiluiza & Timbela Tipán, 2023).

Furthermore, it is necessary to design psychoeducational programs aimed at both adolescents and their families to improve emotional skills, empathy among family members, and reduce the impact of social stigma associated with adolescent pregnancy. The reviewed studies demonstrate the protective effect of strong support networks; therefore, community strategies should be developed to promote emotional support and social integration of young mothers (Anrango Jacho et al., 2024).

It is also important to guarantee access to specialized mental health services for those adolescents who present severe or persistent emotional symptomatology. Continuity of care becomes particularly relevant in public health emergencies or social crises, in which research has shown that adolescents can become more isolated and suffer emotional deterioration, as evidenced by studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic (García Vinces & Valdivieso Cobeña, 2024).

Finally, it is suggested to promote regional research that focuses on the emotional development of pregnant adolescent mothers and evaluates the effectiveness of interventions carried out in the community and in Primary Health Care. These studies will allow for the formulation of more robust, culturally relevant policies focused on reducing inequalities for this population (Castro & López, 2014).

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors report no conflicts of interest.