

Digital Health and Telemedicine in Postpartum Care: A Systematic Review of Their Impact on Maternal Quality of Life

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ABSTRACT

The postpartum period is a critical stage in maternal health characterized by significant physical, psychological, social, and emotional changes that may adversely affect women's quality of life. Limited access to continuous postpartum healthcare, particularly in underserved communities, has accelerated the adoption of digital health and telemedicine as innovative approaches to maternal care. This study aimed to systematically review the impact of digital health and telemedicine interventions on the quality of life of postpartum mothers. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Articles published between 2021 and 2026 were identified through Google Scholar using the Publish or Perish application with the keyword's digital health, telemedicine, postpartum, and quality of life. After applying predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, 14 eligible studies were included in the qualitative synthesis. The findings demonstrate that digital health interventions, including telehealth, mHealth applications, remote monitoring systems, mental health platforms, and virtual consultations, significantly improve postpartum healthcare access, continuity of care, maternal self-management, and psychological well-being. These technologies facilitate early detection of postpartum depression, reduce anxiety, enhance self-efficacy, strengthen adherence to postpartum follow-up, and improve maternal satisfaction with healthcare services. Furthermore, digital health contributes positively to multiple dimensions of maternal quality of life, including physical health, emotional well-being, social functioning, and maternal role adaptation. However, successful implementation remains dependent on digital literacy, technological infrastructure, healthcare provider readiness, and supportive health policies. Overall, digital health and telemedicine represent effective and sustainable strategies for improving postpartum maternal quality of life and should be integrated into future maternal healthcare systems.

INTRODUCTION

The postpartum period is a very important transition period in a woman's life cycle because it involves various physical, psychological, social, and emotional changes after childbirth. In this phase, the mother not only faces the process of recovering her health, but also adapts to her new role as a babysitter. According to a mother, she often experiences a

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variety of health challenges, including postpartum depression, anxiety, breastfeeding difficulties, fatigue, and limited access to ongoing health care support. This is in line with research from which the quality of life of mothers in the postpartum period is influenced by access to health services, social support, psychological conditions, and the ability to obtain timely health information and assistance. Improving the quality of life of postpartum mothers is one of the important focuses in efforts to improve maternal health in a sustainable manner. (Cros et al., 2022; Elsheikh et al., 2024; Martin et al., 2022; World Health Organization, 2022).

Despite global efforts to improve maternal health services, gaps in access to postpartum care are still quite large, especially in rural, low-income, and underserved populations. Many health care systems, postpartum services are still limited to short-term clinical visits, resulting in inadequate monitoring and delayed intervention for maternal complications. This is in contrast to the development of digital technology that has encouraged the transformation of health services through the use of digital health and telemedicine. Based on research from digital health and telemedicine, it has transformed the delivery of healthcare services by enabling remote communication, virtual consultations, digital monitoring, and mobile-based health education (Evans et al., 2012; Jones-Esan et al., 2024; Majebi et al., 2024).

The telemedicine policies introduced during and after the COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated the adoption of remote maternal healthcare services around the world. These technologies provide opportunities to reduce geographic barriers, increase patient engagement, and improve the efficiency of healthcare for postpartum women. Telemedicine enables the provision of healthcare services remotely through mobile applications, consultations, internet-based health monitoring, as well as various other digital health platforms (Ameyaw & Baatiema, 2025; Nandan et al., 2022; Olorunsogo et al., 2024). Research shows that digital health technology has an important contribution to improving women's health, empowerment, and gender equality through wider and more responsive access to services (do Nascimento et al., 2025).

Telemedicine itself has been applied to various stages of service, ranging from pregnancy, childbirth, to the postpartum period. Various innovations such as telehealth, mHealth, telemidwifery, and digital health platforms are developed to support maternal health monitoring, health education, obstetric consultations, and early detection of various postpartum complications. Research from explains that telemedicine has great potential in supporting obstetric services in the future through increased access to information and continuity of services. This is also in line with the statement that telehealth is increasingly accepted in maternal health services even though its implementation still faces various challenges. (Astuti et al., 2023; Cros et al., 2022).

Telehealth-based treatment is considered to be able to increase access to health consultations, strengthen compliance with treatment follow-up, and support continuous monitoring of maternal health conditions. In addition, the use of digital platforms has also been proven to help improve the quality of life and health service experience in women who need intensive health monitoring during the reproductive period. This condition shows that digital technology has the potential to be an important factor in improving the welfare of mothers after childbirth. (Alzubaidi et al., 2023; Lismidiati et al., 2025)

Mental health is a major concern in the postpartum period. According to the statement, postpartum mothers are prone to experiencing stress, anxiety, and postpartum depression which

can have an impact on the quality of life of the mother and the development of the child. In overcoming these problems, various digital services have begun to be developed in the form of mental health screening, online counseling, psychological assistance applications, and teleconsultation services. The results of the study show that the digital approach is able to support the early detection and handling of mental health problems during pregnancy and postpartum periods (Clarke et al., 2024; Humaira et al., 2025; Lau et al., 2024).

The rapid development of digital health technology has changed the way maternal health services are delivered to the public. Various innovations such as maternal health applications, virtual consultations, mobile device-based health monitoring, and integrated telehealth platforms support women's needs during pregnancy and postpartum. The success of postpartum services itself is not only determined by the achievement of clinical outcomes, but also by the ability of these services to improve the quality of life of the mother as a whole. Quality of life in the postpartum period is a multidimensional concept that includes physical health, psychological well-being, social functioning, the ability to carry out the role of mother, and satisfaction with daily life. The complexity of these dimensions shows that the effectiveness of digital health and telemedicine is not enough to be measured through traditional health indicators alone, but needs to be reviewed from their impact on the mother's life after childbirth more comprehensively (Elsheikh et al., 2024).

The diversity of forms of service innovation results in research findings that are spread across various contexts, populations, and different outcome indicators so that they do not provide a complete picture of their contribution to the quality of life of postpartum mothers. This condition creates the need for a synthesis of scientific evidence that is able to integrate various available research results. Therefore, a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is needed to identify research trends, evaluate the effectiveness of various forms of digital health and telemedicine interventions, and map the factors that support and hinder their success in improving the quality of life of postpartum mothers.

METHOD

This study used the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method to identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific evidence related to the use of digital health and telemedicine in improving the quality of life in postpartum mothers. The SLR approach was chosen because it is able to provide a comprehensive picture of research developments, intervention effectiveness, and research gaps that still require further study. The research implementation process refers to the guidelines of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) which consists of the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of articles. The literature search process was carried out from articles in 2021-2026 using the Publish or Perish application with Google Scholar data sources. The article search was conducted using the compiled keywords "digital health" AND "telemedicine" AND "postpartum" AND "quality of life"

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusions

1. An article that discusses the use of digital health and telemedicine in postpartum health services.

2. An article that examines the impact of interventions on the quality of life and health of postpartum mothers.
3. Empirical research articles published in scientific journals that have gone through a peer review process.
4. The article is available in full text in English.

Exclusion

1. Articles that do not discuss postpartum mothers.
2. Articles that focus only on pregnancy or childbirth without discussing the postpartum period.
3. Articles in the form of proceedings, books, and reports.
4. Articles that do not explain the relationship between digital health or telemedicine interventions and maternal quality of life or health outcomes.

PRISMA Flowchart

Based on the PRISMA diagram, the literature search process was carried out through Google Scholar with the help of the Publish or Perish application using the keywords "digital health" AND "telemedicine" AND "postpartum" AND "quality of life", which resulted in as many as 200 articles at the identification stage. Furthermore, 20 duplicate articles were deleted, leaving 180 articles for screening. At this stage, articles were selected based on titles and abstracts, and as many as 135 articles were issued because they were not in accordance with the focus of the research, resulting in 45 articles that were eligible for a full-text review. The eligibility results showed that 31 articles had to be eliminated, consisting of 12 articles that did not focus on postpartum mothers, 5 articles that did not discuss digital health or telemedicine, 9 articles did not report outputs related to quality of life or well-being, 3 articles were not available in full text, and 2 articles were editorial or research protocols. Thus, as many as 14 articles met all inclusion criteria and were subsequently used in a qualitative synthesis to analyze the role of digital health and telemedicine in improving the quality of life of mothers in the postpartum period.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Yes	Researcher	Title	Key Findings
1.	(Clarke et al., 2024)	Digital screening for mental health in pregnancy and postpartum	Digital-based mental health screening is able to improve the early detection of depression and psychological disorders in mothers during pregnancy and postpartum.
2.	(Zhou et al., 2022)	The effectiveness of mHealth interventions on postpartum depression	mHealth interventions are effective in reducing symptoms of postpartum depression and improving the psychological well-being of the mother.
3.	(Hernandez-Green et al., 2024)	Using mHealth to reduce disparities in Black maternal health	mHealth helps reduce barriers to maternal health care access for postpartum mothers in rural areas and vulnerable groups.

4.	(Lehtonen, 2025)	Postpartum follow-up after gestational diabetes and the role of mobile technology	Mobile technology improves postpartum follow-up adherence and aids in long-term health monitoring after gestational diabetes.
5.	(Öz et al., 2024)	The Effect of Home-Based Telehealth and Postpartum Care Given According to Watson's Theory of Human Caring on The Improvement in the Emotional State of the	Home-based telehealth improves the quality of postpartum care, maternal comfort, and healthcare sustainability.
6.	(Fernández et al., 2024)	"How it is said": Analyses of WhatsApp communications in a postpartum depression preventive intervention	Digital communication through WhatsApp is effective as a medium of social support and prevention of postpartum depression.
7.	(Bozkurt & Cesur, 2023)	The effect of the Ebe Evimde application on the self-efficacy and anxiety levels of mothers: Randomized controlled trial	Digital apps increase maternal self-efficacy and lower anxiety levels after childbirth.
8.	(Davison et al., 2026)	Digital Health Interventions for Perinatal Depression in Diverse Cultural Contexts: a Systematic Review	Digital health interventions have shown effectiveness in reducing perinatal depression and improving maternal well-being.
9.	(Bloomberg, 2023)	The impact of digital health interventions in the treatment and management of perinatal depression: a systematic review	Digital health provides wider access to maternal mental health services and supports the success of therapy.
10.	(Oguamanam et al., 2023)	An intersectional look at use of and satisfaction with digital mental health platforms: a survey of perinatal black women	The digital mental health platform increases user satisfaction and supports the quality of life of the perinatal maternal group.
11.	(Balakumaran et al., 2026)	Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy: The use of eHealth technologies in postpartum follow-up strategies to reduce	eHealth helps postpartum monitoring in mothers with gestational hypertension and reduces cardiovascular risk.

		cardiovascular risk-A scoping review	
12.	(Cifuentes et al., 2022)	EMAeHealth, a digital tool for the self-management of women's health needs during pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium: protocol for a hybrid effectiveness	EMAeHealth supports the self-management 8967of women's health during pregnancy, childbirth, and puerperium.
13.	(Sultana et al., 2025)	Assessing the maternal health-related digital health interventions for pregnant women and new mothers in developing countries: a protocol for a systematic review	Digital interventions increase access to 8967maternal health services and support 8967 the health of new mothers in developing countries.
14.	(Cros et al., 2022)	Digital health and telehealth for pregnancy	Telehealth and digital health play a role in improving the continuity of maternal services which continue until the postpartum period.

Based on the synthesis of 14 articles that meet the inclusion criteria, the discussion can be grouped into four main themes, namely:

1. Digital health for postpartum mental health
2. Telemedicine in improving access and continuity of postpartum services
3. mHealth for independent monitoring and management of maternal health
4. The contribution of digital health to the quality of life of postpartum mothers.

This grouping is based on the focus of the intervention and the most dominant outputs are found in the reviewed articles which will be elaborated as follows:

Digital Health in Supporting Postpartum Mothers' Mental Health

Mental health is one of the most discussed aspects in research on digital health in the postpartum period. The postpartum period is often accompanied by various psychological challenges, such as stress, anxiety, and postpartum depression that can affect the mother's ability to carry out a parenting role and reduce the overall quality of life. The results of the synthesis show that various forms of digital interventions, such as application-based mental health screening, online counseling services, digital mental health platforms, to internet-based therapy programs, are able to make a positive contribution to the early detection and management of postpartum psychological disorders.

Digital-based mental health screening is able to improve the early identification of depression and psychological disorders in mothers during pregnancy and postpartum periods. These findings are reinforced by the finding that mHealth interventions significantly lower symptoms of postpartum depression compared to conventional approaches. In addition, it

shows that the use of digital communication media through WhatsApp is able to provide effective emotional support in postpartum depression prevention programs. Digital applications are able to increase self-efficacy while lowering anxiety levels in mothers after childbirth. (Clarke et al., 2024) (Zhou et al., 2022) (Fernández et al., 2024) (Bozkurt & Cesur, 2023)

Research from the study reinforces the findings that digital health not only helps reduce symptoms of depression, but also increases user satisfaction with mental health services, expands access to psychological therapy, and improves overall maternal well-being. Thus, digital health can be seen as an effective innovation in strengthening postpartum mental health services which have often experienced limited access and resources. (Davison et al., 2026; Mahlalela, 2023; Oguamanam et al., 2023)

Telemedicine in Improving Access and Continuity of Postpartum Services

Telemedicine plays an important role in improving the accessibility and continuity of health services for postpartum mothers. One of the main challenges in the postpartum period is the low rate of follow-up visits due to geographical barriers, time constraints, transportation costs, and the lack of health workers in some areas. The presence of telemedicine provides solutions through remote consultations, internet-based health monitoring, and easier communication between mothers and health workers.

Telehealth-based postpartum services carried out from home are able to improve the quality of care, comfort, and emotional condition of mothers after childbirth. These results are in line with those who state that telehealth has become one of the important innovations in maternal health services because it is able to maintain continuity of services from pregnancy to postpartum. In addition, it also shows that digital interventions in maternal health are very useful in increasing access to maternal health services in developing countries that are still facing limited health infrastructure. Telemedicine not only improves the efficiency of health care, but also helps ensure that postpartum mothers continue to receive ongoing medical support. With easier access to health services, the risk of delays in handling postpartum complications can be minimized so that it has a positive impact on the quality of life of mothers. (Öz et al., 2024) (Cros et al., 2022) (Sultana et al., 2025)

mHealth as a Means of Monitoring and Self-Management of Maternal Health

The use of mHealth as a means of monitoring and managing maternal health independently. Mobile device-based health applications allow mothers to obtain relevant health information, monitor health conditions regularly, and communicate with health workers without having to visit health care facilities directly. Research shows that the use of cellular technology in follow-up mothers with a history of gestational diabetes is able to improve adherence to postpartum health controls and support long-term health monitoring. Similar results were found by those who reported that eHealth technology helps monitor mothers with postpartum pregnancy hypertension so that it can lower the risk of cardiovascular complications. EMAeHealth also shows that digital platforms can support independent women's health management during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum period. (Lehtonen, 2025) (Balakumaran et al., 2026) (Cifuentes et al., 2022)

The Contribution of Digital Health to the Quality of Life of Postpartum Mothers

Quality of life is a multidimensional concept that includes physical, psychological, social, and functional health aspects. The results of the synthesis show that digital health and

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telemedicine contribute to these various dimensions through increasing access to health services, mental health support, increasing health literacy, and strengthening the ability of mothers to manage their own health. Research shows that mHealth is able to reduce the gap in access to maternal health services in postpartum mothers living in rural areas and vulnerable groups. Increased access to health information and services contributes to improving the overall well-being of mothers. In addition, research shows that digital mental health platforms provide a high level of satisfaction for users and help improve the quality of life of perinatal women. Meanwhile, research shows that increasing self-efficacy, reducing anxiety, and improving service comfort are important factors that support maternal quality of life in the postpartum period. (Hernandez-Green et al., 2024) (Oguamanam et al., 2023) (Bozkurt & Brave, 2023; Abstract et al., 2024)

Overall, the results of the synthesis in this study show that digital health and telemedicine have great potential in improving the quality of life of postpartum mothers through various mechanisms, ranging from increasing access to health services, strengthening mental health support, more effective health monitoring, to empowering mothers in managing their own health. However, the successful implementation of digital health technology is still influenced by various factors, such as digital literacy, access to technology, readiness of health workers, and adequate policy support. Therefore, the development of postpartum digital services in the future needs to consider aspects of accessibility, sustainability, and the specific needs of postpartum mothers so that the benefits obtained can be felt optimally.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of digital health technology has been proven to be able to increase access to health services, strengthen the continuity of postpartum care, and facilitate more effective communication between mothers and health workers. Various innovations such as telehealth, mHealth, digital health applications, mental health platforms, and remote monitoring systems have become alternative services that are able to reach postpartum mothers more widely and flexibly. The greatest benefits of digital health and telemedicine are found in the postpartum mental health aspect, especially in early detection of postpartum depression, reduction of anxiety, improvement of psychological well-being, and provision of emotional support on an ongoing basis. In addition, the use of digital technology has also been proven to support the monitoring of the health of mothers with special conditions, such as gestational diabetes and gestational hypertension, thereby helping to improve adherence to health follow-up and prevent long-term complications. The use of mHealth applications and digital platforms contributes to increasing self-efficacy, health literacy, independent health management capabilities, and satisfaction with health services. Thus, digital health and telemedicine not only play a role in improving clinical health outcomes, but also have a positive impact on the quality-of-life dimensions which include physical health, psychological well-being, social functioning, and the ability to carry out the role of mother. However, the success of the implementation of digital health technology is still influenced by digital literacy factors, the availability of technology infrastructure, internet access, the readiness of health workers, and adequate policy support.

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