



Ayesha Sujan

Postdoctoral Scholar, Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine

 Curriculum Vitae available Online

Bio

BIO

Ayesha Sujan, PhD, is a postdoctoral scholar in the Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine at Stanford University School of Medicine. Before joining Stanford University, she completed a year-long postdoctoral fellowship in the Kaiser Permanente Division of Research, her doctoral training in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences at Indiana University – Bloomington, her clinical internship at the Medical University of South Carolina, her master's degree in Human Development from Cornell University, and her bachelor's degree from Tulane University. Though her training has focused on psychological science, her training spans multiple disciplines, including epidemiology and pharmacology.

Broadly speaking, she conducts translational research focused on preventing early exposure to risk factors from having adverse consequences on child development. Her research initially focused on early-life adversities, particularly abuse and neglect, and then expanded to include the prenatal period. Though she studies the consequences of a number of pregnancy-related risk factors, her work mainly focuses on prenatal exposure to psychoactive substances (e.g., opioids and antidepressants) and risk for adverse birth outcomes (e.g., preterm birth) and neurodevelopmental problems (e.g., autism spectrum disorder and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder). She uses real-world health care data because women cannot be randomly assigned to use psychoactive substances during pregnancy due to ethical concerns about exposing developing offspring to potentially harmful substances. Given that people who use psychoactive substances during pregnancy differ from those who do not, she uses innovative methods that help account for these differences and seeks converging evidence across multiple methods. For example, one method she uses compares children who were exposed during pregnancy to their own siblings who were not exposed. This method accounts for all genetic and environmental factors shared by the siblings and, thus, provides a strong test of the consequences of substance exposure during pregnancy. Her research has important clinical implications. For example, a paper she published in JAMA suggests that adverse outcomes associated with prenatal exposure to antidepressants are largely due to background factors rather than medication exposure itself. This finding could provide reassurance to people considering antidepressant use during pregnancy. Her hope is that her research will inform policies and practices and will, thereby, help improve the health and wellbeing of mothers and their children.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Presidential Scholar Award, Tulane University (2008 to 2012)
- Dean's List, Tulane University (2008-2012)
- Mortar Board, Tulane University (2012)
- Phi Beta Kappa, Tulane University (2012)
- Anne M. McPherson Undergraduate Research Award, Tulane University (2012)
- Travel award, Marce of North America Perinatal Mental Health Conference (2019)
- J.R. Kantor Graduate Award for distinction in research, Indiana University – Bloomington (2020)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Master of Arts, Cornell University (2014)
- Bachelor of Science, Tulane University of Louisiana (2012)
- Doctor of Philosophy, Indiana University (2021)
- BS, Tulane University , Psychology and Studio Art (double major) (2012)
- MA, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY , Human Development (2014)
- PhD, Indiana University - Bloomington, Bloomington, IN , Clinical Psychology (2021)

STANFORD ADVISORS

- Brian Bateman, Postdoctoral Faculty Sponsor

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Racial and ethnic differences in perinatal depression and anxiety.** *Journal of affective disorders*
Sujan, A. C., Nance, N., Quesenberry, C., Ridout, K., Bhalala, M., Avalos, L. A.
2023
- **Patterns of Substance Use During Early Pregnancy and Associations With Behavioral Health Characteristics.** *Journal of addiction medicine*
Sujan, A. C., Alexeeff, S. E., Slama, N., Avalos, L. A., Adams, S. R., Conway, A., Ansley, D., Young-Wolff, K. C.
2022
- **Patterns of Substance Use During Early Pregnancy and Associations With Behavioral Health Characteristics.** *Journal of addiction medicine*
Sujan, A. C., Alexeeff, S. E., Slama, N., Avalos, L. A., Adams, S. R., Conway, A., Ansley, D., Young-Wolff, K. C.
2022; 17 (3): e141-e147
- **In-utero cannabis exposure and long-term psychiatric and neurodevelopmental outcomes: The limitations of existing literature and recommendations for future research** *BIRTH DEFECTS RESEARCH*
Sujan, A. C., Young-Wolff, K. C., Avalos, L. A.
2022; 114 (13): 689-713
- **Listening to women and pregnant and postpartum people: Qualitative research to inform opioid use disorder treatment for pregnant and postpartum people.** *Drug and alcohol dependence reports*
Guille, C., Hall, C., King, C., Sujan, A., Brady, K., Newman, R.
2022; 3: 100064
- **Initiation of Opioid Prescription and Risk of Suicidal Behavior Among Youth and Young Adults** *PEDIATRICS*
Fine, K. L., Rickert, M. E., O'Reilly, L. M., Sujan, A. C., Boersma, K., Chang, Z., Franck, J., Lichtenstein, P., Larsson, H., D'Onofrio, B. M., Quinn, P. D.
2022; 149 (3)
- **A nation-wide Swedish study of opioid analgesic prescribing patterns during pregnancy and associated preexisting mental health conditions** *JOURNAL OF MATERNAL-FETAL & NEONATAL MEDICINE*
Sujan, A. C., Quinn, P. D., Rickert, M. E., Wiggs, K. K., Larsson, H., Lichtenstein, P., Oberg, A., D'Onofrio, B. M.
2022; 35 (25): 5161-5167