

Comparison of Stress Levels in Women with Spontaneous Pregnancies and Women with Pregnancies Using Assisted Reproductive Technologies

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INTRODUCTION

Assisted Reproductive Technologies are widely used to help infertile couples to conceive but can be very stressful which can have negative effects on both the mother and the fetus. Our goal is to understand if there is a difference between the stress levels of spontaneous and assisted pregnancies. If there is a meaningful difference, healthcare workers can be informed and patients can be guided accordingly.

METHODS

Three inventories will be used on patients who visit Obstetrics and Gynecology Department of Bezmialem Vakıf University. A demographic survey, Perceived Stress Scale and State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. The demographic survey has 9 questions. Perceived Stress Scale is scored out of 40 points. Higher scores mean higher levels of stress. State-Trait Anxiety Inventory Consists of 2 parts of 20 questions each. State Anxiety Inventory focuses on the anxiety levels in a particular environment while Trait Anxiety Inventory focuses on the anxiety apart from the environment. It is scored between 20-80. Higher scores mean higher levels of stress. The minimum sample size is 19. Mann-Whitney U test and SPSS 28V will be used.

RESULTS

There isn't a significant difference between the scores of spontaneous and assisted pregnancies in any of the inventories ($p>0.05$). Women who are younger than 30 scored significantly higher in State Anxiety Inventory ($p<0.05$) meaning they experience more stress. Women whose never been pregnant before scored higher in Trait Anxiety Inventory ($p<0.05$).

Figure 1: Mean PSS, STAI-S, and STAI-T Scores by Pregnancy Type

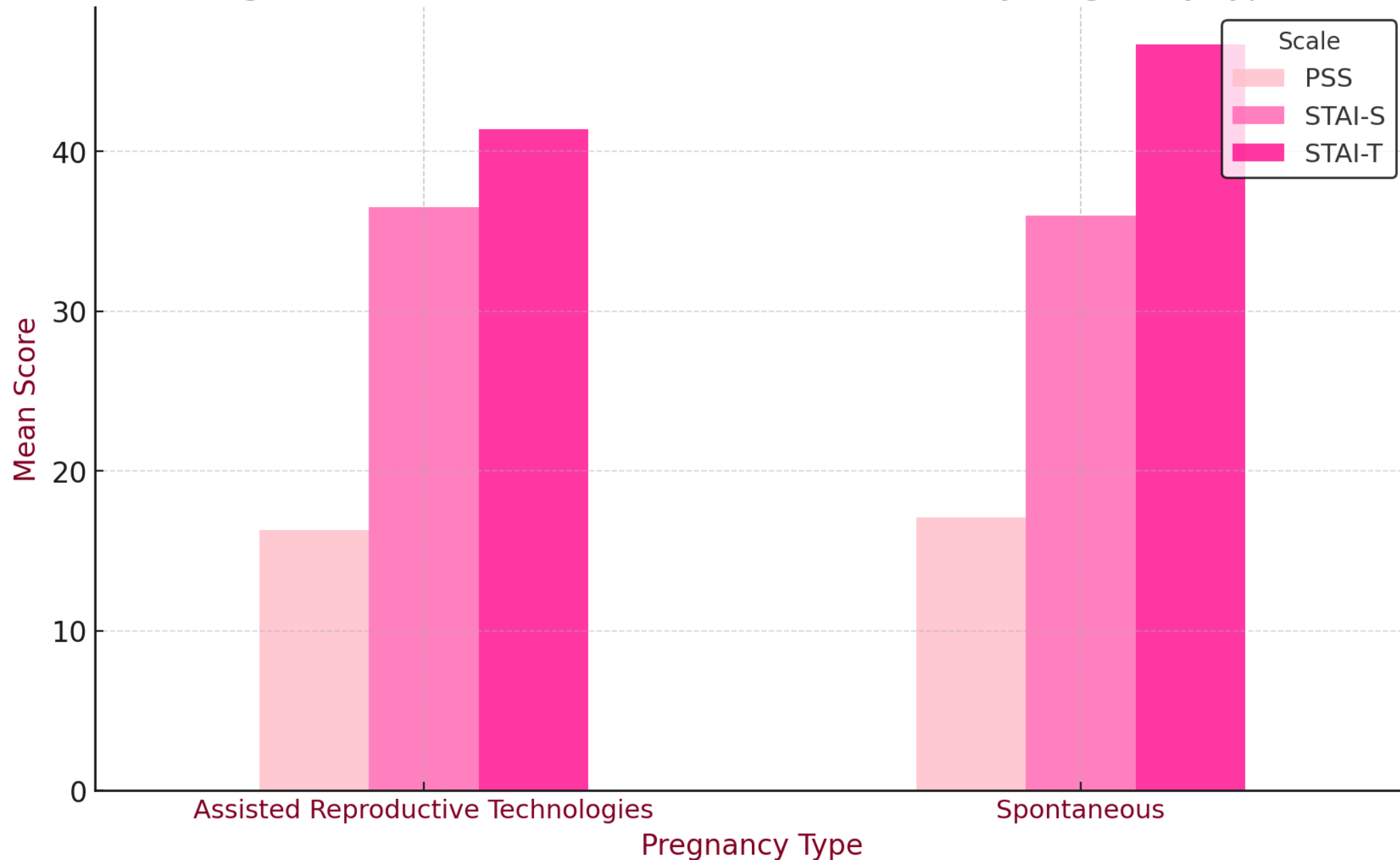


Figure 2: Mean PSS, STAI-S, and STAI-T Scores by Age Group

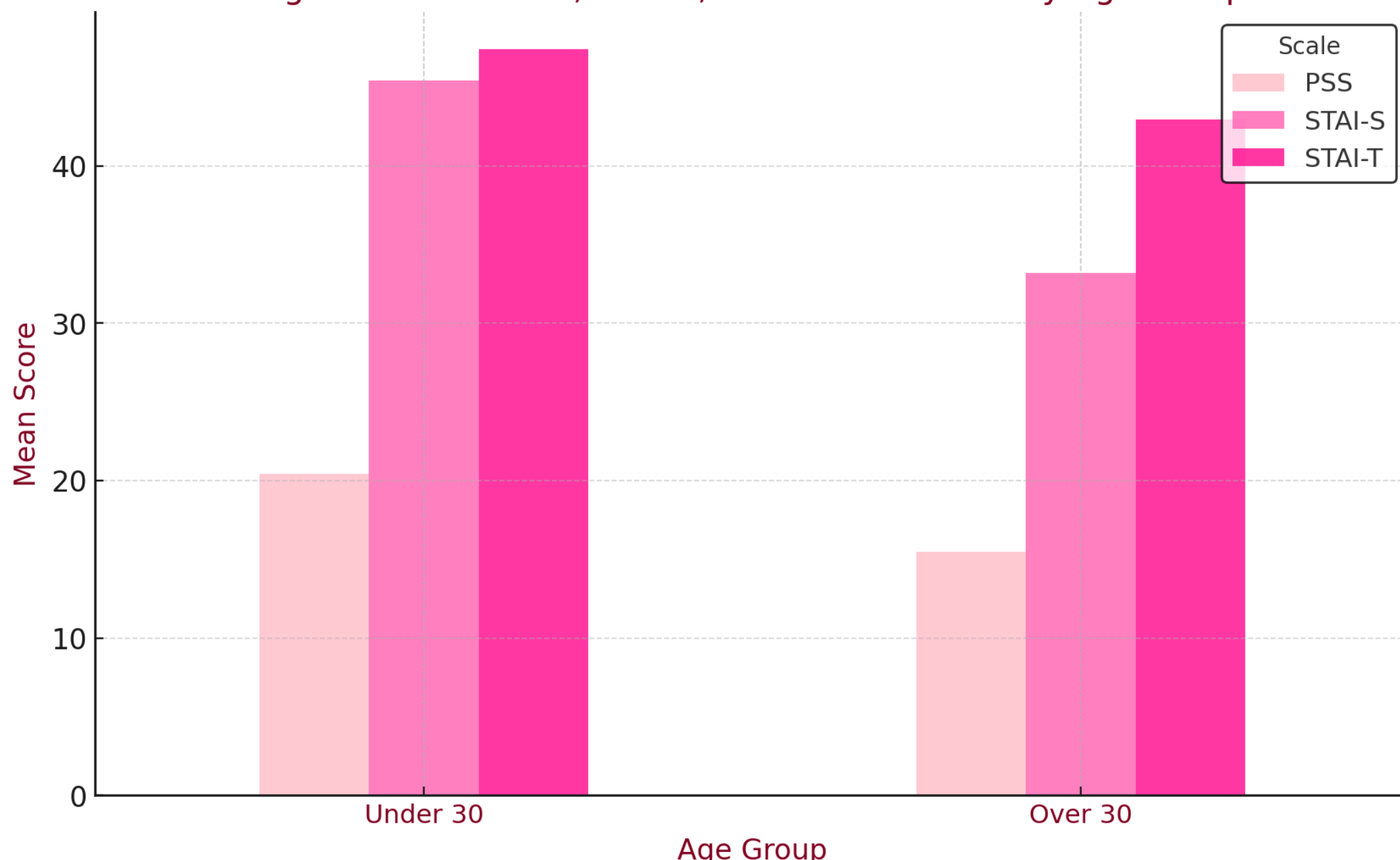
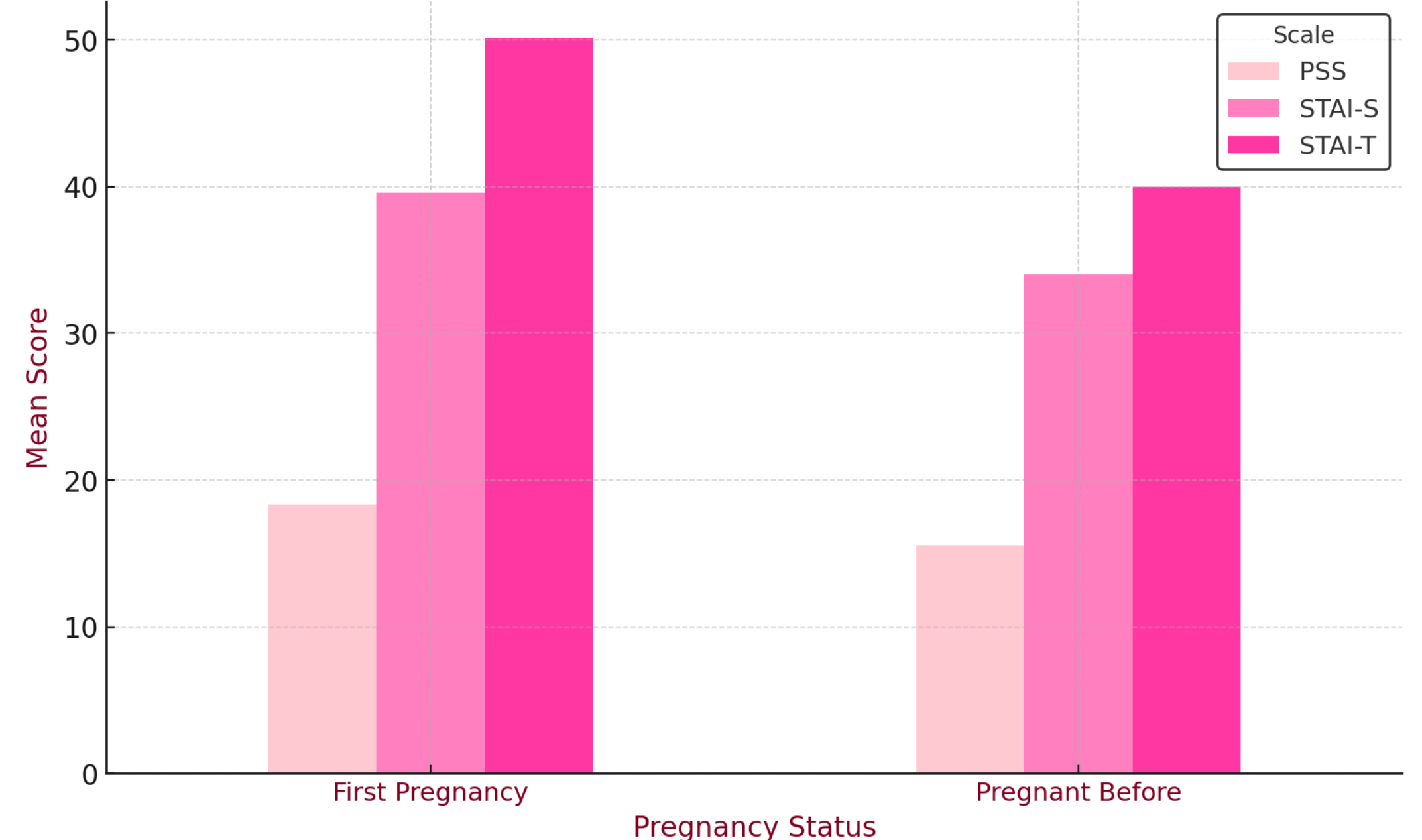


Figure 3: Mean PSS, STAI-S, and STAI-T Scores by Pregnancy Status



DISCUSSION

Stress levels did not significantly differ between assisted and spontaneous pregnancies. However, women under 30 and first time pregnancies were significantly more stressed. This can be because of inexperience and uncertainty. Future research is needed due to the limited sample size.

CONCLUSION

Although there isn't a significant correlation between stress levels and assisted pregnancies, young and first time mothers experience more stress. They should be guided by healthcare workers and provided psychological support to have smoother pregnancies.

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