

Boise State University

ScholarWorks

2021 Undergraduate Research Showcase

Undergraduate Research and Scholarship
Showcases

4-23-2021

Postpartum Depressive Symptoms Predicts Maternal and Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy

Amanda Olson

Boise State University

—

Postpartum Depressive Symptoms Predicts Maternal and Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy

Abstract

The transition into motherhood is a life altering experience that can be greatly affected by postpartum depressive symptoms. Many women are able to relish life with their newborn, but there are also many who suffer from postpartum depressive symptoms which can alter their experience of motherhood. Prior research has indicated predictors of postpartum depression, however limited studies have evaluated the presence of these symptoms as predictors for maternal self-efficacy and breastfeeding self-efficacy. In the current study, 60 first time mothers participated in a longitudinal study from pregnancy to 6 months postpartum. Mothers completed measures of postpartum depressive symptoms, breastfeeding self-efficacy and maternal self-efficacy at multiple time points. Regression analyses determined that 2-week postpartum depressive symptoms predicted reductions in maternal self-efficacy [$F(4, 52) = 2.58, p < .05, R^2 = .166$] and breastfeeding self-efficacy [$F(4, 48) = 2.67, p < .05, R^2 = .18$], controlling for age, ethnicity and marital status. These results suggest the importance of early intervention techniques for postpartum depressive symptoms, and creating resilience in areas of both maternal and breastfeeding self-efficacy.

Postpartum Depressive Symptoms Predicts Maternal and Breast-Feeding Self-Efficacy



Author:
Amanda Olson
Faculty Mentor: Jennifer M. Weaver
Department of Psychological Science

Background

Postpartum depressive symptoms interrupt the joy felt by many new mothers. To better understand possible negative outcomes of these symptoms the researchers examined how the presence of symptoms could impact how a mother feels about her competency as a parent, and her feelings of self-efficacy in breastfeeding her infant.

Design and Methods

N=60
First time mothers

Prenatal Interview
Demographics, feelings + ideas about parenting, + personality traits were recorded.

2-week Postnatal Survey:
Included Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (Cox, Holden, & Sagovsky, 1987), Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale (SF) (Dennis, 2003).

3 Month Postnatal Survey:
Included Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale (SF) + Parenting Efficacy Scale (Teti & Gelfand, 1991) Modified to only include mothers.

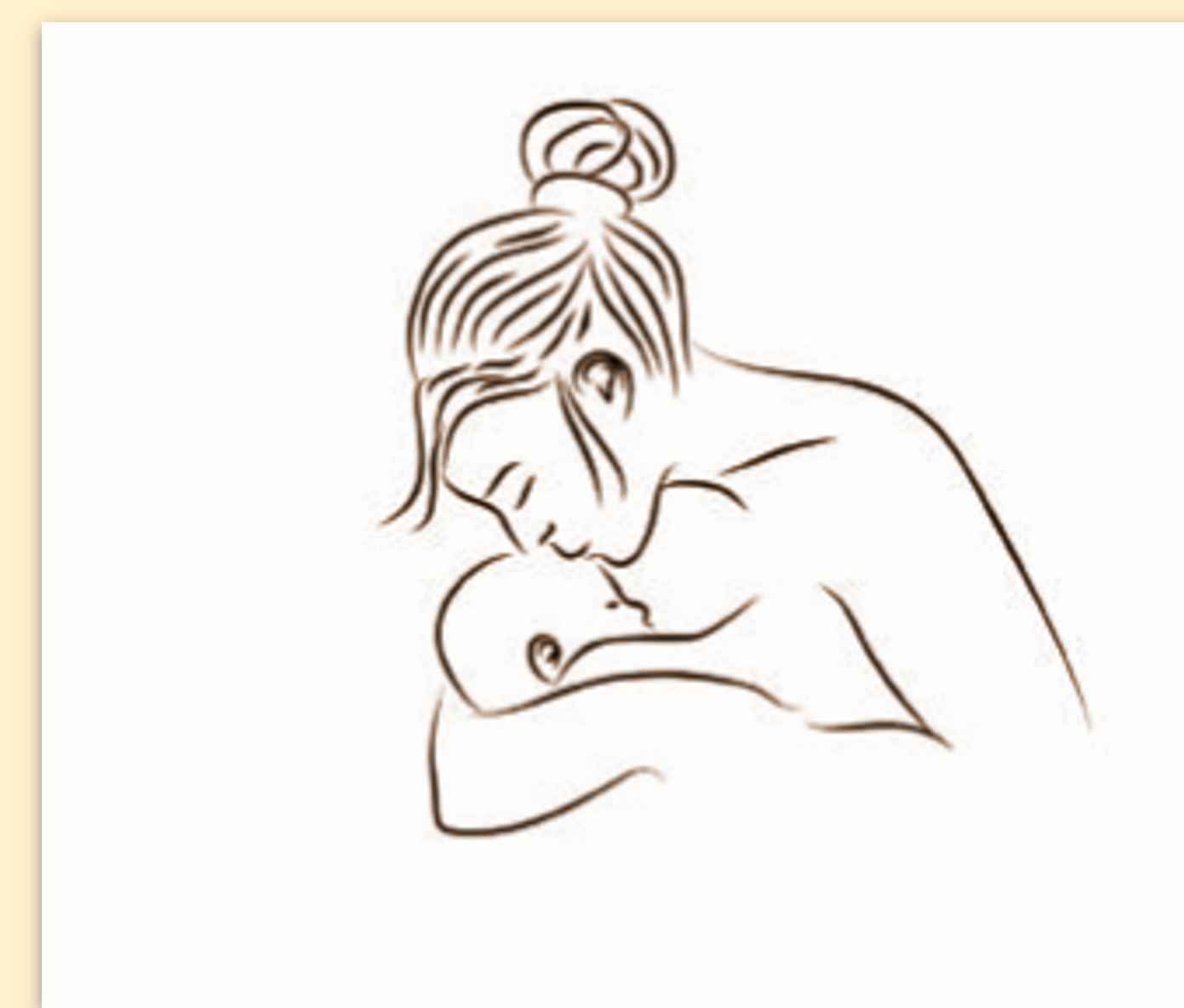
6 Month Postnatal Lab Visit + Interview:
Included Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale (SF) + Parenting Efficacy Scale (modified to only include mothers).

Postpartum Depressive Symptoms Predicts in Maternal Self-Efficacy & Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy

Variable	Maternal Self Efficacy Average			Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Average		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE (B)</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE (B)</i>	β
Age of participant	-.09	.09	-.14	-.16	.30	-.07
Ethnicity ¹	-.25	1.06	-.03	-.91	3.74	-.03
Marital Status ²	-.56	1.52	-.05	-.61	5.00	-.02
Postnatal Depression	-.27	.09	-.41 **	-.93	.29	-.43**
<i>F</i>	2.58*			2.67*		
<i>R</i> ²	.17			.18		

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Note: ¹ 0 = White, 1 = All ethnic minority; ² 0 = Married or Partnered, 1 = Single.



Results

Regression analyses indicate two-week postpartum depressive symptoms predict decreases in maternal self efficacy when 3- and 6-month scores are averaged, as well as a decreased in averaged breastfeeding self-efficacy scores.

Conclusions

Postpartum depressive symptoms are a predictor of both reduced maternal self-efficacy and diminished breastfeeding self-efficacy, when controlling for age, ethnicity, and marital status.

In line with research suggesting the importance of identifying PPD early on (e.g., Luoma et al., 2001), our research suggests that depressive symptoms as early as 2 weeks after the birth are important in understanding mothers' feelings of self-efficacy in their new role, and this may translate into shorter breastfeeding durations and diminished capacity to care for the infant in a healthy manner (McLearn et al., 2006).

Contact Information

Amanda Olson:
amandagillespie@u.boisestate.edu