Association of maternal self-report and observational data at three points postpartum: The case for multiple measurements

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ABSTRACT

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND: The purpose of this dissertation research was to examine the relations among maternal self-report of depression, anxiety and parental stress and observations of maternal affect and gaze, using the Face-to-Face Still Face Paradigm (FFSF) at 16, 24, and 43 weeks postpartum. Behavioral data related to the FFSF paradigm can reveal whether maternal subjective experience reflected in questionnaire responses come into play, given the boundaries and constraints of a particular stressful and/or challenging condition. Developing research tools incorporating observational as well as self-report measures is pivotal in expanding the theoretical basis of maternal-child/mental health nursing knowledge, given the inherent significance of dyadic, relational phenomena.

PATIENT/STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: Although the original study did not engage research participants in its design, future studies focusing on maternal self-report and observed behavior would be enhanced by such engagement.

OVERVIEW/METHODS: Data gathered during an NIH (5R01HD050459-02) funded study, Stability of Coping and Memory for Social Stress, (Tronick, Snidman, DiCorcia & colleagues, 2013) was utilized. Maternal gaze and affect were coded with the Gaze-Faze coding system using videotaped interaction of mother-infant dyads.

FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS: Results of this study were interpreted within Tronick’s Mutual Regulation Model and in relation to well-documented convergences and discrepancies between maternal self-report data and objective behavioral measures. The mixed research methodologies provided a broad perspective on self in relation to others in the context of a stressful encounter. This study has relevance for such research efforts as it highlighted the difficulty in interpreting self-report findings related to variables such as depression, anxiety, and/or parenting stress without the additional context provided by observational data. If observational measures are incorporated into future nursing studies with mother-infant dyads, this context-rich methodology may enrich the research process and optimize the information yield in relation to specific research outcomes.
No handouts were provided for this presentation:

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