

Affective experience in ecologically relevant contexts is dynamic and not progressively attenuated during pregnancy

Gerald F. Giesbrecht & Nicole Letourneau & Tavis Campbell & Bonnie J. Kaplan & The APrON Study Team

Abstract

Pregnancy is thought to diminish a woman's appraisal of and affective response to stressors. To examine this assumption, we used an electronic diary and an ecological momentary assessment strategy to record women's (n085) experiences of positive and negative affect five times each day over 2 days within each trimester of pregnancy. The women also completed the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale in each trimester. Multilevel modeling indicated nonlinear patterns for both positive and negative affect that differed by the level of depressive symptoms. The findings suggest that changes in the psychological experience over the course of pregnancy are dynamic and not progressively attenuated.

Keywords: Pregnancy, Positive affect, Negative affect, Gestational age, Depressive Symptoms.