LINKS BETWEEN MATERNAL TEMPERAMENT, PARENTING KNOWLEDGE, AND PARENTING SELF-EFFICACY: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EMOTION REGULATION

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Recent work has started to focus on the role of parent emotion regulation in relation to caregiving behavior. However, little work has considered links among aspects of parent temperament, emotion regulation, and knowledge of parenting and parenting self-efficacy, both of which have been shown to be notable predictors of caregiver behavior. To addresses these gaps in existing work, the current study examines associations between maternal temperament attributes, emotion regulation and parenting self-efficacy and knowledge. Additionally, the potential mediating role of maternal emotion regulation in the link between maternal temperament attributes and parenting self-efficacy and knowledge is considered.

One hundred seventy-nine mothers of infants participated. Path analyses were conducted to test hypotheses. The results for maternal temperament attributes, emotion regulation and parenting self-efficacy revealed a direct effect between positive affect and self-efficacy, a direct effect between inhibitory control and reappraisal, and a direct effect between reappraisal and self-efficacy. Whereas, the results for maternal temperament attributes, emotion regulation and parental knowledge for parenting strategies showed an indirect pathway between positive affect, suppression and parental knowledge.

In conclusion, mothers with lower positive affect are more vulnerable to use suppression and have less parental knowledge. Whereas, mothers that tend to use more reappraisal and have higher inhibitory control, higher positive affect, also have higher parenting self-efficacy. Taking into account both emotional and cognitive components of self-efficacy and parental knowledge of parenting strategies might lead to new paths to identify parents at risk in community samples. The findings are essentials for designing and implementing parental-emotional-approach preventive programs. The study is the first to investigate the link between parental temperament attributes, emotion regulation strategies and the outcomes on self-efficacy and parental knowledge.