
DO NON-PERINATAL AND PERINATAL CHILDBEARING AGE WOMEN DIFFER IN THE STRUCTURE OF DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS?

A.T. Pereira¹, M. Marques², S. Bos¹, M.J. Soares¹, B. Maia³, V. Nogueira¹, N. Madeira¹, **C. Roque**¹, A. Macedo¹

¹Psychological Medicine Department, Faculty of Medicine University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal ; ²Miguel Torga Higher Institute, Miguel Torga Higher Institute, Coimbra, Portugal ; ³High Institute of Social Service, High Institute of Social Service, Porto, Portugal

Introduction: The Beck Depression Inventory-II [BDI-II] (Beck et al., 1996) is the self-report instrument to depressive symptoms most widely used. A 2-factor structure is frequently obtained in clinical and nonclinical samples. Our group found an identical 2-factor solution in pregnant (3rd trimester) and postpartum women (3 months); the two factors were: Cognitive-Affective and Somatic-Anxiety (Bos et al., 2009).

Objectives: To investigate the BDI-II factor structure in a sample of childbearing age women who were not pregnant or that did not have children in the last year and to compare the structure of depression symptoms experienced by women in the perinatal period versus outside the perinatal period.

Methods: 120 non-perinatal women (students and employees at health and education institutions), aged 18-44 ($M=29.42\pm 7.159$ years), currently or in the last year unpregnant, were asked to fill in the BDI-II. A principal components analysis with Varimax rotation was performed.

Results: The internal consistency coefficient Cronbach alpha (α) was of .82. Following the Kaiser and the Cattell's Scree Plot criteria, a two factors structure was selected, which explained 43.56% of the variance [EV]. Based on items content, Factor [F] 1 (EV=33.55 %; $\alpha=.83$) and F2 (EV=10.26%; $\alpha=.82$) were respectively denominated 'Somatic-Anxiety' and 'Cognitive-Affective'. The dimensions composition completely overlapped with the Bos et al. (2009) structure, obtained with perinatal women.

Conclusions: The BDI-II factorial structure in non-perinatal childbearing age women is robust and meaningful. Our results support the view that the structure of depressive symptoms does not differ between perinatal and non-perinatal women.