



# Relationship Satisfaction and Commitment in the Transition to Parenthood: A Couple-Centered Approach

Leonhardt et al. (2022)

How does your body, mind, and social interactions influence your relationship satisfaction and commitment in your transition to parenthood?

## Methods

203 couples, each with still-pregnant first-time mothers, were recruited at the beginning of the study. At 20 and 32 weeks pregnant, and 3-, 6-, 9- and 12-months postpartum, couples completed online surveys on relationship satisfaction and commitment, as well as biological, psychological, and social factors.



## Results showed that...

There was no difference in relationship trajectories based on biological stressors (e.g., C-section vs. episiotomy). Across the psychological factors, couples who maintained higher satisfaction and commitment over the transition were more pessimistic (perhaps realistic).

## And that...

In terms of social factors, those who maintained high satisfaction and commitment had the lowest attachment avoidance (e.g., fear of intimacy), and perceived greater commitment in their partner.

Interestingly, from 3 to 12 months, 46% of the couples maintained high levels of relationship satisfaction and commitment. An additional 35% of the couples retained moderately high satisfaction and high commitment.

## In Short

The findings of this study suggest that being pessimistic (perhaps realistic), less fearful of intimacy, and perceiving high levels of commitment from your partner improves your transition into parenthood. Those that do are typically able to maintain high commitment, as well as high to moderately high satisfaction.