

## Abstract

This study is aimed at exploring the impact of demographic, social, psychological and obstetrical factors on the quality of childbirth anticipation and experience as in depressive symptoms one week and three months after birth. It was also our interest to examine the association between childbirth anticipation and experience. Finally we analyse the relation between anticipation and experience childbirth quality in the depressive symptoms one week and three months after birth. The participants are 197 pregnant primiparous women, with 15 to 39 years and patients of the External Consultation of Obstetrics of the Júlio Dinis Maternity Hospital (Porto, Portugal) that had participated in the study between September 2001 and July 2002. Informed Consents were provided, and the participants had filled a Socio-demographic Questionnaire and the *Anticipation of Childbirth Questionnaire* (QAP, Costa, Figueiredo, Pacheco, Marques, & Pais, in press) in 2<sup>o</sup> trimester of pregnancy. In the first week after childbirth the participants were contacted again during the Hospital internment and filled out the *Experience and Satisfaction with the Childbirth Questionnaire* (QESP, Costa, Figueiredo, Pacheco, Marques, & Pais, submitted for publication) and the *Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale* (EPDS, Augustus, Kumar, Calheiros, Matos, & Figueiredo, 1996). Later, at 3 months after childbirth, the participation of the mothers was requested again, through the filling out of the EPDS questionnaire. The results show that some socio-demographic circumstances as the marital status, religion, birth place, professional status, educational level, adverse life events, and obstetrical problems are related to the anticipation of childbirth quality.

The childbirth experience is related to the age, marital status, educational level, psychopathological history, obstetrical problems or adverse life events, type of delivery and anaesthesia, first contact with infant, infant's weight and anticipation of childbirth.

Depressive symptoms in the week after childbirth is not related to demographic, social or psychological factors, but only with obstetrical factors, childbirth experience and first contact with the infant. Three months after childbirth, the depressive symptoms are related to psychological factors and childbirth experience.

The results of this study point out the importance of taking care of both medical and psychological needs of mothers during and after childbirth.