Abstract

Objective: This longitudinal study examined the negative impact of postnatal bulimic symptoms on parenting behavior. Method: Ninety-one Chinese mothers were assessed with self-report questionnaires during pregnancy (T1) and telephone interviewed at 6-month (T2) and 1-year postnatal (T3). Results: Bivariate correlation analyses showed that parenting behavior at T3 was correlated with maternal-fetal attachment at T1 and maternal bulimic symptoms at T2. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses further demonstrated that bulimic symptoms at T2 predicted maternal concern at T3 above and beyond the effects of maternal-fetal attachment at T1. However, bulimic symptoms at T2 did not uniquely predict maternal restrictiveness at T3. Conclusion: To facilitate effective parenting, examining maternal eating disturbance alone may not be sufficient to understand fully its impact on parenting behavior. This area of research should move toward identifying how multiple risk factors work together to interfere with the functioning of the parental role.