

Quality of Life of Mothers and Their Partner (Spouse) Following the Birth of a Child

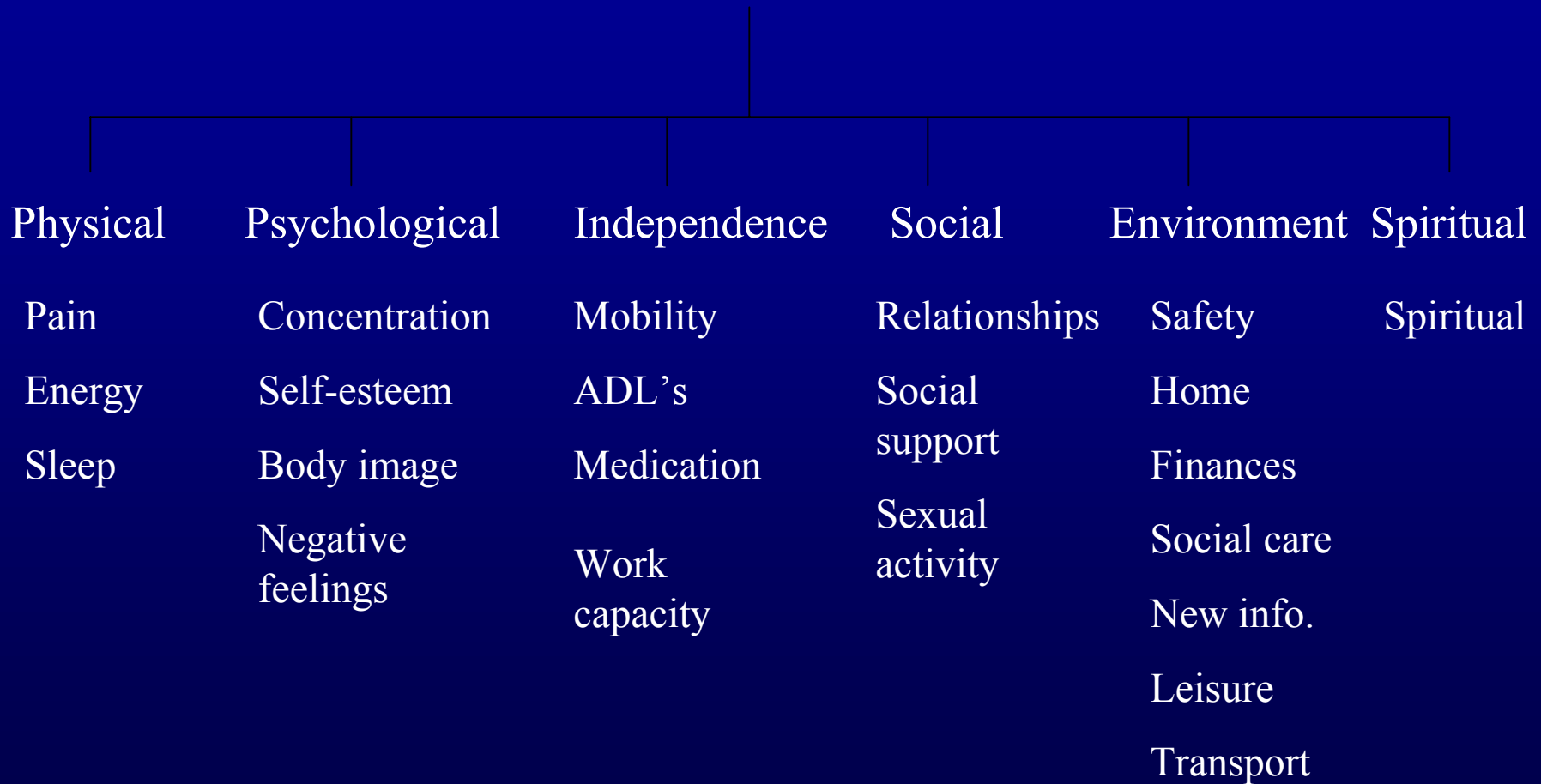
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Background

- Childbirth has a substantial impact on the daily routine & QOL of new parents
- Most “QOL studies” of childbearing women focus on physical/functional function
- No existing QOL studies of spouses of childbearing women

WHOQOL Instrument



Objective

- To describe the impact of childbirth on the QOL of new mothers and their partner (spouse) using the WHOQOL-100 instrument

Methods - Respondent Profile

- 64 U.S. English-speaking woman-partner dyads
- Women required to be pregnant, co-habiting with partner, & generally excited about childbirth

Data Collection

- Mail administration of the WHOQOL
 - T1: 1 month before childbirth
 - T2: 2 months after childbirth
- Response rate ~ 87%

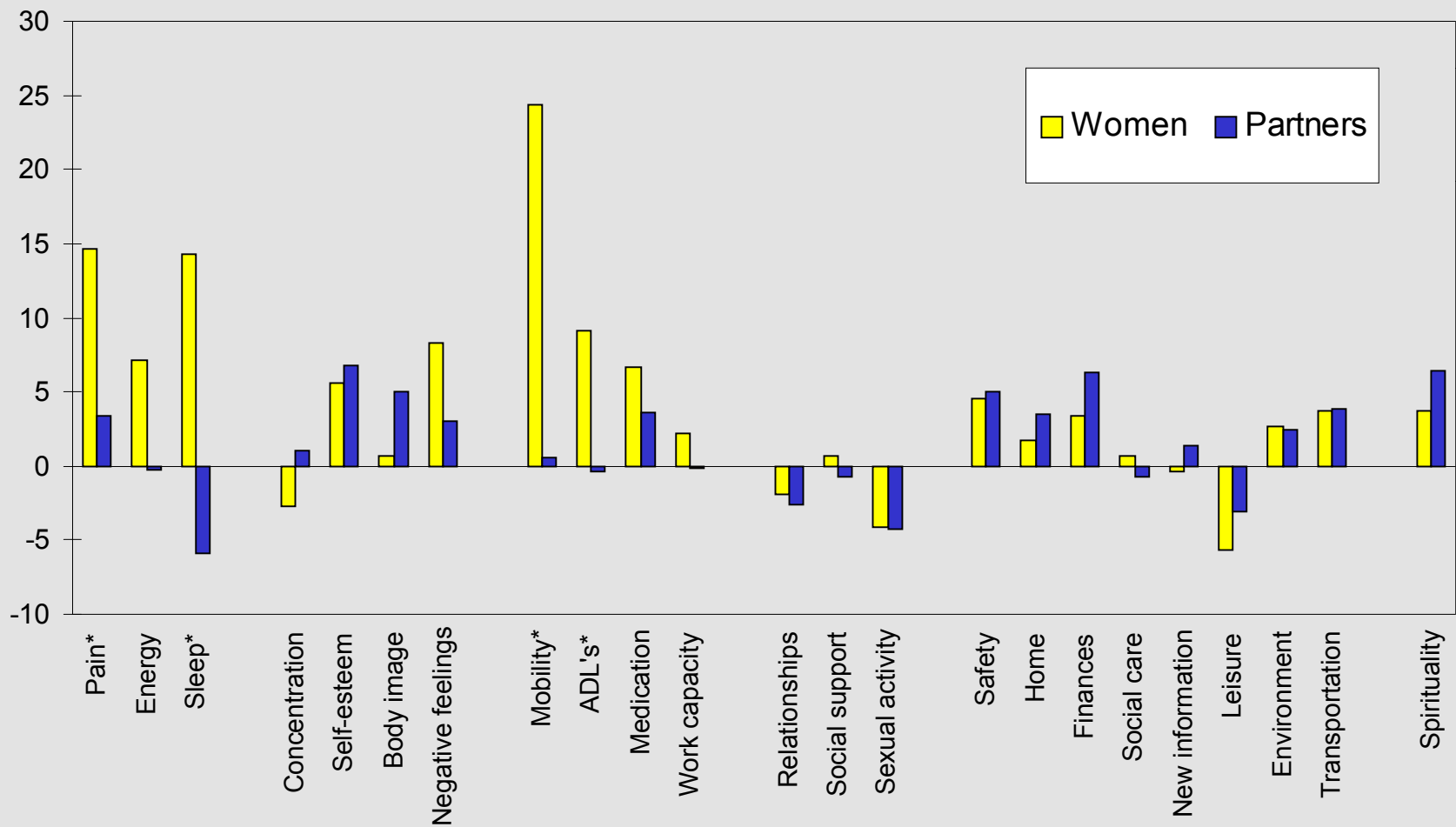
Analysis

- ANOVA to determine compare facet change scores (post - pre-childbirth) in women vs. their partner
- Regression to determine predictive factors (e.g., parity status) of QOL after childbirth

Results - Sample Characteristics

- Age (mean, S.D.)
Women 30 (6.2)
Partners 32 (6.4)
- Ethnicity ~
82% Caucasian
6% Hispanic
12% Other
- Parity status ~
54% primiparas
46% multiparas
- Delivery type ~
80% vaginal
20% cesarean

Quality of Life Changes Following Childbirth in Women and Their Partners



Predictive Factors of QOL

Independent Variable	Physical	Psychological	Independence	Social	Environment	Spiritual
Age (continuous)	.09 (.28)	.07 (.28)	.12 (.17)	-.61 (.34)	-.02 (.24)	.09 (.37)
Childbirth complication (0=no)	-9.69** (4.04)	-4.87 (4.05)	-4.87* (2.39)	-6.94 (5.02)	3.27 (3.44)	-3.31 (5.63)
Type of delivery (0=vaginal)	.53 (3.48)	-1.05 (3.53)	1.58 (2.05)	-1.18 (4.30)	.009 (3.02)	4.01 (4.75)
Gender (0=partner)	-9.70** (3.65)	-4.41 (3.15)	-4.28 (2.51)	-6.08 (3.71)	-.32 (2.65)	-5.38 (4.07)
Education (0 – 20+)	.80 (.64)	1.22* (.648)	.07 (.39)	.31 (.77)	.66 (.57)	.34 (.88)
Ethnicity (0=Cauc.)	-1.53 (1.11)	-.77 (1.11)	-.06 (2.34)	-.49 (1.39)	-1.06 (.94)	-10.46* (5.32)
Baby's health (1=poor to 5=excellent)	5.52 (3.24)	4.82 (3.25)	1.14 (1.19)	16.70† (3.92)	7.37*** (2.74)	15.93‡ (4.38)
Number of children (0=none)	-.38 (2.98)	-4.75 (3.03)	.23 (1.76)	-5.69 (3.84)	-4.93 (2.79)	.22 (4.04)
Baseline WHOQOL domain score	-.13 (.12)	-.13 (.12)	.19** (.08)	-.168 (.16)	-.19 (.12)	.08 (.10)

*p < .05 **p < .02 ***p < .009 ‡ p < .0005 † p < .0001

Study Limitations

- Resource constraints dictated small, culturally homogenous sample
- Did not include high-risk mothers

Conclusions

- First study to examine QOL in both childbearing women and their partners
- Results may have important policy and clinical implications