



## Current parental depression and offspring perceived self-competence: a quasi-experimental examination.

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Abstract:

A genetically-informed, quasi-experimental design was used to examine the genetic and environmental processes underlying associations between current parental depressive symptoms and offspring perceived self-competence. Participants, drawn from a population-based Swedish sample, were 852 twin pairs and their male (52 %) and female offspring aged  $15.7 \pm 2.4$  years. Parental depressive symptoms were measured using the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression scale. Offspring perceived self-competence was measured using a modified Harter Perceived Competence Scale. Cousin comparisons and Children of Twins designs suggested that associations between maternal depressive symptoms and offspring perceived self-competence were due to shared genetic/environmental liability. The mechanism responsible for father-offspring associations, however, was independent of genetic factors and of extended family environmental factors, supporting a causal inference. Thus, mothers and fathers may impact offspring perceived self-competence via different mechanisms and unmeasured genetic and environmental selection factors must be considered when studying the intergenerational transmission of cognitive vulnerabilities for depression.

Notes:

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