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## Parenting Stress, Family Conflict, and Motherhood during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic caused a global lockdown. Consequently, individuals are experiencing significant stress (American Psychological Association, 2020). Using data from Singapore, women and mothers in particular report more moderate or poor work-family balance levels than men and fathers, and poor work-family balance was associated with higher levels parenting stress (Chung et al., 2020). Increased stress can result in increased conflict between partners (Monk et al., 2021). Using data collected from 117 U.S. women in May of 2020, 55 of whom were mothers, we examined the association between stress (parenting status and stress, as well as perceived stress) and conflict with partners. Our first hypothesis was that mothers would have higher levels of conflict and perceived stress, in comparison to the women who were not. Our second hypothesis parents that parenting stress and perceived stress are positively associated with increased conflict. Preliminary analyses showed positive correlations between parenting stress and interpersonal conflict ( $r = .32, p < .05$ ), parenting stress and perceived stress ( $r = .60, p < .001$ ), and perceived stress and interpersonal conflict ( $r = .31, p < .01$ ). In line with my hypothesis, t-tests revealed there were significant differences between mothers and non-mothers in conflict,  $t(115) = -1.99, p = .05$ , but not stress,  $t(115) = 1.13, p = .26$ . Given the pandemic is creating significant change for many people, it is likely that non-mothers are also experiencing high levels of stress during the onset of the pandemic. However, stress disparities may increase over the course of the pandemic as non-parents adjust more quickly to pandemic-related life changes. In future research, scholars should collect longitudinal data from participants in order to understand this variability in experiences over time.