

On the Temporal Nature of Parental Burnout

Developing an Experience Sampling Methodology (ESM) Tool to Assess Parental Burnout and Its Family Context

M. Annelise Blanchard, Jordan Revol, Yorgo Hoebeke, Isabelle Roskam, Moïra Mikolajczak, & Alexandre Heeren



Introduction

Parental Burnout

4 features:

- Emotional Exhaustion
- Emotional Distance
- Feeling Fed Up
- Contrast with Previous Parental Self

Currently:
Measured once



Parental Burnout
Assessment

Roskam, Brianda, &
Mikolajczak (2018)

How does parental burnout
fluctuate from day to day?



Context

Parenting: embedded in the family system,
which is always changing



Theoretical framework

Parental burnout develops from a chronic
imbalance between parenting risks and
parenting resources Mikolajczak & Roskam (2018)



Previous research

- Parental emotional exhaustion varies daily
Gillis & Roskam (2020)
- PB associated with negative consequences
for the family Mikolajczak et al. (2018)

Want to examine daily:

- Exhaustion
- Distance
- Feeling Fed Up
- Contrast
- Family Context

Experience Sampling Methodology (ESM)

- Repeated
- In everyday life
- Measuring states
(not traits)



...but currently no ESM tool or specific items

ESM Item Requirements

- Very brief (low burden)
- Clear phrasing
- Broadly applicable
- Not extreme events (occur daily, variation)

Goal: Develop ESM items to measure
parental burnout and family context daily

Materials



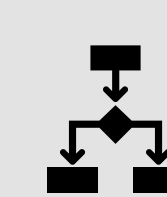
- ✓ Free
- ✓ Open source software: can
share templates & materials
- ✓ Easy to customize with R
code
- ✓ Can send ESM notifications
by email or SMS (with
outside software)

Methodology

ESM item development process

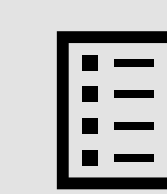
Following recommendations from ESM experts:

Myin-Germeys et al. (2018); Varese et al. (2019); Vasconcelos e Sa et al. (2019)



Decided on constructs of interest

PB features + related family context variables



Developed items

Adapted from existing questionnaires &
formulated new items



Refined & selected items

- Feedback from parents & PB experts
 - about **phrasing** (clear, brief) → **face validity**
 - about **content** (items apply to all parents; not
extreme events) → **content validity**

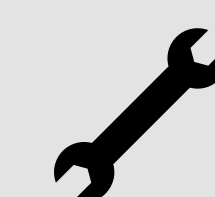
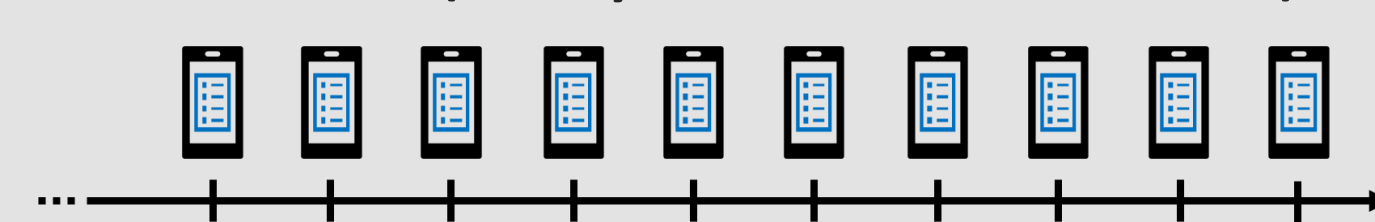


Tested items

- Examined how (general population)
parents respond to items
- Checked for sufficient variation
- Feedback from parents about item
phrasing, content & overall experience

2 phases of data collection:

- n = 5 (daily over one week)
- n = 7 (daily over two weeks)



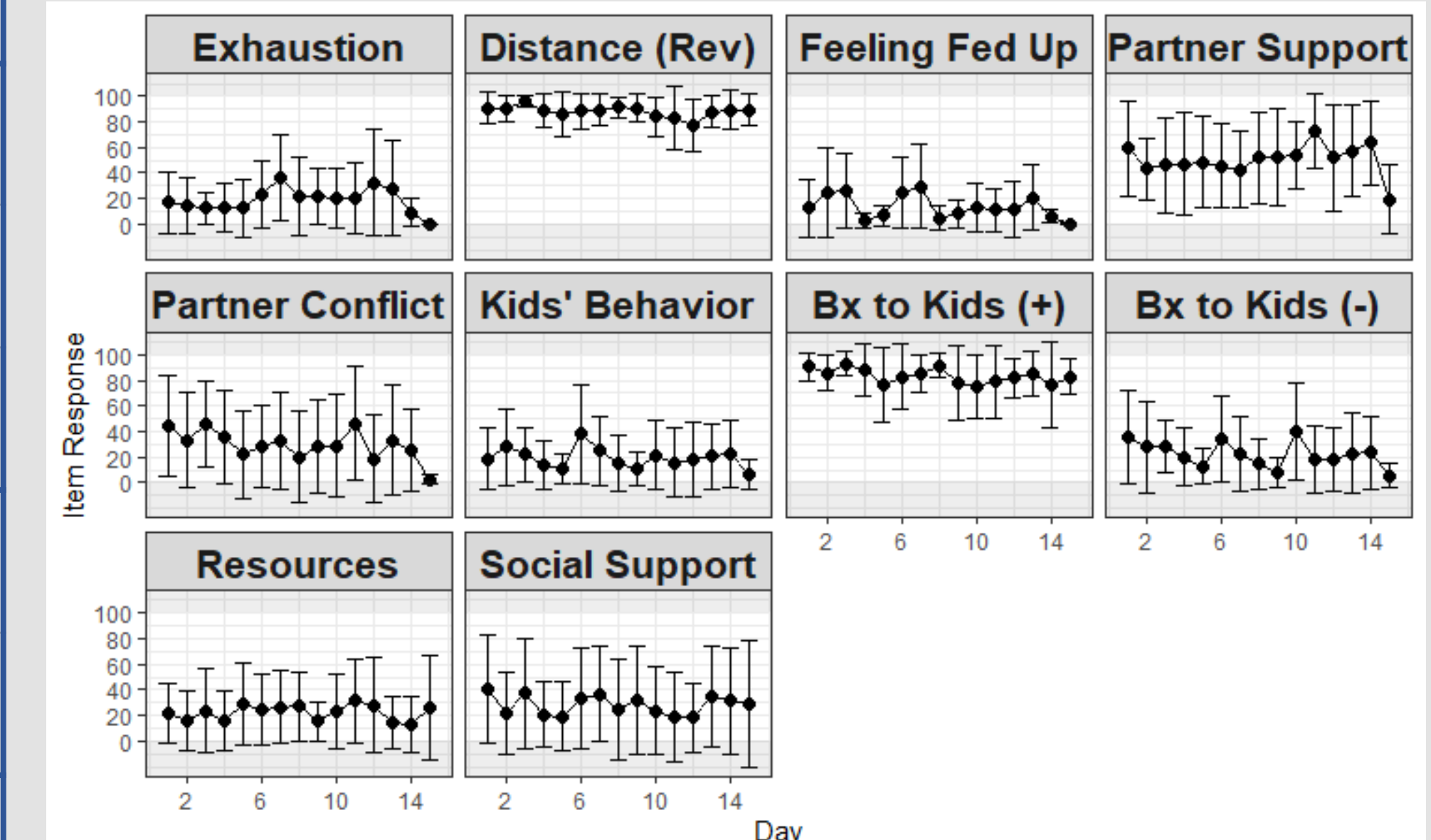
8 revisions from beginning to end

Note: Items originally developed and tested in
French & back-translated into English
(Currently validating English-language items)

Results

	Construct	Final ESM Items
Parental Burnout	Emotional Exhaustion	I felt exhausted while caring for my children.
	Emotional Distance	I felt close to my children in both good and bad situations.
	Feeling Fed Up	I felt overwhelmed with caring for my children.
Partner	Partner Support	I received help from my partner with caring for my children.
	Partner Conflict	I had some misunderstandings, tension, or arguments with my partner.
Kids	Kids' Behavior	My children were difficult to manage.
	Behavior to Kids (+)	I shared positive moments with my children.
	Behavior to Kids (-)	I got angry with one or more of my children.
Context	Resources	I lacked the means (for example, time, energy, material resources) to take care of my children.
	Social Support	I received help from friends or family (other than my partner) with caring for my children.
	Time Spent with Kids	Around how many hours (outside of sleeping hours) did you spend near your children today?

Mean responses of participants



Responses to all items vary daily

Checked if sufficient variation for ESM:

- ✓ Intraclass correlation coefficients
- ✓ Intra-individual SDs

Qualitative Feedback



Conclusions

ESM items

- ✓ Clear phrasing
- ✓ Minimal burden
- ✓ Sufficient individual
variation

Empirical findings

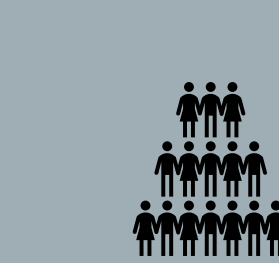
Fluctuations

Exhaustion

Distance

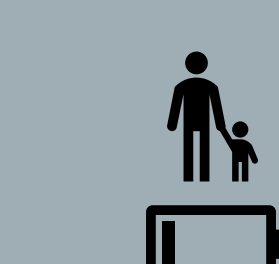
Feeling Fed Up

Future Plans



Further validation

Larger sample size & more timepoints;
compare with trait (one-time) measures



Fluctuations in parents with burnout?

Maybe the features of parental burnout
do not fluctuate for these parents? Or
maybe the dynamics differ?

References

- Gillis, A., & Roskam, I. (2020). Regulation between daily exhaustion and support in parenting: A dyadic perspective. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 44(3), 226–235.
- Mikolajczak, M., & Roskam, I. (2018). A theoretical and clinical framework for parental burnout: The balance between risks and resources (BR2). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 886.
- Mikolajczak, M., Brianda, M. E., Avalosse, H., & Roskam, I. (2018). Consequences of parental burnout: Its specific effect on child neglect and violence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 80, 134–145.
- Myin-Germeys, I., Kasanova, Z., Vaessen, T., Vachon, H., Kirtley, O., Viechtbauer, W., & Reininghaus, U. (2018). Experience sampling methodology in mental health research: New insights and technical developments. *World Psychiatry*, 17(2), 123–132.
- Roskam, I., Brianda, M. E., & Mikolajczak, M. (2018). A step forward in the conceptualization and measurement of parental burnout: The Parental Burnout Assessment (PBA). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 758.
- Varese, F., Haddock, G., & Palmier-Claus, J. (2019). Designing and conducting an experience sampling study. In *Experience Sampling in Mental Health Research* (pp. 8–17). Routledge.
- Vasconcelos e Sa, D., Hartley, S., & Barrowclough, C. (2019). Experience sampling in the study of dyads and family dynamics. In *Experience Sampling in Mental Health Research* (pp. 81–96). Routledge.

For more information



- ✓ Formr template
- ✓ Data
- ✓ R Code
- ✓ Preprint

marie.blanchard@uclouvain.be