

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number:



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

Title of project

Psychological Correlates of Childbirth

Invitation Paragraph

I would like to invite you to participate in this research project which forms part of my **post-doctoral** research. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please email maria.balaet@kcl.ac.uk if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of the project is to understand what the experience of having a child feels like, and how it associates with personality traits, beliefs about the world and life satisfaction.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to participate in this project because you are a member of the Great British Intelligence Test Cohort who has previously consented to be recontacted for future studies.

The inclusion criteria are as follows:

- Be above 16 years old
- Be willing to answer questions about whether you have children and the experience of giving birth/witnessing your partner give birth
- Have at least 1 child (currently pregnant or already born)
- You have given birth yourself in the past or have witnessed your child being born

The exclusion criteria are as follows:

- Be below 16 years old
- Not willing to answer questions about whether you have children and the experience of giving birth/witnessing your partner give birth

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part in the project you will be asked to complete a survey that may take up to 25 minutes to complete. Participation will take place online. As part of participation you will be asked to provide answers to questionnaire items regarding how you felt while having your child, personality questions, beliefs about the world and life satisfaction.

For example, we will be asking whether during childbirth you felt like you experienced 'eternity or infinity', whether you had a sense of 'awe', whether you lost track of time or where you were physically during the experience. We will also be asking whether you are generally moved by poetic pieces or whether you get really caught up in music when you listen to it. We will also be asking whether you think there is an order in the universe that transcends human thinking, or whether you believe the 'self' is a construct of the human brain. We will also ask you about how you deal with uncertainty and whether you are optimistic about your future. We will also ask you to complete a quick battery of cognitive tasks that measure your problem solving ability (under 7 minutes).

If during the survey you respond that you are currently pregnant/expecting, we will only show you a shortened version of the survey that may only take up to 15 minutes to complete and then we will contact you to invite you to complete the survey in full in 9 months time. Participation will be, again, completely voluntary and you may wish to withdraw at any time.

If you choose to take part in this study, the information you provide will be linked to information you previously provided in the Great British Intelligence Test which is hosted on the same Cognitron platform. This will include information that may be considered sensitive: age, sex, ethnicity, lifestyle information as well as physical and mental health data. The data will be analysed together in an anonymised form and it will not be possible to identify you at any stage. The anonymised data will be shared with members of the research team involved in the data analysis, as well as with the wider scientific community upon publication of the study results.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read the information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part we will ask you to tick a box to provide electronic consent.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no risks associated with taking part in this study beyond those you might encounter when talking about childbirth in everyday conversations. However, because some questions relate to challenging experiences of childbirth, some people might find those uncomfortable to answer. Should that be the case, you are free to stop taking part in the study at any time, without giving a reason. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel welcome to contact the research team using the details provided in one of the sections below.

If you would like to speak with someone about challenges during childbirth, in the post-partum period, persisting problems associated with this event, or seek additional support at any time, you may consider reaching out to one of the following:

- **Your GP (General Practitioner):** They can provide advice, guidance, and referrals for any concerns you may have.

- **NHS 111:** For non-urgent medical advice or if you are unsure about who to speak to, dial 111 (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).
- **Samaritans (Call 116 123):** A confidential listening service available 24/7.
- **PANDAS Foundation (Call 0808 1961 776):** Offers information and support around pregnancy, birth, and the postnatal period.
- **National Childbirth Trust (NCT):** Provides advice on pregnancy, birth, and early parenthood, including local groups and helplines.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We cannot promise participating in this study will help you, but you will be helping us understand the experience of childbirth better.

Data handling and confidentiality

Your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018).

- **Data will be stored on secure and GDPR compliant Cognitron servers.**
- **Data will be retained for 5 years.**
- **Data will only be shared within the research team and our collaborators.**
- **Where data will be made available for researchers for analysis, it will be completely anonymous.**
- **Data will remain within the UK; if data will be shared with collaborators abroad we will ensure it complies with UK law.**

King's College London has a responsibility to keep information collected about you safe and secure, and to ensure the integrity of research data. Specialist teams within King's College London continually assess and ensure that data is held in the most appropriate and secure way.

Data Protection Statement

If you would like more information about how your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws please visit the link below:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw at any point of the project, without having to give a reason up to the study completion day, 31.12.2025. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way.

Your rights to access, change or move your information once you have completed the survey are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research

to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the project, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible. Specifically, we will keep your anonymised data but will not contact you again for the purpose of the study.

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of the project will be summarised in scientific publications, conference presentations and content aimed at the general public.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact the following contact details: maria.balaet@kcl.ac.uk

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this project has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

The Chair, PNM Research Ethics Panel rec@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.