**Supplemental table 1: Pivotal sentence(s) from the abstract of the 13 negative studies with a positive focus.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Study** | **Sentence(s) from abstract** |
| Brown (2013) | “The short variant of the serotonin transporter gene specifically sensitizes to the effect of early-life experience of abuse or neglect on whether an adult depressive episode takes a chronic course. This interaction may be responsible for a substantial proportion of cases of chronic depression in the general population.” |
| Cichetti (2007) | “Gene x environment interactions were observed. (…) Sexual abuse and the 5-HTT short/short genotype predicted higher depression, anxiety, and somatic symptoms.” |
| Eley (2004) | “Furthermore, there was a significant genotype-environmental risk interaction for 5HTTLPR in female subjects only, with the effect being in the same direction as another recent study, reaffirming that an important source of genetic heterogeneity is exposure to environmental risk.” |
| Hankin (2011) | “These findings suggest that 5-HTTLPR confers susceptibility to depression via stress reactivity.” |
| Mitchell (2011) | “Using a nontruncated measure of a chronic environmental stressor—socioeconomic status—measured by education, and two polymorphisms (5-HTTLPR and STin2 VNTR) of the serotonin transporter gene (5-HTT), we find strong evidence that some women are genetically more reactive to the environment, resulting in a crossover of risks of postpartum depression for the most reactive groups.” |
| Scheid (2007) | “These data offer modest support to other reports of gene-environment interaction and highlight the importance of considering specific stressful life events.” |
| Stefanis (2011) | “Despite limitations linked to the evaluation of psychopathology by a single general scale and multiple comparisons, the present study supports a role of SLC6A4 in modulating abnormal responses to environmental stress.” |
| Sugden (2010) | “These findings are further evidence that the 5-HTTLPR moderates the risk of emotional disturbance after exposure to stressful events.” |
| Uher (2011) | “The specific effect on persistent depression increases the significance of this G x E for public health. Research that does not distinguish persistent course may underestimate G x E effects and account for some replication failures in G x E research.” |
| Wilhelm (2006) | “The 5-HTTLPR genotype is a significant predictor of onset of major depression following multiple adverse events. This is one of the more robust findings concerning specific biological risk factors for depression.” |
| Wilhelm (2012) | “Findings suggest that 5HTTLPR/rs25531 genotype is associated with psychological distress in a sample of subjects with diabetes.” |
| Zalsman (2006) | “Lower-expressing transporter alleles, directly and by increasing the impact of stressful life events on severity, explain 31% of the variance in major depression severity.” |
| Zhang (2009) | “The 5-HTTLPR polymorphism may modify the interaction between negative life events and MDD in the Chinese population.” |

Caption: The table provides the pivotal sentence(s) from the abstract of the 13 negative studies that were coded as having a positive focus. These sentences suggest that the results support the 5-HTTLPR x stress hypothesis, even though the results were actually coded as negative.

**Supplemental table 2. Preferential citation by study category**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Cited studies** | | | | |
| **Positive** | **Negative without positive focus** | **Negative with (partially) positive focus** | **Unclear** | **Total** |
|  | ***Number of studies*** | *24 (33%)* | *16 (22%)* | *21 (29%)* | *11 (15%)* | *73 (100%)* |
| **Citing studies** | **Positive** | 80 (55%) | 26 (18%) | 28 (19%) | 11 (8%) | 145 (100%) |
| **Negative without positive focus** | 43 (42%) | 31 (30%) | 19 (19%) | 9 (9%) | 102 (100%) |
| **Negative with (partially) positive focus** | 77 (46%) | 28 (17%) | 43 (26%) | 18 (11%) | 166 (100%) |
| **Unclear** | 36 (48%) | 12 (16%) | 18 (24%) | 9 (12%) | 75 (100%) |
| **Overall** | 236 (48%) | 97 (20%) | 108 (22%) | 47 (10%) | 488 |

Caption: Number of within-network citations by each study category (in rows) given to studies of each category (in columns).

**Supplemental Table 3. Sensitivity analysis of mean and median number of citations (raw and year-adjusted) for negative, unclear, and positive studies.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **Negative** | **Unclear** | **Positive** | |
| **With Caspi** | **Without Caspi** |
| **Within-network citations** | Mean (SD) | 5.5 (9.3) | 4.3 (6.2) | 9.8 (14.6) | 7.4 (8.9) |
| Median (IQR) | 1  (0 – 6) | 2  (1 – 3.5) | 5  (2 – 10.5) | 5  (2 – 8.5) |
| **% of subsequent studies citing** | Mean (SD) | 10.5 (13.9) | 9.2 (9.1) | 16.8 (20.6) | 13.6 (13.3) |
| Median (IQR) | 6.3  (0 – 14.6) | 5.9  (3.1 – 11.4) | 9.6  (6.2 – 20.4) | 9.5  (5.7 – 19.8) |
| **Web of Science citations** | Mean (SD) | 55.7 (72.4) | 78.4 (61.8) | 257.9 (765.7) | 103.8 (132.4) |
| Median (IQR) | 31.5  (16 – 53) | 58  (33 – 123) | 56  (36.3 – 117.3) | 46  (35.5 – 95.5) |
| **Yearly citation rate** | Mean (SD) | 7.6 (6.7) | 10.2 (6.6) | 24.9 (63.4) | 12.2 (12.8) |
| Median (IQR) | 5.5  (3.6 – 9.1) | 9.7  (5.3 – 13.3) | 7.7  (5.5 – 14.8) | 7.4  (5.3 – 11.8) |

Caption: Mean (SD) and median (IQR) number of within-network citations, percentage of subsequent studies citing a given study, number of Web of Science citations, and yearly citation rate for negative, unclear, and positive studies.

**Supplemental Table 4. Sensitivity analysis of mean and median number of citations (raw and year-adjusted) for negative studies without a positive focus and with a (partially) positive focus.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **No positive focus** | **Partially positive focus** | **Positive focus** |
| **Within-network citations** | Mean (SD) | 6.1 (9.5) | 3.1 (5.9) | 6.7 (11.3) |
| Median (IQR) | 1.5 (0.0 – 6.3) | 0.0 (0.0 – 3.0) | 1 (0 – 6.5) |
| **% of subsequent studies citing** | Mean (SD) | 11.7 (14.6) | 6.3 (9.4) | 12.1 (16.1) |
| Median (IQR) | 5.8  (0.0 – 17.5) | 0.0  (0.0 – 9.7) | 7.7  (0 – 12.3) |
| **Web of Science citations** | Mean (SD) | 42.4 (44.8) | 40.8 (40.8) | 82.2 (106.8) |
| Median (IQR) | 26.5  (15.8 – 41.0) | 33.0  (15.0 – 37.0) | 40.0  (16.0 – 88.0) |
| **Yearly citation rate** | Mean (SD) | 5.6 (4.0) | 6.7 (3.7) | 10.5 (9.7) |
| Median (IQR) | 4.5 (3.3 – 7.6) | 6.6 (5.0 – 8.8) | 8.8 (4.0 – 13.5) |

Caption: Mean (SD) and median (IQR) number of within-network citations, percentage of subsequent studies citing a given study, number of Web of Science citations, and yearly citation rate for negative studies without a positive focus, with a partially positive focus, and with a positive focus.