

INTRODUCTION

Adult Attachment: Anxiety and Avoidance

- People high in anxiety fear rejection and loss of love
- People high in avoidance are not comfortable with closeness and intimacy
- Parent relationship functioning, including adult romantic attachment, is associated with child health (Bierstetel et al., 2023; Stanton et al., 2017)
- To our knowledge, no research has examined the relationship between adult attachment and child sleep in Hispanic/Latino families.

Goal of Study

- Determine if parent adult attachment is related to child sleep problems and if this association may be explained by parenting behavior.

Hypotheses

- Parents higher in attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance will report greater child sleep problems.
- Parents higher in attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance will report less supportive/engaged behaviors with their children and more hostile/coercive behaviors.
- Parenting behavior will explain, in part, the association between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and child sleep problems.

METHODS

Participants

$N = 37$ Hispanic/Latino primary caregivers with children aged 1-5 years old (97% women; Age Mean = 35.25, Age Range = 24 - 44)

Relationship Type: 65% married; 27% cohabitating; 8% are dating exclusively

Procedure

Participants completed questionnaires during a 2-hour home visit.

METHODS

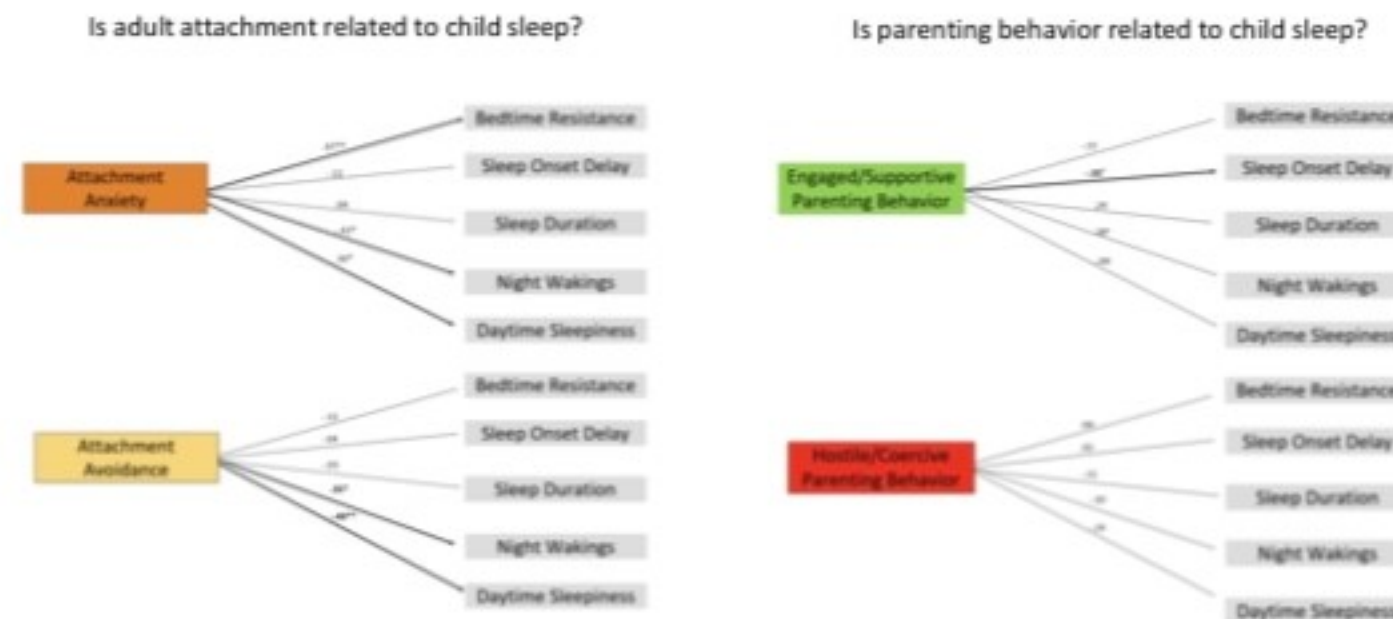
Measures

Adult Attachment (Anxiety and Avoidance): *Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR Short Form; Wei et al., 2007)*
 Attachment Avoidance 6 items, $\alpha = .78$ (e.g., "I prefer not to show my partner how I feel deep down")
 Attachment Anxiety 6 items, $\alpha = .48$ (e.g., "I worry about being abandoned")

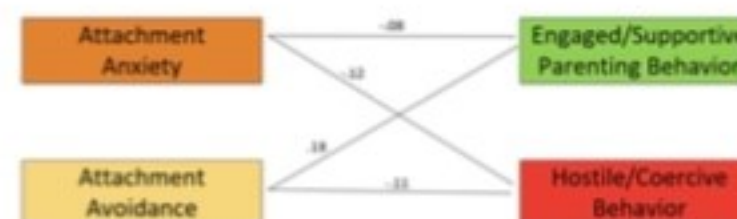
Parenting Behaviors: *Parent Behavior Inventory (Lovejoy et al., 1999)*
 Supportive/Engaged 10 items, $\alpha = .89$ (e.g., "My child and I hug and/or kiss each other")
 Hostile/Coercive 10 items, $\alpha = .77$ (e.g., "I grab or handle my child roughly")

Child Sleep Problems - *Modified Child Health Sleep Habits Questionnaire (Owens et al., 2000)*
 Bedtime resistance, 6 items, $\alpha = .77$ (e.g., "Goes to bed at same time" - reversed, "Child resists going to bed at bedtime")
 Sleep Onset Delay, single item ("My child falls asleep within 20 minutes after going to bed")
 Sleep Duration, reported in hours
 Night Wakings, 2 items, $r = .63$ ("My child wakes up more than once during the night", "My child wakes up once during the night")
 Daytime Sleepiness, 2 items, $r = .18$ ("My child seems tired during the day", "My child falls asleep while involved in activities")

RESULTS



Is adult attachment related to parenting behavior?



SUMMARY & DISCUSSION

Summary

- Consistent with hypotheses
 - Higher attachment anxiety was related to greater child bedtime resistance and more child daytime sleepiness
 - Higher attachment avoidance was related to more child night wakings
- In contrast to hypotheses
 - Higher attachment anxiety was related to fewer child night wakings
 - Higher attachment avoidance was related to less child daytime sleepiness
 - Adult attachment was not related to parenting behavior
 - Higher engaged/supportive parenting behavior was related to greater sleep onset delay

Implications

- Adult attachment anxiety and avoidance may be related to different sleep problems in children
- If parental attachment is related to child sleep, these preliminary results suggest that parenting may not be a potential explanatory mechanism in child sleep outcomes.
- Studies like these can be used to enhance the effectiveness and focus of early intervention programs

Limitations

- Child sleep may have been affected by other external factors
- Cross-sectional data
- Parent report data of child sleep and parenting behavior may introduce biases (e.g., attachment anxiety/avoidance may affect what parents notice about their children's sleep)
- Small sample size
- Internal consistency of attachment anxiety was low

REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank The UT Dallas Seed Program for Interdisciplinary Research (SPIRe) program and The Lewis Foundation for funding this project.



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