

The Association Between Parental Sleep and Parent Child Interactions:

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The Role of Stress



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DISCUSSION

- Parent- child interactions play a significant role in child development.
 - For example, a parent's affection can help the child build perceptions of the self, such as feeling loved and confident (Seror, 2022).
- Poor sleep is associated with greater daily stress reactivity (Kalmbach, Anderson, Drake)
- Greater stress is associated with lower quality parentchild interactions
 - For example, fathers with higher levels of stress were less involved with caring for their child and less sensitive during the parent child interaction (Milikovsky-Ayalon, Atzaba-Poria, 2015)

Hypotheses

- After nights of shorter sleep duration or poorer sleep quality, parents will experience more daily stressors the next day and report more negative (less positive) interactions with their children.
- To test these hypotheses, we utilized daily diary data from a study of Hispanic/Latino parents with young children (ages 1 to 5 years old)

METHODS

Participants

- Hispanic/Latino/a parents or primary caregivers of at least one child who is 1-5 years old.
- Required to speak English or Spanish
- Gender: 97% women
- Age: *M*= 35 with a rage of 25 to 44

Method: 10-day daily diary

- Completed surveys about daily interactions with children and stress at night
- Completed surveys about the prior night's sleep each morning

Data Analytic Plan

- Computed the average across 10 days to create composites of each variable
- Conducted regression analyses to determine if
 - (a) parental sleep is related to parent- child interactions
 - (b) parental sleep is related to daily stress
 - (c) parent stress is related to parent-child interactions
- Significant paths were followed up with statistical tests of mediation in PROCESS

METHODS: MEASURES

Parent-child interactions

Parents rated the degree to which they interacted with their child in

Positive Ways (5 items; $\alpha = .87$)

e.g. I had fun with my child today, I praised my child today

Negative Ways (8 items; $\alpha = .87$)

e.g., I was irritated with my child today, I had to tell my child to stop doing something

Daily Stress

Parents completed a shortened Daily Inventory of Stressful Events (DISE; Almeida, Wethington, Kessler, 2002) indicating if stress occurred in each of 7 categories (<u>Stress Number</u>), and if so, rated the stressfulness of the experience (<u>Perceived Stress</u>)

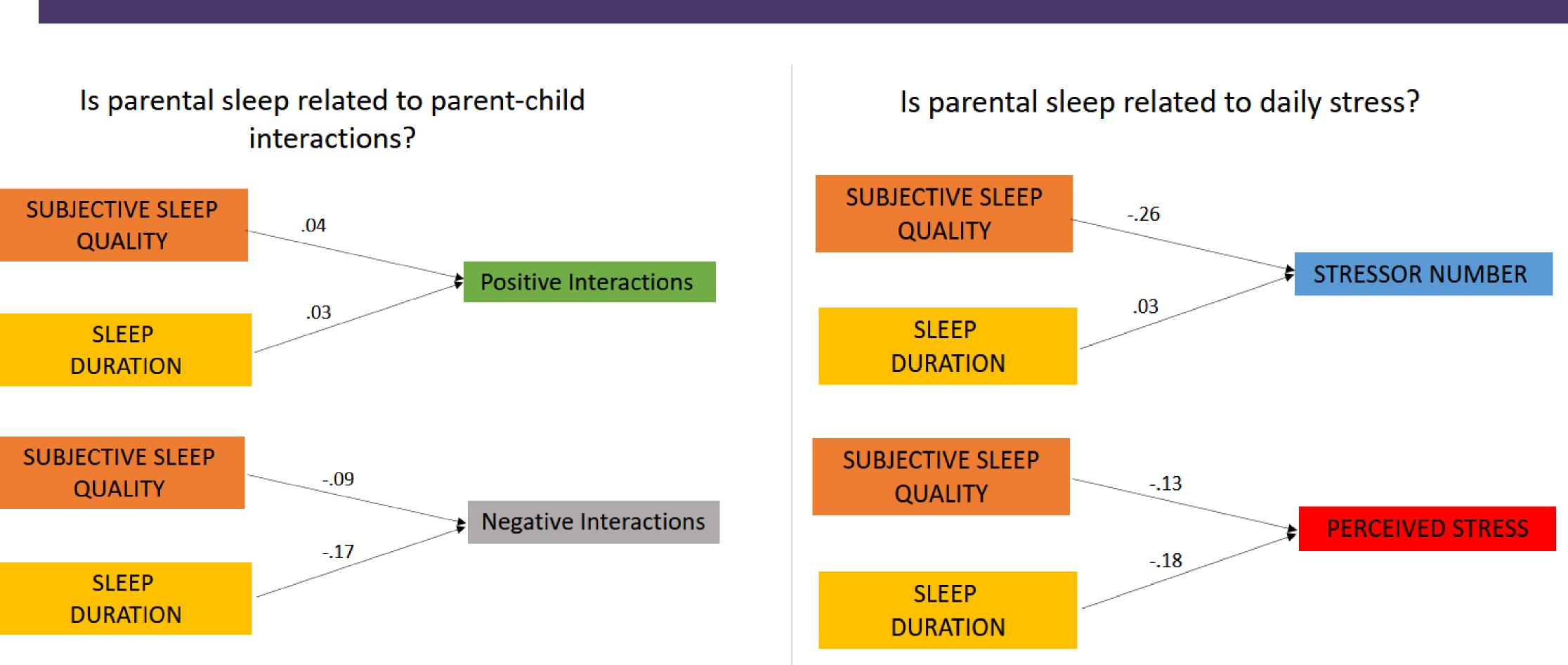
e.g, ...did anything happen at work or school that most people would consider stressful?

Sleep

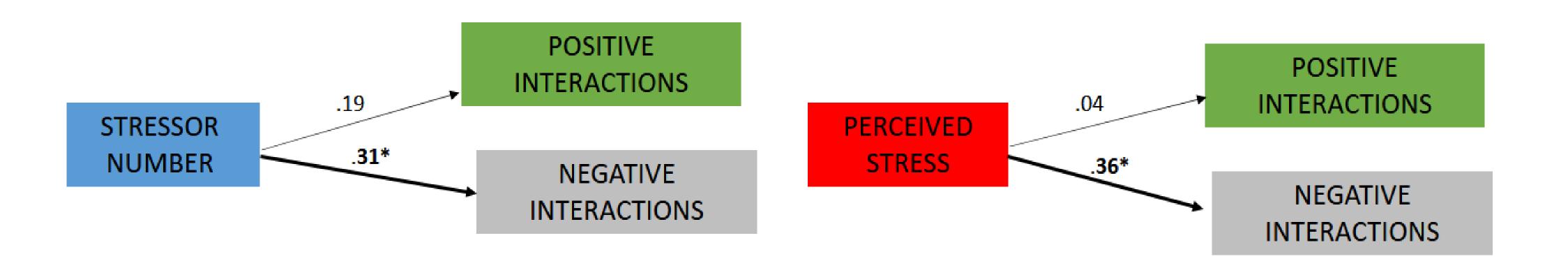
Sleep duration: Parents reported their sleep duration in hours

Subjective sleep quality: "How would you rate your quality of sleep?" 1= poor and 5= very good

RESULTS



Is parental stress related to parent-child interactions?



DISCUSSION

Primary Findings

- Contrary to hypotheses, parental sleep was not associated with parent-child interactions or daily stress
- Consistent with hypotheses, greater numbers of stressors and higher perceived stress were associated with more negative parent-child interactions, but were not related to positive interactions
 - Stress may not interfere with positive interactions, and potentially only increase negative interactions
 - It is possible that reports of negative parent-child interactions and stress are confounded in that negative parent-child interactions may be construed as stressors or stressful

Study Limitations

- The small sample size may limit the ability to detect the hypothesized associations; replications with larger samples are needed
- Because we used composites (averaged over the 10 days) it is not possible to determine directionality of the associations
 - Data is all self-reported and susceptible to reporting biases (e.g. social desirability, memory errors)
- Some of the variables had restricted range that may explain some of the null findings

Study Strengths and Future Directions

- Sleep and daily stress/parent-child interactions were assessed at different time points (i.e., sleep in the morning and daily stress/parent-child interactions in the evening)
- We plan to follow-up these analyses in the full sample (when data collection is complete) and at the daily level (sleep the night before predicting stress and interactions the next day)
- To circumvent some self-reporting biases, we also conduct these analyses with behavioral assessments of sleep (i..e, wrist actigraphy) when data collection is completed

CONTACT AND REFERENCES

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