
**Hypotheses**

- Consistent with existing studies, after controlling for cumulative risk and infant gender, more maternal difficulties with ER would be expected to predict lower marital adjustment.
- Lower maternal dyadic adjustment was expected to predict higher levels of infant NA.
- Next, it was anticipated that more maternal difficulties with ER would predict higher levels of infant dyadic adjustment.
- Finally, an indirect effect of maternal ER on infant NA through maternal dyadic adjustment was expected.

**Method**

- **Maternal Diff. w/ Emotion Regulation Scale (4 Mo)**
  - β = -0.07
  - More maternal difficulties with ER were significantly associated with lower levels of maternal dyadic adjustment.
  - Lower levels of maternal dyadic adjustment predicted higher levels of infant NA two months later.
  - Maternal ER did not directly predict infant NA, however, more maternal difficulties with ER did predict higher infant NA indirectly, through dyadic adjustment.

- **Maternal Dyadic Adjustment (4 Mo)**
  - β = -0.36**
  - Seventy-three mothers (Mean age = 28.59) who identified as being in a relationship, who were part of a larger longitudinal study (n = 84), took part in the present study.
  - Twenty-nine percent of participants self-identified as an ethnic minority.
  - Twenty-two percent of participants were below the poverty line based on family income to needs.

- **Infant Negative Affect (6 Mo)**
  - β = -0.47**
  - Findings largely supported hypotheses and have implications for early NA development and developmental psychopathology.
  - Maternal ER contributes indirectly to increased infant NA through environmental variables, such as maternal dyadic adjustment.
  - This is one of the first studies to demonstrate that lower parental dyadic adjustment influences children as early as infancy.
  - These findings provide evidence of how maternal and family level influences can affect children’s NA in the first year of life, which when elevated, is an individual level risk factor for childhood behavior problems.1,2
  - Interventions targeting maternal quality, in addition to maternal ER, might be particularly beneficial for children as early as the first year of life.

- Although a longitudinal approach was used, one limitation of the current study was reliance on maternal report of ER, dyadic adjustment, and infant NA.

- Future work could utilize varying methods of measurement, such as direct observation of infant affect, and could examine the impact of paternal ER and dyadic adjustment on developing infant NA.

**Results**

- Maternal Dyadic Adjustment (4 Mo)
  - β = -0.36**
  - Maternal dyadic adjustment was expected.
  - Maternal dyadic adjustment predicted lower levels of child aggression.

- Infant Negative Affect (6 Mo)
  - β = -0.47**
  - Infant negative affect was expected.
  - Infant negative affect was predicted in the relationship, who were part of a larger longitudinal study (n = 84), took part in the present study.

**Discussion**

- Maternal ER contributes indirectly to increased infant NA through environmental variables, such as maternal dyadic adjustment.
- This is one of the first studies to demonstrate that lower parental dyadic adjustment influences children as early as infancy.
- These findings provide evidence of how maternal and family level influences can affect children’s NA in the first year of life, which when elevated, is an individual level risk factor for childhood behavior problems.1,2
- Interventions targeting maternal quality, in addition to maternal ER, might be particularly beneficial for children as early as the first year of life.

- Although a longitudinal approach was used, one limitation of the current study was reliance on maternal report of ER, dyadic adjustment, and infant NA.
- Future work could utilize varying methods of measurement, such as direct observation of infant affect, and could examine the impact of paternal ER and dyadic adjustment on developing infant NA.

**References**


**Corresponding Authors**

- Poster Presented at the 2021 biennial meeting of the International Society on Infant Studies in Minneapolis, MN.
- Corresponding Author: Nicole M. Lopez (nlopez@niu.edu)
- To download a copy of this poster, please visit the Emotion Regulation & Temperament website at www.niu.edu/emotionreg