The Influence of Child Attachment Security on the Relationship Between Feeding Responsiveness and Picky Eating Behavior

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INTRODUCTION

The Influence of Child Attachment Security on the Relationship Between Feeding Responsiveness and Picky Eating Behavior

The introduction section of the paper discusses the importance of understanding the relationship between child attachment, feeding responsiveness, and picky eating. It highlights the need for research in this area and introduces the main research question of the study: how does child attachment security influence the relationship between feeding responsiveness and picky eating?

METHODS

Design and Sample

- Sample (n=110) families participated in a 2 hour home visit and surveys.
- Children were on average 21 months old (SD=2.73) and 48% male.

Self-Report Measures

- Children’s Eating Behavior Questionnaire (CEBQ)
- Assessed food fussiness which was used as a continuous picky eating variable (n=93, M = 2.73, SD = 0.75).

Observational Measures

- Feeding Behaviors: Parent Behavior Coding
  - Number of feeding behaviors divided by the total number of feeding behaviors engaged by the parent.

Aim #1:

- In logistic regression analyses, we found that self-reported feeding responsiveness (OR = .48, 95% CI = [.29, .79]) was associated with child picky eating.
- In multiple regression analyses, we found that feeding responsiveness independently predicted child picky eating behavior (Table 2).

Aim #2:

- In logistic regression analyses, we found that child smooth interaction with the mother (OR = .60, 95% CI = [.37, .94]) was associated with fussing eating.
- In multiple regression analyses, we found that attachment security predicted fussiness eating (Table 2).

Aim #3:

- Using both logistic and multiple regression models, we found that significant interaction effects were found.
  - Dichotomous variable: (OR = .84, 95% CI = [.53, 1.35]).
  - Continuous variable: (Table 2; p= .032).

RESULTS

Table 2: Multiple regression analyzing associations between feeding responsiveness, attachment security, and picky eating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>B (SE)</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>B (SE)</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>B (SE)</th>
<th>β</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.35*</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.37*</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>-0.39*</td>
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<td>Model 2</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.22*</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.21*</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Model 3</td>
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<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.04*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Bolded lines and asterisk indicate statistically significant findings.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Aim #1: Parent feeding responsiveness was associated with both picky eating variables

Aim #2: Attachment security was significantly related to the dichotomous and continuous picky eating variable

Aim #3: There was no significant interaction between smooth child attachment security and parent feeding responsiveness in the prediction of food fussiness. Child attachment security and parent feeding responsiveness independently predicted child picky eating variables.

CONCLUSIONS

- The findings were consistent across two different picky eating variables while using an observational child attachment security measure.
- Longitudinal studies can examine if these associations stay consistent over time.
- To reduce picky eating habits, parents can: create more responsive feeding techniques and establish a secure relationship with their child.

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REFERENCES