

Quality of father–infant interactions as an antecedent of children’s friendship quality: Family alliance as a mediating factor

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Introduction

- Quality of parent–infant relationships is a well-documented predictor of child subsequent social functioning (Bornstein, 2019; Pallini et al., 2014)
- Literature has long focused on mothers
- Fathers also play a central role in supporting their infants’ social development (Deneault et al., 2021; Rodrigues et al., 2021)
- Fathers might play an especially salient role in shaping triadic mother–father–child process (Brown et al., 2010)
- Triadic processes may support children’s relational skills (e.g., conflict resolution, compromise) = their capacity to establish high-quality friendships
- Very little research has addressed such relational developmental cascades

Objective

Examine a **9-year developmental cascade** model linking the quality of father–infant interactions at 18 months to child friendship quality at age 10 through the mediating role of family alliance at age 6

Methodology

Quality of father–infant interactions

- T1 : 18 months
- N = 136** father–infant dyads
- 10-minute videotaped play sequences
- Mutually Responsive Orientation scale (Aksan et al., 2006)
- Subscales (1 – 5 scores) :
 - Harmonious communication
 - Mutual cooperation
 - Emotional ambiance
- Global score = Mean of subscales
- 25% of videos rated independently by two research assistants (ICC =.86)

Family alliance

- T2 : 6 years
- N = 141** mother–father–infant triads
- 15-minute Lausanne Trilogic Play (Fivaz-Depeursinge & Corboz-Warnery, 1999)
- Videotaped interactions rated using the Family Alliance Assessment Scales (Favez et al., 2011)
- 15 subscales, e.g :
 - Postures and gazes
 - Family warmth
 - Infant’s self-regulation
- 26% of videos rated independently by two research assistants (ICC =.91)

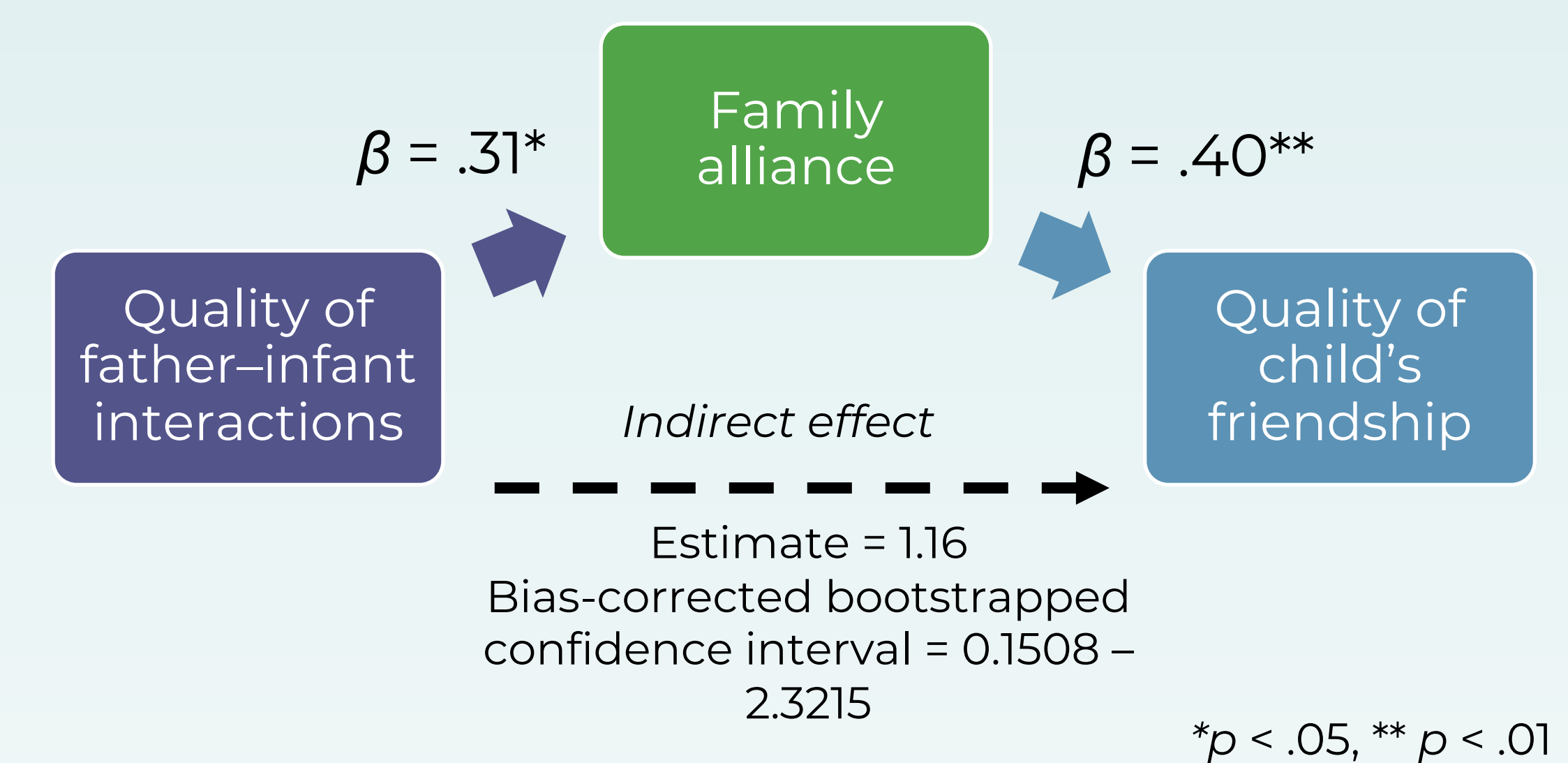
Quality of child’s best friendship

- T3 : 10 years
- N = 169** questionnaires
- Friendship Quality Questionnaire (Parker & Asher, 1993)
- Self-reported by children

Results

Analytic plan

- Mediation analysis was conducted using the PROCESS macro in SPSS
- Covariates :
 - Family SES
 - Child sex
 - Quality of mother–infant interactions T1



Conclusion

These results suggest that **fathers** may play a **central role** in shaping the developing **family alliance**, with implications for child subsequent **social functioning**

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