WAIMH
15-19 July 2023
Dublin . Ireland

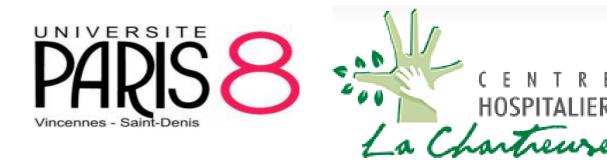WORLD ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

Irish Association for Infant Mental Health

Université Paris Nanterre

Clipsyd
CLInique PSYchanalyse et Développement

UNIVERSITE PARIS 8
Vincennes - Saint-Denis

CENTRE HOSPITALIER La Chartreuse

P-346

Attachment to the partner and perinatal depression: The mediating role of early maladaptive schemas

Vanwalleghem, S.[1], Miljkovitch, R[2], Sirparanta, A.[2], Leclercq, S.[3], Deborde, A.S.[2]

[1] UR CLIPSYD (Evaclipsy) Université Paris Nanterre, 200, avenue de la République, 92001 Nanterre cedex, France ; [2] Laboratoire Paragraphe, Université Paris 8, Saint-Denis, France ; [3] Unité Père-Mère-Bébé, Centre Hospitalier La Chartreuse, Dijon, France ; Corresponding author: stephanie.vanwalleghem@parisnanterre.fr

INTRODUCTION

Insecure attachment and early maladaptive schemas (EMS) are two risk factors for perinatal depression (Smith-Nielsen, 2015; Alimoradi & Nejat, 2018). In a challenging perinatal context, relationship quality with a romantic partner is a key factor for mothers' thymic balance (Smorti et al., 2019). According to Young et al. (2005), EMS are activated when core emotional needs are not met, especially emotional security. This leads us to propose the hypothesis that if mothers feel insecure in their relationship with their romantic partner, this could lead to the activation of EMS, thus increasing in turn the risk of depression. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to test whether the activation of EMS mediates the link between attachment to the romantic partner and perinatal depression.
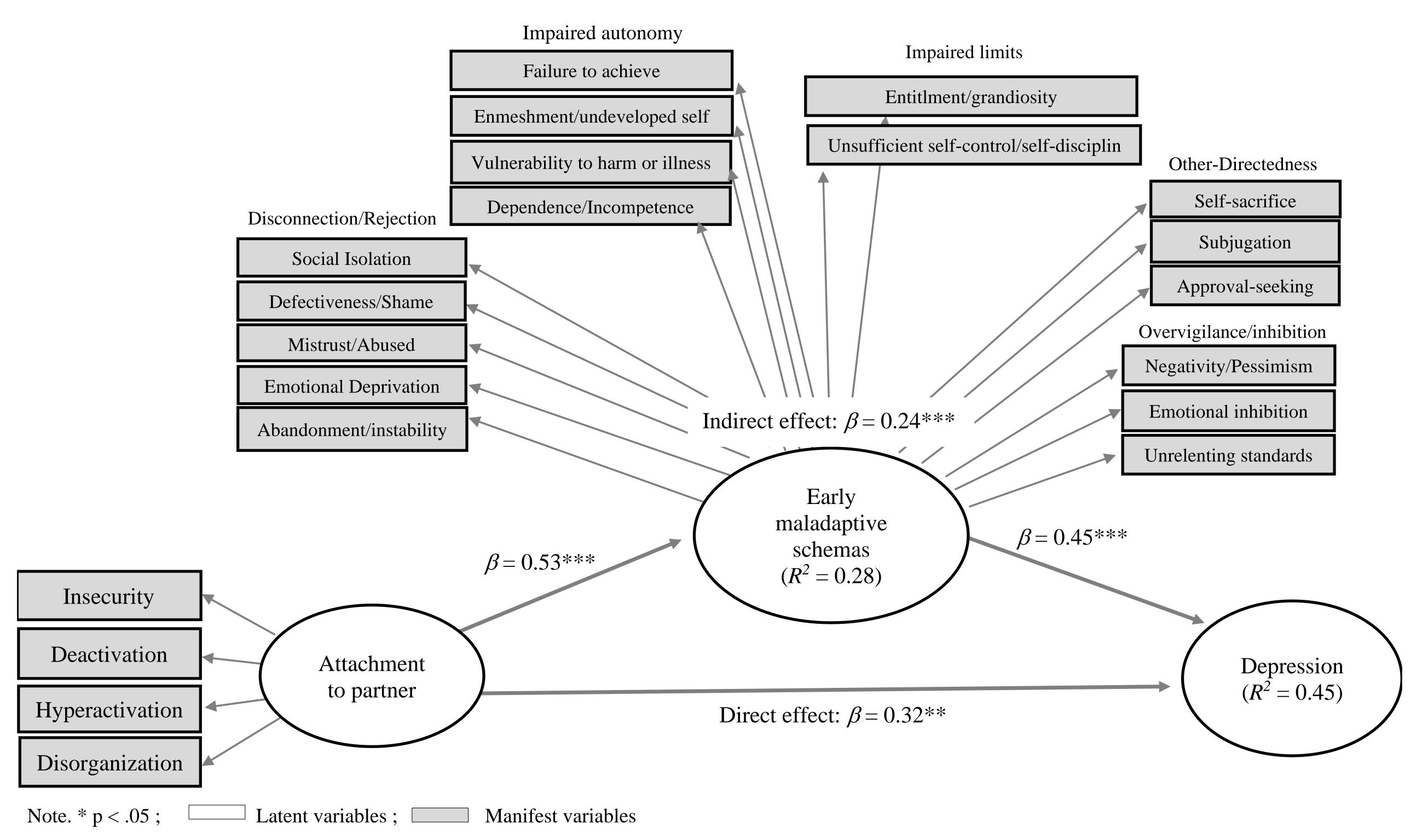
METHOD

PARTICIPANTS

Clinical sample : 40 mothers of infants under 6 months, treated for major postpartum depression disorder
Control sample : 40 mothers of infants under 6 months randomly recruited via a network of midwives

MEASURES

1. Attachment Multiple Model Interview (AMMI; Miljkovitch, 2009; Miljkovitch et al., 2015) : Security ; Deactivation ; Hyperactivation ; Disorganization
2. Young schema questionnaire-short form 3 (YSQ-SF3; Young, 2005): activation score for 18 early maladaptative schemas
3. Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EDPS; Cox et al., 1987; Jardri, 2004) : Depression score varying from 0 to 30 ; Cut-off score for depression = 13

RESULTS

Figure 1. Links between attachment to the partner, early maladaptive schemas and perinatal depression

Note. * p < .05 ; ▭ Latent variables ; ▭ Manifest variables

Partial Least Squares-Path Modeling analysis shows both (1) a direct effect of attachment to the romantic partner on depression and (2) an indirect effect, mediated by early maladaptive schemas. These direct and indirect effects explain 45% of the variance of depression scores (see figure 1).

DISCUSSION

These findings are in line with Young et al.'s (2005) assumption that early maladaptive schemas (EMS) are linked to an unmet need for security. They highlight the need to focus on both attachment to the romantic partner and EMS in the treatment of perinatal depression. Because schema therapy (Young and al., 2005) focuses on both these aspects, it may be indicated in the treatment of perinatal depression. It aims to replace maladaptive coping styles (linked to EMS) with adaptive patterns of behavior in current relationships, such as that with the romantic partner, to help the person feel more secure within this relationship. It also helps people identify the experiences that were drawbacks in early childhood and to revise these painful memories through reparenting and imagery rescripting so as to get basic emotional needs met. More research is needed to test the effectiveness of schema therapy.

REFERENCES

Alimoradi, B. & Nejat, H. (2018). Early maladaptive schemas and premenstrual syndrome in mothers with postpartum depression. Preventive Care in Nursing & Midwifery Journal, 8(1), 43-48.
Cox, J.L., Holden, J.M., Sagovsky, R. (1987). Detection of postnatal depression. Development of the 10 item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. *British Journal of Psychiatry,*150, 782-786.
Jardri, R. (2004). Le dépistage de la dépression postnatale : revue qualitative des études de validation de l'Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. Devenir, 16(4), 245-262. doi:10.3917/dev.044.0245.
Miljkovitch, R. (2009). Les fondements du lien amoureux. Paris : Puf, coll. « Le lien social »
Miljkovitch, R., Moss, E., Bernier, A., et al. (2015). Refining the assessment of internal working models: the Attachment Multiple Model Interview. *Attachment & human development*, 17(5), 492–521.
Smith-Nielsen, J., Steele, H., Mehlhase, H., Cordes, K., Steele, M., Harder, S., & Væver, M. S. (2015). Links Among High EPDS Scores, State of Mind Regarding Attachment, and Symptoms of Personality Disorder. Journal of personality disorders, 29(6), 771–793. https://doi.org/10.1521/pedi_2014_28_173
Smorti, M.; Ponti, L.; Pancetti, F. A Comprehensive Analysis of Post-Partum Depression Risk Factors: The Role of Socio-Demographic, Individual, Relational, and Delivery Characteristics. Front. Public Health 2019, 7, 295.
Young, J.E., Klosko, J.S., & Weishaar, M. E. (2005). La thérapie des schémas, approche cognitive des troubles de la personnalité, traduction française. De boeck : Louvain-la-neuve.
Young, J. E. (2005). Young Schema Questionnaire-Short Form 3(YSQ–S3). New York, NY: Cognitive Therapy Center.