

Association Between Satisfaction towards Communication with Parents and Adolescent’s Suicide Attempts

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Introduction

- Nowadays, adolescents’ mental health has been a serious issue.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among adolescents in the United States, and the rate in this age group is increasing.
- Adolescents tend to be more action-oriented than adults.
- An adolescent’s relationships with peers, family, and adults outside of the family are emerging as factors influencing risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. {De Luca, 2012 #7}
- A number of studies have linked adolescents’ perceived connectedness to family with reduced risk of suicidal behavior.
- Upon statistical analysis of the instrument scores, simple correlation coefficients expressed significant relationships between mother’s and adolescent’s scores, but not between father’s and adolescent’s score. {Stivers, 1988 #9}

Study Aims/Research Questions

- Is child’s satisfaction with parents correlated with child’s suicide attempt rate?
- What are some other variables that could possibly affect and confound this correlation ?
- Dos the suicide attempt rate differ for adolescents’ biological sex?

Method

Sample

- Adolescents relationships to mother and father figures respectively(n=6504) were drawn from the fourth wave of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health (Addhealth)
- Two independent variables were “satisfaction with mother figure”, “satisfaction to father figure”. Two dependent variables were “people ever consider suicide” and “people attempt suicide”.

Measures

- Satisfaction with parents was evaluated through “satisfaction with the way you communicate with mother figure” and “satisfaction with the way you communicate with father figure” respectively.
- Suicide attempts were evaluated through “people seriously thought about committing suicide” and “people actually attempted suicide” over the past 12 months.

Results

Univariate:

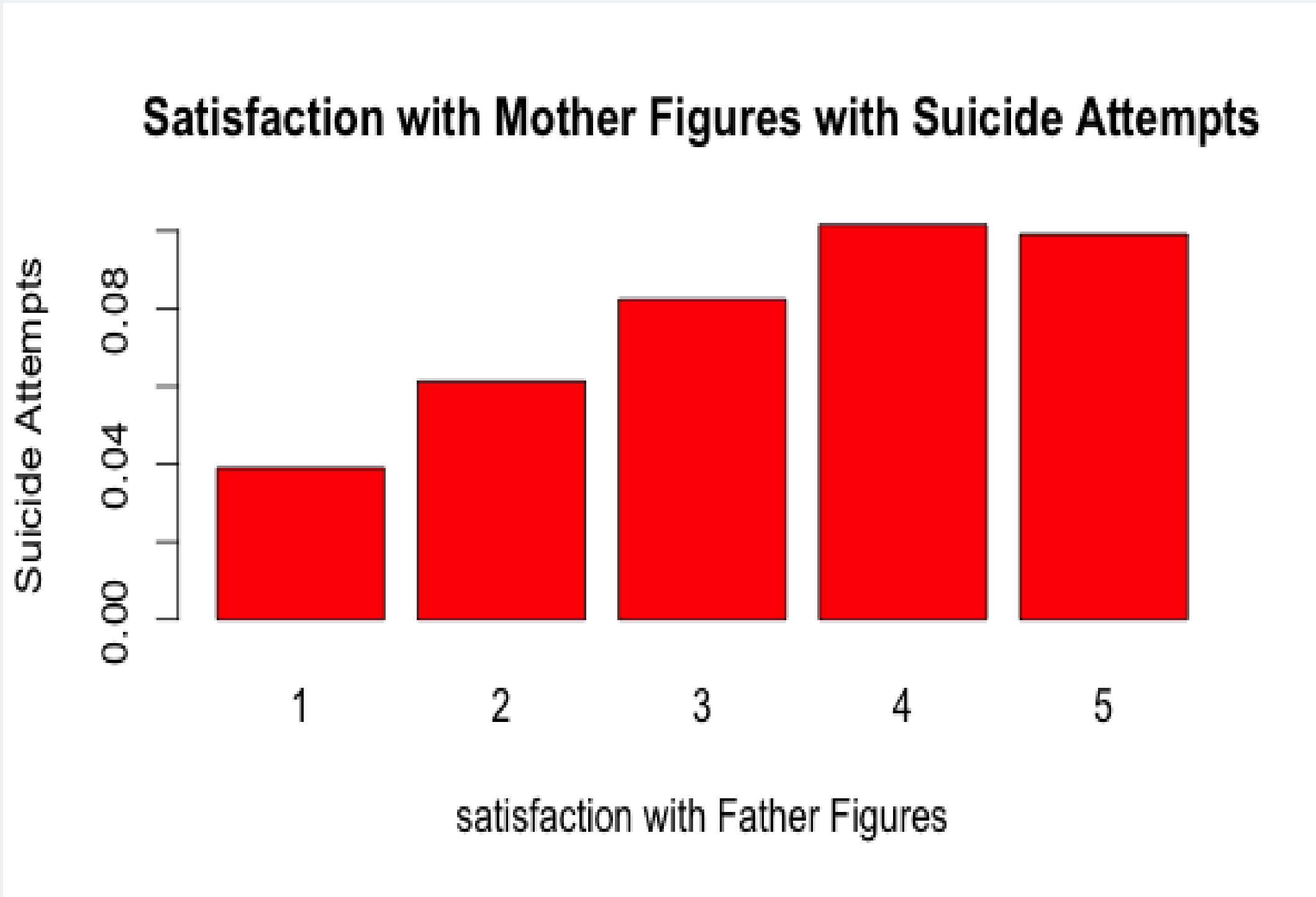
- 11.1% of the children are not satisfied with their communication with mother, 19.5% of the children are not satisfied with their communication with father.
- 8.3% of the children have seriously considered or have attempted suicide.

Bivariate:

- Chi-Square analysis showed that **child’s suicide attempts were significantly more likely when one is not satisfied with communication with mother(20.4%)** than those who are satisfied with the communication(10.8%), $X^2=11.023$, 4 df, $p=.0263<0.05$.
- Chi-Square analysis showed that **child’s suicide attempts were not significantly more likely when one is not satisfied with communication with father(17.6%)** than those who are satisfied with the communication.(19.8%)

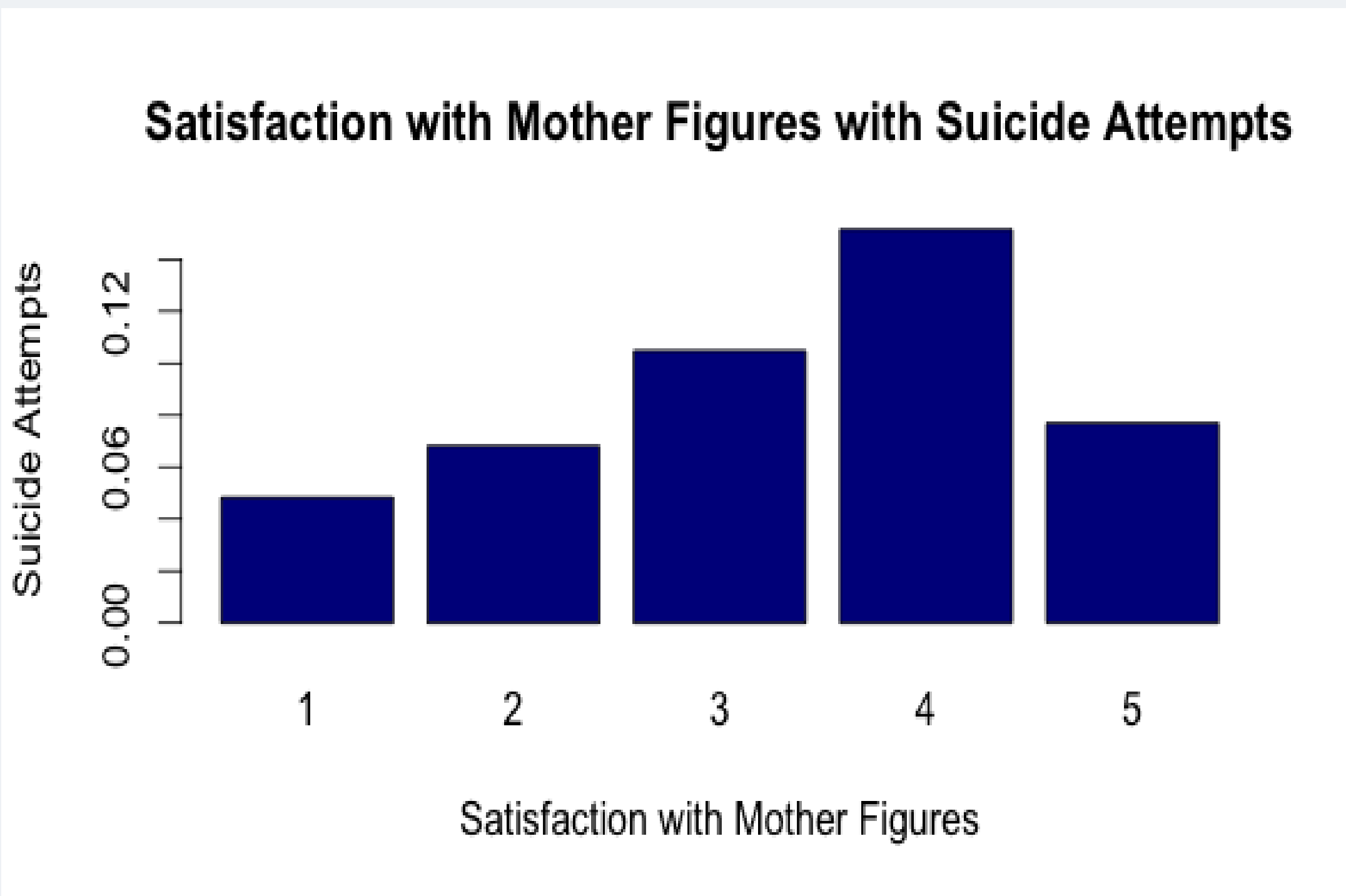
Multivariate:

- Biological sex is considered as a third variable in order to find out the association after confounding biological sex.
- The interaction between child’s satisfaction towards communication with **mother** was found to be **significantly** associated with female adolescents’ suicide attempts but not male’s.
- The interaction between child’s satisfaction towards communication with **father** was **not found to be significantly** associated with male or female adolescents’ suicide attempts.



Results(cont’d)

- However, at each level, adolescents do seem to have a higher probability of attempting suicide when not satisfied with their communication with parents. (As shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2)



Discussions & Conclusion

- Adolescents’ suicide attempts are higher when the child is not satisfied with mother figure compared to satisfaction with father figure.
- Adolescents tend to be closer with mother and more satisfied with the communication with mother. This results match with the results from Stivers’ article.
- Female adolescents tend to be more sensitive to communication with parents but not male adolescents.
- Current finding are based on only four variables. More variables need to be drawn from the sample to make the results significant.
- Further research is needed to determine whether there are any confounding variables that can affect adolescents’ suicide attempts.

References

- De Luca, S. M., Wyman, P., & Warren, K. (2012). Latina Adolescent Suicide Ideations and Attempts: Associations with Connectedness to Parents, Peers, and Teachers.*Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 42(6), 672-683. doi:10.1111/j.1943-278X.2012.00121.x
- Stivers, C. (1988). Parent – Adolescent Communication and its Relationship to Adolescent Depression and Suicide Proneness. *Adolescence*, 23(90), 291-295.