

MATERNAL ATTACHMENT AS A MODERATOR OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN HOPE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS IN LATINX ADOLESCENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Psychological health is associated with both hope and attachment insecurity in adolescents (Esteves et al., 2013).

Adolescents have been found to direct their attachment behavior to nonparental figures (Weiss, 1982). However, these studies have not considered cultural variation.

This study quantitatively examined maternal attachment insecurity for Latinx adolescents as moderators to psychological distress, measured as internalizing symptoms.

HYPOTHESES

1. Hope negatively predicts internalizing symptoms.
2. Attachment insecurity positively predicts internalizing symptoms.
3. Higher levels of maternal attachment insecurity strengthens the negative association between hope and internalizing symptoms.

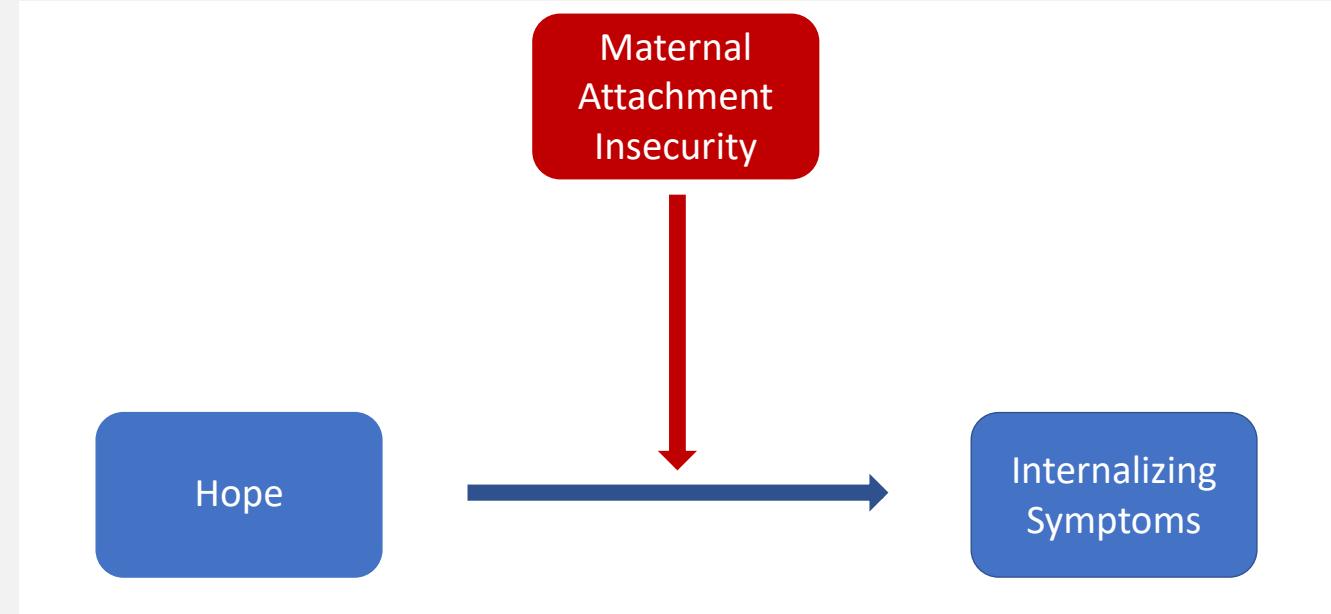


Figure 1. The moderating relationship of maternal attachment on the association between hope and internalization.

METHOD

Participants

- Adolescents aged 10-17 recruited from Latinx communities in Santa Ana through a community partner organization (N = 119, 52.1% Male)
- 78.2% lived in Santa Ana, California between 10-17 years
- Median family income: \$21,800



METHOD

Measures

- Children's Hope Scale (CHS) measured the adolescents' ability to picture their future positively (Snyder et al., 1997).
- Experiences in Close Relationship-Relationship Structures (ECR-RS) measured adolescents' anxious or avoidant attachment to their mothers (Fraley et al., 2011)
- Youth Self Report (YSR) measured internalizing symptoms (Achenbach, 1991).

RESULTS

Hope and maternal attachment insecurity predicted internalizing symptoms controlling for age, sex, and years lived in Santa Ana.

Hope:

$\Delta R^2 = .09, p < .001, b = -.54, SE = .16$

Attachment insecurity:

$\Delta R^2 = .17, p < .001$

Anxiety: $b = 11.87, SE = 3.4, p < .001$

Avoidance: $b = 1.66, SE = .63, p = .01$



RESULTS

Hope predicted internalizing symptoms when adolescents had mean or high anxiety in maternal attachment insecurity.

- Mean and high anxiety moderated the negative association between hope and internalizing symptoms ($\Delta R^2 = .03, p < .05$).
- Adolescents with low anxiety did not have an association between hope and internalizing symptoms.

RESULTS

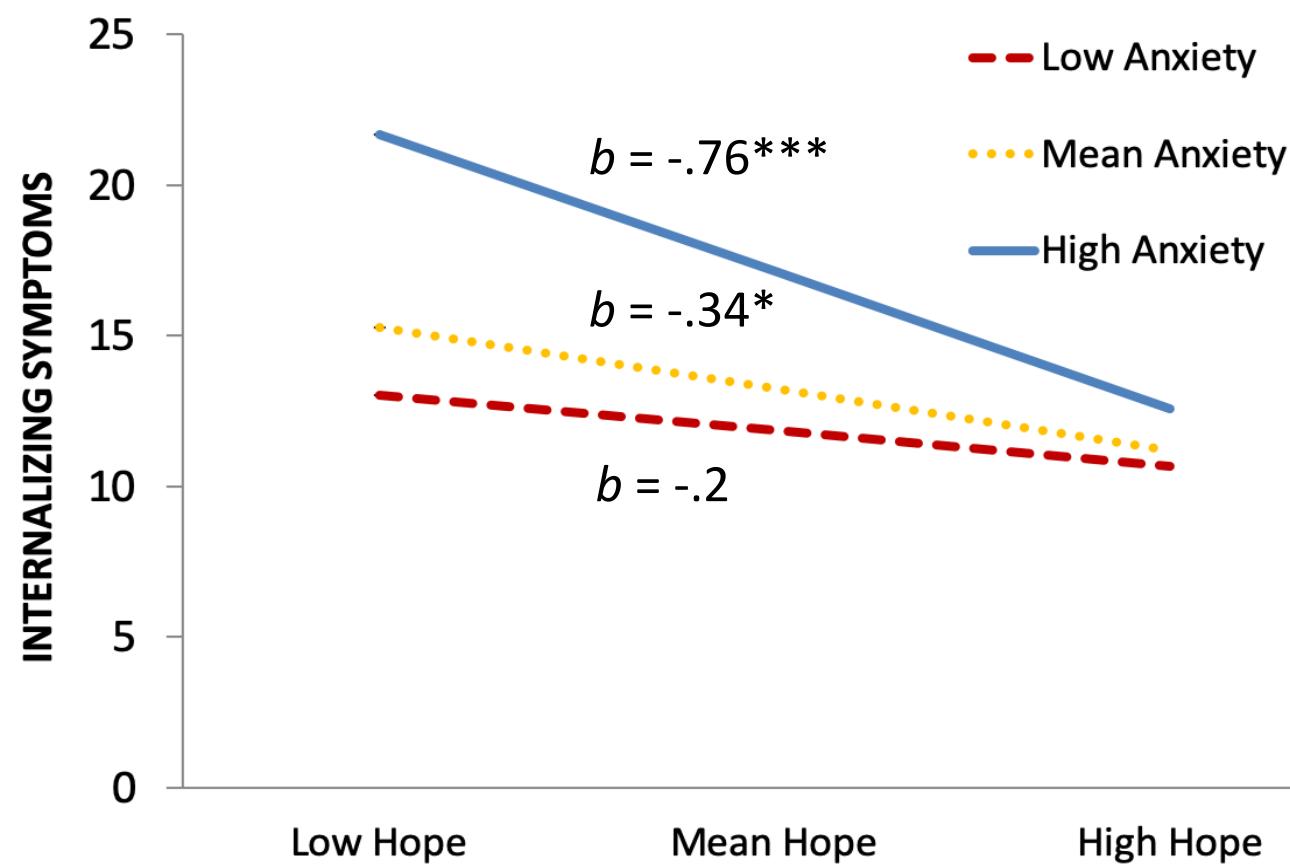


Figure 2. Graph of moderation. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

DISCUSSION

- Unlike prior results in Caucasian populations, anxious attachment to mothers was a significant moderator, revealing that less anxious maternal attachment may act as a buffer to psychological distress.



DISCUSSION

- Since attachment security can potentially serve as a buffer against psychological distress for adolescents with low hope, targeting attachment security may be an effective intervention against psychological distress.



- Further studies can examine the levels of maternal attachment in buffering psychological distress.

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