



# Infant Temperament, Socially Aversive Traits, and Maternal Mindfulness



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## Introduction

- Infant temperament influences the way children regulate behavior, handle emotions, etc., and is indicative of later development & psychiatric risk.
- Insensitive parental responses contribute to infant distress, negative cognitions and attitudes, and a maladaptive regulatory style. Therefore, maternal socially aversive traits (psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism) may negatively impact infant development, too.
- Some psychologists believe that mindfulness is a fundamental parenting skill that may lead parents to develop higher quality relationships with their children.

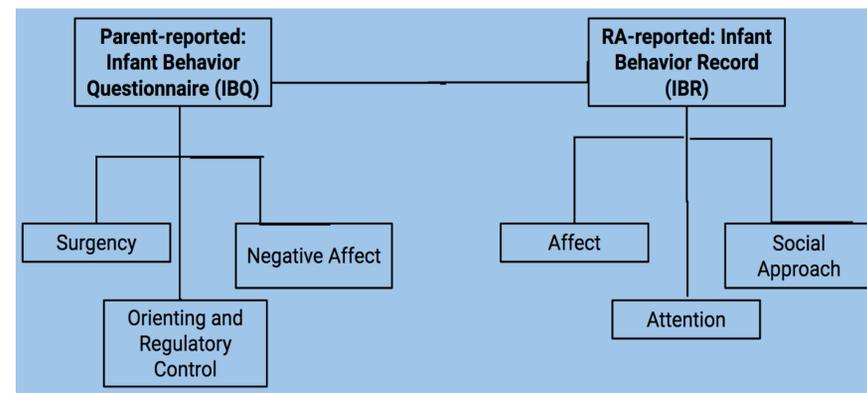
**We hypothesized that (1) maternal socially aversive traits negatively impact infant temperament and (2) maternal mindfulness moderates this association.**

## Methods

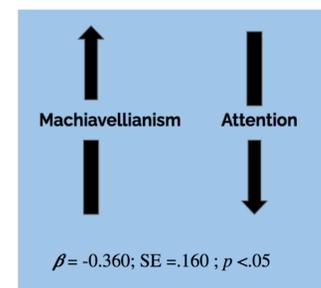
- Study participants: 153 mothers & infants
  - Mothers: 58.8% White (non-Hispanic), average age of 31, 64% earned bachelor's degree or higher
  - Infants: Full-term, 50.3% male
- Measures
  - Self-reported Short Dark Triad (SD3)
  - Self-reported Three Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire
  - Parent-reported Infant Behavior Questionnaire (IBQ)
  - RA-reported Infant Behavior Record (IBR)



## Measures Recorded at 6-months

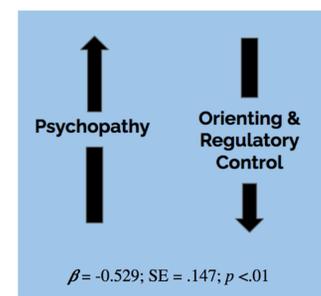


## Machiavellianism & Attention



Controlling for covariates (child age at 6 months, maternal age at birth, maternal race/ethnicity, maternal education, mindfulness mean, remote visit), we found that there is a significant negative relationship between Machiavellianism and IBR Attention.

## Psychopathy & Orienting and Regulatory Control



Controlling for covariates (child age at 6 months, maternal age at birth, maternal race/ethnicity, maternal education, mindfulness mean, remote visit), we found that there is a significant negative relationship between Machiavellianism and IBQ Orienting and Regulatory Control.

## Mindfulness as a Moderator

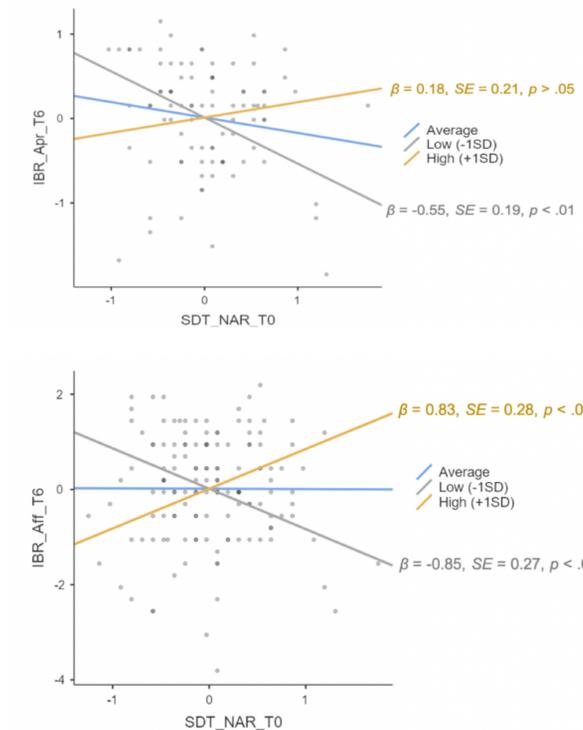


Figure 1. When mindfulness is low, there is a significant negative relationship between narcissism and social approach. When mindfulness is high, there is no significant relationship.

Figure 2. When mindfulness is low, there is a significant negative relationship between narcissism and affect. When mindfulness is high, there is a significant positive relationship between narcissism and affect.

## Conclusions

- This study provides some evidence for negative relationships between maternal socially aversive traits and infant temperament as well as the moderation of maternal mindfulness on this impact.
- If additional research provides support for the protective effect of mindfulness, it seems reasonable to encourage mothers to utilize mindfulness techniques broadly.

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