

A Random Forest Analysis Predicting Intergenerational Attachment Insecurity from Parental Reflective Functioning and Childhood Trauma Phenotypes

Miriam. Hochberger¹, Andrei. Dumitrescu^{2*}, Lucía. Bentancor³

¹ Department of Developmental Psychology, University of Graz, Graz, Austria

² Department of Applied Psychology, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania

³ Department of Psychology, University of the Republic, Montevideo, Uruguay

* Corresponding author email address: andrei.dumitrescu@unibuc.ro

Editor

Habib Hadianfard
Affiliation: Professor, Department of Psychology, Shiraz University, Iran
hadianfd@shirazu.ac.ir

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Ali Akbar Soleymanian
Associate Professor of Counseling Department, Bojnord University, Iran. Email: Soleymanian@ub.ac.ir

Reviewer 2: Thseen Nazir
Professor of Psychology and Counseling Department, Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, Turkey.
Email: thseen.nazir@ihu.edu.tr

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The literature review demonstrates familiarity with key concepts, yet it tends to be more descriptive than analytical. It would significantly strengthen the paper if you critically synthesized prior findings (e.g., grouping them into themes, noting methodological limitations, contradictions, or inconsistencies) and used that synthesis to logically motivate your hypotheses or research questions, rather than merely listing past studies.

The presentation of results would benefit from clearer structuring and more reader-friendly tables and/or figures. Currently, some findings are embedded in dense text, which makes it difficult to trace which results correspond to which hypothesis or research question. I suggest organizing the Results section explicitly around each hypothesis/RQ, and ensuring that each table has self-contained titles and notes that explain all abbreviations and statistical indicators.

The Discussion section appropriately restates the main findings, but it could engage more deeply with the broader literature and theoretical context. Rather than primarily repeating results, try to interpret why certain relationships emerged (or did not)

in light of prior studies, highlight any unexpected findings, and explain how your results refine, challenge, or extend existing theories. Including 2–3 concrete theoretical implications would enhance the scholarly impact of the paper.

The treatment of limitations is relatively brief and somewhat generalized. A more nuanced reflection on methodological constraints—such as sample representativeness, measurement limitations, potential common method bias, and the cross-sectional nature of the data—would increase the credibility of the work. For each key limitation, it is helpful to propose specific directions for future research (e.g., longitudinal designs, experimental approaches, multi-source data, larger or more diverse samples).

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The theoretical framework is present but not sufficiently integrated into the empirical part of the study. Concepts are defined, but the causal mechanisms linking them to the outcome variables remain somewhat implicit. It would be helpful to add a clear conceptual model (even if only described in text) where each arrow is justified with theory-based reasoning, so readers can see exactly why each relationship is expected.

The research design and methodology are described, yet some essential details are missing for full replicability. Please specify the sampling strategy (e.g., probability vs. convenience sampling), inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample size justification (power analysis or at least a rationale), and the timeframe of data collection. Additionally, clarify whether the data are cross-sectional or longitudinal, and discuss potential biases arising from the chosen design.

Regarding measurement, the article would benefit from a more rigorous treatment of validity and reliability. For each construct, indicate whether the scale was adapted from previous validated instruments (with references), whether it was translated/back-translated if applicable, and report reliability indices (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) for the current sample. If you conducted factor analysis (EFA or CFA), please provide key statistics (eigenvalues, factor loadings, model fit indices) or explicitly state that such analyses were not performed and why.

The data analysis section seems to present the main results, but the description of statistical procedures is somewhat terse. It would improve transparency to explain why each statistical test was chosen, list assumptions (normality, homoscedasticity, independence, etc.), and report key diagnostics. Furthermore, effect sizes and confidence intervals should be reported alongside p-values, so readers can assess the substantive significance of your findings and not only their statistical significance.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.