

# Attachment Anxiety as a Mediator Between Childhood Neglect and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The authors state “A robust body of literature highlights the long-term impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)...” This paragraph would be stronger if it included prevalence statistics of ACEs in Canadian samples, connecting local context to global evidence.

The manuscript states “internal consistency coefficients for the anxiety dimension typically above 0.90”. Please report Cronbach’s alpha obtained in the present study to demonstrate reliability in your sample.

The correlations are statistically significant, but effect size interpretation is missing. For instance,  $r = .39$  is moderate; please add interpretative text to aid readers’ understanding.

The claim “Neglect disrupts the development of secure attachment bonds in childhood, often fostering hypervigilance to abandonment and heightened dependency needs” is strong but requires references to neurobiological or developmental psychology studies to substantiate.

The text suggests “incorporating biological or neurodevelopmental measures” but does not specify which (e.g., cortisol reactivity, fMRI). Adding concrete suggestions would improve practical guidance for researchers.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

### 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence “Understanding IPV requires situating it within broader psychosocial and structural contexts” is conceptually strong but underdeveloped. Please expand with concrete Canadian or North American data on structural risk factors for IPV.

The authors write “The current study addresses this gap by testing a mediation model...” but do not explicitly formulate hypotheses. A clear statement of hypotheses (e.g., H1, H2, H3) would sharpen the research focus.

The text says “412 participants were selected through convenience sampling.” This is inconsistent with the earlier claim that sample size was “selected based on the Morgan and Krejcie table.” Please clarify whether the sample size was determined statistically but collected via convenience sampling, or whether a probability method was applied.

The text states “Evidence from offender populations further supports the mediational model”. Please explicitly discuss the difference between victimization and perpetration pathways to avoid conflating these literatures.

The authors write “From a theoretical perspective, these findings align with Gottfredson and Nielsen’s modern control theory framework...” This is an excellent integration but would benefit from more critical discussion—how does attachment theory add explanatory power beyond control theory?

The paragraph identifies self-report bias but does not mention potential non-response bias or gender distribution imbalance (60% female sample). Please add these as limitations.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.