



## THE ROLE OF THE CHILD REARING BEHAVIORS IN PREDICTION OF THE ADULT ATTACHMENT ANXIETY AND ATTACHMENT AVOIDANCE

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### Abstract:

In this study we were aimed to examination between attachment dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) and some demographics (age, working status, duration of marriage and the person helping the mother with childcare) in prediction of child rearing behaviours(inductive reasoning, punishment, obedience-demanding and warmth). The sample consist of 230 mothers whose child in early childhood educational settings. "Personal Information Form", "Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory II (ECRI II)": "Child Rearing Questionnaire" were utilized to conduct to data. Data were analyzed using Pearson's product-moment correlation and hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Research findings revealed that attachment anxiety is the predictor of mothers' obedience demanding and punishment behaviors besides, attachment avoidance is only predictor of mothers' punishment behaviors. According to the results, it could be seen that attachment dimensions are an important predictor in terms of child rearing behaviors. The findings obtained from the study were discussed in the light of the related literature and some suggestions were made for future research.

**Keywords:** attachment, attachment avoidance, attachment anxiety, child rearing behaviors, mothers of pre-schoolers

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## 1. Introduction

It is one of the most important assumptions of the attachment theory that babies, who come into the world as being suitable for developing the behavior of attachment to individuals who provide physiological and psychological care (generally their mothers), will be in need of stronger and more mature people than themselves as of birth (Bowlby, 1980). For the attachment behavior to be able to develop in children, securely, the mother sensitivity, which is defined as mother's responsiveness to baby's needs and feeding is defined (Grossmann et al., 2002; von der Lippe, Eilertsen, Hartmann, & Killèn, 2010). Furthermore, it is thought that other behaviors exhibited by mother in different cases are also important for the development of secure attachment. These behaviors include a) a mother is able to stay positive towards her child and avoid feelings of anger even when the child is irresponsive or stressed, b) she can play games with her child, c) she can balance and meet her child's needs and her own ones, being aware of her child, d) she helps the development of her child's autonomy by supporting child's exploratory behaviors, e) she is able to provide her child with sufficient stimuli and be together with her child, f) she can be responsive to her child's needs, g) she is able to maintain interaction with her child, being accessible in terms of meeting child's both physical and mental needs (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

In the first years of life, the child creates mental models regarding himself/herself and others depending on the responses given by the mother to him/her, and these mental models serve as a guide and model in close interpersonal relationships in years to come (Bowlby, 1980). Moreover, these cognitive models help the child organize and interpret the social messages coming from later relationships and (Goldberg, Grusec, & Jenkins, 1999). It is emphasized in the attachment theory that the baby-mother relationship is featured and the attachment system lasts a life time (from the cradle to the grave) (Bowlby, 1980). Researches in the field of developmental and social psychological on the basis of the assumption that attachment behaviors can keep going with different attachment figures along the lifetime, the researchers developed two different measurement techniques (interview and self-report) related to attachment measurement in 1980s. The first one of them is the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) which is a technique based on the analysis of children's relationship with attachment figures in the context of stress, separation, and care themes in during childhood in the field of developmental psychology (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1985; Main & Goldwyn, 1984, 1998). The first measuring instrument developed on the basis of self-report in the field of social psychology is Hazan and Shaver's (1987) which was adapted from triple attachment classification for adults developed for infants in Ainsworth's experiment of

strange situation and is based on the romantic attachment relationship. Later, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) argued the four-category model based on two dimensions in their Relationship Questionnaire. Other measuring instruments developed on the basis of self-report include the Adult Attachment Scale (Collins & Read, 1990), the Adult Attachment Questionnaire (Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996) and Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998).

The fact that dimensional measures have higher predictive power than categorical measures in recent research studies (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000; Sümer, 2006) was the reason why dimension-based attachment measure was preferred in this research. These dimensions reveal other two dimensions of insecure attachment (anxiety and avoidance). In adulthood, like in childhood, either of the hyperactivation and deactivation strategies are used depending on attachment dimensions in the situations of threat. Attachment avoidance can be defined as the deactivation of individual's attachment system, suppression of emotions and relatively less expressed feelings. In attachment avoidance, individuals tend to become self-sufficient. It has also been stated that such individuals prefer being distant both physically and emotionally in their relationships. Attachment avoidance may cause individuals to keep their partners at emotional and physical distance and be less supportive (Fraley & Shaver, 1998; Kuncze & Shaver, 1994; Reizer & Mikulincer, 2007; Simpson, Rholes, & Nelligan, 1992). Attachment anxiety can be defined as the hyperactivation of attachment system and the need for constant intimacy in relationships and the fear of rejection and being left. In attachment anxiety, individuals want to minimize the psychological distance with their attachment figures (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002). In addition to these, when examining the reactions they give to others' needs, it is stated that anxious individuals give inappropriate reactions to their romantic partners and give these reactions rather with egoistic motives (Feeney & Collins, 2001; Mikulincer & Reizer, 2007; Kuncze & Shaver, 1994). Furthermore, attachment anxiety may cause individuals to regard themselves as inadequate for dealing with stressful events and their stress to increase (Birnbaum, Orr, Mikulincer, & Florian, 1997; Mikulincer & Florian, 1998).

The dual attachment dimension underlies the individual differences in the adult romantic attachment dimensions (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Simpson, Rholes, & Phillips, 1996). It has been revealed in previous research that attachment behaviors in adulthood are related the care given to both the romantic partner and the child (see: Collins, Guichard, Ford, & Feeney, 2006). To sum up, it is widely accepted that relationship between attachment figures has an impact on individual's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors for life (e.g. Berman & Sperling, 1994).

## **2. Attachment and Parenting**

Attachment researchers have examined effects of the system of caregiving behavior on parenting (Cassidy, 2008; George & Solomon, 1999, 2008). It has also been stated that some basic behaviors necessary for parenting behaviors (caregiving behaviors: i.e. being able to be sensitive and answering) may differ on the basis of attachment styles (Edelstein et al., 2004; Mills-Koonce et al., 2011; Rholes et al., 1995). A securely attached mother is warm, sensitive and supportive towards her child. Such a mother experience less conflict by exhibiting harmonious behaviors in her relationship with her child (e.g. Biringen et al., 2000; Oyen, Landy, & Hilburn-Cobb, 2000).

In addition, there are studies revealing the relationship between insecure attachment and negative parenting behaviors (Feeney, 2006; La Valley & Guerrero, 2010). In their study with 250 parents, La Valley and Guerrero (2010) examined the attachment styles, conflict solving strategies and parent-child relationship. A positive relationship was found between both parents' and children's secure attachments and use of positive conflict solving methods; and there is also a positive relationship between insecure attachment patterns and use of negative conflict solving problems. Abaied and Rudolph (2010) conducted a research vertically examining the relationship between mothers' attachment styles and the coping strategies they recommended to their children. It was seen as a result that insecurely attached mothers recommend stopping the communication as a coping strategy to their children. In addition, Leifer, Kilbane and Skolnick (2002) stated that children of insecurely attached mothers exhibit more behavioral problems than those of securely attached mothers.

Research results concluding that there is a negative relationship between attachment avoidance and positive parenting behaviors such as caregiving are remarkable (Berlin et al., 2011; Edelstein et al., 2004; Goodman, Quas, Batterman-Faunce, Riddlesberger, & Kuhn, 1997; Mills-Koonce et al., 2011; Rholes, Simpson, & Blakely, 1995, Selçuk et al., 2010). As a result of a study performed by Berlin et al. (2011), it was shown that there is a negative relationship between mother's attachment avoidance and exhibition of supportive behaviors (no relationship was observed between attachment anxiety and supportive behaviors). No relationship was found between both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and mother's interfering behaviors. In a study conducted by Edelstein et al. (2004), a negative relationship was found between parent's attachment avoidance and parental sensitivity when child's stress level was high. No difference was found between anxious attachment and parental sensitivity. In a study performed by Feeney (2002), a negative relationship was observed between mothers' attachment avoidance and caregiving behaviors (no

relationship is in question for fathers). No relationship was found between attachment anxiety and caregiving behavior. Whereas a positive relationship was observed between mothers' both attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety and their overprotective behaviors, a low-level relationship was found between fathers' attachment anxiety and protective behaviors and no relationship was observed between their attachment avoidance and overprotective behaviors. Mills-Koonce et al. (2011) revealed in a study conducted with 137 mothers who have 6-12-month-old babies that avoidantly attached mothers are less sensitive towards their children.

There are research results indicating a relationship between attachment anxiety and negative parenting behaviors (e.g. Rholes, Simpson and Blakely, 1995). Rholes et al. (2011) showed that there is a relationship between parents' attachment anxiety and the belief that this would have a negative impact on their babies' relationship with their spouses. Similarly, Rholes, Simpson and Blakely (1995) found a negative relationship between mothers' attachment anxiety and being supportive of their children (when their children behave positively). In a study conducted with married couples, Alexander, Feeney, Hohaus and Noller (2001) did not find any relationship between attachment avoidance and parental tension and coping strategies while stating that high anxiety is related to parental stress in fathers. In addition, a relationship was found between mothers' high attachment anxiety and assuming emotion-based approach in behavior of seeking for help and coping.

Furthermore, there are studies in the literature that examine the relationships between both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and parental behaviors (e.g. Cohen, Zerach, & Solomon, 2011). Ceglian and Gardner (2000) stated in their research that the avoidantly-attached mothers felt less insufficiency than the mothers in the secure and anxious group and developed an insecure relationship between their stepchildren. The anxiously-attached mothers reported that they felt like a more worthless and unrespected person than those who attached avoidantly. It was also stated that the avoidantly-attached mothers felt more anger against their children. In a study conducted by Millings, Walsh, Hepper and O'Brien (2013) with 250 parents who have 7-8-year-old children, it was revealed that there was a relationship between high levels of attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and low levels of caregiving behaviors while concluding that this case decreased parenting behaviors and increased authoritarian and permissive parenting. Moreover, a positive relationship was revealed between increasing attachment anxiety and inappropriate parenting behaviors. It was also found that high level of attachment anxiety predicted using problem-oriented coping strategy less in males. In the study in which Cohen et al. (2011) examined the relationship between military personnel's fatherhood attitudes and attachment

dimensions, it was found that there is a negative relationship between both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and parenting satisfaction. It was also observed that there is a negative relationship between both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and parenting quality. A positive relationship was observed between fathers' concern about their children when they were on duty and their attachment anxiety.

In a study performed by Selçuk et al. (2010) with 85 Turkish mothers, a negative relationship was found between both attachment avoidance (significant) and attachment anxiety (not significant in the regression model) and motherhood sensitivity. Attachment anxiety was found to be associated with caregiving behaviors including incoherence in interaction with child, uncomfortable interaction, inaccurate evaluation of signals coming from child and inability to meet child's needs. It was observed that attachment avoidance is related to behaviors such as conflict in interaction with child, missing signals from child and falling insufficient to meet children's needs. In their research conducted with mothers, Sümer, Sakman, Harma and Savaş (2015) revealed that there is a negative relationship with mothers' attachment avoidance and being open to change, richness of perception and behaviors of coherence. A negative and high-level relationship was observed between attachment avoidance and caregiving sensitivity. Furthermore, a positive relationship was found between mothers' attachment anxiety and their concern about children's safety in the same study. In a study conducted by Sümer and Harma (2015) with parents, it was stated that mother's attachment anxiety predicted trait anxiety of boys while father's attachment avoidance predicted trait anxiety of girls. In addition to these findings, it was revealed that mother's attachment avoidance predicted boys' academic self-efficacy and father's attachment anxiety predicted girls' academic self-efficacy. The research results included that parents' attachment dimensions play an important role in children's emotional states as well as their academic efficacies.

There are studies also arguing that there is no relationship between parents' attachment styles and parenting behaviors (Caltabiano & Thorpe, 2007; Lau & Peterson, 2011; Meredith & Noller, 2003). Caltabiano and Thorpe (2007) observed no relationship in their study which examined parenting behaviors and attachment styles towards stepchildren.

To sum up, along with the increase in the number of studies on attachment and parenting (Abaied & Rudolph, 2010; Edelstein et al., 2004; J. Feeney, 2006; Mills-Koonce et al., 2011; Rholes et al., 1995; Scher & Mayseless, 1994; Selçuk et al., 2010), although it has been stated that attachment needs to be studied more in non-Western cultures (Van IJzendoorn & Sagi, 1999), there are limited number of studies in the field (e.g. Selçuk et al., 2010; Sümer & Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010; Sümer & Harma, 2015; Sümer, Sakman, Harma, &

Savaş, 2015) when looking into the literature. It is thought that this study is important in regard to the fact the Turkish culture possesses a relational structure of self-involving both individualist and collectivist society patterns together contributes to the universality assumption of the attachment theory. Based on the fact, the purpose of this study is to examine to what extent ages of mothers, duration of marriage, working status of mothers, the person helping the mother with childcare and the attachment dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) predict child rearing behaviors.

## 2. Participants

The sample of the research is composed of mothers whose children are attending the preschool institutions. Average age of the mothers is 33 ( $s=4.14$ ). It was found that 36.1% of the mothers have been married for 0-5 years, 41.3% have been married for 6-10 years, and 22.6% have been married for 11-15 years. As for the working status of the mothers, majority (70.4%) of the mothers are in working life while 29.6% do not work.

### 2.1 Measurement Tools

**Personal Information Form:** It is an information form prepared by the researchers to obtain information about ages of mothers, duration of marriage, working status of mothers, the person helping the mother with childcare.

**Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory II (ECRI II):** Developed by Fraley, Waller and Brennan (2000), ECRI II is the revised version of Experiences in Close Relationships Inventory developed from the studies by Brennan, Clark and Shaver (1998). Fraley et al. (2000) tested the items in the item pool they created on the basis of the Item Response Theory and aimed at ensuring that the inventory is composed of items with high measuring power. ECRI II is composed of 36 items in which 18 items measure the attachment anxiety (e.g. *"I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love."*) and 18 items measure the attachment avoidance (e.g. *"I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners."*) The Turkish adaptation of ECRI II was performed by Selçuk, Günaydın, Sümer and Uysal (2005). It was found that attachment anxiety and avoidance dimensions have high internal consistency coefficients (attachment anxiety .90 and attachment avoidance .86).

**Child Rearing Questionnaire:** 49-item form of the Child Rearing Questionnaire (Paterson and Sanson, 1999) to measure mothers' parenting behaviors. The original version of the Child Rearing Questionnaire which was translated into Turkish by Yağmurlu and Sanson (2009a) is composed of 30 items in which mother's Explanatory

Reasoning (e.g. *“When my child is in the wrong, I speak to him/her reasonably and review the event”*), Punishment (e.g. *“When my child is not obedient, I slap him/her”*), Obedience Expectation (e.g. *“I expect my child to obey his/her parents without questioning”*), and Warmth (e.g. *“I tell my child how he/she makes me happy”*) behaviors are evaluated in the 5-point Likert type scale. Cronbach’s Alpha internal consistency coefficients are .76 for Explanatory Reasoning, .84 for Punishment, .78 for Obedience Expectation, and .68 for Warmth.

## **2.2 Data Collection Process**

The data collection process was started after the first researcher had received necessary official permissions from Kırıkkale Provincial Directorate of National Education in the spring term of 2013-2014 academic year. First, a Parent-Teacher meeting was held by preschool teachers in each classroom (in total 20 preschool education classroom) at the schools selected with the Simple Random Sampling technique. In those meetings, the mothers were informed of the research and the scales in detail. The personal information form and other data collection instruments were applied to the volunteered mothers by the first researcher in the classroom setting. It took about 40 minutes for the mothers to answer the form and the scales. It was seen that 230 out of 250 questionnaire batteries given to the mothers who had accepted to participate in the research were completed by them completely.

## **2.3 Procedure**

The data obtained with the questionnaire battery were analyzed in the SPSS 20 software package. The correlations between the scores obtained for the subdimensions of the measurement tools used were examined with Pearson’s Correlation Analysis. A hierarchic multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict the child rearing behaviors. In this type of regression, the amount of variance explained by the second and other blocks in the dependent variable is examined after checking the first block (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

## **3. Findings**

Before the hierarchic multiple regression analysis, mean and standard deviation values of the variables and the correlation values among the variables were examined to examine the relationship between age of the mother, duration of marriage, working status of the mother and the person helping the mother with the child, attachment dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) and child rearing behavior



dimensions (obedience expectation, punishment, warmth, and explanatory reasoning.) Mean and standard deviation values of the variables as well as the correlation values are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Mean, standard deviation and correlation values of the variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Mother's Age	-	-	1	.765**	-.098	.071	-.013	.074	-.251**	.291**	.435**	-.282**
2. Duration of Marriage	-	-		1	-.074	.083	-.014	.066	-.246**	.341**	.438**	-.240**
3. Status of Employment	-	-			1	-.119	.111	-.182**	.242**	.120	-.118	-.186**
4. Person helping mother with childcare	-	-				1	-.041	.133*	-.310**	-.272**	.202**	.227**
5. Attachment Anxiety	72.54	9.45					1	-.745**	.317**	-.241**	-.029	-.147*
6. Attachment Avoidance	74.26	3.21						1	-.241**	.039	.067	.195**
7. Obedience Expectation	3.25	.72							1	.128	-.275**	-.311**
8. Punishment	3.17	.70								1	-.149*	-.197**
9. Warmth	3.31	.56									1	-.497**
10. Explanatory Reasoning	3.66	1.02										1

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$

As can be seen in the table, there is a positive relationship between mother's age and duration of marriage ( $r=0.765$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), punishment ( $r=0.291$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and warmth ( $r=0.435$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) while there is a negative relationship between mother's age and obedience expectation ( $r= -0.251$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) and explanatory reasoning ( $r= -0.282$ ;  $p<0.000$ ).

There is a negative relationship between duration of marriage and obedience expectation ( $r= -0.246$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a positive relationship between duration of marriage and punishment ( $r=0.341$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a positive relationship between duration of marriage and warmth ( $r= 0.438$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and a negative relationship between duration of marriage and explanatory reasoning ( $r= -0.240$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). There is a negative relationship between status of employment and attachment avoidance ( $r= -0.182$ ;

p<0.001), a positive relationship between status of employment and obedience expectation ( $r= 0.242$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and a negative relationship between status of employment and explanatory reasoning ( $r= -0.186$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

There is a positive relationship between person helping mother with childcare and attachment avoidance ( $r= 0.133$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) a negative relationship between person helping mother with childcare and obedience expectation ( $r=-0.310$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), a negative relationship between person helping mother with childcare and punishment ( $r= -0.272$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a positive relationship between person helping mother with childcare and warmth ( $r= 0.202$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and a negative relationship between person helping mother with childcare and explanatory reasoning ( $r= 0.227$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

There is a negative relationship between attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance ( $r= -0.745$ ;  $p<0.001$ ) a positive relationship between attachment anxiety and obedience expectation ( $r=0.317$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a negative relationship between attachment anxiety and punishment ( $r= -0.241$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), and a negative relationship between attachment anxiety and explanatory reasoning ( $r= -0.147$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). There is a negative relationship between attachment avoidance and obedience expectation ( $r= -0.241$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a positive relationship between attachment avoidance and explanatory reasoning ( $r=0.195$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

There is a negative relationship between obedience expectation and warmth ( $r= -0.275$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a negative relationship between obedience expectation and explanatory reasoning ( $r=-0.311$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). There is a negative relationship between punishment and warmth ( $r= -0.149$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), a negative relationship between punishment and explanatory reasoning ( $r=-0.197$ ;  $p<0.001$ ). There is a negative and significant relationship between warmth and explanatory reasoning ( $r=-0.497$ ;  $p<0.001$ ).

**Table 2:** Prediction of obedience expectation by other variables

	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	F	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
<b>Block 1</b>						
Invariable	3.843	.221		17.352**	0.189	
Mother's Age	-.122	.089	-.128	-1.366		
Duration of Marriage	-.106	.089	-.112	-1.200		
Status of Employment	.296	.095	.189	3.109**		
Helper	-.403	.091	-.269	-4.439**		
<b>Block 2</b>						
Invariable	-.172	1.829		-.094	0.275	0.087
Mother's Age	-.129	.085	-.135	-1.516		
Duration of Marriage	-.105	.084	-.111	-1.248		
Status of Employment	.264	.092	.168	2.880**		

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Helper	-.408	.087	-.272	-4.683**
Attachment Anxiety	.511	.117	.374	4.357**
Attachment Avoidance	.488	.351	.122	1.391

\*\* p < .01

For investigating the effect of other variables on predicting the childrearing behavior of obedience expectation, a hierarchic regression model was created, in which the subdimension of obedience expectation was the dependent variable and the demographic variables and the attachment styles were the independent variables. According to the findings in Table 2, it was seen that obedience expectation was significantly predicted by status of employment and person helping mother with childcare whereas mother's age and duration of marriage were not significant within the model in the first block. ( $F_{4,230} = 13.086$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.189$ ). In the first block, the independence variables in the model explained the dependent variables at the rate of 18.9%. It was observed that status of employment and person helping mother with childcare were significant within the model. Unemployed mothers' levels of obedience expectation were found to be higher than the levels of employed mothers. It was also observed that the mothers who received the help of neighbours and babysitters with childcare had higher levels of obedience expectation than the mothers who received the help of babysitters and relatives with childcare respectively.

When testing the model in the second block upon adding attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance to the demographic variables checked before, these variables explained the dependent variable at the rate of 27.5% with an increase of 8%. Whereas the variables found to be significant in the first block maintained their level of significance in the second block, attachment anxiety predicted obedience expectation significantly ( $F = 4.357$   $p < 0.001$ ) and attachment avoidance was found to be insignificant within the model in the second block.

**Table 3:** Prediction of punishment by other variables

	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	F	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
Block 1						
Invariable	2.835	.210		13.477**	0.223	
Mother's Age	.082	.085	.088	0.961		
Duration of Marriage	.283	.084	.307	3.361**		
Status of Employment	.177	.090	.116	1.959		
Helper	-.422	.086	-.290	-4.891**		
Block 2						
Invariable	9.708	1.715		5.662**	0.324	0.101
Mother's Age	.094	.080	.102	1.184		

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Duration of Marriage	.283	.079	.307	3.587**
Status of Employment	.184	.086	.121	2.147*
Helper	-.397	.082	-.273	-4.861**
Attachment Anxiety	.617	.110	.466	5.617**
Attachment Avoidance	1.079	.329	.277	3.279**

\*\*p < .01

To investigate the effect of other variables on predicting the childrearing behavior of punishment, a hierarchic regression model was created, in which the subdimension of punishment was the dependent variable and the demographic variables and the attachment styles were the independent variables. According to the findings in Table 3, it was seen that punishment was significantly predicted by duration of marriage and person helping mother with childcare whereas mother's age and status of employment were not significant within the model in the first block. ( $F_{4,230} = 16.167$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.223$ ). In the first block, the independence variables in the model explained the dependent variables at the rate of 22.3%. It was observed that duration of marriage and person helping mother with childcare were significant within the model. It was seen that level of punishment became higher as duration of marriage increased whereas the mothers who received the help of relatives and neighbors with childcare exhibited more punishment behaviors than the mothers who received the help of neighbors and babysitters respectively.

When testing the model in the second block upon adding attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance to the demographic variables checked before, these variables explained the dependent variable at the rate of 32.4% with an increase of 10.1%. ( $F_{6,230} = 17.842$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 32.4$ ). The variables found to be significant in the first block maintained their level of significance in the second block while status of employment, attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance predicted punishment significantly in the second block. Whereas level of punishment became higher as duration of marriage increased, unemployed mothers' levels of punishment were higher than the employed mothers. It was also observed that the mothers who received the help of relatives and neighbors with childcare separately had higher levels of punishment than the mothers who received the help of neighbors and babysitters with childcare respectively. Mothers' attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance had a positive impact on their punishment behaviors.

**Table 4:** Prediction of warmth by other variables

	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	F	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$
<b>Block 1</b>						
Invariable	2.489	.168		14.793**	0.246	
Mother's Age	.174	.068	.231	2.55*		
Duration of Marriage	.183	.067	.244	2.714**		
Status of Employment	-.072	.072	-.059	-1.001		
Helper	.186	.069	.158	1.702		
<b>Block 2</b>						
Invariable	2.710	1.470		1.843	0.246	0
Mother's Age	.174	.068	.231	2.552*		
Duration of Marriage	.183	.068	.244	2.703*		
Status of Employment	-.072	.074	-.058	-0.980		
Helper	.187	.070	.159	2.677*		
Attachment Anxiety	-.019	.094	-.018	-0.205		
Attachment Avoidance	-.035	.282	-.011	-0.124		

\*\* p < .01

To investigate the effect of other variables on predicting the childrearing behavior of warmth, a hierarchic regression model was created, in which the subdimension of warmth was the dependent variable and the demographic variables and the attachment styles were the independent variables. According to the findings in Table 4, it was seen that warmth was significantly predicted by mother's age, duration of marriage and person helping mother with childcare whereas mother's age and status of employment were not significant within the model in the first block. ( $F_{4,230} = 18.356$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.246$ ). In the first block, the independence variables in the model explained the dependent variables at the rate of 24.6%. It was observed that duration of marriage and person helping mother with childcare were significant within the model. Whereas level of warmth became higher as duration of marriage increased, for the person helping mother with childcare, neighbors and babysitters affected the behavior of showing warmth more than babysitters and relatives respectively.

When testing the model in the second block upon adding attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance to the demographic variables checked before, it was seen that these variables did not increased the explanation rate of the dependent variable. ( $F_{6,230} = 12.138$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.246$ ). The variables found to be significant in the first block maintained their level of significance in the second block whereas none of the variables added in the second block predicted the behavior of warmth.

**Table 5:** Prediction of explanatory reasoning by other variables

	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>β</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>ΔR<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Block 1</b>						
Invariable	4.403	.318		13.848**	0.179	
Mother's Age	-.355	.128	-.260	-2.769**		
Duration of Marriage	-.100	.127	-.074	-0.789		
Status of Employment	.425	.137	.190	3.109**		
Helper	.490	.130	.229	3.759**		
<b>Block 2</b>						
Invariable	2.710	1.470		1.843	0.204	0.025
Mother's Age	.174	.068	.231	2.552**		
Duration of Marriage	.183	.068	.244	2.703		
Status of Employment	.072	.074	.058	0.980*		
Helper	.187	.070	.159	2.677**		
Attachment Anxiety	-.019	.094	-.018	-0.205		
Attachment Avoidance	-.035	.282	-.011	-0.124		

\*\* p < .01

For investigating the effect of other variables on predicting the childrearing style of explanatory reasoning, a hierarchic regression model was created, in which the subdimension of warmth was the dependent variable and the demographic variables and the attachment styles were the independent variables. According to the findings in Table 5, it was seen that explanatory reasoning was significantly predicted by mother's age status of employment and person helping mother with childcare whereas duration of marriage was not significant within the model in the first block. ( $F_{4,230} = 12.24$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.179$ ). In the first block, the independence variables in the model explained the dependent variables at the rate of 17.9%. It was seen that reasoning behaviors decreased as mother became older. The unemployed mothers were found to be exhibiting the behaviors of reasoning less than the employed mothers. The mothers who received the help of neighbors and babysitters showed more reasoning behavior than the mothers who received the help of babysitters and relatives respectively.

When testing the model in the second block upon adding attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance to the demographic variables checked before, these variables explained the dependent variable at the rate of 20.4% with an increase of 2.5%. ( $F_{6,230} = 9.511$   $p < 0.001$ ;  $R^2 = 0.204$ ). The variables found to be significant in the first block maintained their level of significance in the second block whereas none of the variables added in the second block predicted the behavior of explanatory reasoning. Attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance do not predict the behavior of explanatory reasoning within the model.

#### **4. Discussion**

The purpose of this research study is to examine to what extent mothers' attachment dimensions (attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance) and their certain demographics (age, duration of marriage, person helping with childcare, status of employment) predict childrearing behaviors. According to the findings obtained in the research, mother's status of employment and people helping mother with childcare predicted the subdimension of obedience expectation, which is a childrearing behavior. It was seen that level of obedience expectation became higher as duration of marriage increased whereas the mothers who received the help of relatives and babysitters with childcare exhibited more obedience expectation behaviors than the mothers who received the help of neighbors and relatives respectively. It was observed that the mothers who received the help of relatives with childcare exhibited more obedience expectation behaviors than other mothers.

It was revealed that attachment anxiety predicts mother's obedience expectation but attachment avoidance does not predict the obedience expectation behavior. It can be said that the relationship between attachment anxiety and mothers' over-intervening behaviors toward their children has been revealed by several studies. Mother's obsessive attachment (high anxiety and low avoidance) is accepted to be an extremely negative characteristic in Western societies (Rothbaum, Weisz, Pott, Miyake, & Morelli, 2000; Van IJzendoorn & Sagi, 1999). In addition, it has been stated that there is a relationship between individuals' high level of attachment anxiety (low level of attachment avoidance) and worrying about sustaining close relationships more. Such mothers' tendency of being extra closer to their children may prevent them from being a base of trust in children's behaviors of exploring the environment (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). It can be said that mothers' attachment anxiety is related to the fact that they expect their children to accept their all requests and expectations. How attachment avoidance does not predict showing obedience expectation behaviors shows parallelism with research results which reveal that attachment avoidance is related to mothers' indifferent, cold and distant behaviors toward their children (Berlin et al., 2011; Edelstein et al., 2004; Mills-Koonce et al., 2011).

Attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance predict punishment behavior significantly. It can be said that the finding show parallelism with the research results revealing the relationship between both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance and showing negative parenting behaviors (Cohen, Zerach, & Solomon, 2011; Millings, Walsh, Hepper, & O'Brien, 2013).

In addition, the results were addressed on the basis of both mothers' attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. For example, for attachment anxiety, it can be said that the results are in parallel with the results of the research performed by Berlin et al. (2011) to examine the relationship between mothers' attachment anxiety and the punishment behavior. Moreover, it can be said that result achieved by Adam, Gunnar and Tanaka (2004) in their study which shows that obsessively attached mothers' exhibit angry and intervening parenting approaches supports this finding of the research.

The finding that showing punishment behaviors is explained by mothers' attachment avoidance reveals that such mothers prefer oppressing and controlling their children who obey rules during the child rearing process. It can be concluded that studies revealing that indifferently attached (high avoidance and low anxiety) mothers criticize negative emotions of their children and oppress their negative statements (Cassidy & Kobak, 1988; Main, 1999 in Berlin & Cassidy, 2003) support this finding. It can be also said that such mothers possess a positive self-model and a negative other model (Sümer & Güngör, 1999) and why they exhibit punishment behaviors can be explained by the fact because they are perceived as being over-controlled by others (Kobak & Sceery, 1988). Furthermore, as mothers' attachment avoidance has an impact on the fact that they regard attachment needs as unimportant and have problem about expressing the need for intimacy and the emotions (Collins et al., 2004; Schachner et al., 2005), it can be said that they may tend to stay away from the needs of their children and exhibit behaviors of punishing them. Studies revealing that there is a relationship between attachment avoidance and low levels of mother sensitivity (Edelstein et al., 2004; Rholes, Simpson, & Blakely, 1995; Selçuk et al., 2010) are in parallel with this finding of the research.

The warmth behavior is not predicted either by attachment anxiety or attachment avoidance. This finding is in parallel with the fact that the warmth behavior is a common characteristic among mothers in the Turkish culture in general. Regarding the warmth subdimension, it has been determined in previous studies that mothers are very affectionate and warm towards their children and this does not differ by socio-contextual characteristics such as educational level or traditionalism-modernism (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1970; Yağmurlu & Sanson, 2009). Warmth and emotional attachment is two of the characteristics of a Turkish mother observed independently from the family structure or parents' educational or income level (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2010).

It was observed that level of explanatory reasoning became lower as the mother became older and the unemployed mothers had lower levels of explanatory reasoning. The mothers who received the help of babysitters and neighbors showed more



reasoning behavior than the mothers who received the help of neighbors and relatives respectively. Bağlanma kaygısı ve kaçınma kaygısı model içerisinde açıklayıcı akıl yürütme düzeyini anlamlı bir şekilde yordamamaktadır. Bu bulgu açıklayıcı akıl yürütme davranışının çocuklarıyla birlikte daha fazla aktive yapabilmek için gerekli ekonomik destek ve imkanlara sahip olmalarıyla açıklanabilir (Abels et al., 2005; Keller, Hentschel, et al., 2004; Miller, 2006). Attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance do not predict the explanatory reasoning level significantly within the model. It is also an interesting finding that attachment dimensions do not have an impact on exhibiting the explanatory reasoning behavior whatsoever. It can be said that this finding show parallelism with the results of the studies revealing that attachment dimensions are significant rather in explaining individuals' moods (e.g. Cassidy, 1994). Sümer and Kağıtçıbaşı (2010) state that mothers' attachment avoidance predicts that they assume a more negative attitude towards their children compared to their attachment anxiety and this is caused by a cultural structure. It can be said that the research in question coincides with the current finding. The finding is also in parallel with the results of studies which concluded that attachment anxiety is not a risk factor in most of the countries such as Turkey where psychological dependence is a part of the culture although suppression of autonomy is regarded as a positive trait of parenting in individualist societies (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007). It can also be said that mothers' attachment anxiety predicted that they tend to exhibit behavior of punishment towards their children and this may cause more negative impacts on the developments of Turkish children.

When examining the related literature, it is obvious that mother's status of employment has negative effects on children's cognitive development (Ruhm, 2004; Gottfried & Gottfried, 2006) and their social and emotional behaviors (Johnson, Kalil, & Dunifon, 2012). Furthermore, there are research studies examining the relationship between whether a mother participates in the working life and certain parenting behaviors. For instance, in a study conducted Buehler and O'Brien (2011), it was revealed that the mothers working part-time had more positive parenting skills than the mothers working full-time. In a study performed by Muller (1995) which examined the research data of mothers in a national education research study, it was stated that the mothers working part-time had been more supportive of their children in the cognitive sense than the mothers working full-time. Lleras (2008) also found that the mothers working for 21-35 hours a week exhibited lower levels of parenting behaviors than the mothers working for longer or shorter hours (including unemployed mothers). The physical punishment applied by parents has been found to be associated with sociodemographic variables such as education, age, employment and income (Day,

Peterson, & McCracken, 1998). It has been also seen that mother's depression and certain financial hardships increase physical punishment of child (Eamon & Zuehl, 2001).

The fact that mothers participated in the working life predicted only the subdimensions of obedience expectation and explanatory reasoning out of the subdimensions of childrearing attitudes. It can be said that such mothers are rather in search for obedience from their children compared to the unemployed mothers and preferred explanatory reasoning with being inclined to follow more logical ways in their relationships with them. It is seen that the finding in question is not supported by the results of the studies which state that mothers working part-time are more sensitive to their children as they experience less stress in the workplace than unemployed mothers and mothers working full-time (e.g. Buehler & O'Brien, 2011).

It can be said that the current findings showing that the employed mothers assumed such two different attitudes as obedience expectation and explanatory reasoning together are in parallel with the results of the studies which conclude that mothers may be influenced by the working life both positively and negatively (Chang, 2013). Moreover, it can be also argued in the cultural context that this inclination supports the cultural norms as obedience expectation is an acceptable characteristic in collectivist societies. It can also be suggested that the finding in question coincides with the result of the study which stated that adaptation to society and behaving accordingly are considered the most important features in the socialization objectives set by well-educated and poorly educated mothers for their children (Yağmurlu, Citlak, Dost, & Leyendecker, 2009). It can be said that such mothers support their children logically and provide cognitive activities such as showing the cause and effect relation as they are not only culturally sensitive but also feel good at the workplace. This attitude of the mothers can be explained by the fact that they care about spending supportive and quality time with their children.

There are some limitations to this research due to using self-report-based measurement tools and the sample composed of mothers. Some recommendations were made in accordance with these limitations. Research is needed for the importance of parents in early childhood which represents the most critical years of an individual. It is also recommended that vertical studies are to be conducted regarding the critical consequences of mother (caregiver) and infant on the basis of attachment, which can communicate the culture of the country to parents. Especially in the light of the results of this research, it can be ensured that up-to-date data are obtained to be used at seminars, meetings or visits in which the importance of attachment for parents. Other than the limited number of studies in which the effect of mothers' working status on

their sensitivity and the process of children participating in the education is discussed, studies which reflect the perspectives of other disciplines can be performed. Even though the mother may have more influence on the child in parent studies (Sunar, 2009), it is known that fathers have an important role in the socialization of the child (Belsky, 1984). Based on the fact, parents' parenting behaviors can be examined in vertical research studies in consideration of the limited number of studies in which parents are addressed together in the Turkish culture in the related literature. Research studies in which early childhood relationships are evaluated especially in regard to the child can be conducted to examine the relationships between children's attachment dimensions and parents and teachers, who are important figures in their lives.

### **Acknowledgment**

This research is a part of the Seda Ata's doctoral dissertation conducted under supervision of Professor Berrin Akman.

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