

Introduction: Emotional eating (EE) in children has been linked to childhood obesity and may be predictive of parental overinvolvement. (Webber et al., 2009; Allen et al., 2008; Ogden et al., 2006; Braden et al., 2014). Parental overinvolvement relates to lower sleep quality in children, and short sleep duration also influences overeating (Brand et al., 2009; Dweck, Jenkins, & Nolan, 2013). The current study will examine if sleep quality moderates an association between parental overinvolvement and child EE.

Methods: Parents ($N=71$; M age = 43.4 ± 6.14 years) and children ($N=71$, M age = 11.7 ± 2.65) were recruited as part of a larger study examining neurocognitive functioning in children with and without anxiety. Child EE was measured using the Emotional Eating Scale for Children (EES-C). Parenting style was measured using the Alabama Parenting Questionnaire (APQ). Parent-reported child sleep quality was measured using the Sleep Disturbances Scale for Children (SDSC).

Results: A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. The APQ and SDSC scores were entered in step 1, and interaction term (APQ x SDSC) was entered in step 2. Both the initial model, $F(2, 68) = .1473, p = .236$ and overall model with the interaction term were non-significant $F(3, 67) = .023, p = .410$.

Discussion: A non-significant relationship was found between parental involvement, sleep, and EE. It is possible that other parenting practices (e.g., over-control) are more impactful on EE. Parents and children also may have been inaccurate in their estimate of sleep, overinvolvement, and EE. This study demonstrates that the relationship between child EE and parenting is complex and should be studied from different directions. Future research should longitudinally examine different aspects of parenting on child EE.