

Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

---

Research on the Hill (Salt Lake City)

---

1-30-2014

## Multiple Attachment Relationships: More Caregivers May Mean More Confidence to Behave Prosocially

Julie Carter  
*Utah State University*

Jair Almaraz  
*Utah State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/poth\\_slc](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/poth_slc)



Part of the [Psychology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Carter, Julie and Almaraz, Jair, "Multiple Attachment Relationships: More Caregivers May Mean More Confidence to Behave Prosocially" (2014). Research On Capitol Hill 2014. *Research on the Hill (Salt Lake City)*. Paper 11.

[https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/poth\\_slc/11](https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/poth_slc/11)

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@USU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research on the Hill (Salt Lake City) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@USU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@usu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@usu.edu).





# Multiple Attachment Relationships: More Caregivers May Mean More Confidence to Behave Prosocially

Julie R. Carter  
Jair Almaraz  
Susan Talley, Ph.D.  
Utah State University

## I. Introduction

Most of the research on attachment relationships has focused on mothers as the primary attachment figure, although as a society we are seeing an increase of inter-generational caregiving for children. Mothers and Fathers are increasingly seeking their parents' help to care for their children. Further, fathers are taking a larger role in the primary care of their children. As a result, ongoing questions about the quality of attachment relationships with multiple caregivers are beginning to rise to the top of our list of understanding attachment in general.

What role might multiple caregivers have in the positive development of children? We chose to investigate their role in the performance of prosocial behavior. The major research question in this study was to discern whether there was a relationship between feelings of security between the child, his or her caregivers (including fathers, grandparents, aunts, or other adults) and feelings of confidence for behaving in a prosocial way.

## II. Methods

We approached 108 pre-adolescent sixth-grade children coming from a variety of socioeconomic back-grounds and racial demographics in the Toledo, Ohio area. The sample was drawn from four schools and five classrooms – one inner city, one urban, and two suburban.

We asked the children how they viewed their quality of attachment relationships using both the Separation Anxiety Test (SAT) and the Security Scale for mother and father separately. The SAT is a scripted interview that was originally designed for use with 11 to 17 year old youth and later revised for 8 to 12 year old children.

The Security Scale is comprised of 12 questions each for the mother-child and father-child relationships based on Susan Harter's "some kids, other kids" format.

We asked the children how confident they felt that they could perform prosocial acts. Feelings of self-efficacy were measured using a Likert scale.

Additionally, the Prosocial Behavior Effectiveness Scale (PBES) was administered, which covers 11 of the most common prosocial behaviors. Prosocial behavior was also assessed via peer nominations, teacher ratings, and the children's own self-reports.

Table 2 - Correlations

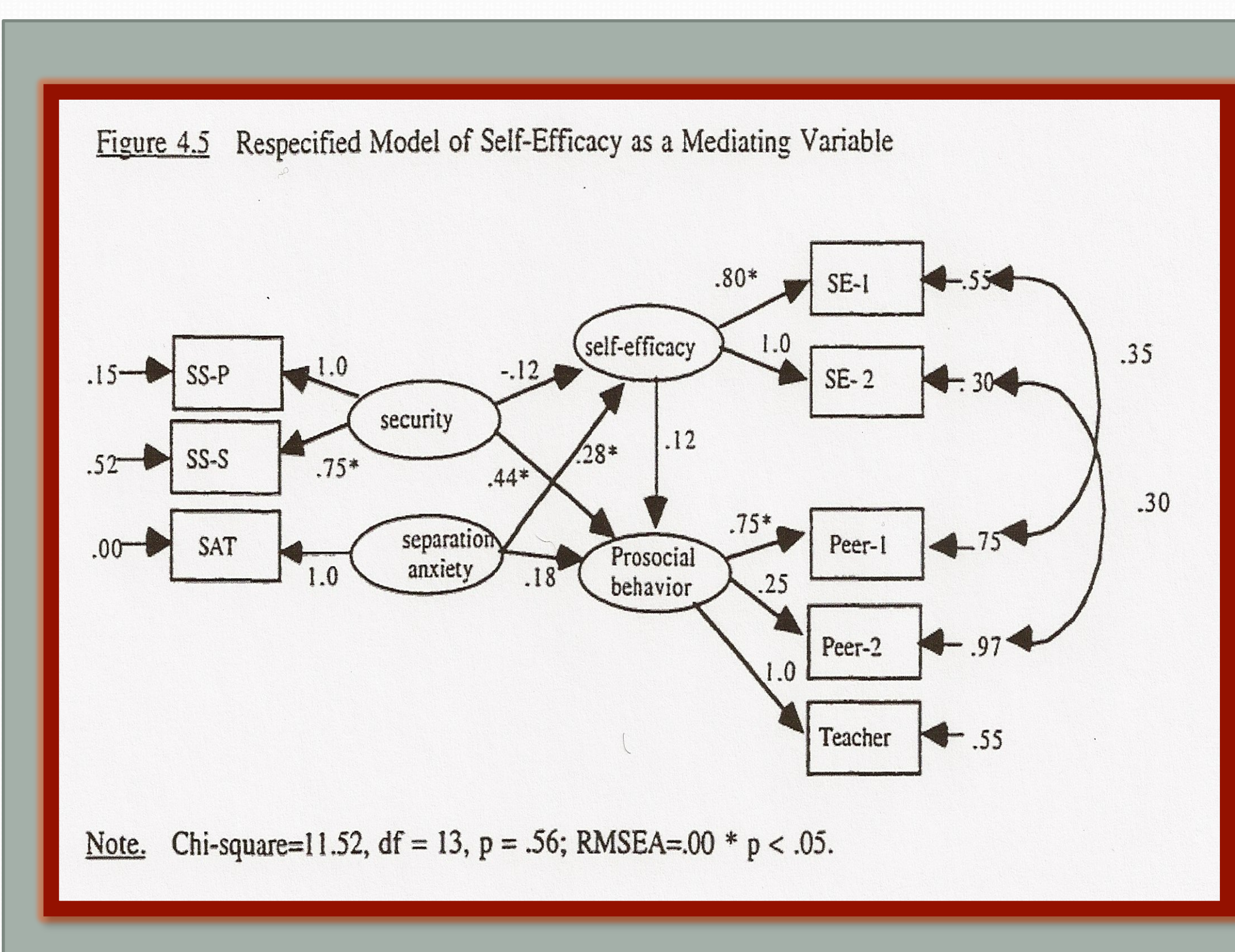
		Dads - Security Scale	Moms - Security Scale	Prosocial Behavior Ratings	Self-Efficacy Measure
Dads - Security Scale	Pearson Correlation	1	.038	-.016	.031
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.699	.968	.752
	N	108	104	108	107
Moms - Security Scale	Pearson Correlation	.038	1	.190	-.315**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.053	.001
	N	104	104	104	103
Prosocial Behavior Ratings	Pearson Correlation	-.016	.190	1	.125
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.868	.053	.200
	N	108	104	108	107
Self-Efficacy Measure	Pearson Correlation	.031	-.315**	.125	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.752	.001	.200
	N	107	103	107	107

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

## III. Results

Preliminary results suggest that there is some evidence to support a specific relationship between secondary caregivers and feeling confident for performing prosocial behaviors. A reanalysis of the data under a revised model indicates that the secondary caregiver (75% fathers) is more complicated.

Figure 1 – Preliminary Model



Note. Chi-square=11.52, df = 13, p = .56; RMSEA=.00 \* p < .05.

## III. Results (continued)

We were specifically interested in the security scale data as our outcome measure. We tested both mothers and fathers in an ordinal regression model. All four assumptions were met; however, the results of the test proved the null hypothesis.

Susan D. Talley  
Utah State University  
Associate Professor, FCHD  
susan.talley@usu.edu



Table 1 – Model Assessment

### Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 log	Chi-sq	Df	Sig
Intercept	339.123			
Final	291.532	47.590	35	.076

### Goodness of Fit

	Chi-sq	Df	Sig
Pearson	749.288	535	.000
Deviance	290.147	535	1.000

### Pseudo-R square

Cox and Snell	.382
Nagerlkerke	.394
McFadden	.140

## IV. Conclusions

The results indicate that multiple attachment relationships are important factors in feelings of self-confidence and prosocial behavior. It is determined that a more sensitive model must be developed to determine which relationships are more salient. That analysis is underway.



Julie R. Carter  
Utah State University  
Department of Psychology  
julie.carter@aggiemail.usu.edu



Jair Almaraz  
Utah State University  
Department of Psychology  
jairalmaraz@gmail.com