# SAFE SORRY

## Gender Ideology and Overprotective Parenting: Examining the Intervening Role of Parents' Adherence to an Intensive Parenting Ideology

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### Introduction

Social norms about gender roles shape our ideologies about how to be a good mother or a good father and may prescribe different parenting practices for mothers and/or fathers.

### **Gender Ideology**

- Traditional Vs Egalitarian
- 2 facets

- *Essentialism*: breadwinner / caregiver model  $\rightarrow$ mothers *naturally* better parents than fathers - Gender attitudes concerning the role of women and men in the society

#### Intensive parenting

Parents must be attentive, available, responsive  $\rightarrow$  • <u>Two types of O.P.</u> important implications for a child's development

### **Overprotective Parenting**

- Excessive level of parental protection, considering the developmental level of the child (Thomasgaard et al., 1993)
- Important consequences on :
  - Children's mental health (Segrin et al., 2012)
  - Parents' mental health (Zimmermann et al., 2022)

### SAMPLE

Method

- N = 177 Belgian parents of adolescents ( $M_{age} = 16.6, 56.3\%$  female)
- 104 mothers ( $M_{age}$  = 48.09, 76% in couple, 75% university diploma, 54% monthly household revenue >  $\in$  4000)
- 73 fathers (M<sub>age</sub> = 49.77, 82% in couple, 80% university diploma, 71% monthly household revenue > €4000)

### **MEASURES**

- Parents totally responsible for their children's outcomes  $\rightarrow$  parental determinism (Lee et al., 2014)
- Parents should sacrifice themselves for their children (Loyal et al., 2017)
- Childcare is a child-centered activity (Hays, 1996)
- $\rightarrow$  Extreme pressure on parents, and especially mothers?

 $\rightarrow$  Different standards of parenting ? Intensive mothering VS involved fatherhood (Lee et al., 2014)

### Results

Table 1 Descriptive statistics, internal consistencies, and correlations between the variables

		Mean (SD)	α	1	2	3
1. Traditional	Mothers	2.03 (.55)	.76	-		
Gender Ideology	Fathers	1.92 (.57)	.88	-		
2. Intensive	Mothers	3.00 (.65)	.89	.47***	-	
Parenting	Fathers	2.83 (.60)	.89	.37***	-	
3. Ego-	Mothers	2.41 (.67)	.67	.23*	.43***	-
Overprotection	Fathers	2.29 (.60)	.70	17	.01	-

- - Anxious (anxiety-driven age-inappropriate overprotective behaviors)
  - Ego-enhancing (boosting the child's ego in excessive ways) (Chevrier et al., 2022)

### **RESEARCH GOALS**

- $\rightarrow$  Examine the relation between parental gender ideology and parenting
- $\rightarrow$  Intervening role of adherence to intensive parenting
- $\rightarrow$  Same model for mothers and fathers?

#### **Overprotective parenting** (Chevrier et al., 2022)

Anxious Overprotection (10 items)  $\rightarrow$  "I immediately see danger whenever my child wants to do something new."

Ego-Enhancing Overprotection (6 items)  $\rightarrow$  "When my child is not doing as well at school, I say that it is not his/her fault."

### Adherence to intensive parenting ideology (self-constructed)

Child Centeredness (5 items)  $\rightarrow$  "Children should be the greatest" preoccupation in a mother's / father's life."

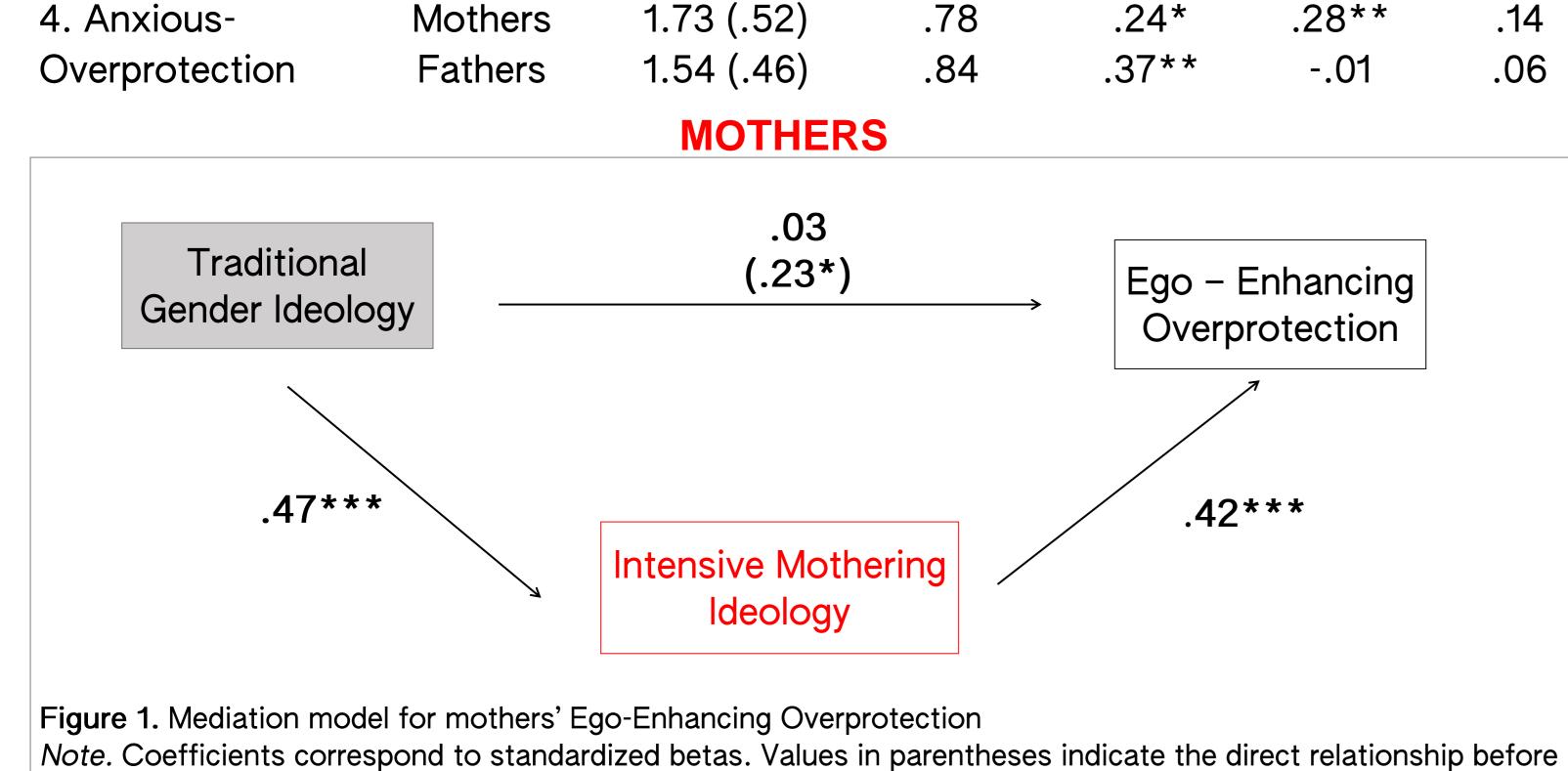
Parental Sacrifice (5 items)  $\rightarrow$  "A mother/father should be ready to make almost any sacrifice for their children."

Parental Determinism (5 items)  $\rightarrow$  "Ultimately, it is the mother /father" who is responsible for how her / his children turn out."

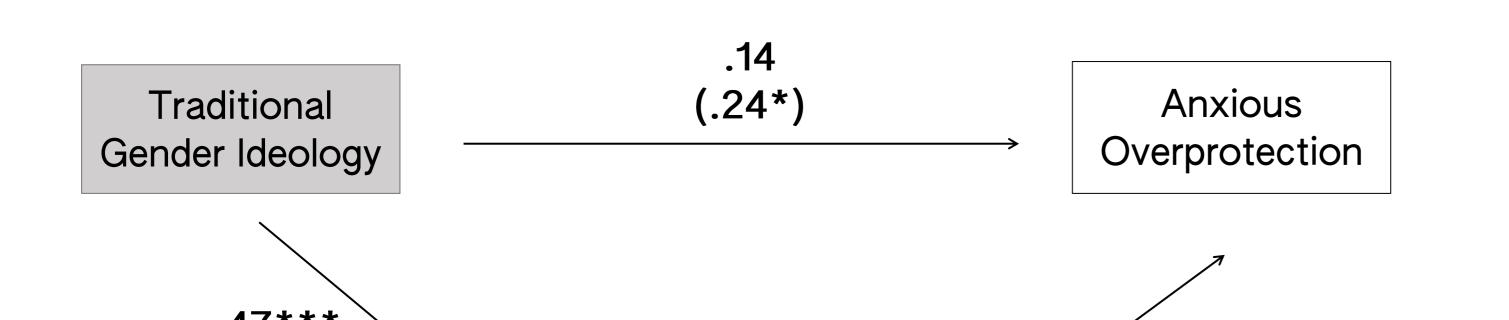
#### Traditional Gender Ideology (Liss et al., 2013; Greenstein et al., 2012)

Essentialism (6 items)  $\rightarrow$  "Although fathers are important, ultimately" children need mothers more."

Traditional Gender Attitudes (8 items)  $\rightarrow$  "A woman must have" children to feel fulfilled."



conducting the mediation model.



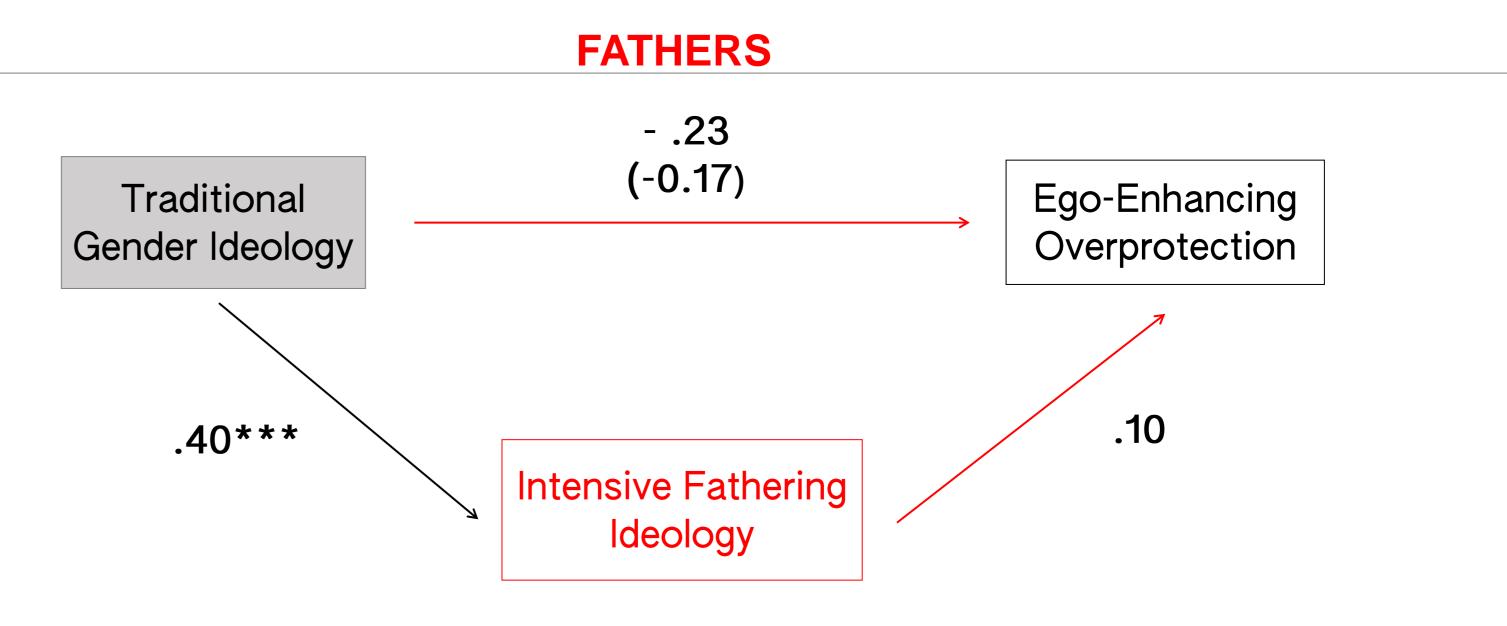


Figure 2. Mediation model for fathers' Ego-Enhancing Overprotection Notes. Coefficients correspond to standardized betas. Values in parentheses indicate the direct relationship before conducting the mediation model. Red arrows indicate non-significant relationship.

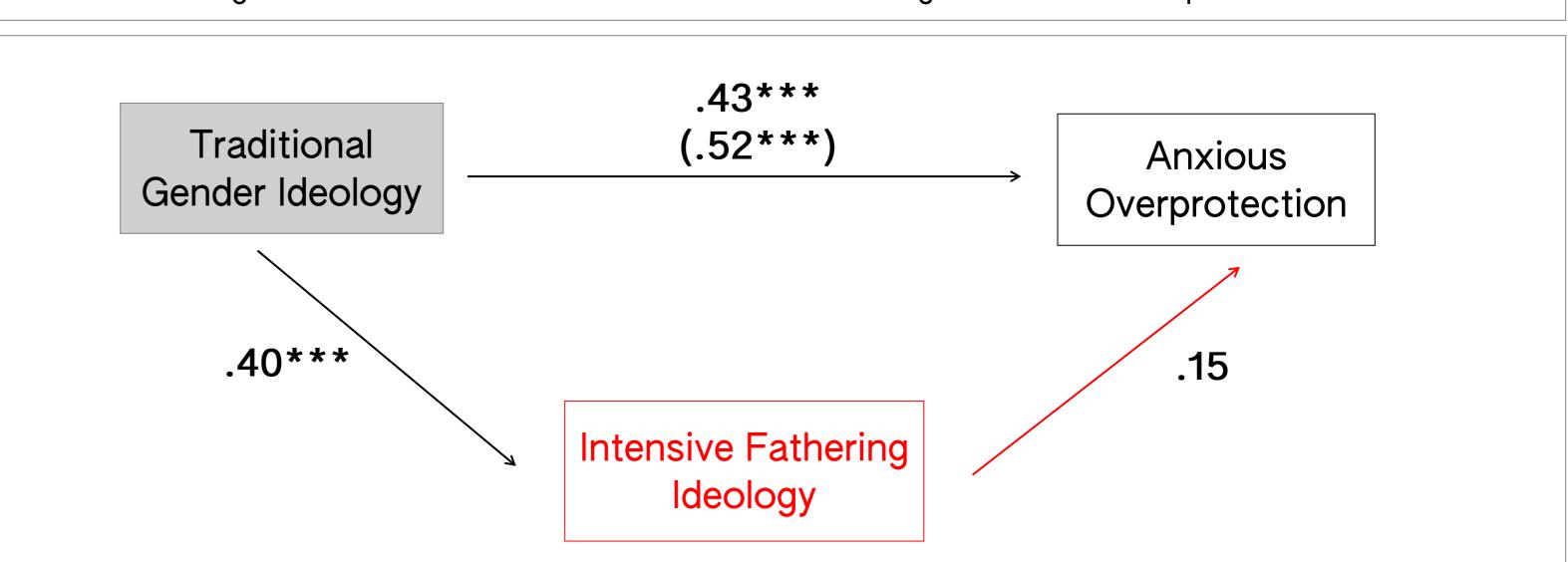




Figure 3. Mediation model for mothers' Anxious Overprotection

Note. Coefficients correspond to standardized betas. Values in parentheses indicate the direct relationship before conducting the mediation model.



- Intensive parenting ideology relates to a traditional gender ideology for **both parents**  $\rightarrow$ Different meaning for mothers and fathers ?  $\rightarrow$  Intensive fathering expectations not in line with a traditional gender ideology for fathers
- Intensive parenting translates to overprotective parenting only for mothers
- →The ones typically affected by the high demanding expectations of intensive mothering discourse? (Newman & Henderson, 2014)
- ->Link stronger with ego-enhancing overprotection / In line with a highly child-centered intensive parenting (mothering?) ideology (Hays, 1996)
- Traditional gender ideology and anxious overprotection of fathers?  $\rightarrow$ Traditional breadwinner model vs new, more involved father models  $\rightarrow$ Intensification of fatherhood? (Lee et al., 2014)



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Figure 4. Mediation model for fathers' Anxious Overprotection Note. Coefficients correspond to standardized betas. Values in parentheses indicate the direct relationship before conducting the mediation model. Red arrows indicate non-significant relationship.

### **FUTURE RESEARCH**

- Better understand how fathers experience contemporary fatherhood (e.g., Johansson, 2011)
- Beyond the traditional VS egalitarian ideology (Grunow et al., 2018)  $\rightarrow$  implications for parenting?
- Clusters of parents?