Intensive Parenting Ideology and Overprotective Parenting

A Typological Examination of Gendered Representations of Parenthood

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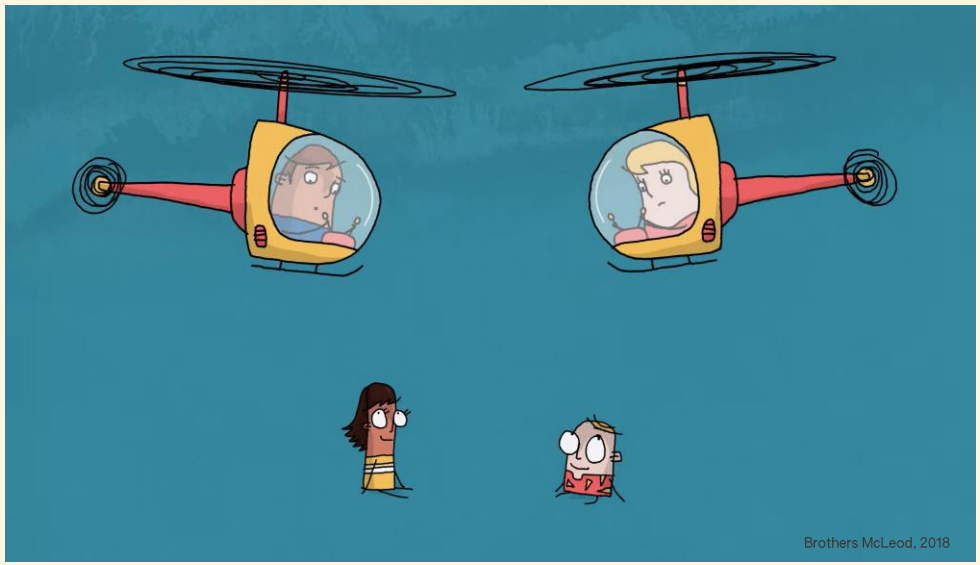

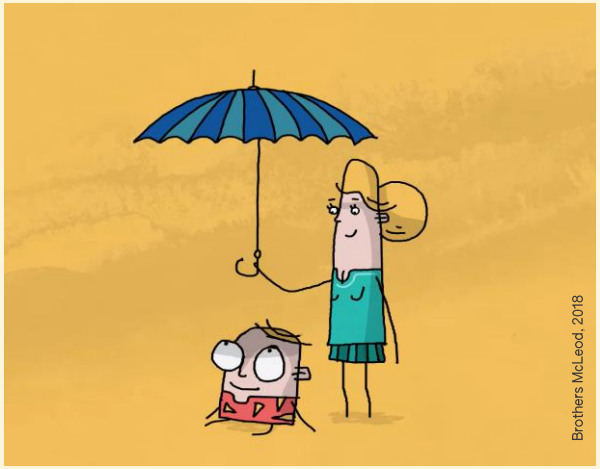

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Introduction

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.

Theoretical Background
Contextual variables

Perceived social pressure

Feeling pressure to be a perfect parent

Intensive parenting

Parents must be <u>always</u> attentive, available, responsive → child's development exclusive determined by parenting

Essentialism

Breadwinner VS caregiver model → mothers *naturally* better parents than fathers

Theoretical Background
Parenting Variables

Involvement

Responsiveness

Involved, warm, nurturing parents (Davidov & Grusec, 2006)

Overvaluation

Parents believing their children are more special than other children (Brummelman et al., 2015)

Anxious overprotection

Anxiety-driven age-inappropriate overprotective behaviors

(Chevrier et al., 2022)

Research Goals

Distinguish between different parental typologies

Examine whether these are differently associated to positive and negative parenting dimensions

Explore the impact of parenthood beliefs!

Brothers McLeod, 2018

Sample

N=872 parents of adolescents (M_{age}=17.00, 54.5% girls)

	Mothers (n=504, M_{age}=48.84)	Fathers (n=368, M_{age}=50.67)
Civil status	Single=23%	Single=16%
Education	Higher education=81% Master's=38% Doctoral=6%	Higher education=78% Master's=41% Doctoral=9%
Subjective social status	**M_{sss}**=4.11/10*	**M_{sss}**=3.78/10*
Primary caretaker	Mostly me=39% Shared=60% Mostly other parent=1%	Mostly me=6% Shared=77% Mostly other parent=16%

**Note: McArthur SSS scale from 1 to 10, 1 equals most privileged*

Measures

Perceived Social Pressure (α=.95/.95)

(15 items, Wuyts et al., 2015a, 2015b/ Meeussen & Van Laar, 2018)

→ *"Society wants me to be perfect as a parent."*

Adherence to intensive parenting ideology (α=.90/.89)

(15 items, self-constructed)

→ *"Children's problems are almost always a result of their mother's/father's parental practices."*

Essentialism (α=.86/.83)

(6 items; Liss et al., 2013)

→ *"Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more."*

Involvement (α=.70/.77)

(6 items; Grolnick, W. S., Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L.,1991)

→ *"I put time and energy into helping my child."*

Responsiveness (α=.75/.83)

(7 items; CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965)

→ *"I cheer up my child when he/she is sad."*

Overvaluation (α= .69/.70)

(7 items; Brummelman et al., 2015)

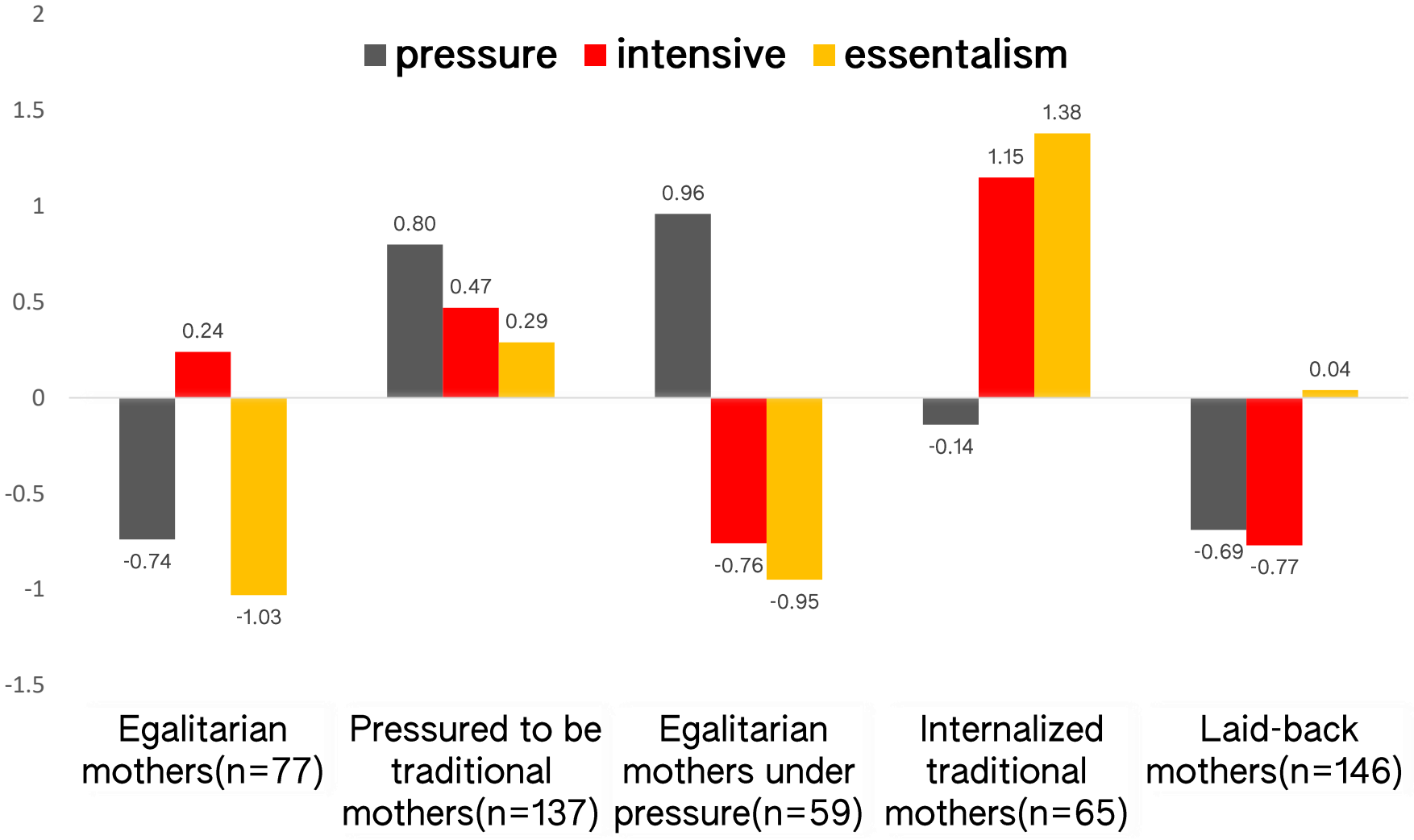
→ *"My child is a great example for other children to follow."*

Anxious overprotection (α= .82/.80)

(10 items; Chevrier et al., 2022)

→ *"I immediately see danger whenever my child wants to do something new."*

Fig1. Z-scores for social pressure, intensive parenting and essentialism in the five-cluster solution for mothers



Results Mothers

Variable	Egalitarian mothers	Pressured to be traditional mothers	Egalitarian mothers under pressure	Internalized traditional mothers	Laid-back mothers	*F*	η^2
Anxious Over.	1.62_a	1.99_b	1.71_a	2.13_b	1.75_a	13.59***	.10
Overval.	2.41_a	2.71_b	2.71_{ab}	2.67_{ab}	2.63_{ab}	2.32	.02
Respon.	4.29_a	4.13_a	4.19_a	4.20_a	4.33_a	1.13	.01
Involv.	4.25_a	4.05_a	4.22_a	4.20_a	4.19_a	1.76	.02

Note. Cluster means are significantly different if they have different subscripts

****p<.001*

Results Mothers

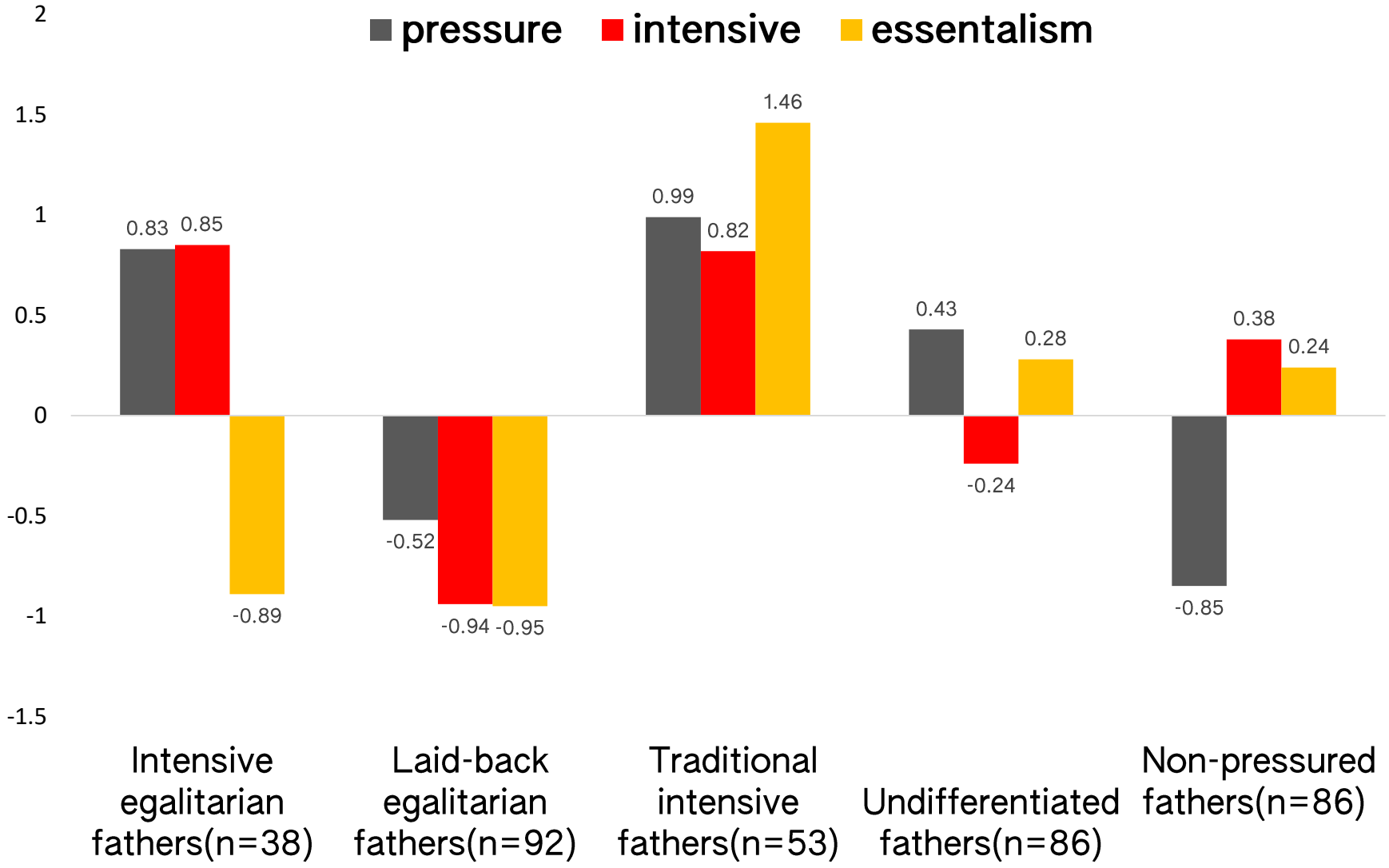
Pressured to be traditional mothers (n=137)

Internalized traditional mothers (n=65)

→ Higher adherence to anxious overprotection

NO differences between clusters for mothers in terms of positive parenting implication (involvement, responsiveness)!

Fig2. Z-scores for social pressure, intensive parenting and essentialism in the five-cluster solution for fathers



Results fathers

Variable	Intensive egalitarian fathers	Laid-back egalitarian fathers	Traditional intensive fathers	Undifferentiated fathers	Non-pressured fathers	*F*	η^2
Anxious Over.	1.75_{bc}	1.49_{a}	1.99_{c}	1.75_{b}	1.64_{ab}	10.40***	.11
Overval.	2.92_{a}	2.50_{b}	2.69_{ab}	2.61_{ab}	2.53_{ab}	2.49*	.03
Respon.	4.37_{a}	4.07_{ab}	3.74_{c}	3.87_{bc}	3.89_{bc}	6.91***	.09
Involv.	3.52_{a}	3.42_{a}	3.02_{b}	3.18_{b}	3.27_{ab}	6.65***	.09

Note. Cluster means are significantly different if they have different subscripts

p < .05;*p<.001*

Results Fathers

Traditional intensive fathers (n=53)

Highest adherence to anx. overprotection, higher overvaluation & lowest responsiveness

Intensive egalitarian fathers (n=38)

Highest involvement, responsiveness AND higher anx. overprotection

Laid-back egalitarian fathers (n=92)

Higher involvement & lowest adherence to anx. overprotection and overvaluation

Discussion

For mothers it is mostly the traditional profiles that report higher anxious overprotection

No cluster differences in the positive aspects of parenting → all mothers responsive and involved

For fathers it is mostly essentialism that translates into anxious overprotection → different meaning of traditional gender ideology for fathers?

Most intensive and gender egalitarian fathers →more positive parenting

Discussion

Intensive egalitarian fathers→
New, more involved father model? Vs *traditional*, *breadwinner*, *uninvolved father model*

Intensification of fatherhood? (Lee et al., 2014)

Contextual variables, e.g. gender ideology, are vital in order to better understand contemporary parenting!

Ingrid Frahm, 2019

Thank you for your attention!

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Table 1 Descriptive statistics, internal consistencies, and correlations between variables for mothers (N=504) and fathers (N=368)

		Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social Pr.	Mothers	2.82 (.84)	-					
	Fathers	2.61 (.81)	-					
2. Inten Par.	Mothers	2.63 (.66)	.19***	-				
	Fathers	2.58(.62)	.29***	-				
3. Essent.	Mothers	2.07 (.81)	.16***	.44***	-			
	Fathers	1.86 (.72)	.21***	.24***	-			
4. Involv.	Mothers	4.16 (.53)	-.04	.01	.03	-		
	Fathers	3.28 (.51)	-.09	.06	-.27**	-		
5. Respons.	Mothers	4.20 (.46)	-.03	-.01	- .05	.60***	-	
	Fathers	3.96 (.57)	-.01	.12*	-.30***	.63***	-	
6. Overval.	Mothers	2.65 (.61)	.21***	.18***	.17***	.04	.08	-
	Fathers	2.60 (.64)	.26***	.16**	.00	.04	.15*	-
7. Anx Over.	Mothers	1.85 (.54)	.17***	.28***	.30***	-.16**	-.28***	.13**
	Fathers	1.69 (.49)	.31***	.17**	.30***	-.17**	-.14*	.14*

**p < .05; **p < .01; ***p<.001*