



**GHENT
UNIVERSITY**

Adolescents' Coping with Overprotective Parenting: A Person-Centered Approach

Frederik De Spiegeleer

Introduction

Overprotective parenting

❖ “Helicopter parenting”

- Highly discussed topic
- Controlling:
 - Highly involved
 - Sometimes even “warm”

❖ Parental overprotection related to developmental difficulties

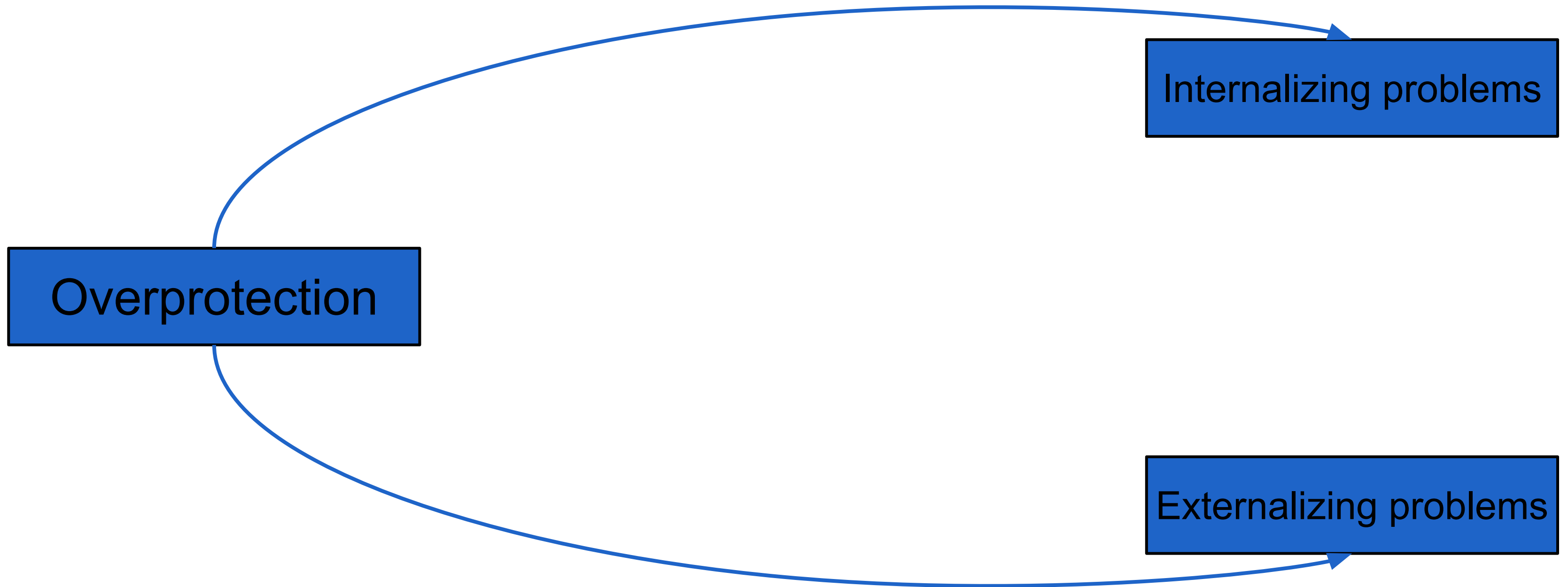
➤ Internalizing problems:

- Anxiety (e.g., Segrin et al., 2013)
- Depressive symptoms (e.g., Schiffrin et al., 2014)

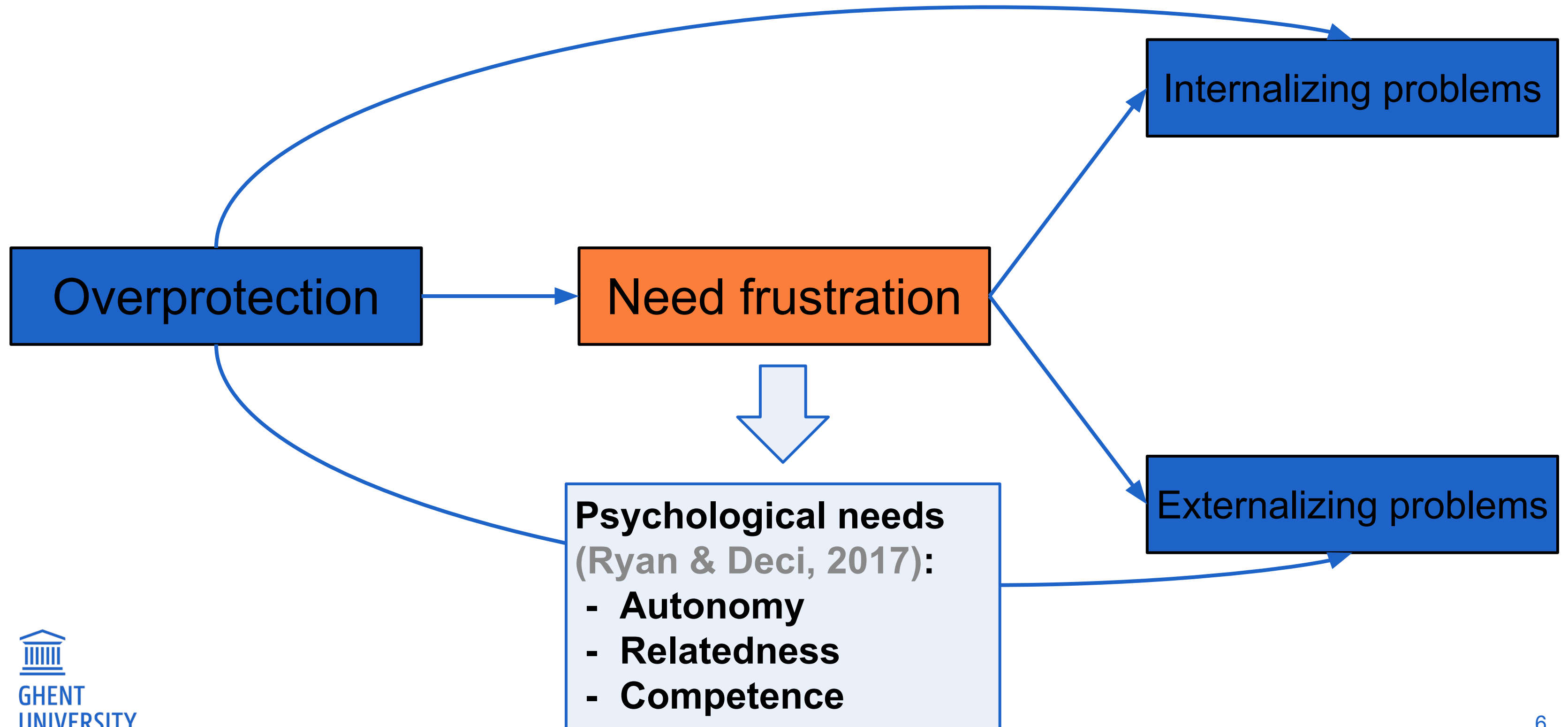
➤ Externalizing problems:

- Aggression (e.g., Muris et al., 2003)

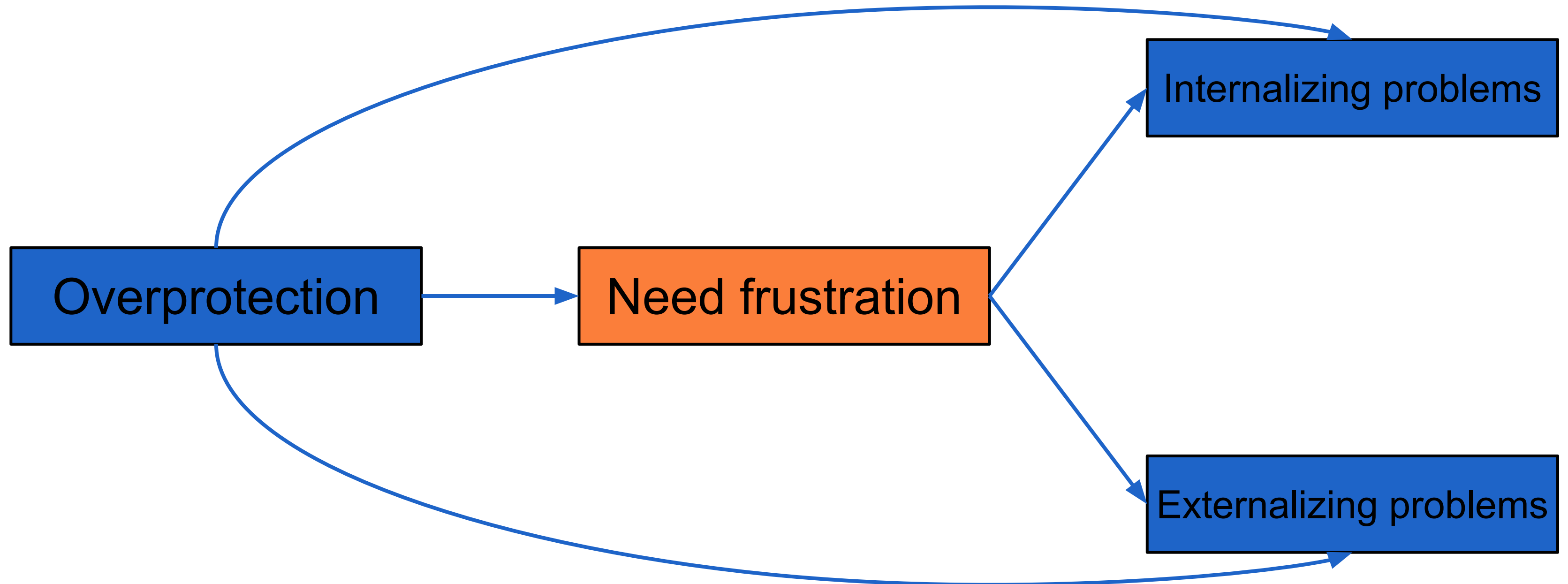
Self-Determination Theory



Self-Determination Theory



Mediation model



⇒ **Evidence** (e.g., Schiffrin et al., 2014; Van Petegem et al., 2020)

Coping with overprotection

❖ **Soenens et al. (2015):**

- Children play active role in upbringing
- Individual differences affect susceptibility towards parenting

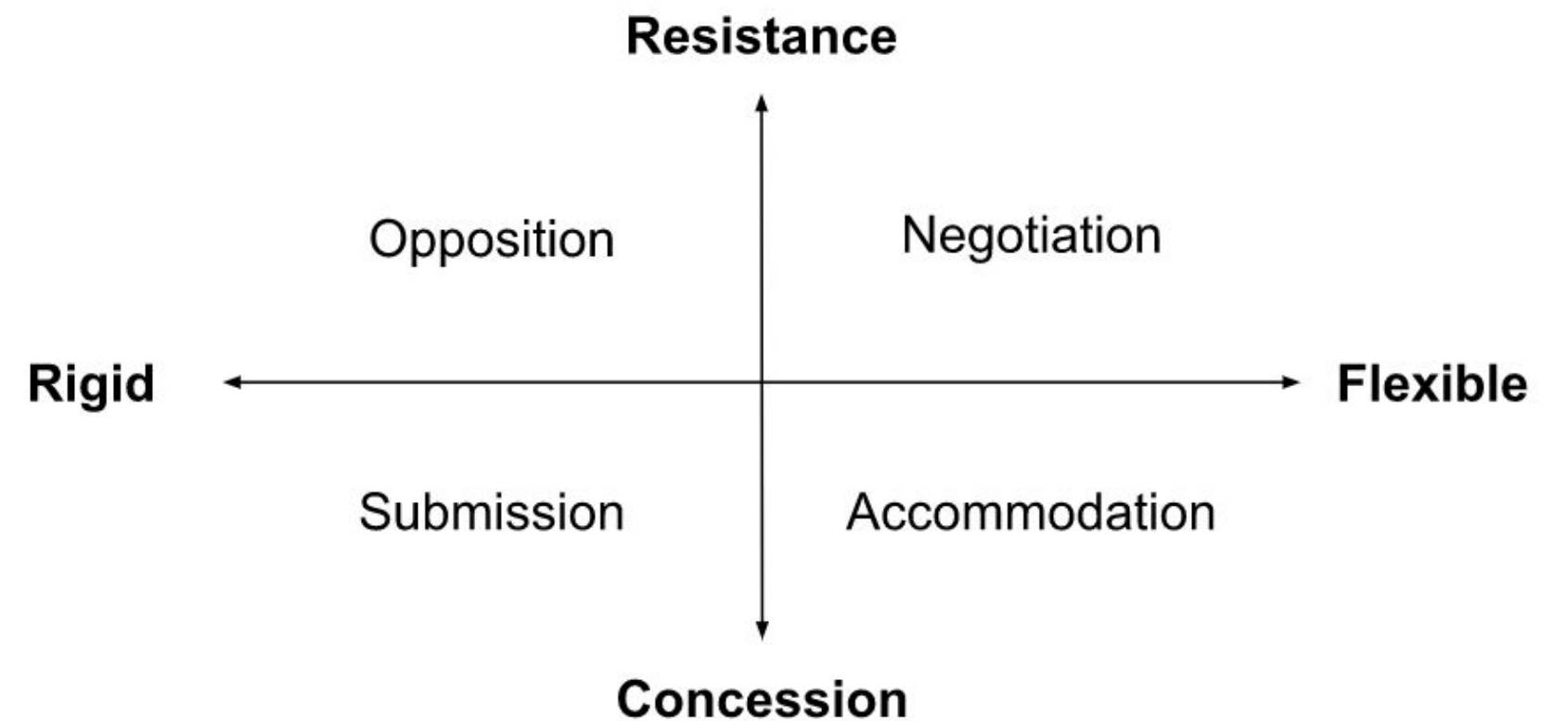
❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

- People differ in how they cope with stress
- Certain parental behaviors \Rightarrow stressful situations

Coping with overprotection

❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

➤ **Autonomy thwarted \Rightarrow 4 coping strategies:**

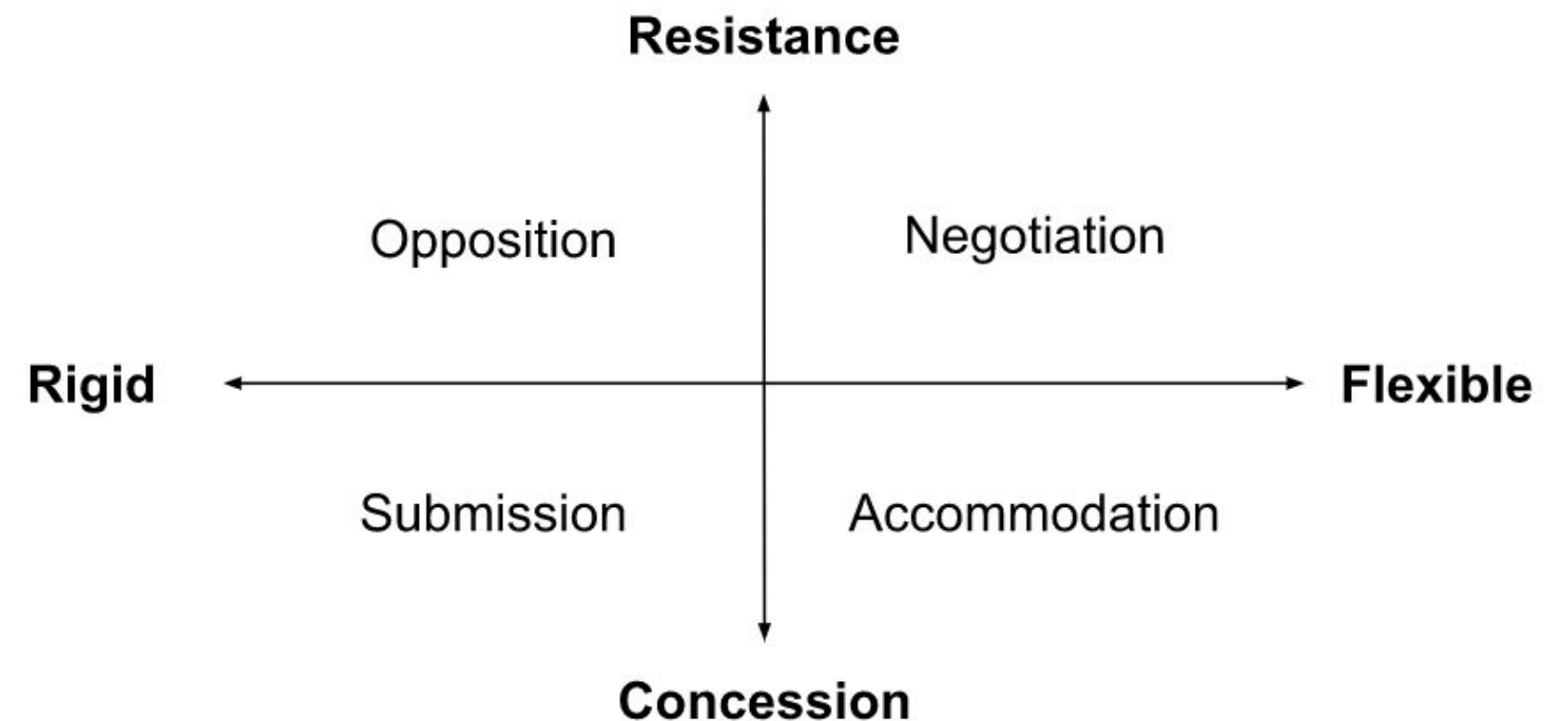


Coping with overprotection

❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

➤ **Autonomy thwarted \Rightarrow 4 coping strategies:**

- **Opposition**

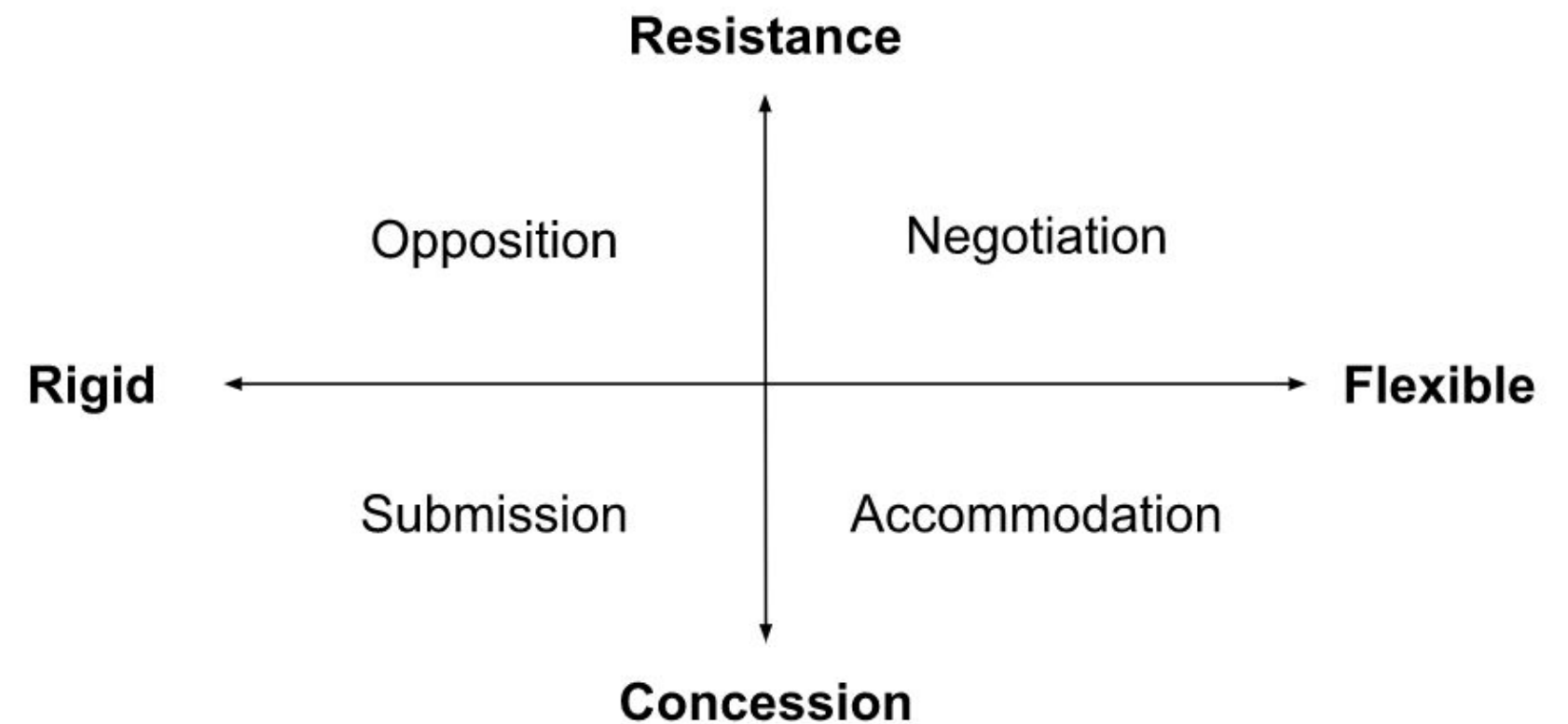


Coping with overprotection

❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

➤ **Autonomy thwarted \Rightarrow 4 coping strategies:**

- **Opposition**
- **Submission**

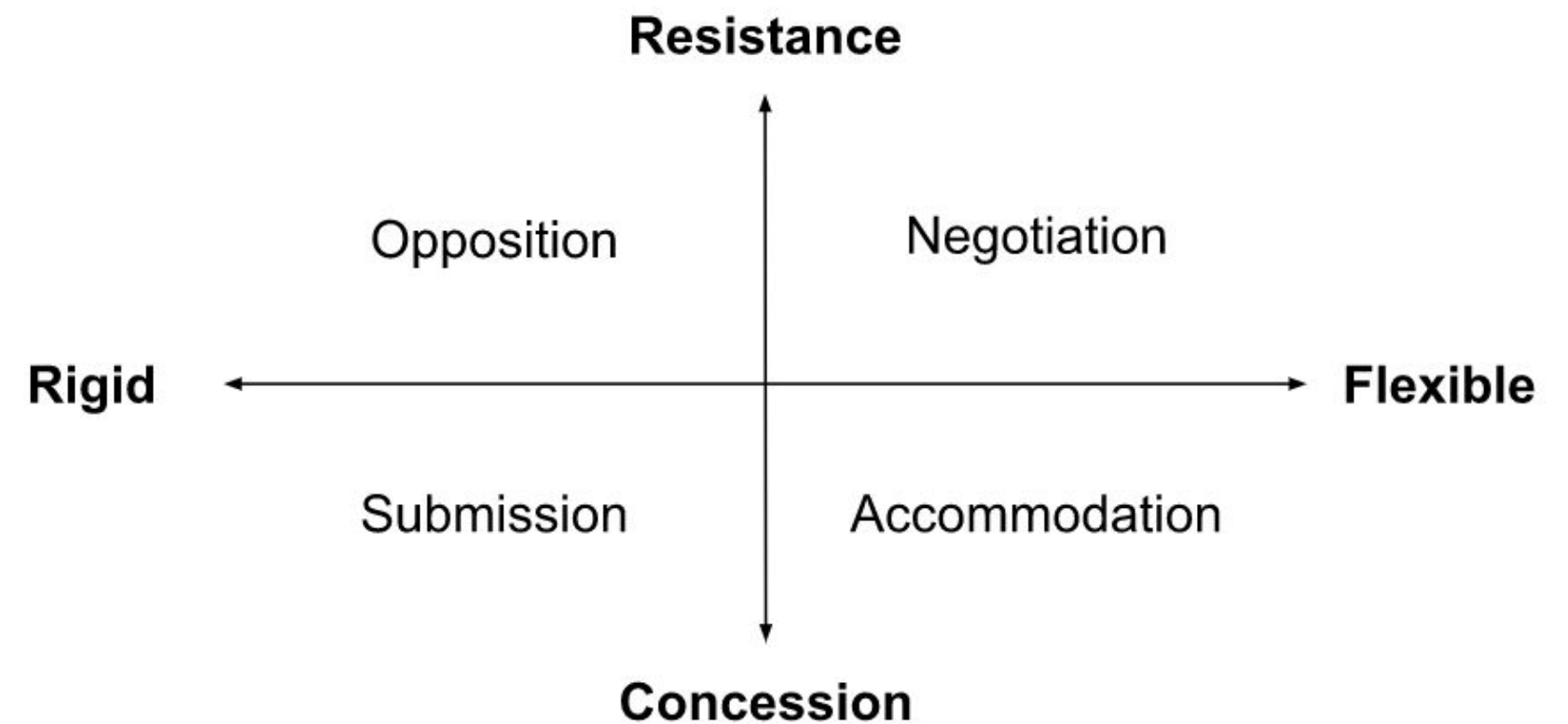


Coping with overprotection

❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

➤ **Autonomy thwarted ⇒ 4 coping strategies:**

- **Opposition**
- **Submission**
- **Negotiation**

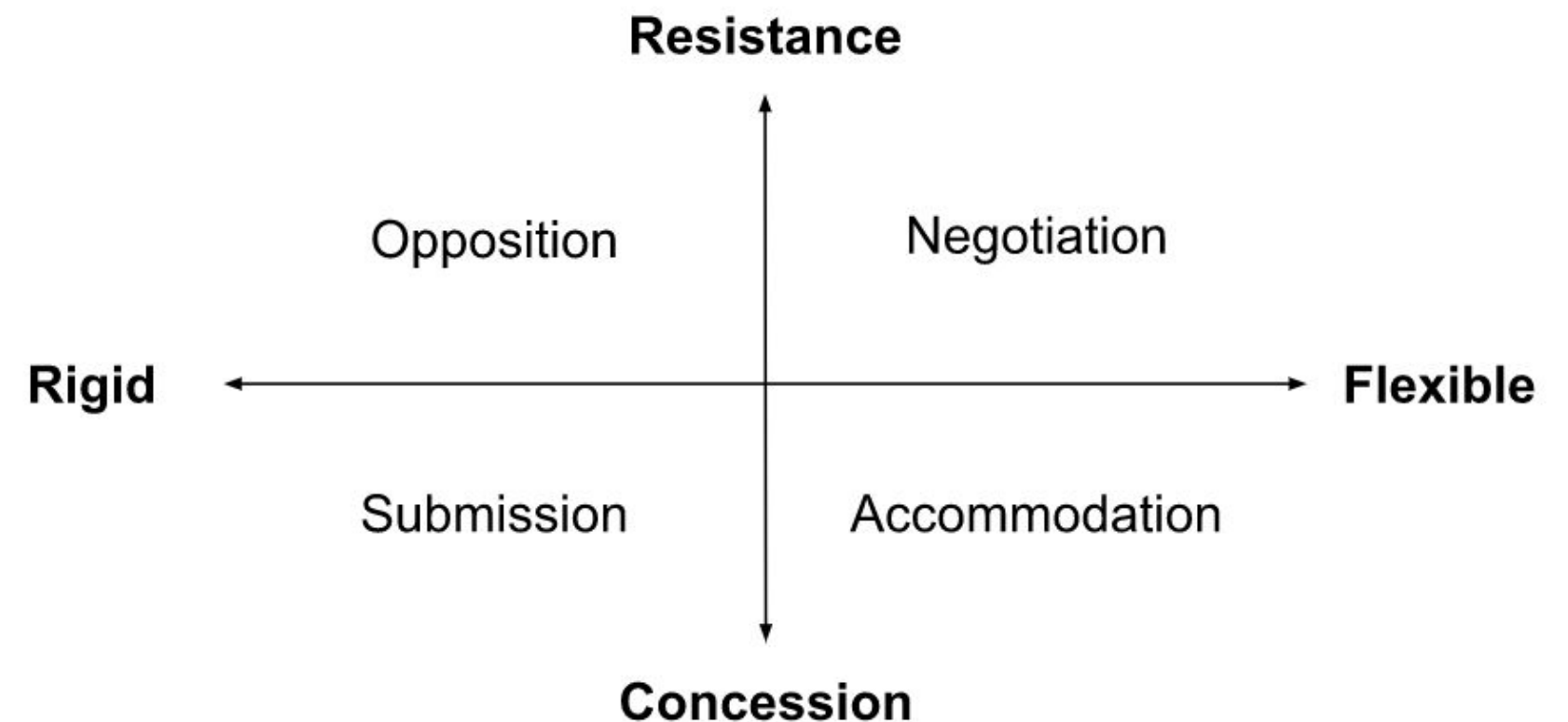


Coping with overprotection

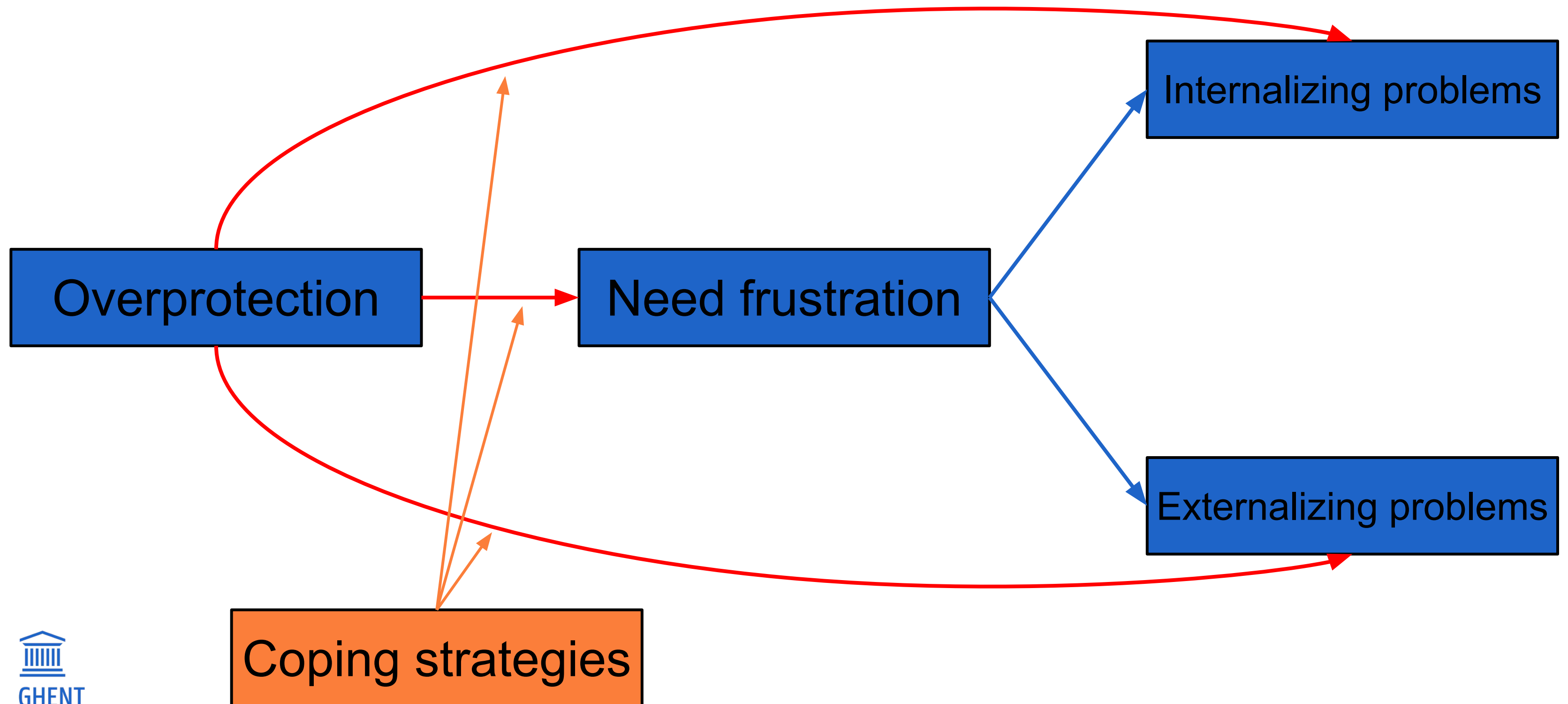
❖ **Skinner and Edge (2002):**

➤ **Autonomy thwarted ⇒ 4 coping strategies:**

- **Opposition**
- **Submission**
- **Negotiation**
- **Accommodation**



Moderated mediation model



Coping with parenting

- ❖ **Coping strategies modify to some extent...**
 - Relationship between **overprotective parenting** and both internalizing and externalizing problems (Flamant, Boncquet, et al., 2022):
 - Submission ⇒ clearest effect: maladaptive
 - Negotiation ⇒ to some extent adaptive
 - Accommodation ⇒ mixed effects
 - Opposition ⇒ no effect

Current study

❖ However, ...

➤ Previous studies:

- Coping as separate strategies

➤ These moderating effects:

- Do not arise from one particular strategies
- **But a combination of coping strategies**

(Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2016)

➤ As far as we know:

- No previous research on **profiles of coping with parenting**

❖ Therefore, ...

➤ Current study: **person-centered approach**

Current study

- ❖ **Goal 1: different types of coping profiles that adolescents have with regard to overprotection**
- ❖ **Goal 2: whether and how coping profiles play a moderating role in associations of overprotection**

The Current Study

Method

❖ Data (N = 509):

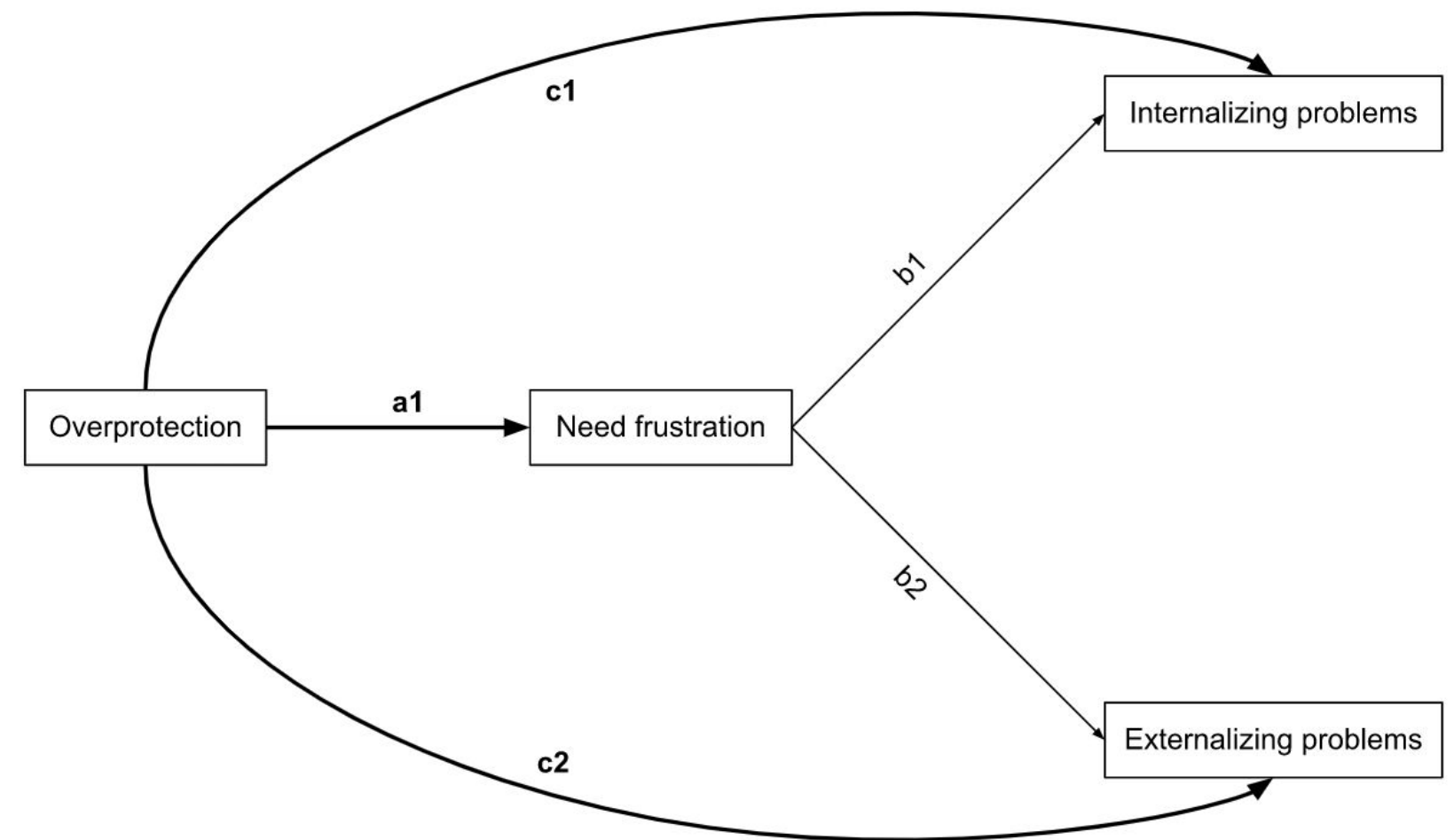
- Belgian adolescents (Dutch)
- 2 subsamples:
 - Flamant, Boncquet, et al. (2022)
 - Data master's students
- Mean age = 17.2 years (SD = 0.91)
- Female = 48.8%; male = 42.4%; X = 8.8 %
- Most followed an academic track (70.7%)
- Intact families = 68.2%

1) 4 coping strategies:

- Hierarchical K-Mean Cluster Analysis
(Waterschoot et al., 2022)

2) Mediation model between clusters:

- Multiple group analysis



Results

Hierarchical K-Mean Cluster Analysis

❖ Good clustering tendency:

- Hopkins statistic = .65 (>.50)

❖ Number of clusters

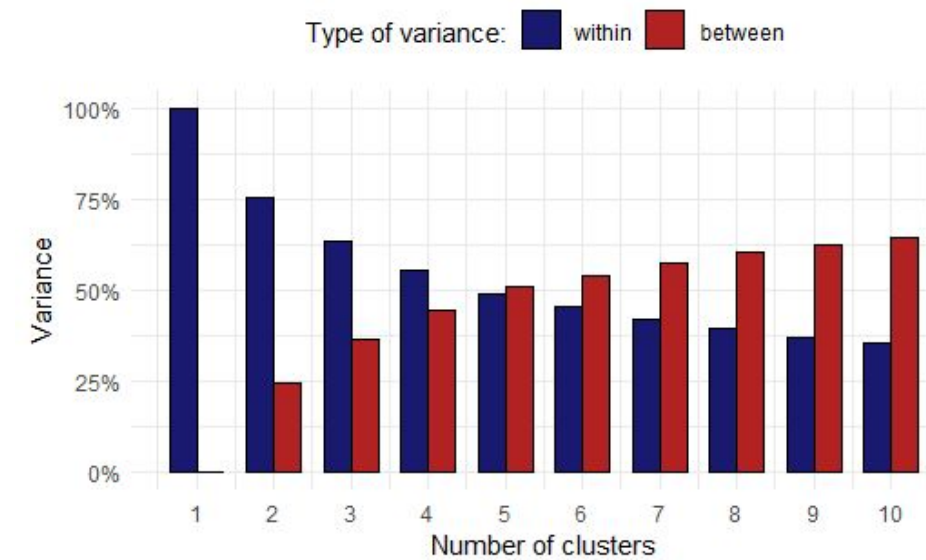
- Validation methods:

- 5 clusters

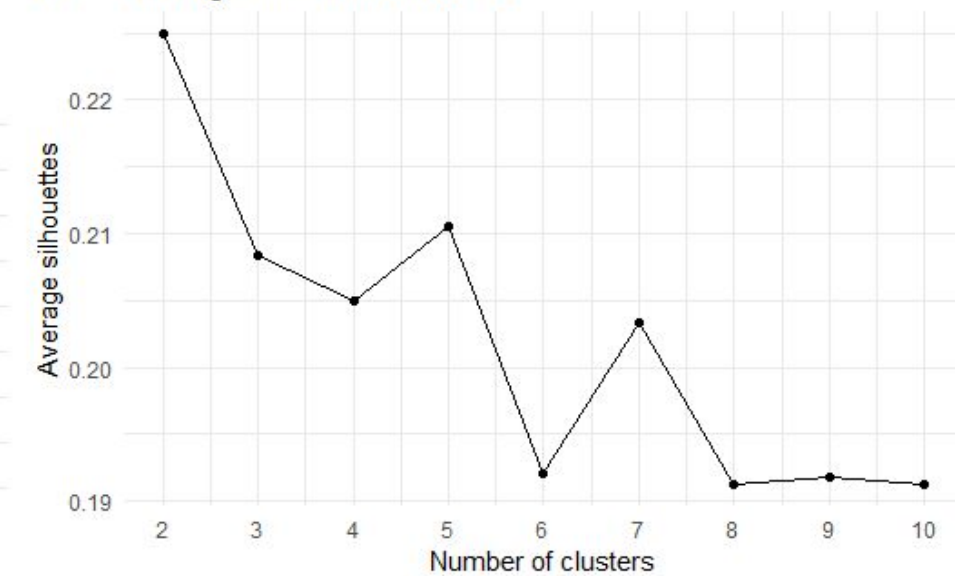
- Highest cluster stability:

- 5 clusters

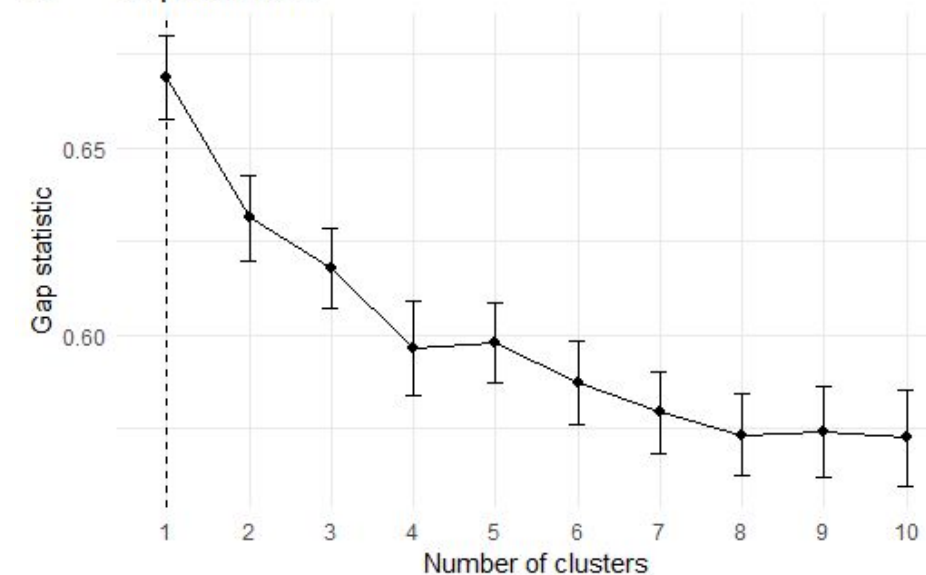
A Elbow method



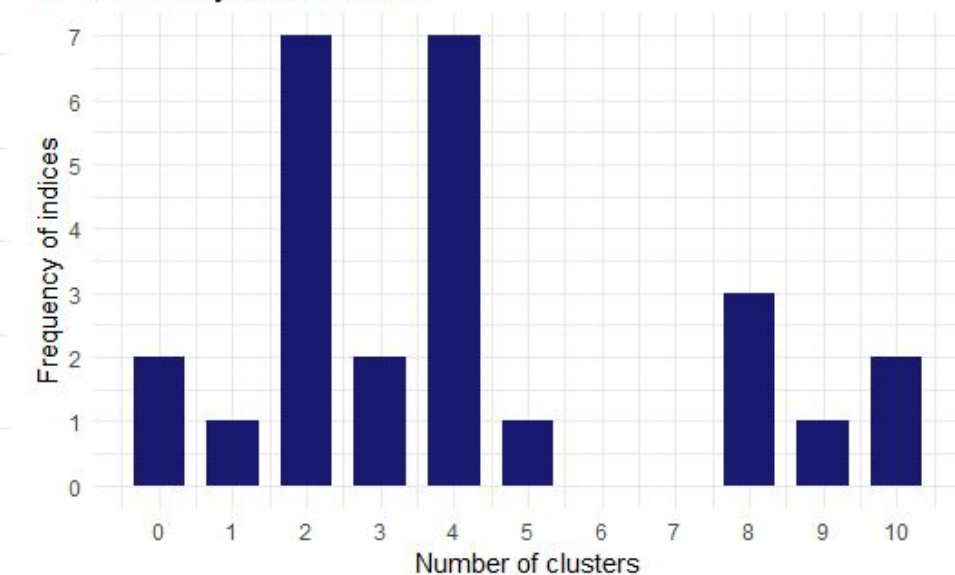
B Average Silhouette method



C Gap statistics

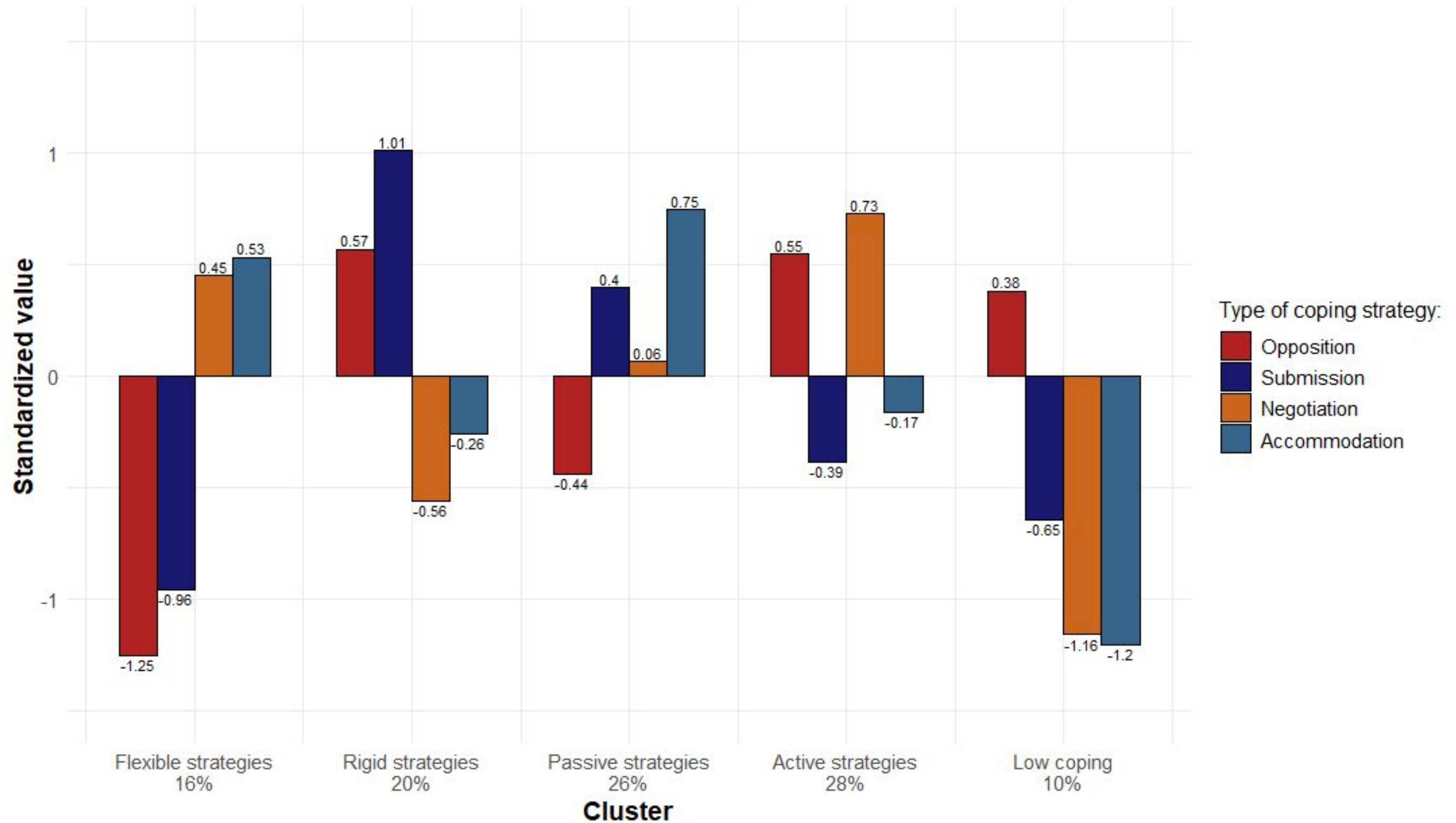


D Summary of 30 indices



Hierarchical K-Mean Cluster Analysis

❖ 5 cluster solution:



Hierarchical K-Mean Cluster Analysis

Table 2. Univariate differences in maternal overprotection, need frustration, internalizing, and externalizing problems between clusters.

Variables	Clusters					<i>F</i> (<i>df1</i> , <i>df2</i>)	Partial η^2
	Flexible strategies	Rigid strategies	Passive strategies	Active strategies	Low coping		
Maternal overprotection	1.95 ^a (.52)	2.76 ^c (.67)	2.42 ^b (.54)	2.29 ^b (.69)	2.43 ^b (.67)	16.36***	.13
Psychological need frustration	2.05 ^a (.60)	2.86 ^c (.76)	2.42 ^b (.70)	2.38 ^b (.62)	2.52 ^b (.81)	12.28***	.10
Internalizing problems	1.91 ^a (.58)	2.37 ^c (.48)	2.17 ^b (.56)	2.18 ^b (.58)	2.22 ^{bc} (.75)	5.70***	.05
Externalizing problems	1.59 ^a (.62)	2.15 ^b (.82)	1.66 ^a (.56)	1.62 ^a (.41)	1.60 ^a (.40)	11.56***	.10

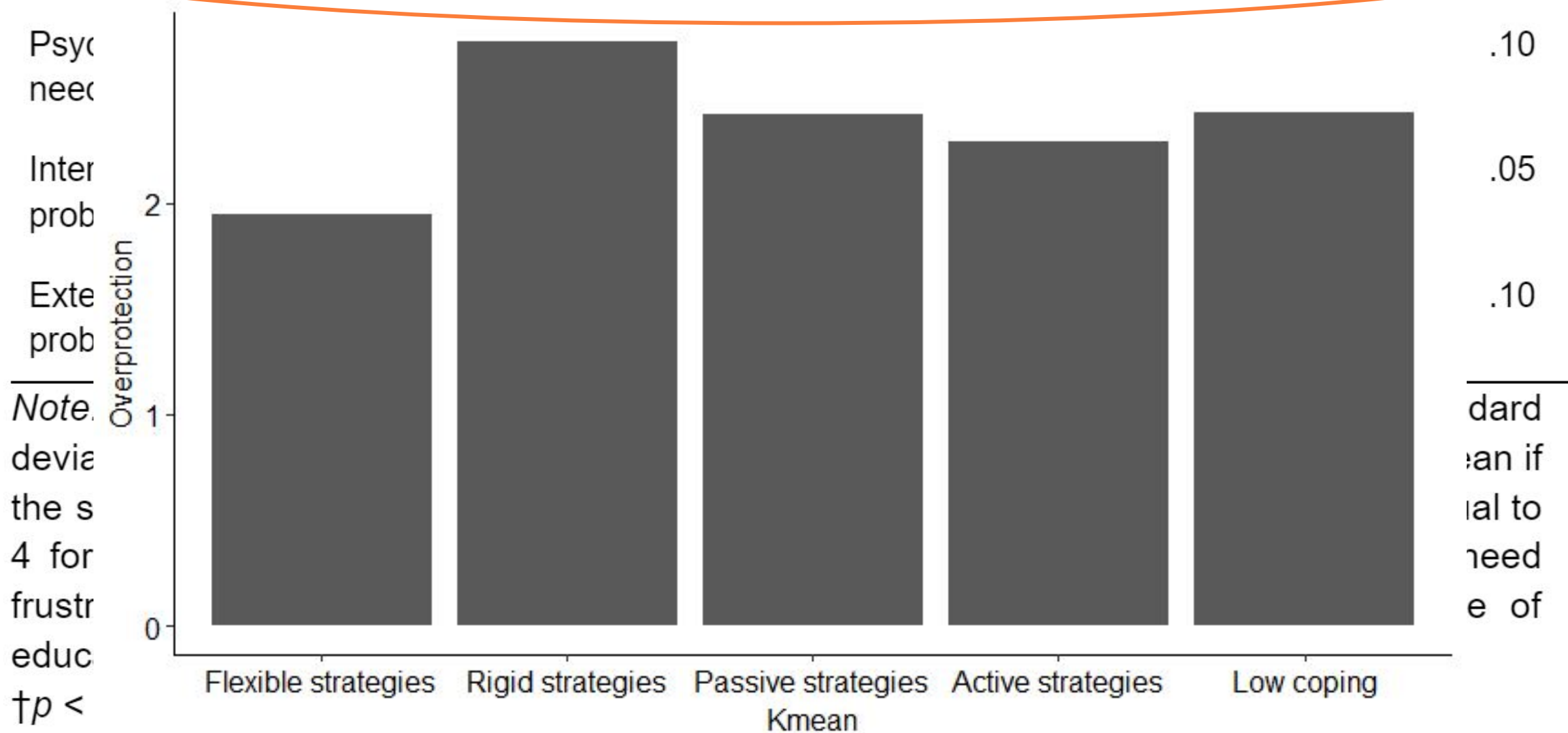
Note. The mean scores of the variables for each cluster are shown with the standard deviations in parentheses. One mean is significantly different ($p < .05$) from another mean if the superscript does not contain the same letter (a, b, c). For the *F* Statistics, *df1* is equal to 4 for each variable, and *df2* is equal to 427, 419, 409, and 401 for overprotection, need frustration, internalizing, and externalizing problems, respectively. Gender and type of education were controlled for.

† $p < .10$, * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

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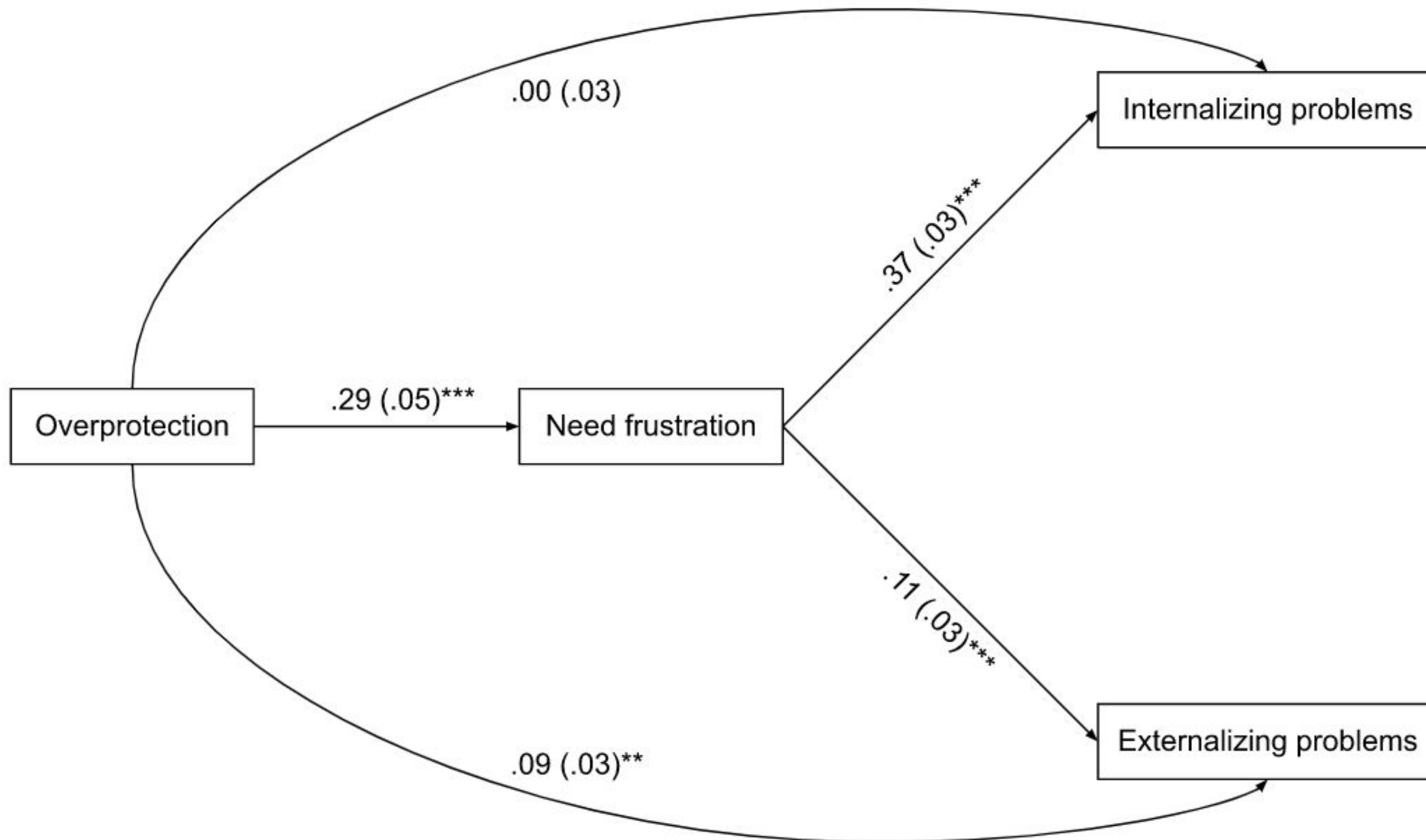


Note:
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SEM (baseline mediation model)

Figure 5. The baseline mediation model.

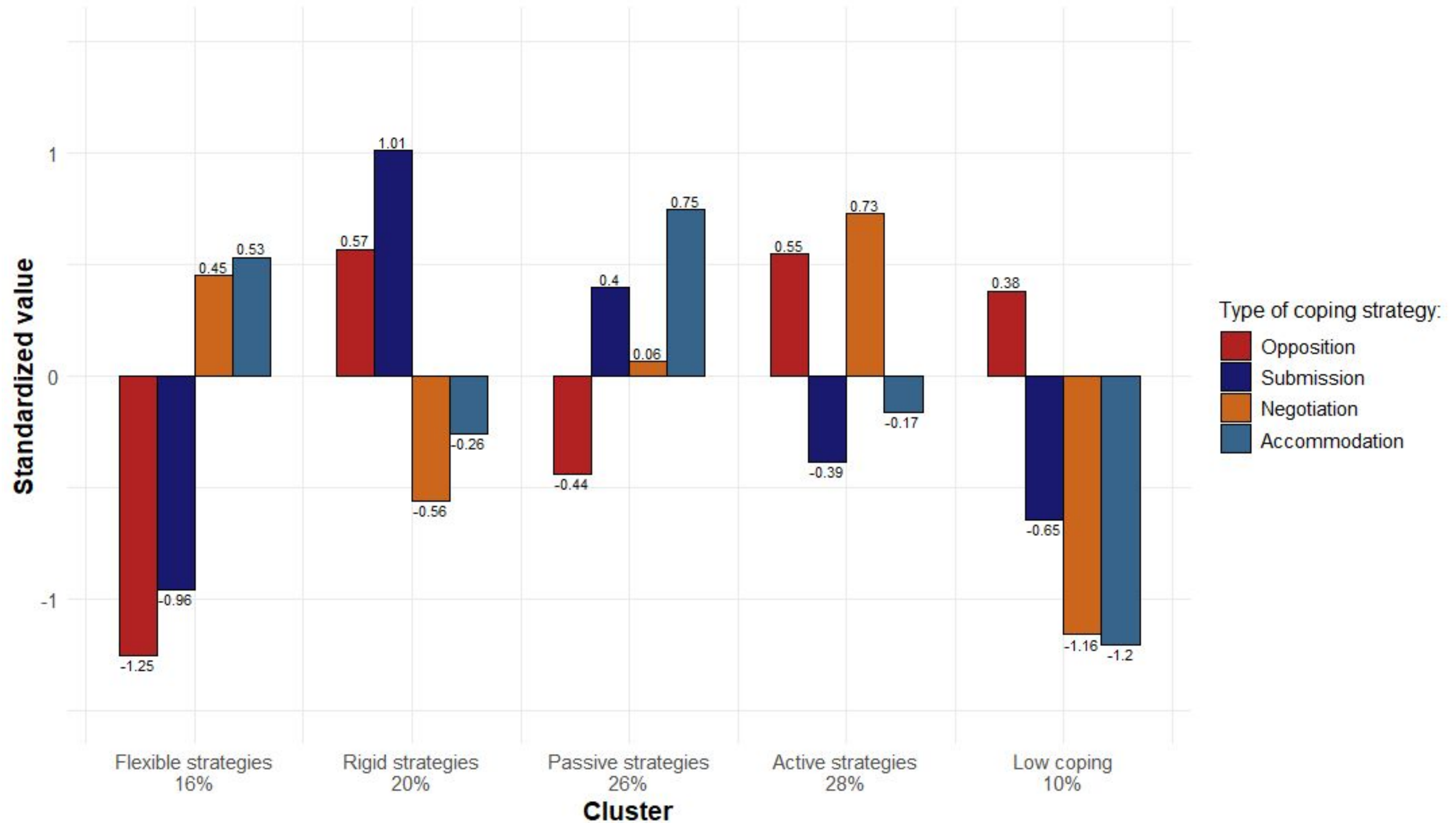


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Multiple Group Analysis

❖ 5 cluster solution:



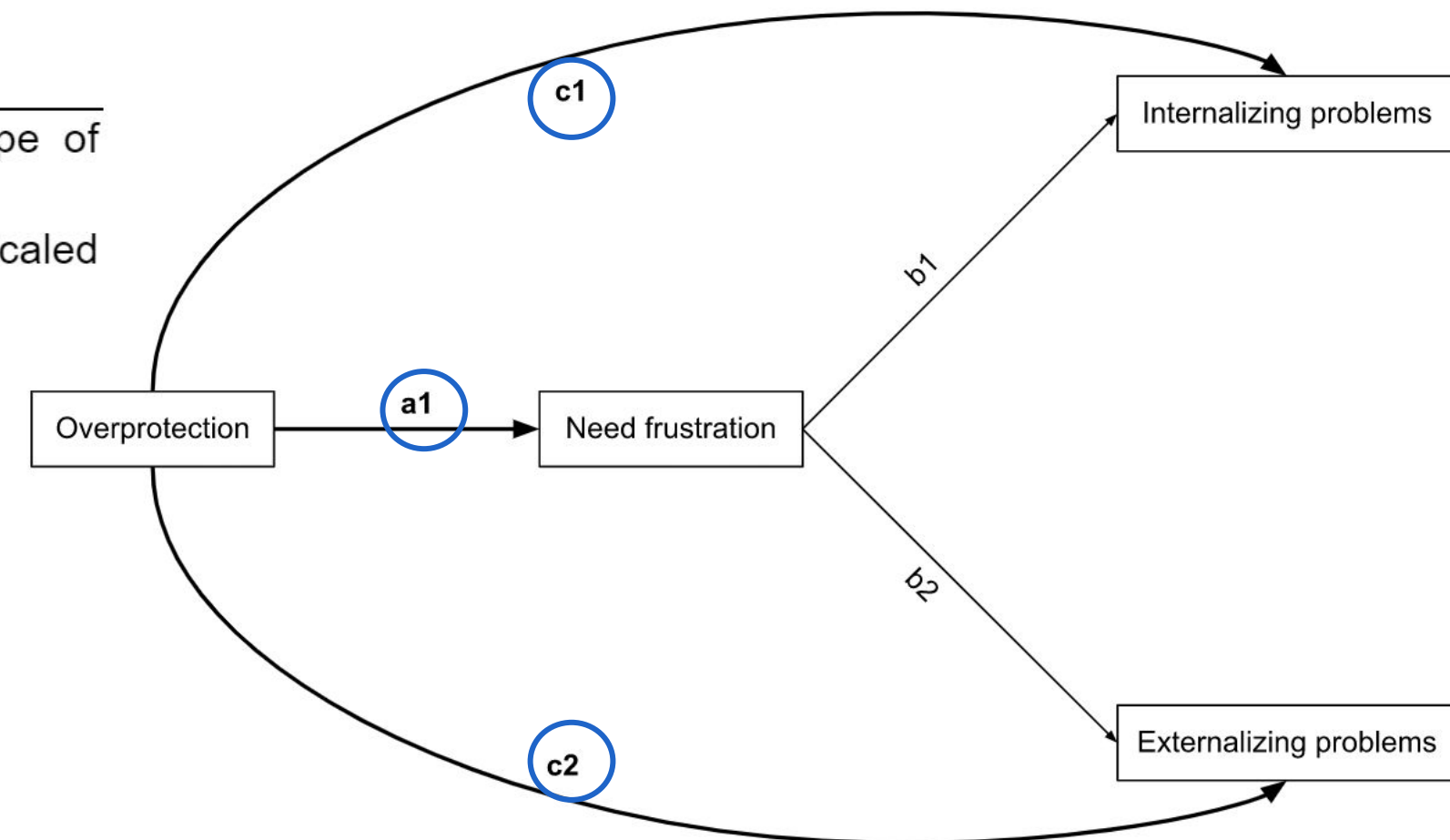
Multiple Group Analysis

Table 3. Fit indices of each model in the multiple group analysis..

Models	Fit indices			
	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>
Fully unconstrained	64.193	40	0.917	0.083
Fully constrained*	94.466	52	0.855	0.096
Constrained a1*	75.875	44	0.891	0.090
Constrained c1*	75.859	44	0.891	0.090
Constrained c2	71.187	44	0.907	0.084

Note. The coefficients *a1*, *c1*, and *c2* are visualized in Figure 2. Gender and type of education were controlled for.

*Model significantly differs from the fully unconstrained model according to a Scaled Chi-Squared Difference Test and has a ΔCFI exceeding a cutoff of .01.



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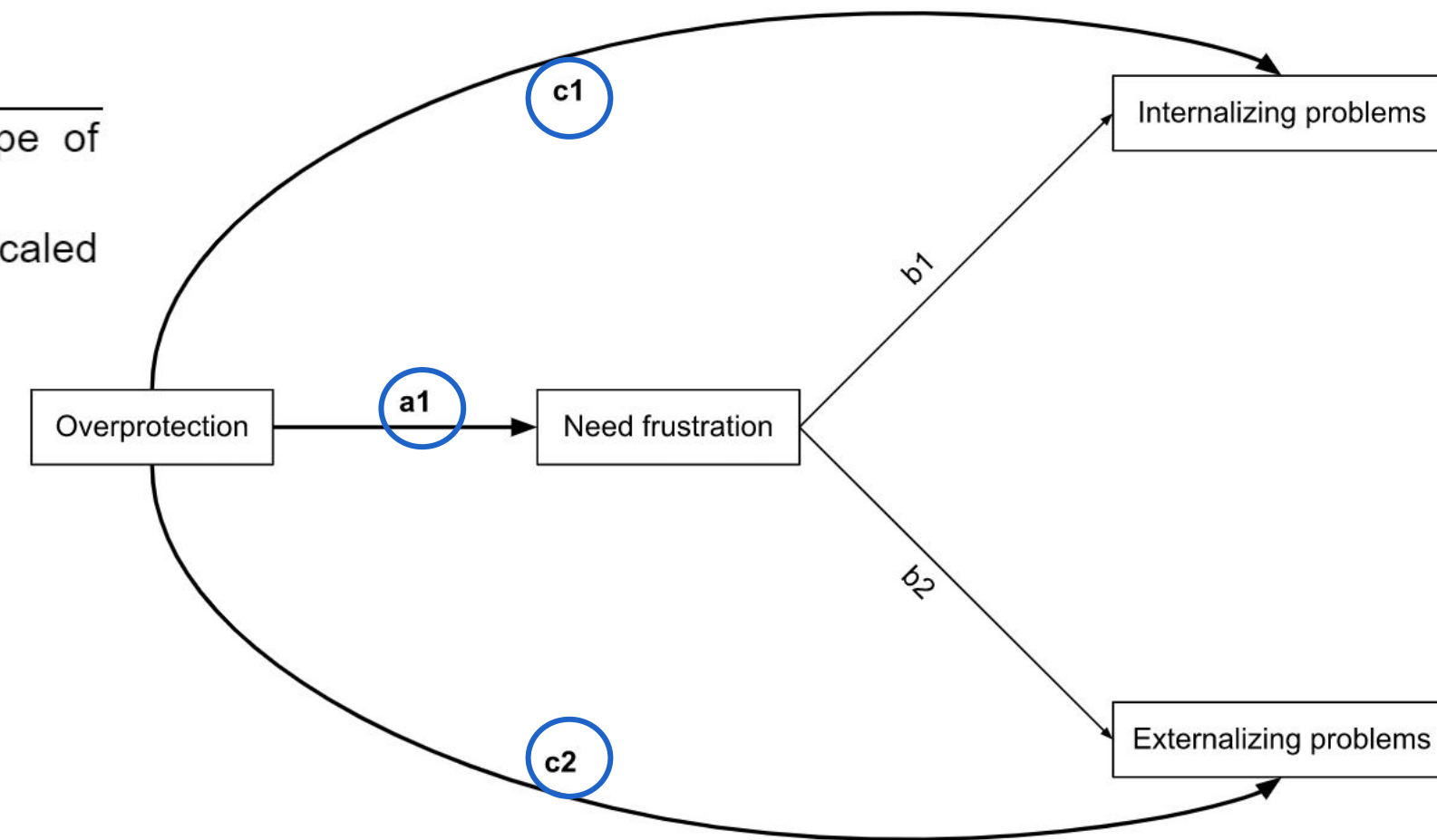
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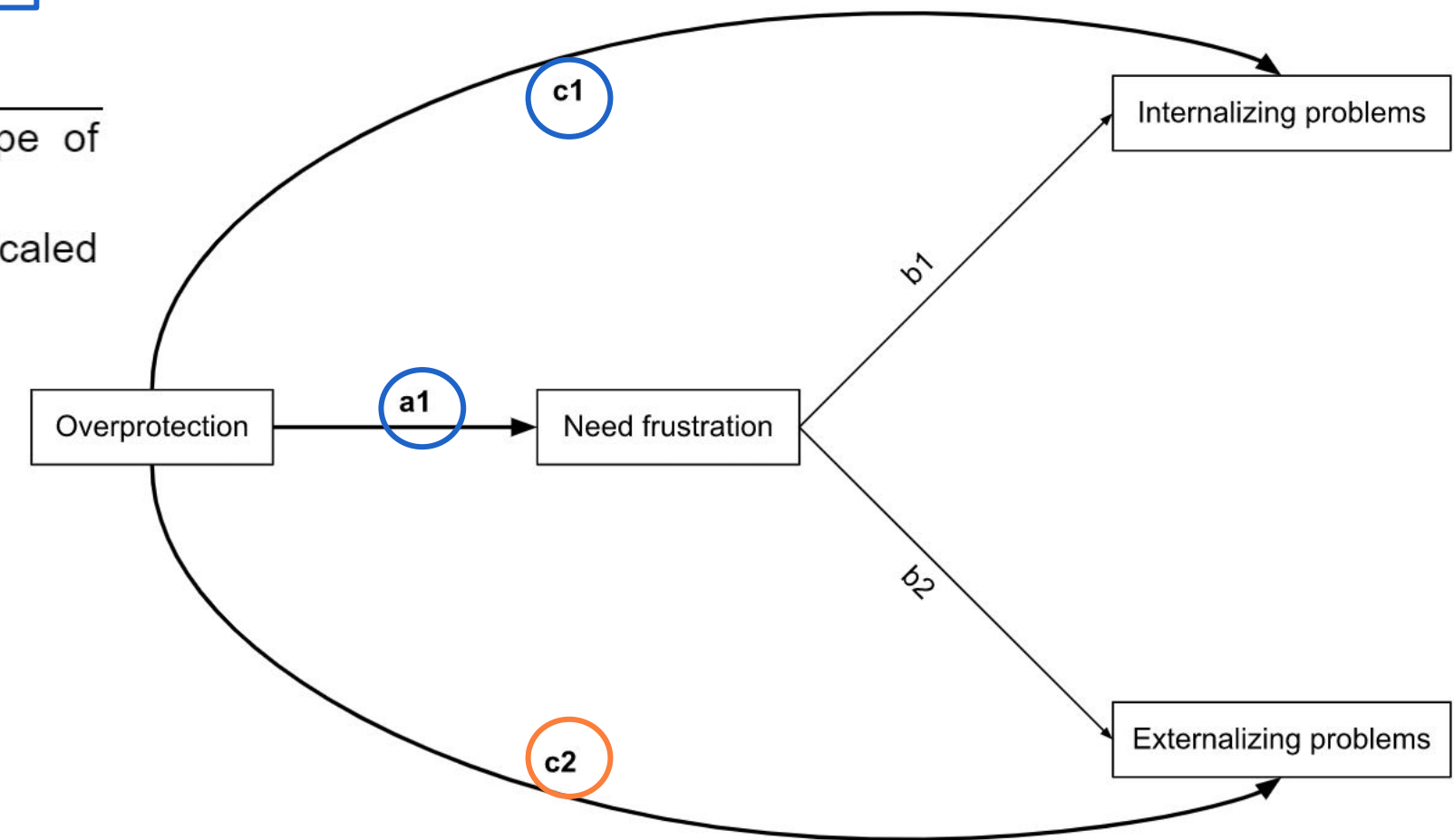
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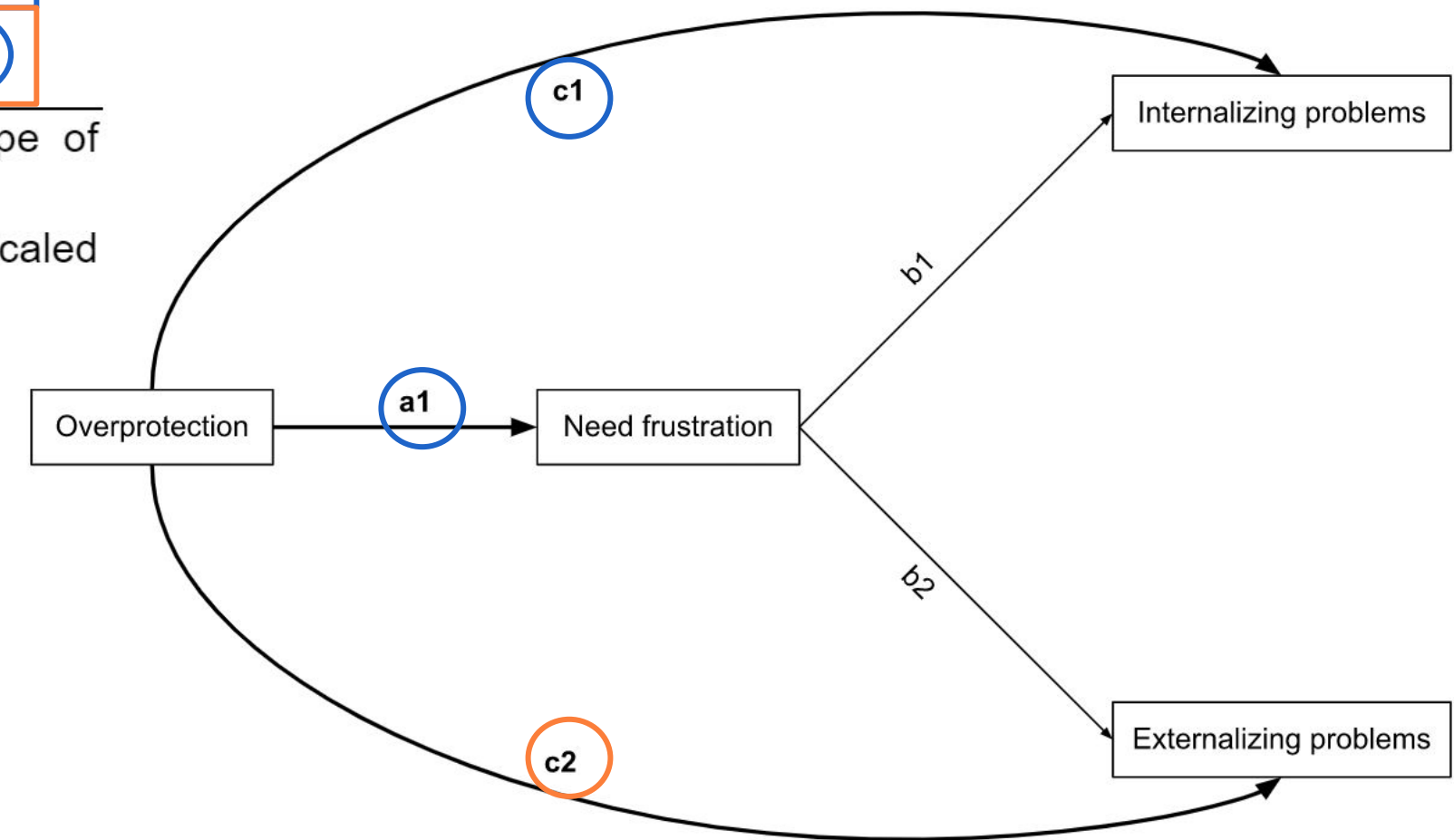
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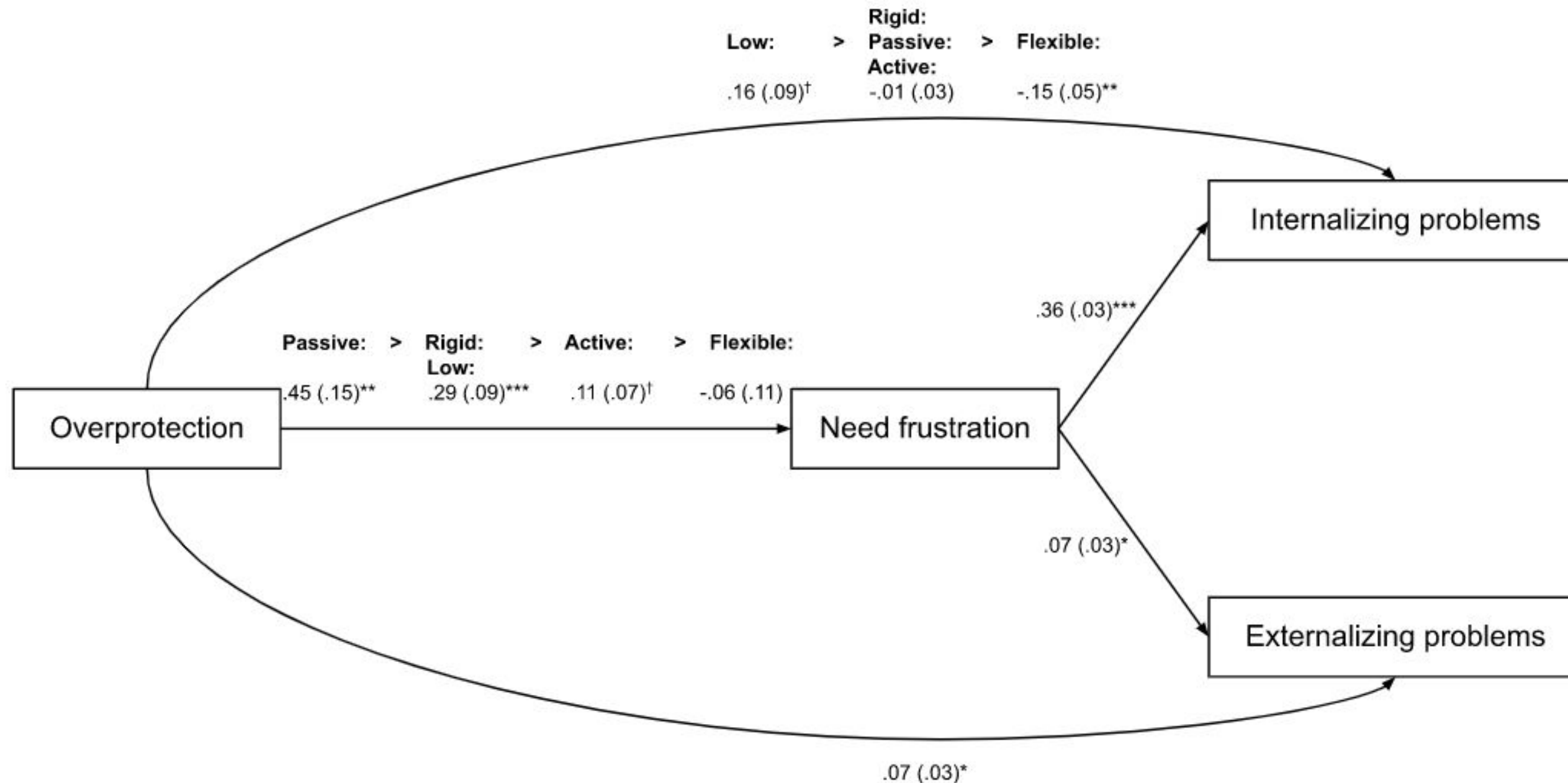


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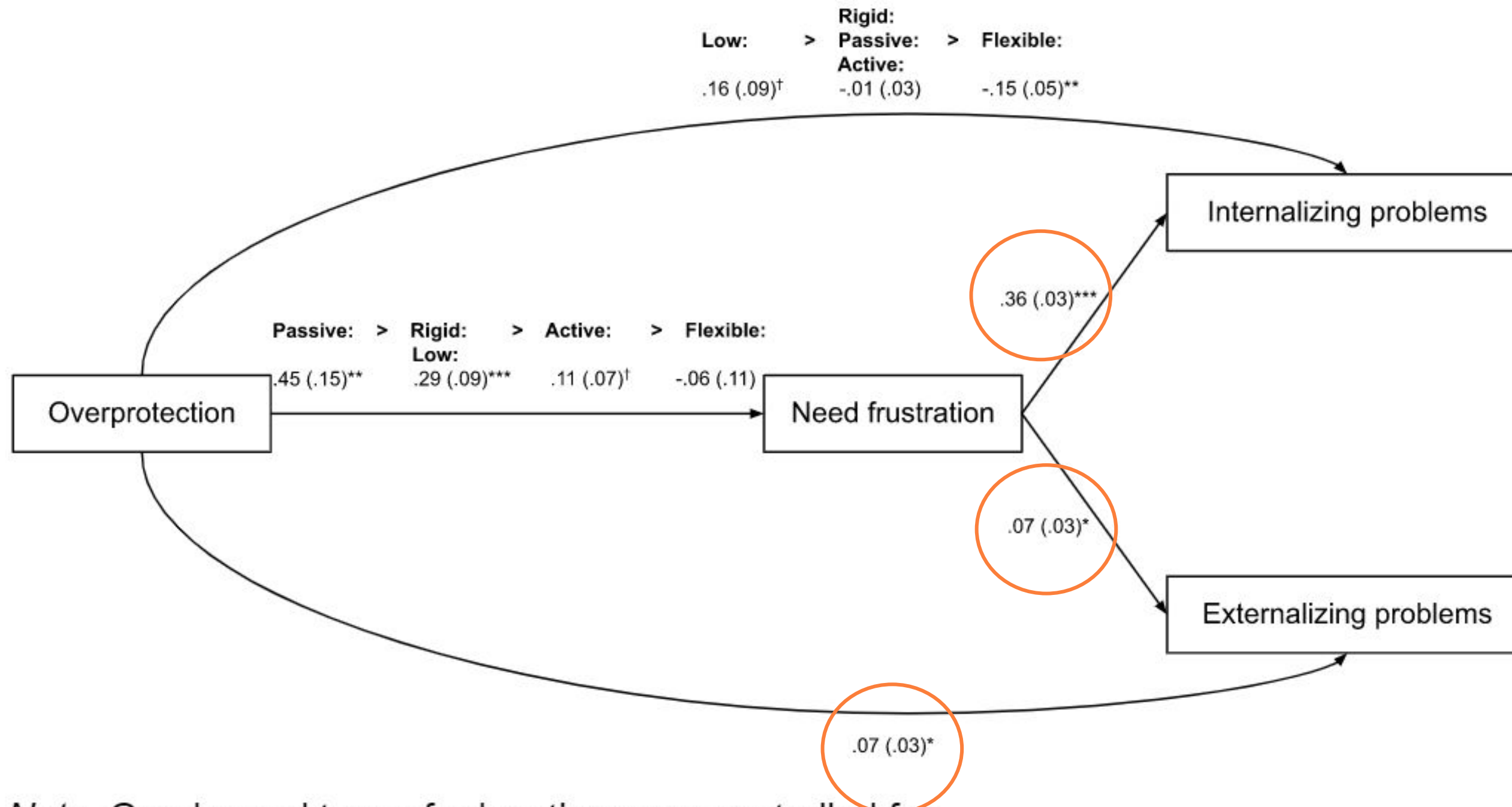
Figure 6. Best-fitting mediation model in the multiple group analysis with specified constraints between clusters in terms of coefficients $a1$ en $c1$ ($CFI = 0.913$, $RMSEA = 0.078$, $\chi^2(47) = 72.531$).



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Multiple Group Analysis

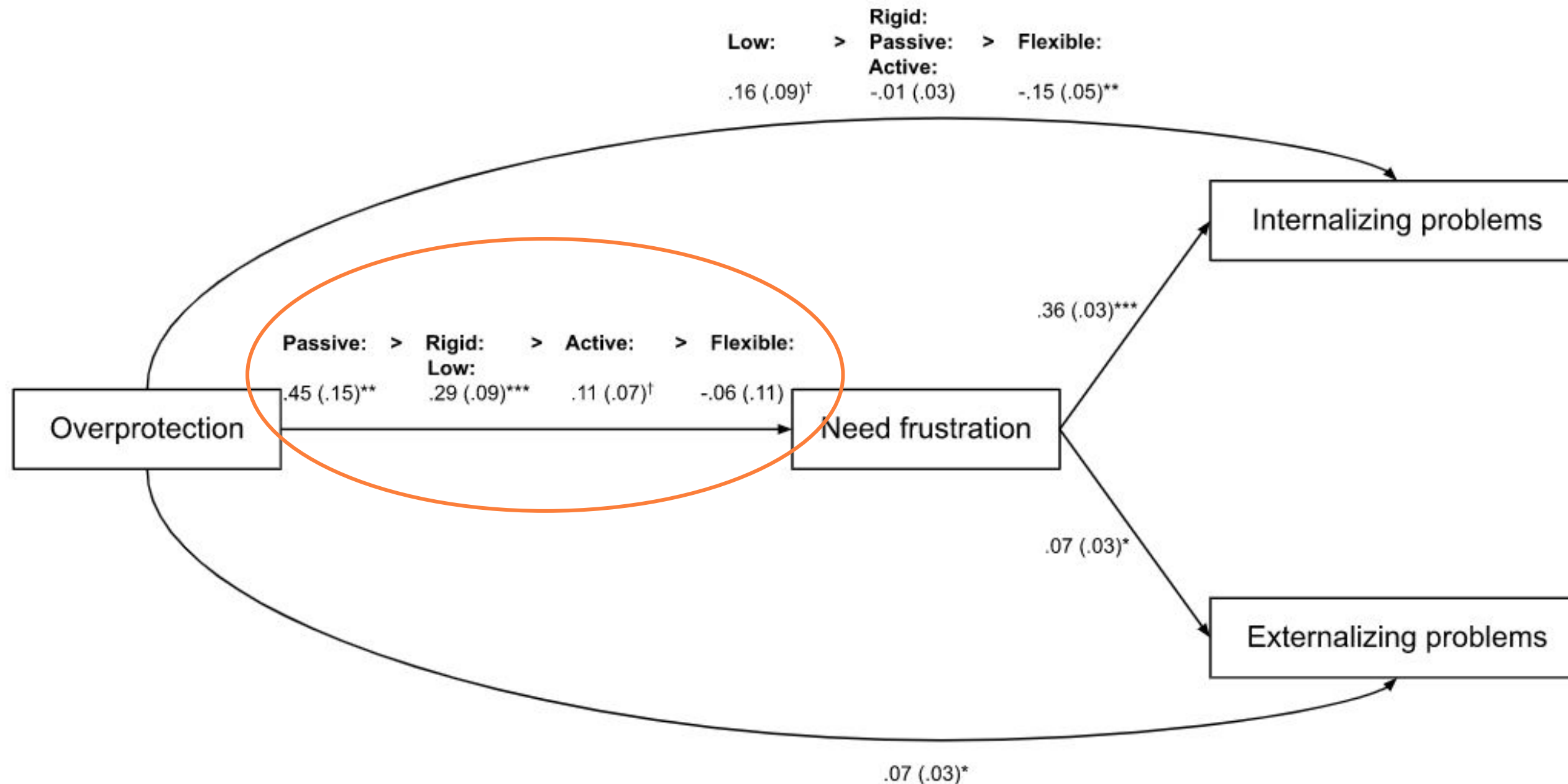
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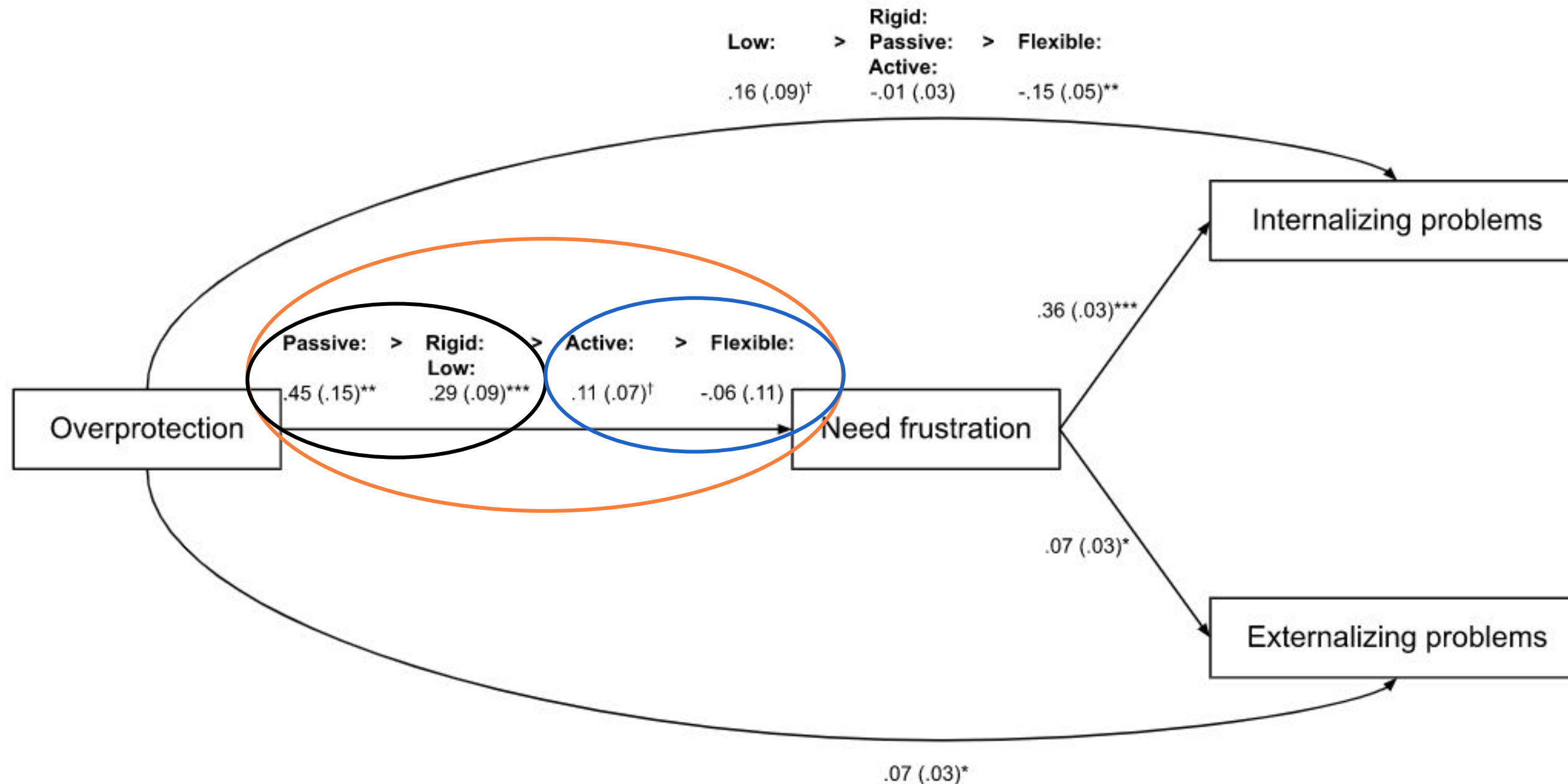
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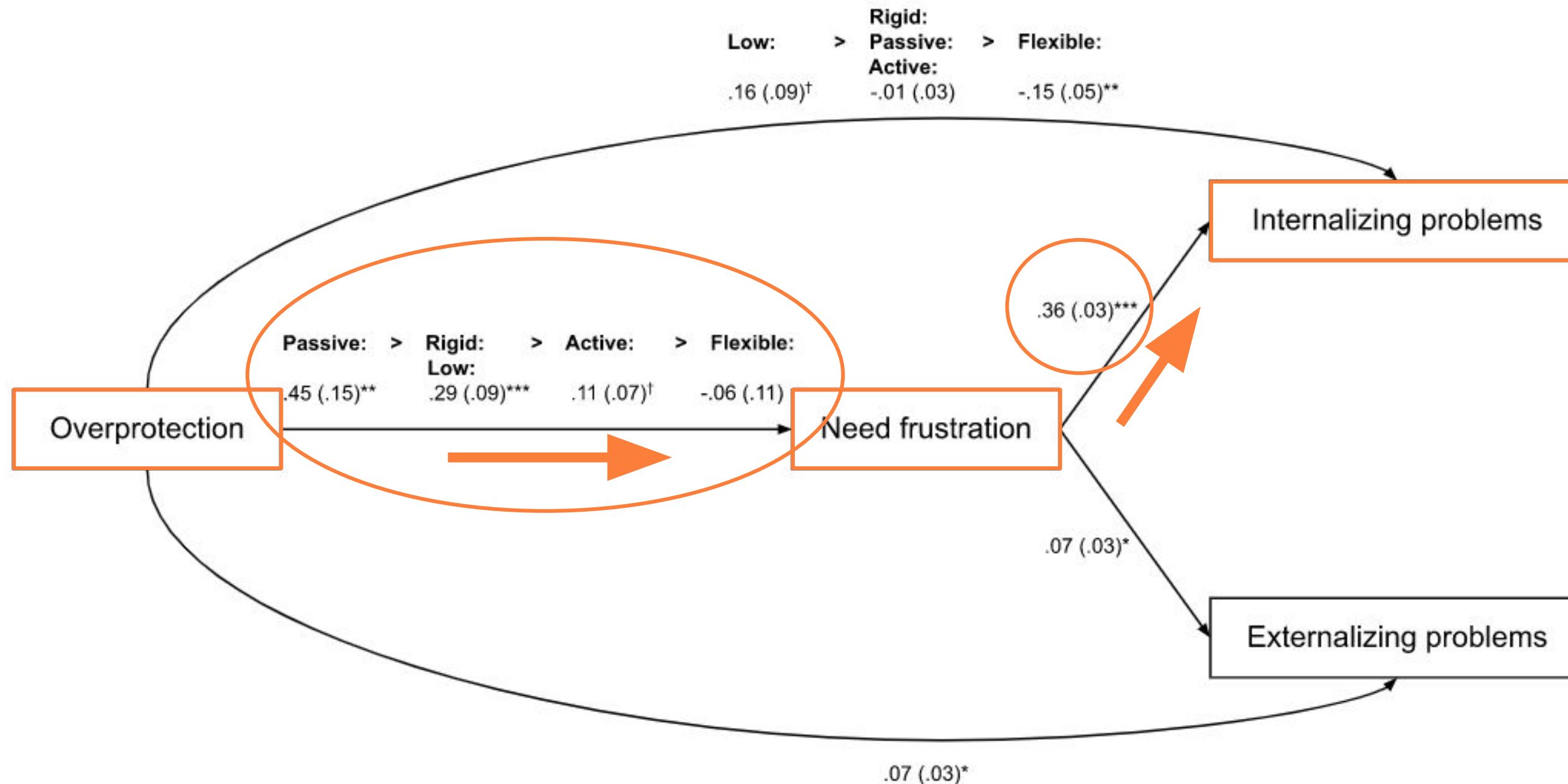
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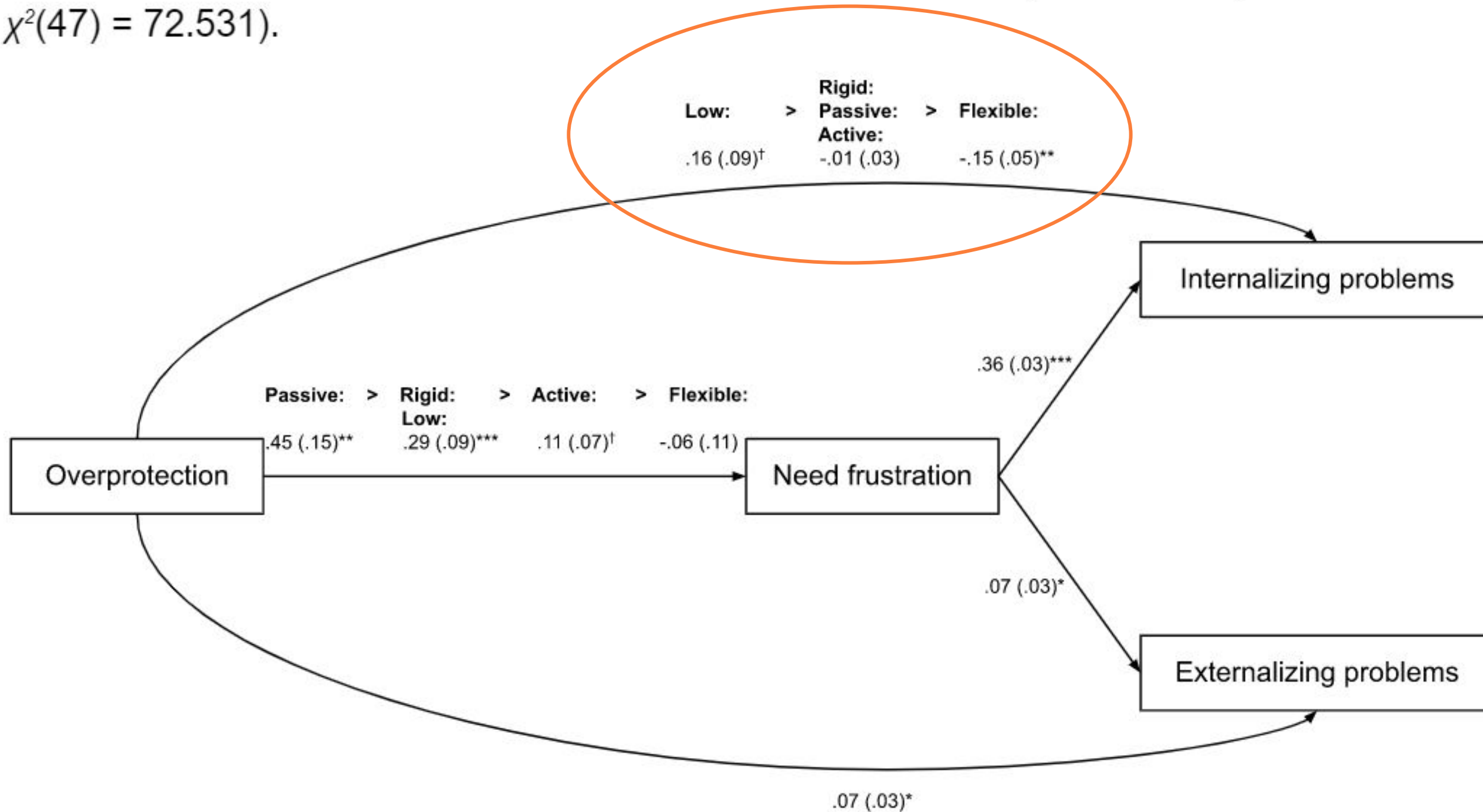
Multiple Group Analysis

Table 4. Indirect effects of overprotection on internalizing and externalizing problems through need frustration in each cluster for the best-fitting mediation model.

Cluster	Indirect effects					
	Internalizing problems			Externalizing problems		
	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> -value	Estimate	SE	<i>p</i> -value
Flexible strategies	-.02	.04	.597	.00	.01	.616
Rigid strategies	.10	.03	.001	.02	.01	.100
Passive strategies	.16	.05	.003	.03	.02	.144
Active strategies	.04	.02	.087	.01	.01	.194
Low coping	.10	.03	.001	.02	.01	.100

Multiple Group Analysis

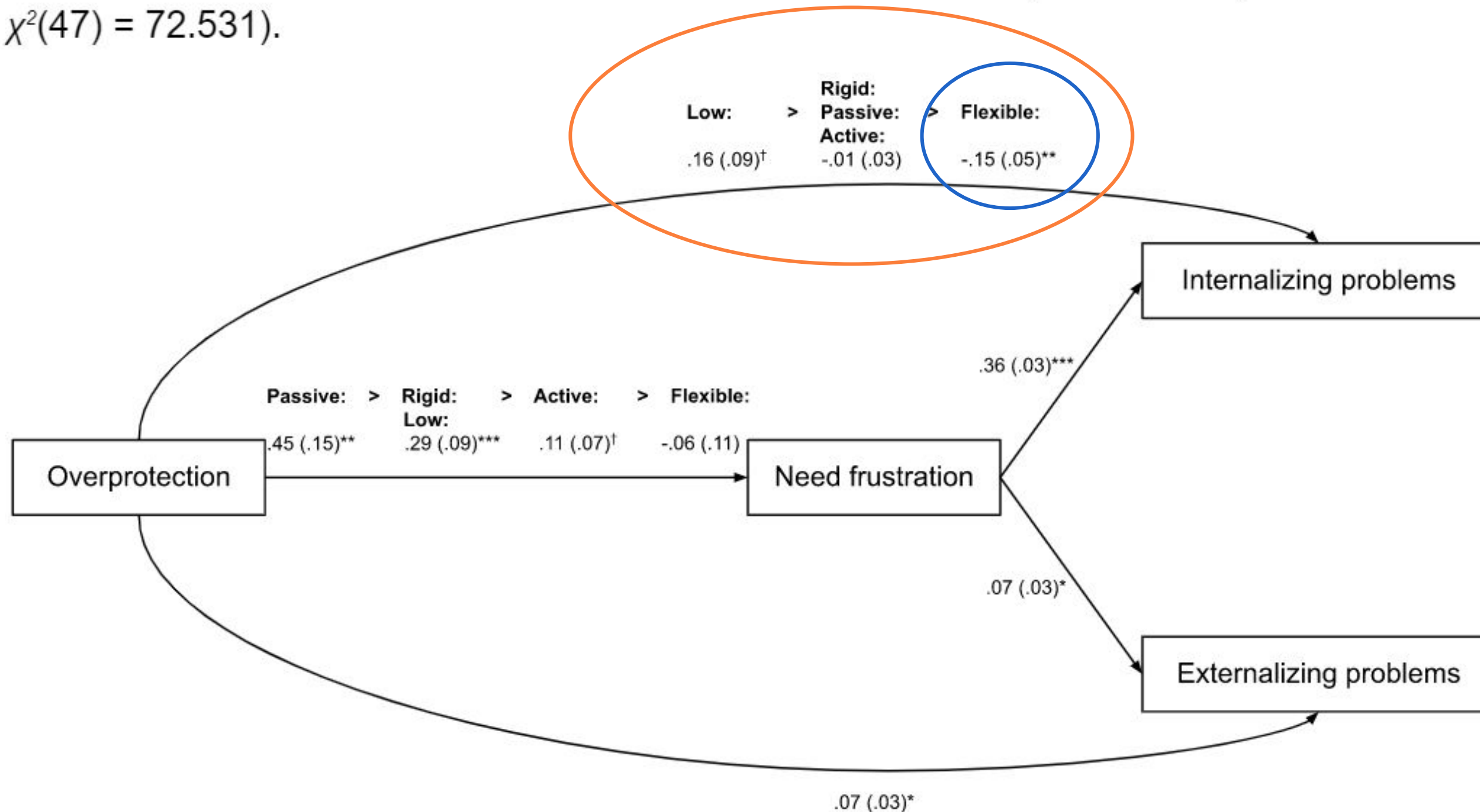
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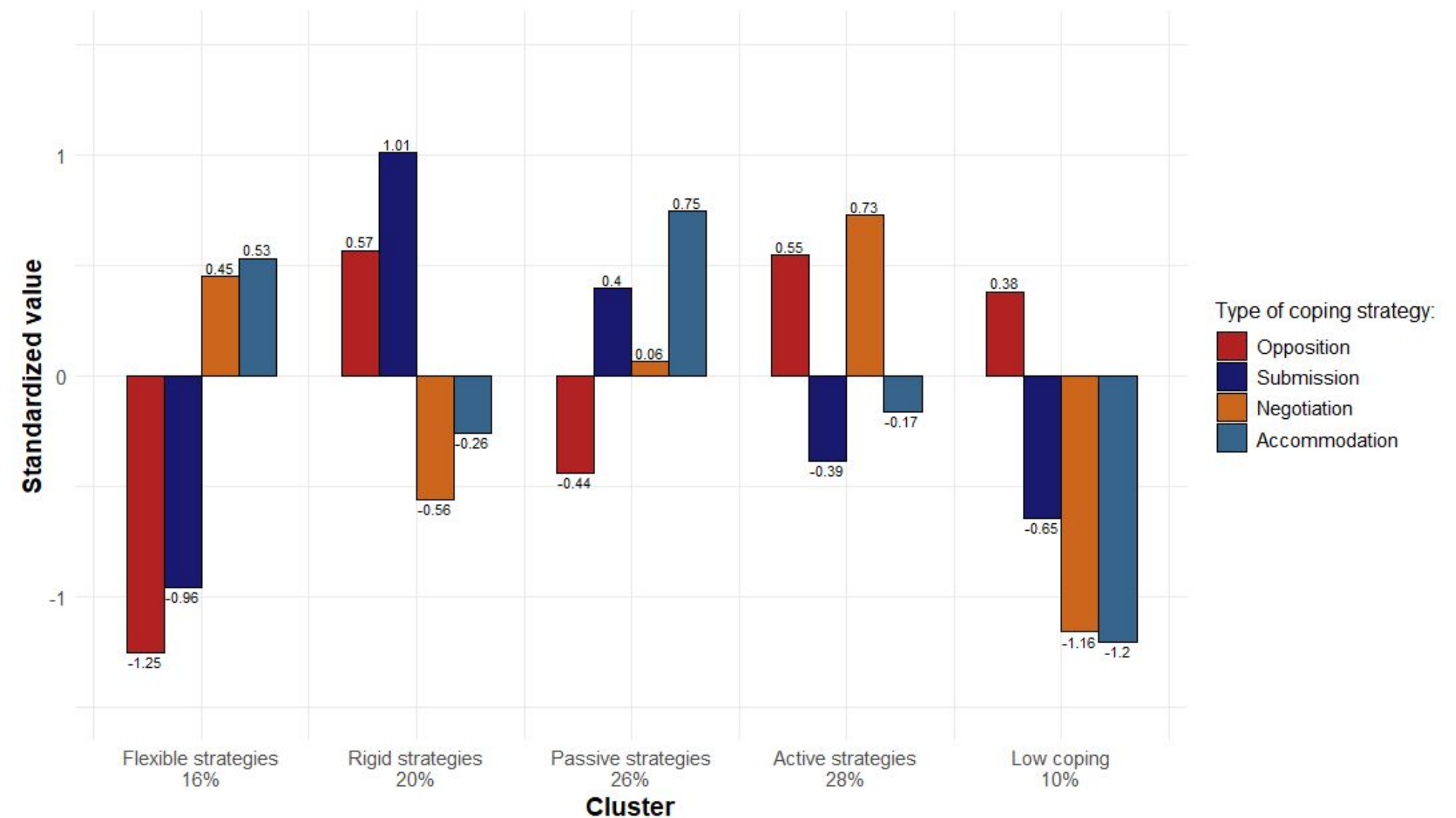
Discussion

Discussion

❖ Goal 1: different types of coping profiles that adolescents have with regard to overprotection

➤ 5 coping profiles:

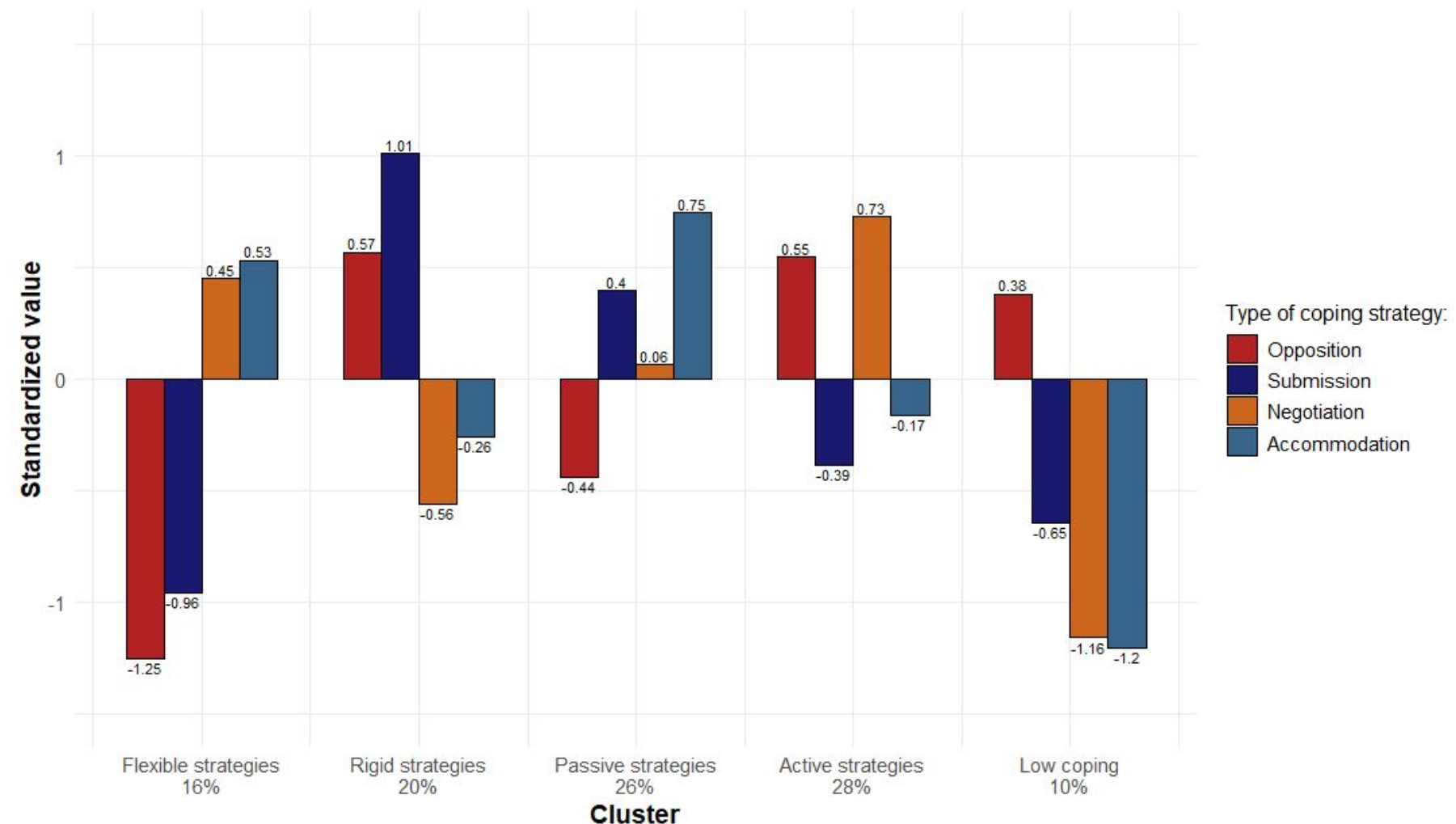
- Flexible strategies
- Rigid strategies
- Passive strategies
- Active strategies
- Low coping



Discussion

❖ 5 coping profiles:

- Similar profiles found by previous studies:
 - Coping with stressful situations (e.g., Doron et al., 2014)
 - Coping with peer exclusion (e.g., Titova et al., 2021)

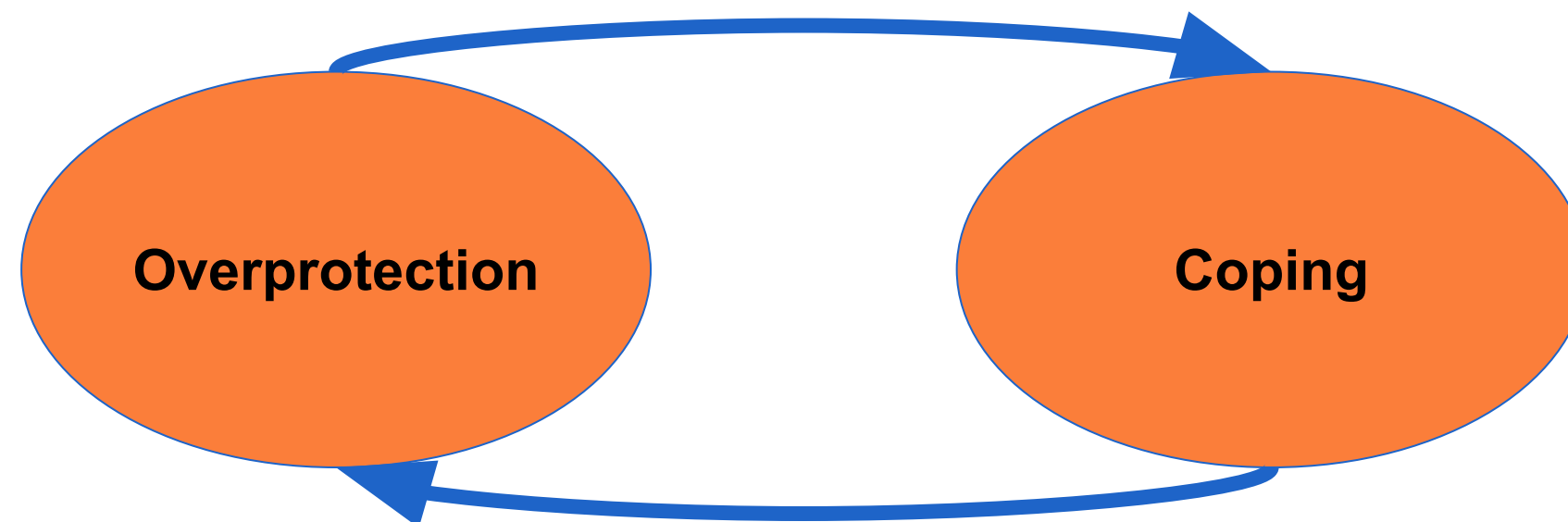


Discussion

- ❖ **Goal 2: whether and how coping profiles play a moderating role in associations of overprotection**
 - Adolescents with different coping profiles are differently impacted by maternal overprotection:
 - Need frustration
 - Internalizing problems

Discussion

- ❖ **Good news: buffer!**
 - **Flexible strategies profile:** Negotiation & accommodation
- ❖ **However...**
 - Flexible strategies: less overprotection
 - Rigid strategies: more overprotection
- ❖ **Ironic: downwards spiral**



Discussion

❖ **Practical implications**

➤ **Interventions:**

- Support for people dealing with overprotection
- Focus on:
 - Parent
 - Adolescent

❖ **Future research:**

➤ **Focus on causality**

- Longitudinal studies
- Vignette experiments

Conclusion

Conclusion

- ❖ **Coping profiles to some extent moderate the effects of overprotection**
 - Some profiles buffer for effects of overprotection
 - Adolescents better rely on negotiation & accommodation
 - Intervention programs: targeting adolescents' coping behaviors
 - ⇒ Future research: causality
- ❖ **Importance of person-centered approach**
 - Future research: coping with other parenting styles
 - ⇒ Dynamics in parent-adolescent relationships

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