

# When parents become too involved in school

## Understanding parental overinvolvement in a changing social world

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# Introduction

Better safe than sorry?



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# Parental school involvement

## Conceptualization and past research

Parents' commitment of resources to the academic context of children (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994)

- School-based involvement
  - Home-based involvement
- Essential for psychosocial adjustment, achievement, and motivation (e.g., Barger et al., 2019)

But: more is not always better

→ How, whom, and why? (Pomerantz et al., 2007)

# Overprotective parenting

## Conceptualization

« The provision of a level of protection that is excessive, considering the child's developmental level » (Thomasgard et al., 1995)

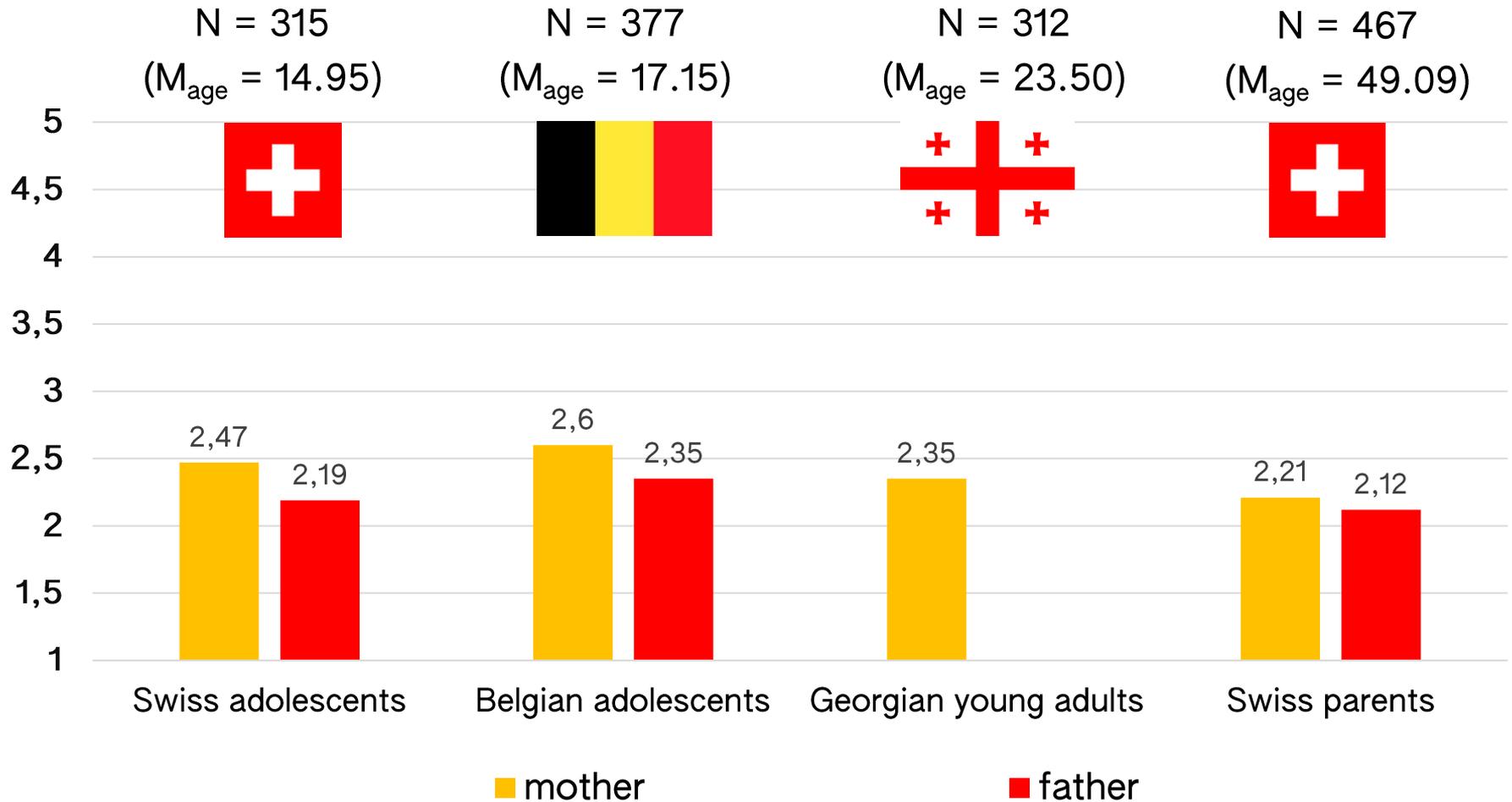
In adolescence and young adulthood, e.g.,

- Premature problem-solving
- Anxious rearing
- Academic overinvolvement
- Infantilisation
- Intrusiveness

E.g., « My mother/father often intervenes in things that I could actually solve myself » (Chevrier et al., 2023)

# Overprotective parenting

## Some prevalence data



# Mothers vs. fathers

What is your opinion?

« Mothers are naturally better parents than fathers »

- Completely disagree
- Rather disagree
- Rather agree
- Completely agree

→ [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com), use code 33 43 93 2

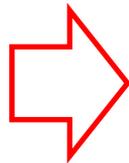
# Consequences

## Psychopathology



N = 402 mother-adolescent dyads

Parental overprotection



Competence



Internalizing & externalizing problems

Autonomy

Relatedness

Van Petegem, S., Antonietti, J. P., Nunes, C. E., Kins, E., & Soenens, B. (2020). The relationship between maternal overprotection, adolescent internalizing and externalizing problems, and psychological need frustration: A multi-informant study using response surface analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 49, 162-177.

# Consequences

## Externalizing symptoms



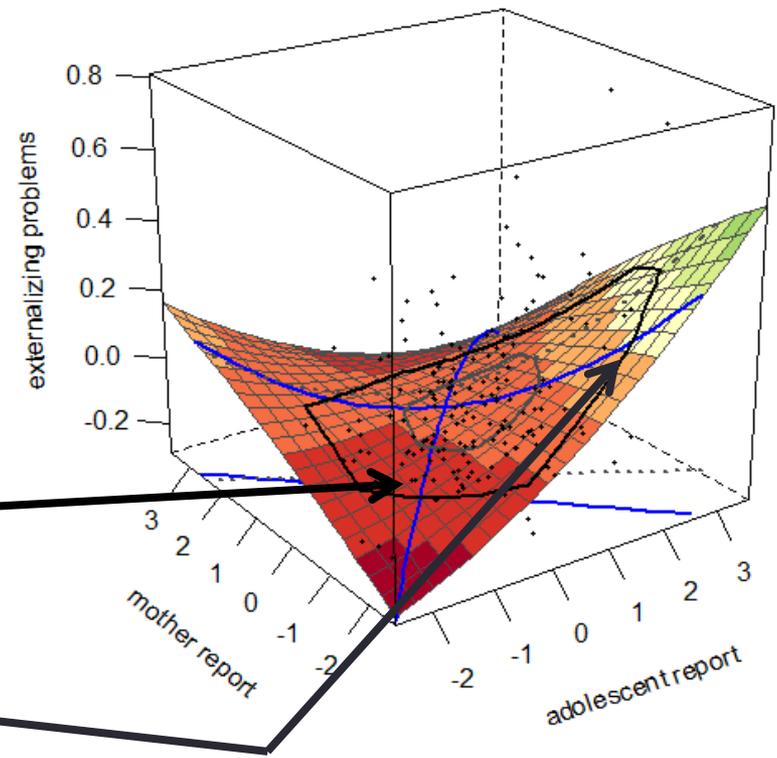
N = 402 mother-adolescent dyads

### Polynomial regression coefficients

$b_1$ – AR	.04**
$b_2$ – MR	-.01
$b_3$ – AR <sup>2</sup>	.01
$b_4$ – AR*MR	-.03
$b_5$ – MR <sup>2</sup>	.00

### Response surface parameters

$a_1$ – slope LOC	.03*
$a_2$ – curvature LOC	-.02
$a_3$ – slope LOIC	.05*
$a_4$ – curvature LOIC	.04



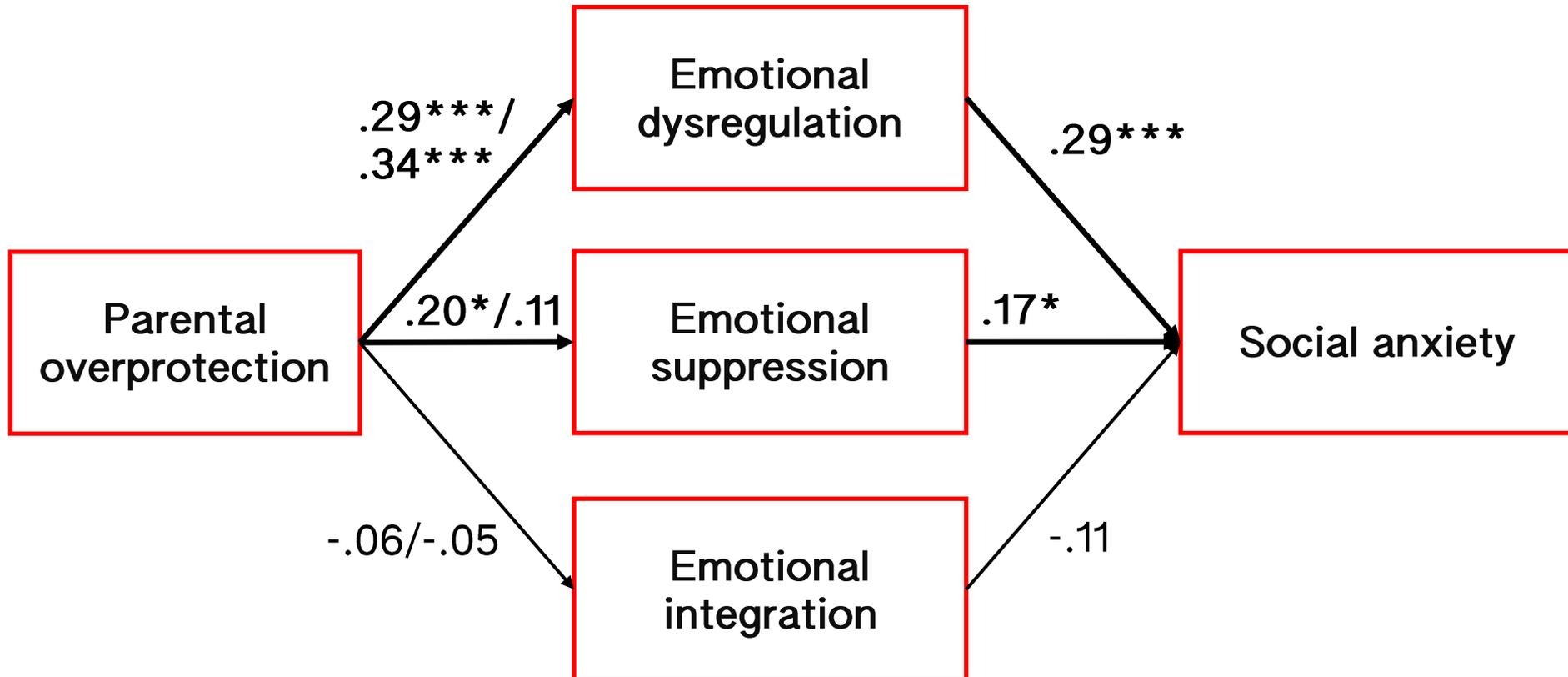
Van Petegem, S., Antonietti, J. P., Nunes, C. E., Kins, E., & Soenens, B. (2020). The relationship between maternal overprotection, adolescent internalizing and externalizing problems, and psychological need frustration: A multi-informant study using response surface analysis. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 49, 162-177.

# Consequences



## Emotion regulation

N = 278 adolescents



Mathijs, L., Mouton, B., Zimmermann, G., & Van Petegem, S. (2023). Overprotective parenting and social anxiety in adolescents: The role of emotion regulation. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.

# Consequences

## School-related outcomes

### Outcomes:

- **Academic success** (e.g., Howard et al., 2019)
- **Self-regulated learning, motivation** (e.g., Hong et al., 2015)
- **School burnout** (Love et al., 2020)

### Mechanisms:

- **Grit, self-control** (e.g., Howard et al., 2019; Love et al., 2020)
- **Procrastination** (e.g., Hong et al., 2015)
- **Self-efficacy** (e.g., Bradley-Geist & Olson-Buchanan, 2011)
- **Maladaptive perfectionism** (e.g., Hayes & Turner, 2021; Schiffrin & Liss, 2017)

# Overprotective parenting

## Determinants

### Parent factors

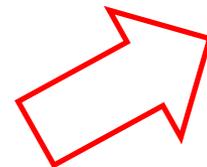
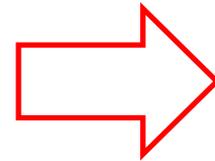
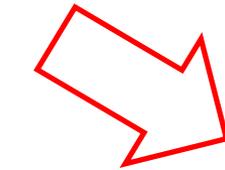
- Anxiety, perfectionism
- Attachment style

### Child factors

- Inhibition
- Pediatric conditions

### Contextual factors

Societal, economic and cultural factors?



Parental  
overprotection

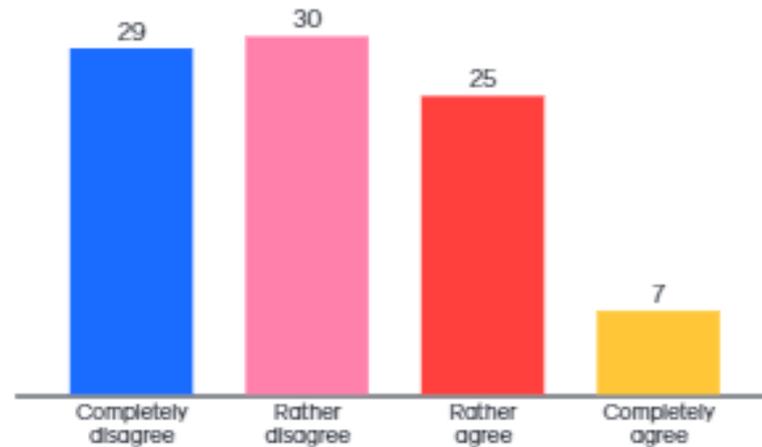
# What was your opinion?

## Mothers vs fathers

Join at [mentimeter.com](https://mentimeter.com) use code 3343932

Mentimeter

### Mothers are naturally better parents than fathers



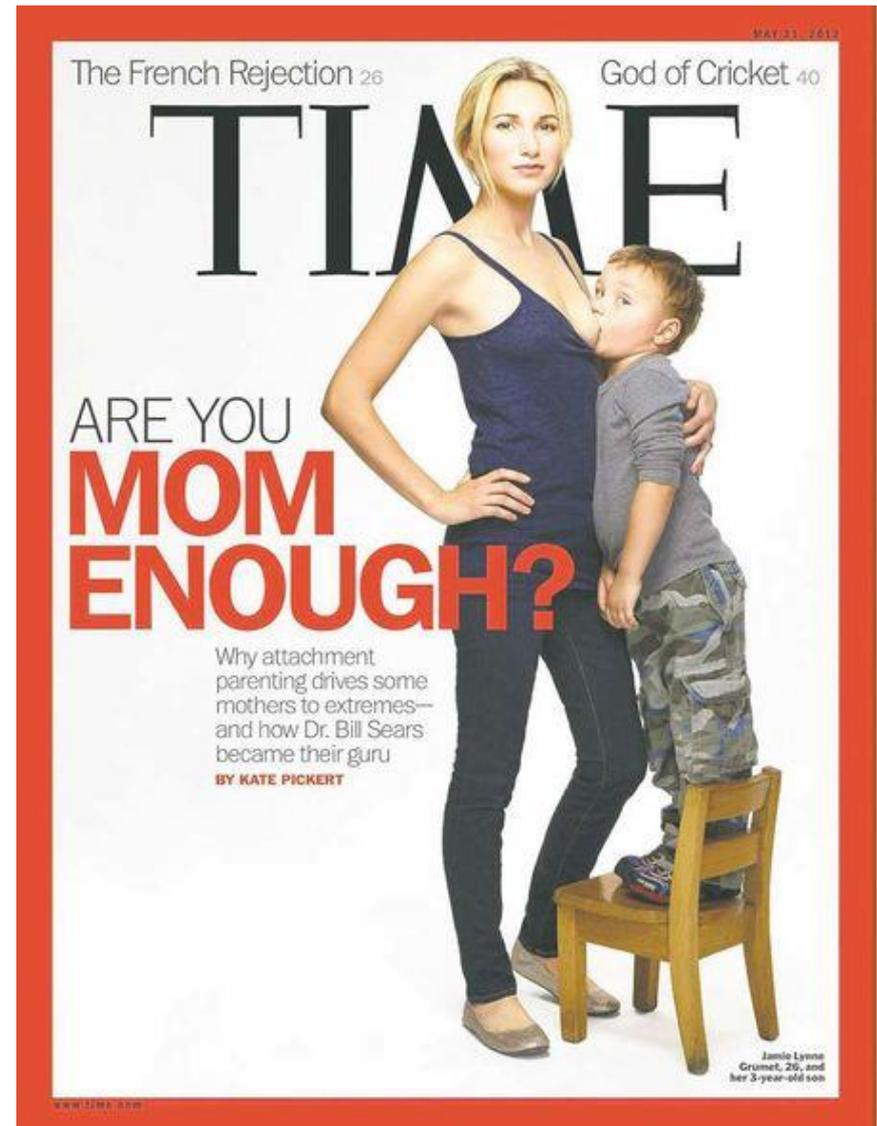
# SAFE-SORRY

## Macrocontextual factors

Intensive mothering ideology  
(Hays, 1996)

E.g., self-sacrifice

- Pressure, guilt, shame
- Gendered representations

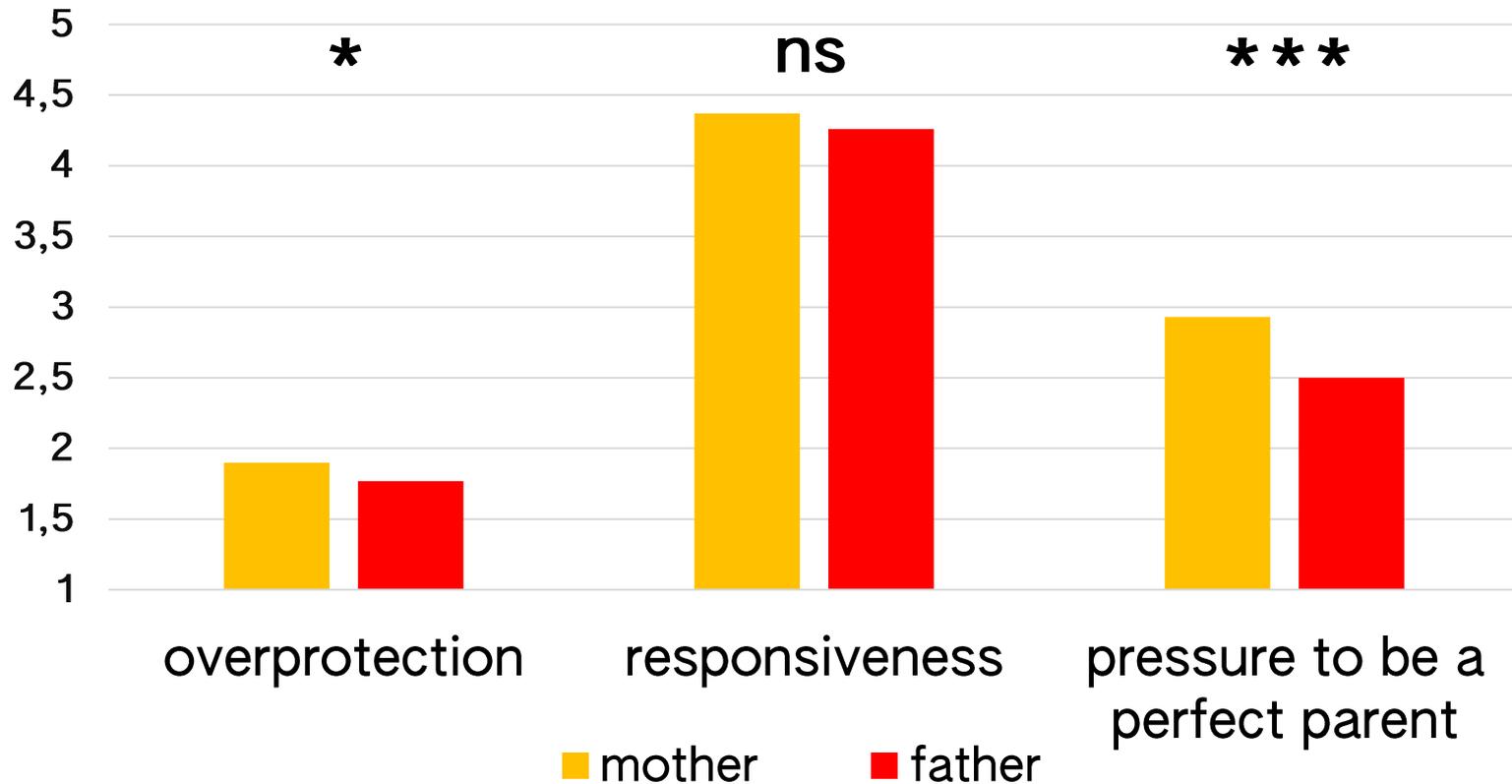


# Societal expectations



## Parents under pressure

N = 146 mother-father dyads

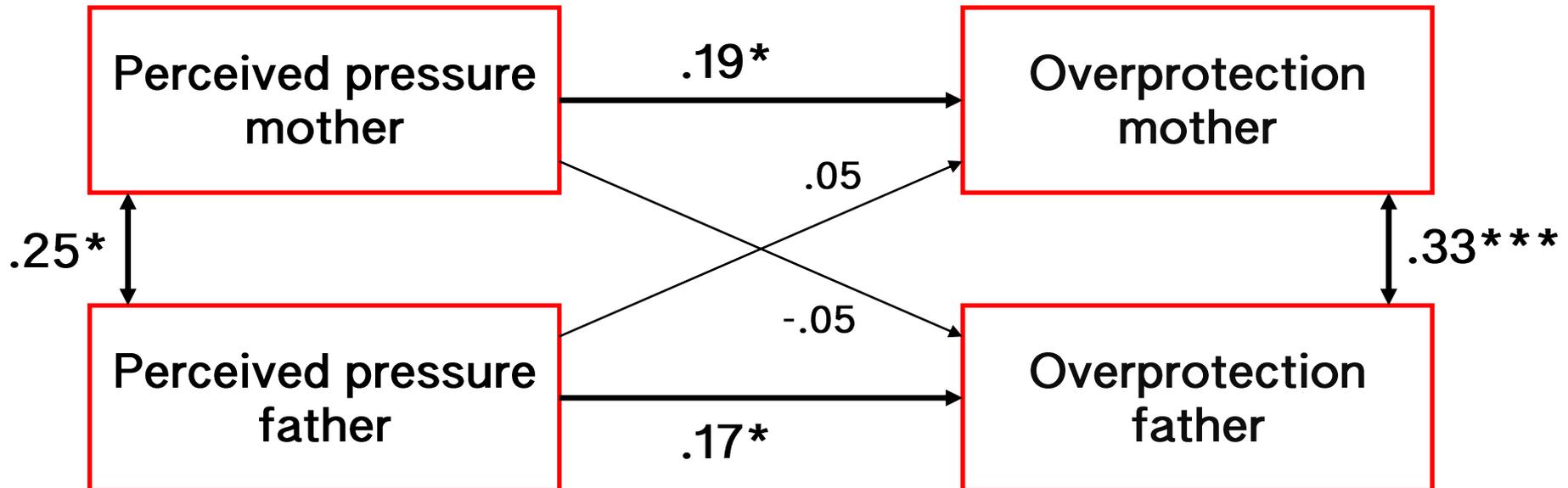


# Societal expectations

## Parents under pressure



N = 146 mother-  
father dyads

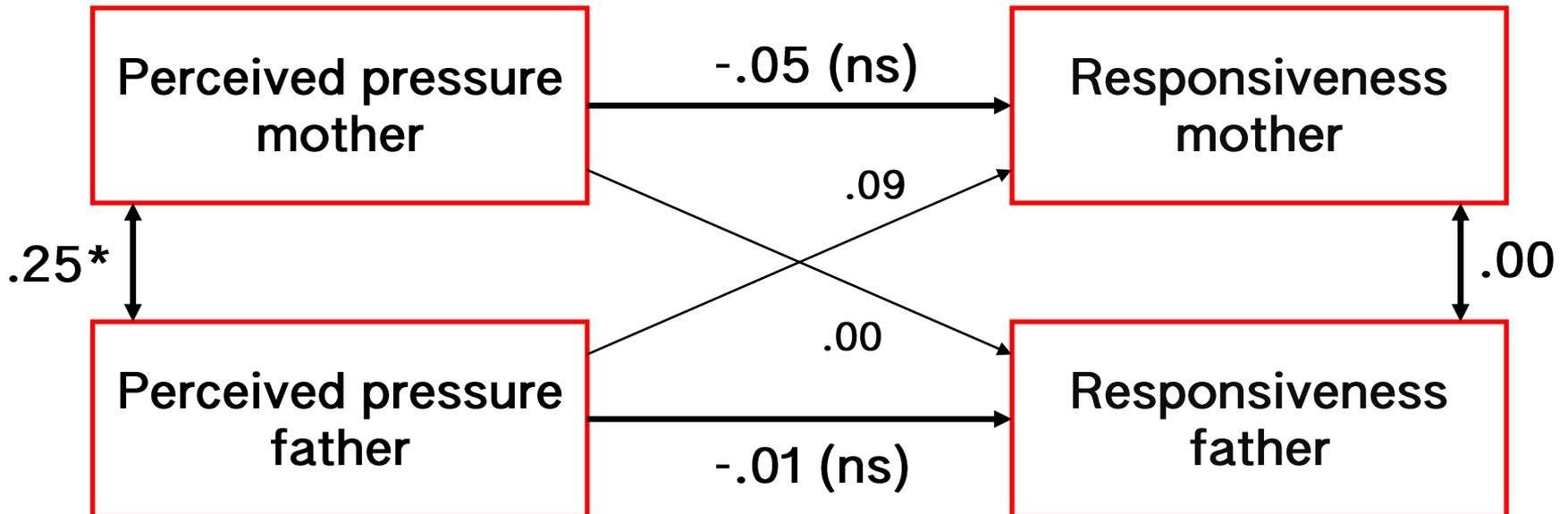


# Societal expectations

## Parents under pressure



N = 146 mother-  
father dyads



# Societal expectations



N = 1002 parents

## Typological approach

- Perceived pressure to be perfect
- Intensive parenting beliefs
- Essentialist beliefs

→ Positive and negative involvement

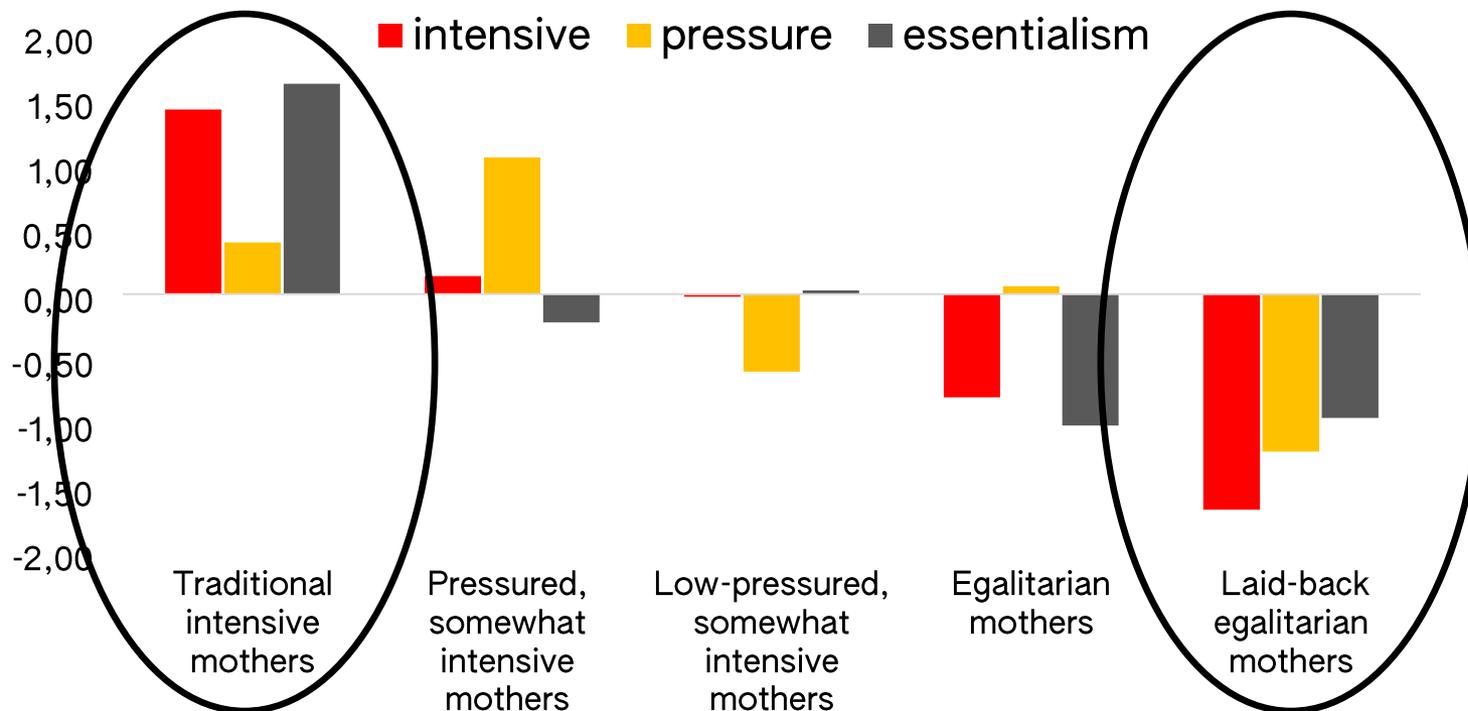
→ In general and in school context

# Societal expectations



N = 1002 parents

## Typological approach

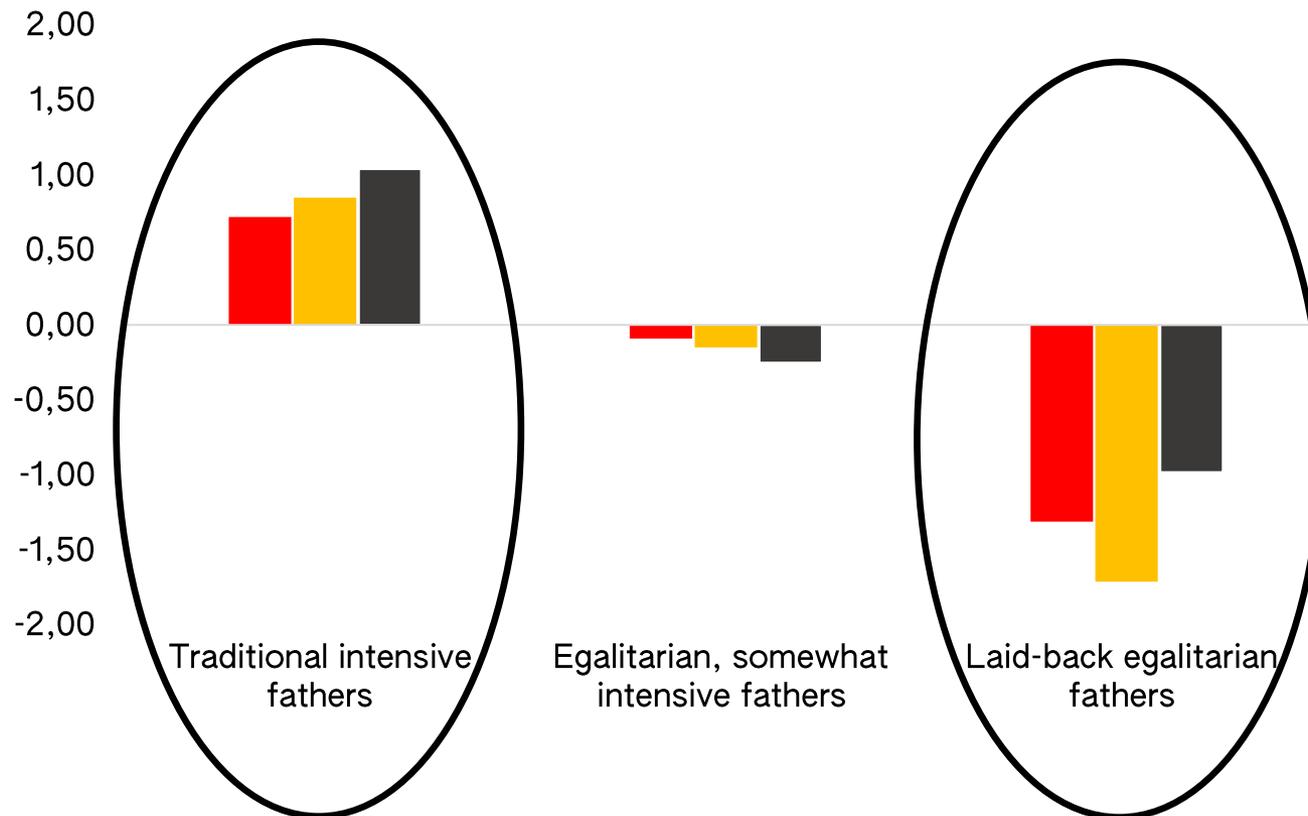


# Societal expectations



N = 1002 parents

## Typological approach

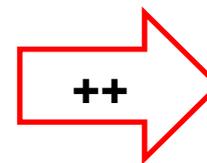
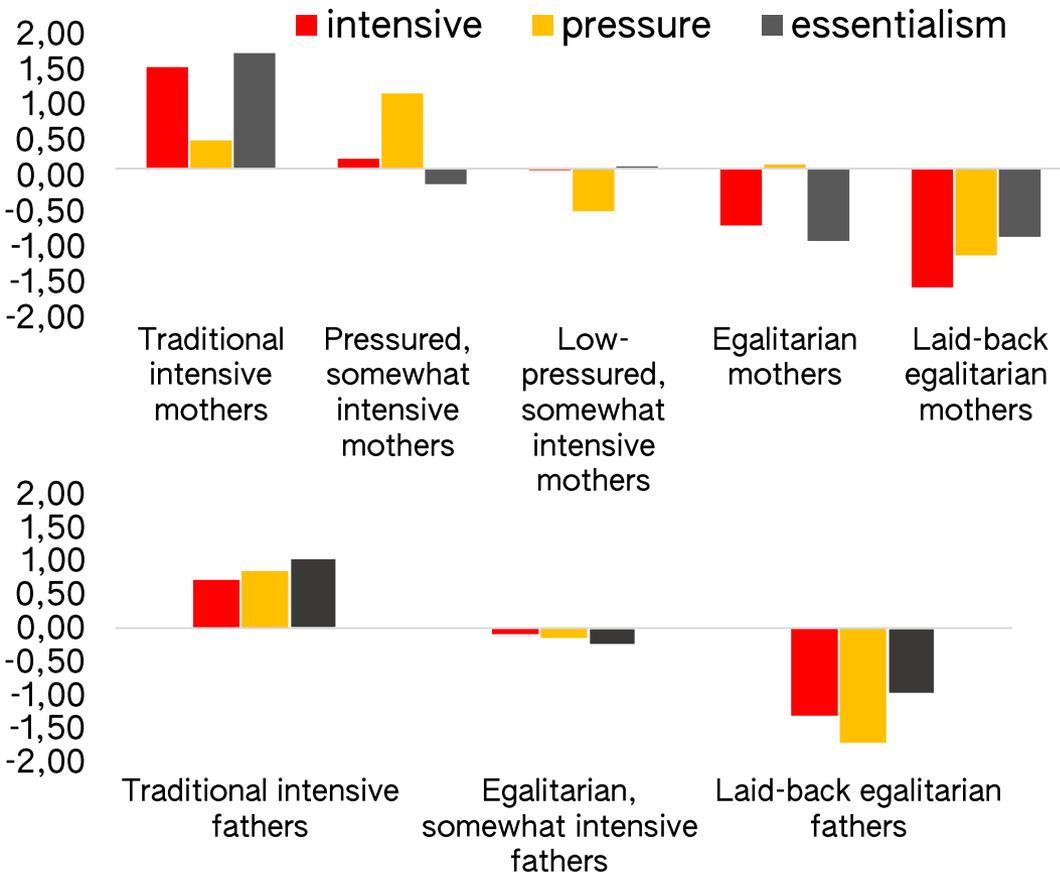


# Societal expectations

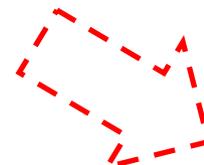


N = 1002 parents

## Typological approach



Overprotection & controlling involvement



Positive involvement

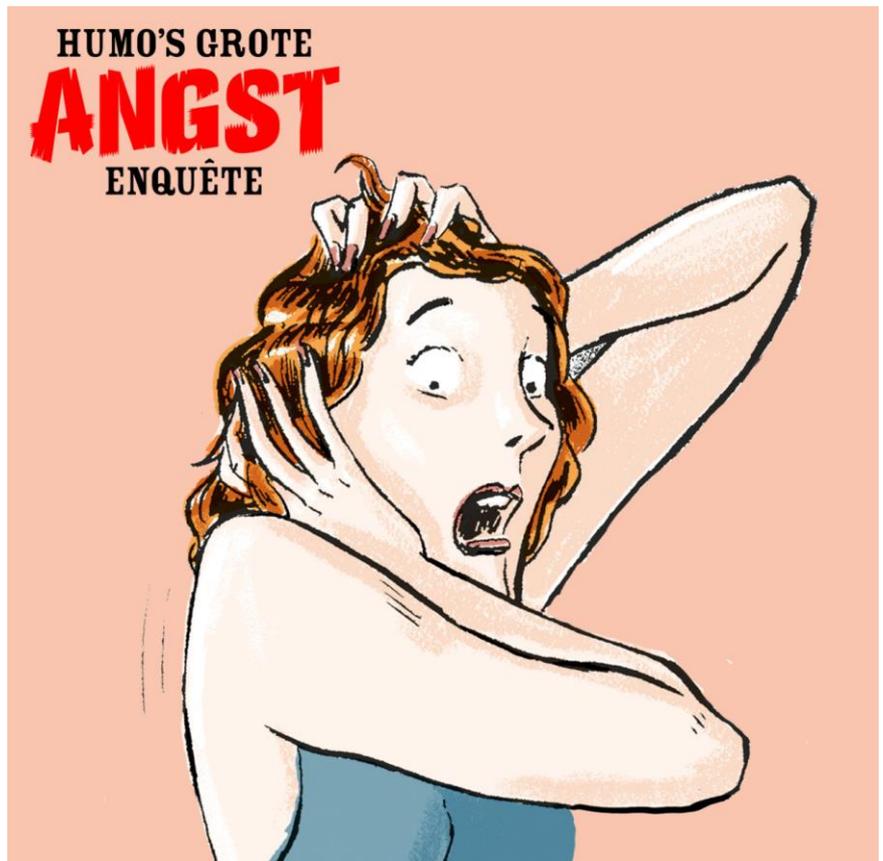
# Macrocontextual factors

## Survey

(HUMO, june 2022)

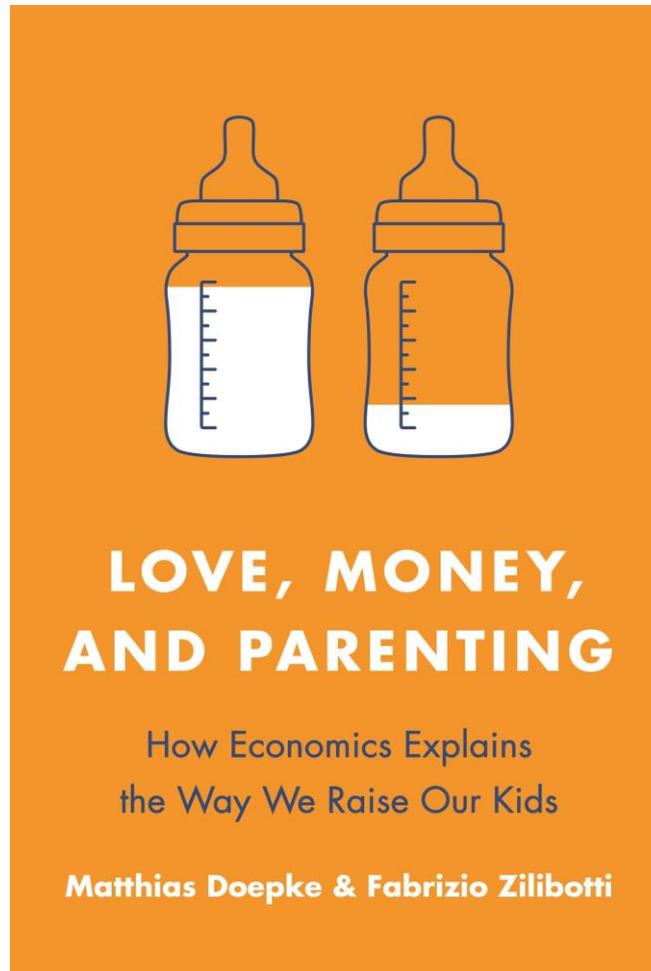
### The Belgians are worried, concerned or afraid about...

Rising prices and the own financial situation	82%
War, terror, and international security	81%
Climate change and extreme weather	73%
Health (incl. mental), pandemics and diseases	70%
Political situation in Belgium and Europe	67%
Refugees and migration	64%
Digitalisation	59%



# Macrocontextual factors

## Economic inequality and parenting



# Macrocontextual factors



N = 908 parents

## Parents' economy perceptions

Focus on parents' *school involvement* (Cheung et al., 2016)

- Controlling involvement
- Autonomy-supportive involvement

## Parents' economy perceptions

- *Personal* situation (financial scarcity) (Hilbert et al., 2021)
- *National* economy
  - Perceived income inequality (Sommet et al., 2019)
  - Perceived national job insecurity (Shoss et al., 2022)

# Economy perceptions



N = 908 parents

## Parents' school involvement

### Autonomy support

### Control

#### IV: inequality

Gender	.10**	-.16***
Perceived inequality	.05*	-.03
Financial scarcity	-.03	.15***
Interaction	.03	.02

#### IV: job insecurity

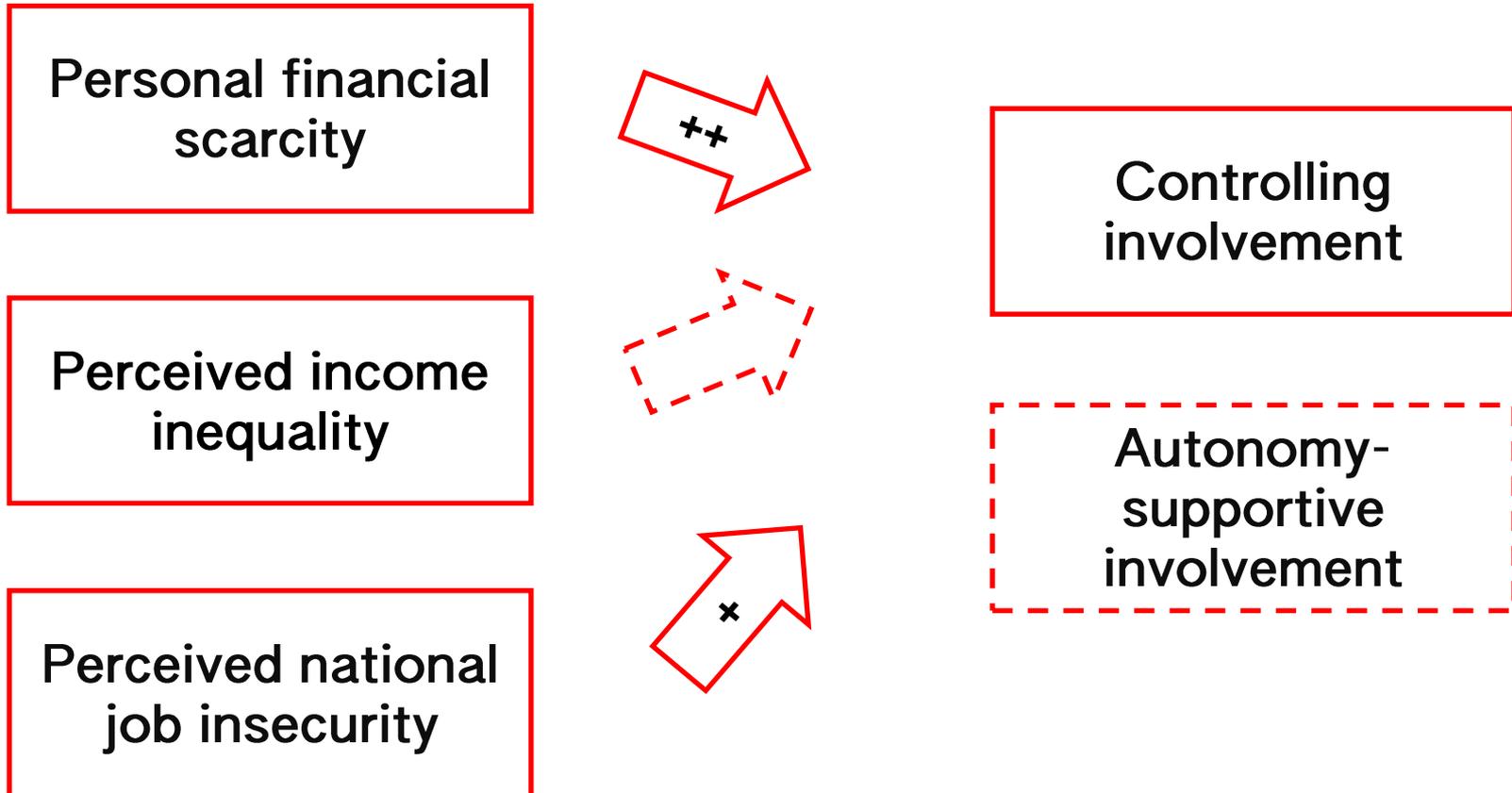
Gender	.09**	-.16***
Job insecurity	.00	.06*
Financial scarcity	-.03	.13***
Interaction	.02	.00

# Economy perceptions



N = 908 parents

## Parents' school involvement



# Conclusion

## What to take home?

### Overprotective parenting

- Different from appropriate school involvement
- Risk factor for psychosocial and academic difficulties

### Macrocontextual factors

- Societal expectations and pressures
- Economic insecurities

### What's up next?

- Cross-cultural comparisons
- Implications for teachers

contact

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