Dynamics between Parent's Essentialist Beliefs and Practices as Parents and Coparents
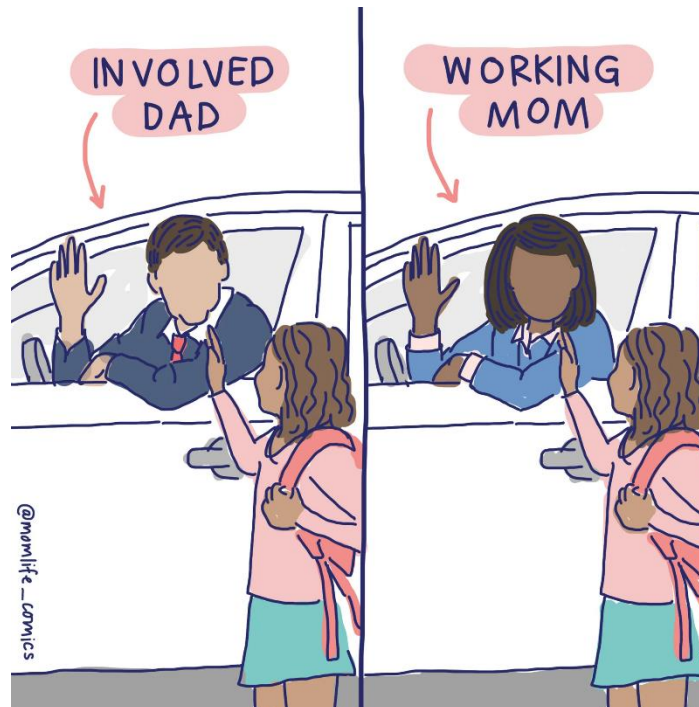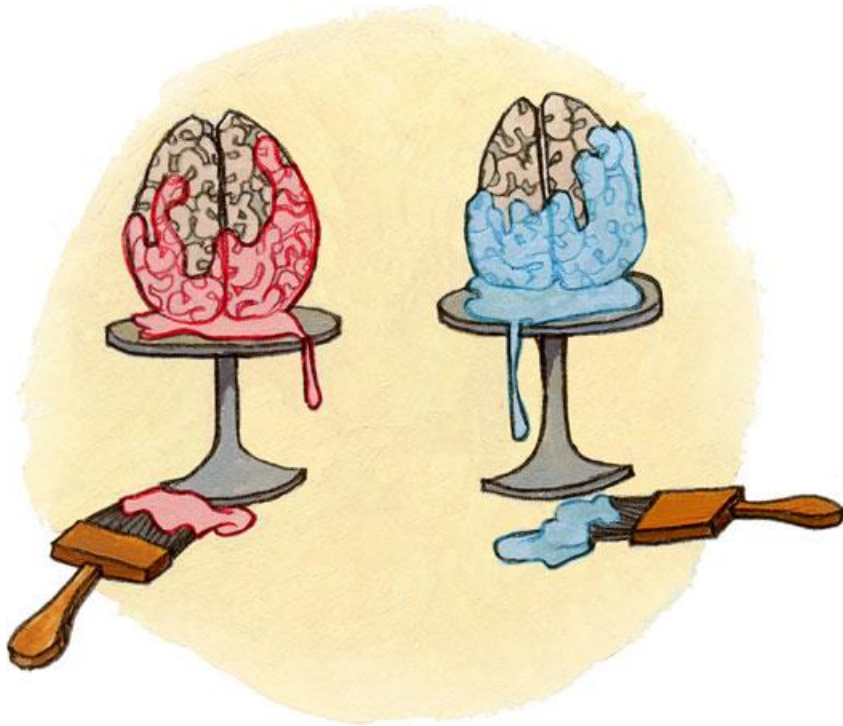
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ECDP 2023- TURKU

Parenthood and beliefs

- Essentialist beliefs
- Perceptions (e.g., Meyer & Gelman, 2016)
- Behaviors (e.g., Pinho & Gaunt, 2021)

Practices as parents

Self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2012)

COMPETENCE
*Effective dealing
with environment*

AUTONOMY
*Control the course
of our lives*

RELATEDNESS
*Close relationship
with peers*

- Parents may support or hinder their children's needs

➡ Need-supportive or need-frustrating parenting

Practices as parents

➡️ Need-supportive parenting vs. Need-frustrating parenting

Autonomy support

Parental control

Overprotection

Responsiveness

Practices as coparents

Coparenting

Level of support and solidarity between the adults/parental figures responsible for the care and upbringing of a child (McHale et al., 2019)
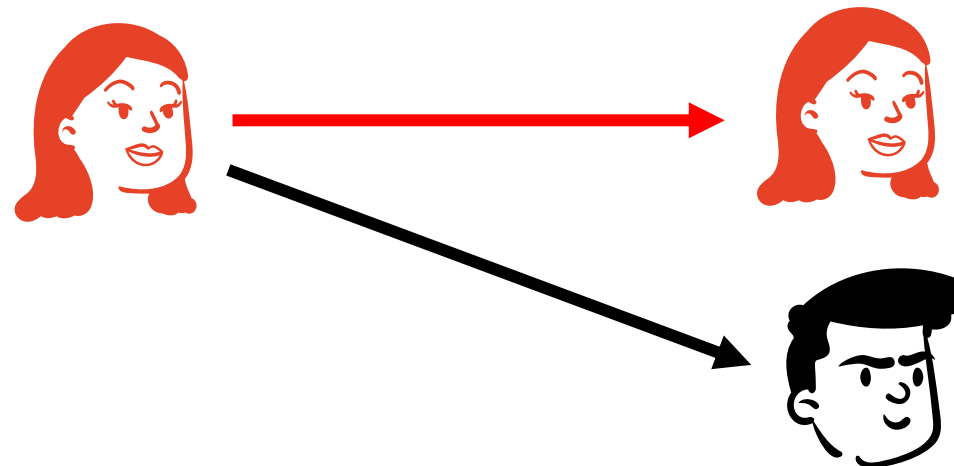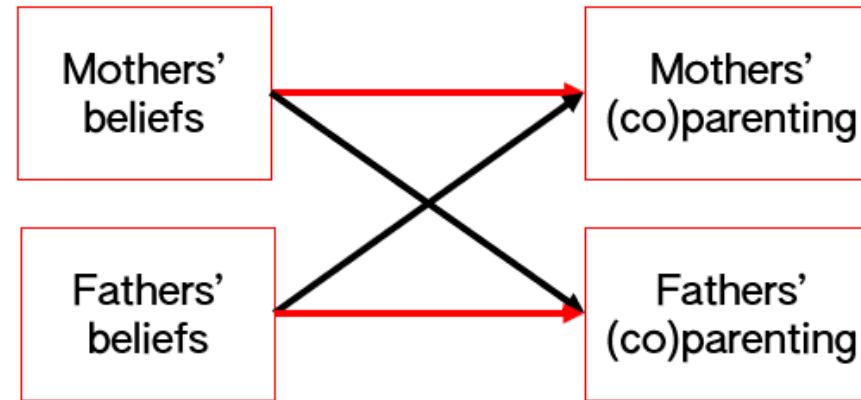
Objectives

Understand how essentialist beliefs may shape parenting and coparenting practices for mothers and fathers

a. Focus on need-supportive and need-frustrating parenting

b. Coparenting support

c. Look into transactional associations between parents

Actor-partner interdependence model

- Actor effect = relationship within one parent
- Partner effect = relationship from one parent to the other
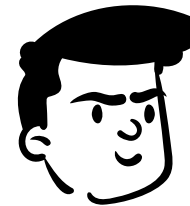

Kenny et al., 2006

Sample

Recruited through 22 secondary schools

N= 543 parents (226 couples)

49 (4.6) years old
54% university degree
89% working (1/3 part-time)

50.4 (5.4) years old
54% university degree
93% working (< 1/10 part-time)

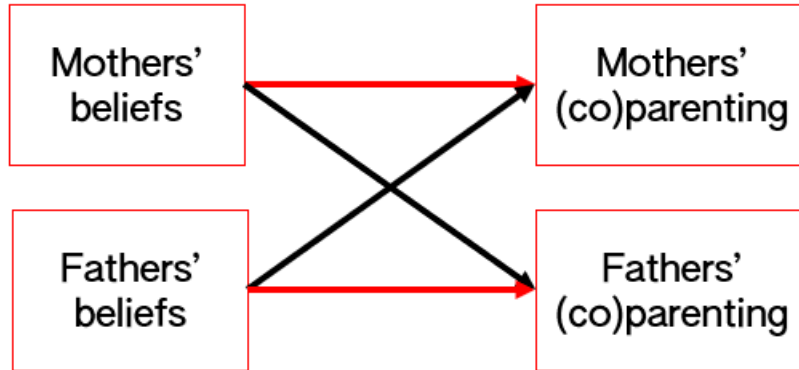65% married couples (12% separated/divorced)
2.2 children
Target adolescent: 17.2 (0.84) years old
54% girls

Measures

Essentialism (Liss et al.,2013; 6 items)

Although fathers are important, ultimately children need mothers more.

Need-supportive parenting

- Autonomy support (Cheung et al., 2016; 8 items)

I allow my child to make choices about his/her studying as much as possible

- Responsiveness (Schaefer, 1965; 7 items)

I give my child a lot of care and attention

Need-frustrating parenting

- Overprotection (Chevrier et al., 2023; 10 items)

I give my child the impression that I don't want him/her to grow up

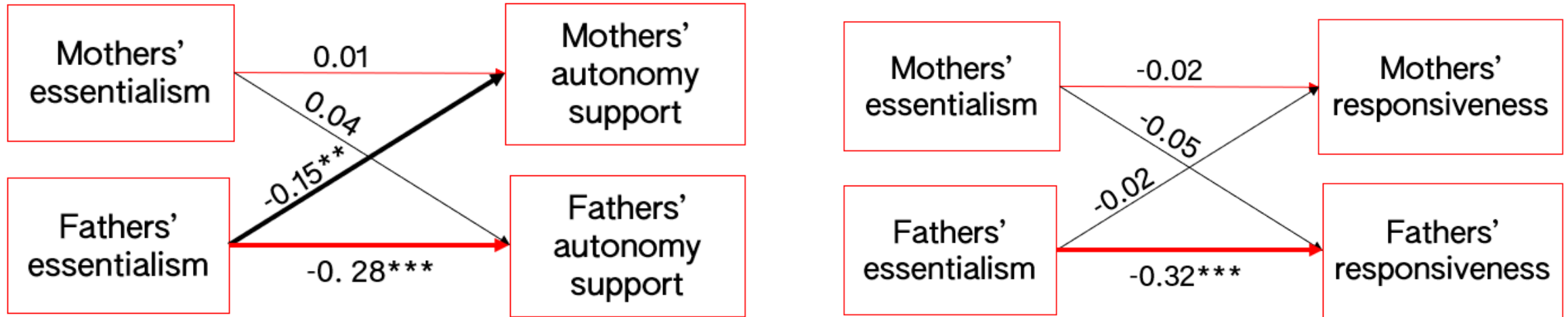- Parental control (Cheung et al., 2016; 10 items)

For things related to school, I'm usually in charge

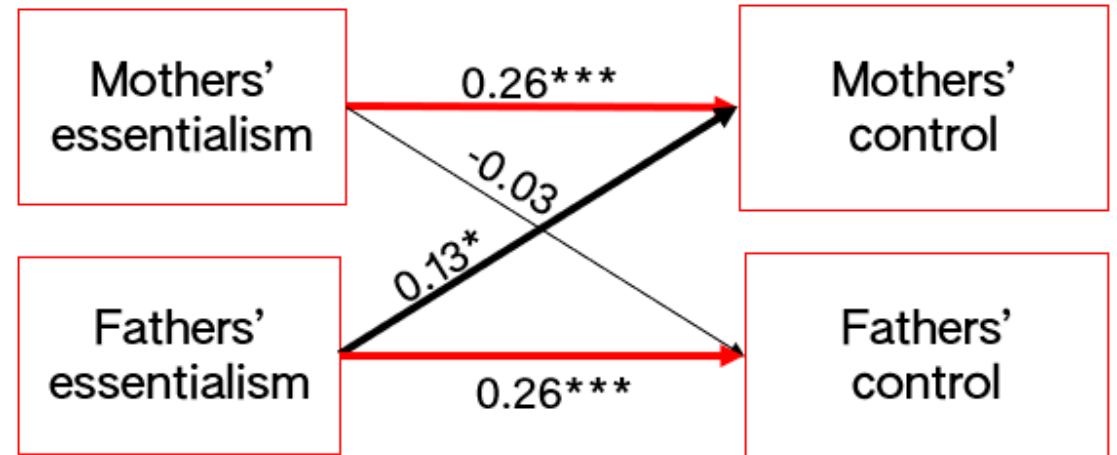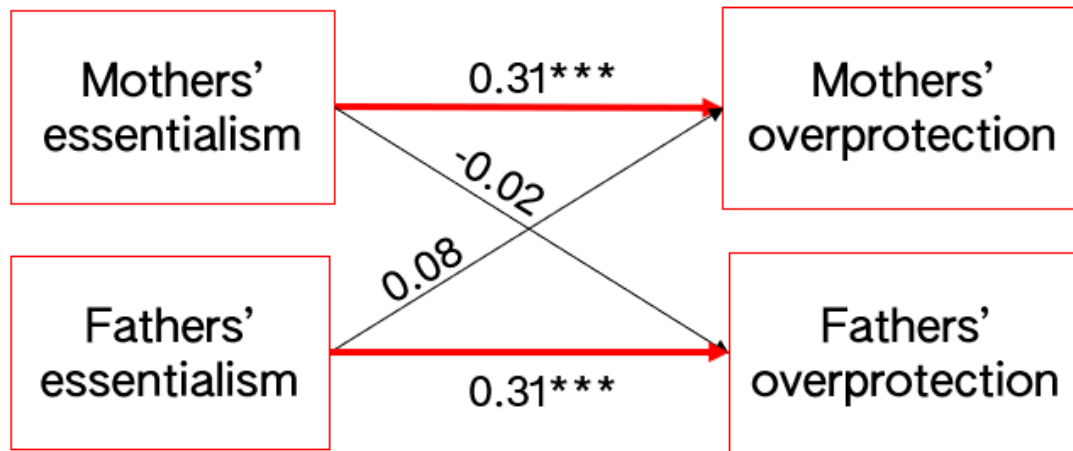**Coparenting support**
(Konold & Abidin, 2001; 7 items)

The other parent and I make a good team
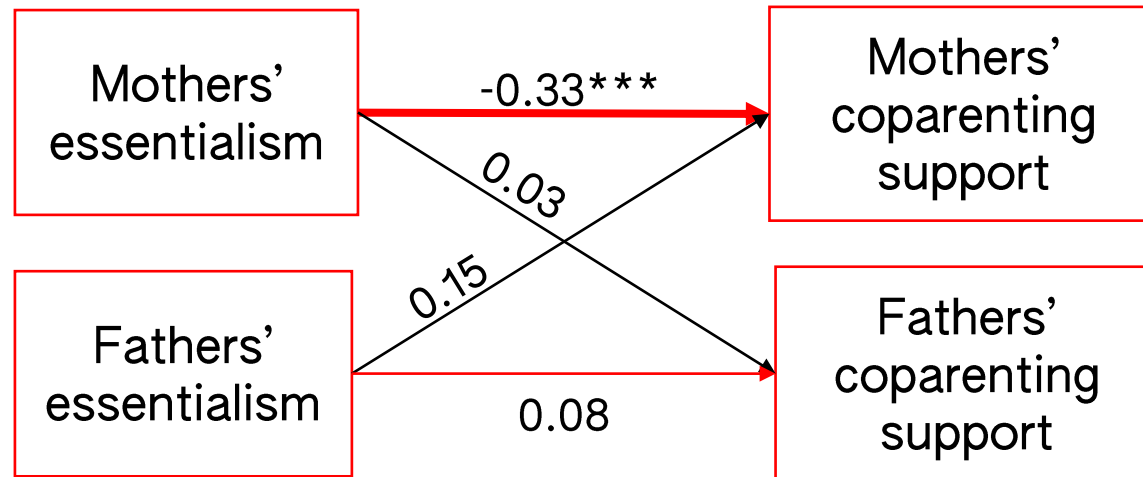
Need-supportive parenting

➡️ Actor effects of essentialist beliefs on need-supportive practices for fathers

➡️ Fathers' essentialism is related to less need-supportive parenting in fathers but also in mothers to a certain extent

➡️ Actor effects of essentialist beliefs on need-frustrating practices for both parents !

➡️ No gender difference

➡️ Partner effect of father's essentialism on mothers' control

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Mothers' essentialism → Mothers' coparenting support: -0.33***
Mothers' essentialism → Fathers' coparenting support: 0.03
Fathers' essentialism → Mothers' coparenting support: 0.15
Fathers' essentialism → Fathers' coparenting support: 0.08

➡ Mothers with more essentialist beliefs also report less coparenting support

Discussion

Essentialist beliefs <-> more need-frustrating practices

➡️ by extension deleterious for adolescents' development

Fathers' essentialism = actor and partner effects

Why?
Father's essentialism = more traditional view of fatherhood?

≠ disengaged

= Head of the family

Mother following father's prescriptions

Mothers' essentialism = less coparenting support

Take home message

Important to better understand the impact of societal norms/prescriptions on parents' cognitions and behaviors among both mothers and fathers!

Thank you for your attention!

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https://safesorry.be/

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