

Different Families, Diverse Strengths: Profiles of Early Childhood Family Processes and Adolescent's Well-Being

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Introduction

- Family has an **enduring effect** on individual development
- **Parental engagement** and **interparental affection** are two key family processes
- **Integrating** these processes **across subsystems** provides a holistic view of family
- Their **relations to adolescent well-being** is **unknown**

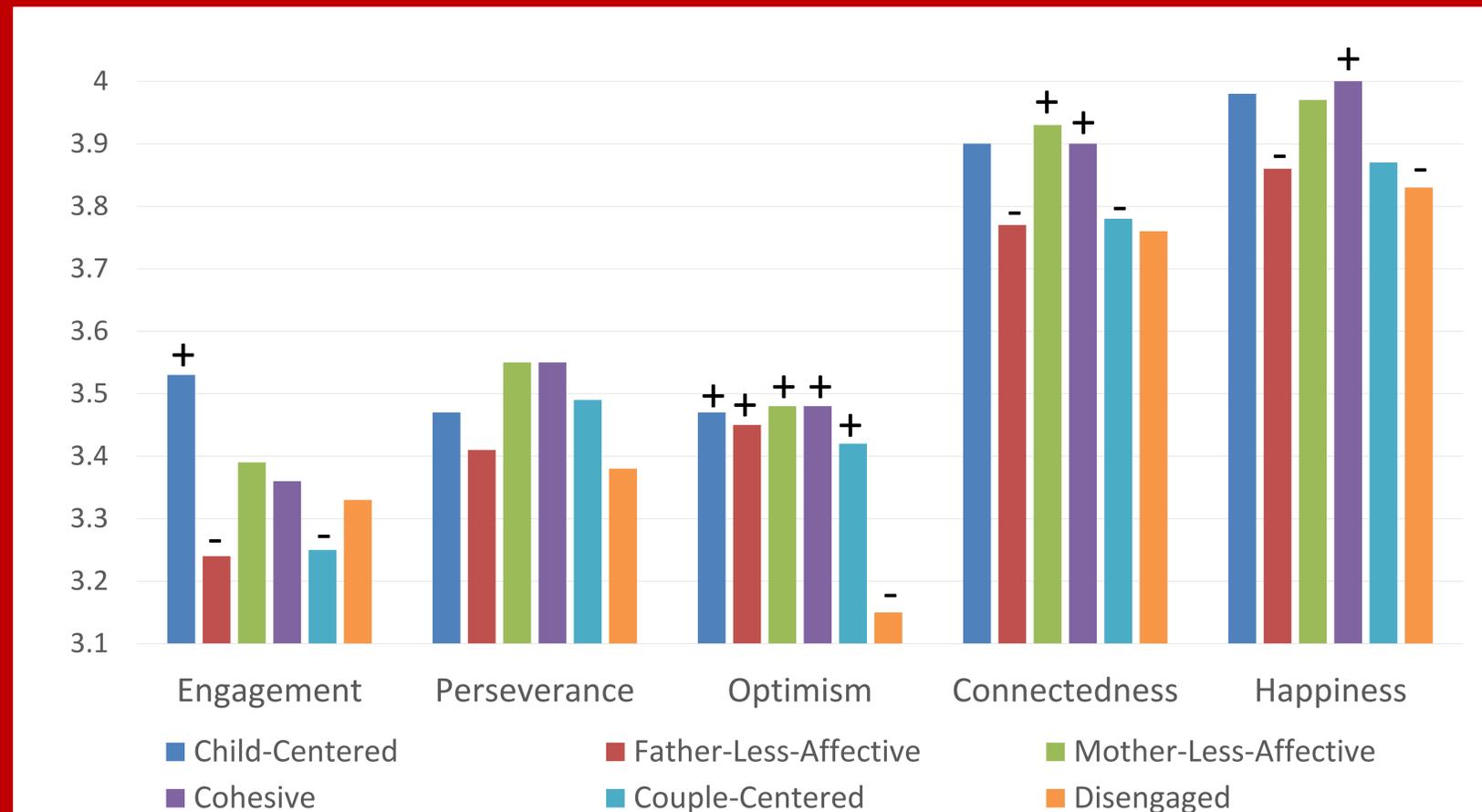
Study Goals

- Identify family configurations of parental engagement and interparental affection across age 1 and 5
- Examine **the longitudinal association** of early family configurations and each facet of **adolescent positive well-being**

Method

- **Participants:**
 - ❖ 495 two-parent families
 - ❖ 53.3% boys (at birth)
 - ❖ Ethnicity diverse sample
- **Measures:**
 - ✓ **Parental engagement:** mother engagement and father engagement at Y1, Y5
 - ✓ **Interparental affection:** mother report and father report at Y1, Y5
 - ✓ **Adolescent well-being:** engagement, perseverance, optimism, connectedness, and happiness at Y15
- **Analysis:**
 - latent profile analysis and BCH approach

Families with different configurations of parental engagement and interparental affection during early childhood had differentiated associations with the child's engagement, optimism, connectedness, and happiness during adolescence.



Results

- **Six family configurations**
 1. Child-Centered (7%)
 2. Father-Less-Affective (23%)
 3. Mother-Less-Affective (13%)
 4. Cohesive (32%)
 5. Couple-Centered (19%)
 6. Disengaged (6%)
- **Differentiated associations** (after controlling for parental education and age, family income, and child's sex)
 - Engagement: 1 > 2, 5
 - Perseverance: (ns)
 - Optimism: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 > 6
 - Connectedness: 3, 4 > 2, 5
 - Happiness: 4 > 2, 6

Take-home message

- 1) Fathers provide more support to mothers while mothers are more engaged with the child may be an **alternative balanced** family configuration other than cohesive families
- 2) Both **balanced family** configurations are promotive for adolescent **connection** with others
- 3) Higher **parental engagement** during early years are important for individual **engagement** in later years
- 4) **Any positive process** in early family experience may instill a **positive outlook** of life
- 5) The **more positive elements** are in early years, the **happier** individuals are during adolescence