



# Discrepancy Between Mother-child Perceived Maternal Psychological Control and Susceptibility to Peer Influence: The Importance of Adolescents' Emotion Regulation and Externalized Problems

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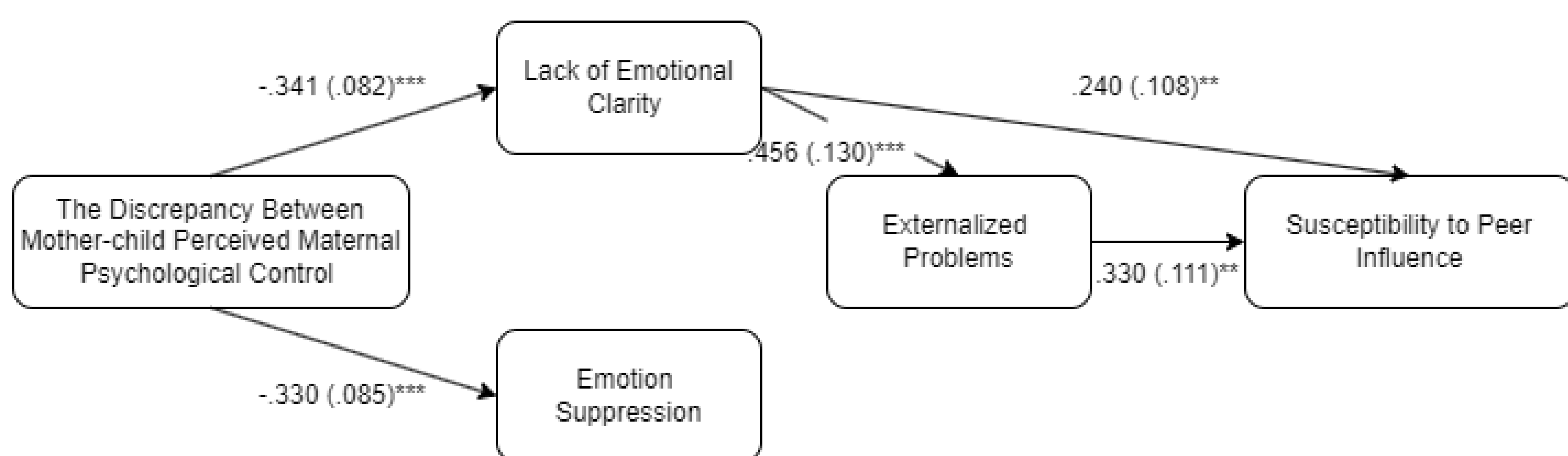
## BACKGROUND

Parental psychological control disrupts a child's emotion regulation and results in emotional insecurity and dependence (Morris et al., 2002), encouraging more reliance on peers (Chan & Chan, 2011). The discrepancy between the parent-child perception of psychological control indicates communication aspects of the relationship (Reidler & Swenson, 2012), which is important for adolescents' emotion regulation, externalized problems (Walton & Flouri, 2010), and susceptibility to peer influence.

Based on this rationale, we aim to examine whether the discrepancy between mother-child perceived maternal psychological control is linked to adolescents' emotion regulation (lack of emotional clarity and emotion suppression), and in turn, it is associated with their susceptibility to peer influence through externalized problems.

## RESULTS

Results indicated good model fit ( $\chi^2(2) = 2.2$ , CFI = .998, RMSEA = .028 [.000 - .183]). The discrepancy of maternal psychological control negatively predicted children's lack of emotional clarity and emotion suppression, but only lack of emotional clarity was related to susceptibility to peer influence and this relationship was mediated by children's externalized problems ( $\beta = .150$ , 95% CI [.025, .276]).



\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

## CONCLUSIONS

The results indicate that the way children perceive their mothers' parenting techniques is an important factor affecting children's emotion regulation skills. The lack of emotional clarity seems to make adolescents rely more on their peers who not always may be exemplary. However, this is only an exploratory study, and no causal assumptions can be made. Longitudinal and more in-depth studies are needed to further analyze these relations.

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## METHODS

The sample consisted of 124 mother-adolescent dyads. The mean age of adolescents was 10.86 years (SD = 1.12). The mean age of mothers was 39.39 years (SD = 5.20).

Measures:

- Susceptibility to Peer Influence Scale (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007)
- Lack of Emotional Clarity Scale (Kaufman et al., 2016)
- Emotion Suppression Scale (Gullone & Taffe, 2011)
- Maternal Psychological Control Scale (Barber et al., 2005)
- The discrepancy of maternal psychological control was calculated by subtracting the child's report from the mother's, in this way the values below zero indicate that child perceives the mother as more controlling than the mother herself does, and values above zero indicate that the mother perceives herself as more controlling than the child does.

## REFERENCES

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