

8th Congress of the European Society on Family Relations (ESFR)
Changing Family Relations – Gender and Generations
August 31 - September 3, 2016, TU Dortmund University,
Germany



The role of dyadic coping in the transition to parenthood

Valentina Fenaroli*, Sara Molgora*,
Chiara Acquati**, Emanuela Saita*

* Department of Psychology, Catholic University of Milan, Italy

** Graduate College of Social Work, Houston, Tx

BACKGROUND

Transition to parenthood

critical and potentially stressful event



Individual tasks



Relational tasks

(Cutrona et al., 2005; Donato, 2014; Lawrence et al., 2008)



Individual well-being

VERSUS

Individual distress

Relational well-being

VERSUS

Relational distress

BACKGROUND

Empirical and clinical implications...

❖ individual *disease*
psychological disease

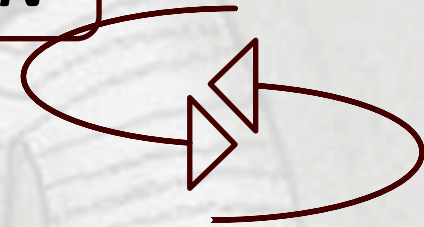


DEPRESSION

❖ relational *disease*
marital quality



COUPLE SATISFACTION



... negative effects on the children well-being
(Grigoriadis et al., 2013; Stein et al., 2014)

BACKGROUND

COPING STRATEGIES



Individual coping

(Berghuis & Stanton, 2002;
Coyne & Smith, 1991; O'Brien & DeLongis,
1997)



Dyadic coping

(Bodenmann, 2005;
Bodenmann, Meuwly, &
Kayser, 2011)

BACKGROUND

Dyadic coping (DC)



(a) *“the coping efforts of one partner in order to support the other in times of stress”*

(b) *“the common attempts of both partners to cope together with a shared stressor”* (Bodenmann, 2005)




Positive DC

Negative DC

BACKGROUND

Positive dyadic
coping



Individual
well-being

(Hausler et al., 2016; Regan et al., 2014; Rottman et al., 2015)

relational
well-being

(Bodenmann, Pihet, & Kayser, 2006; Donato et al., 2014; Falconier et al., 2015; Fuenfhausen & Cashwell, 2015)

AIMS

1. to explore ***dyadic coping styles*** during pregnancy in the two partners, specifically targeting aspects of *congruence* and *incongruence*;
2. to test if dyadic coping is a predictor of:
 - individual variable (depression)
 - interpersonal variable (couples adjustment);



AIMS

1. to explore ***dyadic coping styles*** during pregnancy in the two partners, specifically targeting aspects of *congruence* and *incongruence*;

2. to test if dyadic coping is a predictor of:

- individual variable (depression)
- interpersonal variable (couples adjustment);

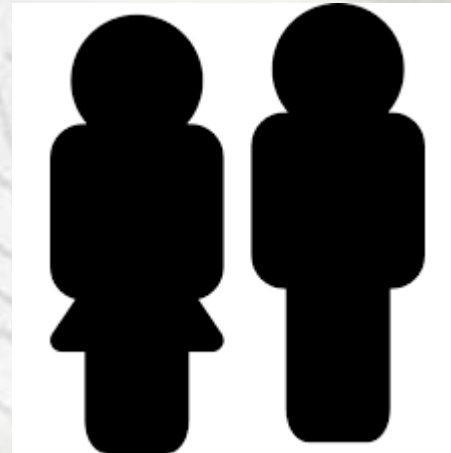


Method *Cross sectional research design*

Participants

78 primiparous couples

In Northern Italy



Inclusion criteria:

- 32nd- 37th week of pregnancy
- in a stable couple relationship;
- with a spontaneous and planned conception;
- fluent in Italian;
- not having a multiple pregnancy;
- not having a pregnancy with serious complications (for mother-to-be and for the fetus).

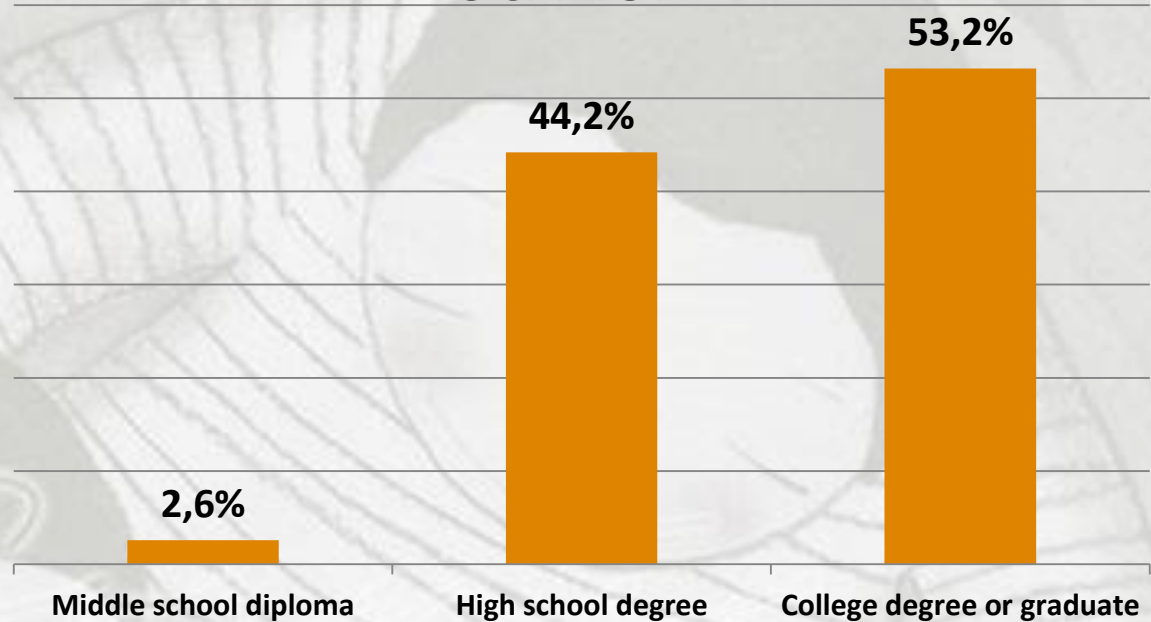
EDUCATION



Mean Age = 33,10 years

Range = 24-49

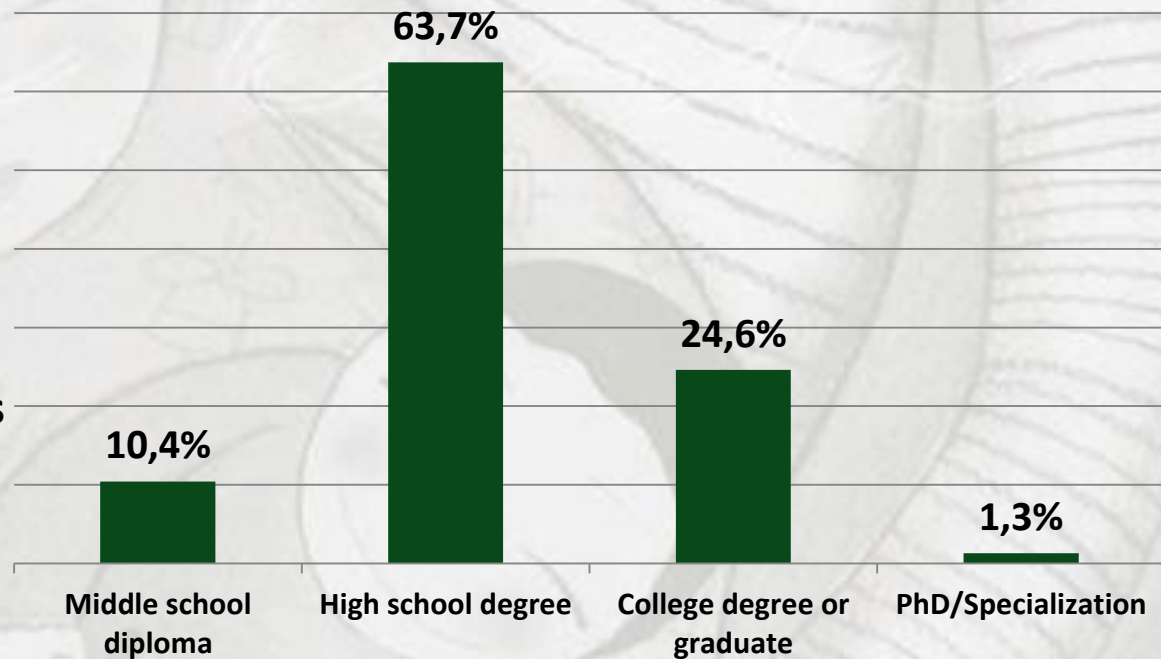
SD = 5,85



Mean Age = 35,58 years

Range = 23-52

SD = 6,26



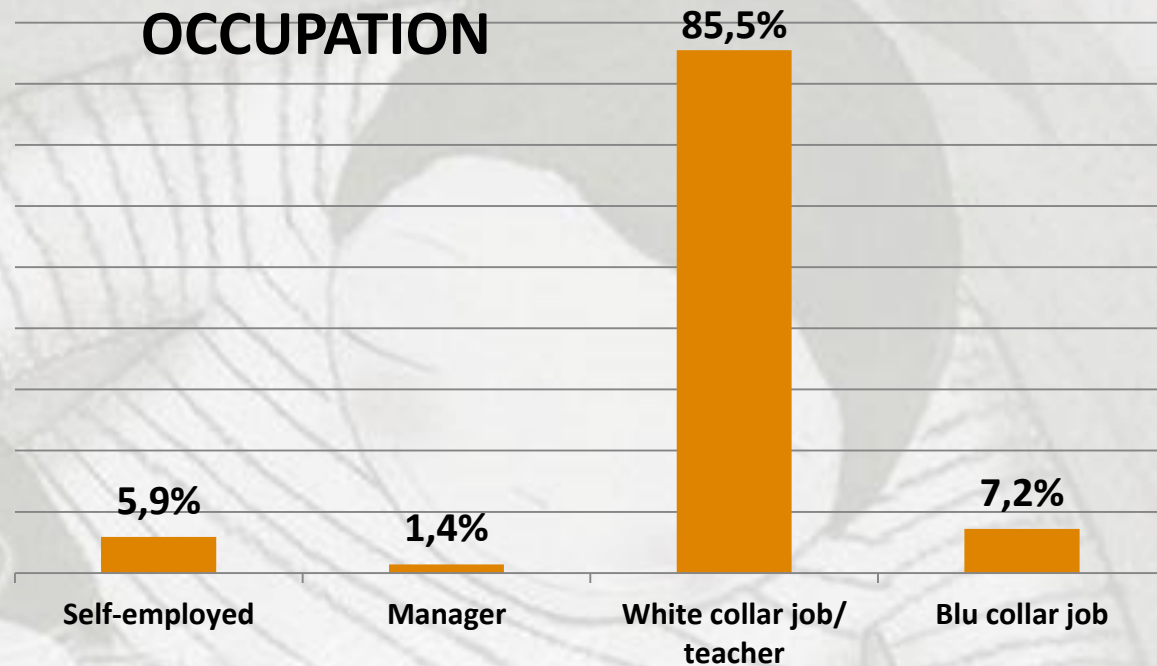


OCCUPATION

Mean Age = 33,10 years

Range = 24-49

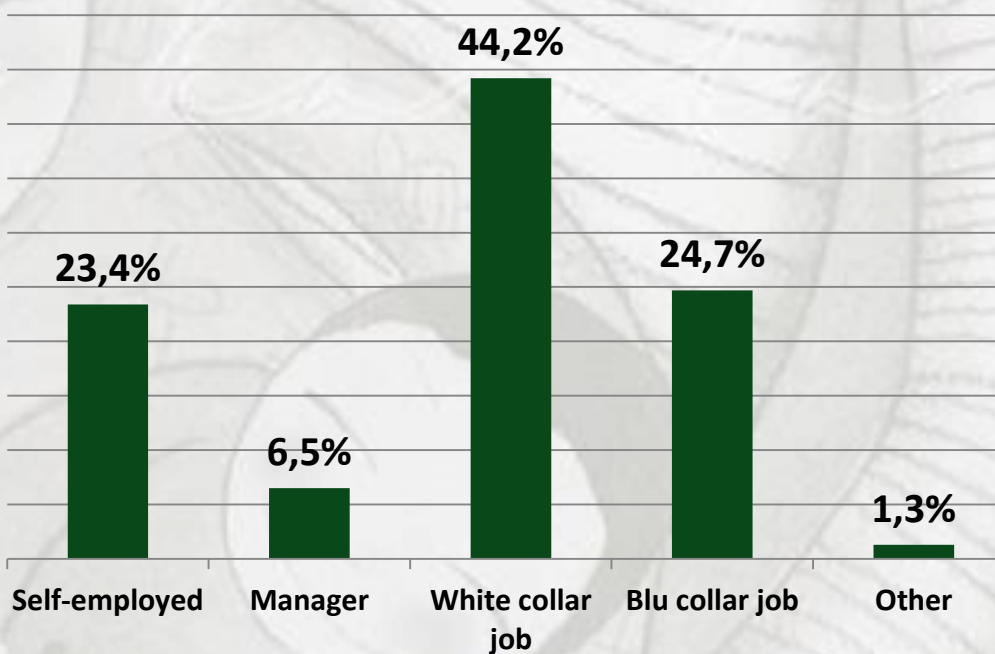
SD = 5,85



Mean Age = 35,58 years

Range = 23-52

SD = 6,26

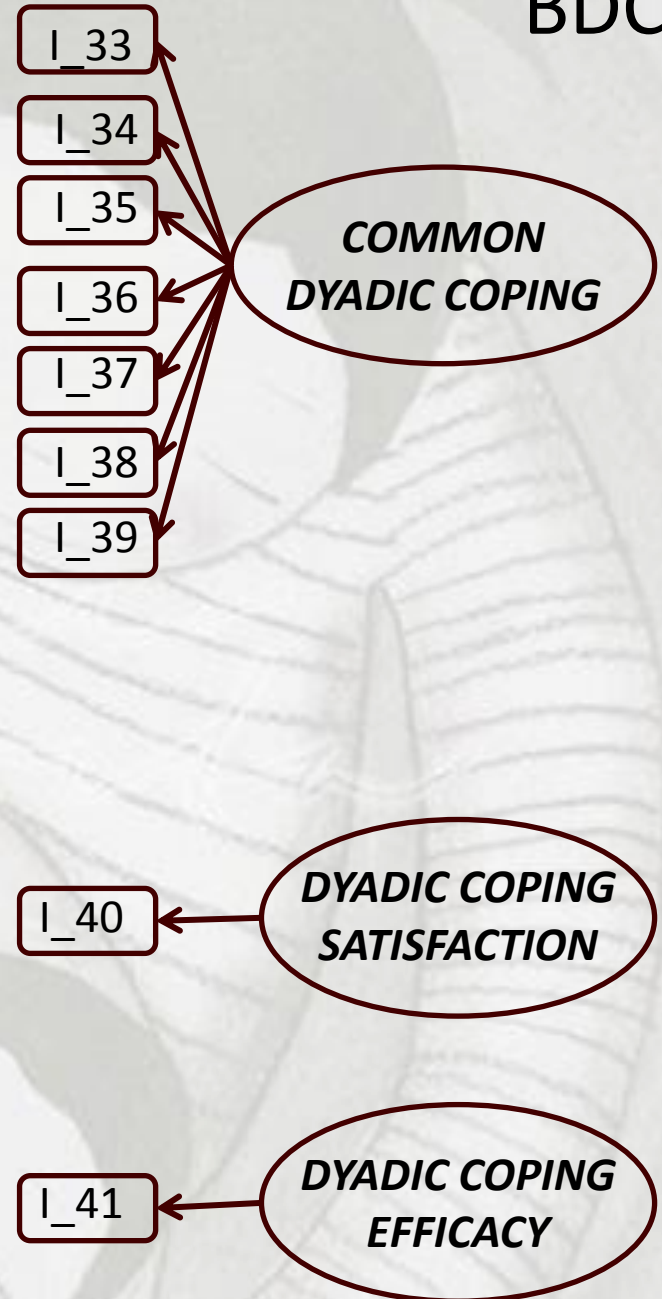
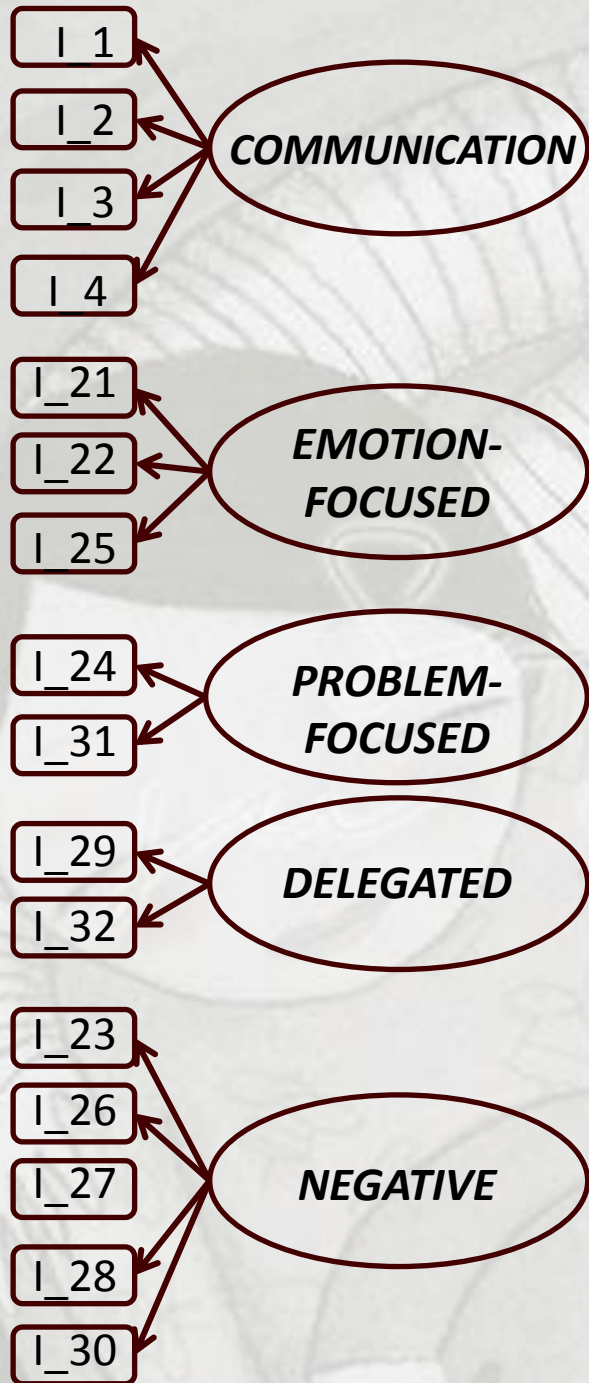


Instruments

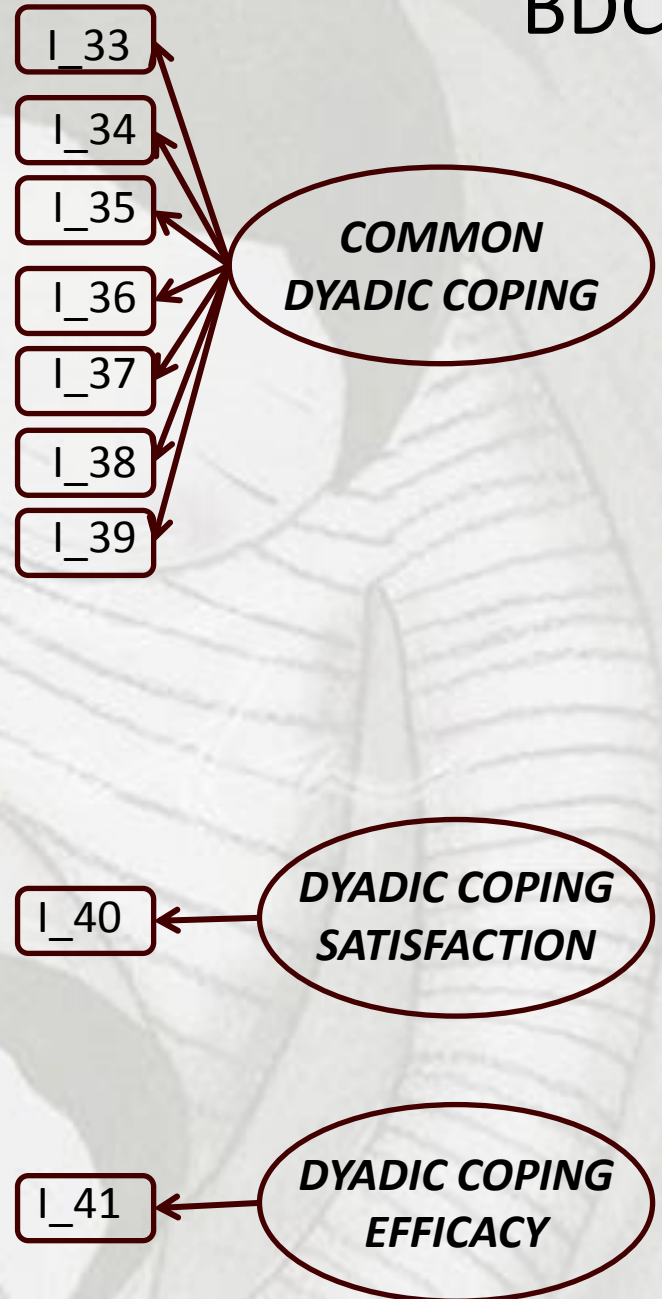
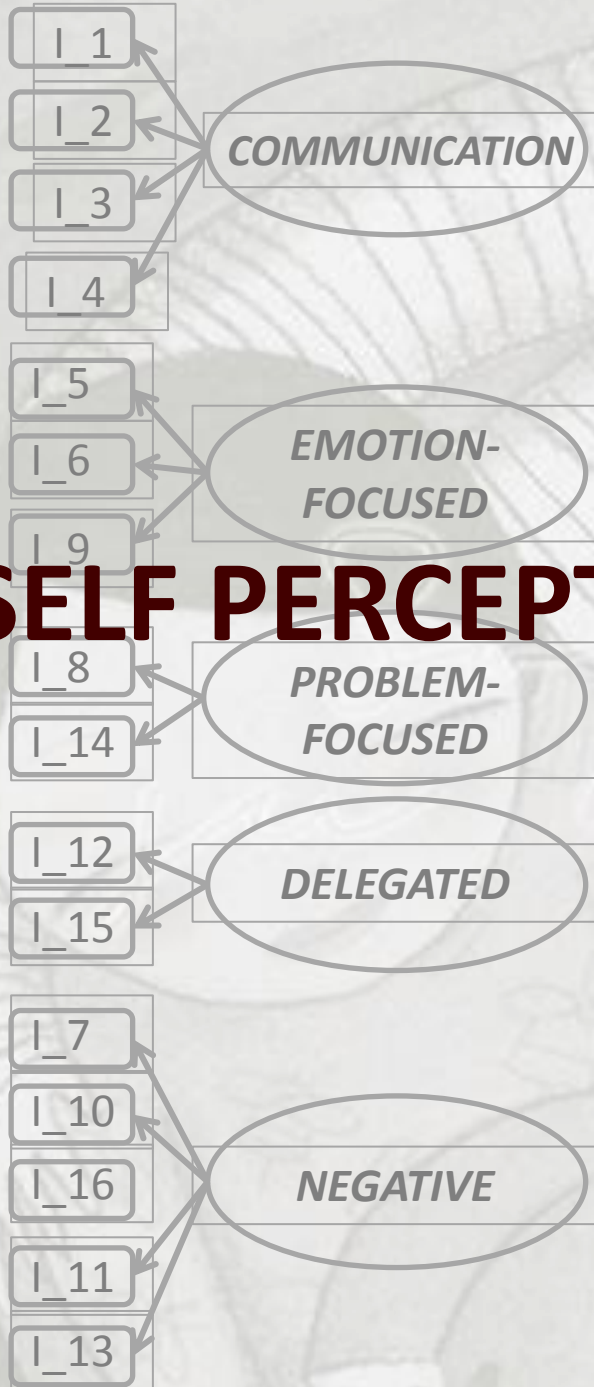


- ***Personal information and anamnestic questionnaire***
- ***Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale – EPDS –***
(Cox et al., 1987; Benvenuti et al., 1999; Loscalzo et al., 2015);
- ***Dyadic Adjustment Scale – DAS –***
(Spanier, 1976; Gentili et al., 2002);
- ***Bodenmann’s Dyadic Coping Questionnaire – BDCQ –***
(Bodenmann, 1997, 2000; Donato et al., 2006).

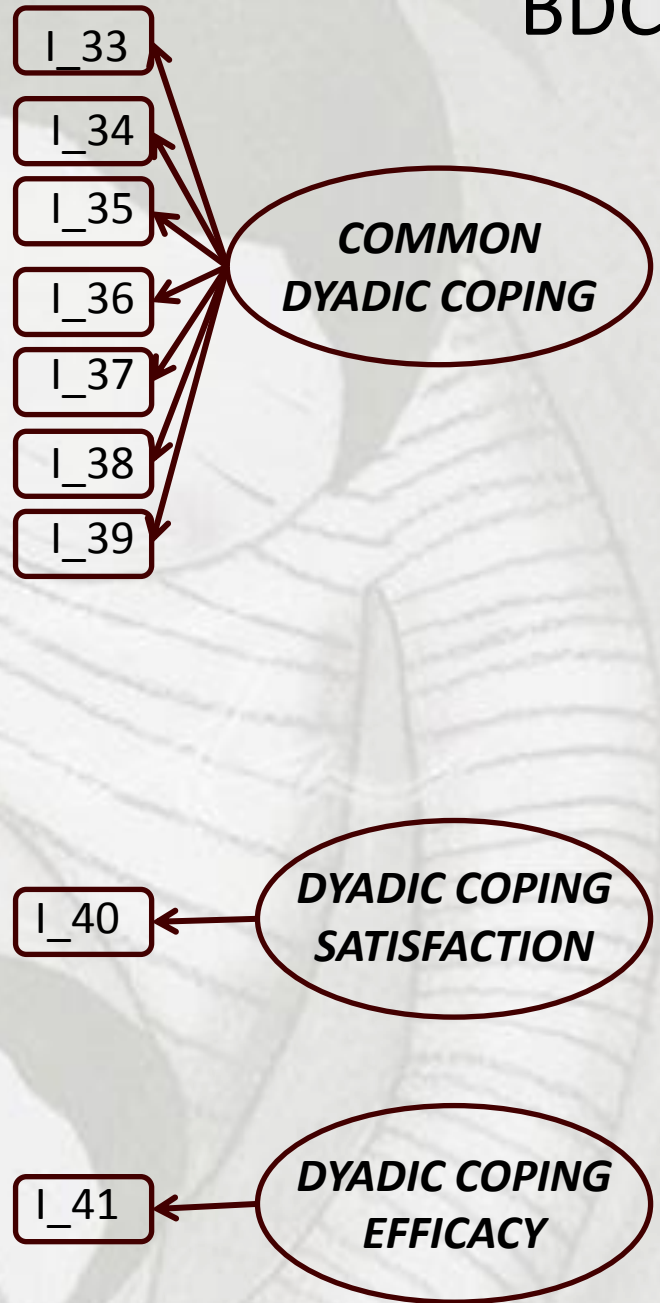
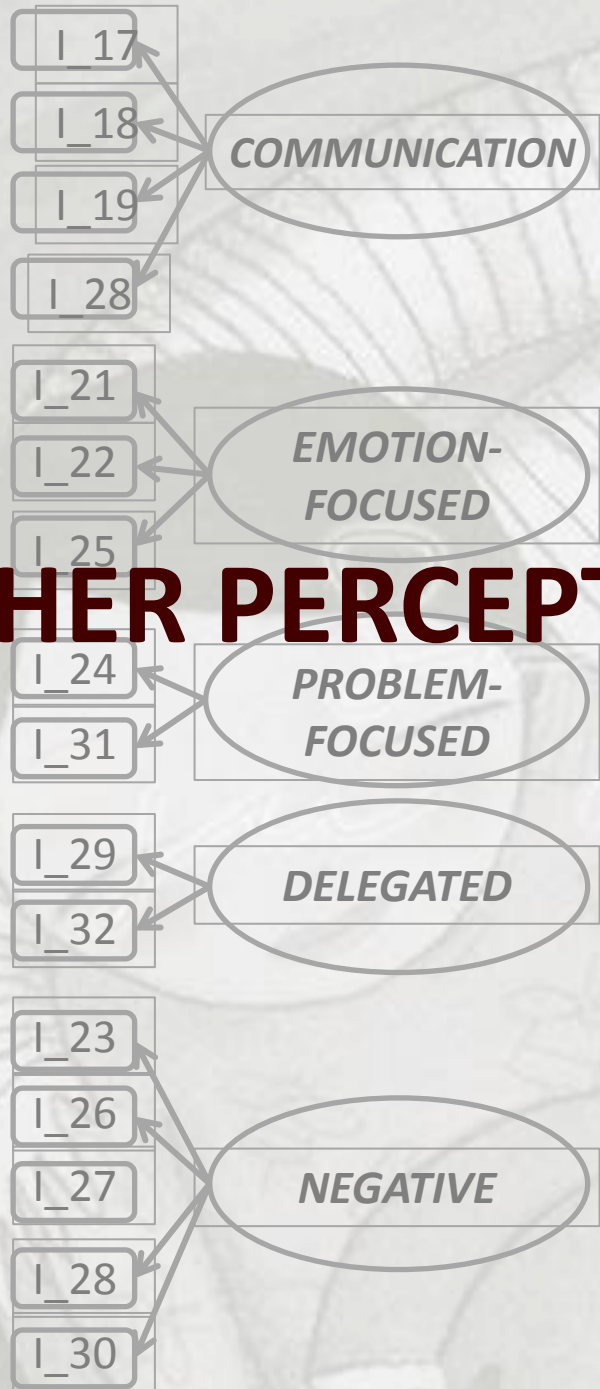
BDCQ



SELF PERCEPTION



OTHER PERCEPTION



Data analysis

- Descriptive statistics

1

- Paired-samples t test

2

- Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM)
(Kenny, 1996; Kenny & Cook, 1999)

3

Results

Descriptive statistics

	WOMEN	MEN	T value (p)
	M (SD)	M (SD)	
EPDS	7,49 (4,15)	4,93 (3,52)	4,62 (p<.000)
DAS	125,27 (13,17)	124,90 (13,36)	.34 (p>.05)

Dyadic Coping

WOMEN

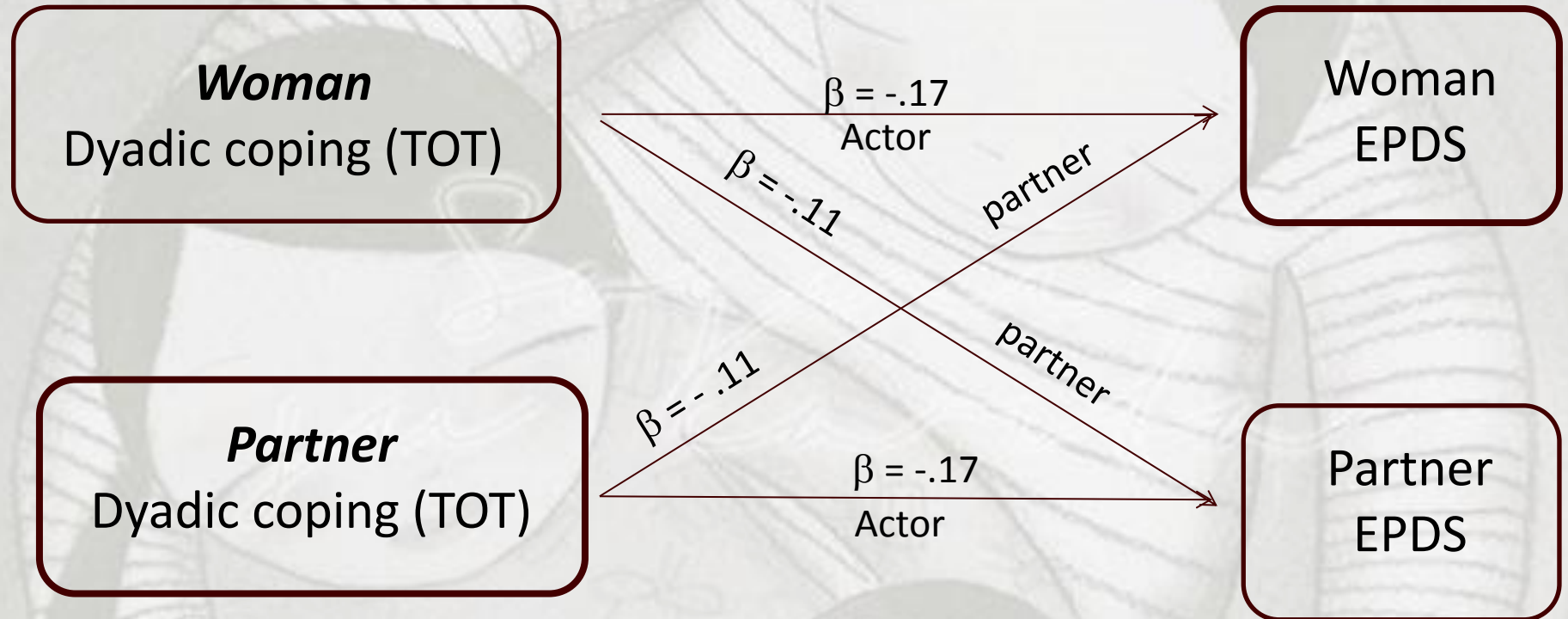
MEN

1

	Self perceptions M (SD)	Other perceptions M (SD)	Self perceptions M (SD)	Other perceptions M (SD)
TOTAL SCORE	112,29 (10,17)		112,87 (13,35)	
Stress communication	3,53 (.72)	2,81 (.63)	3,18 (.88)	3,15 (.71)
Emotion-focused Supportive DC	3,67 (.70)	3,87 (.75)	4,00 (.73)	3,71 (.83)
Problem-focus Supportive DC	1,46 (.83)	1,73 (.92)	1,56 (1.00)	1,62 (.97)
Delegated DC	2,74 (.60)	2,67 (.73)	2,96 (.72)	2,67 (.62)
Negative DC	2,62 (.54)	3,03 (.83)	2,71 (.74)	3,15 (.76)
Common DC Relaxation		2,88 (.62)		2,87 (.78)
Common DC Problem-focused		4,01 (.71)		4,09 (.79)
Common DC Seeking Closeness		3,52 (.90)		3,54 (.81)
DC Satisfaction		3,68 (1.10)		3,74 (.97)
DC Efficacy		3,97 (.91)		4,27 (.75)

FACTOR	WOMEN		MEN	
	Self perceptions M (SD)	Other perceptions M (SD)	Self perceptions M (SD)	Other perceptions M (SD)
TOTAL SCORE	112,29 (10,17)		112,87 (13,35)	
Stress communication	3,53 (.72)	2,81 (.63)	3,18 (.88)	3,15 (.71)
Emotion-focused Supportive DC	3,67 (.70)	3,87 (.75)	4,00 (.73)	3,71 (.83)
Problem-focus Supportive DC	1,46 (.83)	1,73 (.92)	1,56 (1.00)	1,62 (.97)
Delegated DC	2,74 (.60)	2,67 (.73)	2,96 (.72)	2,67 (.62)
Negative DC	2,62 (.54)	3,03 (.83)	2,71 (.74)	3,15 (.76)
Common DC Relaxation	2,88 (.62)		2,87 (.78)	
Common DC Problem-focused	4,01 (.71)		4,09 (.79)	
Common DC Seeking Closeness	3,52 (.90)		3,54 (.81)	
DC Satisfaction	3,68 (1.10)		3,74 (.97)	
DC Efficacy	3,97 (.91)		4,27 (.75)	

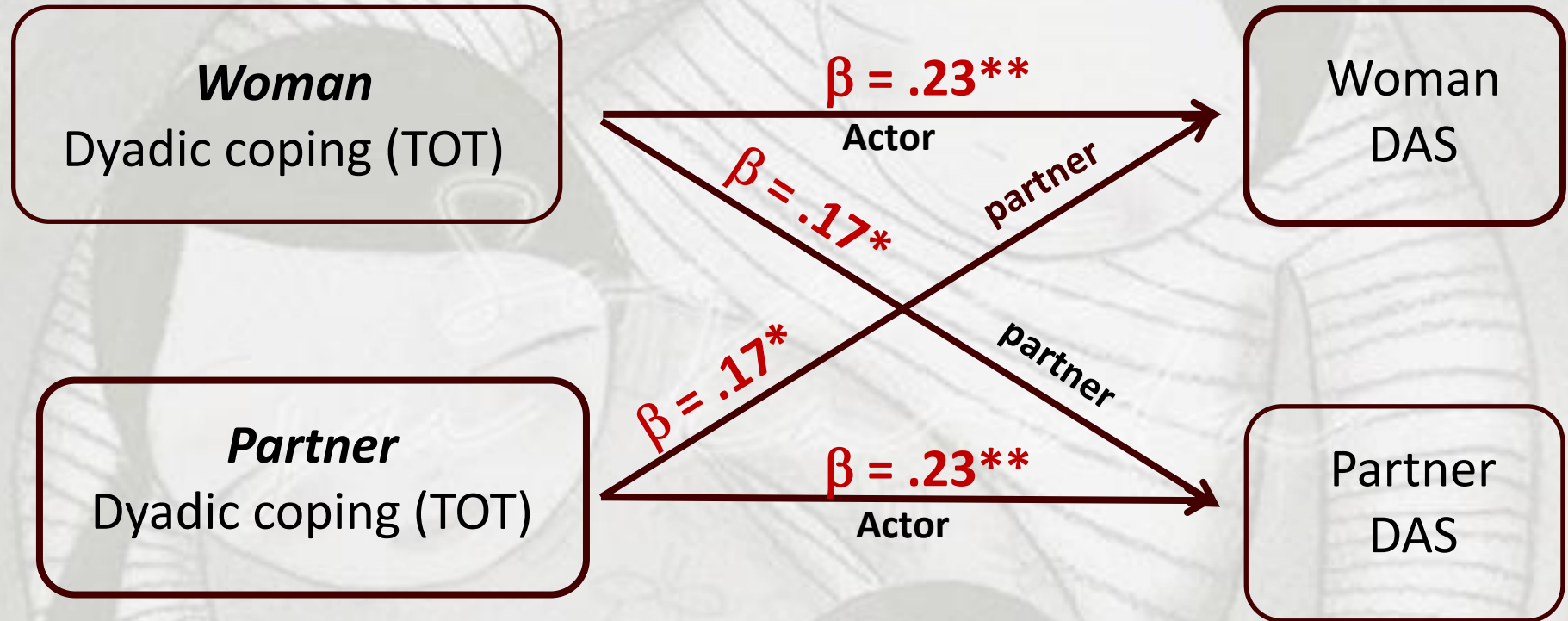
Actor and partner effects of dyadic coping (TOTAL SCORE) as predictor of EPDS



APIM with distinguishable dyads regression model.

- $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
- **standardized coefficients**

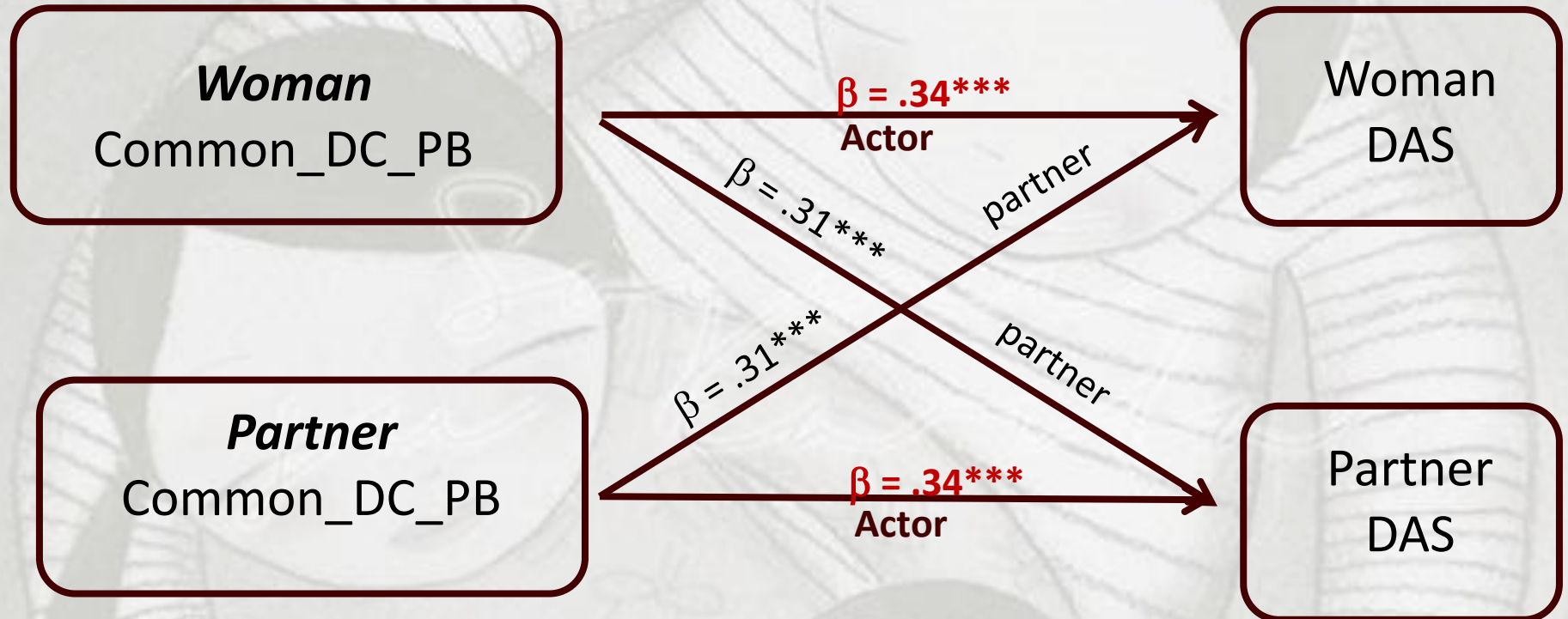
Actor and partner effects of dyadic coping (TOTAL SCORE) as predictor of DAS



APIM with distinguishable dyads regression model.

- $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
- **standardized coefficients**

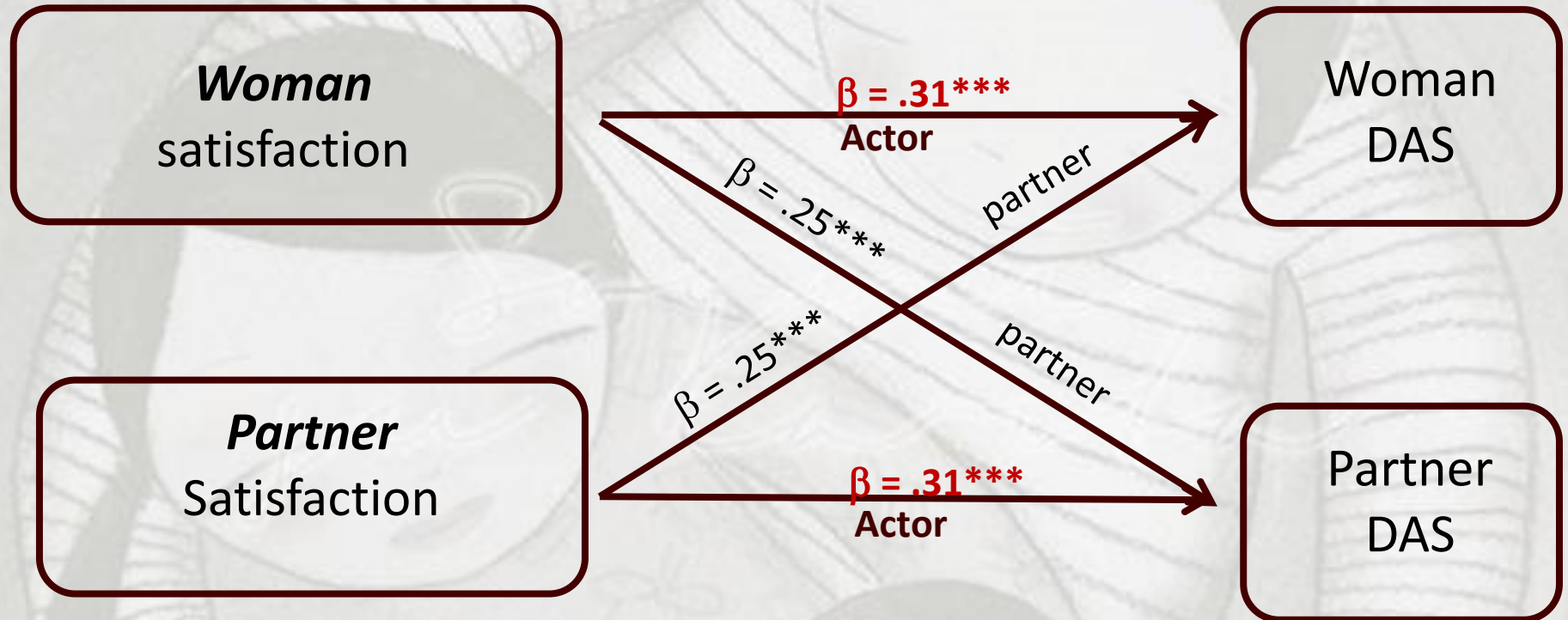
Actor and partner effects of Common DC as predictors of DAS



APIM with distinguishable dyads regression model.

- $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
- **standardized coefficients**

Actor and partner effects of Satisfaction about DC as predictors of DAS



APIM with distinguishable dyads regression model.

- $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
- **standardized coefficients**

Actor and partner effects of **Efficacy** about DC as predictors of **DAS**

Woman
Efficacy

Woman
DAS

$\beta = .52^{***}$
Actor

partner

$\beta = .25^{***}$

Partner
Efficacy

Partner
DAS

$\beta = .52^{***}$
Actor

partner

$\beta = .25^{***}$

APIM with distinguishable dyads regression model.

- $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
- **standardized coefficients**

CONCLUSIONS

**PARTNERS'
PERCEIVED DYADIC
COPING**



**HIGH AND
CONGRUENT**



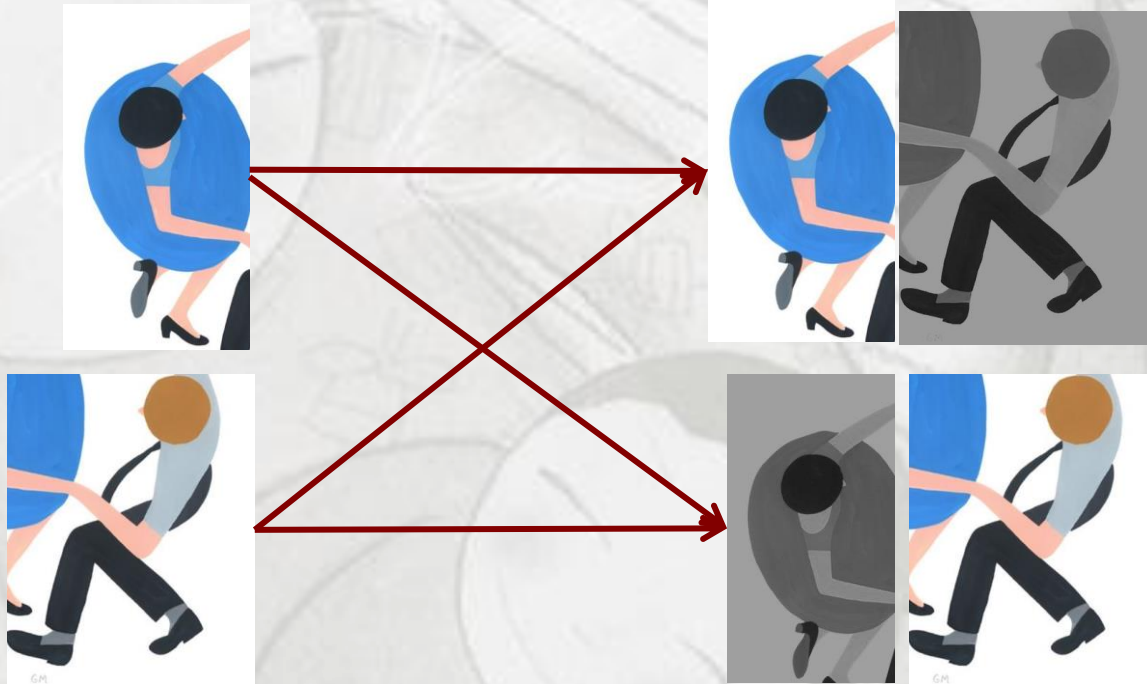
CONCLUSIONS

Transition to parenthood - pregnancy

DYADIC COPING



**COUPLE
ADJUSTMENT**



CONCLUSIONS

Transition to parenthood - pregnancy

DYADIC COPING



**INDIVIDUAL
WELL-BEING
(DEPRESSION)**



FURTHER RESEARCH

LOGITUDINAL DESIGNS

**DYADIC COPING
(PREGNANCY)**



**COUPLE ADJUSTMENT
(AFTER BIRTH)**

**INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING
(AFTER BIRTH)**

FURTHER RESEARCH

LOGITUDINAL DESIGNS

**DYADIC COPING
(PREGNANCY)**



**COUPLE ADJUSTMENT
(AFTER BIRTH)**

**INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING
(AFTER BIRTH)**

«AT RISK» PREGNANCIES

**DYADIC COPING
(PREGNANCY)**



**COUPLE ADJUSTMENT
(PREGNANCY)**

**INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING
(PREGNANCY)**



Thank you

valentina.fenaroli@unicatt.it

sara.molgora@unicatt.it