

Heterogeneity in Supportive Parenting Practices: Associations with Mental Health and Competence in Toddlerhood

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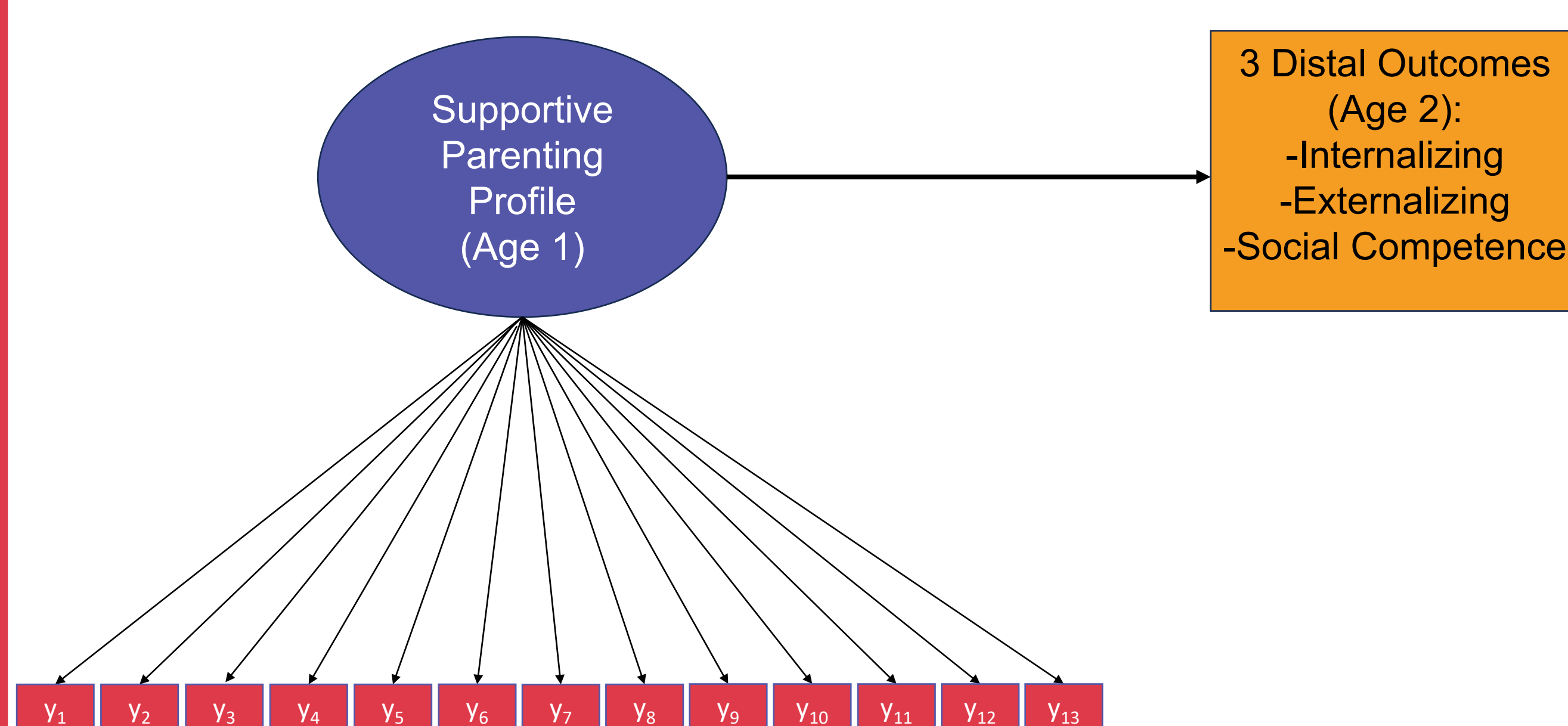
Background

- Higher levels of supportive parenting are often associated with fewer internalizing and externalizing problems in early childhood, making it a robust predictor of early psychopathology.
- Supportive parenting remains a rather amorphous construct in early childhood, with prior research typically examining parenting practices as composite or individual variables.
- Addressing the **multidimensionality** of supportive parenting practices can provide a more **nuanced representation** of how early parenting behaviors shape young children's burgeoning mental health and adaptive functioning.
- Such findings have the potential to facilitate the design and delivery of tailored parenting services that **capitalize on parents' strengths** and better meet needs of individual families.

Current Study

RQ1: Do meaningful latent profiles of supportive parenting emerge when child are ~1 year of age?

RQ2: Do these profiles predict internalizing/externalizing problems and social competence at age ~2?



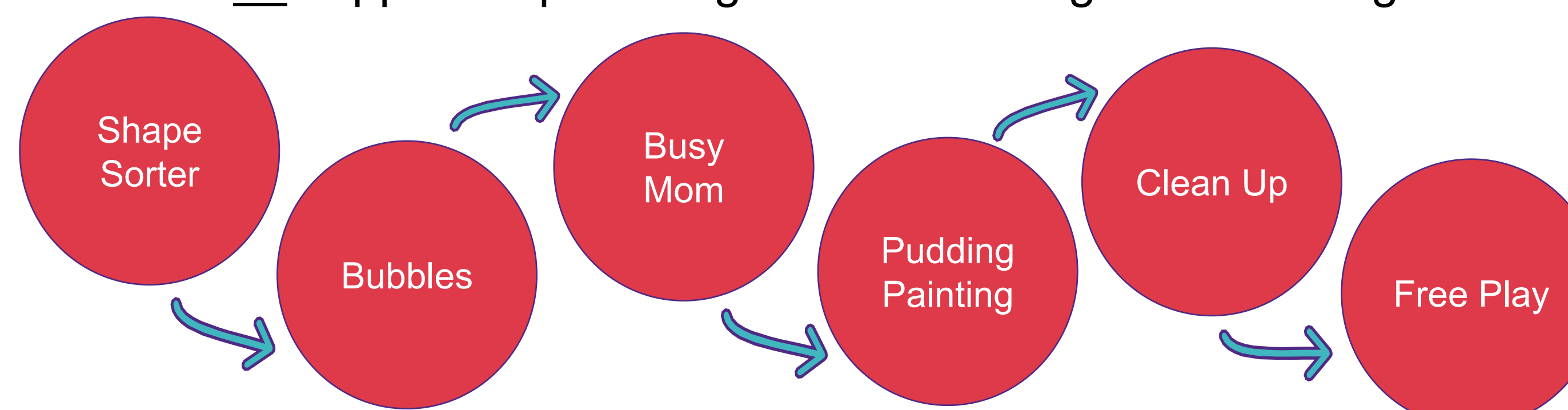
Participants/Procedure

- $N = 333$ mother-child dyads (157 girls)
- Child age 12-18 months at Time 1 and 24-36 months at Time 2
- Children were:
 - 49% White
 - 25% Black
 - 2% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - 8% More Than One Race
 - 25% Hispanic
- Mothers and toddlers completed a laboratory visit at Age 1 to assess observed supportive parenting
- Mothers completed interviews and surveys at Age 2 to assess child psychopathology and social-emotional competence

Method & Results

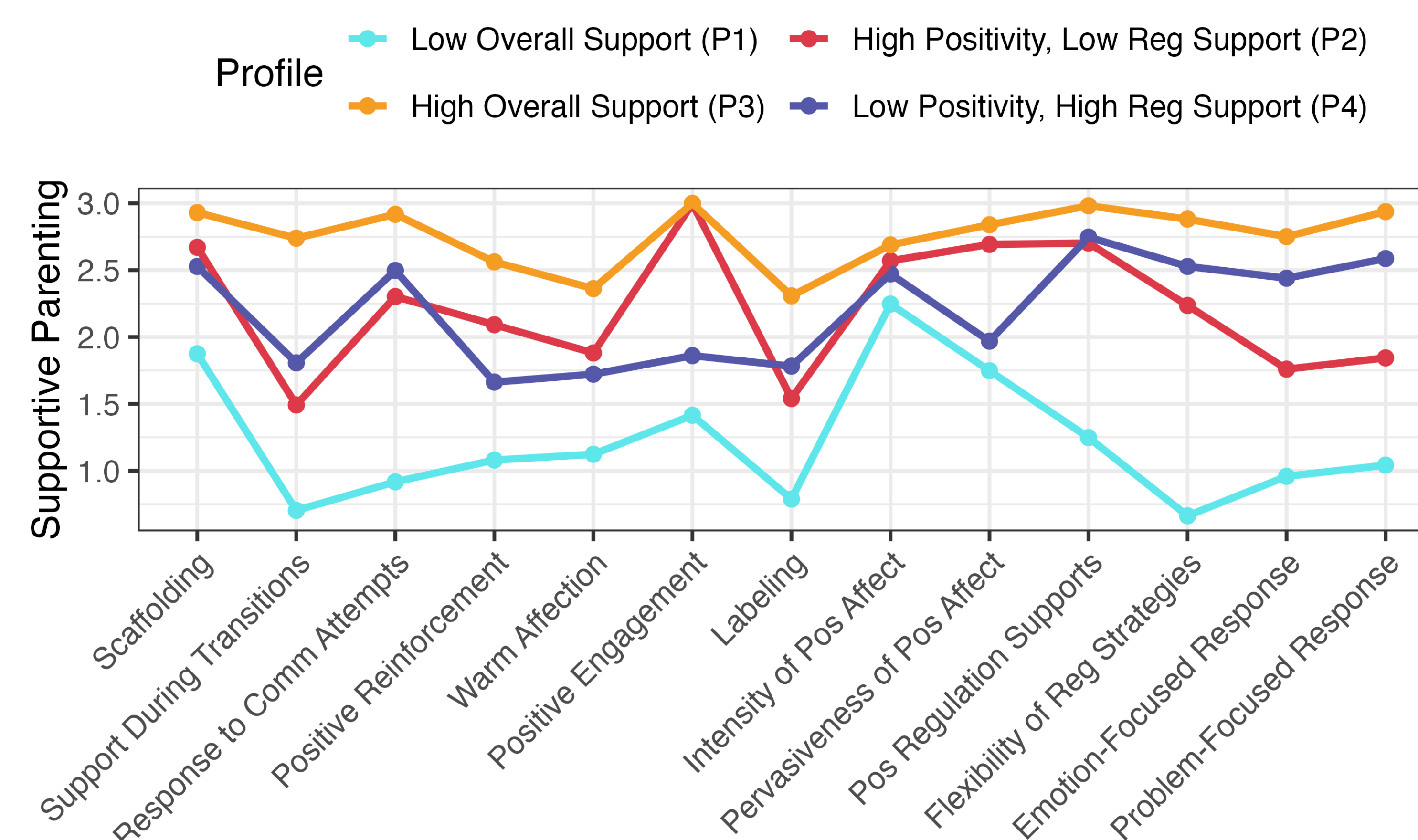
Age 1 Measures

- Infant version of the Disruptive Behavior Diagnostic Observation Schedule (DB-DOS; Wakschlag et al., 2008)
 - Coded for 13 supportive parenting behaviors using the Parenting Clinical Observation Schedule (P-COS; Hill et al., 2008) on scale of 0-3



Age 2 Measures

- Preschool Age Psychiatric Assessment (PAPA; Egger et al., 2004) interview assessed child internalizing and externalizing problems
- Brief Infant-Toddler Social and Emotional Assessment (BITSEA; Briggs-Gowan et al., 2004) assessed child social-emotional competence



Model fit statistics from LPA of mothers' supportive parenting behaviors

Profiles	Profile N	BIC	Entropy	Bootstrapped LRT p Value	Smallest class size %	Model Converge
1	333	9160.75	--	--	--	Y
2	34-299	7615.09	0.997	0.000	10%	Y
3	22-73-238	7186.84	0.951	0.000	7%	Y
4	24-44-229-36	6928.42	0.974	0.000	7%	Y
5	14-18-56-227-18	6660.47	0.967	0.000	4%	N

Distal outcome mean differences between latent profiles (Wald Chi-Squared Tests)

Distal Outcome	Profile	Distal Mean	Profile 1 χ^2	Profile 2 χ^2	Profile 3 χ^2
Internalizing	P1	3.751			
	P2	4.274	0.206		
	P3	2.894	0.742	4.505*	
	P4	3.523	0.040	0.790	1.065
Externalizing	P1	6.752			
	P2	5.226	1.105		
	P3	6.280	0.136	1.422	
	P4	6.287	0.092	0.780	0.000
Competence	P1	15.618			
	P2	18.032	4.775*		
	P3	17.680	4.531*	0.275	
	P4	14.694	0.330	5.393*	5.002*

Data Analysis

- Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) was used to identify subgroups of parents with similar supportive parenting behavioral patterns
- BCH 3-Step Approach (Bolck et al., 2004) with Distal Outcome modeled in Mplus Version 8.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 2024)
 - Means and variances were freely estimated
 - Variances of indicators were held equal and covariances fixed at zero to estimate most parsimonious model
- Optimal number of profiles was selected based on:
 - BIC
 - Entropy
 - p value below .05 for the Bootstrapped LRT
 - Smallest profile size no smaller than 5% of sample
 - Model convergence

Conclusions

- Internalizing**
 - The High Positivity/Low Regulation Support profile (P2) had toddlers with significantly higher internalizing problems than the High Overall Support profile (P3).
- Externalizing** → no significant differences
- Competence**
 - The High Positivity/Low Regulation Support profile (P2) and the High Overall Support profile (P3) had toddlers with significantly higher social-emotional competence than the Low Overall Support profile (P1) and the Low Positivity/High Regulation Support profile (P4).
 - Higher levels of positive affect, without proper support particularly in response to child dysregulation, may increase child internalizing risk.
 - However, high levels of positive affect may be beneficial for fostering social-emotional competence.
- Future research will test relations with preschool outcomes.

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