Family Cohesion and Youth Dysregulation: Moderation by Bullying and Gender

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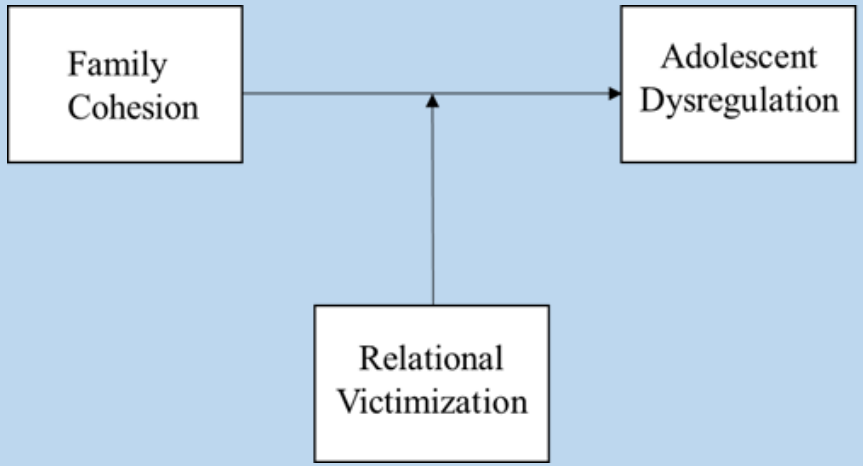
Background

- Emotional dysregulation and adolescent psychosocial adjustment
  - Linked with anxiety, depression, substance use, etc.
- Family Cohesion as a protective factor
- The bioecological model
  - Relational Victimization
    - Being bullied as a peer-based stressor
- Gender
  - Girls and dysregulation, sensitivity to family variables

Boyes, Carmody, Clarke, & Hasking, 2017; Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Deng, Li, & Tang, 2014; Herres, Ewing, & Kobak, 2016; Rabinowitz, Osigwe, Drabick, & Reynolds, 2016; Riggs & Brown, 2017

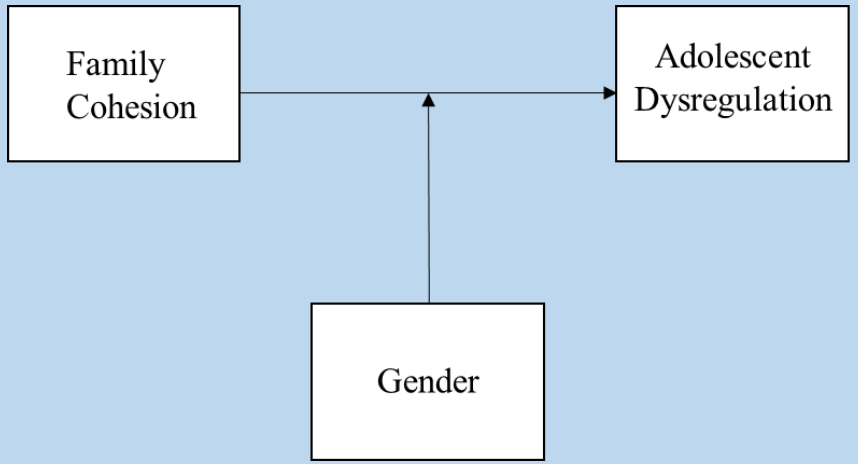
Present Study

- Aim 1: to examine whether relational victimization moderates relationship between family cohesion and dysregulation



H1: negative association stronger with high relational victimization (Stress-buffering)

- Aim 2: to examine gender differences



H2: negative association stronger for girls

Methods

- Participants
  - N =1,098 7th and 8th grade students from public schools in CT & MA
  - Mean age 12.75, SD =.71, 51% girls
  - 51% Non-Hispanic White, 9% African American, 20% Hispanic/Latinx, 3% Asian, 14% Multi-Ethnic, 3% other
- Procedures
  - In-school data collection in fall of 2016 (PANDA project)
- Measures
  - Demographic variables: age, gender, race/ethnicity, parent education
  - Cohesion subscale of the Family Satisfaction Scale (α=.84)
  - Emotional Reactivity Scale (α=.94)
  - Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Scale (Reverse scored; α=.83)
  - Relational Victimization Subscale of the Revised Peer Experiences Questionnaire SF (α=.80)

Olson & Wilson, 1982; Greco, Baer, & Smith, 2011; Nock et al., 2008; Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001

Moderated Regression Results

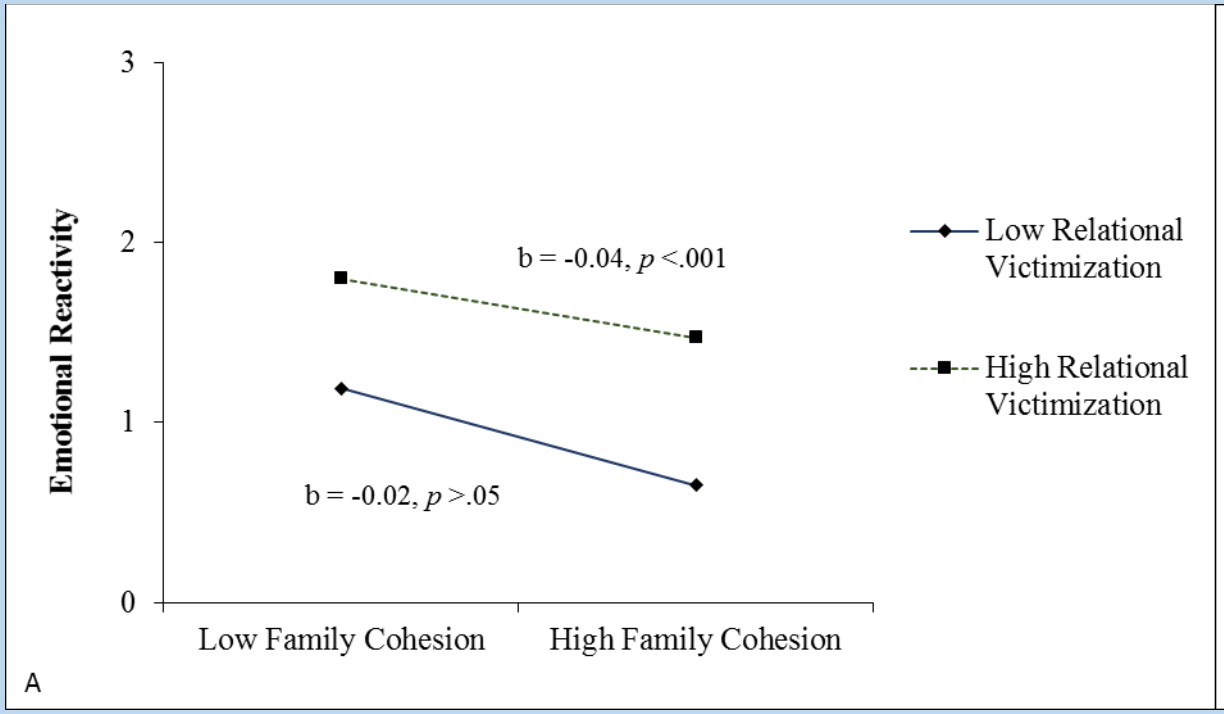
Linear OLS regression coefficients for emotional reactivity and poorer mindfulness

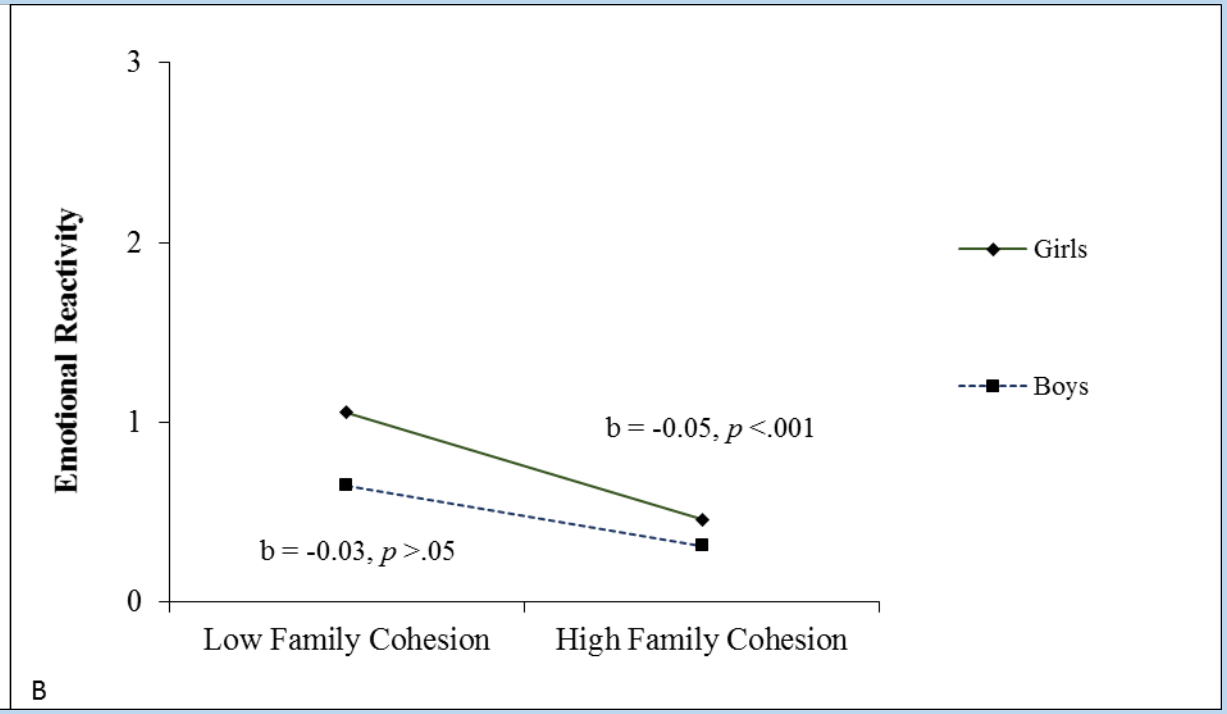
	Emotional Reactivity ($n = 946$)			Poorer Mindfulness ($n = 813$)		
	b	*SE*	*β*	*b*	*SE*	*β*
Age	0.027	0.028	0.028	0.508	.311	0.054
Black/African American	-0.023	0.101	-0.007	-1.904	1.118	-0.056
Latinx	0.142	0.076	0.056	1.406	0.846	0.057
Asian	0.064	0.178	0.010	0.753	2.445	0.010
Parent Education	-0.034	0.028	0.028	0.200	0.315	0.022
Family Cohesion (FC)	-0.047	0.009	-0.312***	-0.435	0.094	-0.300***
Relational Victimization (RV)	0.728	0.726	0.126	13.653	8.072	0.246
Gender (G)	-0.880	0.295	-0.496**	-14.222	3.272	-0.784***
FC* RV	0.051	0.025	0.248*	-0.075	0.272	-0.038
FC*G	0.021	0.009	0.339*	0.389	0.099	0.648***
RV *G	-0.226	0.343	-0.037	1.006	3.794	0.017
F		28.22***			14.15***	
R^2		0.25			0.16	

Note. Girls and White adolescents served as the reference group.

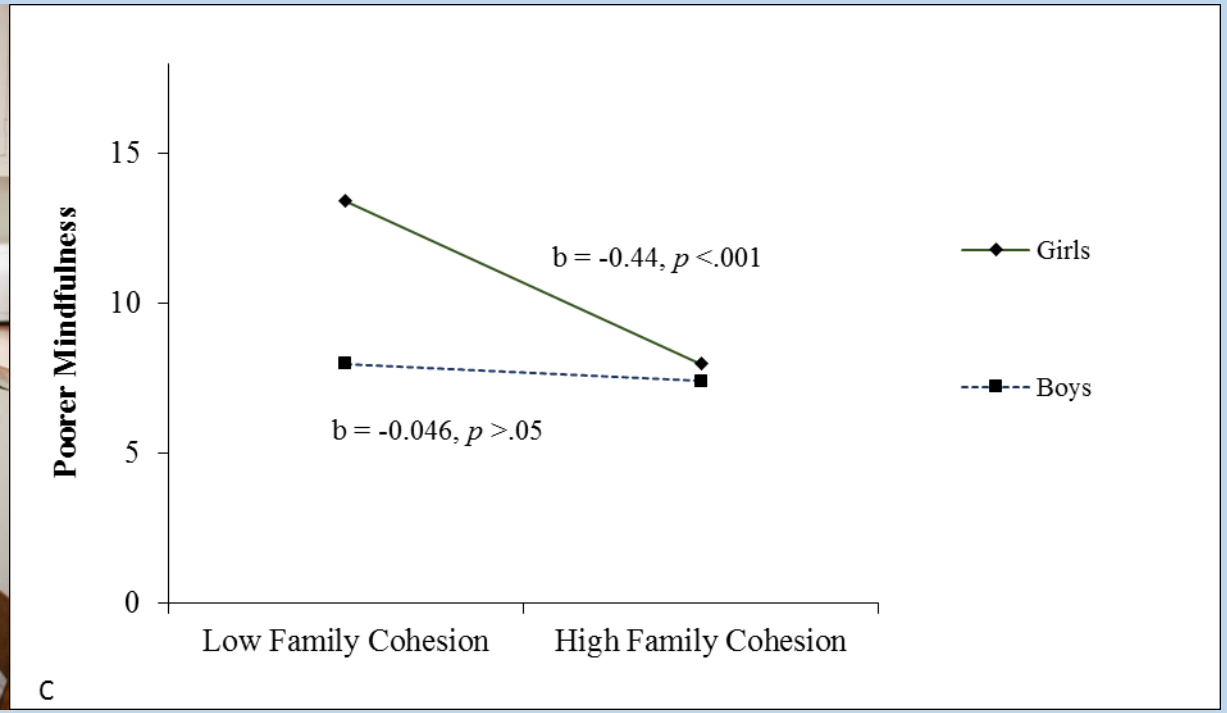
*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Post Hoc Results for Emotional Reactivity





Post Hoc Results for Poorer Mindfulness



Implications and Conclusions

- Cross-sectional evidence for stress-buffering effects of family cohesion in the presence of relational victimization for early adolescent dysregulation
  - Next step: longitudinal
- Evidence that family cohesion was more closely tied to emotional dysregulation for adolescent girls
  - Extends literature on gendered effects of family functioning
- Highlights the need for prevention/interventionists to consider multiple systems at work in the lives of adolescents, including the family, as well as the need to consider gender

Questions for Later Discussion

- Which characteristics of the family or parent-child relationships are most protective against emotional dysregulation or other developmental concerns?

- What individual differences may impact these protective features of the family?

Thank you