



ERFCON 2017

PRECONFERENCE: **GROWING RESILIENCE: RESEARCHING BEYOND ACADEMIA**

SYMPOSIUM:

**Resilience at different levels and populations:
studies conducted at Faculty of Education and
Rehabilitation Sciences**

**Ivana Maurović, Martina Ferić, Josipa Mihić, Gabriijela Ratkajec Gašević,
Antonija Žižak**

16 MAY ZAGREB

Introduction

- Resilience has been subject of lectures and review articles/books among scientist/teachers at Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences for a long time
- Different elements of resilience were researched (risk, protective factors, outcomes)
- Studies on resilience started with research in 2013
- Since then, 4 studies were conducted that have been focused on resilience (at different level/with different population)
 - Regarding population: high risk population/low risk population
 - Regarding resilience levels: individual /family level

Rationale, aim and structure of symposium

- There are numerous challenges in conceptualization and operationalization of resilience at each level and population.
- The aim of this symposium is to present some of the possible ways of understanding the resilience of different systems by presenting four studies conducted at the Faculty of Education - Rehabilitation Sciences
- Studies:
 - 1) Research of individual resilience: adolescents in Children's homes in Croatia** (Maurović, I., Žižak, A.)
 - 2) Research of family resilience: high school students and their parents perspective** (Ferić, M., Maurović, I., Mihić, J., Ratkajec Gašević, G., Žižak, A.)
 - 3) Family resilience: youth at risk and parent's perspective** (Žižak, A., Maurović, I., Ferić, M., Ratkajec Gašević, G., Mihić, J.)
 - 4) Some aspects of individual resilience in relation to family resilience: college students perspective** (Mihić, J., Ferić, M., Maurović, I., Ratkajec Gašević, G., Žižak, A.)

Each study will be presented by focusing on:

- 1) the challenges of conceptualization and operationalization of resilience in the study
- 2) key results of the study
- 3) the extent to which study was participatory
- 4) possible improvements to the existing/future studies



Preconference
Growing resilience: Researching beyond academia
May 16th 2017

Research of individual resilience: Adolescents in Children's Homes in Croatia

Ivana Maurović, Antonija Žižak
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences
University of Zagreb, Croatia

Project funded by University of Zagreb (2013)

1. Challenges in conceptualization and operationalization of resilience in the study

Research rationale

- 47% of youth living in children's homes in Croatia have some kind of behavioural problems - clinical results (Sladović Franz, 2002).
 - it is not known **how** they are functioning concerning **other developmental outcomes**
 - **which protective mechanisms** and processes differentiate between those children that are functioning well and those that are not functioning well
- Resilience literature: question of indicators of risk, protective mechanisms, good outcomes (importance of comprehensive assessment)
 - who sets **criteria of good developmental outcome** for children in children's home and which are most important?
- It is hard to „**catch**” **the process of resilience** (without longitudinal and qualitative study)

Research problems

- 1) to identify differences in protective mechanisms between „resilient” and „non-resilient” youth when comprehensive assessment of developmental outcomes is taken into account
- 2) to identify key protective mechanisms, indicators of good developmental outcomes and the process of resilience from the perspective of resilient youth in children's homes
- 3) to compare and integrate data from quantitative and qualitative approach

Conceptualisation of resilience

- **Resilience** is a **process** of effectively negotiating, adapting to or managing significant sources of stress or trauma (**risk**). Assets and resources within the individual, their life and environment (**protective mechanisms**) facilitate this capacity for adaptation and bouncing back (**good outcome**) in the face of adversity (adopted from Windle, 2011)

Operationalisation of resilience in the study

(Convergence)

Quantitative

INDI

Main

(L)

External protective mechanisms

1. Family (CR, HE, MP)
2. Community (CR, HE)
3. Children's home (CR, HE)
4. School (CR, HE)
5. Friends (CR)
6. Connection to School
7. Participation in decision making and helping (children's home/School)
8. Participation in hobbies and interest (School/Community)
9. Friends (HE)

Internal protective mechanisms

1. Self-awareness and Self-efficacy
2. Empathy
3. Goals and aspirations
4. Problem solving

Adapted version of Resilience and Youth Development Module
(WestEd, 2000)(Cronbach α from .53 to .92)

ns

1991)

indicators

Data analysis

Quantitative part

- Descriptive statistics
- Discrimination analysis

Qualitative part

- Thematic analysis (Braun and Clark, 2006)
 - Transcription phase
 - Extensive reading
 - Recognizing themes
 - Integratin of themes

Integration of qualitative and quantitative data

Sample

Quantitative approach

- Convenience sample (80%) of adolescents age 14 - 18 from 14 Croatian Children's homes
- N= 228
- 45.6 % Male, 54.4% Female
- Mean age -16.79, SD -1.11
- 6,2 years on average separated from Family

Qualitative approach

- Adolescents from 14 Croatian Children's homes that were assessed by caregivers as resilient
- N= 24
- 13 Female, 11 Male
- Mean age – 17,2
- Time spent in home- 5,37

Data were collected from November 2013 to February 2014.

2) Key results of the study

Descriptive results

Major

M=3.34 (SD=.85)
(1-5)

School program (%):
Regular: 70.9
Special: 29.1

Number of MLE

External protective mechanisms (M of all protective mechanisms above 3 (accept 8):

- HE, MP)
- CR, HE)
- CR, HE)
- HE)

Protective mechanisms (Internal and external)

M = 4.79, SD=1.12
(0-7)

is

injection to school

Decision making and (School)

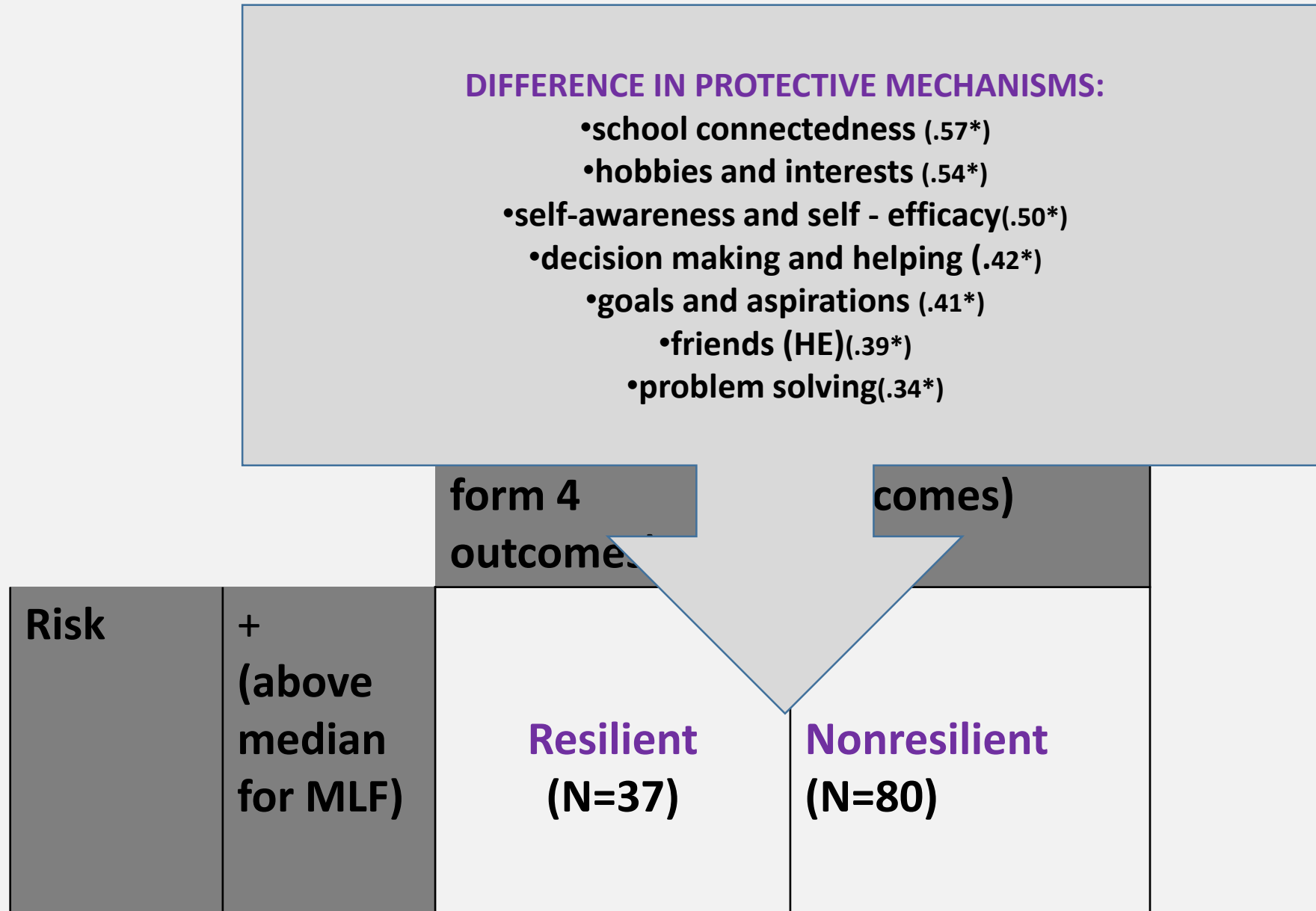
ties and interest

ol/Community)nds (HE)

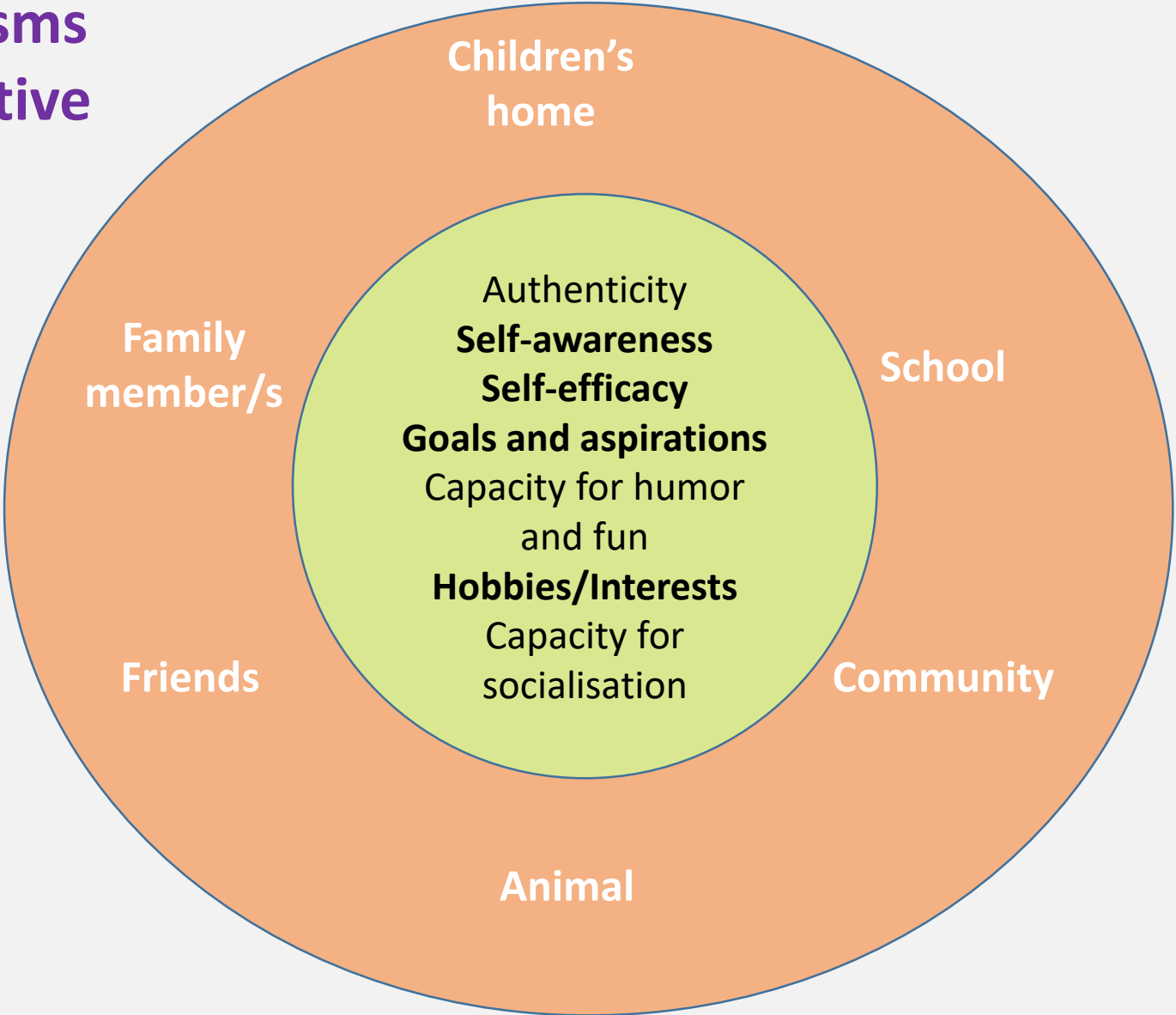
Internal protective mechanisms (M of all

- Self-awareness and Self-efficacy
- Empathy
- Goals and aspirations
- Problem solving

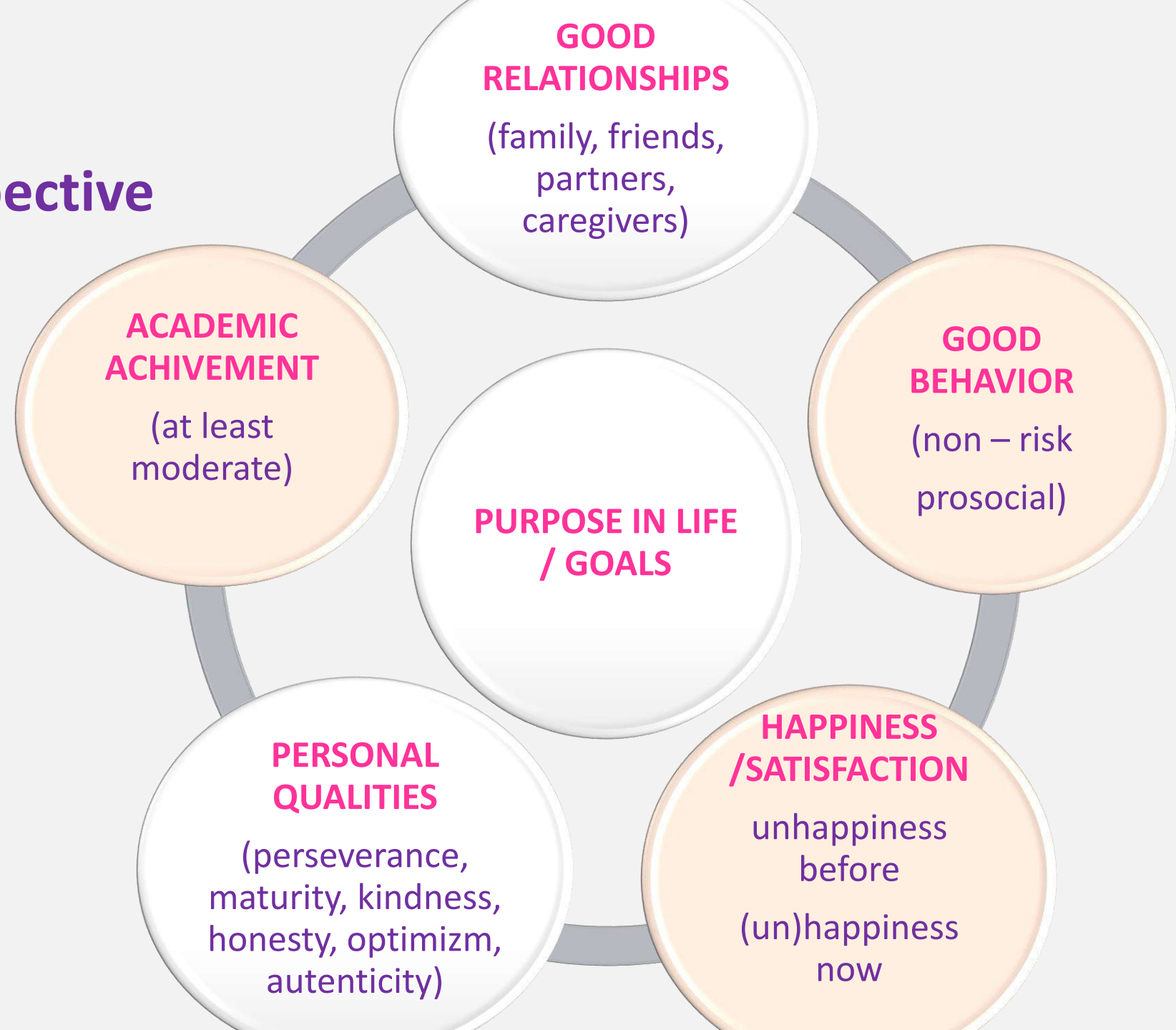
1. PROBLEM: Difference (resilient:non resilient)



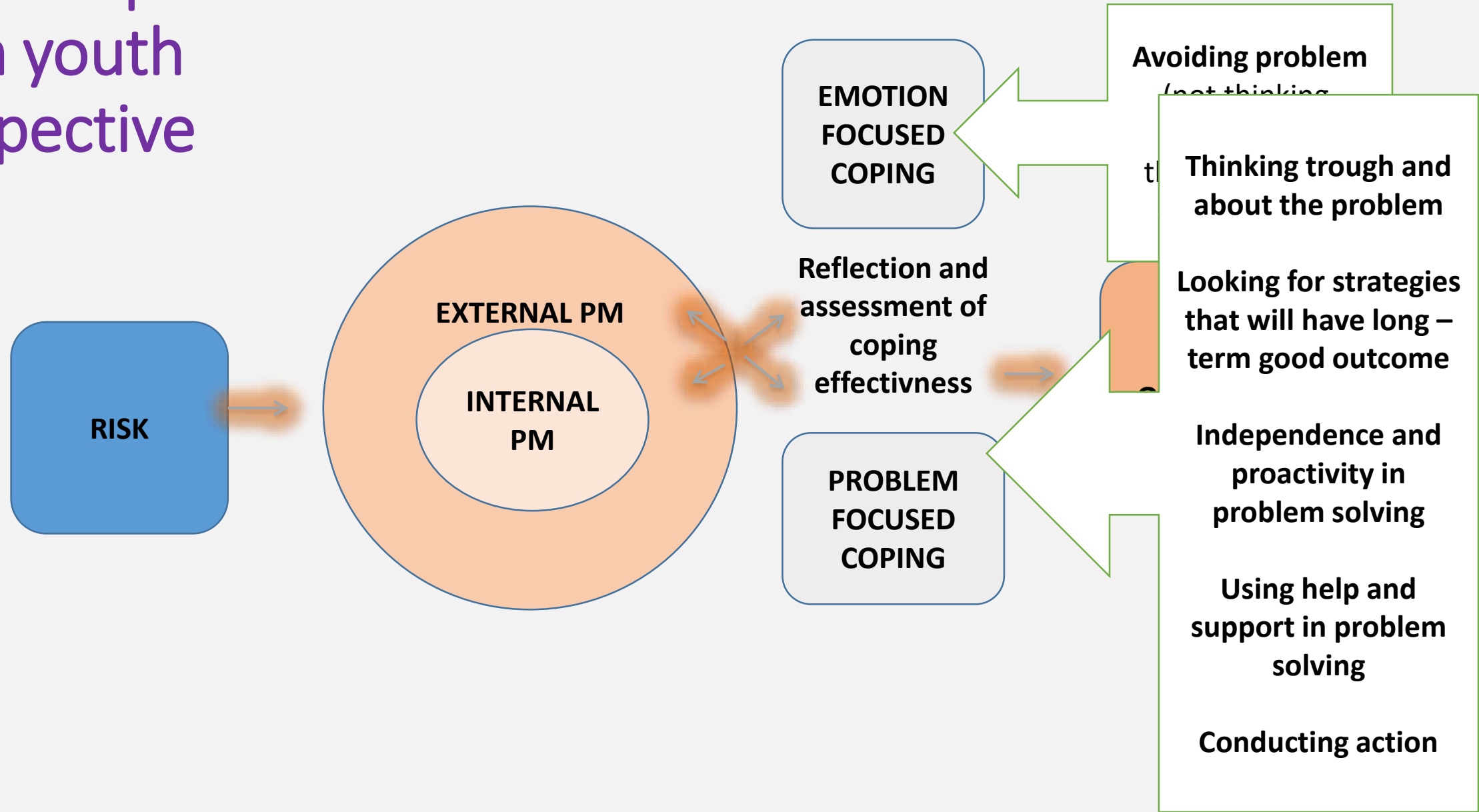
2.a) PROBLEM:
Protective mechanisms
from youth perspective



2.b) PROBLEM: Good outcomes from youth perspective



2.c) PROBLEM: Resilient process from youth perspective



3. PROBLEM - Integration of quantitative and qualitative data:

Qual & Quan research	OUTCOMES	PROTECTIVE MECHANISMS
SAME	Academic achievement „Good” behavior Happiness/satisfaction	Internal: self-awareness & self-efficacy, goals & aspirations, hobbies /interests External: majority of systems same (Family, School, Children’s home, Peers, Community) In qual research, more elements (existential needs met, contact - basics)
DIFFERENT	Good relationships (qual) Personal qualities (qual) Purpose in Life /goals (qual)	Internal: capacity for socialisation (helping others, resistance to manipulation), humor and fun, authenticity External: different system (Animal) different aspects in systems: fulfilment of existential needs (Family, Children’s home), regular contact (Family), stability in the time of replacement, sense of normality (School), material support (School) New aspect in qualitative approach: Coping process

3) The extent to which study was participatory

- Participants were included in:
 - Designing instruments (Major life events, Daily hassles) – through focus group
 - In assessment (quantitative /qualitative)
 - In dissemination of results: final conference of the project (15 young people)
 - Feedback on data
 - implication for intervention – discussion with caregivers

4) Possible improvements to the existing/future studies

- More participation of children – in all phases of research (planning, conducting, disseminating)
- Inclusion of coping process in resilience research
- Inclusion of questions regarding changing social structure that support adversity of youth in Children's homes
- More use of results – creating and conducting interventions for different systems

Thank you for your attention!



Research of family resilience: high school students and their parents perspective

Martina Ferić, Ivana Maurović, Josipa Mihić, Gabriijela Ratkajec Gašević, Antonija Žižak
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences
University of Zagreb, Croatia

Preconference
Growing resilience: Researching beyond academia
May 16th 2017

Project

- Family resilience research

Project team

- Antonija Žižak, project leader
- Martina Ferić, Ivana Maurović, Josipa Mihić, Gabriјela Ratkajec Gašević

Timeframe

- 2015

Funded by

- University of Zagreb

Family resilience research (2015)

Objectives

- to expand knowledge on the family resilience from the perspective of parents and young people
- to determine how family protective factors contributes to the developmental outcomes of young people

The challenges of conceptualization and operationalization of resilience in the study

Family resilience (Walsh, 2003)

„.....dynamic process of perseverance, self governance and growth which occurs during the response to crises and challenges.....”

Three key elements:

1. A risk
2. Protective factors/mechanisms
3. An outcome

family protective factors

Family Resilience Assessment Scale
Sixbey (2005)

Family Communication and Problem Solving
Utilizing Social and Economic Resources
Maintaining the Positive Outlook
Family Connectedness
Family Spirituality
Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity

risk

Social Readjustment Rating Scale – SRRS
Homes & Rahe, 1967

assessment of probability for negative
outcomes



outcome

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
Goodman, 2006

prosocial behavior
problem behavior

Key results of the study

Sample

- convenience sample
- 304 first grade high school students and 194 of their parents

Students

- female 63.5%, male 36.5%
- average age 15.3

Parents

- mothers 54.5%, fathers 45.5%
- average age 44.0

Protective factors

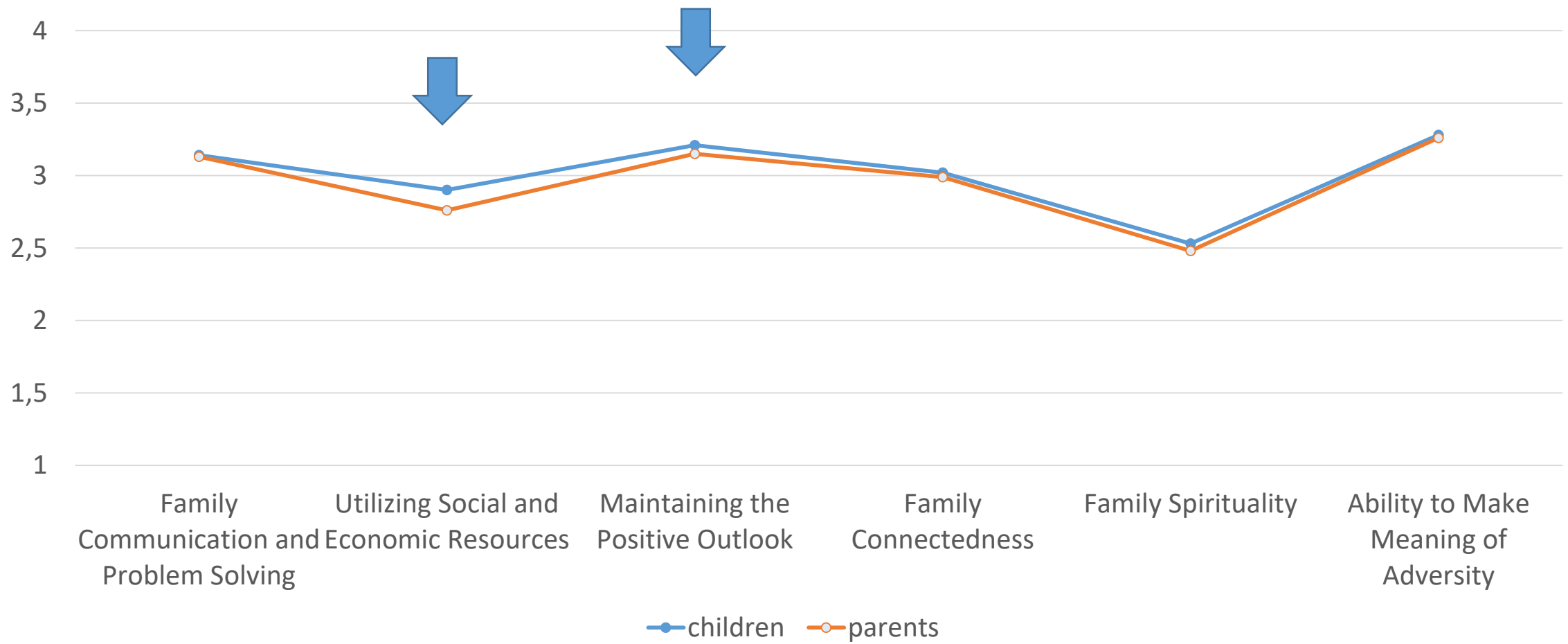
Instrument

Family Resilience Assessment Scale (Sixbey, 2005)

- Family Communication and Problem Solving
 - Utilizing Social and Economic Resources
 - Maintaining the Positive Outlook
 - Family Connectedness
 - Family Spirituality
 - Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity
-
- factor analysis - original (Sixbey, 2005) 6 factor solution was not confirmed
 - the differences by the 6 scales was explored

Scales		Mean (1-4)	K-S test (Z)	Mann Whitney	Wilcoxon W	p
Family Communication and Problem Solving	children	3.14	.074	27304.000	46219.000	.163
	parents	3.13	.129			
Utilizing Social and Economic Resources	children	2.90	.106	23761.500	42676.500	.000
	parents	2.76	.138			
Maintaining the Positive Outlook	children	3.21	.111	25448.000	44363.000	.009
	parents	3.15	.252			
Family Connectedness	children	3.02	.111	27658.500	46573.500	.239
	parents	2.99	.114			
Family Spirituality	children	2.53	.085	28744.000	47659.000	.633
	parents	2.48	.128			
Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity	children	3.28	.178	27113.000	46028.000	.146
	parents	3.26	.247			

Results



Results

- all scales are assessed in high values
- there is no differences in the scales Family Communication and Problem Solving, Family Connectedness, Family Spirituality and Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity
- youth perceive more ***utilizing social and economic resources*** in the family than their parents
- youth perceive that their family is more able ***to maintain a positive perspective and outlook*** than their parents

Risk

Instrument

Social Readjustment Rating Scale – SRRS (Homes & Rahe, 1967)

- 42 possible events, standardized rating

Results

Average number of events in last year 4,47

scores	probability of negative outcomes	results
300+	80%	1.8%
150-299	50%	14.65%
> 150	30%	84.45%

Most rated stress sources

- a large mortgage or loan
- personal injury or illness
- change in health of family member
- change in financial state
- begin or end school

Results

- low stress events exposure
- most of the sample have score below 150 points – low probability of negative outcomes
- begin or end school – common event for whole sample
 - average level of disturbance assessed by youth - 3,25 (scale 1-10)

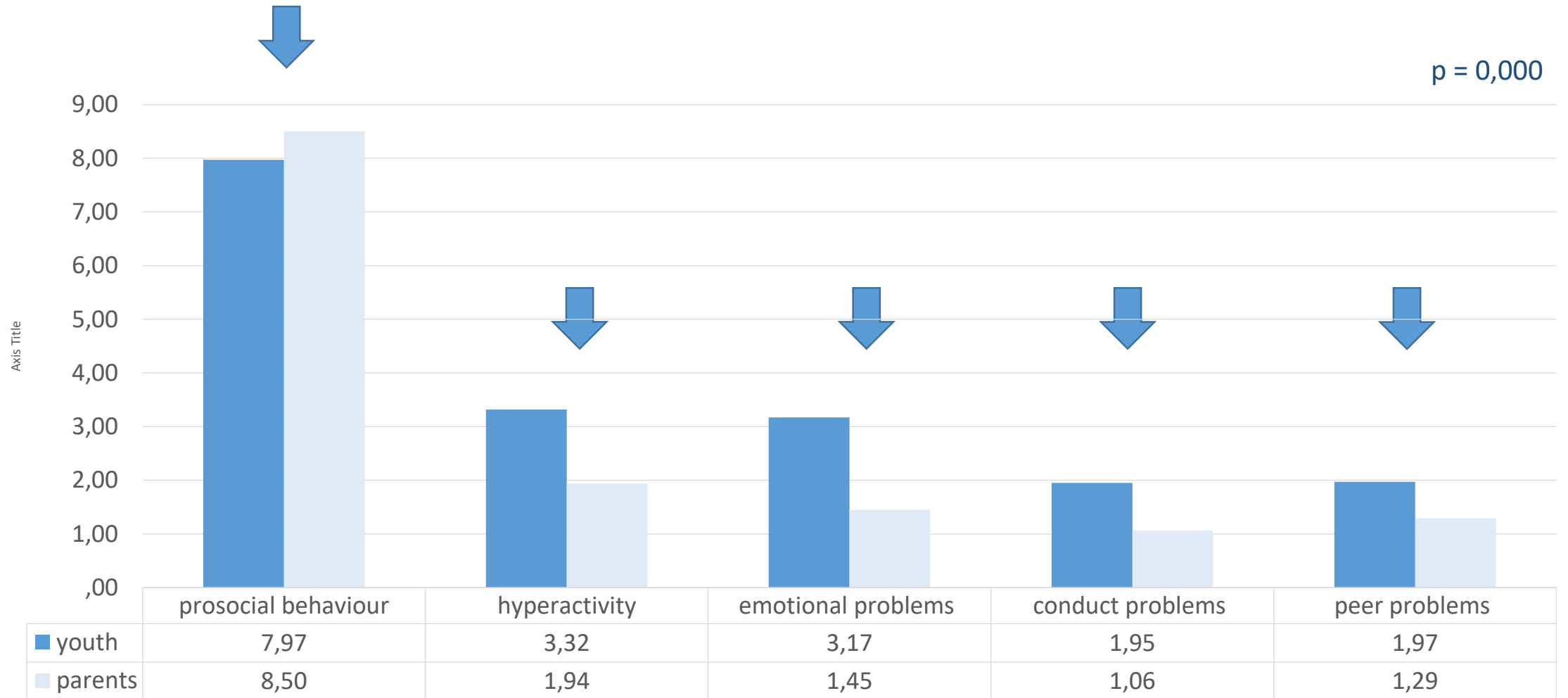
Outcomes

Instrument

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 2006)

- Prosocial behavior scale
- Emotional problems scale
- Conduct problems scale
- Hyperactivity scale
- Peer problems scale

Results



Results

	level of difficulty		
	low	moderate	high
youth	82.2%	11.4%	6.1%
parents	91.5%	4.3%	4.3%

	prosocial behavior		
	low	moderate	high
youth	1.7%	7.7%	90.6%
parents	0.9%	4.3%	94.8%

Results

- parents perceived more prosocial behavior and less problem behavior than youth
- high level of difficulties
 - youth 6.1%, parents 4.3%
- low level of prosocial behavior
 - youth 1.7%, parents 0.9%

Contribution of family mechanisms to behavior problems

- hierarchical regression analysis
- youth sample (N=304)

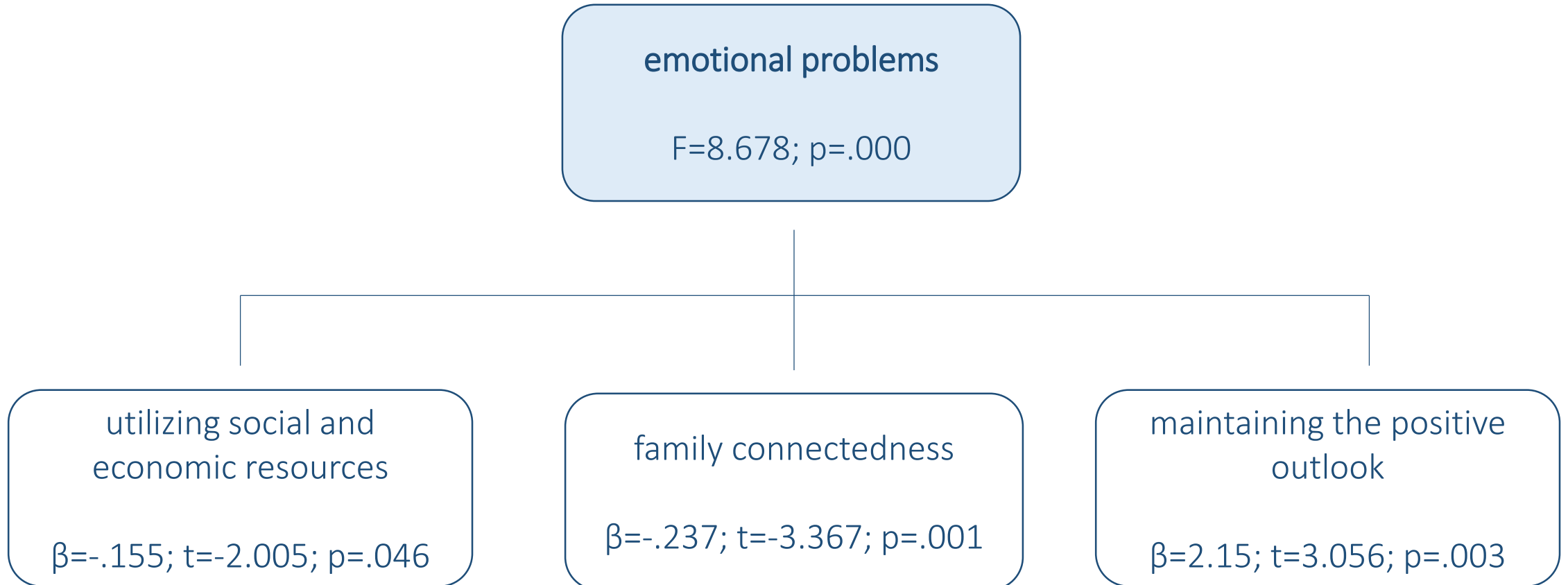
Independent variables

- stress level
- family protective factors

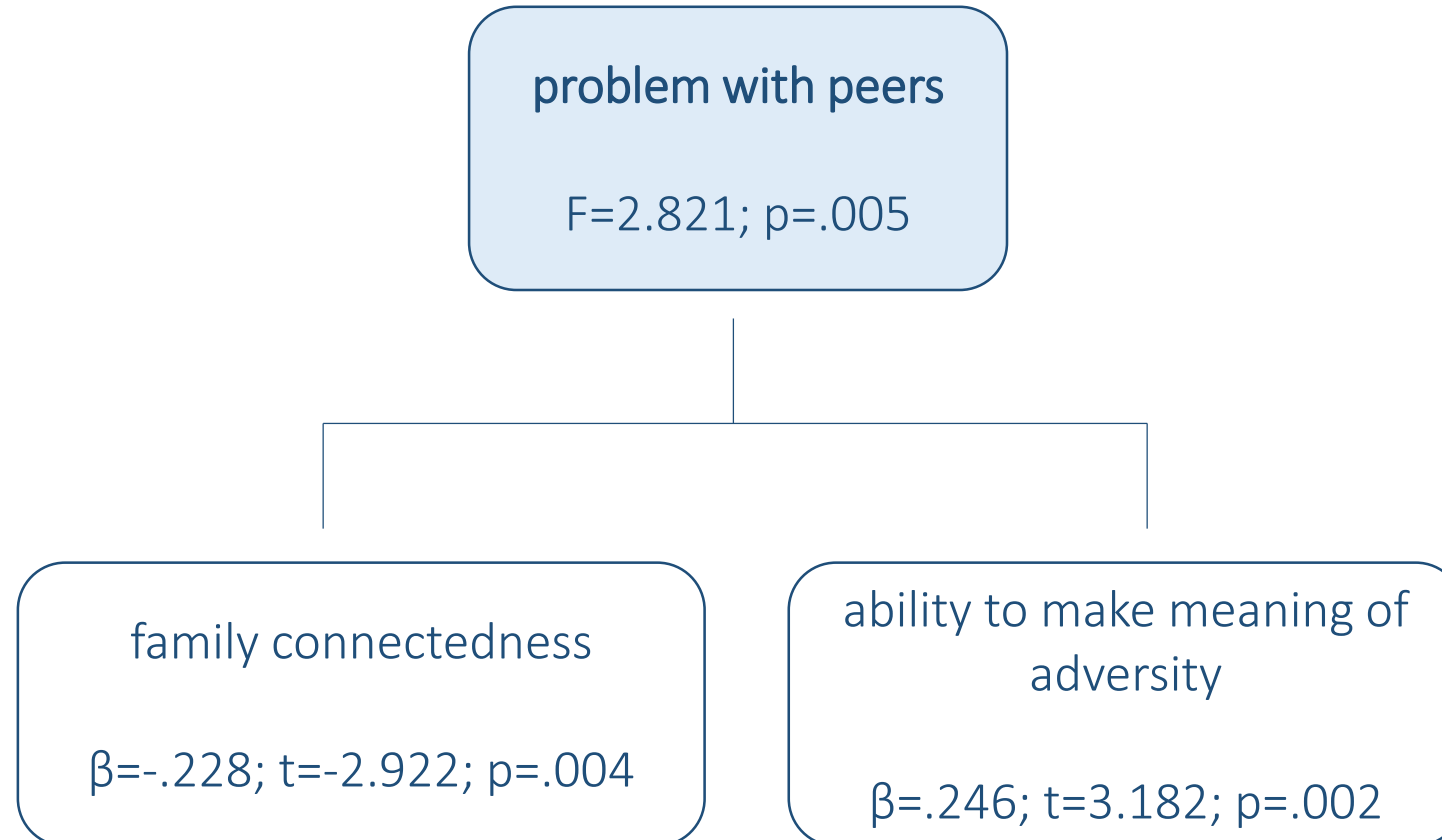
Dependent variables

- emotional problems
- conduct problems
- hyperactivity
- peer problems

Results



Results



Results

- Family connectedness contribute to less Emotional problems and Problems with peers
- Utilizing social and economic resources and Maintaining the positive outlook contribute to less Emotional problems
- Ability to Make Meaning of Adversity contribute to less Problem with peers
- other family protective factors do not contribute to self-report of other aspects of behavior problems

The extent to which study was participatory

Forms of participation

- in assessment (quantitative)
- in dissemination of results: presentation in two schools
 - low interest

Possible improvements to the existing/future studies

Challenges

- use of instruments that are standardized in Croatian setting
- family definition
- risk (level) operationalization
 - risk indicators and risk level definition on the system (family) level
- good outcome operationalization
 - individual level (youth) vs. the family system level
- the level of participation

Thank you for attention!



FAMILY RESILIENCE: youth at risk and parent's perspective

Antonija Žižak, Ivana Maurović, Martina Ferić, Gabrijela Ratkajec Gašević, Josipa Mihić
Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences
University of Zagreb, Croatia

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This study is pilot study of the project -
*Specific characteristics of families at risk:
contribution to complex interventions planning*
– *FamResPlan*(CSF – IP-2014-09-9515)



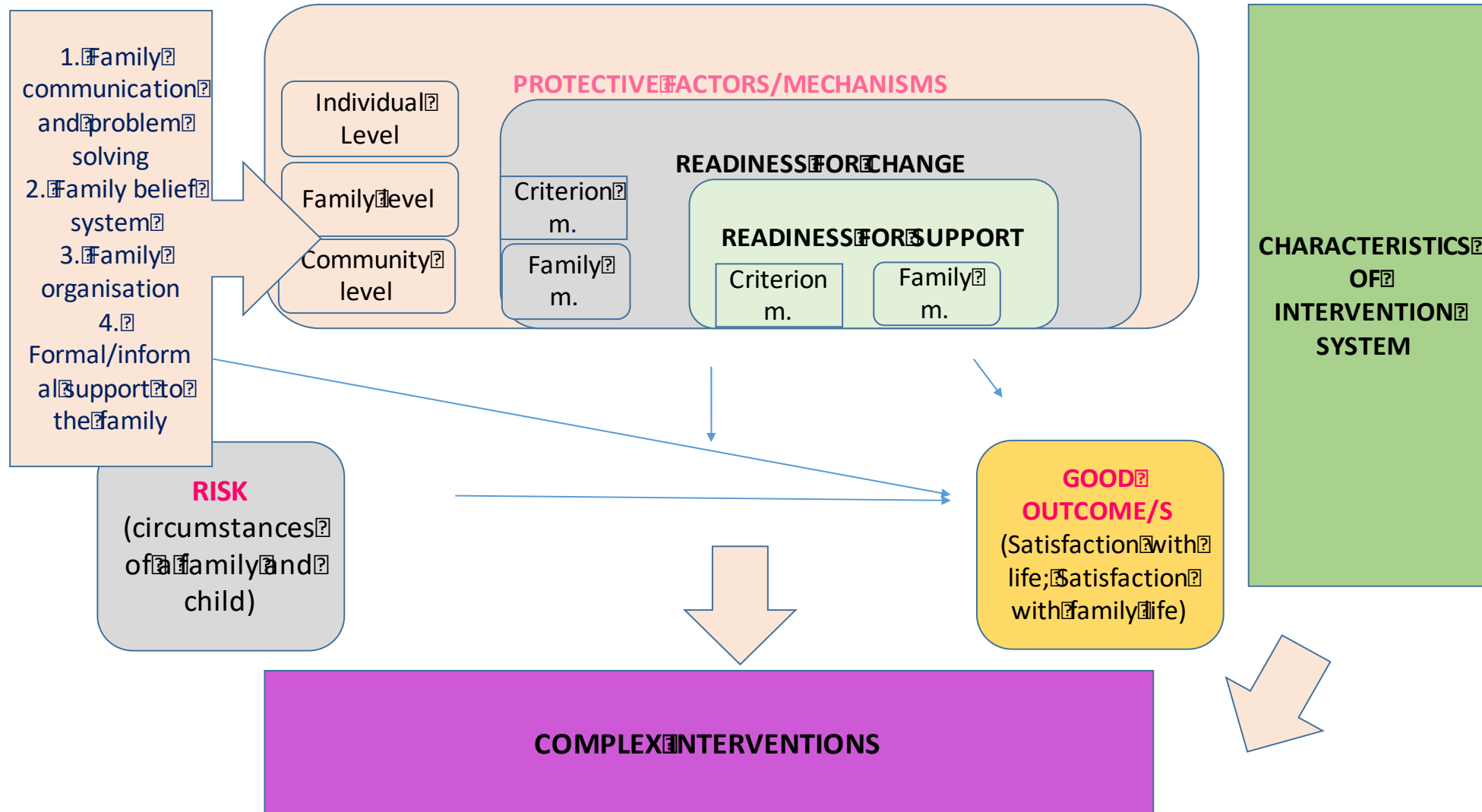
Aim and objectives

Aim - to expand knowledge by assessing under-researched characteristics of families and their members, combine the results with existing knowledge on individuals and families at risk and create a proposal of a complex interventions planning model for families at risk

Specific objectives:

- To develop framework of qualitative, quantitative and "mix-method" methodology of researching families at risk.
- To identify general and specific characteristics of families with at least one family member who is a beneficiary of interventions in the area of education, social welfare, mental health and/or judiciary due to specific risks/behavioural problems.
- To determine characteristics of **resilience, readiness for change, readiness for intervention** and **life satisfaction** of families with at least one family member who is a beneficiary of interventions in the area of education, social welfare, mental health and/or judiciary due to specific risks/behavioural problems.
- Examine the differences in risk factors, characteristics of resilience, readiness for change, readiness for interventions and life satisfaction of different groups according to the risk levels of families whose member is a beneficiary of interventions in the area of education, social welfare, mental health and/or judiciary due to specific risks/behavioural problems.
- Examine the contribution of risk factors to the resilience, readiness for change and readiness for intervention in the interpretation of life satisfaction perception of different groups of families at risk.
- Explore family experiences or gain insight in family perspective about researched constructs (risks/needs, resilience, life satisfaction, readiness to change and intervention and the experience of intervention)
- Explain how qualitative themes contribute in explaining of researched constructs (family resilience, life satisfaction and readiness to change)
- Define the guidelines for planning **(complex) interventions** for families at risk which are based on the beneficiary perspective and disseminate the results of the study and the guidelines.

RELATION OF THE CONSTRUCTS (working model)



1) Challenges in researching family system and conceptualizing resilience

Approaches to family in research

Quantitative / practical approach - focus is on what is easy/possible to explore (parent/child), leaving out „whole world unexplored” – mostly quantitative researcher

Qualitative approach - explore family as a whole; what is family and the meaning of the family during the research

Measuring family as system

- Model of aggregation – average result of all family members
- Pathogenic model- result for a family is a „worst” result of a family member
- Salutogenic model - result for a family is a „best” result of a family member
- Consensus model – family members agree upon result (Van Breda, 2001)

Term	How they are understood in FamResPlan project
Family at risk	<p>Family in which at least one member is included in some kind of intervention (either in the social welfare system, the judiciary and/or mental health care) because of behavioural problems. Family members are individuals living in the same household, and who are blood/custody related.</p>
Family resilience	<p>The process of overcoming and adapting to significant source of stress or trauma (risk) in an effective way. Strengths and resources within an individual, family or family environment (protective factors) that enable capacity for adaptation and recovery (good outcome) in a situation of misfortune/stress. During lifespan, the experience of resilience will vary (adapted from Windle, 2011).</p> <p>Risk – the overall level of family exposure to risk factors in different domains (the family as a whole, criterion member – member included in the intervention, other family members). The level of risk can be low, medium or high.</p> <p>Risk factors – biological, psychological, social, economic and other conditions/events that can significantly increase the likelihood of negative developmental outcomes (Roisman, 2005, according to Windle, 2011).</p> <p>Protective factors – strengths and recourses within the family or outside the family that encourage the capacity for recovery and/or adaptation in the situation of misfortune/stress (adapted from Windle, 2011).</p> <p>Good family outcome - satisfaction with the quality of life of family members and satisfaction with family life. Life satisfaction – one of the indicators of quality of life construct. The level of assessing overall quality of life (according to Veenhoven, 1996). Family life satisfaction – the level of satisfaction of family members with family cohesion, family adaptiveness and family communication.</p>



GLOSSARY

Term	How they are understood in FamResPlan project
Readiness	<p>Readiness for change – is conceptualised with combination of: 1) Perceived importance of the problem which is necessary to change; 2) Self – confidence of person that change can be achieved; 3) Intentions of person for behaviour changes; 4) Personal capacities important for behaviour change (Armenakis, 1993; Miller, Rollnick, 2002.)</p> <p>Family readiness for change – the family ability to support one or more family members in achieving a personal and/or social acceptable behaviour changes. It consists of knowledge about acceptable behaviours, the ability of the whole family to change behavioural patterns in order to achieve changes in family relationships and communication.</p> <p>Readiness for intervention/treatment – motivation for seeking help or readiness for involvement in treatment activities (Ward and associates, 2004).</p>
Complex interventions	<p>Interventions that consist of at least two intervention components (simple interventions) and they are related, directed toward specific family member and/or toward the whole family. The purpose of complex interventions is directed toward achieving of greater number of variable outcomes. They are carried out in coordination of one complex or at least two simple intervention systems (education, judiciary, social welfare, mental health).</p>

2) Key results: Goals of pilot study

QUANTITATIVE PART	QUALITATIVE PART
<p>Conducting the study in Centres for social welfare with children/youth (older than 12) who were included in intervention regarding behaviour problems (N = 130) and their parents (N = 130)</p>	<p>Family interview with 4 families which were involved in family program within NGO Ambidexter club project. These families agreed to be involved in research (explorative approach)</p>
<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review of metric characteristics of instruments: FRAS, FACES IV (resilience), Readiness for change Questionnaire, Perception of support, Readiness for offering support to family member2. Review approach to family system regarding data collection	<p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review the Protocol for family interview about key constructs2. To gain knowledge and experience in family interviewing3. Review family experience upon applicability and purposefulness of this approach





2) Key results: Instruments

FAMILY RESILIENCE SCALE (FRAS)

(Sixbey, 2005.)

1. Family communication and problem solving
2. Ability to make meaning of adversity
3. Neighbors support
4. Family spirituality
5. Family connectedness
6. Security and support in the community

FAMILY ADAPTIBILITY AND COHESION EVALUATION SCALE (FACES IV package)

(Olson, Gorall, Tiesel, 2010)

1. Family cohesion and flexibility
 - Enmeshed cohesion
 - Balanced cohesion
 - Disengaged cohesion
 - Chaotic flexibility
 - Balanced flexibility
 - Rigid flexibility
2. Communication
3. Family satisfaction

2) Key results - Sample:

- 115 young people; 110 adults living in the same household (parents, custodian parents)
- included in at least one intervention in Centre for social work (Čakovec, Osijek, Rijeka, Pula)

**CRITERION MEMBER
CHILD (AGE 12-18)
INCLUDED IN SOCIAL WELFARE
INTERVENTION**

CRITERION MEMBER
CHILD (AGE 12-18)
INCLUDED IN HEALTH CARE
INTERVENTION

CRITERION MEMBER
ADULT
INCLUDED IN PROBATION
SERVICE INTERVENTION

CRITERION MEMBER
ADULT
INCLUDED IN HEALTH CARE
INTERVENTION FOR ADDICTS

**FAM
RES
PLAN**

2) Key results regarding resilience

*Different factor solutions were tested

*FRAS – different results for different subsamples

*FASES IV – FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE - one factor solution for both subsamples (Cronbach alpha – ,933 and ,924)

Key results:

- 1) new instrument for measuring family resilience in main research is needed
- 2) Family satisfaction scale – acceptable for measuring good outcome

3) Where the study is placed regarding waves of resilience research development and participatory level



Wave	Study belongs to the wave	Elements of participation
1. Wave – description of resilience phenomena, concepts and methodologies – focusing on individual	YES - description of concept and methodology of its researching	YES – through series interviews with family members – various levels are possible
2. Wave – resilience as dynamic process of positive adaptation in the context adversity/ risk – focusing on transaction among individual and systems important for their development	YES – relation among concepts of family resilience as well as among individual and family system	YES – through series of interviews with family members – various levels are possible
2. Wave – creating resilience by intervention – focusing on changes in developmental pathways	YES – the purpose is to create recommendations for complex interventions	There are some possibilities
4. Wave – integrating resilience across multiple levels of analysis – focusing on ways the systems interact to shape development (neurobiological processes)	There are some possibilities	

Thank you for attention!



Some aspects of individual resilience in relation to family resilience: college students perspective

Josipa Mihić, Martina Ferić, Ivana Maurović, Gabriijela Ratkajec Gašević, Antonija Žižak

Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences
University of Zagreb, Croatia

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PROJECT

- “RESEARCH OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY RESILIENCE”

Project team from the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences

- Antonija Žižak, project leader
- Martina Ferić, Ivana Maurović, Josipa Mihić, Gabriijela Ratkajec Gašević

Time frame

- 2016/2017

Funded by

- University of Zagreb

PROJECT

- “RESEARCH OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY RESILIENCE”

Project research aim

- to explore the contribution of the individual and family resilience to the developmental outcomes of college students

Focus in this presentation

- to explore specific contribution of **gender, stress levels** and **family protective mechanisms** on first year college students' socio-emotional skills

1. Challenges in conceptualization and operationalization of resilience in the study

Individual resilience

Developmental process, reflecting the capacity for positive adjustment in difficult life circumstances as opposed to a trait.

(Lightsey, 2006)

Resilience is the ability to use social-emotional skills to overcome, or bounce back from the effects of stress in one's life

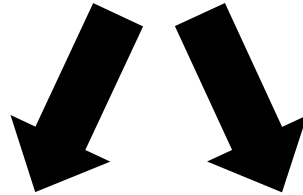
(Wright, 2013)

CASEL model of socio- emotional skills



Risk

Transition from
high school education to college



Family protective factors

modified Family Resilience Assessment Scale
Sixbey (2005) and FACES IV (Olson et al,
2007)

Family Communication and Problem Solving
Family Belief System
Family Organization



Individual protective factors

Questionnaire of socio-emotional
competences (UEK-45, Takšić, 2002)

Individual socio-emotional skills

Emotional awareness
Expression of emotion
Emotion regulation

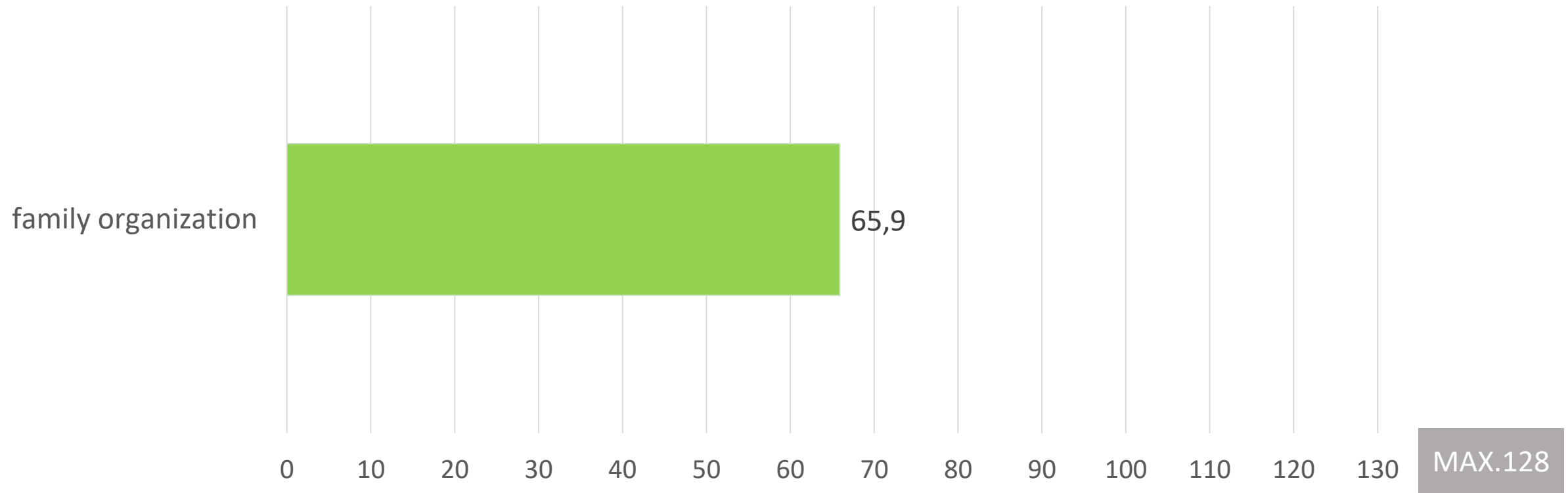
2. Key results of the study

Sample

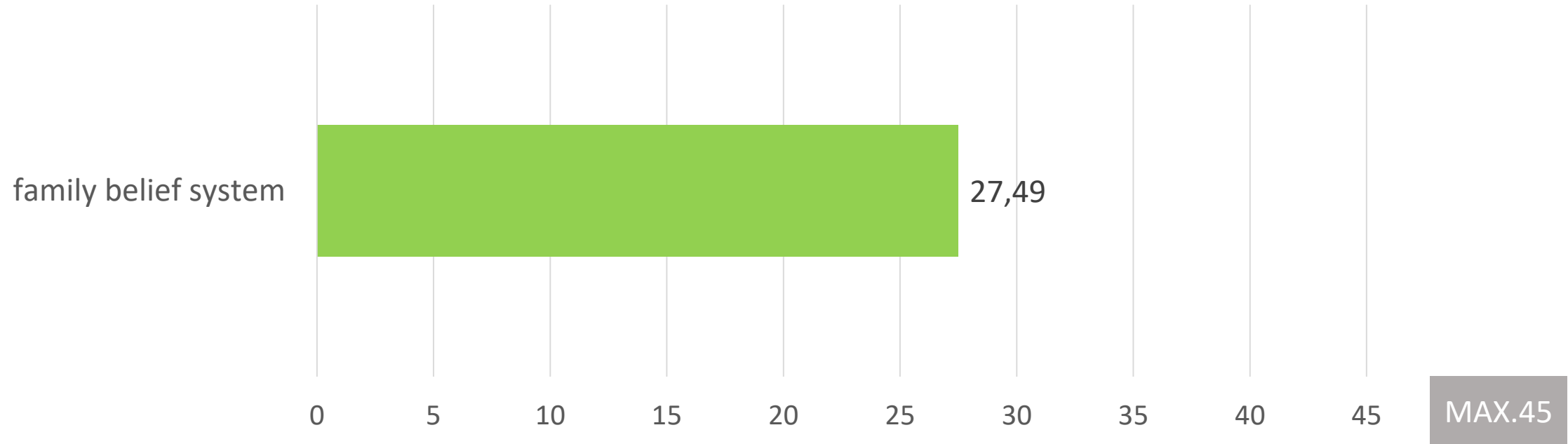
Quantitative approach

- Convenience sample of 1st year college students (**N=403**) from the University of Zagreb
- 37.2% Male, 62.8% Female
- Mean age -19.15, SD -1.54
- Data was collected from November 2016 to February 2017

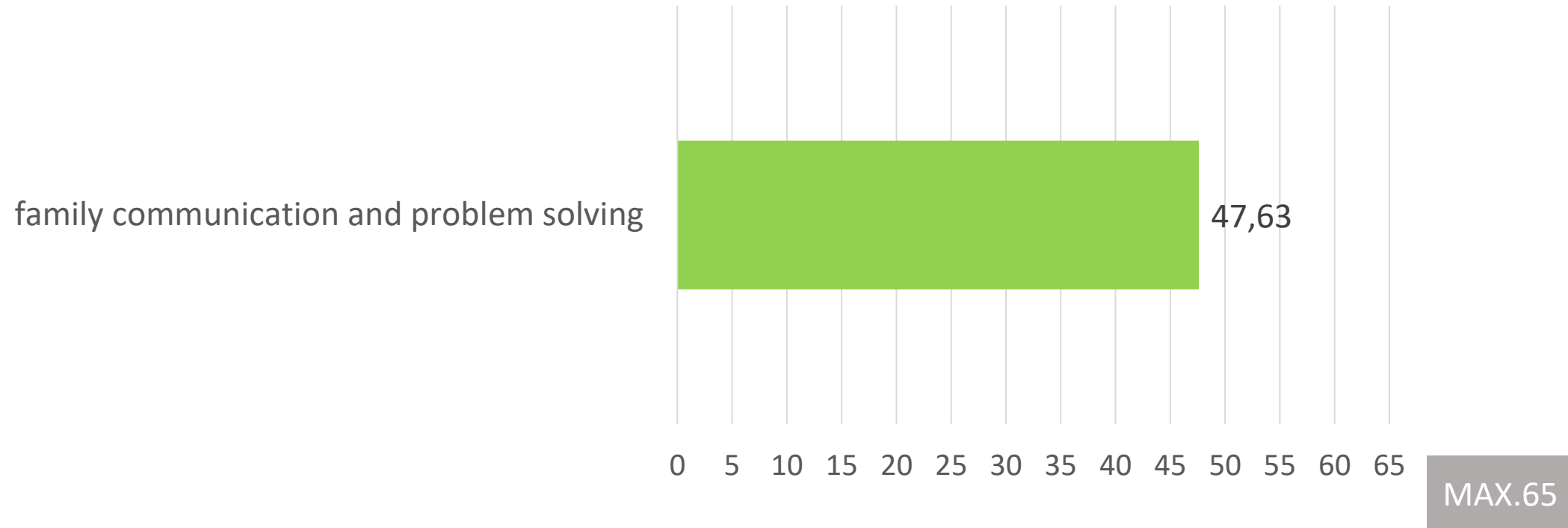
Descriptives (means)



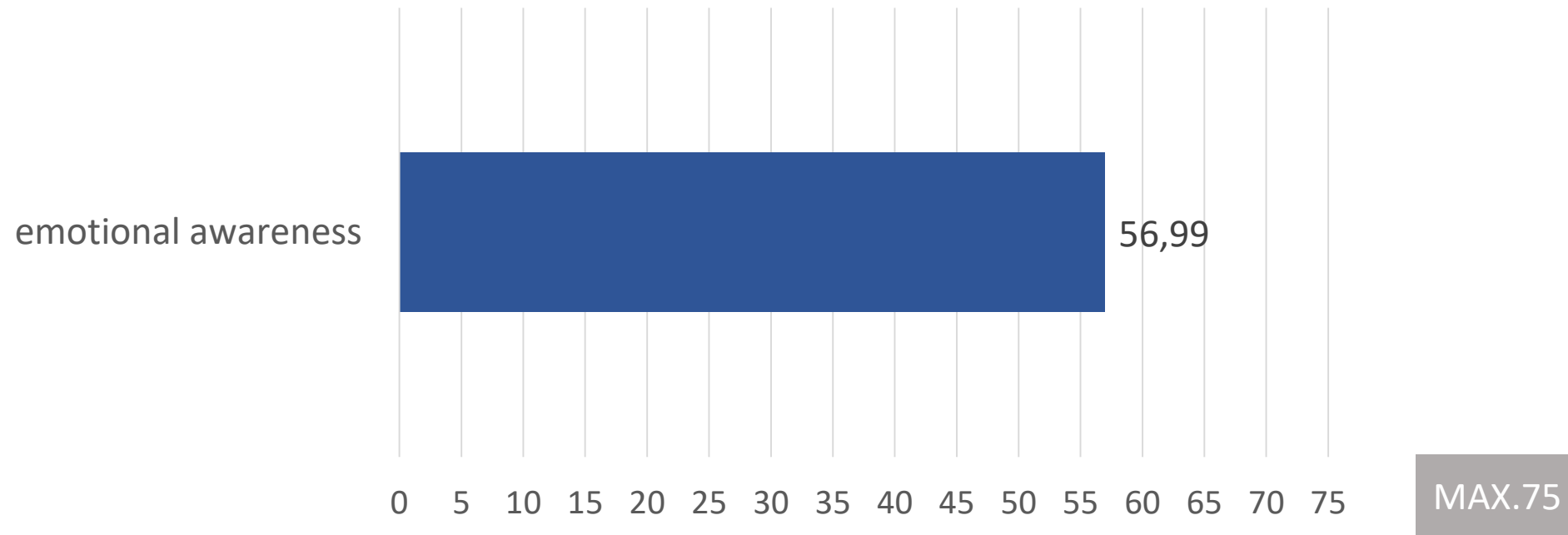
Descriptives (means)



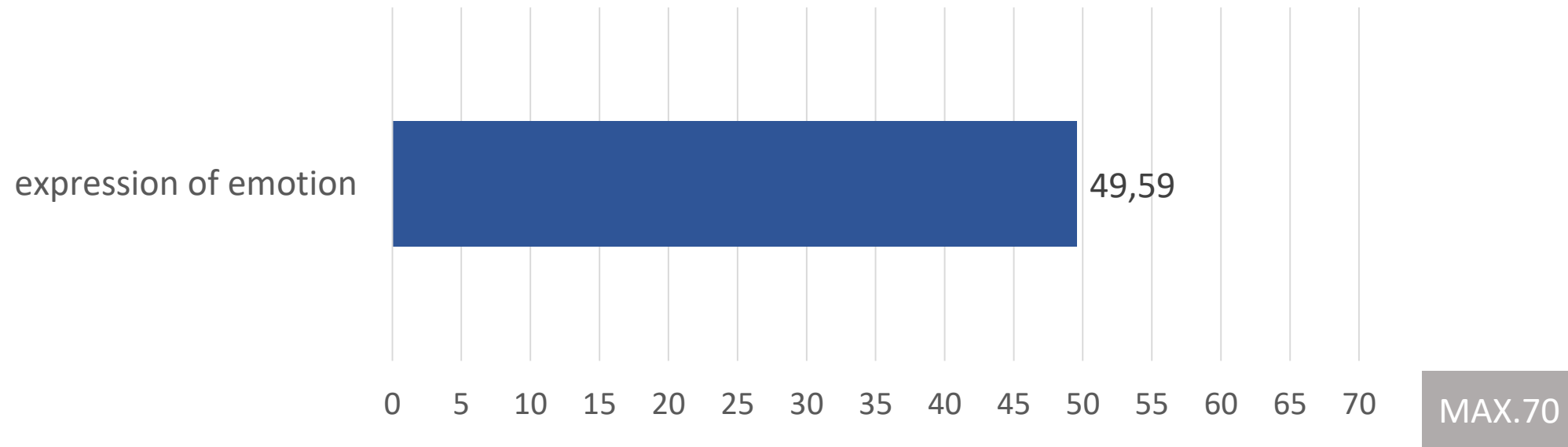
Descriptives (means)



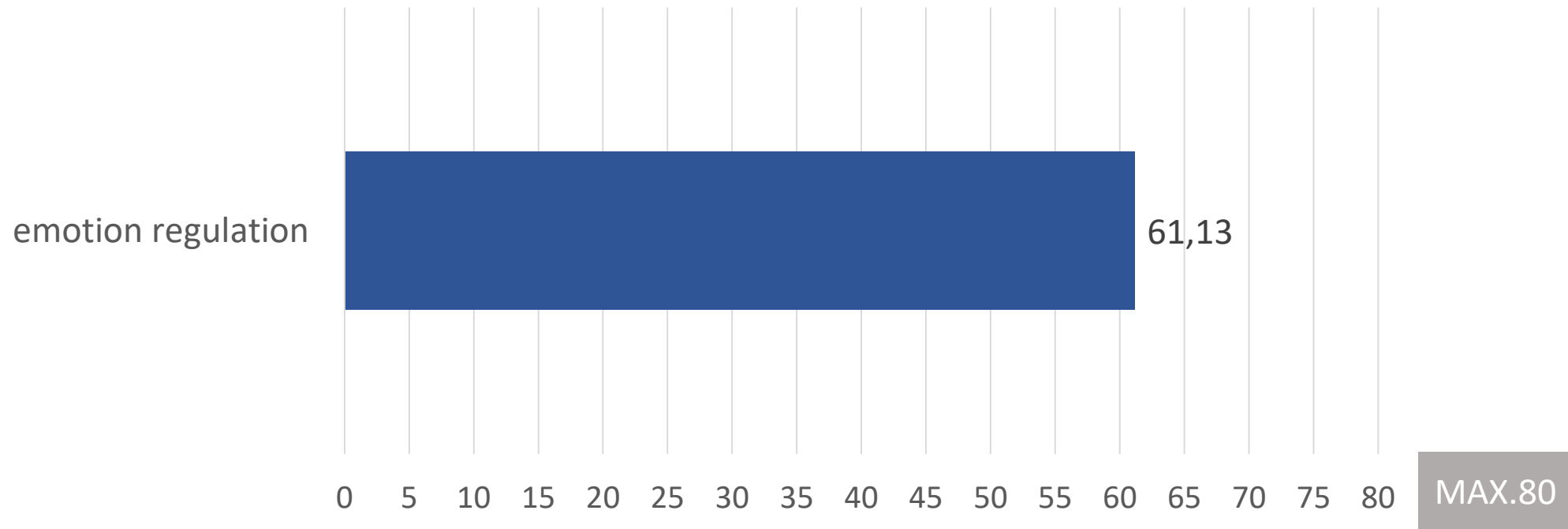
Descriptives (means)



Descriptives (means)



Descriptives (means)



Contribution of family protective mechanisms on first year college students' socio-emotional skills

- hierarchical regression analysis
- youth sample (N=403)

Independent variables

- gender
- stress level
- family protective mechanisms

Dependent variables

- emotional awareness
- expression of emotion
- emotion regulation

Emotional awareness

F=8.678; p=.000

Family communication
and problem solving

Family Belief System

Family Organization

Gender
 $\beta=-.153$; t=3
p=.003

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS	M	SD	T-test	p
FEMALE	58.15	8.35	- 3.363	.001
MALE	54.88	10.61		

Expression of emotion

F=7.406; p=.000

Family communication
and problem solving
 $\beta=-.272$; $t=3.027$ $p=.003$

Family Belief System

Family Organization

Gender

Emotion regulation

F=24.457; p=.000

Family communication
and problem solving
 $\beta=-.185$; t=2.186 p=.029

Family Belief System

Family Organization
 $\beta=-.292$; t=3.504 p=.001

Gender

Results

- Gender contribute to **Emotional awareness**
- Family Communication and Problem Solving contribute to **Expression of emotion** and **Emotion regulation**
 - Clear communication, Collaborative problem solving, Open expression of emotion
- Family Organization contribute to **Emotion regulation**
 - Flexibility, Family connectedness
- Family belief system do not contribute to self-reported socio-emotional skills of students

3. The extent to which study was participatory

- Participants were included in:
 - assessment (quantitative)
 - dissemination of results: final presentation of project results – planned

4. Possible improvements of the existing/future studies

- Broadening a **concept of individual resilience**
- Inclusion of **qualitative research methodology**
- Improvement of **students level of participation** during the all research stages

Thank you for attention!