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# Starting university in French context: Role of family environment, attachment, self-determination, and home leaving in emerging adults' psychosocial adjustment

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In the French context of “race for diplomas” (Erner, 2014) where the feeling of “becoming adult” is delayed (Lannegrand-Willems et al., 2011), emerging adults particularly have to adjust to the transitional period of starting university. During emerging adulthood:

- Family environment (Picard & Marc, 1996)
- Attachment (Konrath et al., 2014)
- Self-determination (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013)
- Home leaving (Kins et al., 2009)

Adjustment

## Aim of the study

Determine the relations between all these dimensions and their influence on emerging adults' psychosocial adjustment during the transitional period of starting university.

N = 1,142 freshman emerging adults (70.7% women;  $M_{age} = 18.4$ ;  $SD_{age} = 0.6$ ) recruited in different curricula.

Family environment – Relations with parents (Delhay et al., 2012) + Relations with family (Olson, 1985 and Moos & Moos, 1994).

Attachment – Attachment representations (Collins & Read, 1990).

Self-determination – Motivation (Vallerand et al., 1989) + Satisfaction/frustration of the basic needs (Chen et al., 2015).

Home leaving – 3 indicators: living arrangement + return to family home + feeling of living at family home (see Kins et al., 2009).

Psychosocial adjustment – Self-worth (Neeman & Harter, 2012) + Depression (Beck & Beamsderfer, 1974) + Psychological well being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).



## Home leaving patterns

$L^2 = 30.42$ ,  $df = 27$ ,  $p = .29$ ; BIC = 6389.42

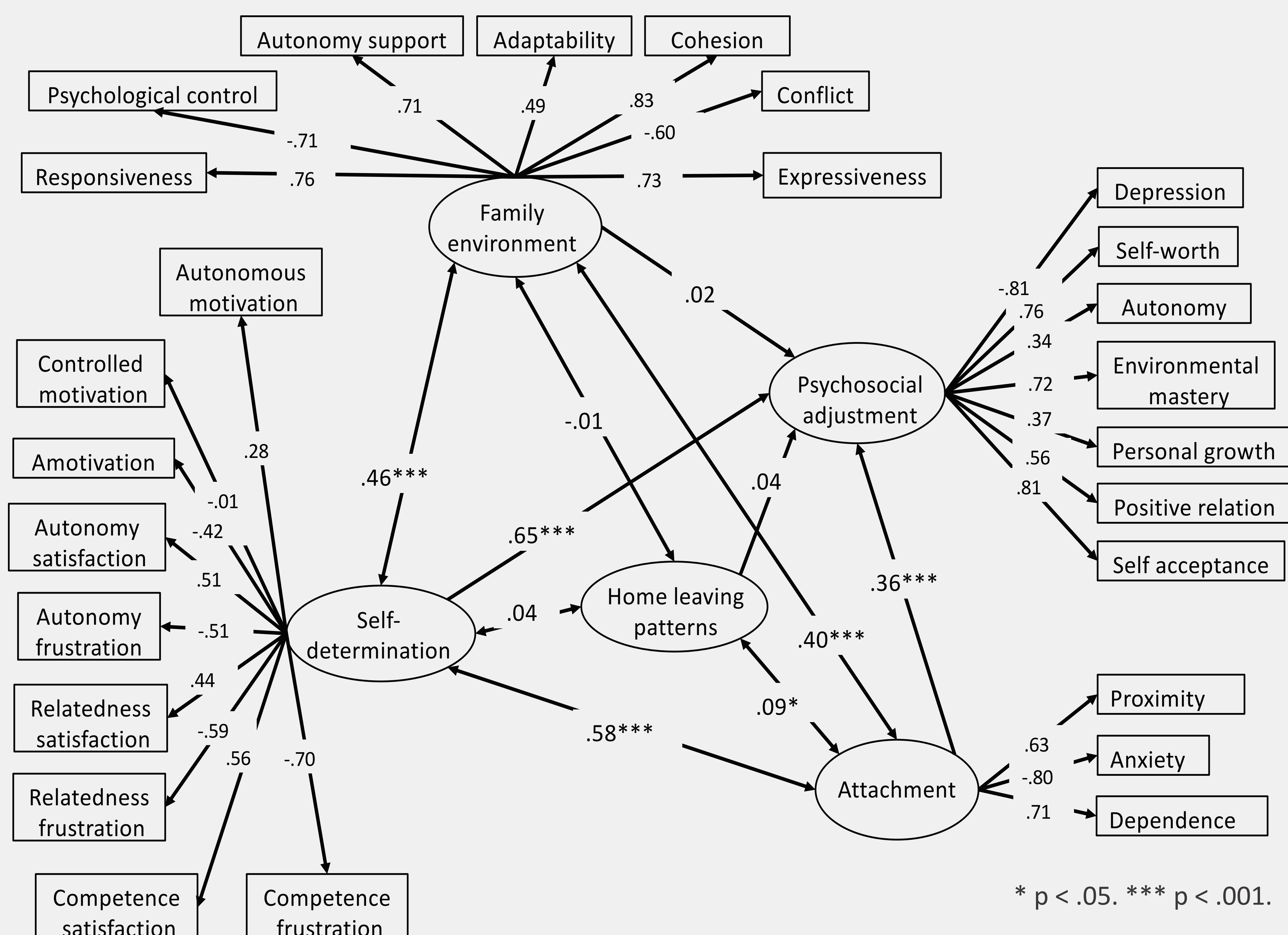
Co-resident / Still live with parents + still considered living at the parental home ( $n = 59.4\%$ )

Semi-independent / Leave the family house + go back once in two weeks + still considered living at the parental home ( $n = 22.6\%$ )

Independent / Leave the family house + go back in varying degree + do not considered living at the parental home ( $n = 18.0\%$ )

## Structural equation modeling

$\chi^2 (315) = 1853.28$ , CFI = .93, RMSEA = .07[.068-.074], TLI = .92, and SRMR = .08



Home leaving patterns were in line with the literature with independent pattern which go back more frequently.

Attachment and self-determination directly influenced emerging adults' psychosocial adjustment whereas family environment and home leaving patterns seemed to be mediated by other variables.

Attachment appeared to be a core variable in understanding emerging adults' adaptation to a new context of life.