

Reflection on Adolescent Playfulness



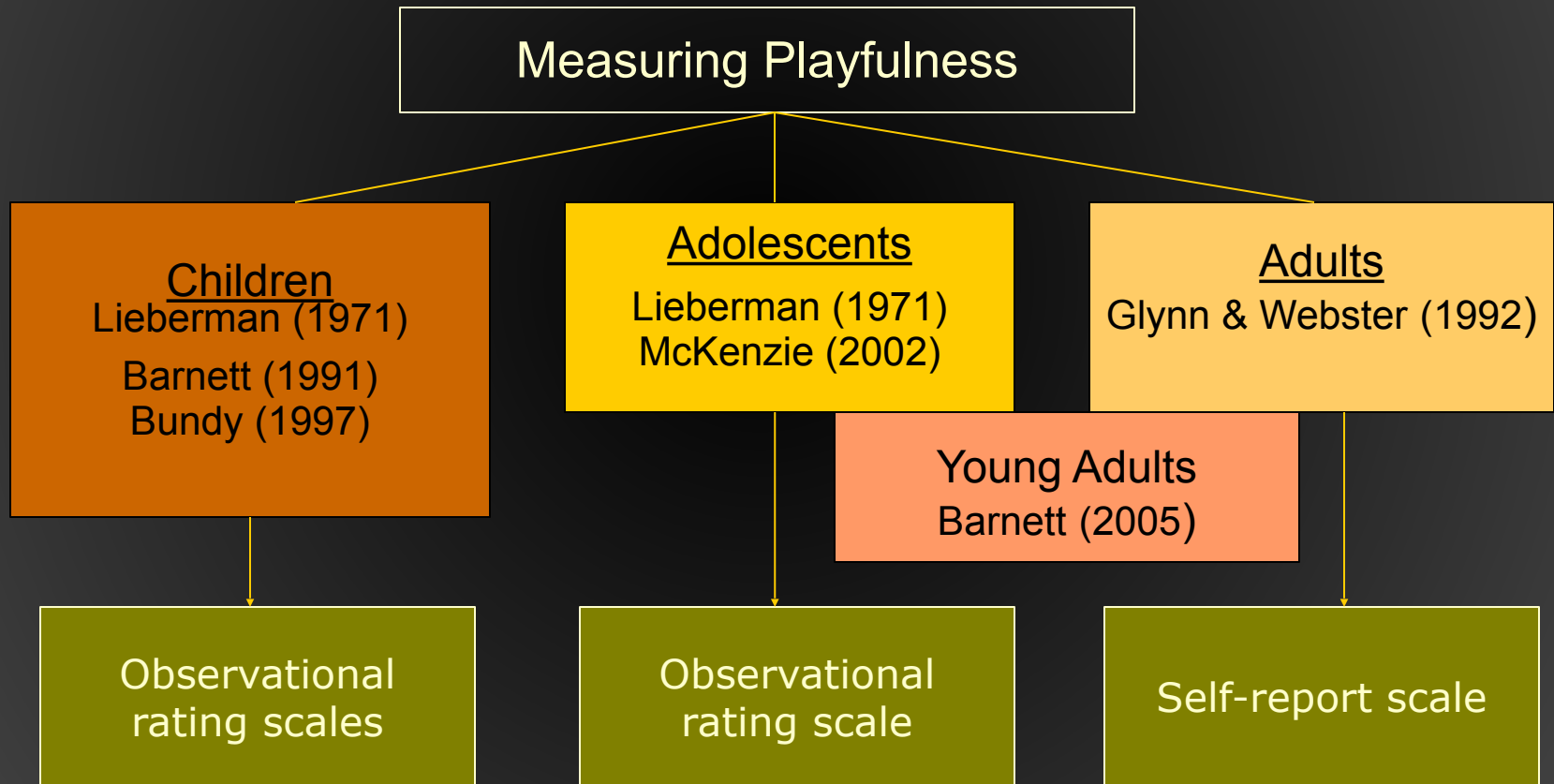
Marianne B. Staempfli Ph.D.
Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies

Playfulness – and related literature

Personality and leisure

Measures of playfulness

- Playfulness (Lieberman, 1971)
 - CPS (Barnett, 1982)
 - PSYA (Barnett, 2005)
 - ToP and TOES (Bundy, 1997)
 - APS (Glynn & Webster, 1992)
 - SOPLAY (McKenzie, 2002)
-



Playfulness – what is in a word

- Self-confidence
 - Relaxed
 - Sociable
 - Teasing / joking
 - Not caring what others think of you
 - Humor
 - Laughter
 - Happiness
 - Smiling
 - Easy going
 - Wittiness with words
-

Playfulness and Gender

Males

- physical
- rough & tumble
- sexually expressive

- universally similar

- Not very self-conscious (in presence of females)

Females

- emotional
 - caring & touchy-feely
 - flirtatious

 - individually different

 - very self-conscious (in presence of males)
-

Playfulness and Context

School

- The more playful the teacher the more playful the classroom / learning environment
 - In-class time - a time for work
 - School specific code of conduct
-

Playfulness and Context cont.

Leisure

- Opportunities are people, place and situation dependent
 - Same-sex friends (less pressure to conform, more honesty and trust)
 - Friendships
 - Socialization
 - Relax, chill – a great way to ease tension
 - *But it may also increase level of stress*
-

Measuring Playfulness – APF20

(Alpha=.90)

- I like to play and horse around with my friends
 - When I hang out with friends, we usually like to play around
 - I like to be active physically
 - Being physically active keeps me stimulated and motivated

 - By being playful it is easier to get along with people
 - I like to interact with people in a playful way
 - I like to make people laugh
 - I feel comfortable joking around with others

 - I like to imagine myself and other people in funny situations
 - I like to play with ideas
 - I have an active imagination
 - I like to imagine myself as being different people or different characters

 - I like to sing and hum out loud when I am happy
 - I laugh and smile a lot
 - My friends can tell when I am having a good time
 - In most situations I express my emotions freely

 - I like to clown around
 - I can usually find something to laugh and joke about in difficult situations
 - I can find something comical or humorous in most situations
 - I like to tell funny stories
- Physical animation

 - Social engagement

 - Mental spontaneity

 - Emotional fluidity

 - Humorous perspective

Measuring Playfulness – APF20

How playful a person are you?	Almost never true for me	Seldom true for me	Sometimes true for me	Often true for me	Almost always true for me
I like to play and horse around with my friends	1	2	3	4	5
I often sing or hum out loud when I am happy	1	2	3	4	5
When I hang out with my friends, we usually like to play and joke around	1	2	3	4	5

Playfulness and Well-being

Research questions:

1. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness differ in their perception of normative **stressors**?
 2. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness make use of different **coping strategies** or cope more effectively than less playful adolescents?
 3. What is the **relationship** between playfulness, and the perception of daily stressors, coping styles and psychological well-being?
 4. Are there significant **gender and age** differences?
-

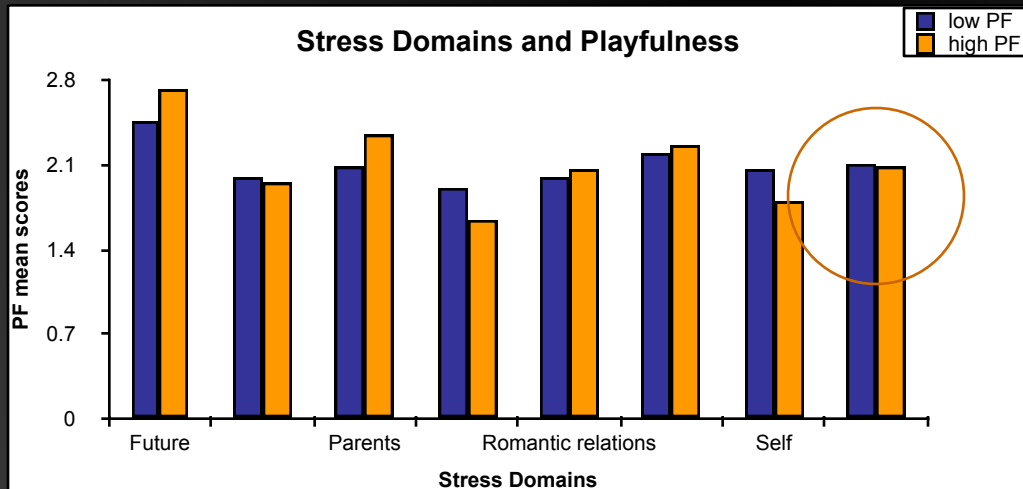
Playfulness and Well-being cont.

Participants:

- 290: 41% females & 59% males
 - Age groups: 44% / 23% / 33%
 - Playfulness score: mean 3.6 (range 1 - 4.95)
 - Low pf = 1-3.4
 - Med pf = 3.41-3.95
 - High pf = 3.96 -5.0
-

Findings

1. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness differ in their perception of normative **stressors**?

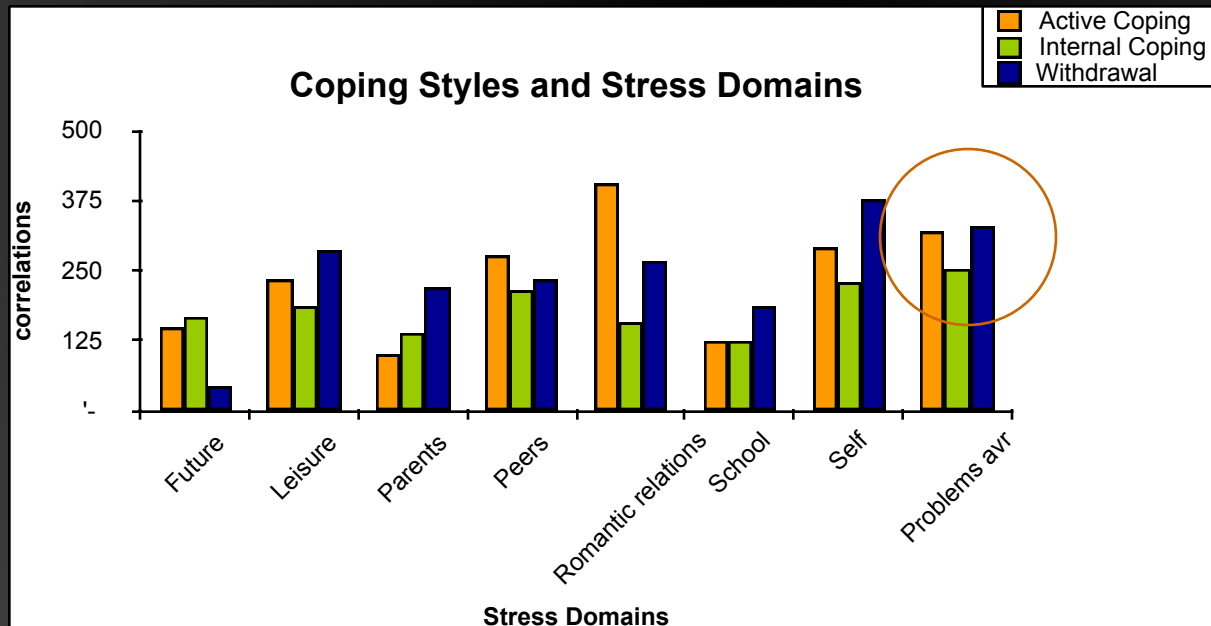


Stress Domains:

- Future
- Parents
- Peers
- Self
- Romantic relationships
- School
- Leisure

Findings cont.

2. Do adolescents with higher levels of playfulness make use of different **coping strategies** or cope more effectively than less playful adolescents?



- Peers & romantic relationships
- Future
- Leisure, parents, school, self

Coping styles (CASQ, Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)

Active coping

- I disclose the problem to my parents or other adults
- I talk-straight away about the problem when it appears and don't worry much
- I try to talk about the problem with the person concerned

Internal coping

- I expect the worst
- I compromise
- I tell myself that there always will be problems

Functional coping

Withdrawal

- I try to forget the problem with alcohol and drugs
- I do not worry because usually everything turns out all right
- I try to let my aggression out (with loud music, riding my bike, wild dancing, sports, etc).

Avoidance coping

Findings cont.

3. What is the **relationship** between playfulness and the perception of daily stressors and coping styles, as well as psychological well-being?

During leisure & school

- Functional coping
 - Avoidance coping
-

Playfulness and Well-being cont.

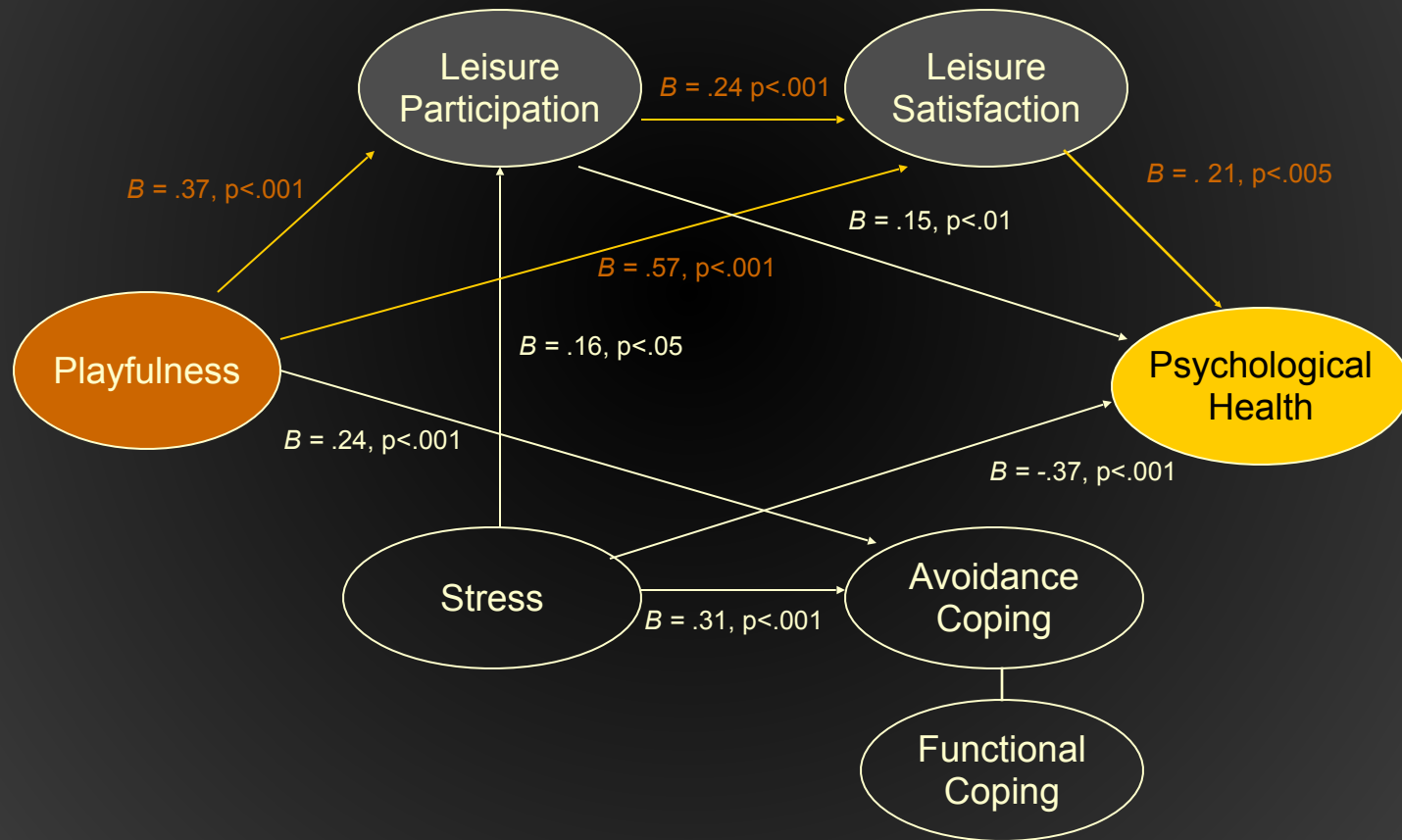
IV:

- Playfulness (APF20)

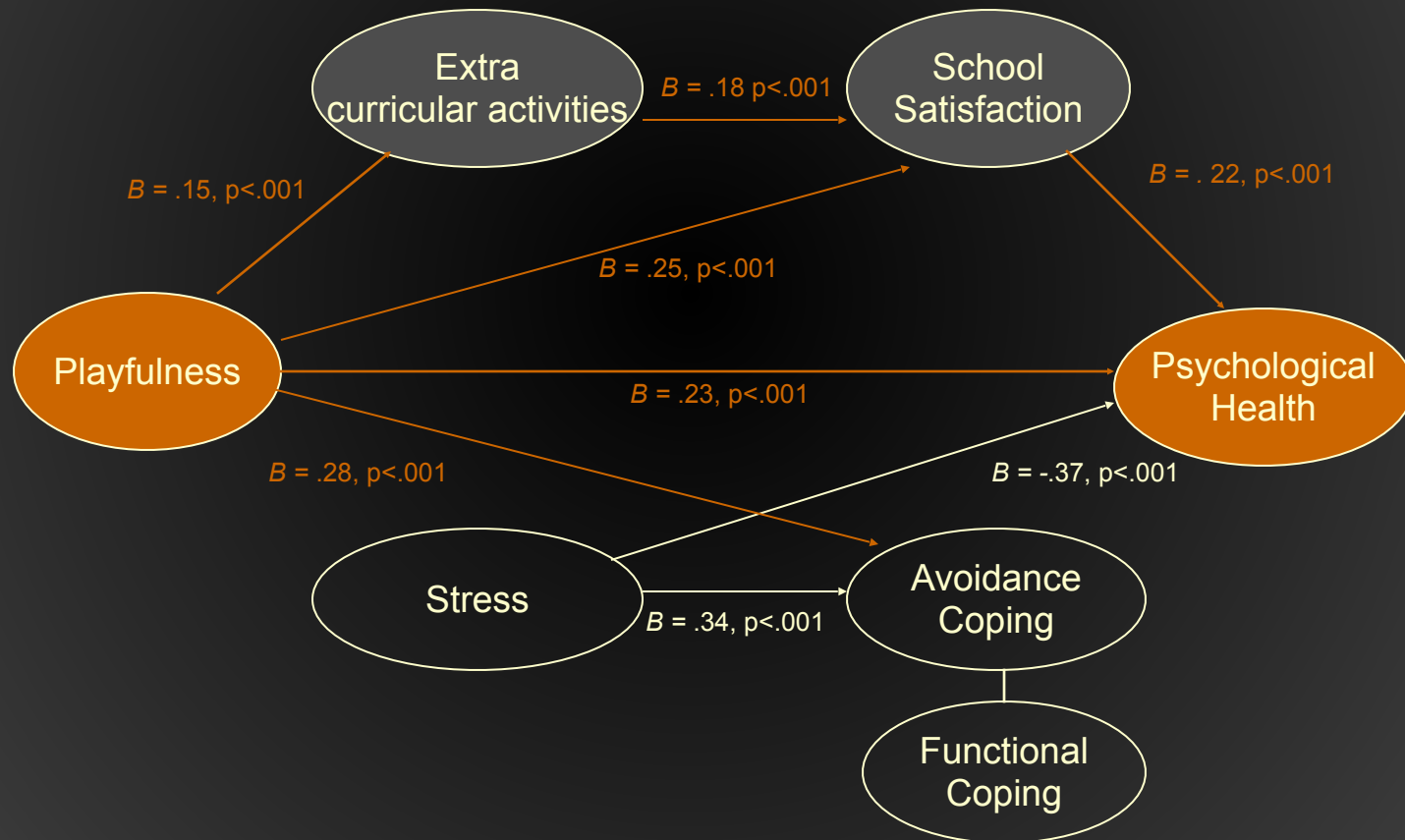
DV:

- Perceived normative stress (PQ - Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
 - Coping (CASQ - Seiffge-Krenke, 1995)
 - School (Extra curricular involv. & satisfaction)
 - Leisure (Participation and satisfaction)
 - Psychological health (self-confidence, affect)
-

Findings - Leisure cont.



Findings - School cont.



Findings cont.

4. Are there significant **gender and age** differences for highly playful adolescents?

Coping Styles	Playfulness (<i>r</i>)	Regression Coefficients (Standardized Beta values)		
Active Coping	.293**	gender age PF	$\beta = -.265^{**}$ $\beta = -.052$ $\beta = .268^{**}$	R ² = .140
Internal Coping	.207**	gender age PF	$\beta = -.092$ $\beta = -.026$ $\beta = .195^{**}$	R ² = .037
Withdrawal	.262**	gender age PF	$\beta = -.057$ $\beta = -.097$ $\beta = .246^{**}$	R ² = .065



Conclusion

What was learned

- Contextual differences observed (e.g. leisure, school)
 - Not more stressors but different stressors are perceived between high and low playful teens
 - Minimal differences in terms of coping style between high / low playful teens
 - Gender differences identified (verbal & statistical)
 - Indirect relationship between playfulness and adolescent psychological health for leisure - not for school
-