

Family Resilience Predicts COVID-19 Psychopathology in Youth with Perinatal Maternal Adversity

Findings from the MAVAN birth cohort



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Introduction

- ❗ **COVID-19 pandemic** created widespread adversity and stress across the population
- 🧐 **Mitigation measures** exacerbated youth psychopathology
- 👶 **Early life adversity** (e.g., maternal stress, socioeconomic hardship) increases vulnerability to mental health problems
- 🛡️ **Resilience** can protect against these risks, but which forms matter most?
- 🧠 **Universal stressors** offer a natural context to investigate the factors underlying variability in youth mental health outcomes

Research Questions

- ? Does family resilience buffer the impact of perinatal adversity on youth psychopathology during COVID?
- ? Which dimensions of family resilience are most protective?



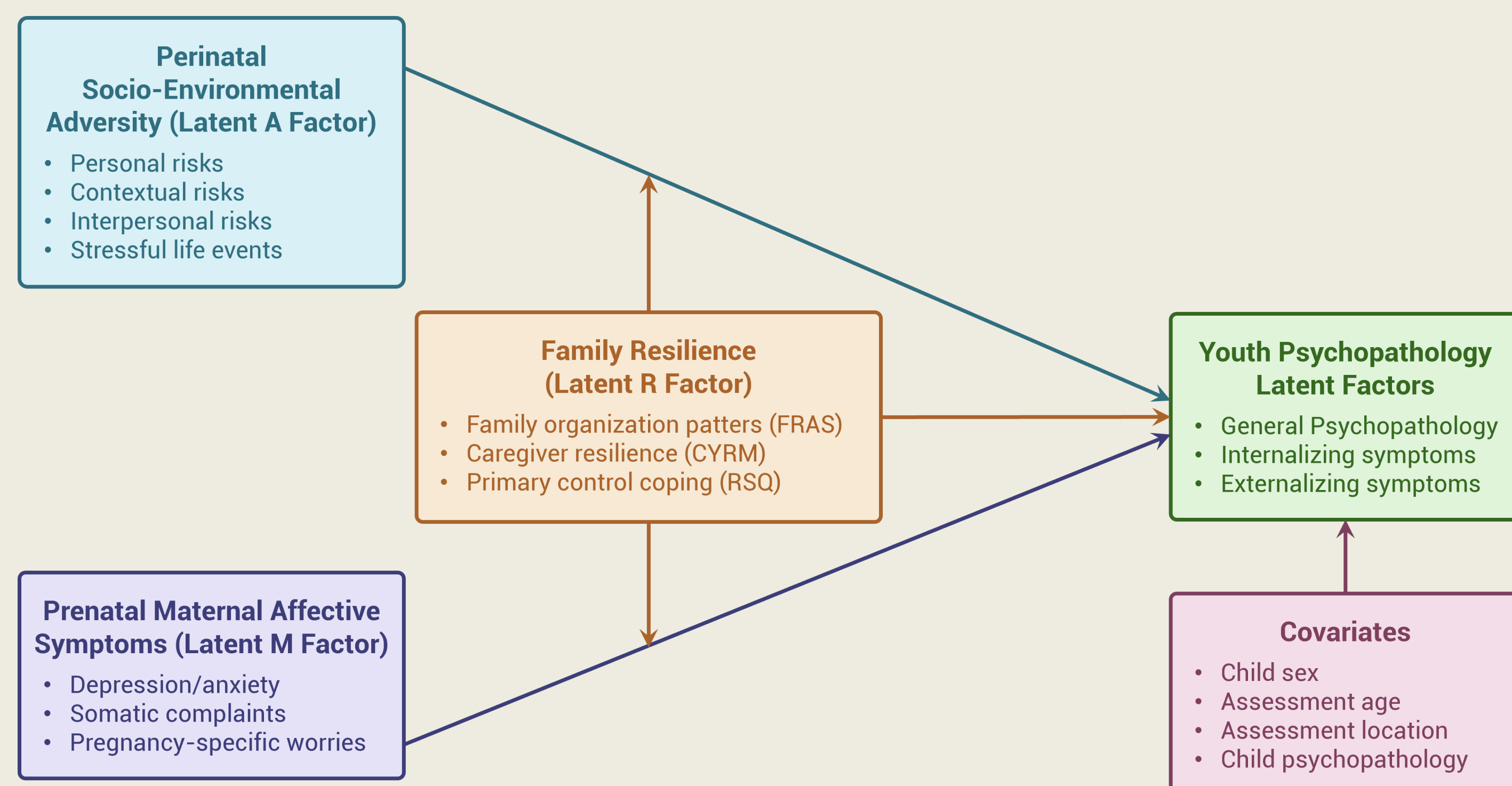
Methods

Study Design: Longitudinal cohort from the MAVAN study (Canada)

Sample: $N = 115$ youth, ages 9–17 ($M = 14.4$), 50% males

Measures: **Multi-informant reports:** youth-rated, mother-rated, or combined reports

Analysis: **Latent factor modelling** via LEGIT, which tests interactions between latent environmental factors (e.g., adversity \times resilience)



Discussion & Implications

Strengths

- + Longitudinal approach
- + Multi-informant reports
- + Advanced statistical modelling

Clinical Relevance

- Support families' organizational resilience in interventions, such as implementing routines & structure in household
- Adapt interventions to developmental stage & gender, given differing profiles of internalizing & externalizing symptoms
- Account for both parent & youth perspectives

Limitations

- Small, less diverse sample
- No genetic data

Future Directions

- Follow-up post-pandemic
- Qualitative exploration of youth-parent resilience perceptions

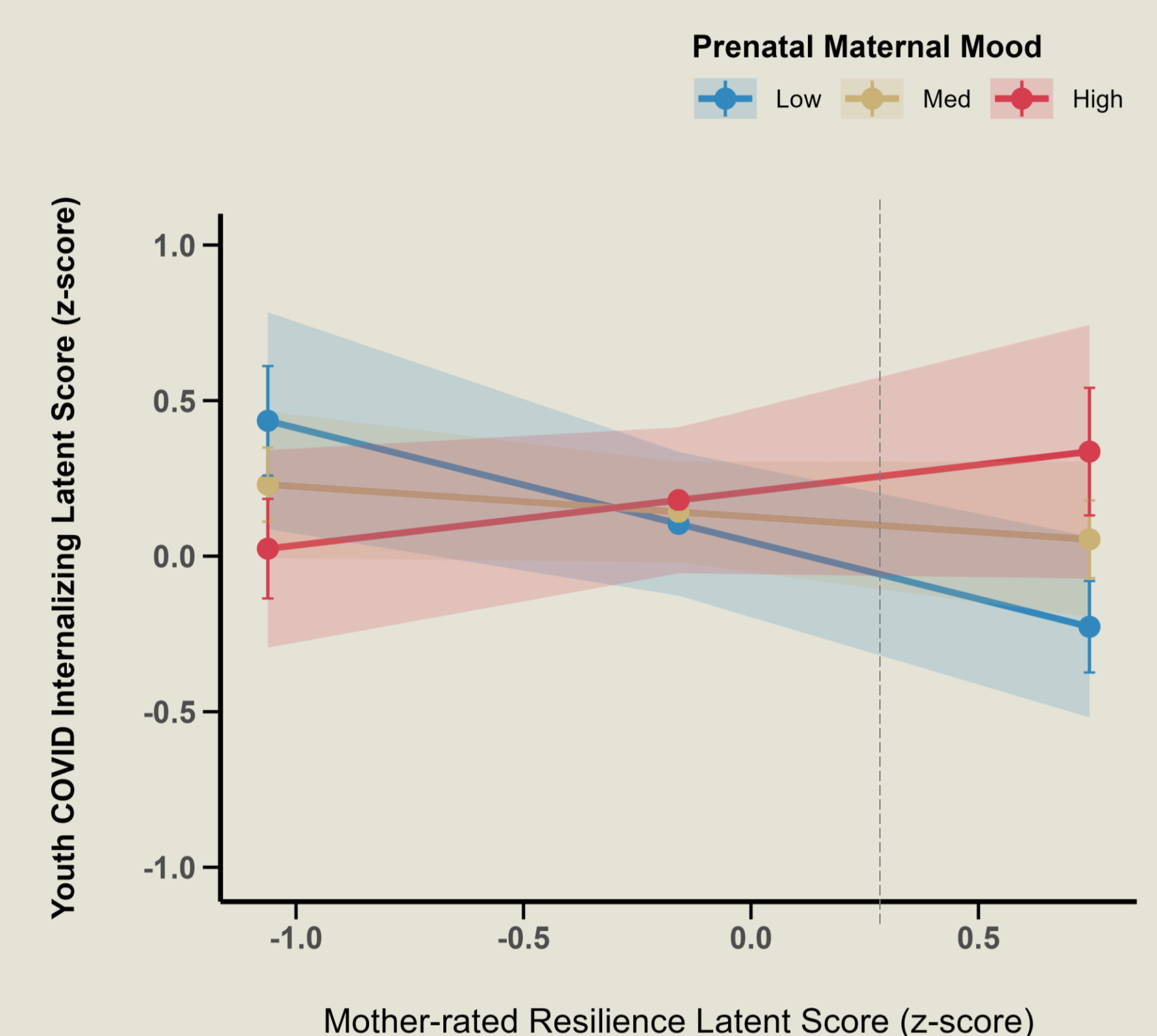
Main Findings

Youth-Reported

- **General psychopathology & Internalizing:** Family organization + Caregiver resilience = protective
- Higher family resilience = ↓ youth psychological distress

Mother-Reported

- **General psychopathology & Internalizing:** Family organization + primary control coping = protective
- Higher family resilience = ↓ youth psychological distress
- **Externalizing:** No main effect of family resilience, only family organization patterns = protective
- **Interaction:** The association between mother-rated family resilience & internalizing symptoms was moderated by prenatal maternal mood
- High prenatal adversity @ low-med family resilience = ↓ anxiety/depression



Combined Reports

- **General psychopathology:** Youth-reported family organization patterns + caregiver resilience = protective
- **Internalizing:** Youth-reported family organization patterns + caregiver resilience + Mother-rated youth primary control coping = protective
- **Externalizing:** Mother-rated family organization patterns = protective

Gender & Age Differences

- **Females** = ↑ internalizing symptoms
- **Males & Older youth** = ↑ externalizing symptoms

Key Takeaways

- * **Family resilience**, particularly **family organization patterns**, protected youth against pandemic stress
- * **Prenatal maternal mood** modulated mother-reported family resilience effects on youth internalizing symptoms
- * **Internalizing symptoms** more sensitive to resilience than externalizing

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Sponsors:

