



EDGEWOOD COLLEGE

Examining the Consistency and Disparity Between Profiles of Mothers' and Teachers' Perceptions of Child Prosocial Behavior

Su Jiang¹, Ting-Lan Ma², Sandra Simpkins¹, Deborah Vandell¹, Nicole Zarrett³
¹University of California, Irvine, ²Edgewood College, ³University of South Carolina



BACKGROUND

- Prosocial behavior, defined as the voluntary behaviors intended to benefit others, is a critical dimension of positive youth development (Eisenberg et al., 2015).
- Teachers and mothers are common sources of information in studying child prosocial behavior. Children who show prosocial behavior in multiple settings are more likely to persist in such behavior than those who do not (Veenstra, 2006). **One way of understanding child prosocial behavior is to focus on the consistency and disparity between mothers' and teachers' perceptions of prosocial behavior.**
- There is evidence (Veenstra et al., 2008) that teachers and mothers use different criteria for rating child prosocial behavior. Because mothers and teachers interact with children in different settings, their perceptions and criteria of rating child prosocial behavior might be different. **However, less is known about the correspondence between mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior.**

RQ1: What are the profiles of 4th graders' prosocial behavior rated by mothers and teachers?

RQ2: How do mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior agree and disagree with each other?

METHOD

- Participants:** Data were drawn from the NICHD study of Early Childcare and Youth Development (n=877; 47% girls; 78% White, 10% African American, 7% Hispanic students).
- Prosocial Behaviors:** Mothers and teachers reported on nine aspects of child prosocial behavior (9 items, $\alpha=.91$, 0=not true, 2=often true, e.g. friendly toward other children) at 4th grade (Ladd & Profilet, 1996).
- Latent Profile Analysis** was conducted to explore the profiles of mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior. The best solution for the number of classes was determined with multiple fit indices (AIC, BIC, CAIC, SABIC, LMR-aLRT, and cmP). Entropy = 0.988 & 1.
- Chi-square tests** were conducted to test the correspondence of mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior.

Figure 1. Latent Profiles of Mother-Rated Child Prosocial Behavior at 4th grade

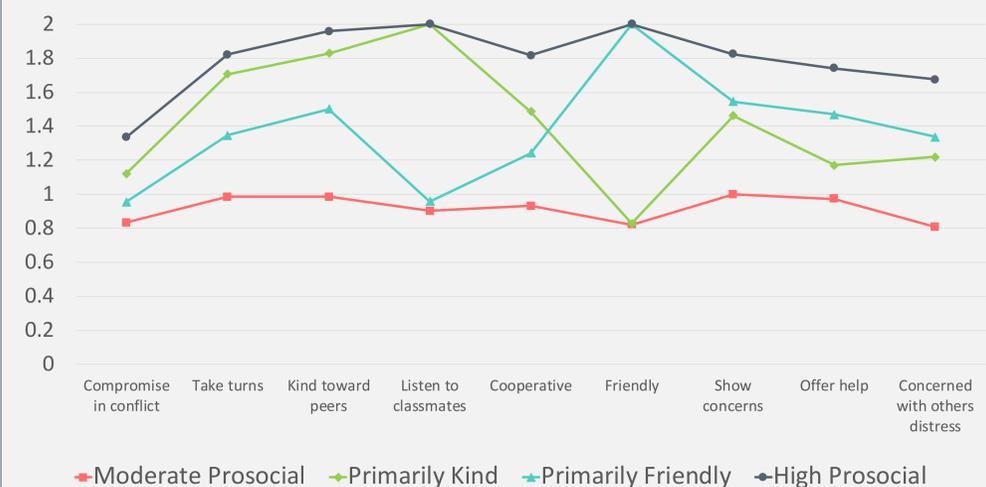


Figure 2. Latent Profiles of Teacher-Rated Child Prosocial Behavior at 4th

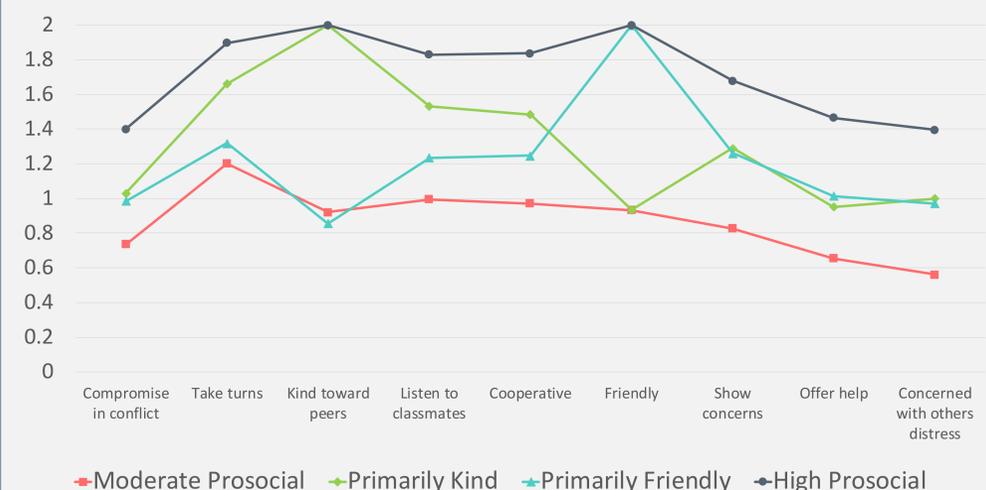


Table 1. Number and percentage representation across mother- and teacher-rated prosocial profiles at 4th grade

| Mother Report | Teacher Report | | | | Total |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| | Moderate Prosocial | Primarily Kind | Primarily Friendly | High Prosocial | |
| Moderate Prosocial | 22 (+)*** (2.51%) | 5 (0.57%) | 5 (0.57%) | 21 (-)*** (2.39%) | 53 (6.04%) |
| Primarily Kind | 8 (0.91%) | 2 (0.23%) | 1 (0.11%) | 26 (2.96%) | 37 (4.22%) |
| Primarily Friendly | 42 (+)** (4.79%) | 13 (1.48%) | 18 (2.05%) | 93 (-)*** (10.60%) | 166 (18.93%) |
| High Prosocial | 85 (-)*** (9.69%) | 38 (4.33%) | 43 (4.90%) | 455 (+)*** (51.88%) | 621 (70.81%) |
| Total | 157 (17.90%) | 58 (6.61%) | 67 (7.64%) | 595 (67.84%) | 877 (100%) |

Note. Chi-square test results are presented by (+) for overrepresentation and (-) for underrepresentation. Significance of the adjusted standardized residuals is denoted by ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001.

FINDINGS

RQ1:

- Mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior demonstrated a consistent four-class best fit solution.
- Four similar profiles of 4th grade mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior were identified: *High Prosocial*, *Primarily Friendly*, *Primarily Kind*, and *Moderate Prosocial* (see Figure 1 & 2).

RQ2:

- Between mothers' and teachers' profiles on prosocial behavior, there is more consistency in *High Prosocial* and *Moderate Prosocial* groups and less consistency in the other two groups, $\chi^2(9)=45.76$, $p<.001$.
- Mother-rated *Primarily Friendly* children are overrepresented in teacher-rated *Moderate Prosocial* group and underrepresented in teacher-rated *High Prosocial* group.
- There are disagreements between mothers' and teachers' perceptions of prosocial behavior for many children, for example, 85 (10% of the sample) children are rated as *High Prosocial* by mothers and *Moderate Prosocial* by teachers.

DISCUSSION

- The four similar profiles of mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior confirms the consistency in the patterns of mothers' and teachers' perceptions of child prosocial behavior.
- Differences between mothers' and teachers' perception of particular children's prosocial behavior could be the result of a) these children behave differently in different settings, b) teacher and mothers have different rating criteria for prosocial behavior because teachers have experience with a broader range of children.
- The next step includes finding out what leads to the disparity of perceptions between mothers and teachers and how mother- and teacher-rated prosocial behavior relate differently to social outcomes (e.g., peer relationship).

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Questions & Comments: Contact Su Jiang at sjiang7@uci.edu
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