

INDIVIDUATION IN YOUNG ADULTS IN MUNICH AND MILAN

Testing the Construct Validity of MITA-Dimensions in International Comparison

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1.1 Individuation in Early Adulthood

- Development of autonomy while maintaining relatedness (Allen et al., 1994; Blos, 1966; Walper 2003; Youniss & Smollar, 1985):
 - **Relatedness**: sympathy, loyalty, mutual support
 - **Autonomy**: becoming independent from thoughts and intentions of others
 - emotional autonomy
 - autonomy of behavior
 - cognitive autonomy
 - economic autonomy
- ☞ **Changes in Parental Control and Offspring Self-Regulation required**
- Individuation is a developmental task in adolescence as well as in early adulthood

1.2 Young Adults in Germany and Italy: An International Comparison

- Age at leaving the parental home is highest in Italy (Sgitta 2001; Iacovou 2001)

	Italy	Germany
Median Age of Home Leaving*	28.4	23.2

- Strong culturally framed family ties: „famiglia lunga“ (Scabini & Cigoli 1997)
- „Family Welfare Regime“ vs. „Mixed Welfare Regime“ (Vogel 2003)
- Youth unemployment in Italy (25%) is twice as high as in Germany (12%)

*) see Iacovou 2001

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2.1. Research Questions

- (1) Can the original MITA-Dimensions be replicated for young adults in Germany as well as in Italy?
- (2) Are there mean differences in individuation by country?
- (3) Can the MITA-Dimensions be validated by other scales, e.g. the Network of Relationship Inventory (NRI) and the Filial Responsibility Scale (FRS)?

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2.1. Research Questions

(1) Test of MITA-Dimensions:

- Confirmative Factor Analysis (AMOS)
- Test of MITA-Dimensions for Milan: Explorative Factor Analysis (SPSS)

(2) Test of Mean Differences:

- Unpaired T-tests

(3) 2-Cities-Comparison of correlations of MITA-dimensions:

- Pearson Correlations
- Test of Two Independent Correlation Coefficients (Preacher 2002)

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2.2. The YAGIS Project and Sample

Young Adults in Germany, Italy and Sweden (YAGIS)

Life Design of Young Adults in Munich, Milan, Stockholm and Gothenburg, aged 20 – 30 between Vocational Training, Job and Family.

2005 - 2006: Young Adults in **Munich** and **Milan**

2007: Young Adults in Gothenburg and Stockholm

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2.2. The YAGIS Project and Sample

	Munich	Milan	Total
N	484	548	1032
Female	60.1% (N=291)	55.7% (N=305)	57.8% (N= 596)
Mean Age	24.00	24.67	24.35
has Partner	61.2% (N=293)	63.7% (N=349)	62.5% (N=642)
Coresiding with Parents	29.8% (N=144)	81.6% (N=447)	57.3% (N=591)

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2.3. The MITA

Munich Individuation Test of Adolescence

(Walper, Schwarz and Jurasic 1996; Walper, 1997, 1998)

- Based on the *Separation-Individuation Test of Adolescence* (SITA); Levine, Green, & Millon, 1986; Levine & Saintonge, 1993), strongly revised
- Includes 6 scales measuring successful individuation as well as specific individuation problems
- Similar versions for individuation RE: mother, father, best friend, romantic partner
- Slightly adapted version for young adults

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Original Scales of the MITA for German Adolescents

Scale	Sample Item	# of Items	Alpha Mother	Alpha Father
Nurturance Seeking	<i>When she is near me, I have the feeling that nothing bad can happen to me.</i>	6	.73	.76
Denial of Attachment Needs	<i>I get along well without her affection.</i>	6	.78	.78
Engulfment Anxiety	<i>It drives me crazy if she questions me about my personal matters.</i>	7	.84	.79
Fear of Love Withdrawal	<i>If I have disappointed my mother I am anxious that she does not like me any more.</i>	5	.68	.61
Ambivalence	<i>I would like to do more things with her, but I am anxious to be a nuisance.</i>	5	.65	.65
Successful Individuation	<i>Even if I don't like everything my mother does, I try to understand her.</i>	5	.73	.81

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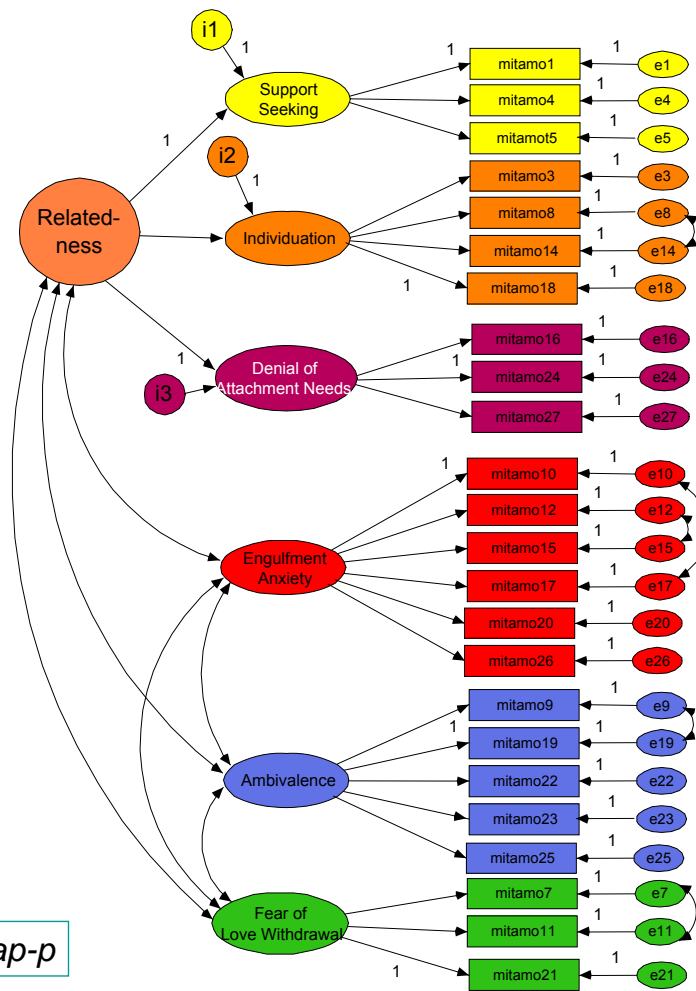
3. Testing the MITA-Dimensions

- Testing the Original Model of MITA-Dimensions
- data from the **Munich sample** (n = 484)
- report regarding individuation in relation to mother

MITA Dimensions Munich Sample

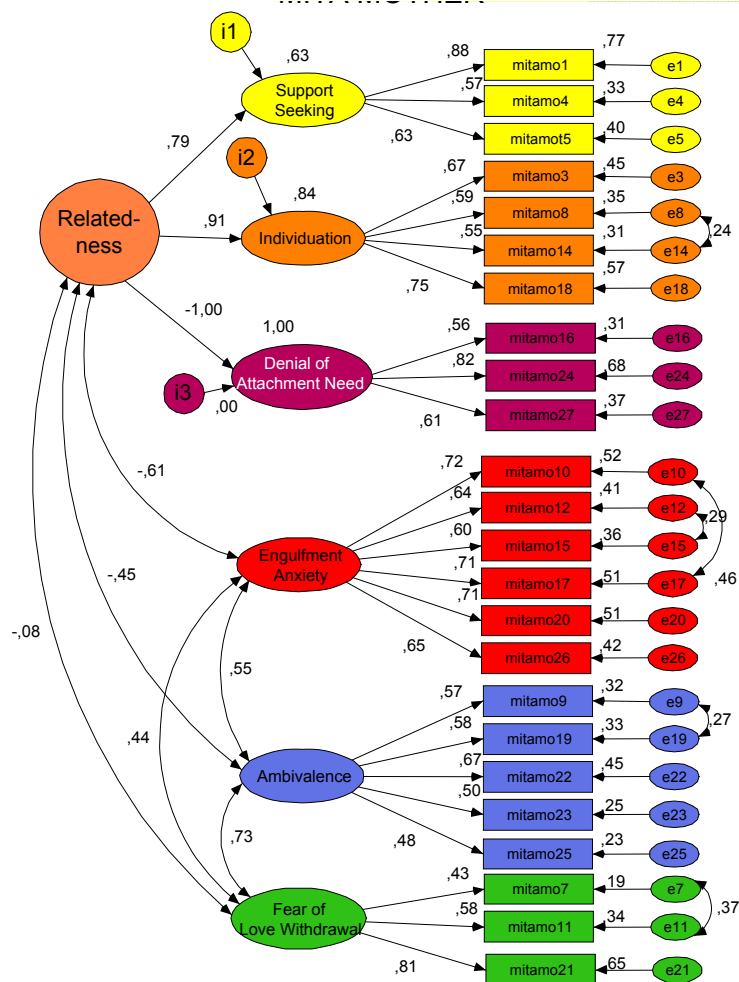
Chi²=590.8; df=238;
 p=.000; p_{BSB}*=.001;
 CFI=.916;
 SRMR=.0631;
 RMSEA=.055
 (LO:.050; HI: .061)
 N=484;
 Kurtosis=192.9;
 Cr=60.1

*) p_{BSB}= Bollenstine Bootstrap-p



MITA Dimensions Munich Sample

Chi²=590.8; df=238;
 p=.000; p_{BSB}*=.001;
 CFI=.916;
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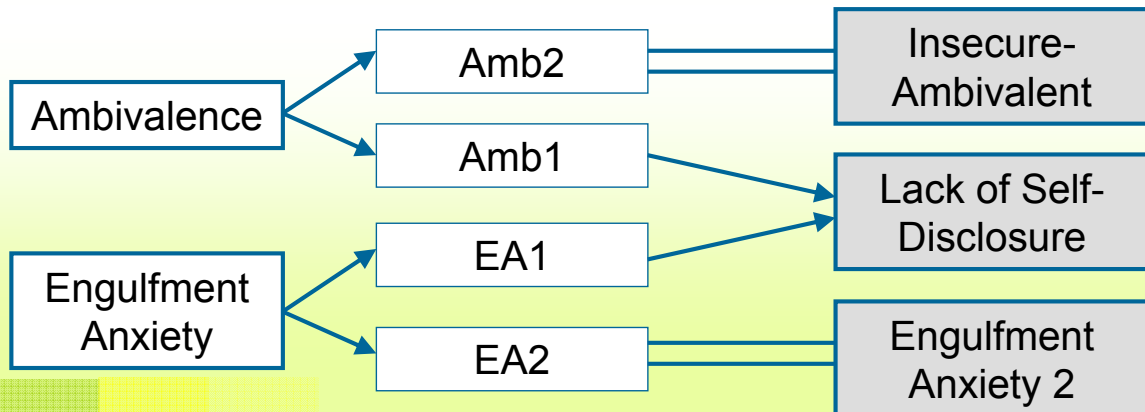
3.1. Test of the Original German MITA-Dimensions

...for the **Italian Sample**:

- Confirmative Factor-Analysis showed that the German MITA Modell does not fit for Italian Data:

$\chi^2=808.3$; $df=238$; $p=.000$; $p_{BSB}=.001$; $CFI=.852$;
 $SRMR=.0794$; $RMSEA=.066$ (LO:.061; HI:.071)

- Back to SPSS: Explorative Factor-Analysis showed



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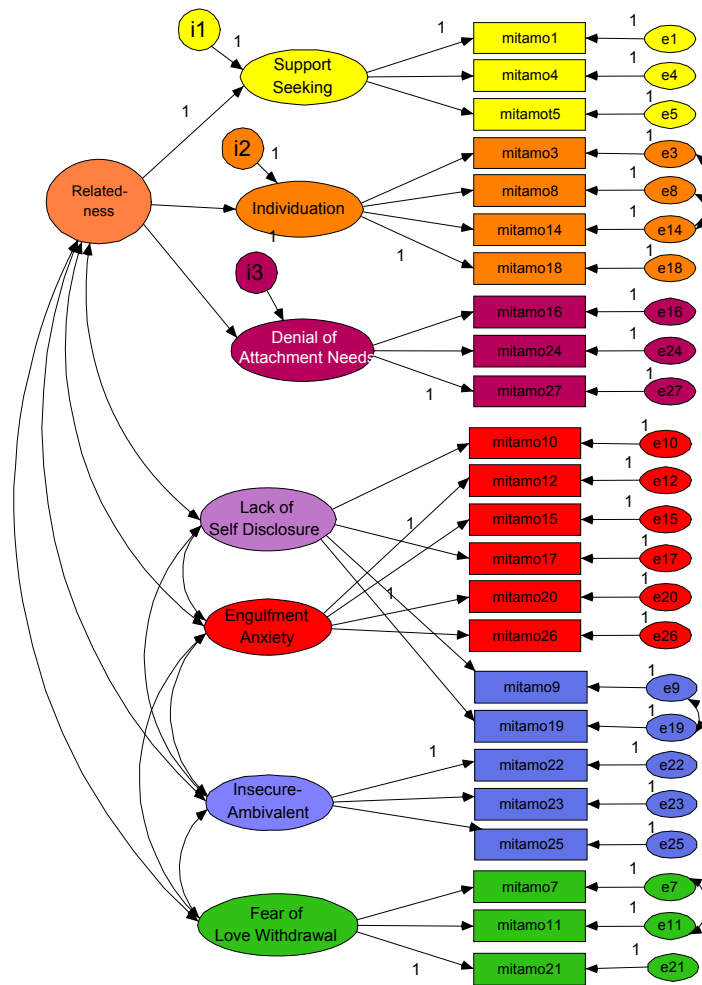
3.2. Test of the MITA-Dimensions

- Testing the revised MITA-Dimensions for the **Milan Sample**

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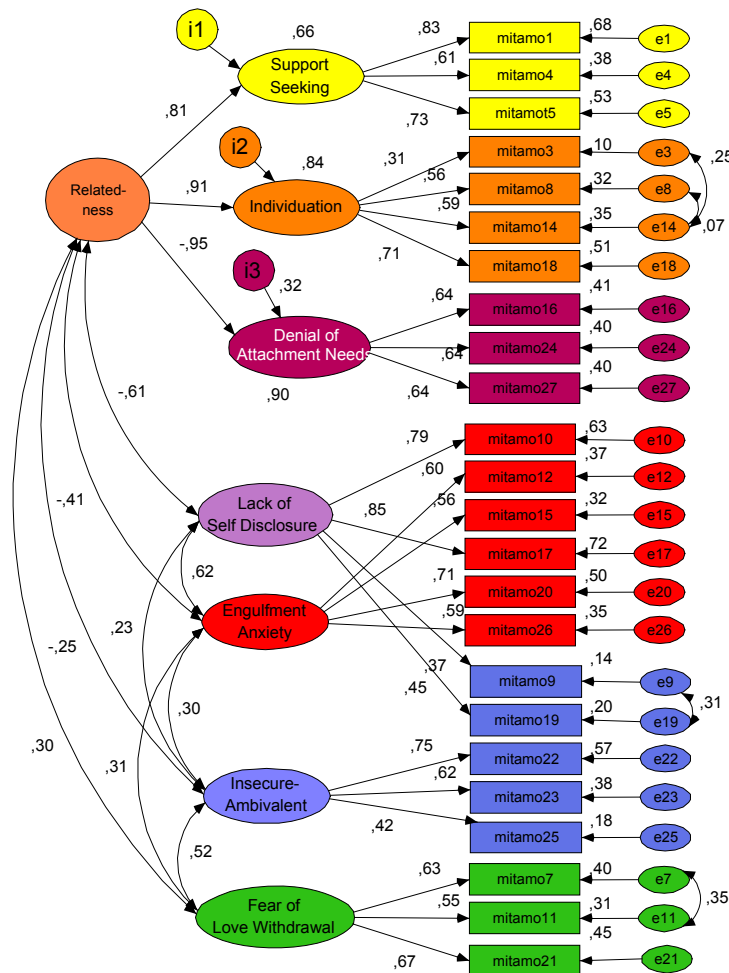
MITA Dimensions Milan Sample

Chi²=672.1;
df=238; p=.000;
p_{BSB} = .001;
CFI=.887;
SRMR=.0677;
RMSEA=.058 (LO:
.053; HI: .063)
N=548;
Kurtosis=103.3;
Cr=34.2



MITA Dimensions Milan Sample

Chi²=672.1;
df=238; p=.000;
p_{BSB} = .001;
CFI=.887;
SRMR=.0677;
RMSEA=.058 (LO:
.053; HI: .063)
N=548;
Kurtosis=103.3;
Cr=34.2



3.2. MITA-Dimensions in Milan and Munich

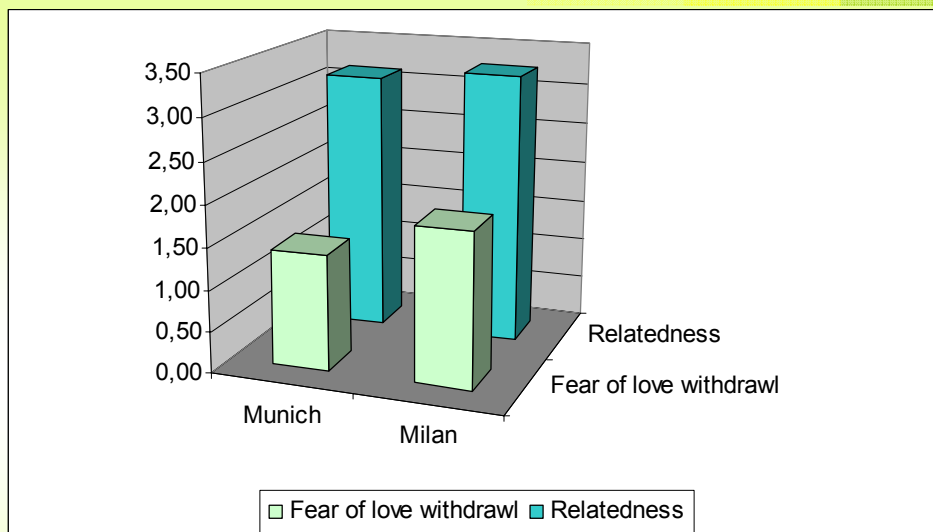
Confirmative Factor-Analysis showed

1. that the German MITA Modell does not fit for Data from Milan.
2. that the Italian MITA Modell does not fit for Data from Munich.

→ The MITA-Dimensions *Ambivalence* and *Engulfment Anxiety* differ in both countries.

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3.3. Mean Differences in Individuation in Munich and Milan



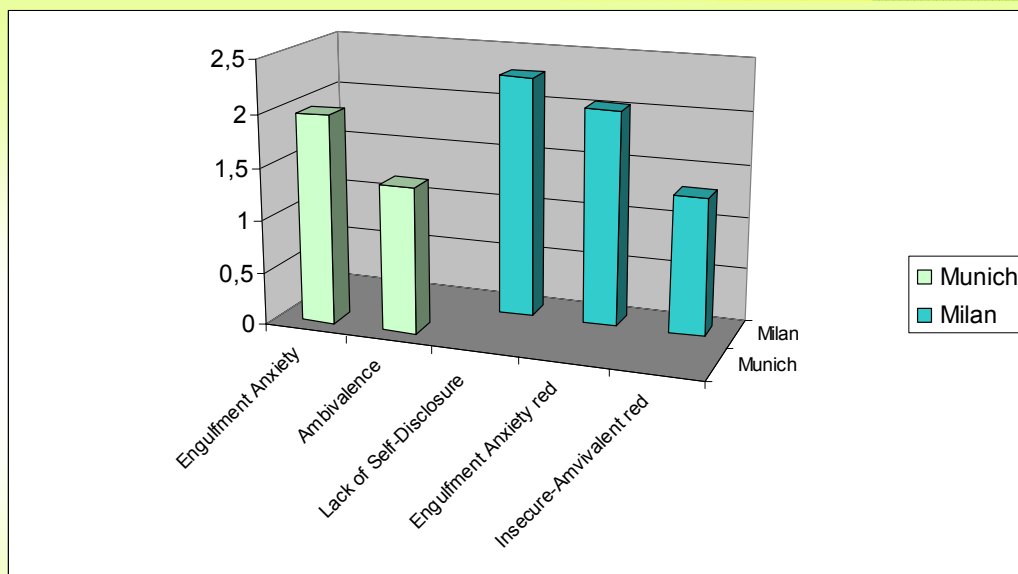
Significant differences between Munich and Milan:

Relatedness (M=3.13 vs. M=3.27); $t=4,28$; $df=1030$; $p=.000$

Fear of Love Withdrawal (M=1.40 vs. M=1.86); $t=11,21$; $df=1030$; $p=.000$

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3.3. Mean Differences in Individuation in Munich and Milan



Differences between anxieties in Munich (Engulfment Anxiety M=1.99; Ambivalence M= 1.38) **and Milan** (Lack of Self-Disclosure M=2.29; Engulfment Anxiety red. M= 2.04; Insecure Ambivalent red M= 1.31)

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3.4. Correlates of MITA-Dimensions

MITA in Munich

	Relatedness	Fear of Love Withdrawal	Engulfment Anxiety	Ambivalence
Relatedness	1	-.03 n.s.	-.45**	-.37**
Engulfment Anxiety	-.45**	.27**	1	.43**
Ambivalence	-.37**	.44**	.43**	1

N = 484; Fear of Love Withdrawal N = 483

MITA in Milan

	Relatedness	Fear of Love Withdrawal	Lack of Self-Disclosure	Engulfment Anxiety 2	Insecure-Ambivalent
Relatedness	1	.18**	-.43**	-.29**	-.18**
Lack of Self-Disclosure	-.43**	.15**	1	.44**	.22**
Engulfment Anxiety (red.)	-.29**	.21**	.44**	1	.20**
Insecure-Ambivalent	-.18**	.37**	.22**	.20**	1

N = 548

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4.1 Instruments: NRI and FRS

Network of Relationship Inventory (NRI)

based on Furman & Buhrmester (1985)

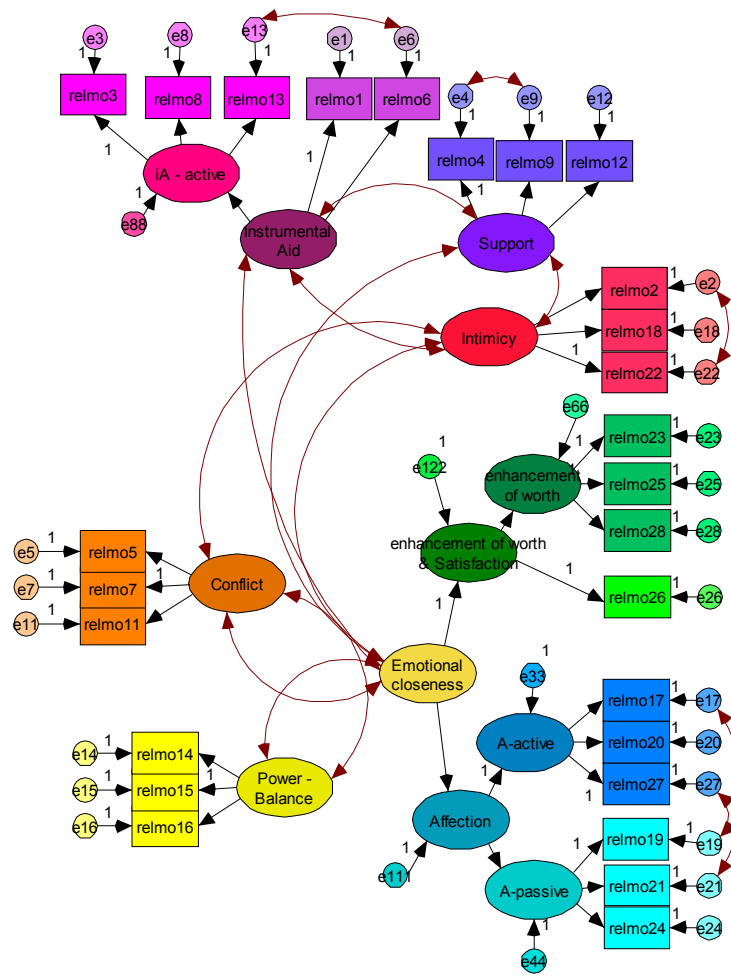
German Version based on Wittmann, Helm, Buhl & Noack (2000)

☞ Correlations of MITA-Dimensions with

☞ **NRI** (Furman & Buhrmester, 1985; German version: Wittmann, Helm, Buhl & Noack (2000) and

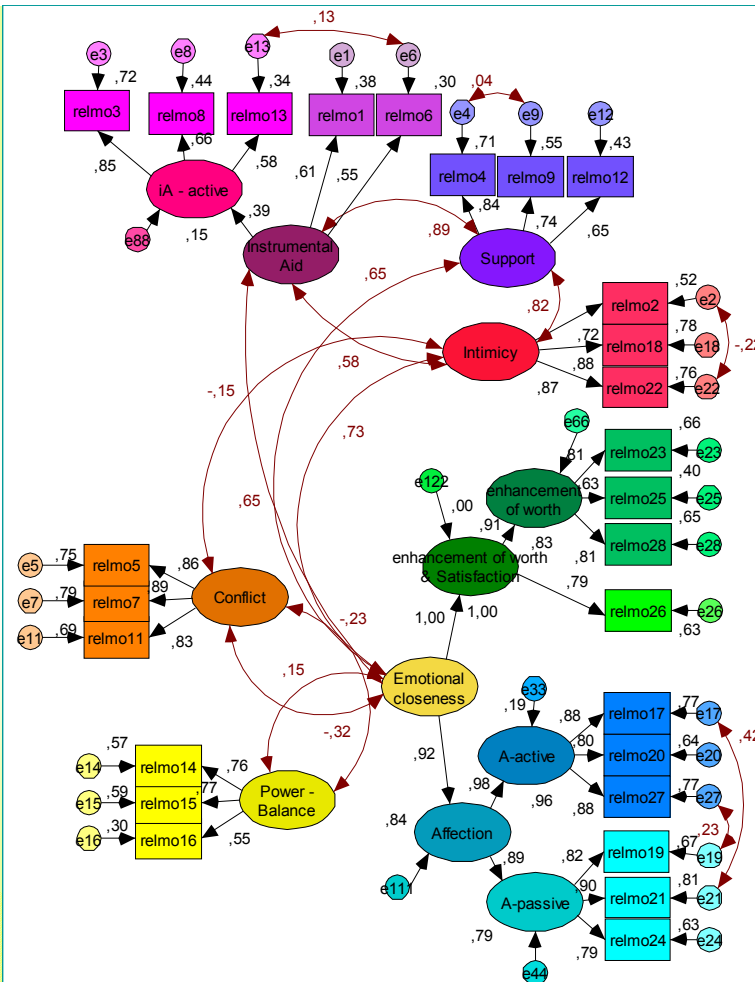
☞ **FRS** (Jurkovic & Thierfeld, 1998)

NRI Dimensions
total sample
(Munich + Milan)



Chi²= 695.0;
df=303; p=.001;
p_{BSB} = .001;
CFI=.947;
SRMR=.0599;
RMSEA=.052 (LO:
.047; HI: .057)

NRI Dimensions
total sample
(Munich + Milan)

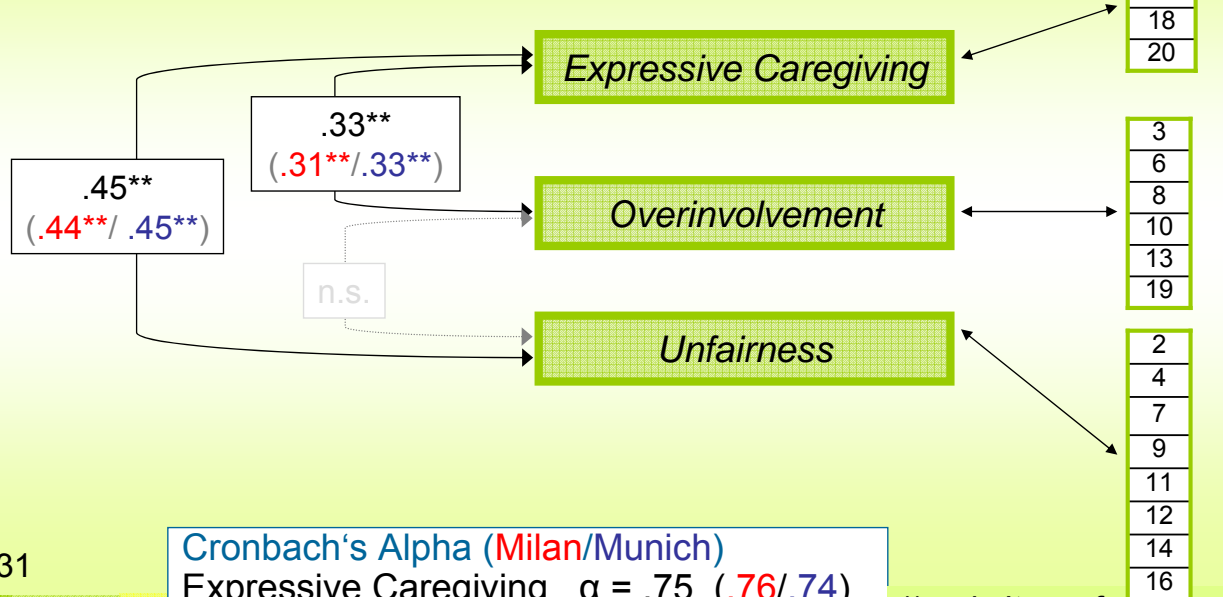


Chi²= 695.0;
df=303; p=.001;
p_{BSB} = .001;
CFI=.947;
SRMR=.0599;
RMSEA=.052 (LO:
.047; HI: .057)

4.1 Instruments: NRI and FRS

Filial Responsibility Scale – Adults (FRS-A)

based on Jurkovic & Thierfeld (1998)*



N=1031

Cronbach's Alpha (Milan/Munich)	
Expressive Caregiving	$\alpha = .75$ (.76/.74)
Extreme Involvement	$\alpha = .67$ (.68/.66)
Unfairness	$\alpha = .83$ (.81/.84)

*) only Items for current situation, not for past.

4.2. Correlations MITA-Relatedness with FRS + NRI in Munich Sample (n = 477 – 484)

	r
Expressive Caregiving	-.08 .
Overinvolvement	.32**
Unfairness	-.50**
NRI Conflict	-.33**
Support Received	.56**
Intimacy	.63**
Enhancement of Worth	.66**
Affection	.73**
Instrumental Aid	.31**
Relative Power (balanced)	.25**
Relative Power (mother)	.02 .
Enhancement of Worth & Satisfaction	.72**
Emotional Closeness	.77**

Relatedness is well confirmed:
Higher for emotionally close, affective, satisfying relationship with mother.
Similar correlations were also found for Milan sample.

N = 477 - 484

4.2. Correlations MITA- **Fear of Love Withdrawal** with FRS + NRI in Munich Sample

	r
Expressive Caregiving	.12**
Overinvolvement	.20**
Unfairness	.37**
NRI Conflict	.17**
Support Received	.15**
Intimacy	.00
Enhancement of Worth	-.01
Affection	-.06
Instrumental Aid	.21**
Relative Power (balanced)	-.19**
Relative Power (mother)	-.08
Enhancement of Worth & Satisfaction	-.07
Emotional Closeness	-.07

↔ Milan: .16**

Fear of Love Withdrawal is less well captured by FRS and NRI. Perceived Unfairness is a correlate in Germany, but less so in Italy.

N = 477 - 484

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4.2. Correlations MITA – **Engulfment Anxiety (EA) and Ambivalence (AM)** with FRS + NRI in Munich Sample

	EA	AM
Expressive Caregiving	.27**	.16**
Overinvolvement	.00	.06
Unfairness	.42**	.58**
NRI Conflict	.40**	.27**
Support Received	-.22**	-.22**
Intimacy	-.38**	-.43**
Enhancement of Worth	-.28**	-.31**
Affection	-.31**	-.39**
Instrumental Aid	.06	-.01
Relative Power (balanced)	-.23**	-.23**
Relative Power (mother)	-.05	-.06
Enhancement of Worth & Satisfaction	-.33**	-.38**
Emotional Closeness	-.34**	-.42**

Engulfment Anxiety and ***Ambivalence*** relate to unfairness, conflict, and a lack of emotional closeness.

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4.2. Correlations MITA – Engulfment Anxiety (EA), Ambivalence (AM) and Lack of Self Disclosure (LSD) with FRS+NRI in Both Samples

	Munich		Milan		
	EA	AM	LSD	EA red	AM red
Expressive Caregiving	.27**	.16**	,14**	.29**	,26**
Overinvolvement	.00	.06	-,01	.07	,08
Unfairness	.42**	.58**	,36**	.30**	,39**
NRI Conflict	.40**	.27**	,19**	.31**	,19**
Support Received	-.22**	-.22**	-,45**	-.18**	-,01
Intimacy	-.38**	-.43**	-,63**	-.23**	-,05
Enhancement of Worth	-.28**	-.31**	-,38**	-.17**	-,11*
Affection	-.31**	-.39**	-,30**	-.12**	-,23**
Instrumental Aid	.06	-,01	-,12**	.03	,12**
Relative Power (balanced)	-.23**	-,23**	-,14**	-.10*	-,13**
Relative Power (mother)	-.05	-,06	-,02	.02	-,10*
Enhancement of Worth & Satisfaction	-.33**	-,38**	-,43**	-.22**	-,14**
Emotional Closeness	-.34**	-,42**	-,39**	-.18**	-,21**

5. Discussion

- In Germany, the MITA evidences the same dimensions for adolescence and young adulthood.
- In Italy, a specific aspect of individuation problems was found which was not evident (as distinct dimension) in the German sample: Lack of self disclosure.
- Mean differences point to higher relatedness and higher anxieties in Italy than in Germany.
- Nevertheless, the overall pattern of correlations between MITA scales and other scales is similar for Munich and Milan.
- For comparisons between Italy and Germany, it seems most appropriate to combine the various individuation problems (Engulfment Anxiety, Ambivalence, Lack of Self Disclosure) into a single indicator.

THANK YOU!

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