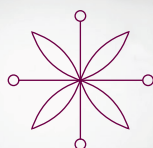


The Abstract Book of the 22nd European Conference on Developmental Psychology



August 25-29, 2025
Vilnius, Lithuania

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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOLOGICALLY CONTROLLING TEACHING ON STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL COST AND ATTAINMENT VALUE IN MATHEMATICS

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Situated Expectancy-Value Theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020) highlights the role of situational variables in shaping students' motivational beliefs, yet empirical research—especially longitudinal—on how contextual factors like teacher behavior influence these beliefs remains limited. One key aspect of teacher behavior is psychologically controlling teaching, which imposes excessive pressure on students (Soenens et al., 2011) and may be used more in high-stakes courses such as mathematics. This pressure may lead to more negative emotions while learning math, contributing to greater emotional cost. Further, students may try to protect their self-worth from excessive pressure by reducing the perceived importance of success in math, lowering attainment value. This study explores the bidirectional interrelations over time between perceived psychologically controlling teaching, emotional cost and attainment value of learning mathematics during the first three semesters of high school. A cross-lagged panel analysis was conducted on 1,202 Lithuanian ninth-grade students (58.3% female, $M = 14.88$ years) from 24 high schools who participated in all three waves of a larger longitudinal study on math motivation. Self-report measures assessed attainment value (5 items), emotional cost (5 items), and psychologically controlling teaching (7 items). Results revealed a bidirectional relationship between perceived psychologically controlling teaching and emotional cost across the second and third time points, as well as between emotional cost and attainment value. Between the first and second time points, unidirectional relationships emerged: emotional cost predicted both psychologically controlling teaching and attainment value. Indirect path analysis showed that higher emotional cost led to increased psychological control, which, in turn, further heightened emotional cost. Additionally, higher emotional cost lowered attainment value, subsequently contributing to even greater emotional cost. These findings suggest that negative feelings attributed to mathematics may affect students' susceptibility to controlling teacher behavior, leading to a more negative perception of teaching and mathematics.