

Interplay Between Maternal Control, Adolescent Personality, and Rule Breaking Behavior Across Adolescence

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BACKGROUND

- Previous studies assessed found **reciprocal relationships between parenting and externalizing problem behavior and between personality and externalizing problem behavior** (De Haan, Prinzie, & Deković, 2012; Keijsers, Loeber, Branje, & Meeus, 2012, Van Leeuwen et al, 2004; 2007).
- **Parental control**, is associated with rule breaking behavior, but associations between different aspects of control have received less research attention (Huh, Tristan, Wade, & Stice, 2006).

OBJECTIVES

- To gain knowledge on the **transactional associations between maternal control, adolescent personality and a specific variant of externalizing problems, that is rule breaking behavior**.
- To get a **more detailed picture of the role of maternal control as an antecedent and consequence of rule breaking behavior**, by assessing different forms of control. It is expected that proactive control is negatively associated, whereas punitive and psychological control are positively associated.
- To add to the literature by **including both personality characteristics and parenting**. Conscientiousness and agreeableness are hypothesized to be positively associated with proactive control, but negatively with punitive and psychological control as well as rule breaking.



METHODS

- **Three-wave accelerated longitudinal design** with a one-year interval between waves. This results in an age range from 12 to 16 years.

- **Maternal control** (mother report):
 - Psychological control (Psycon)
 - Proactive control (Procon)
 - Punitive control (Puncon)

- **Rule breaking behavior** (adolescent report): Youth Self-Report (Achenbach, 1991; Rul)

- **Adolescent personality** (mother report):
 - Agreeableness (Agree)
 - Conscientiousness (Con)

- Sample W1.
 -  N adolescents= 1,111
 -  N mothers= 747
 - Age: M= 13.79 years old
 - 51% Boys

ANALYSIS STRATEGY

- **Cross-Lagged Panel Models (CLPM)** are used.
- Dependency in the data due to multiple measurements within one individual is taken into account by correcting the estimates and standard errors.
- **Stepwise model fit procedure** that includes
 - 1) Within-wave correlations + stability paths
 - 2) Cross-lagged paths between predictors (personality and maternal control) and outcome (rule breaking behavior)
 - 3) Cross-lagged paths between predictors

RESULTS

Table 1
Pearson Correlations Between Variables Within Waves.

	Wave 1					Wave 2					Wave 3				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Procon (1)	1					1					1				
Puncon (2)	.17**	1				.18***	1				.16***	1			
Psycon (3)	.09	.28***	1			.012	.05	1			.14**	.11*	1		
Agree (4)	.09	-.24***	-.28***	1		.16**	.09	-.28***	1		.06	-.05	-.16***	1	
Con (5)	-.05	-.23***	-.23***	.33***	1	-.02	.00	-.12	.17**	1	.01	.01	-.11*	.19***	1
Rul (6)	.01	.22***	.21***	-.31***	-.19***	-.05	.06	.18***	-.10***	-.09	-.08	-.07	-.06	-.10	-.01

Note. * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

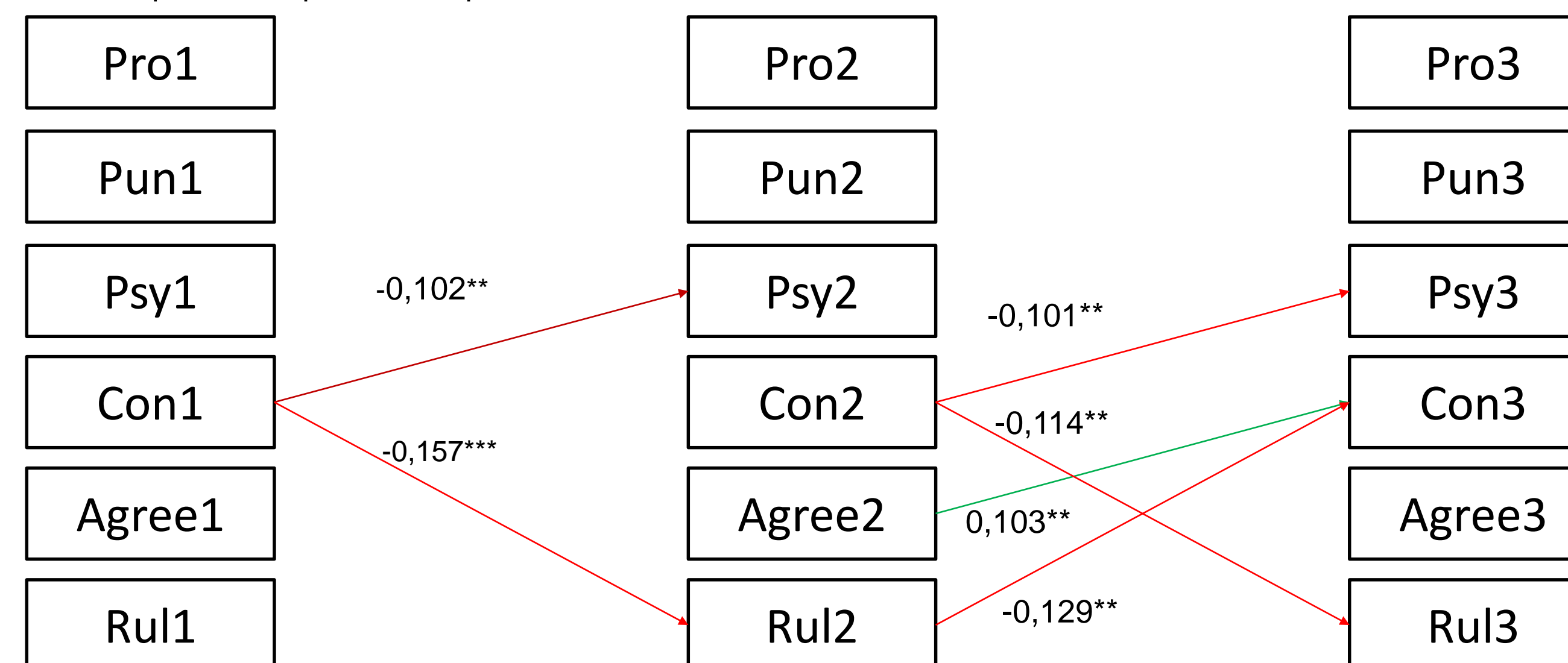


Figure 1. Significant cross-lagged pathways.

Note. Pro = Proactive Control; Pun = Punitive Control; Psy = Psychological Control; Con = Conscientiousness; Agree = Agreeableness; Rul = Rule Breaking Behavior; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 2
Beta's of the Stability Pathways Between Successive Waves.

	Waves	
	T1-T2	T2-T3
Proactive Control	.587***	.636***
Punitive Control	.587***	.643***
Psychological Control	.702***	.616***
Conscientiousness	.776***	.434***
Agreeableness	.716***	.769***
Rule Breaking Behavior	.454***	.565***

Note. * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

CONCLUSIONS

- Conscientiousness plays an important role; It predicts a decrease in psychological control as well as in rule breaking behavior.
- In turn, rule breaking predicts a decrease in conscientiousness, whereas agreeableness predicts an increase in conscientiousness at Wave 3.
- Longitudinally, proactive and punitive control do not show associations with rule breaking, but these two are positively associated within each wave.
- Parenting, personality and rule breaking behavior are very stable across adolescence.
- It is possible that there is a social desirability bias in that adolescents conceal rule breaking, whereas mothers may have the tendency to describe the personality of their child more positively.

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