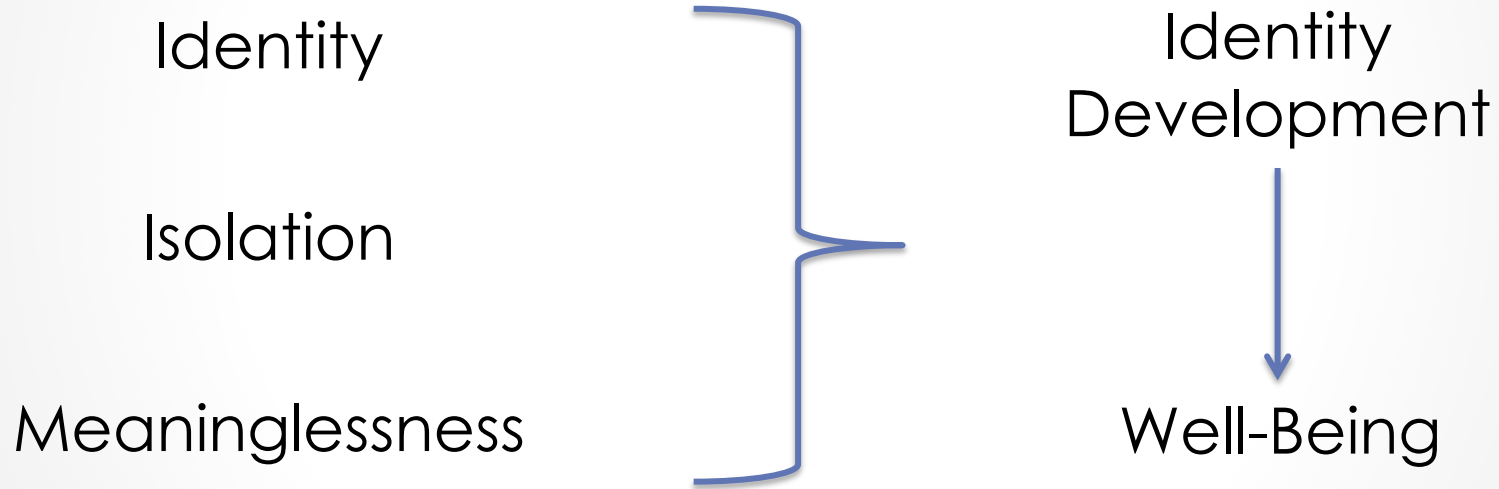


Moral Identity & Meaning in Life: The Mediating Role of Self-Transcendence

Paul Lutz, Holli-Anne Passmore, and Derrick Wirtz

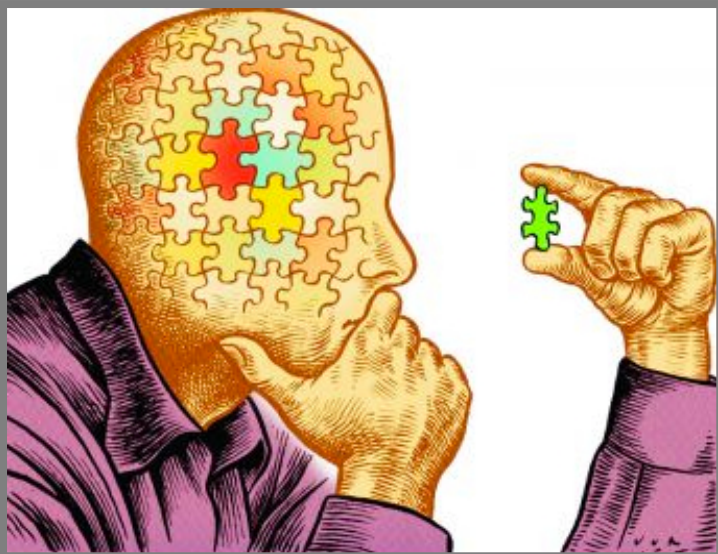
Existential Concerns



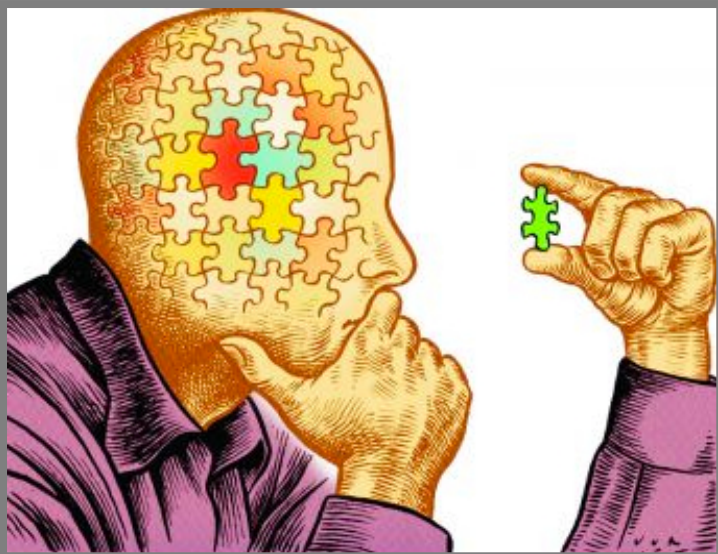
(Wong, 2009; Yalom, 1980)

Identity and Well-Being

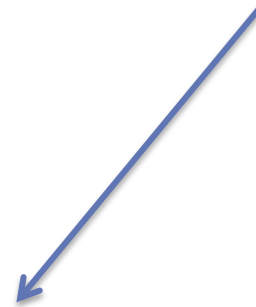
Identity



Identity and Well-Being



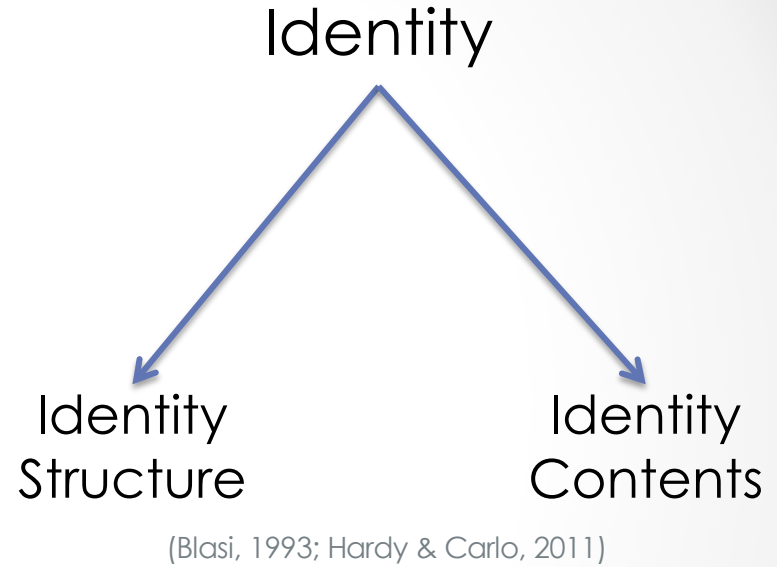
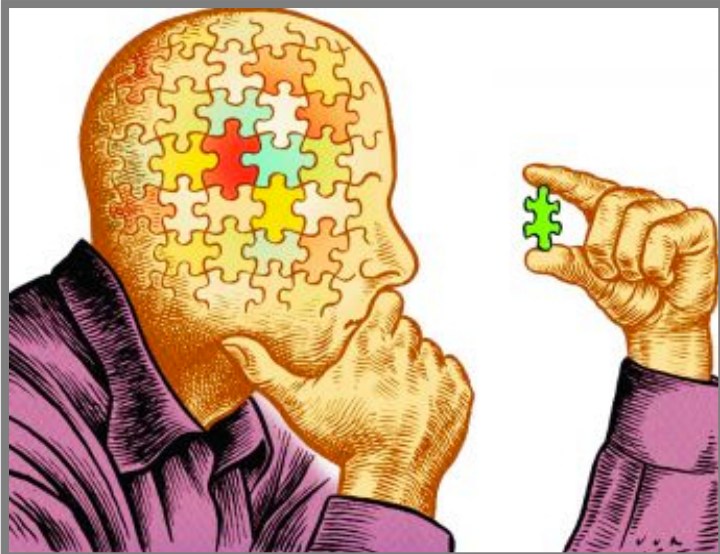
Identity



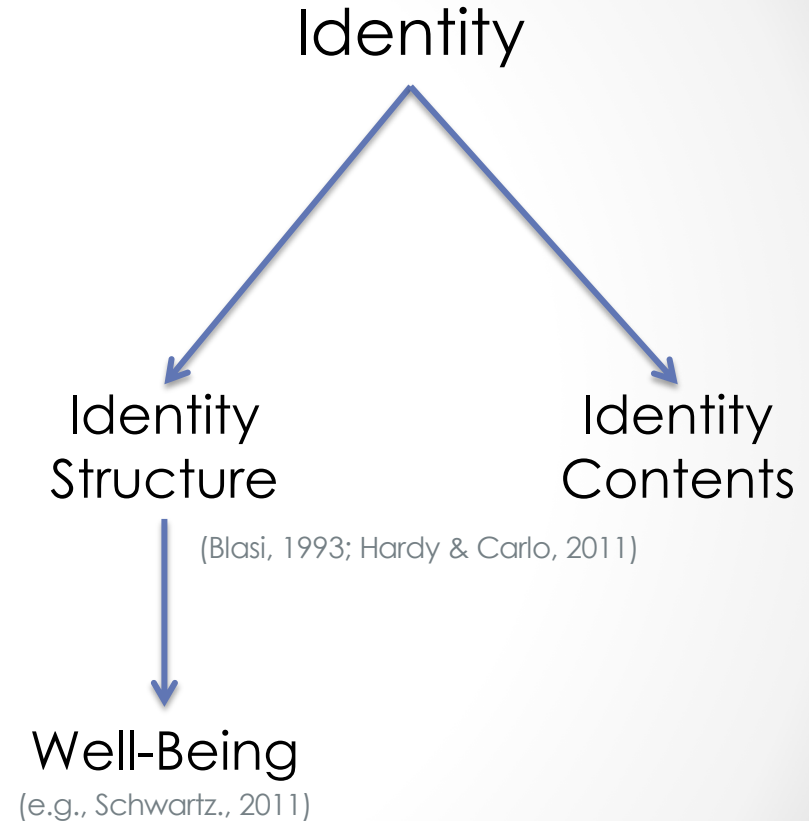
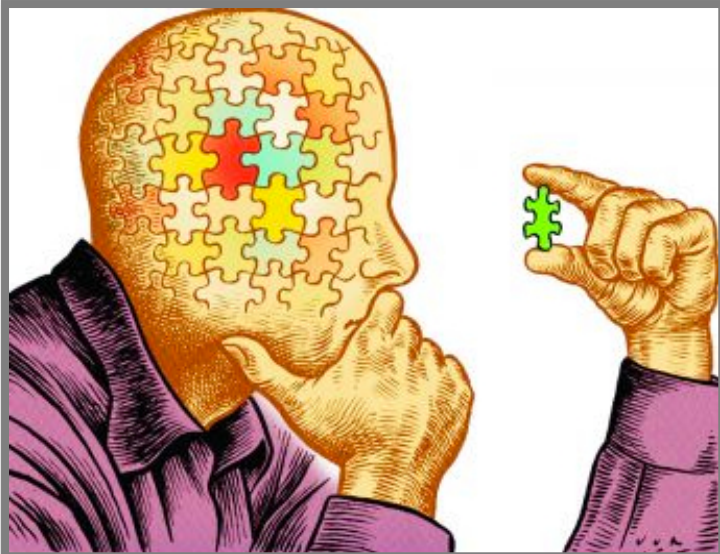
Identity
Structure

(Blasi, 1993; Hardy & Carlo, 2011)

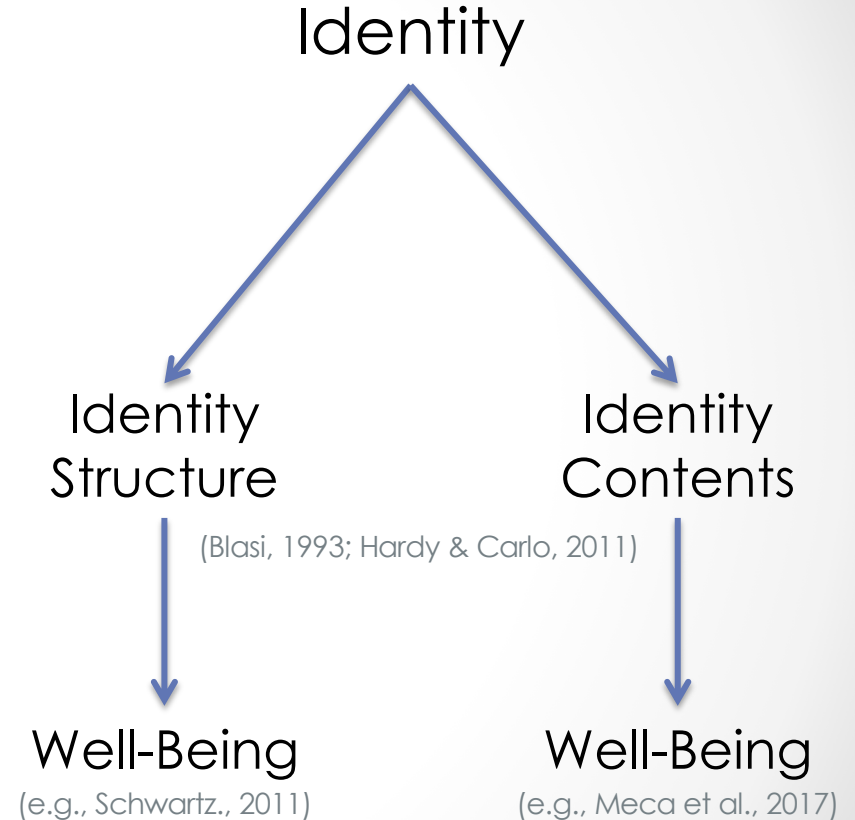
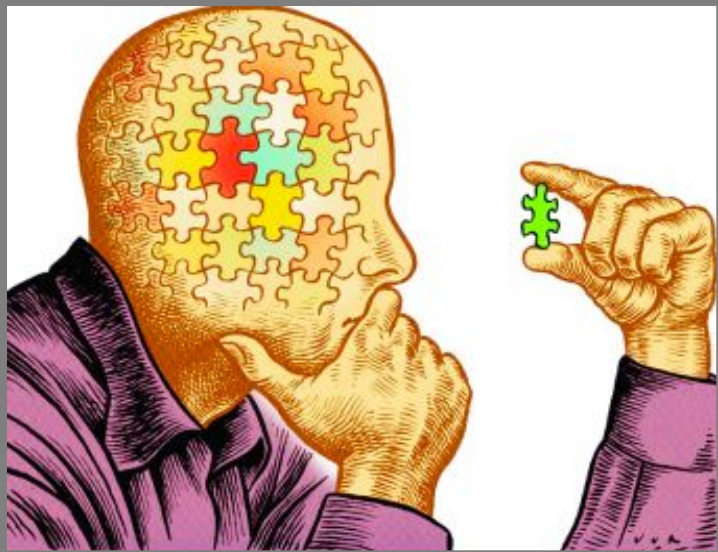
Identity and Well-Being



Identity and Well-Being



Identity and Well-Being



Moral Identity

- The extent to which moral traits such as being kind, generous, and honest are central to one's self-concept (Aquino & Reed, 2002)

Moral Identity

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- Linked to meaning in life, one of the most fundamental factors constituting human flourishing (Steger et al., 2013)

Meaning in Life

- Three facets of meaning: (Martela & Steger, 2016)

Meaning in Life

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 - Purpose – Sense of core goals and direction in life

Meaning in Life

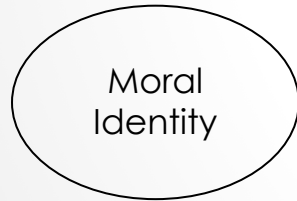
- Three facets of meaning: (Martela & Steger, 2016)
 - Purpose – Sense of core goals and direction in life
 - Coherence – Sense of one's life making sense

Meaning in Life

- Three facets of meaning: (Martela & Steger, 2016)
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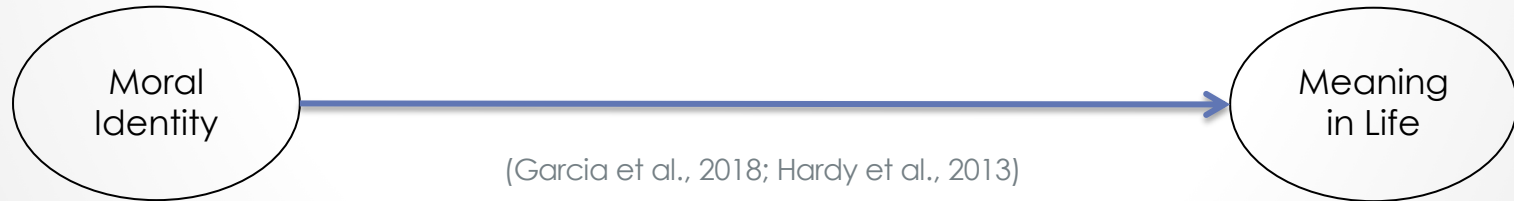
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(Han et al., 2018)



✓ Moral Identity → Meaning in Life

(Han et al., 2018)



✓ Moral Identity → Meaning in Life

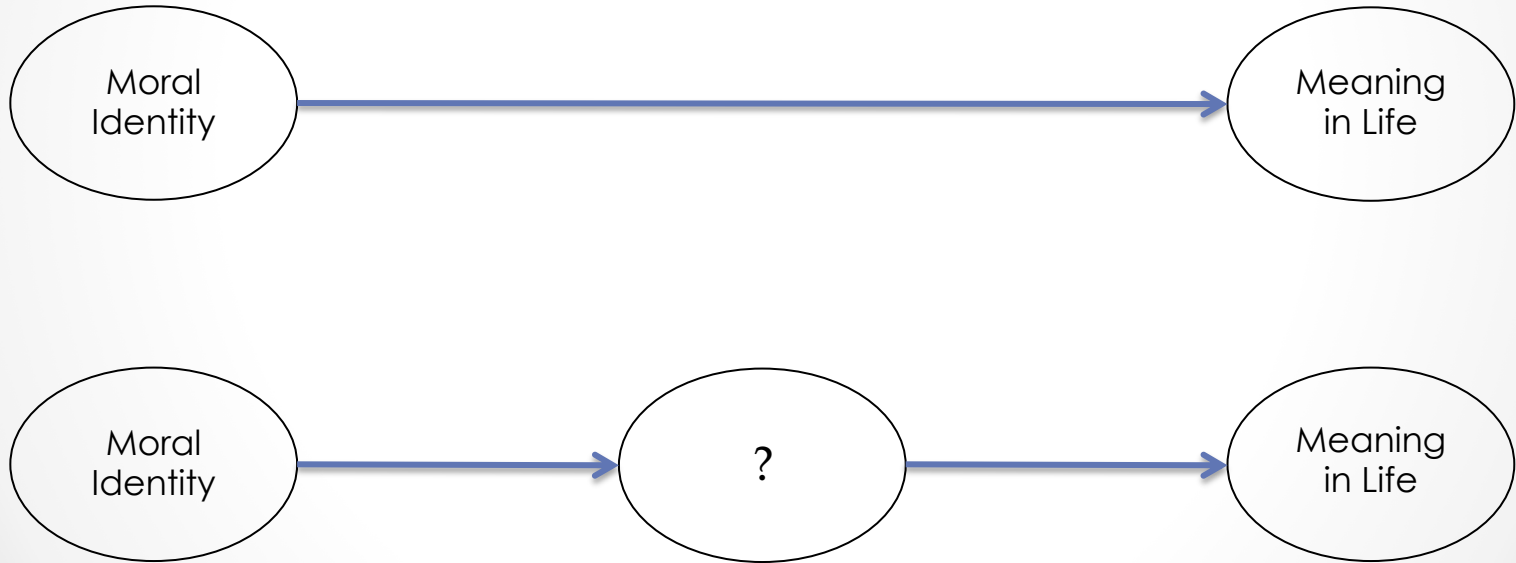
✗ Meaning in Life → Moral Identity

(Han et al., 2018)

Moral Identity and Meaning in Life



Moral Identity and Meaning in Life

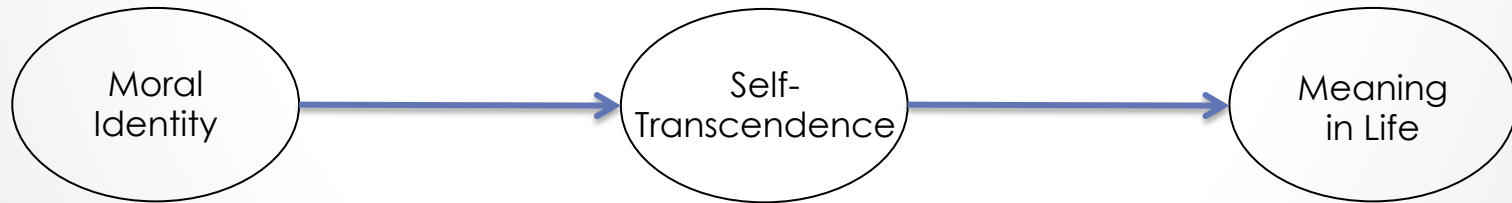


Self-Transcendence

- Moving beyond the concerns of the self to embrace the concerns of others and feeling a broader sense of connection with other entities (Frankl, 1984; Steger et al., 2012)

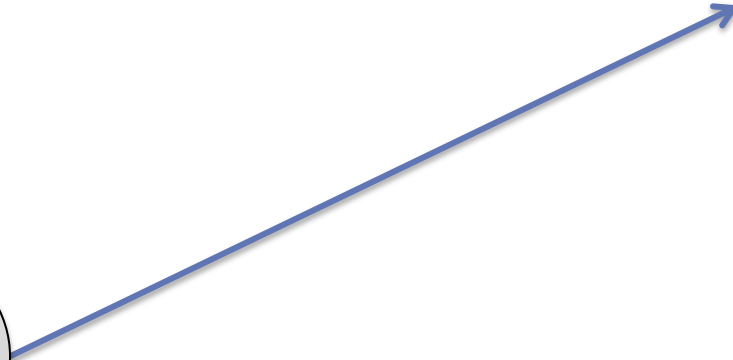
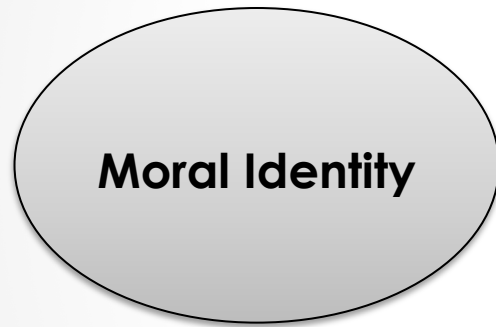
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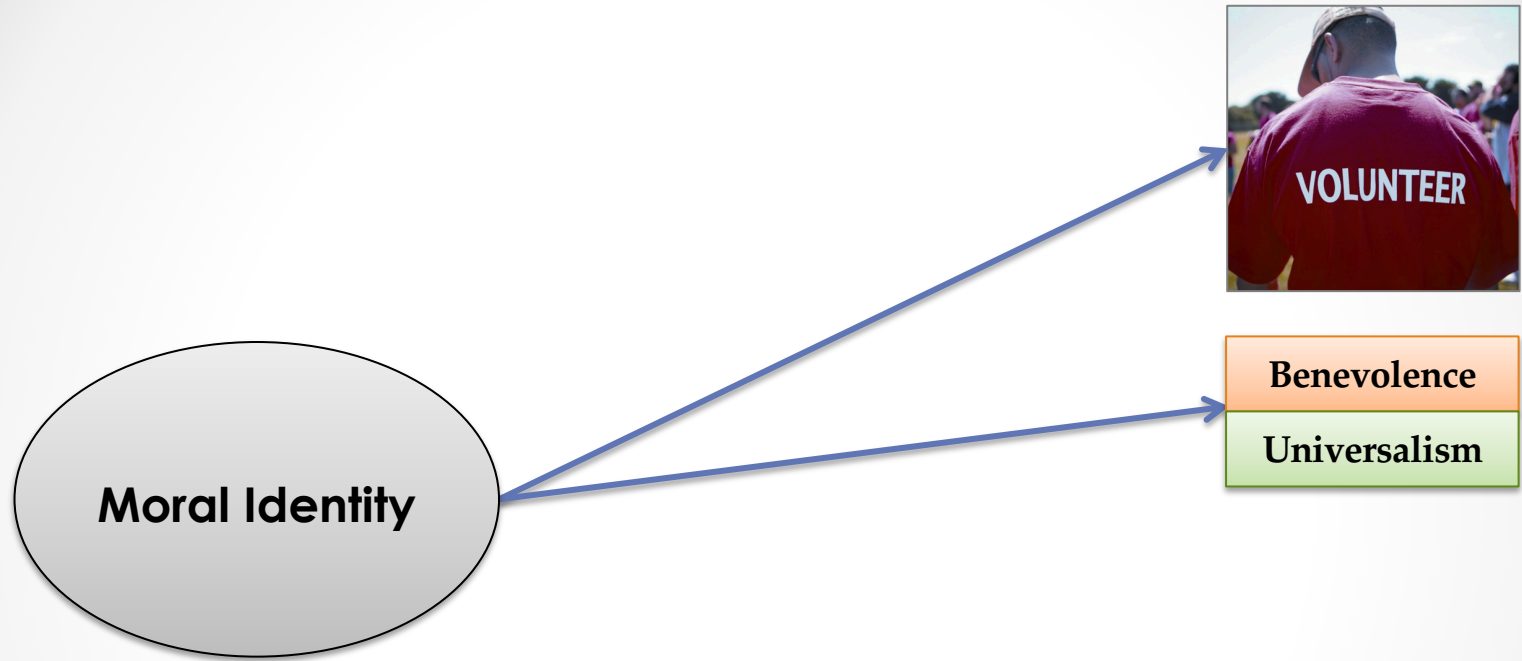




Moral Identity

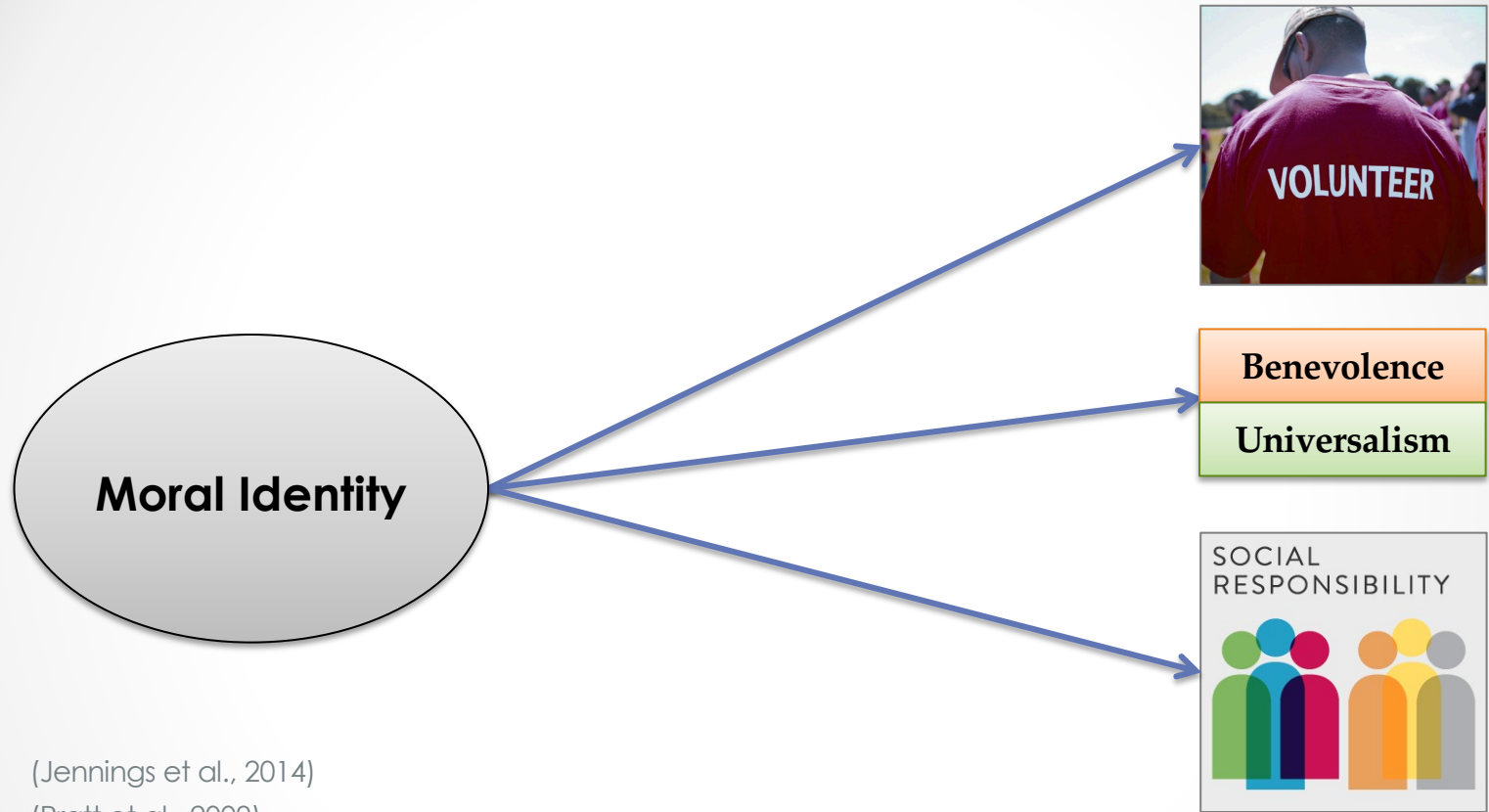


(Jennings et al., 2014)



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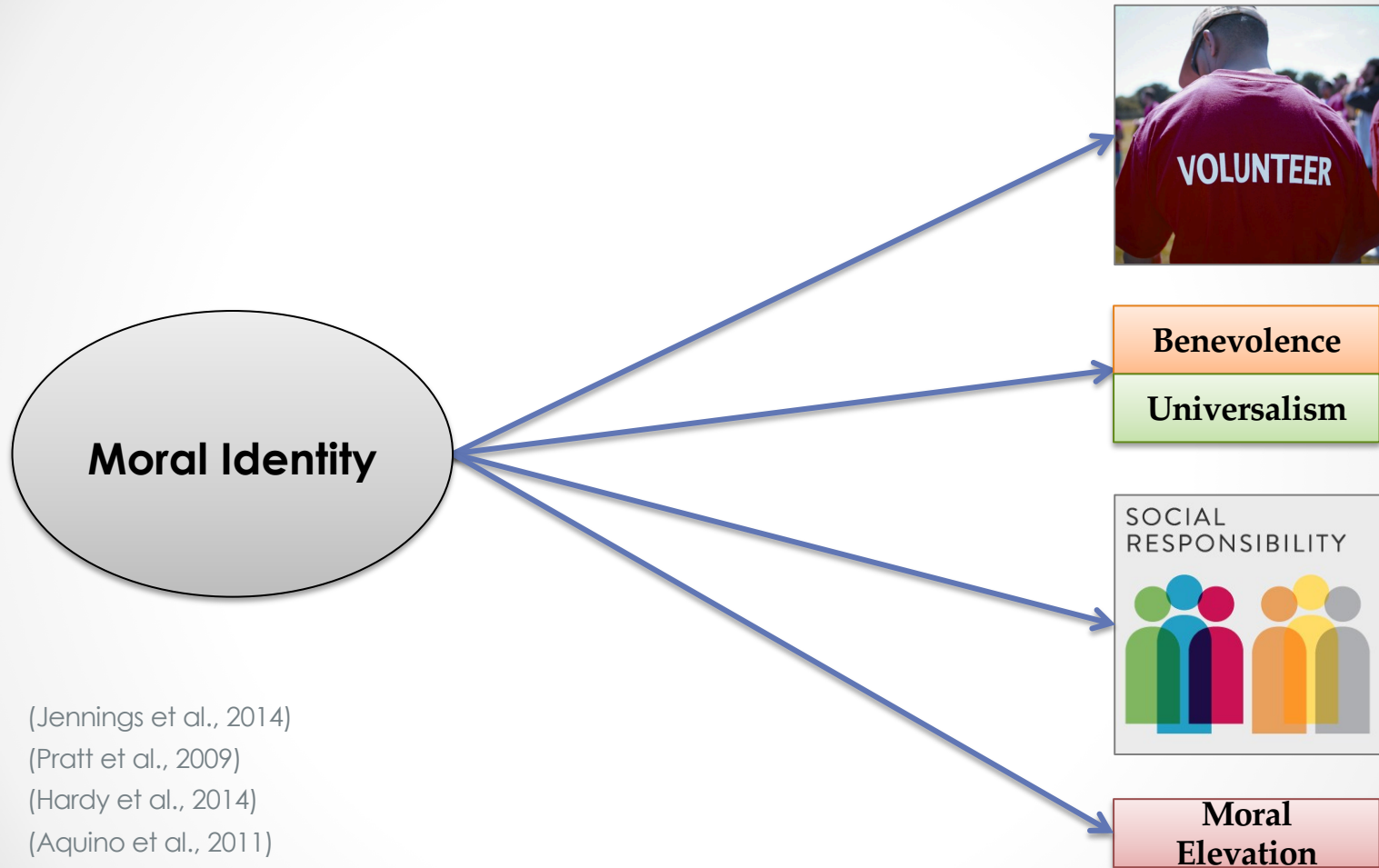
(Pratt et al., 2009)



(Jennings et al., 2014)

(Pratt et al., 2009)

(Hardy et al., 2014)



(Jennings et al., 2014)

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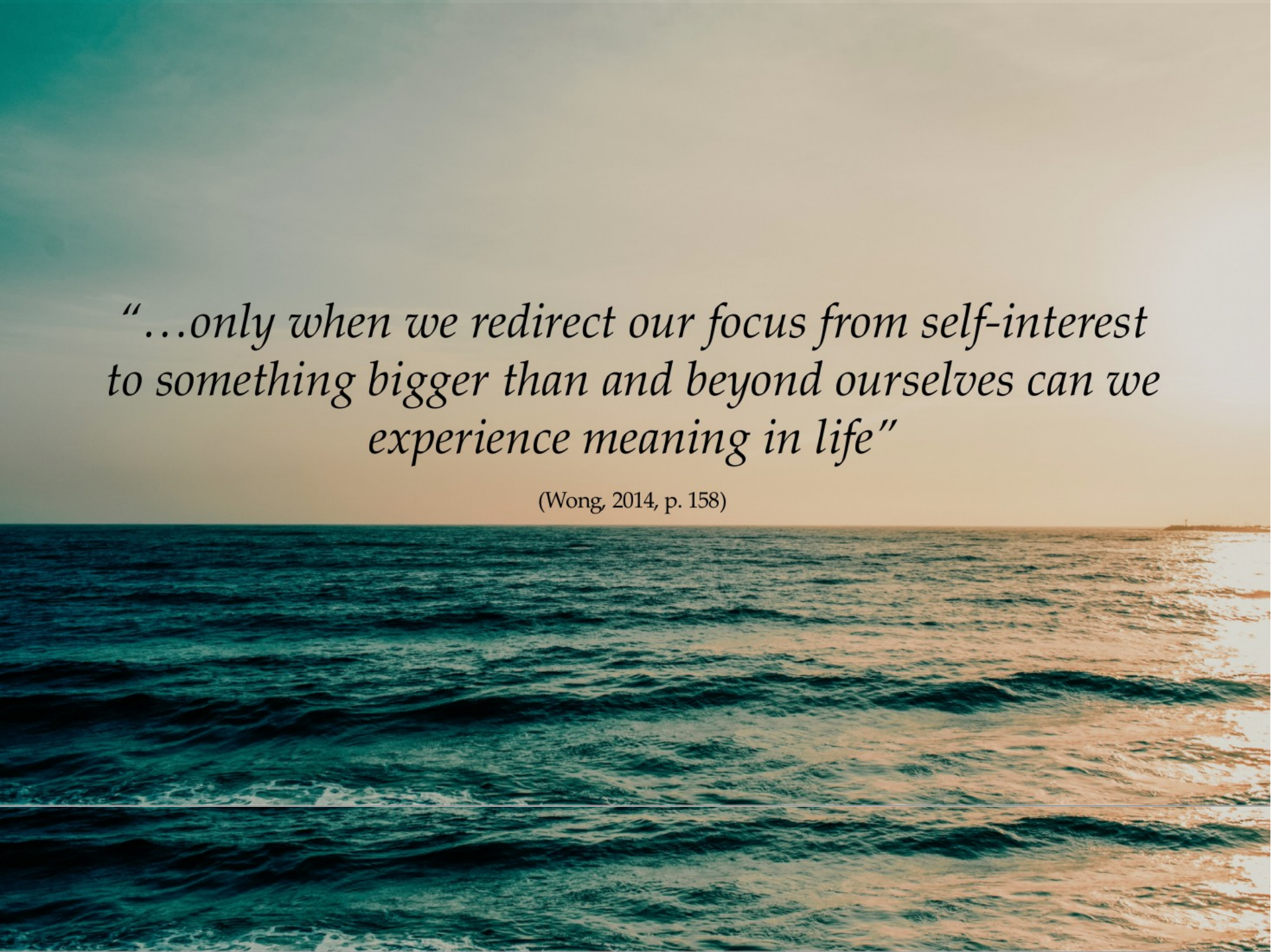
(Hardy et al., 2014)

(Aquino et al., 2011)

The background of the slide is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise over rolling hills. The sky transitions from a deep teal at the top to a bright orange near the horizon. The hills in the foreground are silhouetted against the bright light of the sun.

“The essence of meaning is connection”

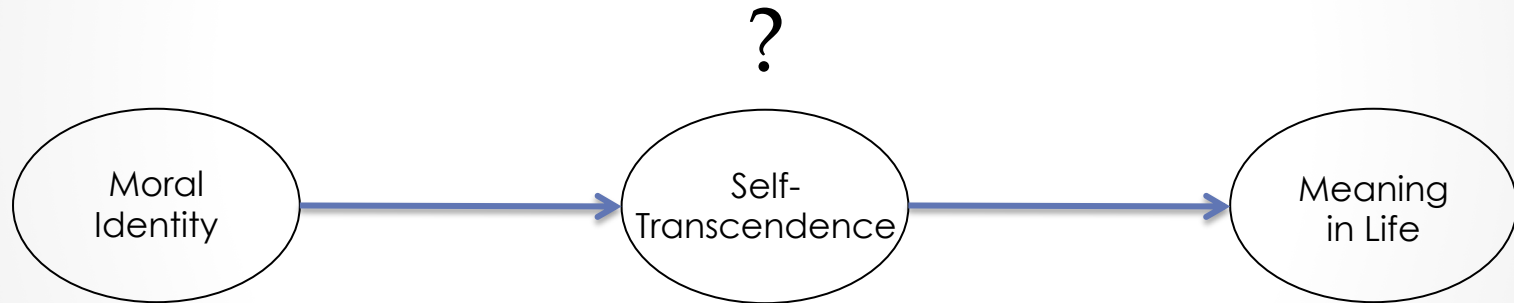
(Baumeister & Vohs, 2002, p. 608)



“...only when we redirect our focus from self-interest to something bigger than and beyond ourselves can we experience meaning in life”

(Wong, 2014, p. 158)

The Current Study



Participants

- An a priori power analysis suggested a minimum $N = 444$

Participants

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- Cross-sectional, correlational study

Participants

- An a priori power analysis suggested a minimum $N = 444$
- Cross-sectional, correlational study
- $N = 499$ undergraduate participants (74% female)

Procedure and Measures

- Participants completed the following measures online:

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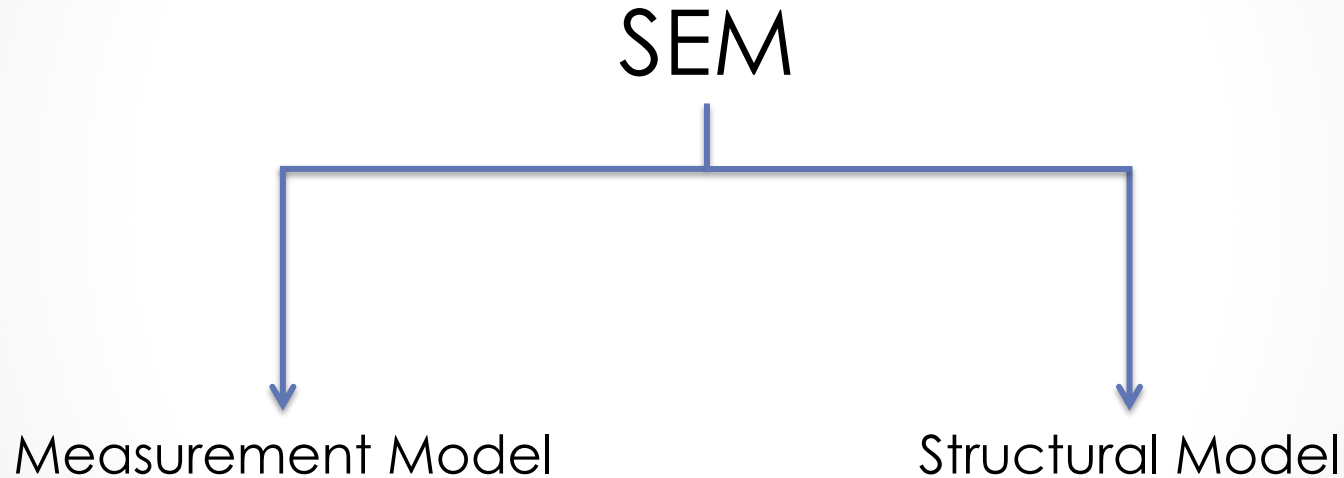
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 - Meaning in Life:
 - Multi Dimensional Existential Meaning Scale (George & Park, 2017)

Data Analytic Approach



Measurement Model

- Concerns the relations between latent and observed variables

Latent Variables:

Moral Identity
Self-Transcendence
Meaning in Life



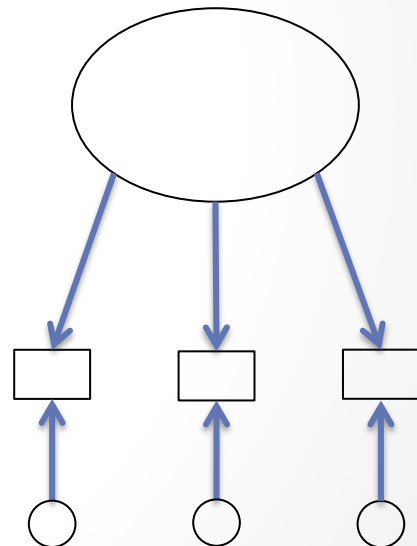
Observed Variables:

Questionnaire Items



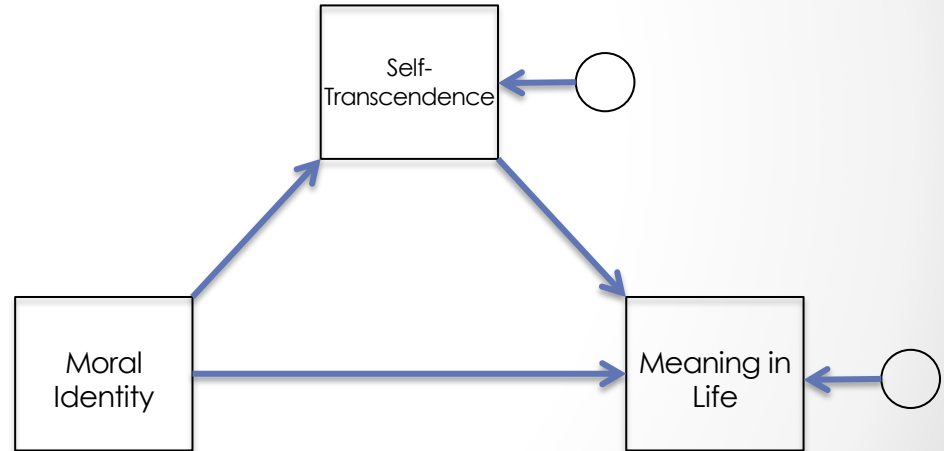
Latent Variable:

Measurement Error

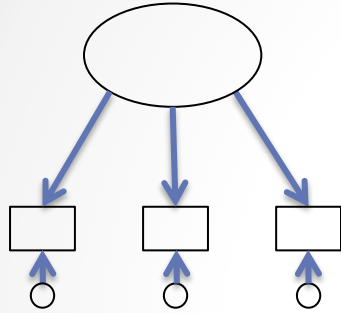


Structural Model

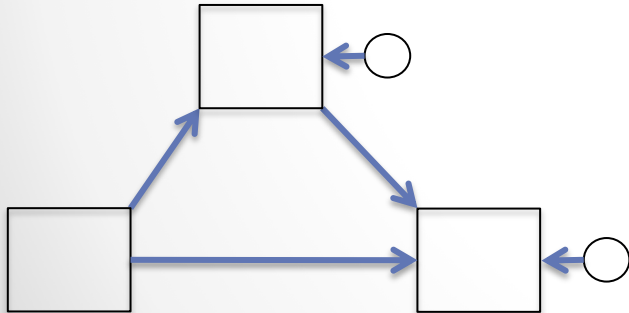
- Concerns the directional pathways between independent and dependent variables



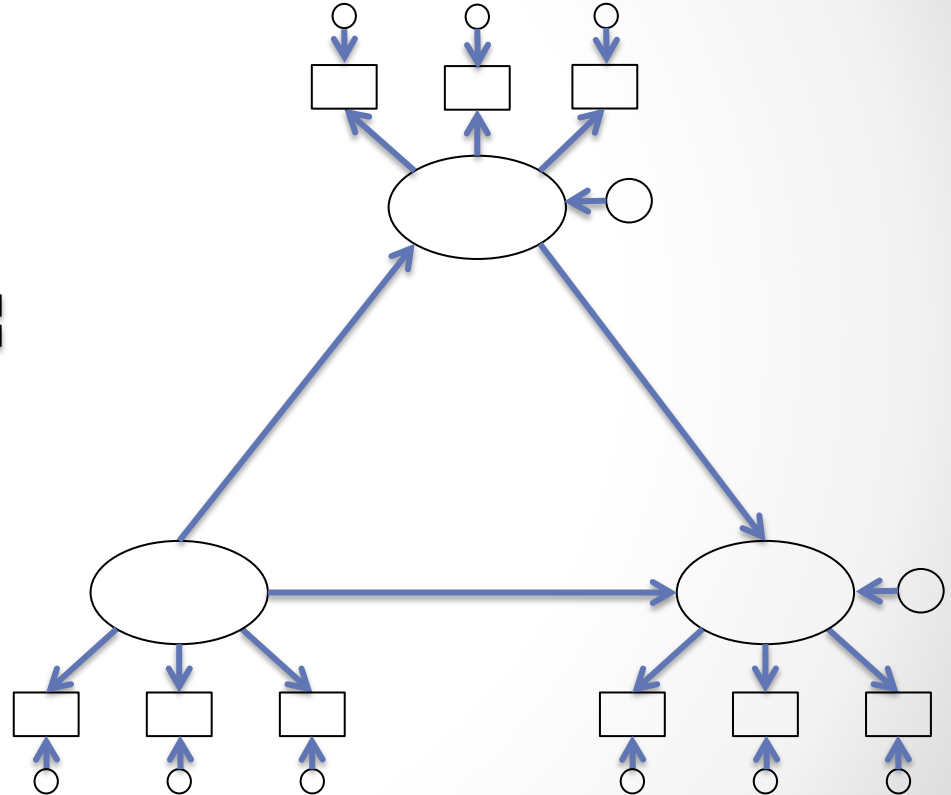
Measurement Model



Structural Model



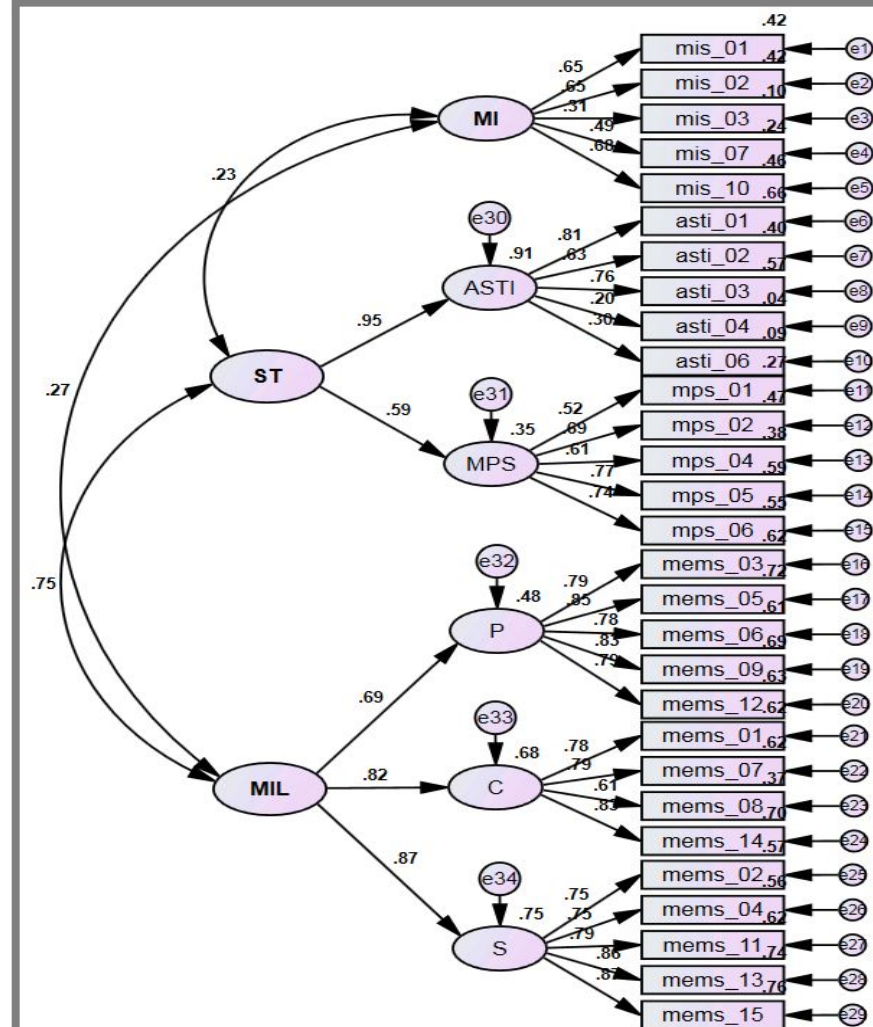
Full Structural Equation Model



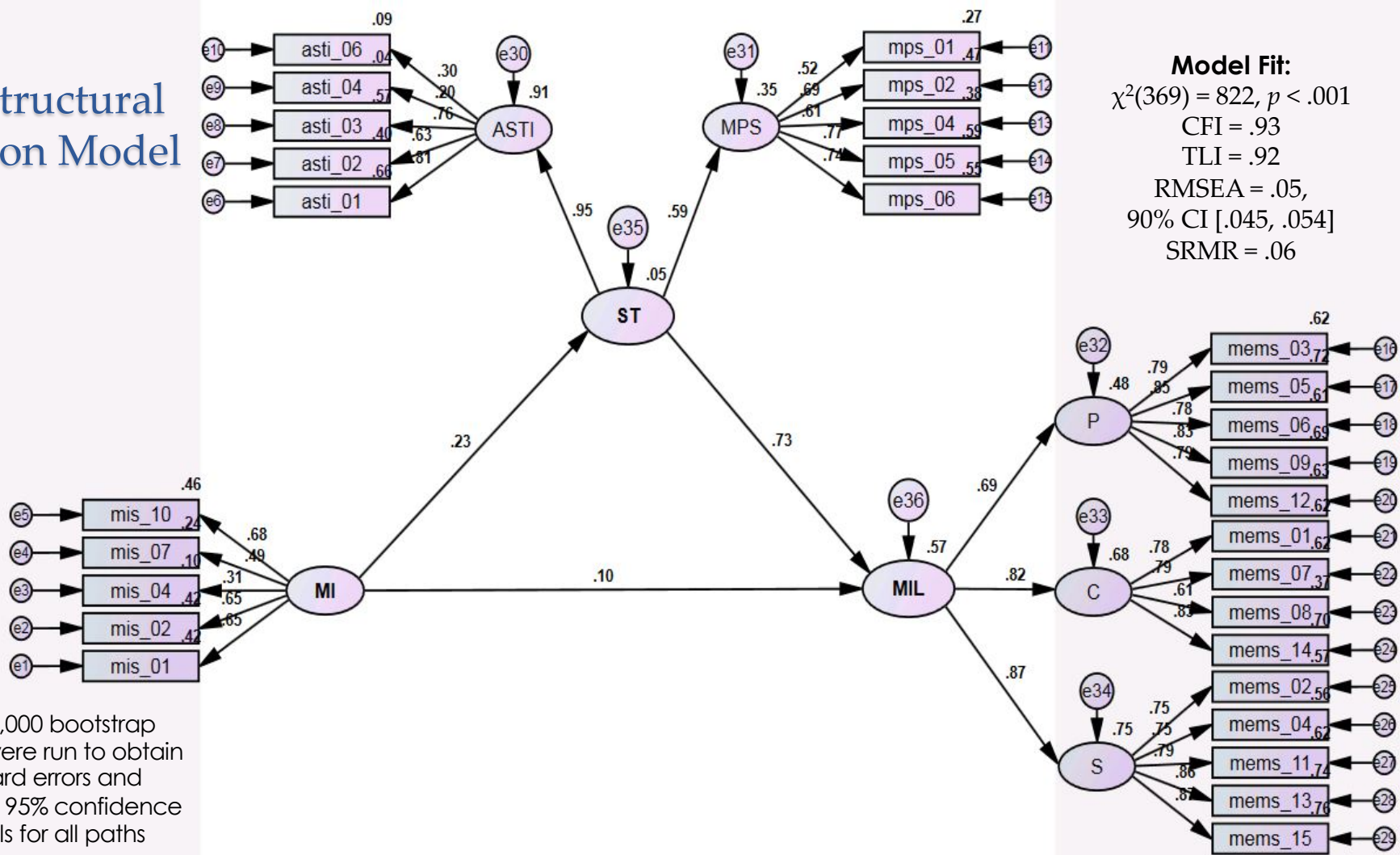
Measurement Model

Model Fit Indices

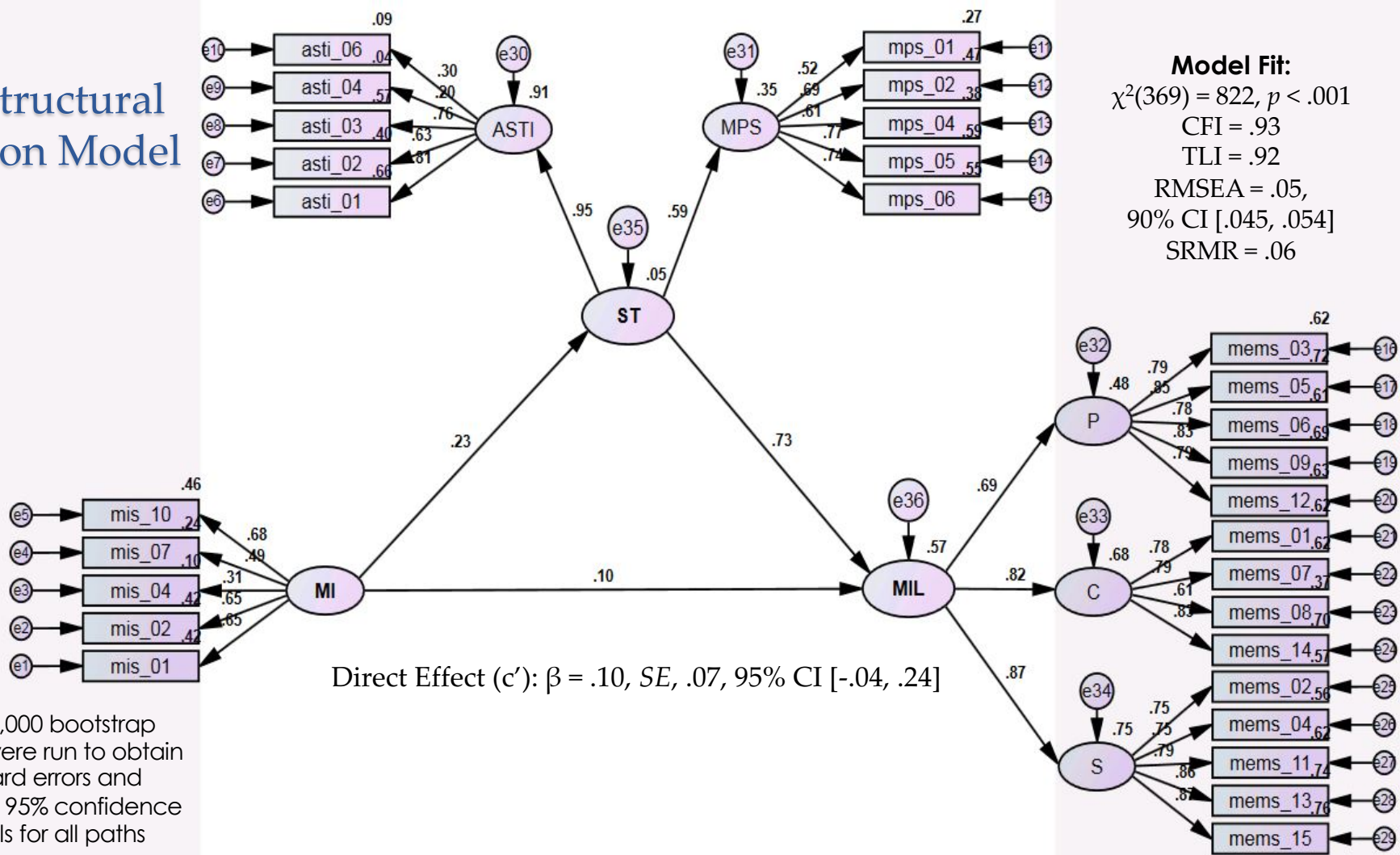
Measure	Value
Chi Square Test	$\chi^2(369) = 822, p < .001$
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.93
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	.92
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.05, 90% CI [.045, .054]
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	.06



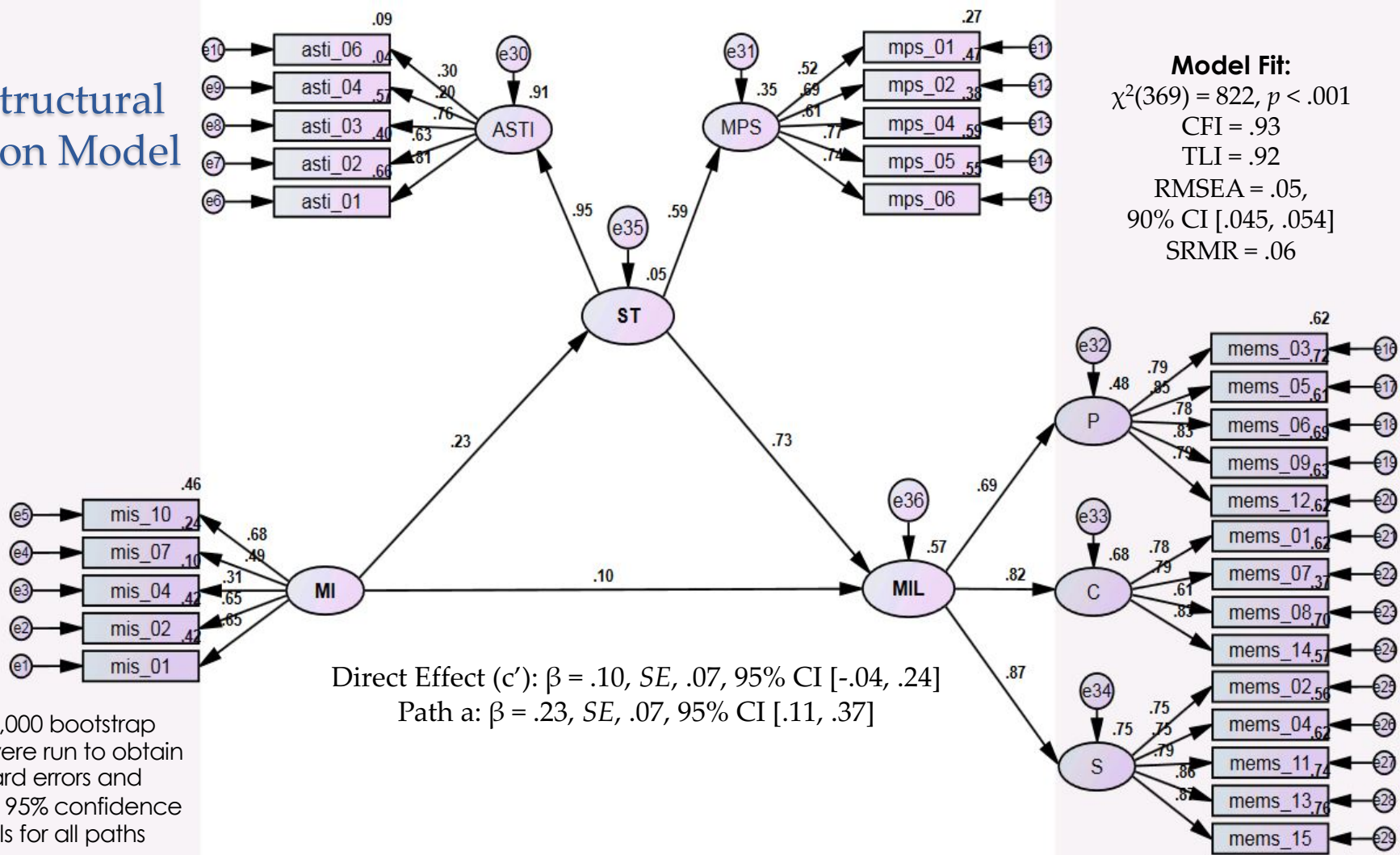
Full Structural Equation Model



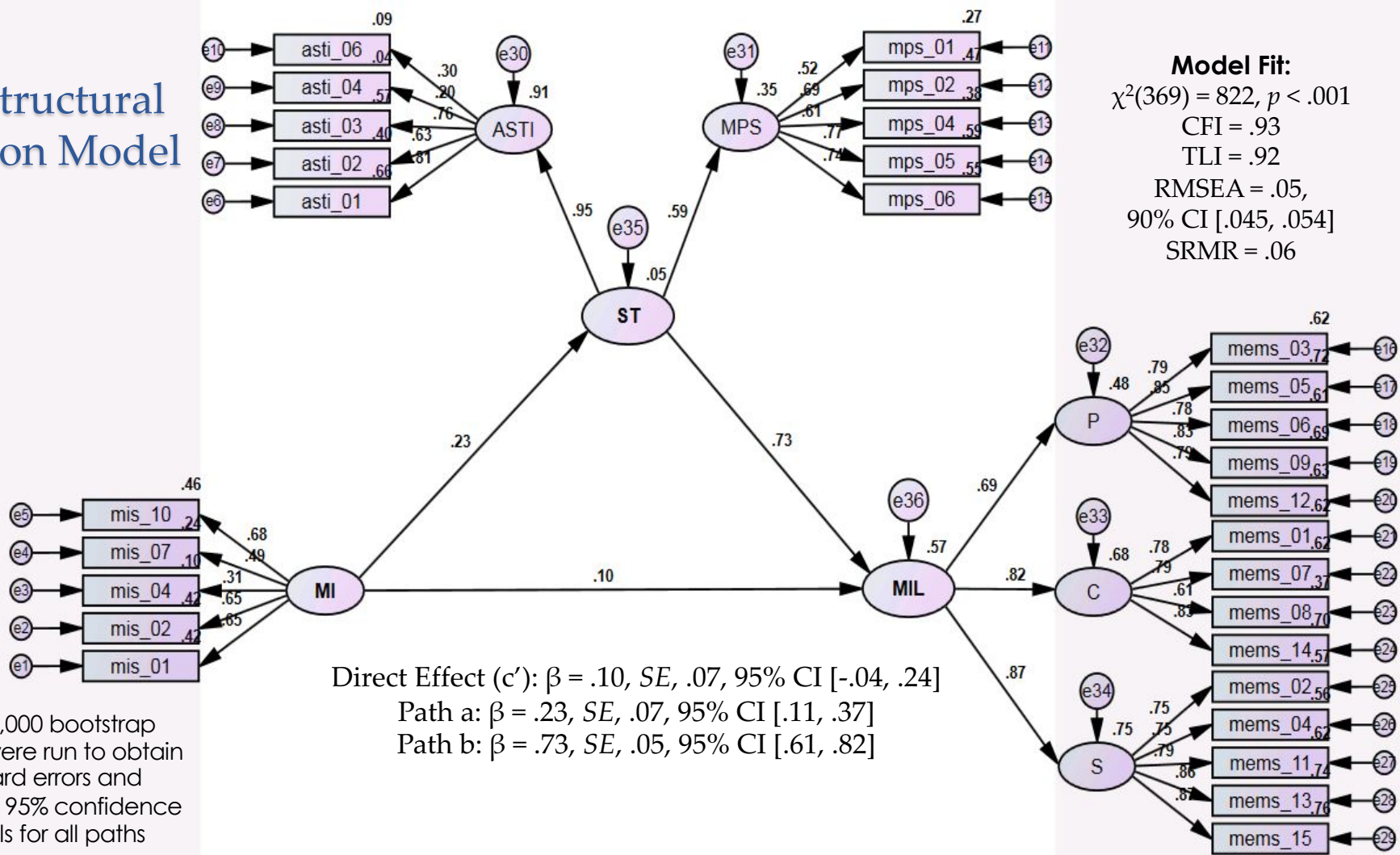
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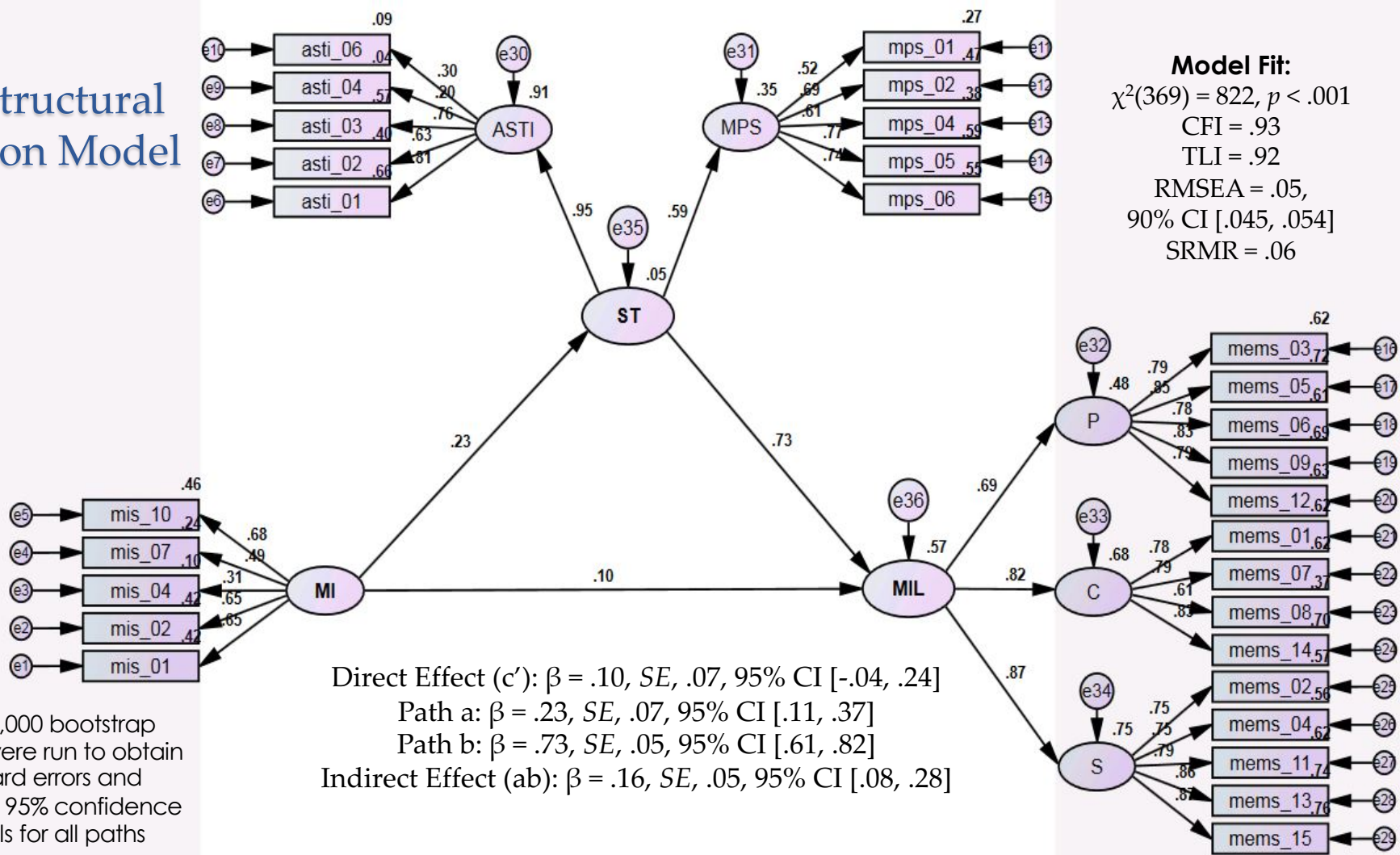


Full Structural Equation Model

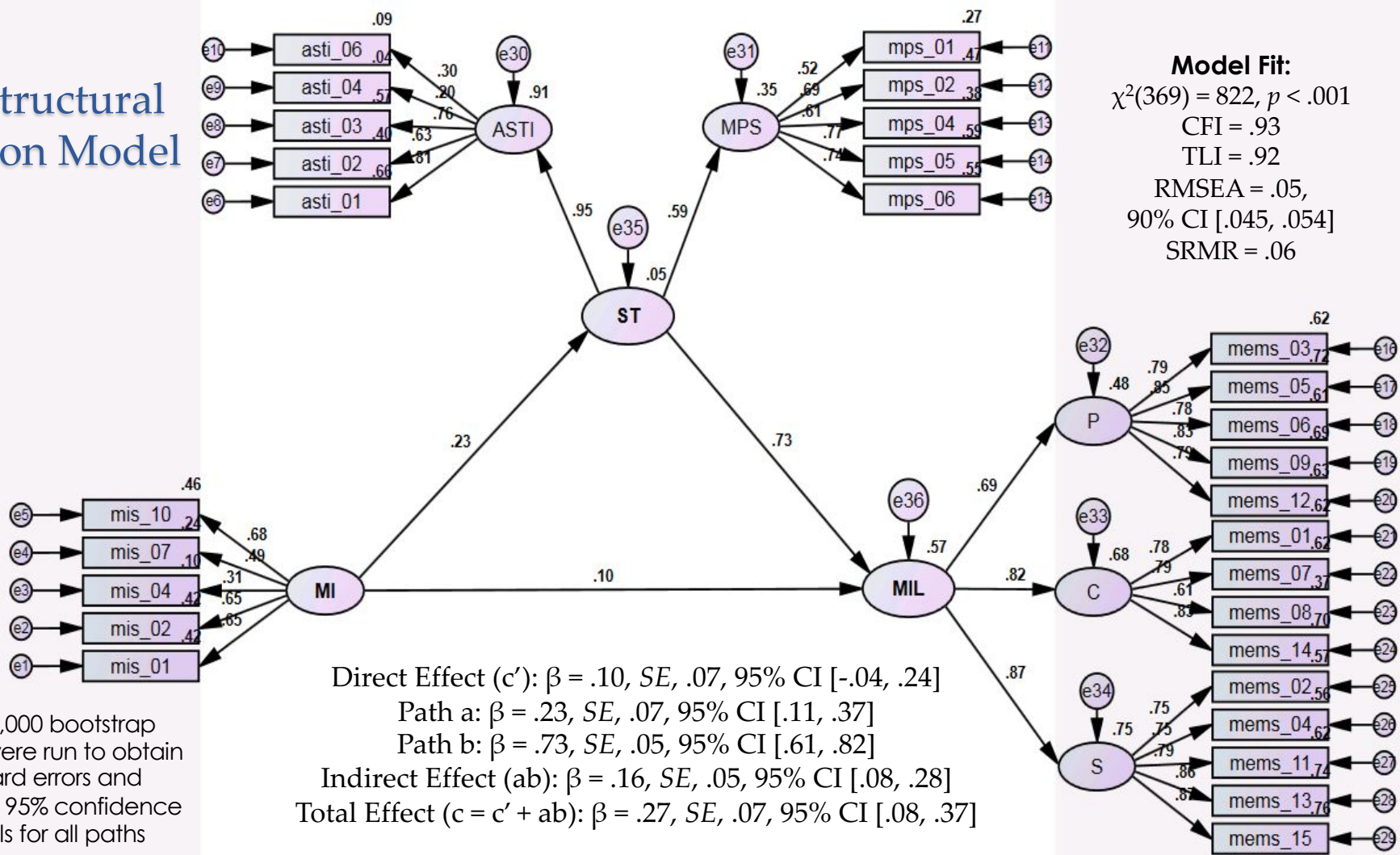


Note: 10,000 bootstrap samples were run to obtain standard errors and percentile 95% confidence intervals for all paths

Full Structural Equation Model

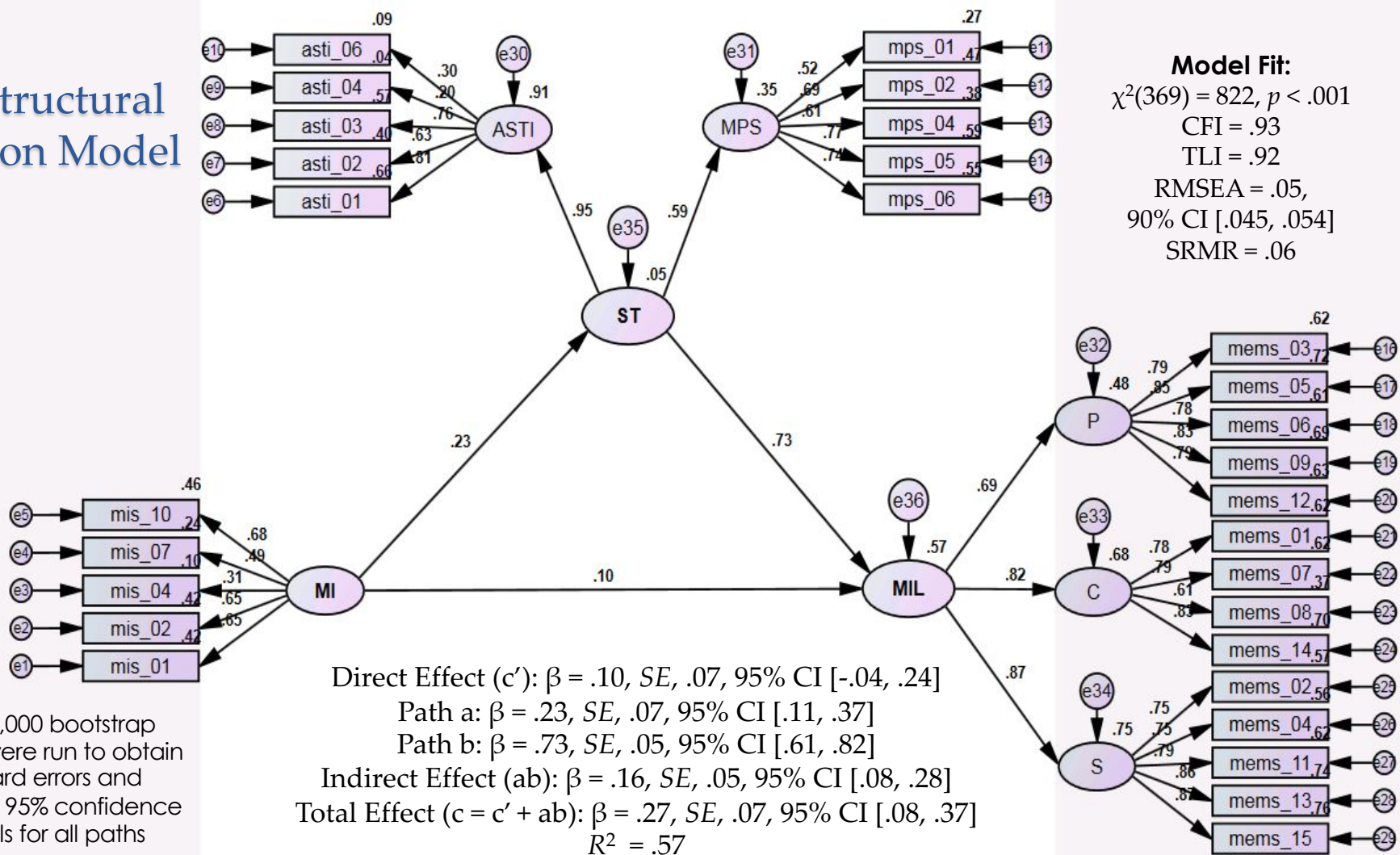


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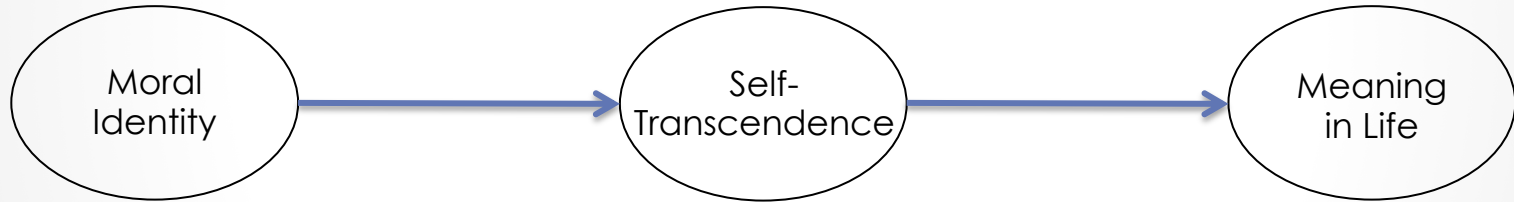
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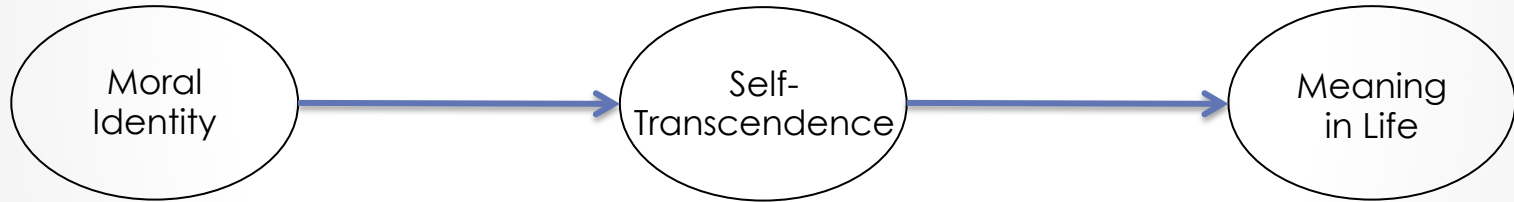
Discussion

- These results supported our hypothesis



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- University students, young adults at a phase in life in which identity and a search for meaning are particularly salient issues (e.g., Smith et al., 2011)

Discussion

- Constructing an identity around moral concerns and commitments may be especially beneficial for promoting well-being (e.g., Lapsley & Hardy, 2017)

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Identity
contents

Discussion

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Identity
contents



(Hardy et al., 2013; Waterman, 1993)

Healthy
functioning

Discussion

- Constructing an identity around moral concerns and commitments may be especially beneficial for promoting well-being (e.g., Lapsley & Hardy, 2017)

Identity
contents



(Hardy et al., 2013; Waterman, 1993)

Healthy
functioning

- Moral identity contents appear to be especially adaptive

Future Directions

- Additional research is needed to augment the current study's findings



[illegible]

- Additional research is needed to augment the current study's findings
- Longitudinal and experimental research

Conclusion

This study is a first step in the exploration of how moral identity predicts meaning in life

Thank You!