

Attachment Anxiety, Relationship Quality, & Co-rumination in Romantic Couples

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What is co-rumination?

1: Rose, 2002



| **Rumination:** The act of repeatedly focusing on and speculating about problems or negative emotions

| **Co-rumination:** Engaging in ruminative behavior **with** another person ¹

What does existing research tell us?

1: Felton et al., 2018

2: Rose, 2002;

Tompkins et al., 2011;

Waller & Rose, 2010



Co-ruminating has some pros

Self-disclosure increases closeness ¹

And cons

Fixating on negative thoughts can increase anxiety and depressive symptoms ²

What do we want to find out?

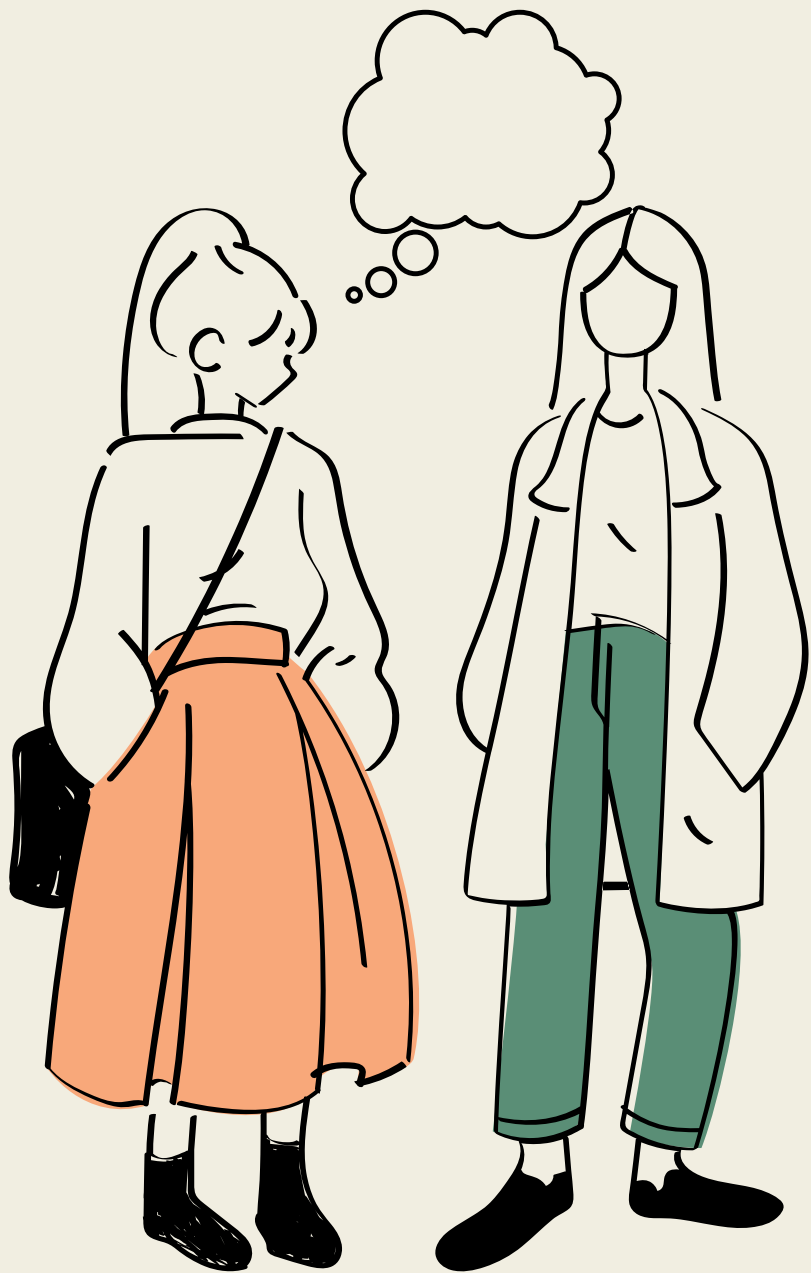
1: Wei et al., 2005; Shaver et al., 2005

2: Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991

3: Waller & Rose, 2010

4: DiGiovanni et al., 2021

5: Rose, 2002; Felton et al., 2019



1: Which **factors** are associated with co-rumination?

Anxious attachment

Need for validation and attention leads to dependency¹

High self disclosure + attraction to self disclosing partners²

Relationship quality

CR associated w/ high relationship quality in mother-adolescent dyads³

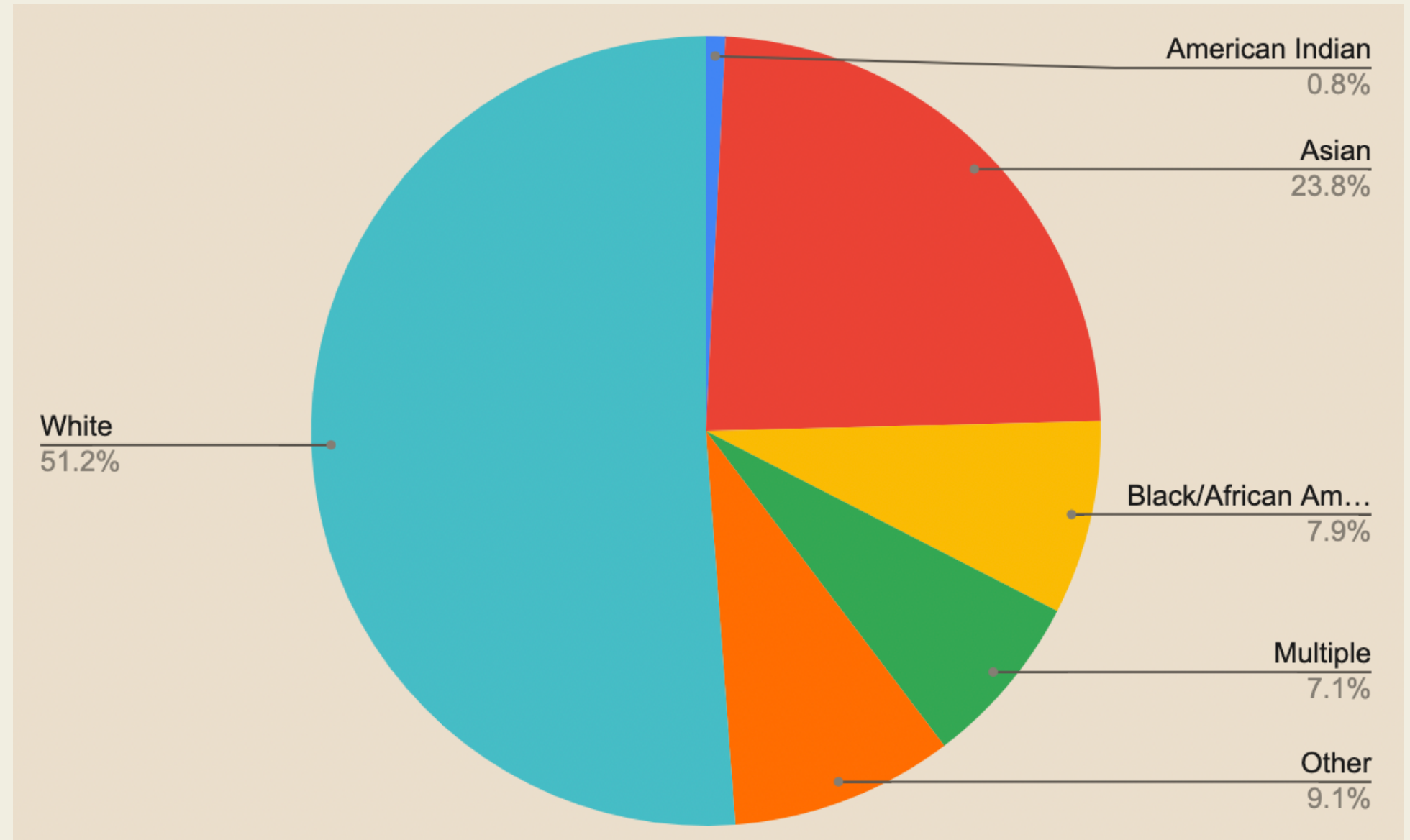
CR associated w/ closeness⁴ and positive friendship adjustment⁵ in friendships

2: How do these associations manifest in **adult romantic couples** when studied **dyadically**?

Data Collection

108 cohabitating, heterosexual romantic couples living in New York & New Jersey completed an **online survey**.

Data collection conducted during the pandemic from August 2020 to April 2021.



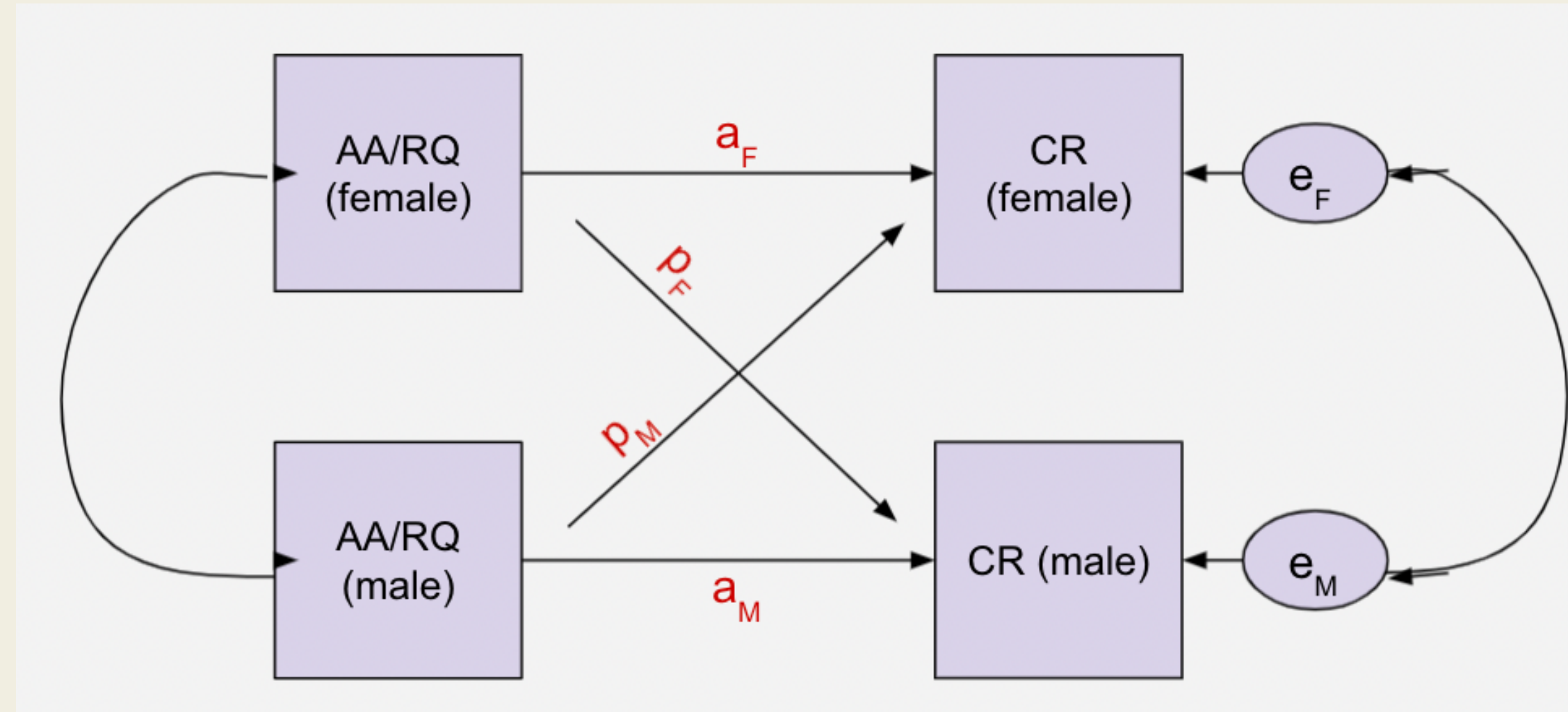
Age: avg 29 years old

Relationship length: avg 4.5 years

Analysis

Actor effects: how someone's attachment anxiety or relationship quality relates to their **own** reports of co-rumination

Partner effects: how these also relate to their **partner's** reports of co-rumination



Actor-Partner Interdependence Model, or APIM (Cook and Kenny, 2005)

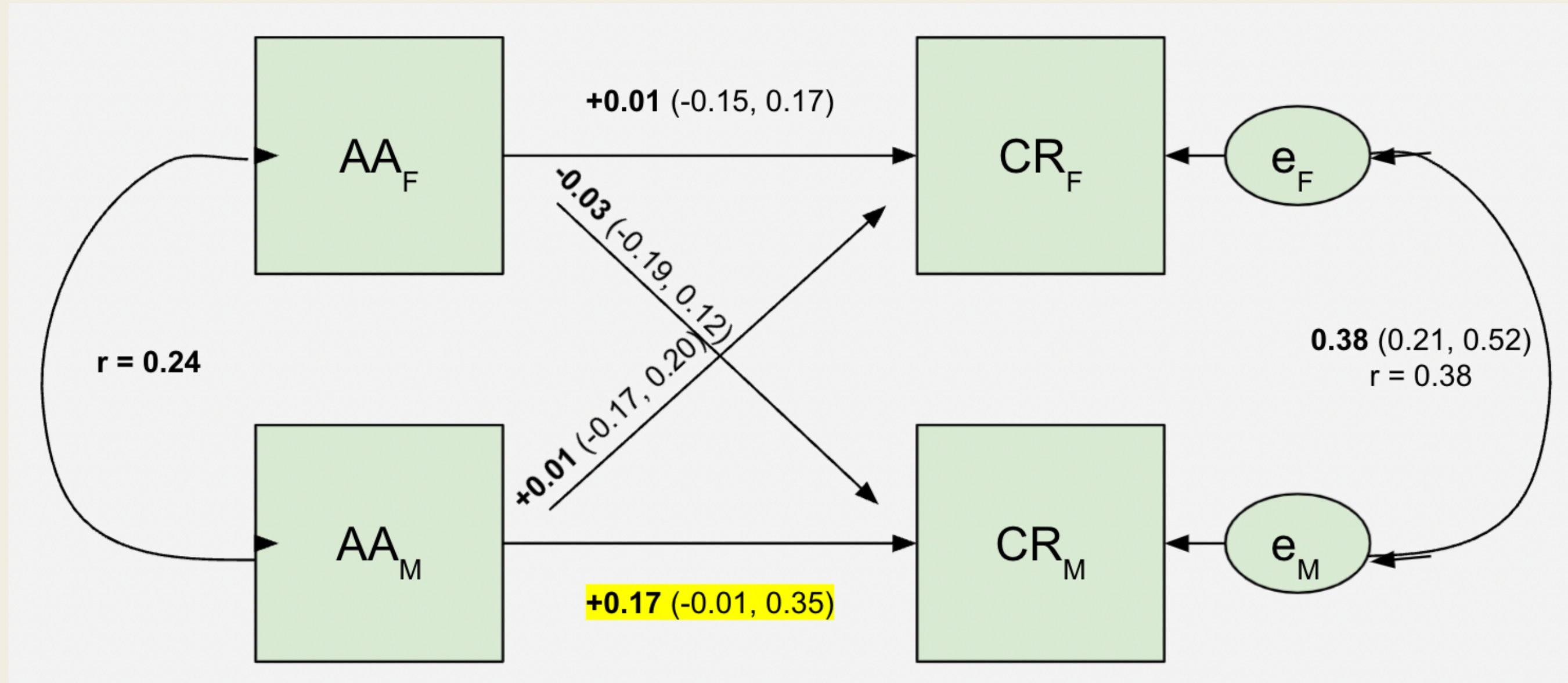
KEY:

RQ = relationship quality
AA = anxious attachment
CR = co rumination
F = female partner
M = male partner

a = actor effect
p = partner effect
e = residual variance

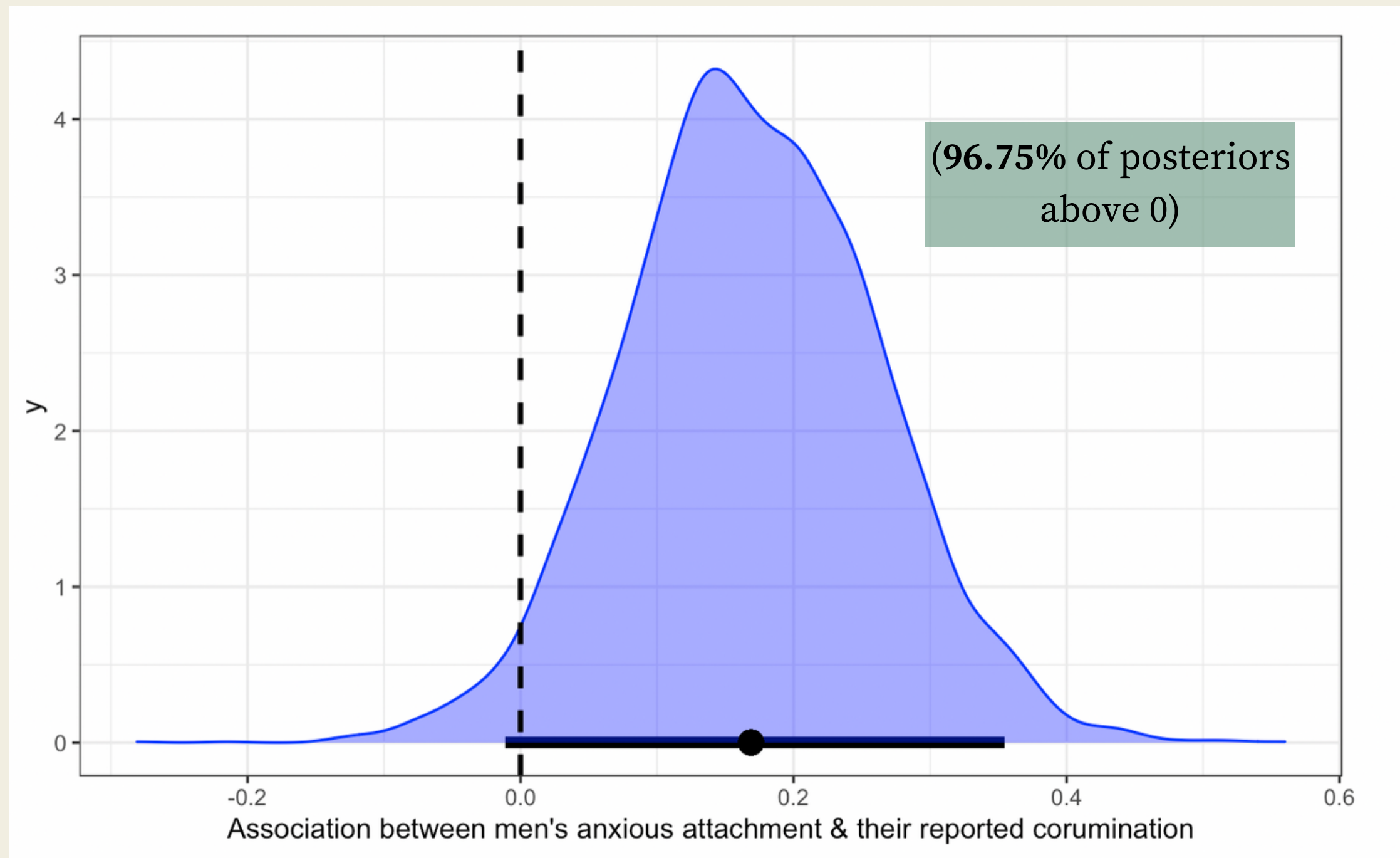
Results: Anxious Attachment & Co-Rumination

Meaningful: **Men's** anxious attachment is associated with their **own** co-rumination



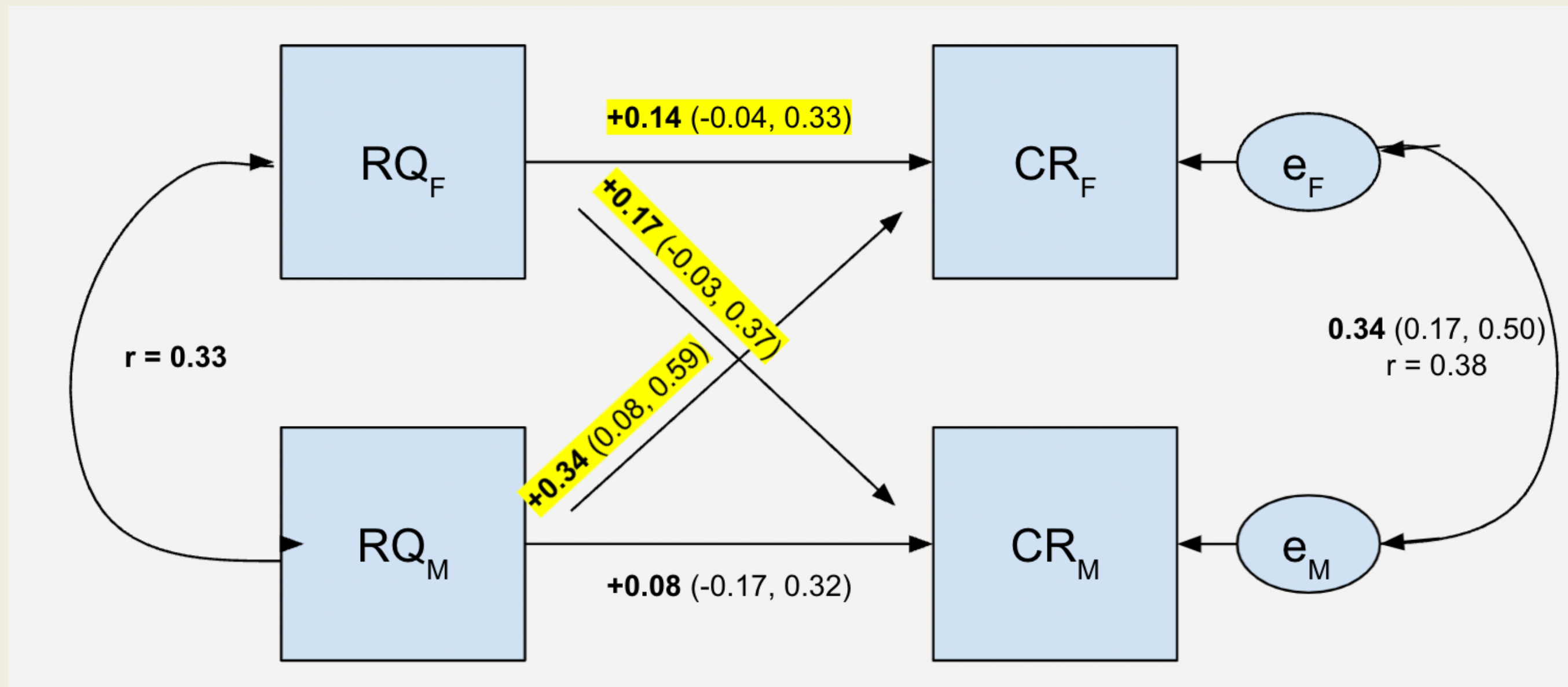
Results: Anxious Attachment & Co-Rumination

Not '**significant**', but still potentially **meaningful**



Results: Relationship Quality & Co-Rumination

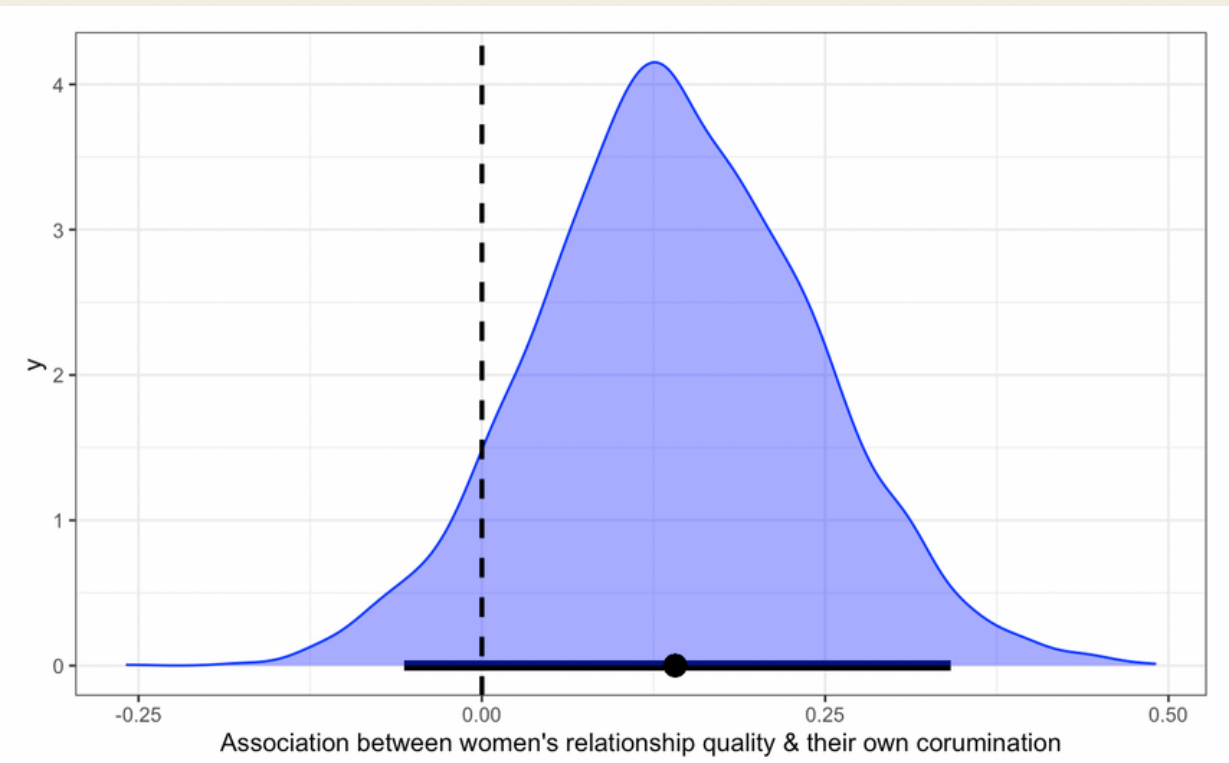
- Meaningful: **Women's** relationship quality is associated with their **own** co-rumination
- Women's** relationship quality is associated with their **partner's** co-rumination
- Men's** relationship quality is associated with their **partner's** co-rumination



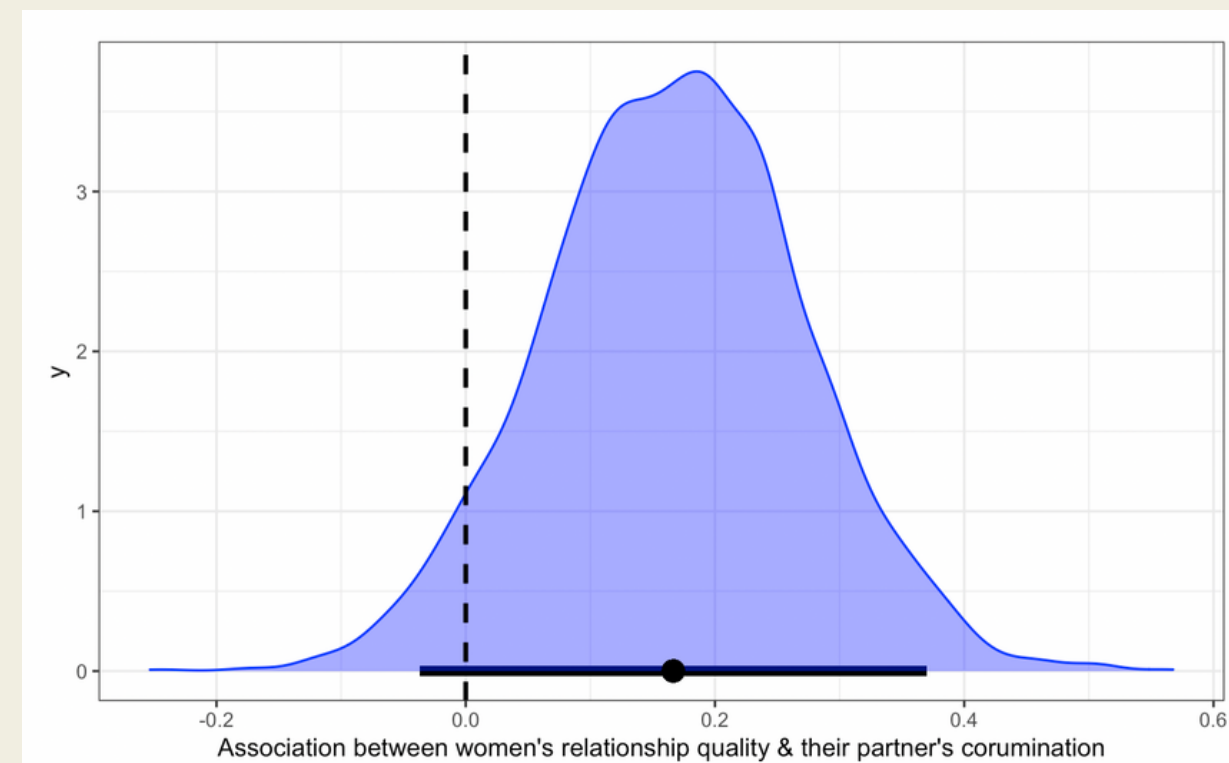
Results: Relationship Quality & Co-Rumination

Not '**significant**', but still potentially **meaningful**

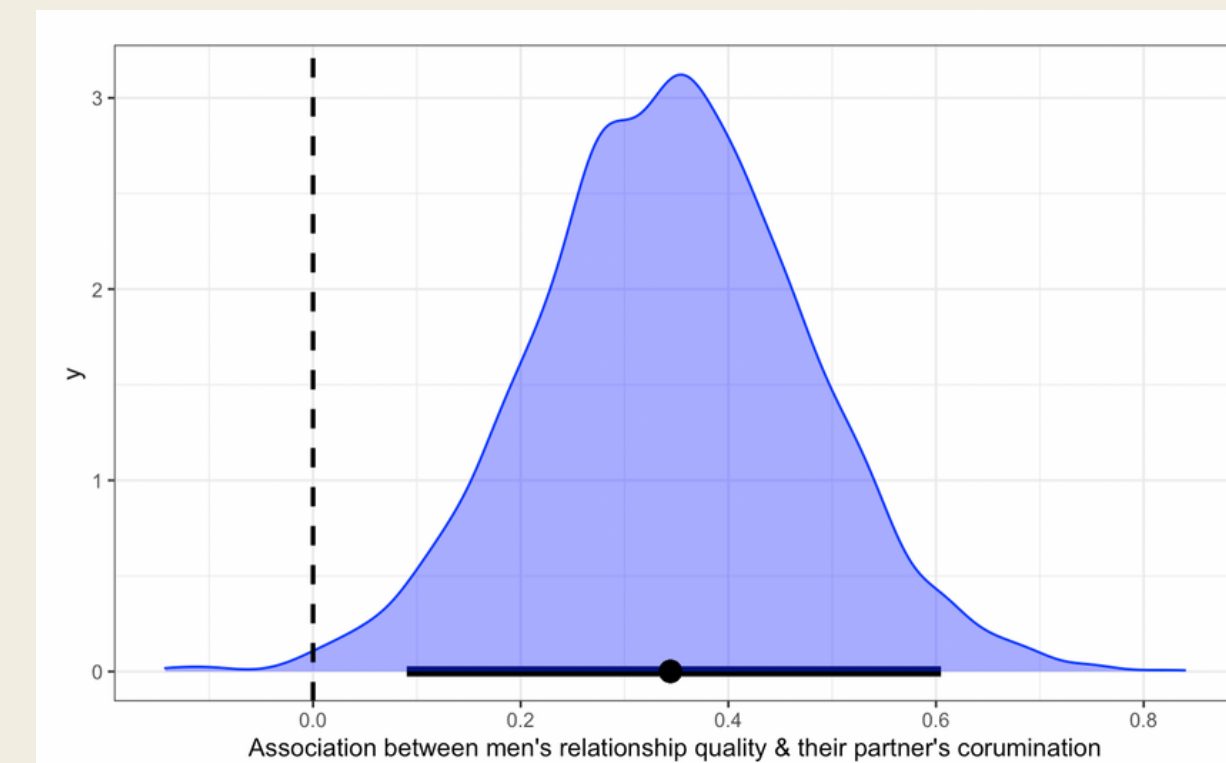
Significant!



92.98% of posteriors above 0
(women RQ --> own CR)



95.53% of posteriors above 0
(women RQ --> partner CR)



99.60% of posteriors above 0
(men RQ --> partner CR)

Summary



Anxious attachment is **minimally associated with co-rumination**
the only association was a small actor effect for men

Relationship quality is more **strongly associated with co-rumination**
i.e. people who ruminate together often tend to be more satisfied in their relationships

These associations occur **both at the actor and partner level**

Limitations & Future Directions

- Anxious attachment was measured **globally** rather than relationship-specific
- Cannot determine **directionality** in association between relationship quality and co-rumination because of correlational model
- 18 non-heterosexual couples were **excluded** for statistical accessibility
- Organizing results along **binary gendered** lines can be illustrative in some ways and limiting in others
- Could always have more **diversity** in sample age, race, sexuality, gender identity, and geography

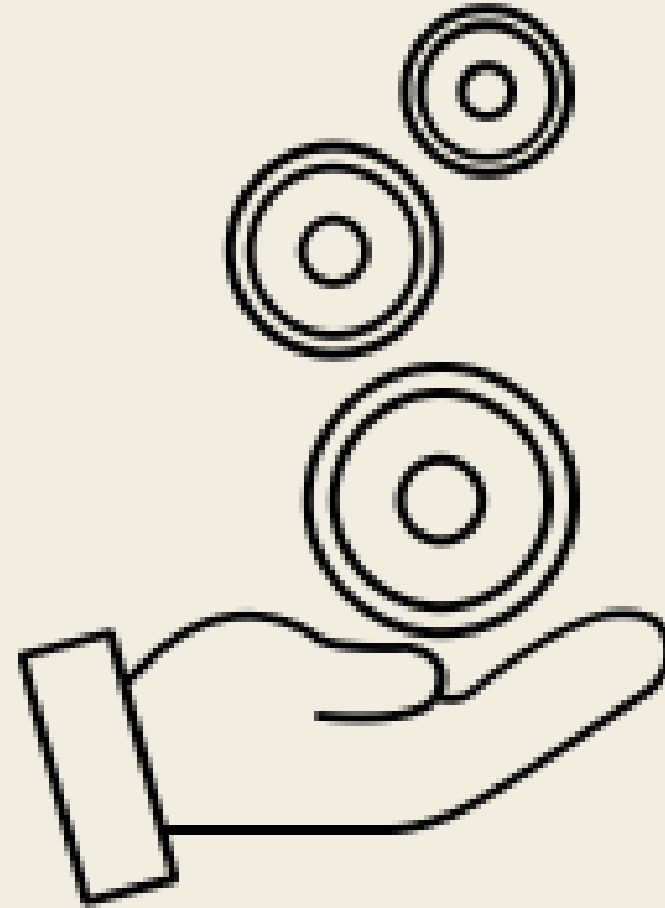


Thank you!



Q&A

Extra slides



for if people have questions!

Data Collection

Measurement:

Co-Rumination: Co-rumination
Questionnaire (Rose, 2002)

Relationship Quality: Quality of Marriage
Index (Norton, 1983)

Anxious Attachment: Experiences in Close
Relationship Scale, Attachment Anxiety
sub-scale (Wei et al., 2007)

Between partner reporting

Correlations between male and female reports of variables within couples:

Relationship quality: $r = 0.33$

Anxious attachment: $r = 0.24$

Co-rumination: $r = 0.38$