



# **Observed classroom quality and emotional regulation among preschoolers in Portugal**

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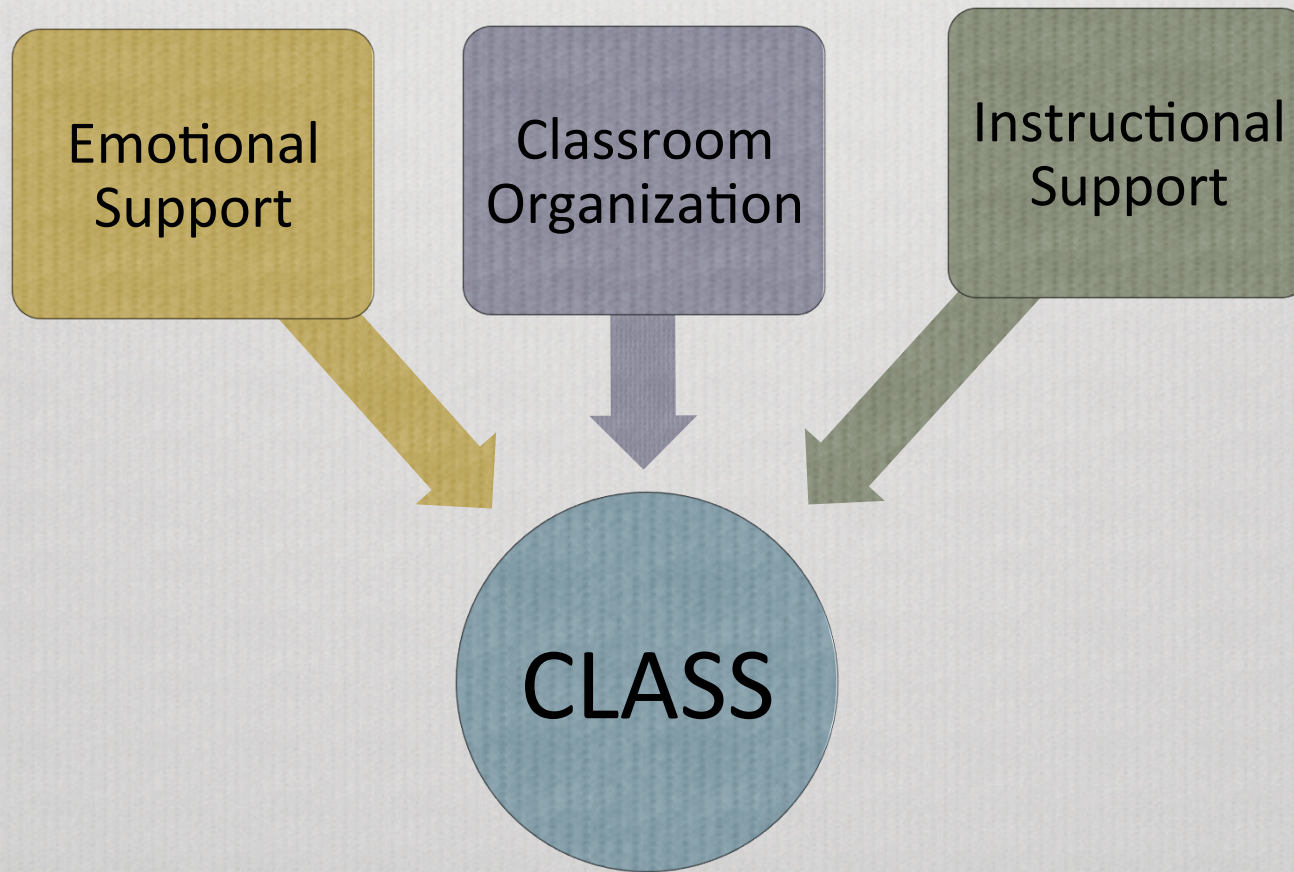


# Classroom quality

- The quality of teacher-child interactions has been increasingly acknowledged as contributing to children's social development in early childhood (Burchinal et al., 2008; Mashburn et al., 2008).
- Considerable research demonstrates that high-quality teacher-child interaction are associated with children's lower levels of problem behaviors and higher levels of social skills, including positive peer relationships, assertiveness, high task orientation, and high frustration tolerance (Burchinal et al., 2008; Mashburn et al., 2008)



Classroom quality consists on three dimentions:



Classroom Assessment Scoring System (Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008)



## Emotional Support

- Develop warm supportive relationships
- Sensitive to children's needs
- Regard for children's ideas





# Classroom Organization

- Monitor children's behavior
- Use proactive strategies that help children regulate their own behavior
- Support children's interest in learning activities



PEA **MATILDE**  
Plano de Escolha de Atividades

Áreas	Feira	Feira	Feira	Feira	Feira
Faz-de-conto	X				X
Jogos de construção					X
Jogos de mesa					X
Desenho	X	X	X	X	X
Recorte e Colagem	X	X	X	X	X
Modelagem	X	X	X	X	X
Pintura	X	X	X	X	X
Escrita/Matemática			X	X	
Biblioteca e fantoches					
Computadores		X	X	X	
Ciências - Experiências					X
Robot Roamer			X	X	





## Instructional Support

- Purposeful stimulation of children's thinking, and teacher's focus on understanding
- Feedback that expands learning and understanding
- Use of language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques





# However...

- Mixed findings for links between early childhood center quality and socioemotional development (e.g., Keys et al., 2013)
- Little is known about how the quality of teacher-child interactions relates to emotional regulation.



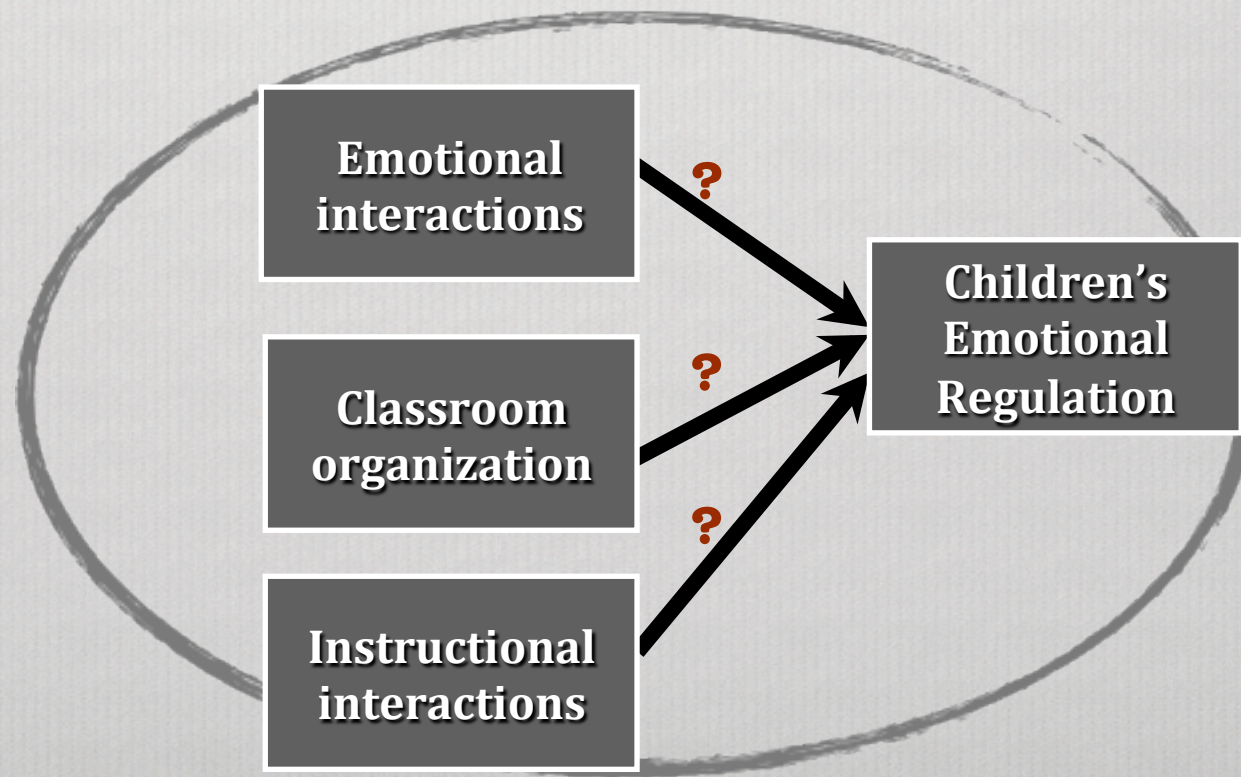
# Emotional Regulation

- The processes of managing and deliberately modulating emotions in a way that supports adaptive responses (Calkins & Williford, 2009; Denham, 2006).
- These skills have been shown to play a significant role in children's social and academic competence (Blair, Denham, Kochanoff, & Whipple, 2004; Graziano, Reavis, Keane, & Calkins, 2007).



# The present study

- Aims to examine the associations between the quality of teacher-child interactions and children's emotional regulation among preschoolers in one European country, Portugal.





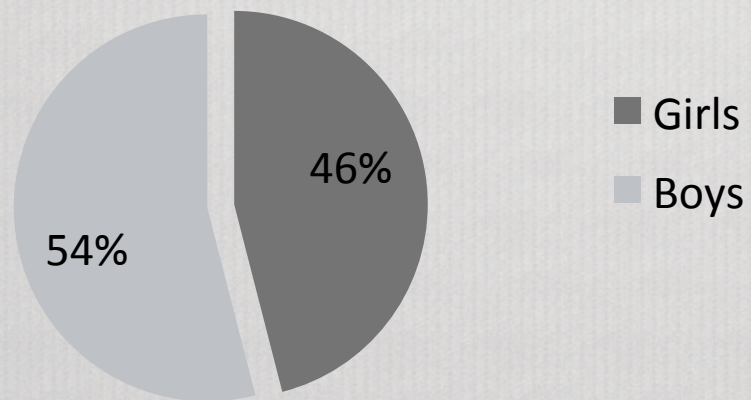
# Method



# Participants

## 193 Portuguese at-risk children

- 46 classrooms (5 children per classroom)
- Mean age: 5 years ( $SD = 0.76$ )



- 58% mothers/67% fathers < 9 yrs school
- 37.8% < National Minimum Salary



# Measures: classroom quality

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS; Pianta et al., 2008)

- 7-point scale
- ICC = .87
- Observational measure

1. Positive Climate
2. Negative Climate
3. Teacher Sensitivity
4. Regard for Student Perspectives

1. Behavior Management
2. Productivity
3. Instructional Learning Formats

1. Concept Development
2. Quality of Feedback
3. Language Modeling

**Emotional Support**

**Classroom organization**

**Instructional Support**



# Measures: emotion regulation

Emotion Regulation Checklist (ERC; Shields & Cicchetti, 1997)

- 4-point scale
- Teachers' report

5 items

$\alpha = .70$

## Examples

“Is empathetic towards others.”  
“Responds positively to neutral or friendly overtures by peers.”

Emotion regulation

8 items

$\alpha = .90$

## Examples

“Is prone to angry outbursts.”  
“Exhibits wide mood swings.”

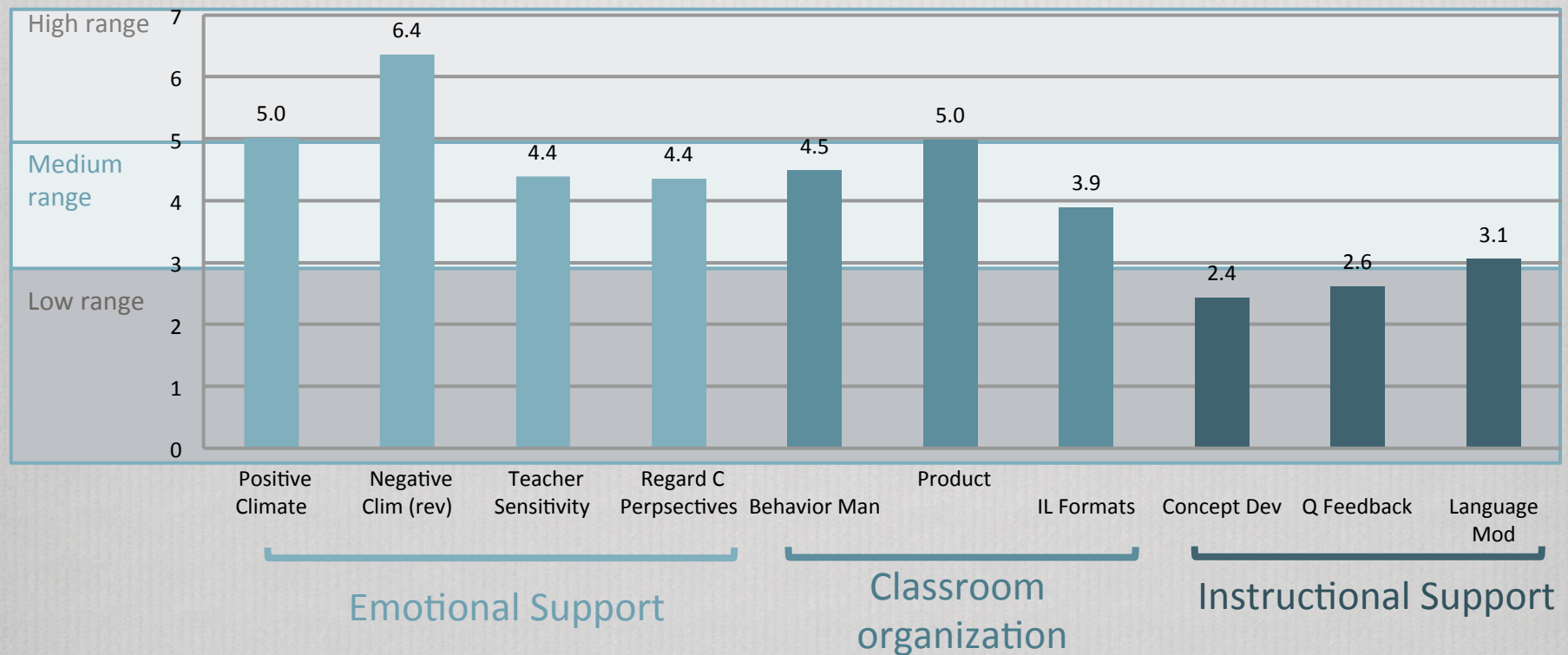
Lability/Negativity



# Results and Discussion



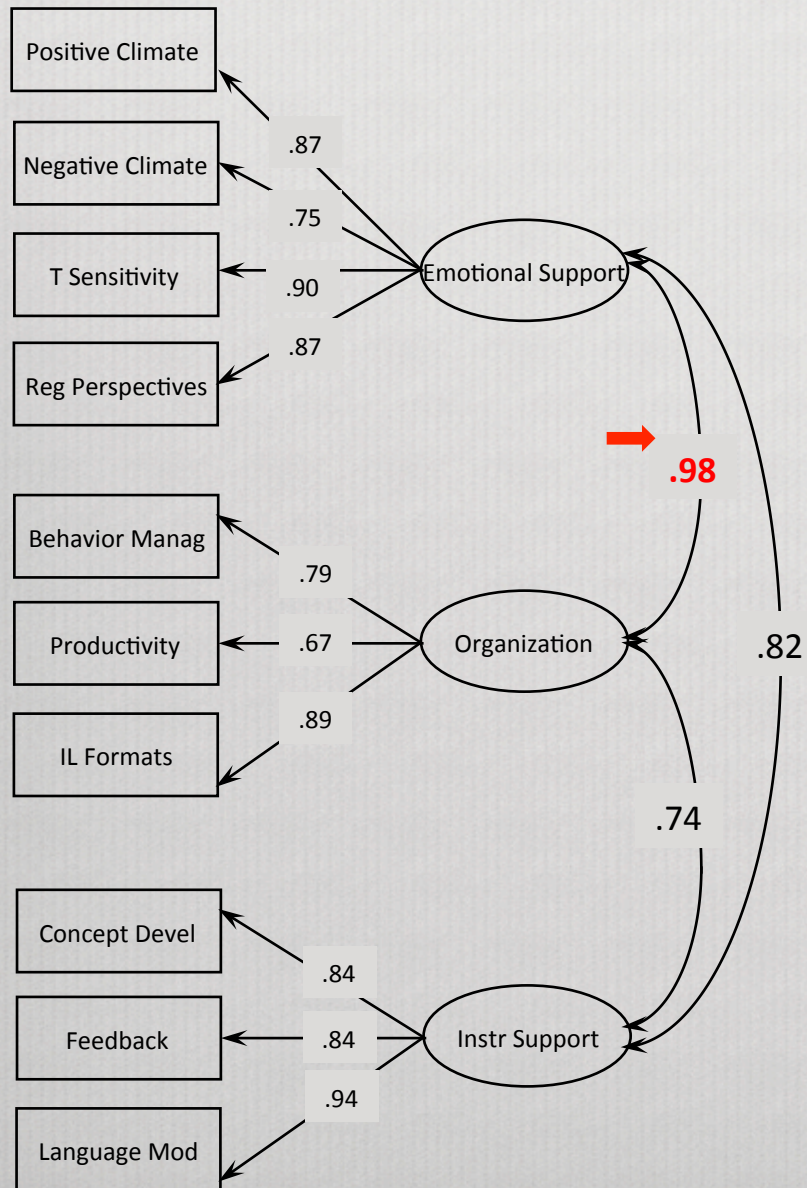
# Results: classroom quality





### CLASS: Original model

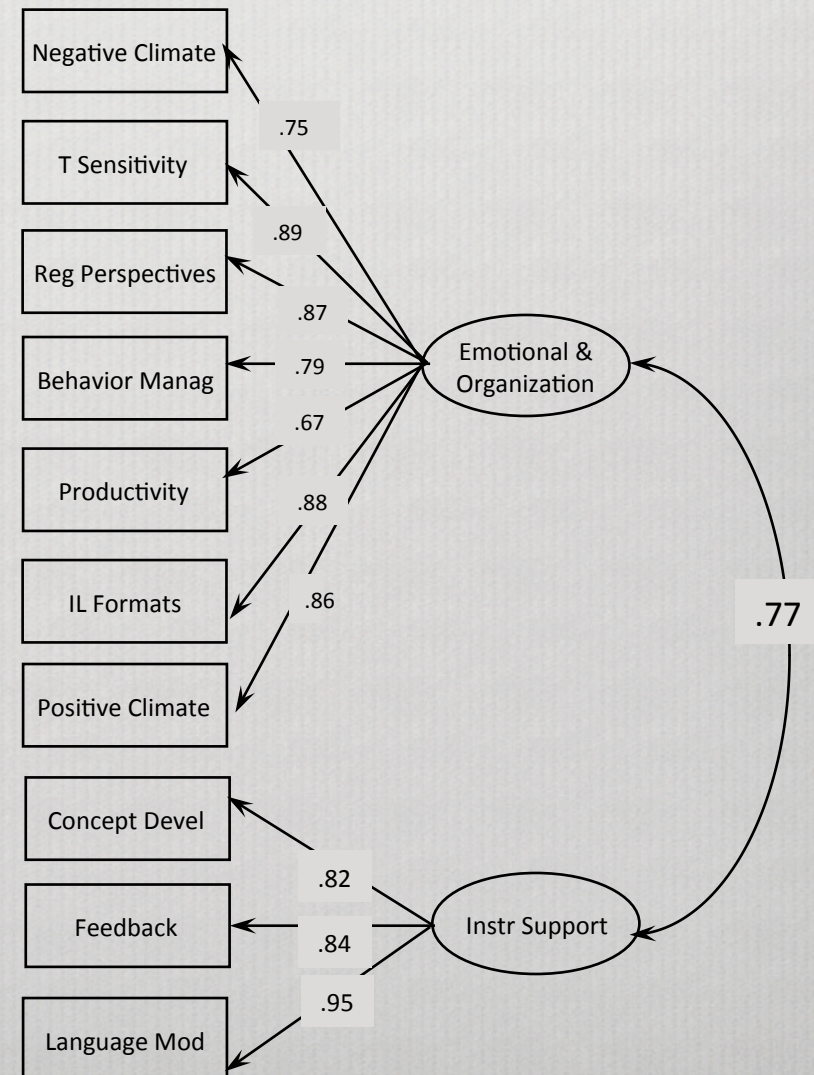
$\chi^2(32)=50.4$ ,  $p=.02$ ; CFI=.95; RMSEA=.05



### CLASS: 2-dimensions model

$\chi^2(34)=53.6$ ,  $p=.02$ ; CFI=.95; RMSEA=.05

$\Delta\chi^2(2)=3.2$ ,  $ns$



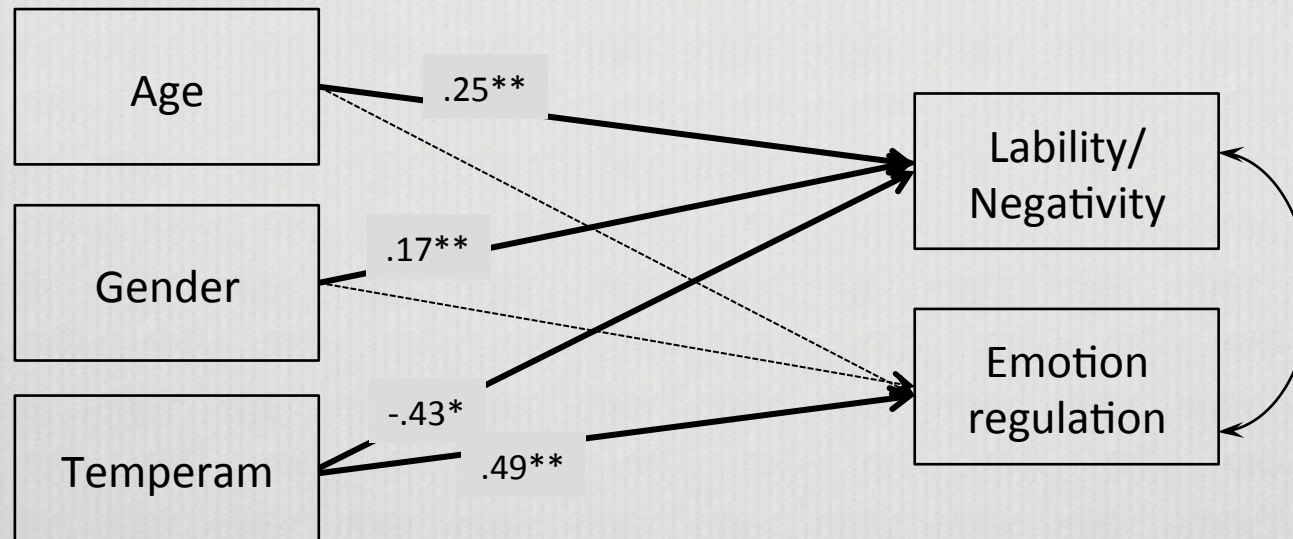


# Results: emotion regulation



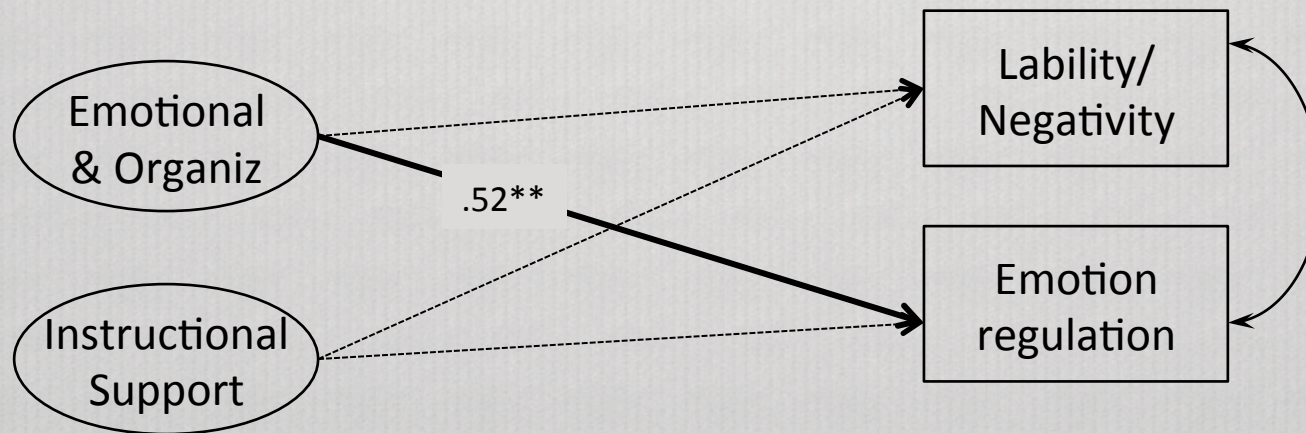


## Results from multilevel SEM models



Within-level

Between-level



$\chi^2(50)=77.7, p=.007$ ; CFI=.93; RMSEA=.05; SRMR within = .006; SRMR between = .058



# Discussion

- Teachers' interactions with children play an important role in helping children to develop emotional regulation skills.
- Our results underscore that warm, sensitive, and well-organized interactions are particularly important for this set of skills.
  - Managing and deliberately modulating emotions in a way that supports adaptive responses.
- Everyday interactions – including morning routine, free play, snacks – seem to be a set of core practices that early childhood teachers can use to support the development of emotion regulation skills.



# Limitations & future directions

- Concurrent nature of data
- Factor structure of CLASS



Thank you for your time  
and attention!