



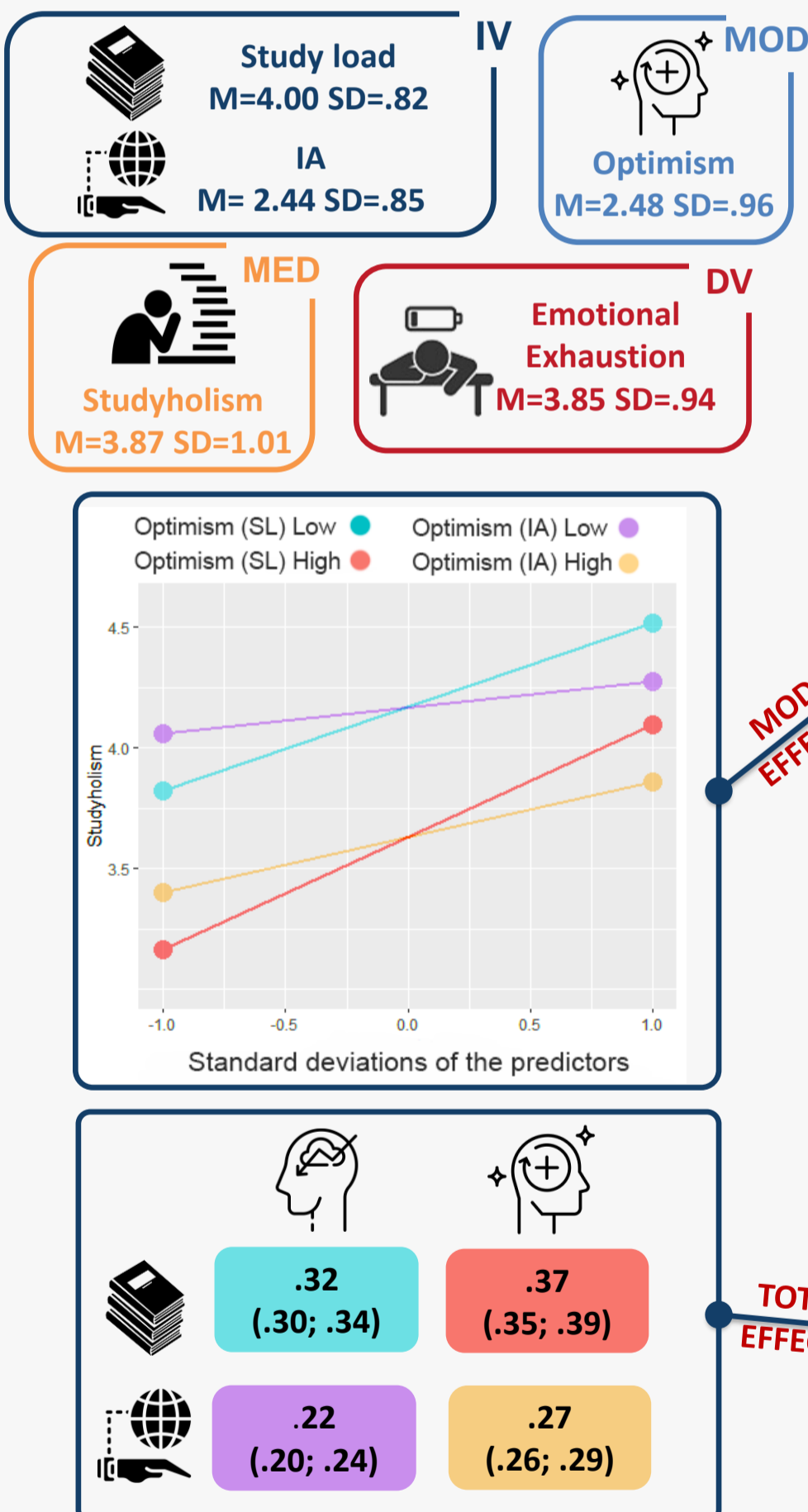
Background

University students during the COVID-19 emergency experienced **increased study load** and **technology usage** for learning and leisure, linked with **academic burnout**¹ and negative effects on well-being². **Studyholism (STH)**³ may mediate this relationship, while **optimism**, as part of PsyCap, could **moderate** the effects of study load and aid in avoiding maladaptive coping strategies, such as Internet addiction (IA).

Method and participants

Study conducted during the **second lockdown** of the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy, involving **10298 participants from 11 universities (70.8% females, mean age 24.25 years; SD=6.13)**. **57.6%** of students were enrolled in Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) courses; **15.7%** were taking **supplemental years** to finish their degree. SPSS 26 and R were used to perform descriptive analyses and test a **moderated mediation model**, controlling for gender, age, broad scientific area, and being in supplemental years.

Results



N=9847				
DV= STH (R ² =.410; p<.001)	β	z	p	
Study load	.40	49.34	<.001	
Internet addiction	.17	20.66	<.001	
Optimism	-.27	-32.18	<.001	
Study load*Optimism	.06	7.61	<.001	
IA*Optimism	.06	7.83	<.001	
Age	-.04	-4.67	<.001	
Gender	.21	11.99	<.001	
Scientific area (1=SSH)	-.06	-3.49	<.001	
Supplemental years (1=Yes)	.21	9.40	<.001	
Conditional effects	SL	CI 95%	IA	CI 95%
-1 SD Optimism	.34	.32; .36	.11	.08; .13
+1 SD Optimism	.46	.44; .48	.23	.20; .25

N=9847				
DV= Emotional exhaustion (R ² =.430; p<.001)	β	z	p	
Study load	.17	19.05	<.001	
IA	.18	21.85	<.001	
STH	.44	46.39	<.001	
Age	-.14	-17.16	<.001	
Gender	.05	3.34	.001	
Scientific area (1=SSH)	.04	2.81	.005	
Supplemental years (1=Yes)	.00	0.15	.883	
Conditional ind. eff	SL	CI 95%	IA	CI 95%
-1 SD Optimism	.15	.14 ; .16	.05	.04; .06
+1 SD Optimism	.20	.19; .21	.10	.09; .11

Conclusions

- STH is influenced by **personal and contextual resources and demands**
- Optimism is a protective factor, but the **interaction effects are positive**: high levels could exacerbate the effects of study load and IA on STH and thus exhaustion
- Main limitations: cross-sectional study, self-report data, no previous pre-pandemic systematic analyses

References

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