

Engaging with the World Using a Relational Framework

Making the invisible, visible: mapping the metrics of human connection.

Dr Robert Loe

June 2025



The Scots College
Sydney Australia



EXTENSION

How does this relate to you?

RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Relational matters: A review of the impact of school experience on mental health in early adolescence

Colleen McLaughlin & Barbie Clarke

The review of this area posited the notion of 'the supportive school' as important and one key element, the notion of school connectedness. Within that the role of relationships is identified as significant. This paper explores the part played by relationships between teachers and pupils and pupils' peer relationships are mainly in the last 15 years. Relationships between teachers and pupils impact upon mental health are identified as the key ones. The main ways in which school-based relationships impact upon mental health are explored. First, in terms of the relationship to academic outcomes; second, the relationship between social support, feelings of emotional well-being or distress, and teacher-pupil relationships; and finally the relationship between school connectedness and mental health outcomes. The authors argue for greater attention to be paid to the interconnections between the relationships with young people and their emotional and academic well-being. The paper concludes with the implications for schools and teachers of these findings and an argument for an acknowledgement of the importance of the social goals of education.

Schooling does matter greatly. Moreover, the benefits can be surprisingly long lasting ... Schools are about social experiences as well as scholastic (Butter, 1991)

satisfying personal relationships; develop a sense of right and wrong; and resolve problems as well as learning from them (Mental Health Foundation, 1999). The period that the review focuses upon is early adolescence, i.e. between 10 and 14. This is an interesting time period since it encompasses the teenage years of primary school. It is a

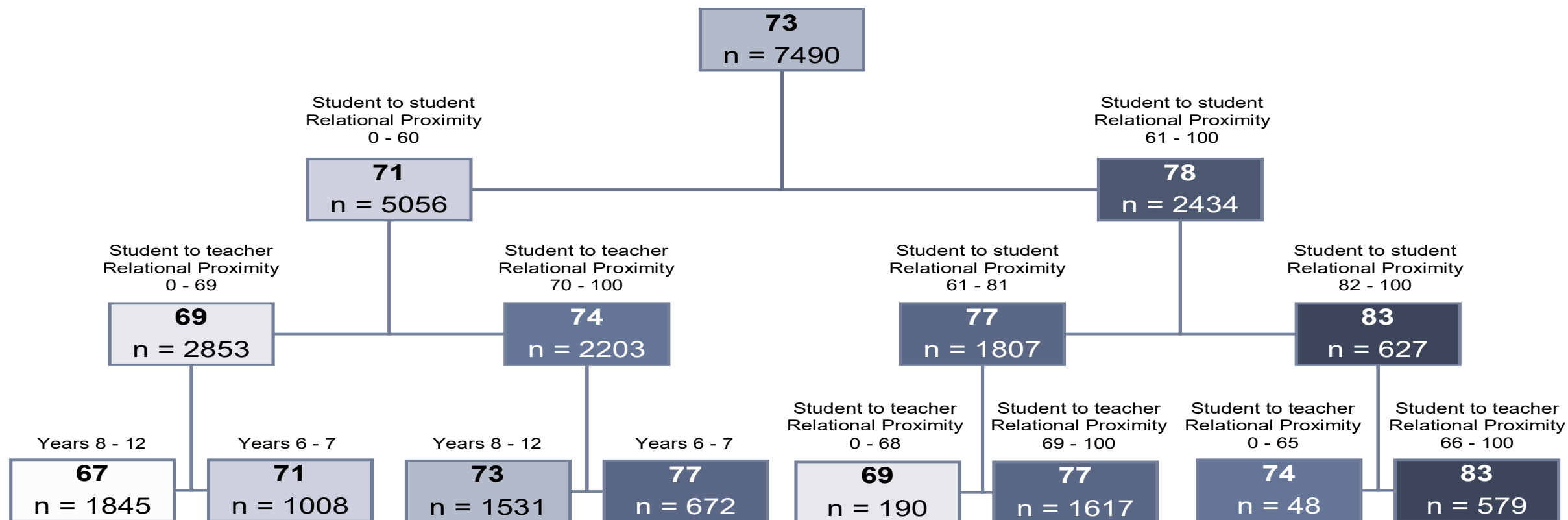


Prof. McLaughlin

RELATIONSHIPS PROTECT

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS DATASET

Overall student wellbeing



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WE ARE HARDWIRED TO CONNECT



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SYMPHONY OF THE THOUSAND



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CHANGING BEHAVIOURS

Without the intervention of a third party, do selfish interests always dominate in a destructive way?

Let us test that with a simple thought experiment...

“The Public Goods Game”



AN AUNT LEAVES YOU \$800

1



2



3



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THE **BEST** AND WORST EXAMPLES

4invested **\$800**
people **\$3200** x 1.5
....a pot of **\$4800** **\$1200**



and a dividend of

THE **BEST** AND WORST EXAMPLES

1invested **\$0**
person
....a pot of **\$2400**

but the rest
invested...
\$800

and a dividend of **\$900**



THE **BEST** AND WORST EXAMPLES

\$400



THE BEST AND WORST EXAMPLES

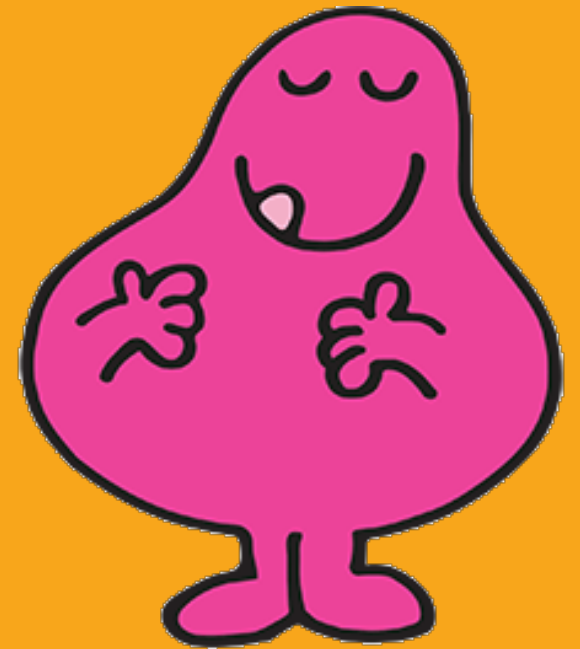


\$100



THE BEST AND WORST EXAMPLES

\$1700



MR. GREEDY



FEHR AND GÄCHTER

84% paid to punish

....and cooperation skyrocketed





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THERMAL SCAN

LOCAL: 11:28:28

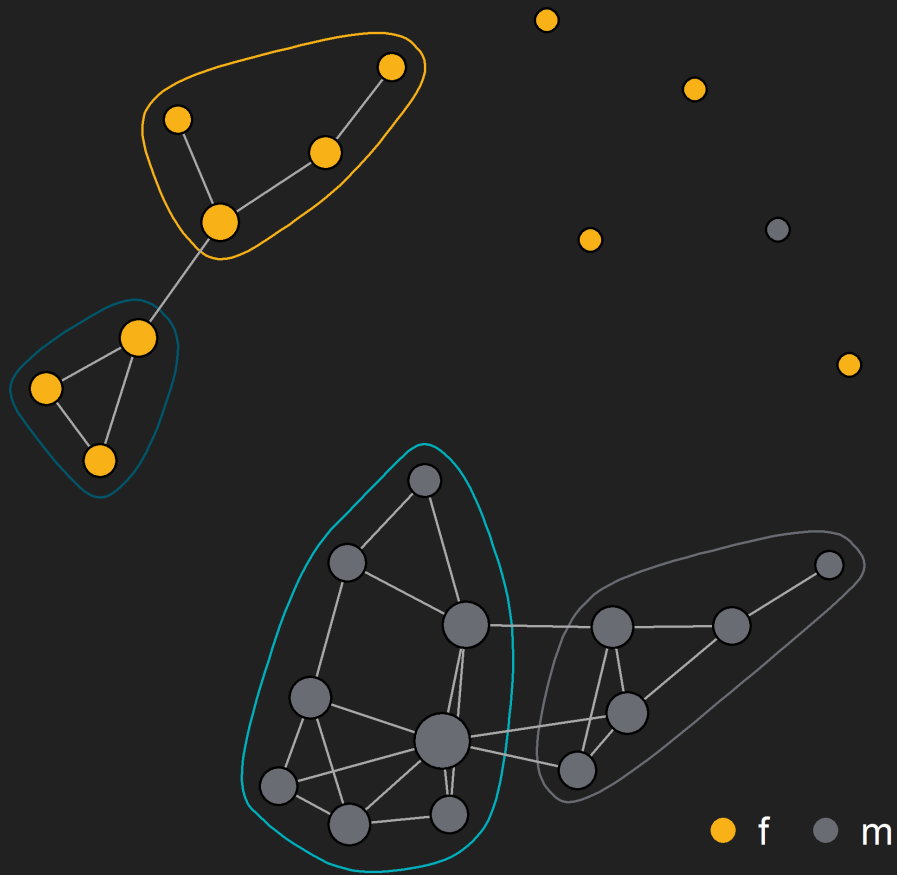


SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS

AUG TEMP
37.86

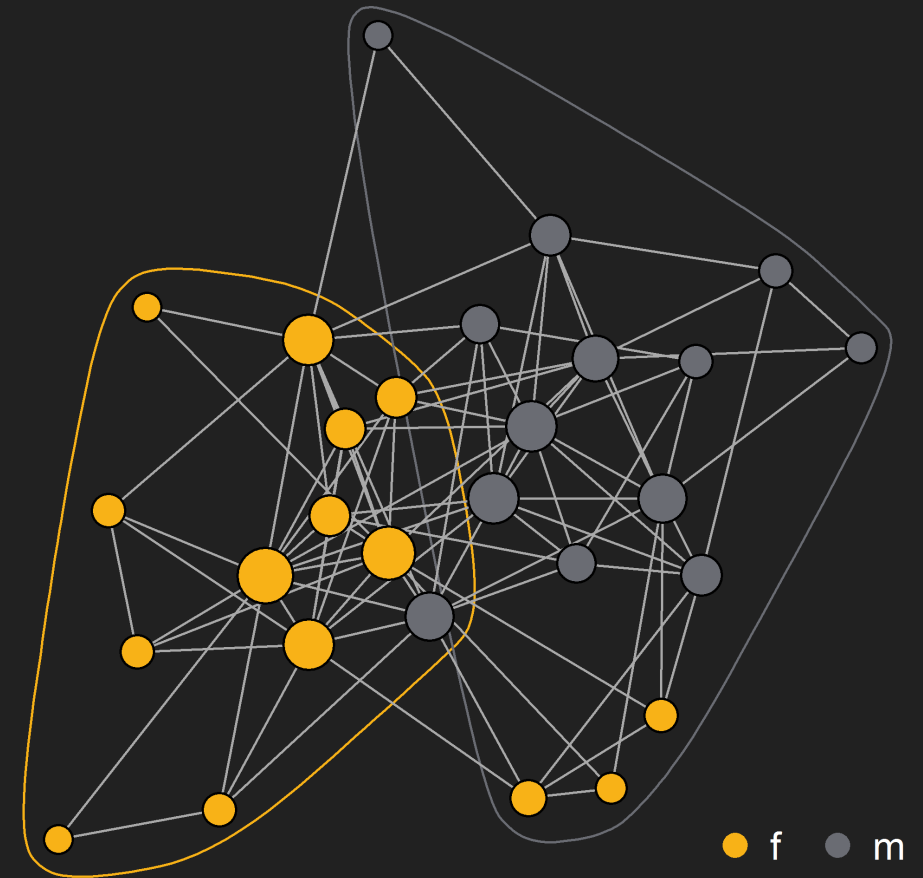
DISTANT RELATIONSHIPS

Characterised by small cliques, dyads of peripheral actors and isolates



CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

An interconnected web of tight relationships.







“...if the larger rat dominates, like a bully, as he could, then he will lose at the highest level, the level where the fun continues for the longest possible time”.



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WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

A background image showing a group of young men in blue and yellow athletic gear participating in a team-building exercise. They are gathered around a muddy pit, with some lying on the ground and others standing, possibly pulling on ropes or equipment. The setting is outdoors with trees in the background.

“Praise and affirm the actions of others around you”

“To deliver on time and to a high quality”

“To show up when expected and often before and after contracted”

“To take your fair share of the jobs no one wants but that must still be done”

“To do more than your job requires”



“

...organizational factors such as mentor support or positive work climate that are the important job resources that enable teachers to cope with demanding environments and particularly demanding student interactions.

BAKKER ET AL. (2007)

EDITED BY ALISON FOX, HUGH BUSER
AND CARMEL CAPEWELL

THINKING CRITICALLY AND ETHICALLY ABOUT RESEARCH FOR EDUCATION

ENGAGING WITH VOICE AND EMPOWERMENT
IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS



132 Jack

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SOCIO-MAPPING AND THE RELATIONAL RESILIENCE OF AND FOR TEACHERS

11

SOCIO-MAPPING AND THE RELATIONAL RESILIENCE OF AND FOR TRAINING TEACHERS

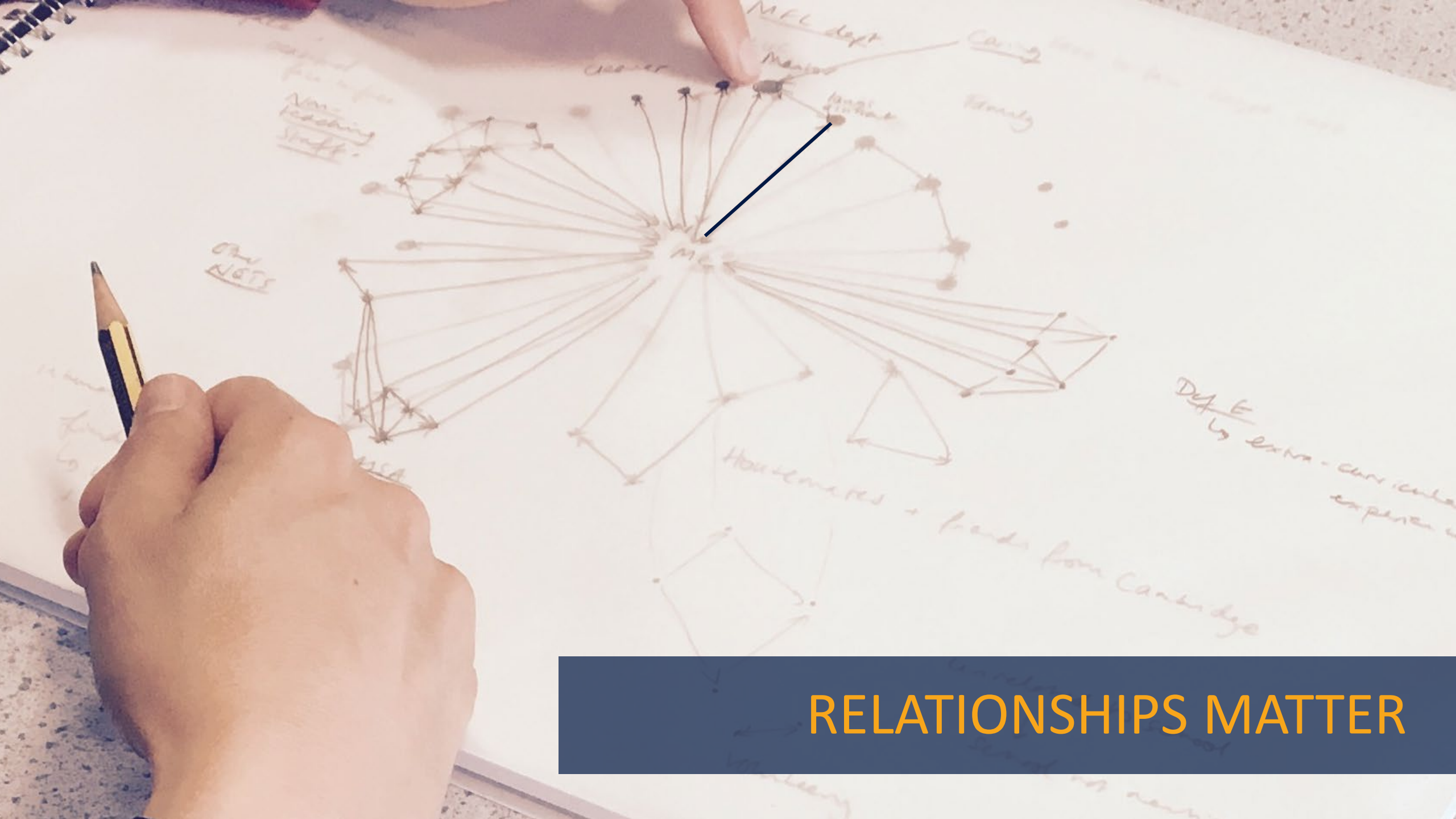
Alison Fox, Kate Sida-Nicholls and Rob Loe

Relationships and early career retention of teachers

Relationships influence the ways in which people cope with stress, access advice, learn, collaborate, and find fulfilment in their work. This is particularly so in professions which rely on positive relationship building, such as teaching. Teaching involves relationship building with a wide range of others: students, colleagues, leaders, parents, agency workers supporting students (e.g. Fox and Wilson, 2015; Le Cornu, 2013). The project reported in this chapter sought to gain an understanding of the relational factors that help explain why some people do not complete their training (Hobson et al., 2009) or leave the profession in their early career. The aim was to use this evidence to inform earlier and effective interventions for early career teachers (Joiner and Edwards, 2008). The project therefore had both research and development intentions. This is an urgent focus in the context of an international crisis in teacher retention, particularly acute during teachers' early careers (e.g. Hughes, 2012; Worth and de Lazzari, 2017).

Whilst Early Career Teachers (ECTs) can find support from within training programmes, school placements and their existing social networks (Baker-Doyle, 2012; Fox and Wilson, 2015), individuals show different networking proactivity (Fox et al., 2011). Their behaviours link to their senses of agency and self-efficacy (Wilson, 2012) and prosocial characteristics (Kokkinos, 2007; Bastian et al., 2017). Vulnerabilities to relational resilience can relate to personal circumstances, such as the impact of young professionals moving geographically to take up training/early career positions, physically distancing themselves from their personal network of family and friends (Ashcroft et al., 2016). Vulnerabilities can also be linked to the work settings in which ECTs find themselves (Fox et al., 2011) and the quality of relations with school leaders, colleagues, parents and supervisors. These relationships contribute to an ECT's developing sense of belonging (or not) to their

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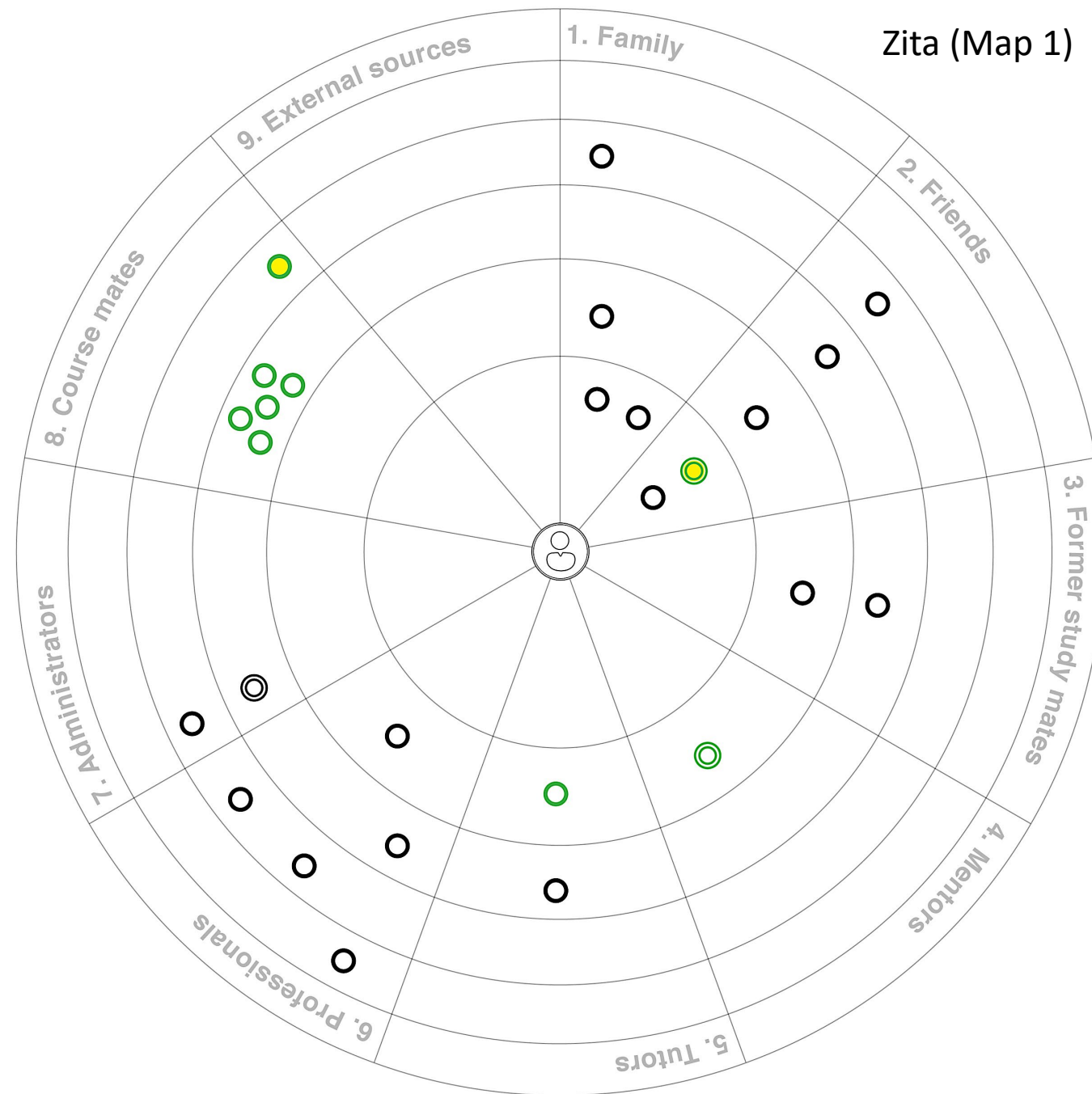
RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

CASE-STUDY

Zita (Map 1)



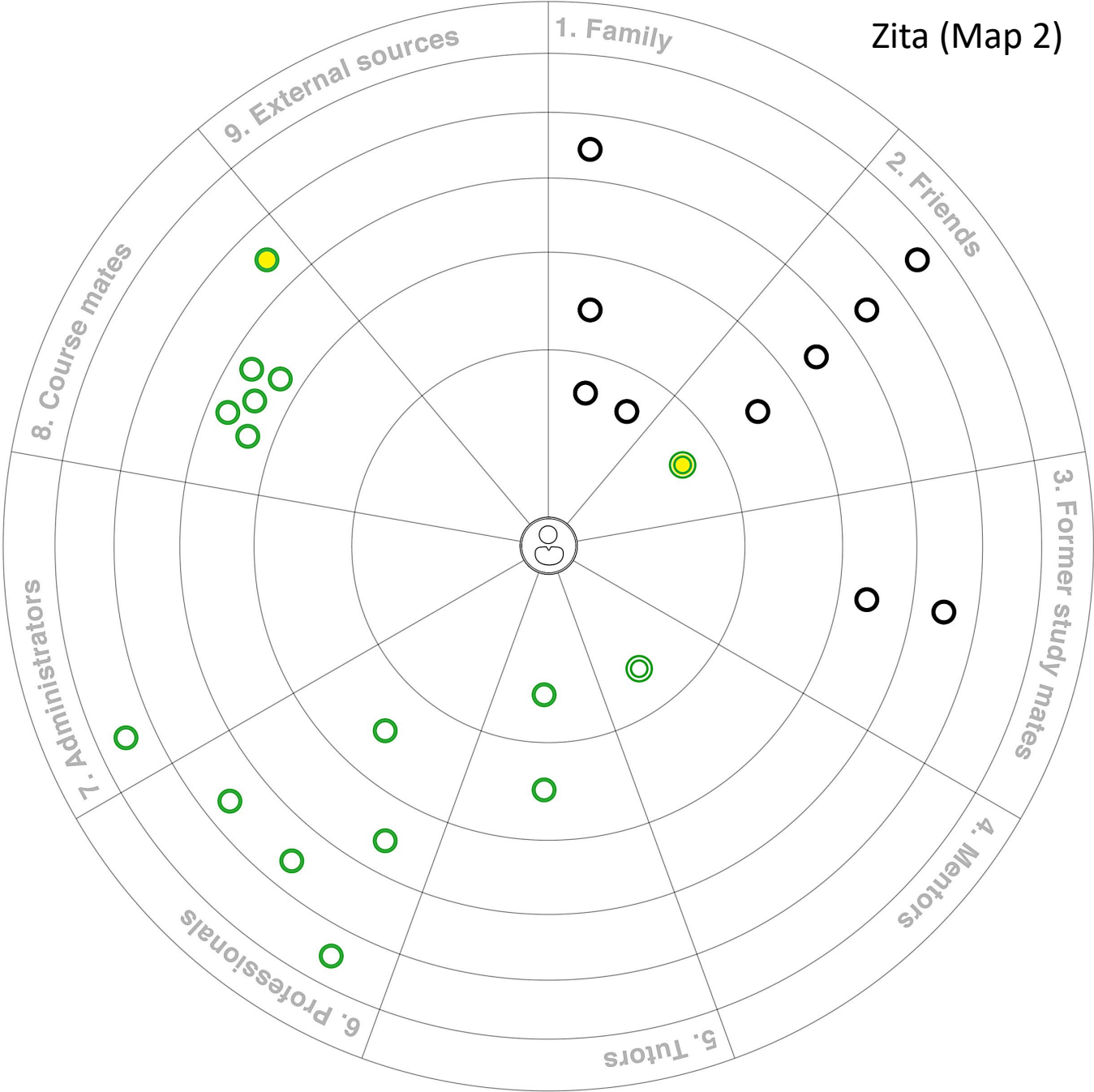
Zita (Map 1)



- Doesn't live nearby
- Lives nearby
- Personal and professional support
- ⊙ Collaborates



Zita (Map 2)



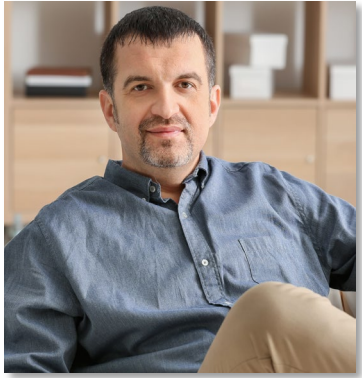
- Doesn't live nearby
- Lives nearby
- Personal and professional support
- ⊙ Collaborates







- Doesn't live nearby
- Lives nearby
- Personal and professional support
- Collaborates

RELATIONAL RADAR

Risk and Protective Factors



Adrian (Map 2)

-  Doesn't live nearby
-  Lives nearby
-  Personal and professional support
-  Collaborates

Protective factors

- Previous work with children
- Local personal network
- Collegial relationships within the department (school 1)

Risk factors

- Small network (less than 30 nodes)
- Trying to keep personal and professional separate
- Bereavement of someone close in network
- Struggled to engage with the support offered – distant departmental relationships
- Weak alignment between the trainee and tutor
- Low coping (stress tolerance and resilience) CPSQ scores





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Job alerts

My CV

Career preferences

Resources

Downloads

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Author dashboard

Add resource

My shop

Trainee teachers with more friends less likely to quit

'Personal and professional relationships enhance resilience', study finds

By Will Hazell
26 March 2019

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MP to leave son at No 10 in protest over school cuts



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Heston Blumenthal: 'I have ADHD. But I wouldn't change it for the



Sats results 2019: all you need to know



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“

...One of the key findings has been the importance of the ‘unsung relational heroes’ in an early career teacher’s network. Even without holding formal support roles, these vital links can provide the key emotional and professional support which keeps a trainee on track and a teacher in post.

FOX (2019)

Most Read

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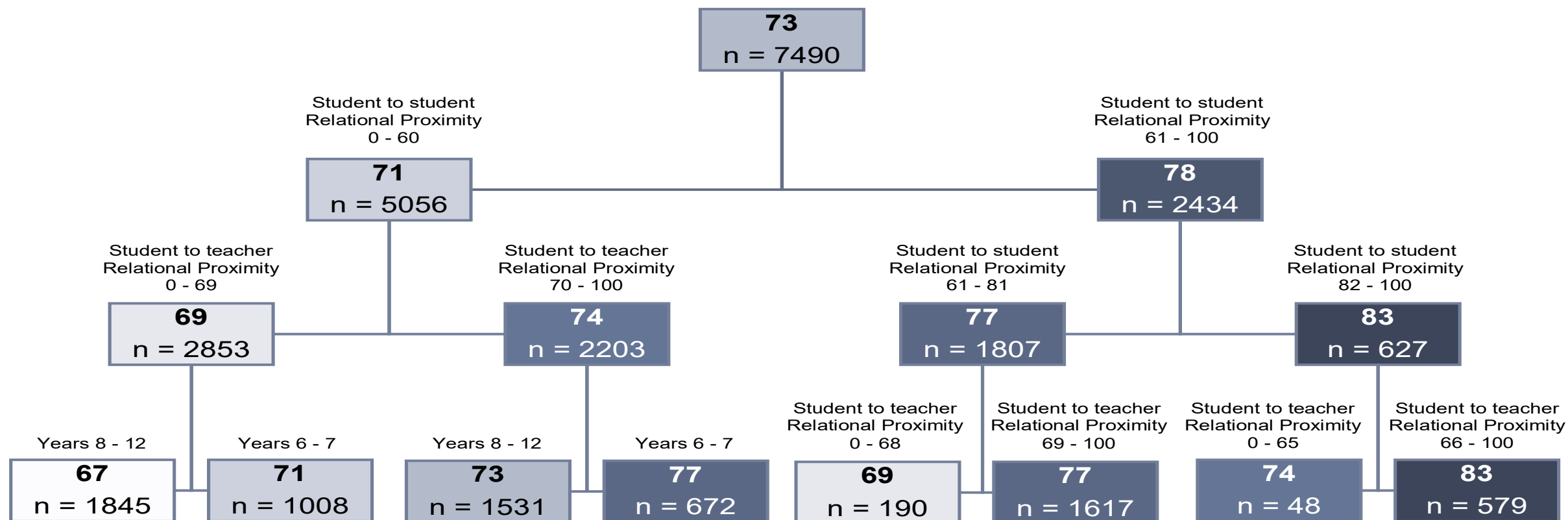
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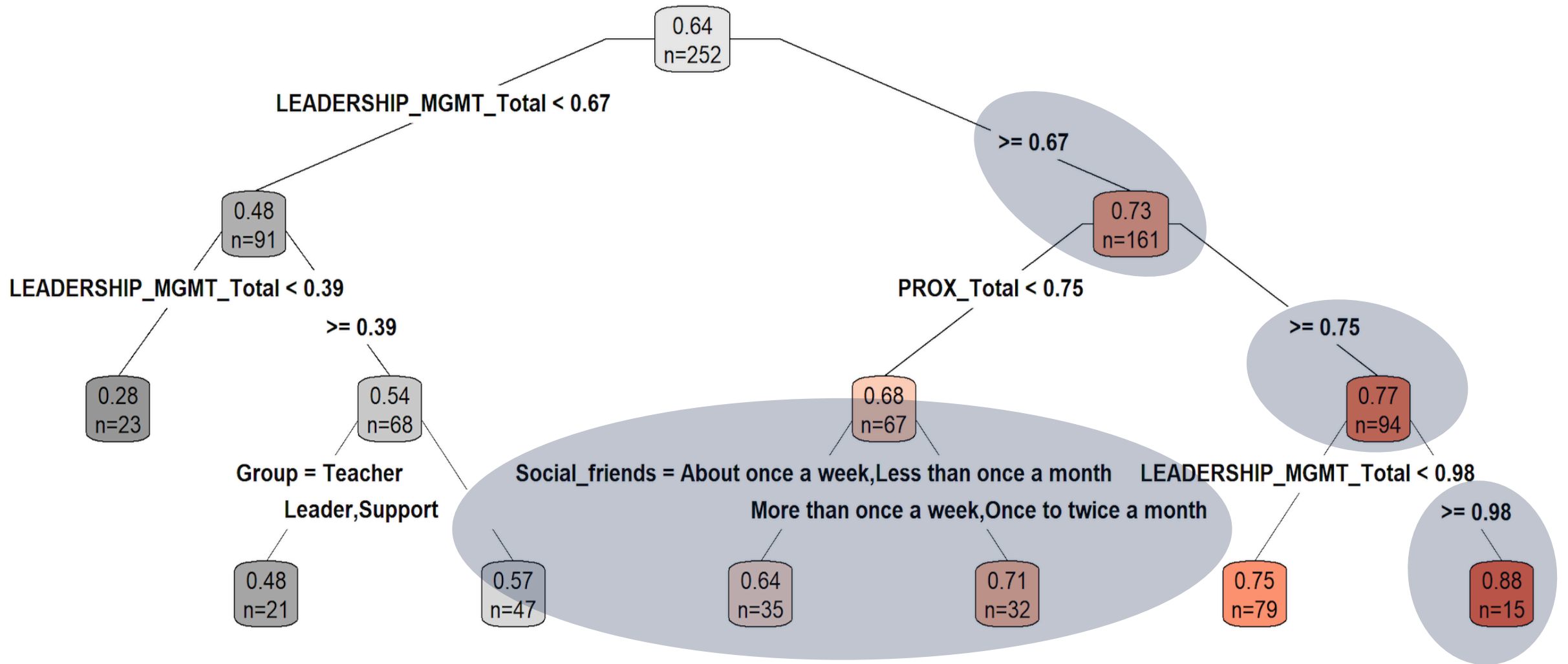


RELATIONSHIPS PROTECT

AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS DATASET

Overall student wellbeing







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The quality of the exchange relationship with the leader, which is based upon the degree of emotional support and exchange of valued resources, is pivotal in determining the member's fate within the organization.

SPARROWE AND LIDEN (1997)

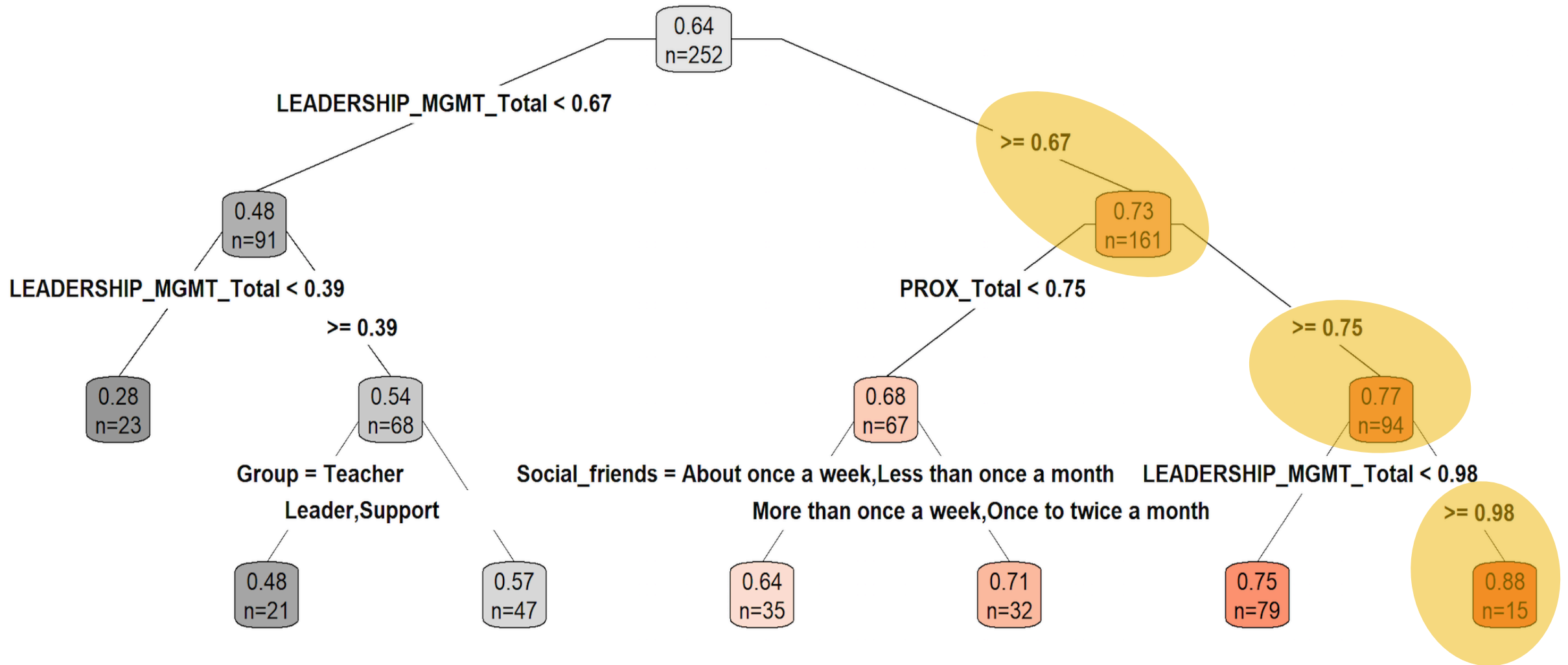


Relationships involve a series of interactions between two individuals who know each other such that each interaction can be influenced by past interactions and by expectations of interactions in the future.

ROBERT HINDE (1997)

Relationships: A Dialectical Perspective Psychology Press p.48





QUESTIONS?



Thank you!



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