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# Group Decision Making is Impaired by Opinion Exchange

## When Members Like Each Other

# Overview

1. Effect of **opinion exchange** on group decision making (GDM)
2. Hypothesis: **Interpersonal liking** enhances the effect of other variables (e.g., **opinion exchange**) on GDM
3. Results of three own studies
4. Summary and theoretical implications
5. Practical implications

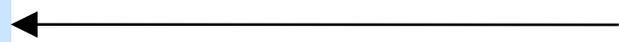
# Group Decision Making (GDM) is Impaired by Opinion Exchange

- Groups often fail in decision-making tasks
  - when they have to integrate each member's unshared information to identify best alternative (Brodbeck, Kerschreiter, Mojzisch, & Schulz-Hardt, 2007; Stasser & Titus, 1985; Wittenbaum, Hollingshead, & Botero, 2004).
- = in hidden-profile tasks
- One reason: **Early opinion exchange on members' decision preferences**
  - ⇒ reduced systematic information processing (Mojzisch & Schulz-Hardt, 2008)
  - ⇒ reduced decision quality (Gigone & Hastie, 1993; Mojzisch & Schulz-Hardt, 2008)

# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM

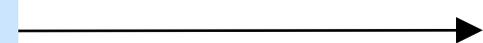
Need for Similarity

Interpersonal Liking



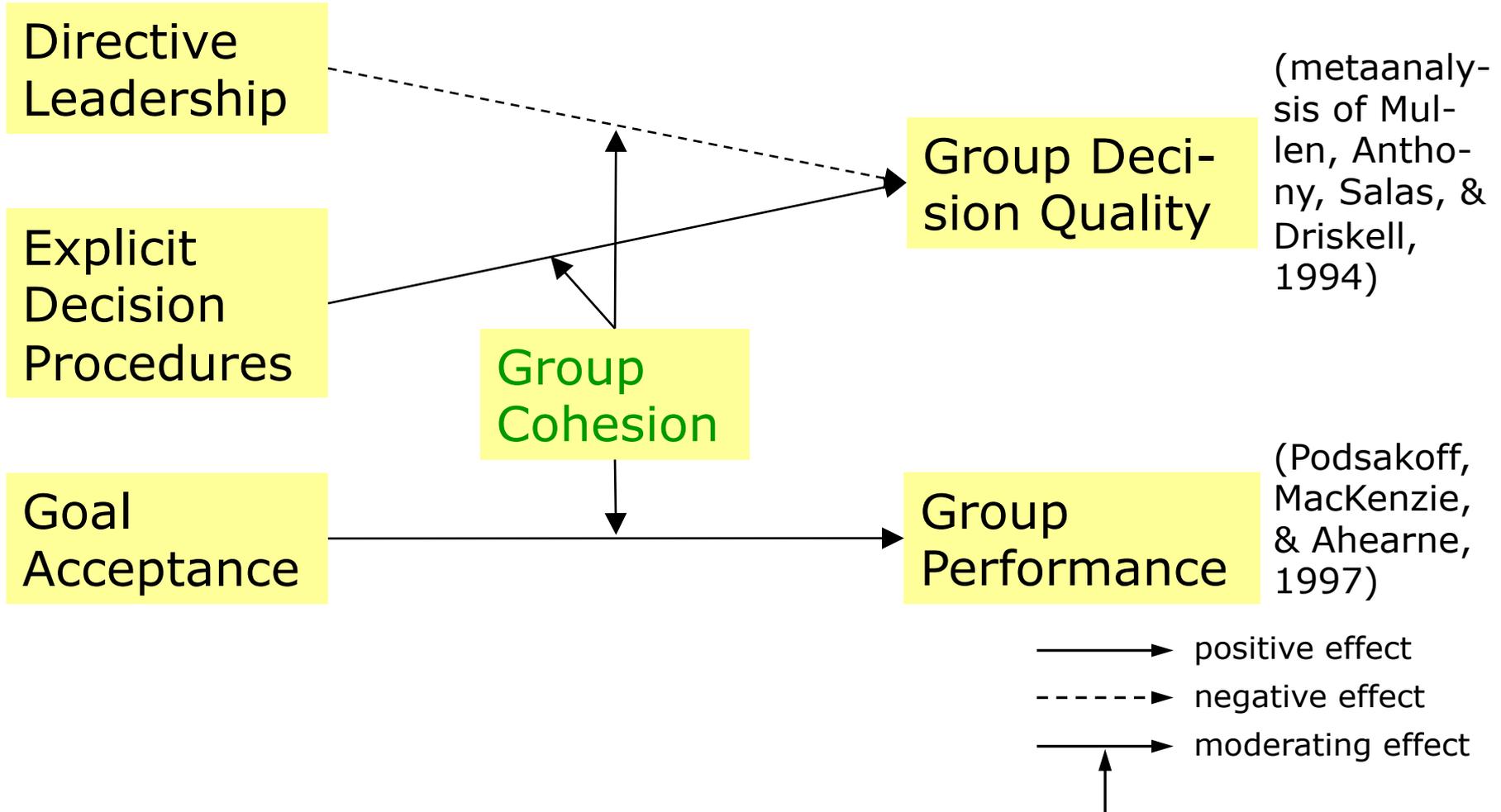
Adaptation of ...	Self	Other
Cognitions	E.g., adapting own preferences	E.g., preference-consistent communication
Actions	E.g., imitation	E.g., normative pressure

Similarity between Group Members

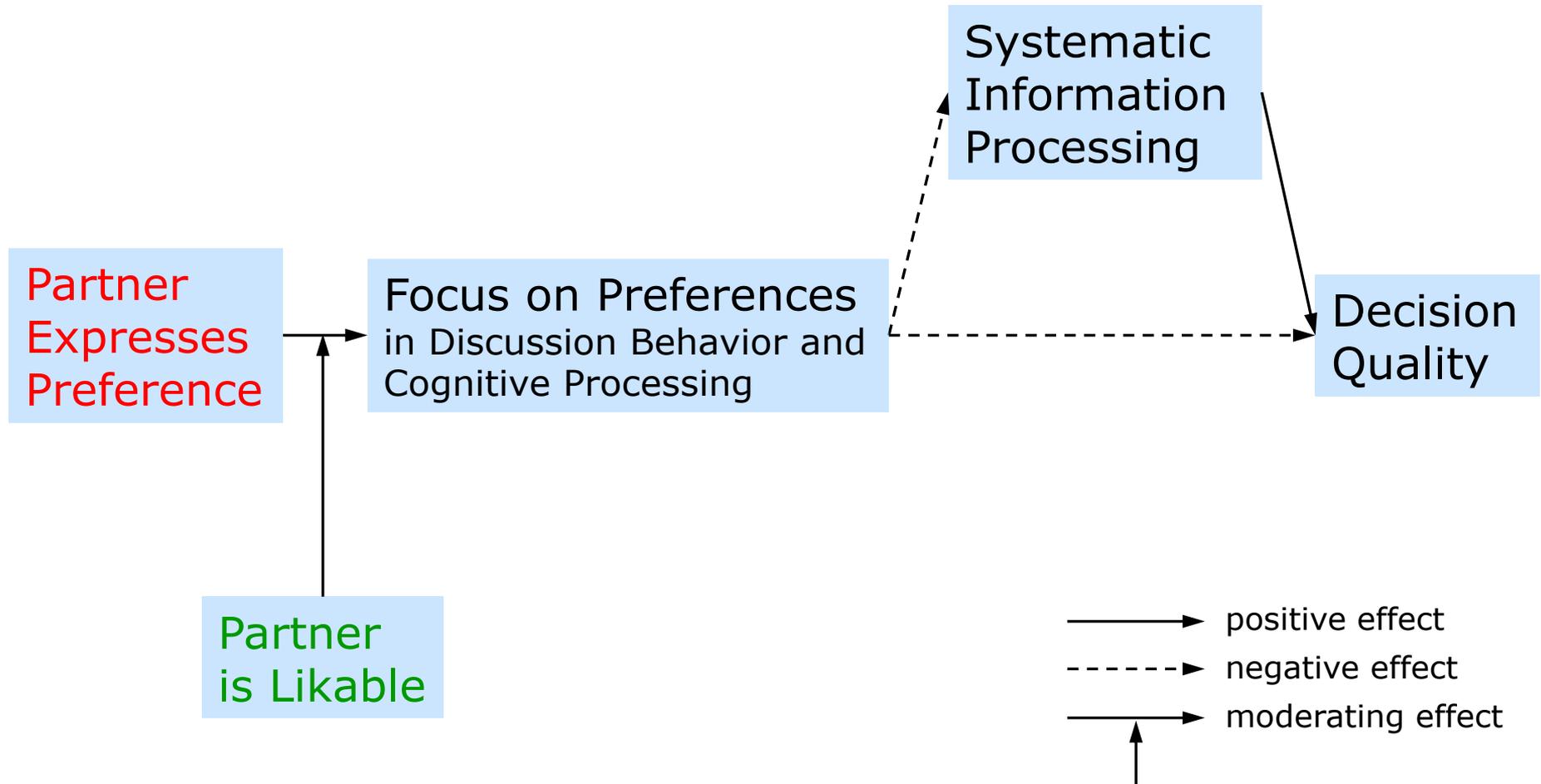


Enhancement of Prevalent Processes

# Existing Evidence: Group Cohesion Enhances Effects of other Variables on GDM



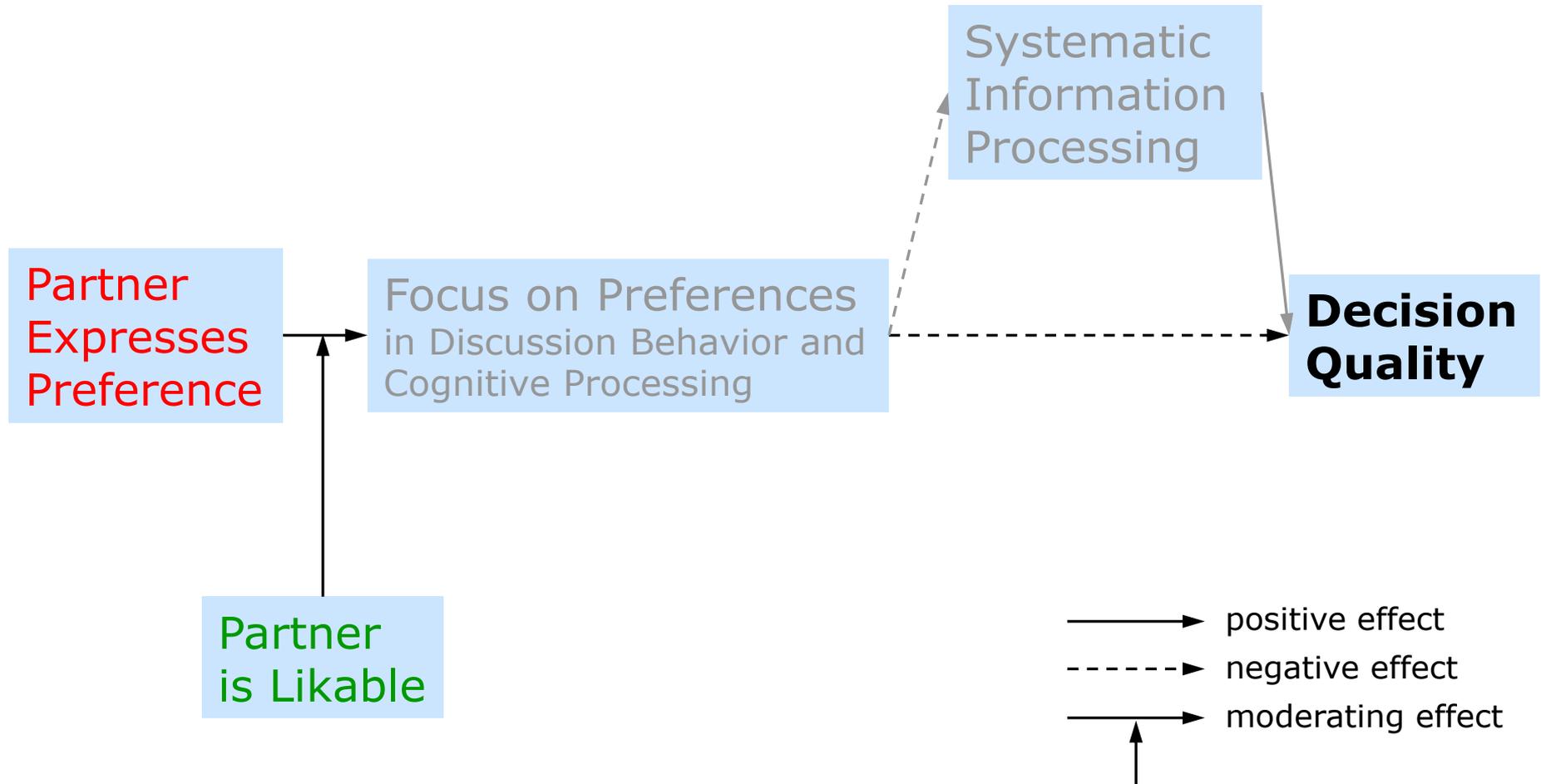
# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM



# Three Studies: Methods

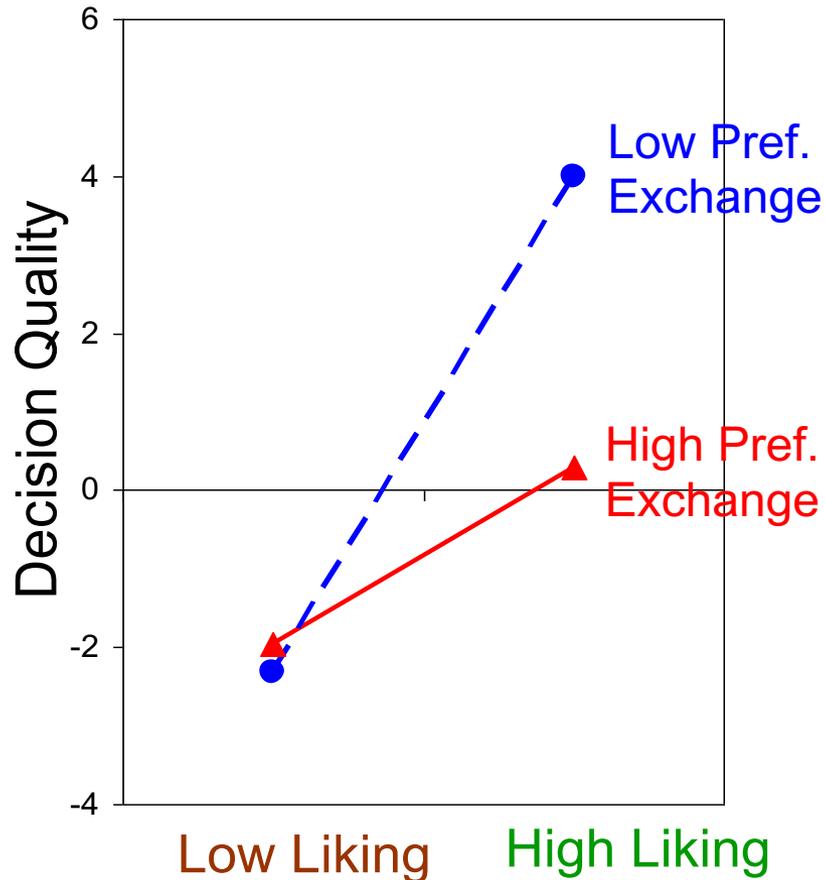
Study 1	Study 2	Study 3
30 groups of 3 familiar members	123 single individuals	77 single individuals
Real face-to-face interaction	Anticipated face-to-face interaction with a female partner	
Hidden-profile task		Judgmental task
Interpersonal liking		
Measured before discussion	Manipulated in "first experiment on person perception" by self presentation of "partner" on a video in likable or dislikable way	
Preference exchange / Partner's preference expression		
Observed in discussion	Manipulated by „initial" audio statement of the "partner" (preference + information vs. only information)	

# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM



# Study 1 (Real Interaction): Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on Decision Quality

**Decision quality** = Reversed rank position of correct alternative in group decision



Predictor	$\beta$
Preference exchange	# -0.83
Liking	* 2.14
Pref. exch. x liking	# -1.02

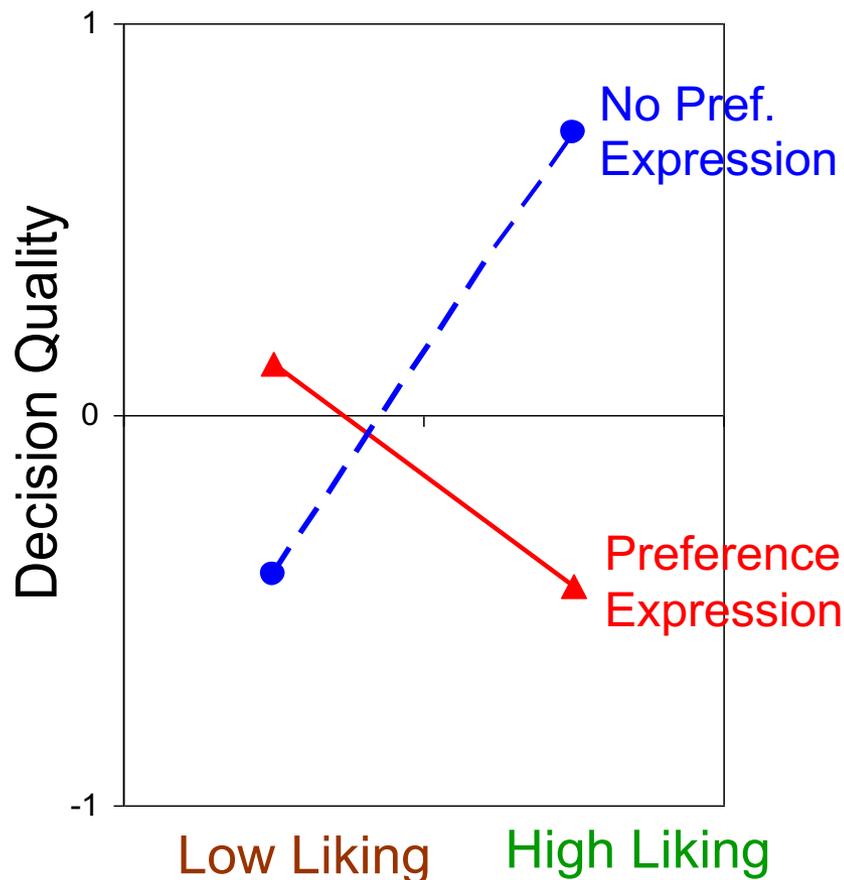
Ordinal regression with z-standardized predictors

Means estimated by procedures of Aiken and West (1991)

#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$   
(hypotheses one-tailed)

# Study 2 (Anticipated Interaction): Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Expression on Decision Quality

**Decision quality** = Reversed rank position of correct alternative in individual decision after unlimited time to listen to partner's statement



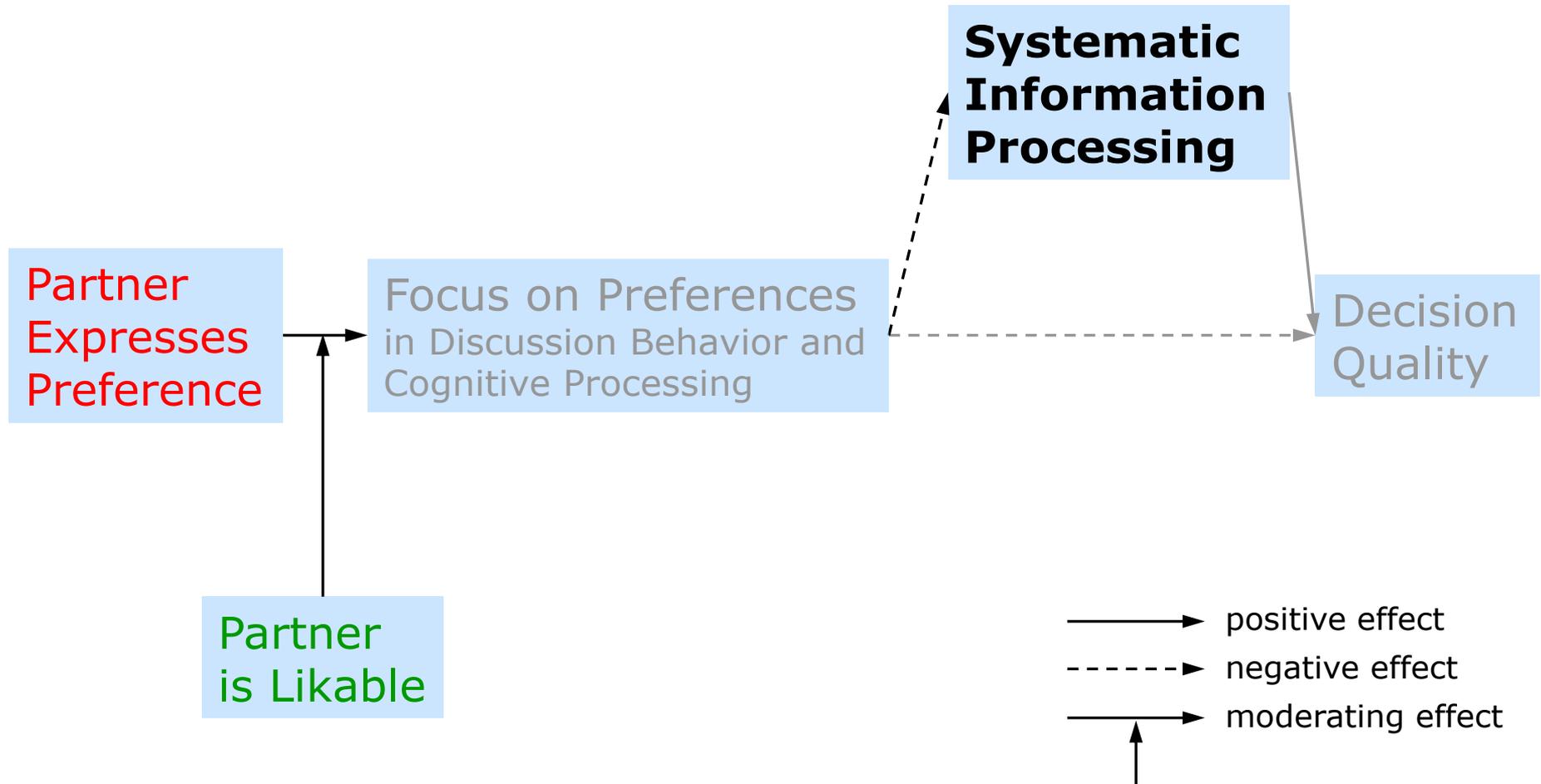
<i>Predictor</i>	$\beta$
Preference expression	-.16
Liking	.14
Pref. expr. x liking	* -.42

Ordinal regression with z-standardized predictors

Means estimated by procedures of Aiken and West (1991)

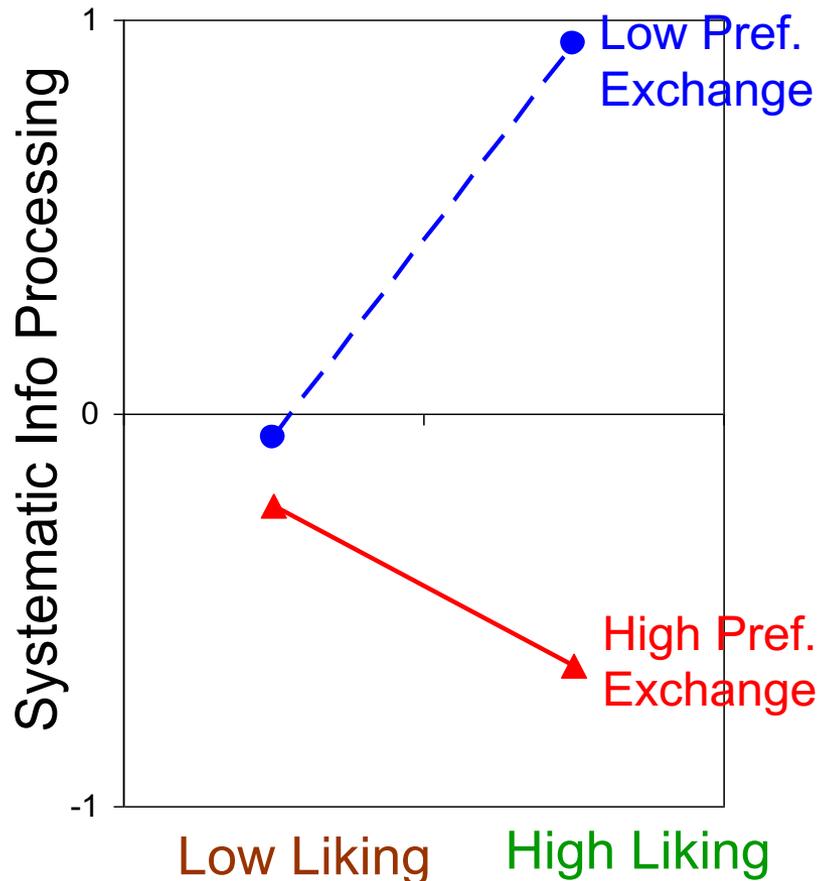
#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$   
(hypotheses one-tailed)

# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM



# Study 1 (Real Interaction): Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on Systematic Information Processing

**Systematic information processing** =  $z(\text{information introduced into discussion}) + z(\text{individual recall of new information after discussion})$



<i>Predictor</i>	$\beta$
Preference exchange	** -.44
Liking	.15
Pref. exch. x liking	* -.35

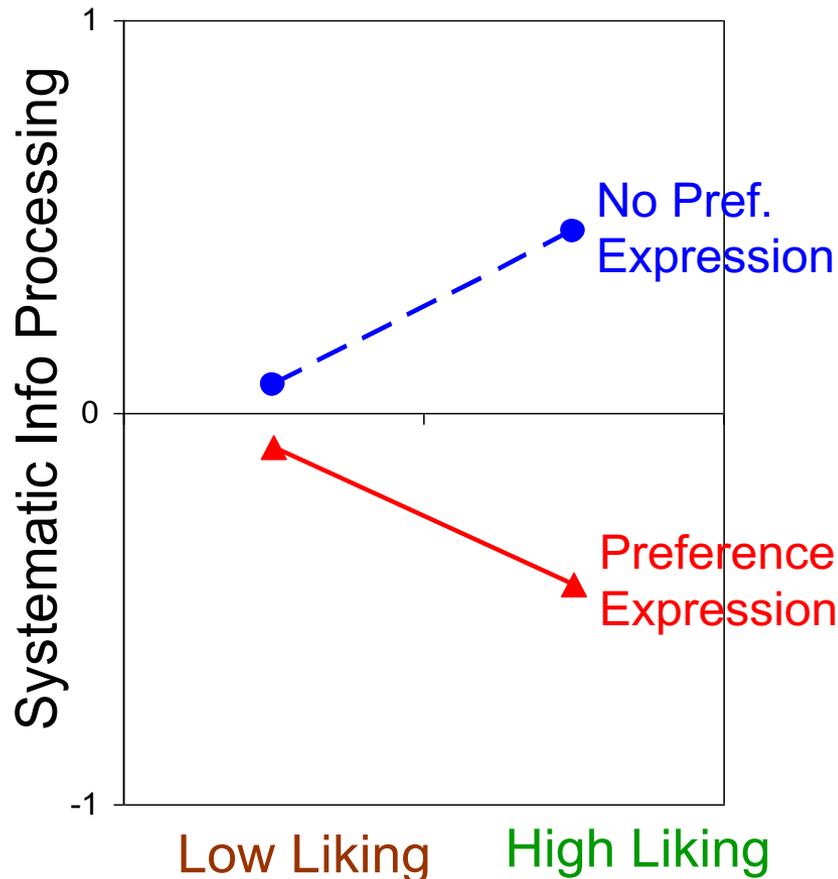
Multiple regression with z-standardized predictors

Means estimated by procedures of Aiken and West (1991)

#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$   
(hypotheses one-tailed)

# Study 2 (Anticipated Interaction): Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Expression on Systematic Info Processing

**Systematic information processing** = Factor score (time for final decision, words on note paper, evaluative signs on note paper)



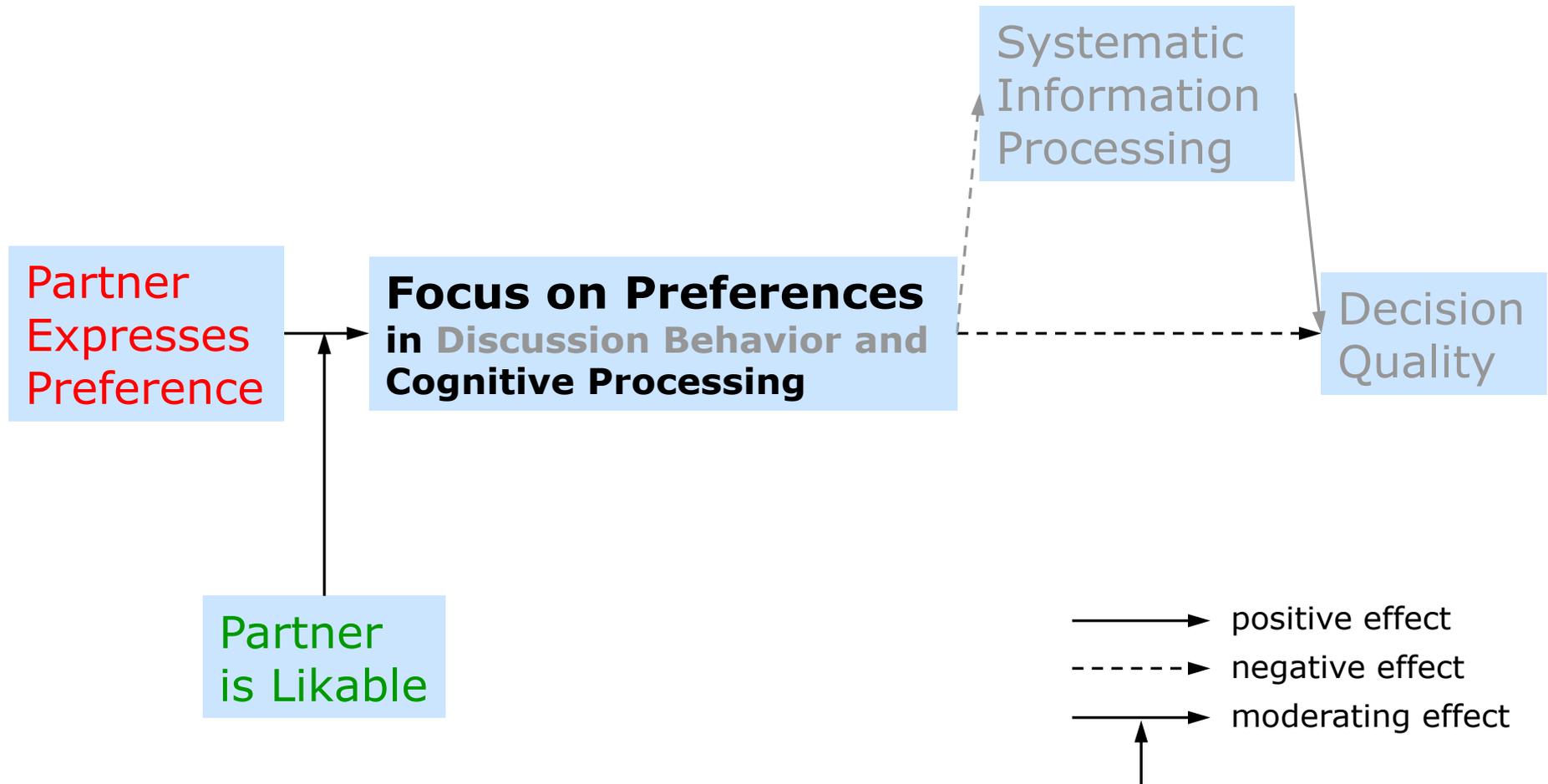
<i>Predictor</i>	$\beta$
Preference expression	** -.26
Liking	.01
Pref. expr. x liking	* -.19

Ordinal regression with z-standardized predictors

Means estimated by procedures of Aiken and West (1991)

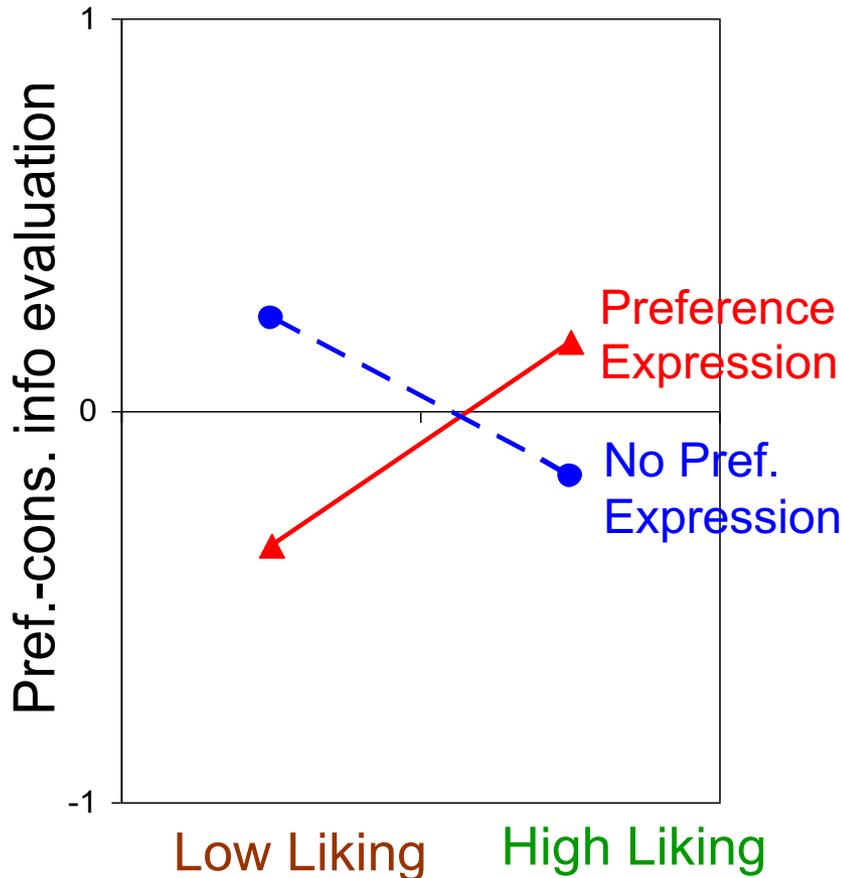
#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$   
(hypotheses one-tailed)

# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM



# Study 2 (Anticipated Interaction): Liking Enhances Effect of Pref. Expression on Preference-consistent Evaluation

**Pref.-cons. info evaluation** = Evaluation of consistent info – evaluation of inconsistent info (credibility and relevance, subset of 12 pieces of info)



<i>Source of variance</i>	$\eta^2$
Preference expression	.00
Liking	.00
Pref. expr. x liking	** .06

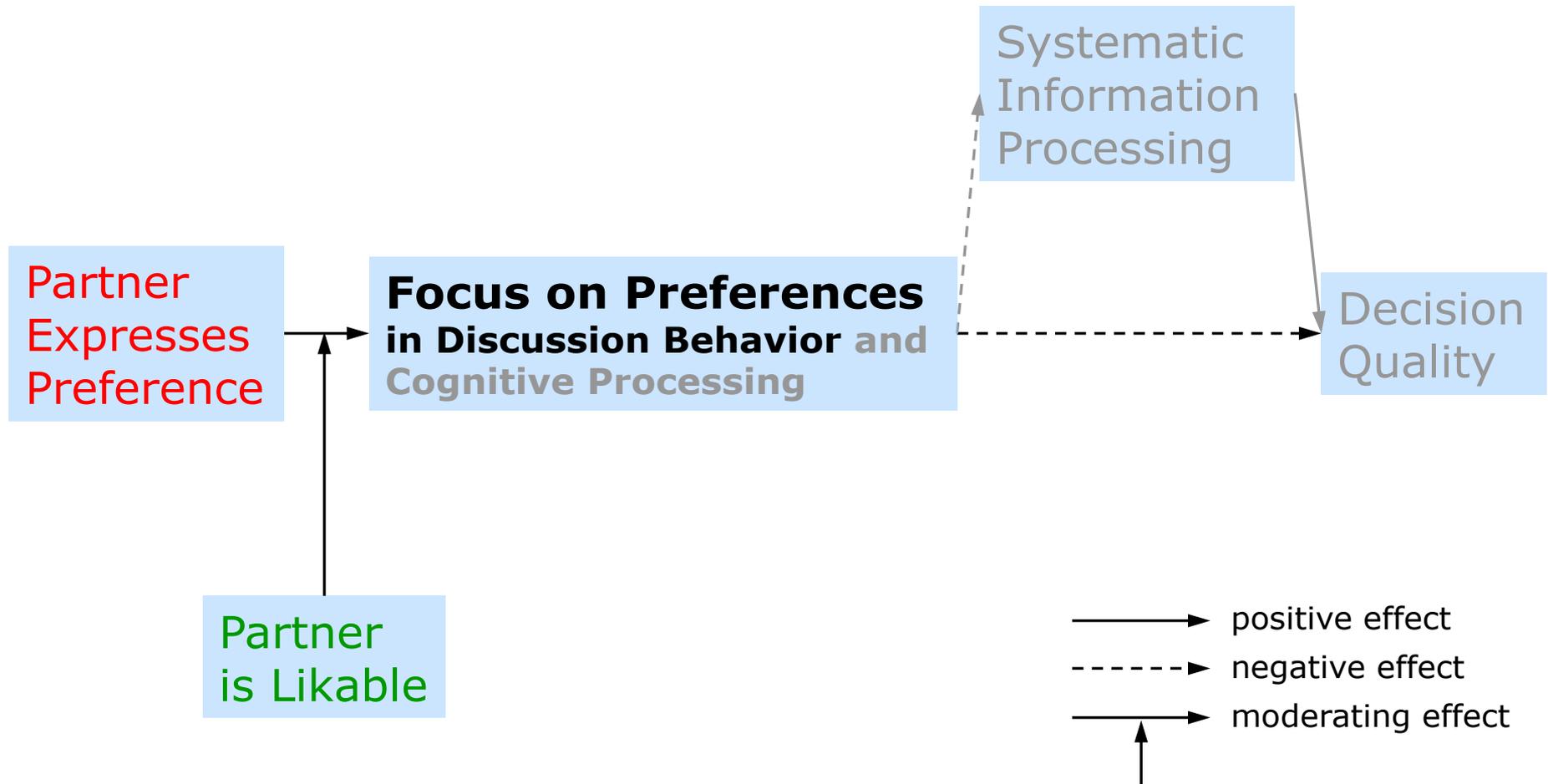
ANCOVA with z-standardized dependent variable

Estimated marginal means

#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$

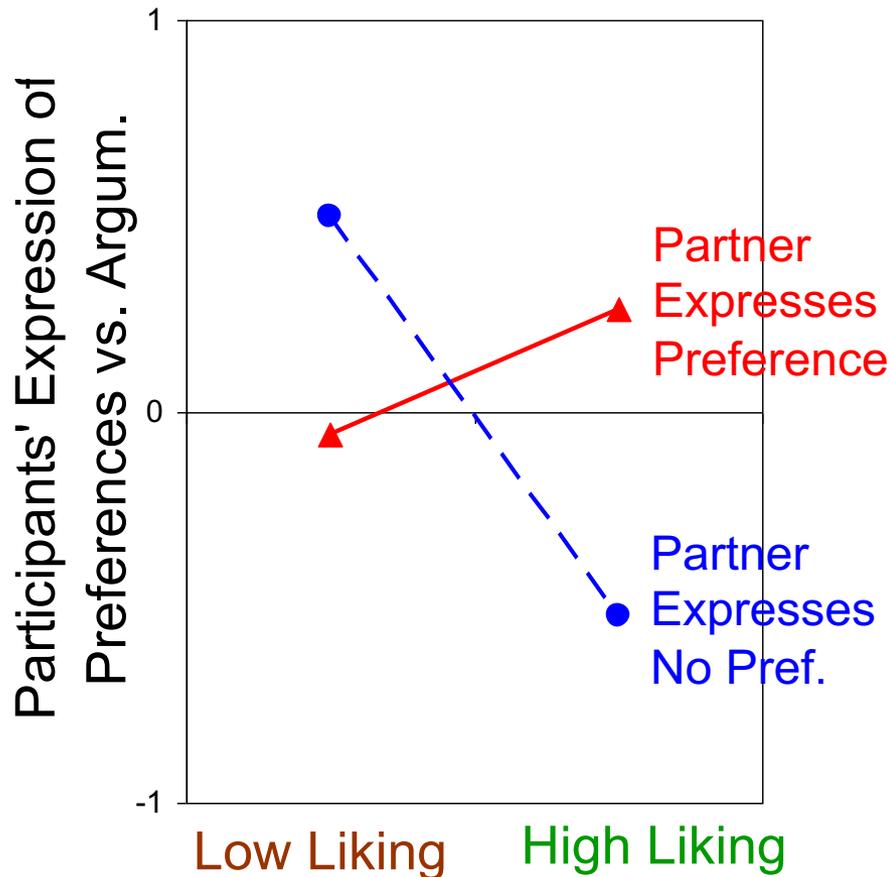
(hypotheses tested one-tailed by contrasts)

# Hypothesis: Interpersonal Liking Enhances Effect of Preference Exchange on GDM



# Study 3 (Anticipated Interaction): Liking Produces Imitation of Discussion Behavior

**Expression of preferences vs. arguments** =  $z[\text{Preference expr.} \times \text{intensity}] - z[z(\text{different arguments expr.}) + z(\text{time to expr. arguments})]$



Source of variance	$\eta^2$
Preference expression	.01
Liking	.04
Pref. expr. x liking	** .14

ANCOVA with z-standardized dependent variable

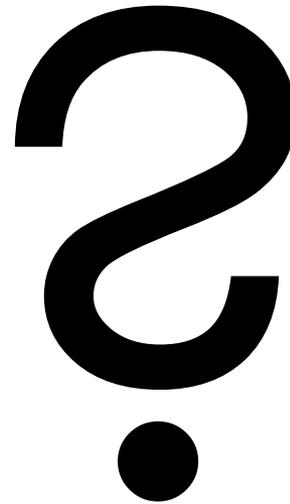
Estimated marginal means

#  $p < .10$  \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$   
(hypotheses tested one-tailed by contrasts)

# Summary and Theoretical Implications

- Detrimental effect of **preference exchange** and promotional effect of **information exchange** on decision quality only when **interpersonal liking** is high (study 1 & 2)
- Possible reason: **Liking** ⇔ Striving for similarity
  - Imitation of discussion behavior (study 3)
  - Imitation of cognitive processing
    - More systematic information processing when **partner has presented only information** (study 1 & 2)
    - More preference-consistent information evaluation when **partner has presented her preference** (study 2)

# Practical Implications



Enhance **interpersonal liking**  
in decision-making teams, e.g.,  
by funny teambuilding games??

# Practical Implications

- YES: Enhance **interpersonal liking** in decision-making teams
  - BUT: only when other conditions of high decision quality are secured
  - e.g., by a facilitator who structures decision process in a way that **information exchange** precedes **preference exchange**

Thank you very much  
for your attention!

Questions ...?

Comments ...?