Self-Efficacy and Mood in Social Support Processes

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Self-Efficacy

Defined as: “People’s beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions” (Bandura, 1997).

Greatest predictor: Past successful attempts at bringing about desired effects (Bandura, 1977, 1997).
Why Relationships?

Committed dyadic relationships are the source from which individuals draw the most strength in times of stress.

(Revenson, 1994)
What is the Role of Self-Efficacy In Relationships?

Previous studies have shown strong correlations between self-efficacy and:

- Mood
- Behaviors people engage in
Questions:

Does efficacy predict mood within relationships?

Can an intervention increase efficacy?
What Social Support is:

Partner’s attempt to extend his or her help when a need or stress is recognized.
Honey, I want to thank you for being so attentive tonight and... WAAAAAAT A MINUTE HERE...
Social Support Paradox

- Perceived availability of support: Positive effects
- Perceived enactment of support: Often negative effects
- Why?

(Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, 2000; Fisher, Nadler, and Whitcher-Alagna, 1982; Krause, 1997)
Unskilled Support

1. Recipient feels sense of inadequacy.
2. Focus recipient’s attention on stressor itself.
3. Recipient feels indebted.
4. Support is miscarried.
“If you ask me what’s wrong one more time, I’m going to tell you.”
Solution = Skilled Support

- When? (Timing, AAA)
- What? (Emotional vs. Practical)
- How? (Invisible, Directedness vs. Indirectedness)
- Who? (Equity between giver/receiver)
Skilled Support Intervention

- Background questionnaire
- 3 week diary period
- Intervention Workshop (For exp. cond.)
- Follow up 1 & 2
Subjects

- N = 46 couples
  - 22 workshop couples
  - 24 control couples
- Gender: Male = 44 Female = 48
- Age: M = 30.33, SD = 9.81
- Length living together: M = 3 years, 10 months, SD = 5 years, 7 months
Workshop

Couples Randomly Assigned

Composed of:

- Video Vignettes
- Discussion
- Power Point
- Quiz
- Take-home Handbook
Measuring Moods and Efficacy

- Three-week Palm Diaries

Moods:

“Please rate the extent to which you are feeling these things RIGHT NOW IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP: cheerful, content, passion, anxious, sad.”

Efficacy:

“Please rate the extent to which you are feeling these things RIGHT NOW IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP: capable of helping, unsure of my ability to help.”
Baseline Self-Efficacy Measure

Composed of 5 items on a 10-point scale

Example:

To what extent do you feel confident that you can effectively give the help which you think your partner needs?

0  Cannot do at all
1  Moderately can do
2  Can do
3  Highly certain can do
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
# Efficacy Affects Next Day Moods

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<th>P Value</th>
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$ * = p < .05 $
Efficacy Affects Next Day Passion

![Bar graph showing the comparison between Low Efficacy and High Efficacy on Next Day Passion. The graph indicates a significant difference with p = .02.]

Passion (0-4)

Low Efficacy

High Efficacy

*p = .02
Efficacy Affects Next Day Anxiety

Anxiety (0-4)

Low Efficacy

High Efficacy

*p = .01
Simply Providing Support Boosts Efficacy (same day)

Provide

Not Provide

* $p = .006$
Providing Beneficial Support Boosts Efficacy (same day)

* $p < .0001$
Partner’s Moods Affect My Efficacy (same day)

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<td>Angry</td>
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<td>*$p = .008$</td>
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* = $p < .05$
Partner’s Anger Affects My Efficacy (same day)

- Low Anger
- High Anger

*p = .008
Workshop Effects on Efficacy

No significant effects

- On Daily Level
- On Baseline Measure
- If anything, slight decrease...
Why No Change After Intervention? (Hypothetical)
Summary

- Daily efficacy predicts moods
  - Unidirectional
- Daily Support attempts increase efficacy
- Partner’s moods affect efficacy
- Workshop did not increase efficacy levels as expected

Future Directions:
  - Incremental intervention model
Thank You!

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