Social Support, Depression, and Life Stress: A Meta-Analytic Path Analysis

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Social Support, Depression, and Life Stress: A Meta-Analytic Path Analysis
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Introduction
Perceived: Beliefs about the availability or quality of support
• Previous research consistently shows a negative correlation between perceived support and depression

Received: Recent experiences of supportive behaviors
• Previous research shows mixed results between received support and depression.

We investigated life stress as a potential confounding variable.

Methods
Search
• Inclusion Criteria: correlation (r), participants 18+, study in English, common and validated social support measures
• Databases: PSYC Info, PubMed, and Proquest
• Search Terms: “Depression,” social support measure name or acronym
• Variables: social support construct, depression, life stress

Meta-analysis
• Results weighted by sample size
• Coding Program: R "metaphor"

Meta-analytic Path Analysis
• Life stress
• Mplus path analysis
  • Harmonic Mean

Results

Perceived Support $r = -0.32^*$

Life Stress $r = -0.19^*$

Depression

Received Support $r = -0.03^*$

Life Stress $r = 0.09^*$

Depression $r = 0.42^*$

Harmonic mean= 3701
Confounding Effect: -0.07 95% CI [-0.08, -0.06]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>214,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Stress</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16,887</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $K = number of samples$ $N = total number of participants$

Discussion
Psychological Intervention
• Reflecting on received support.
• Coping mechanisms for stress.

Future Research
• Incorporating life stress as a search variable.
• Consider how moderator variables may affect life stress's influence on depression and social support
  • Culture types (Hofstede Insights)
  • Gender roles
  • Reciprocity of received support