

AFFECTION EXCHANGE THEORY

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Think About...

• Affection Exchange Theory is all about how we communicate affection (verbal, direct nonverbal, indirect nonverbal).

- What kind of affectionate communication do you prefer to receive?
- What kind of affectionate communication do you prefer to give?



**Supportive
Communication is
Associated with
Markers of
Immunocompetence**



Purpose

- Examine the association between expression of support in non-distressing relationships and immunological health
 - Wanted to know whether expressing supportive forms of affection would increase immunological health
 - Important because it is one of the primary outcomes identified with the receipt of social support
 - Focused on three specific markers of immune function that show relationship with received support:
 - Immunoglobulins, lymphocytes, natural killer cells
- Focus on the benefits associated with expressing support as opposed to the benefits derived from receiving support



How Was AET Used?

- Utilizes the third form of affectionate expression: expression of support
 - Any behavior designed to provide emotional or tangible assistance to another
- Relies on AET to trace the relationship between psychological stress and supportive affection and determine its findings
 - Measures of expressed support and received support are utilized in the form of scales
 - Expressed support: 5-item social support subscale from the Affectionate Communication Index, an 18-item measure with statements related to each of the 3 types of affectionate communication
 - Received support: 12-item version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, not AET



Hypotheses

H1: Received support is positively associated with immunocompetence.

H2: The expression of supportive affection is positively associated with immunocompetence.

H3: Controlling for the benefits of received support, the expression of supportive affection is positively associated with immunocompetence.

Participants

- **Participants:**
 - 39 healthy adults from a large urban campus in the Southwestern United States
 - Mean age of 27
 - 62.3% White



Method

- **Data was collected using questionnaires & laboratory procedures**
 - Pre-laboratory procedures questionnaire: measured social and emotional health, personality traits, relationship quality, health-related behaviors, and demographic characteristics
 - The University's Clinical Research Center conducted the laboratory sessions
 - Blood draw, height, weight, and resting pulse
 - Expressed support and received support were measured using scales
 - Expressed support: 5-item social support subscale from the Affectionate Communication Index
 - Statements related to each of the 3 types of affectionate communication
 - Rated frequency of engagement in each affectionate behavior
 - Received support: 12-item version of the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social support

Findings



H1: Received support is positively associated with immunocompetence

- Mixed support
- $\frac{3}{8}$ of the immunological outcomes were significantly correlated with perceived social support
 - % of the remaining outcomes were positively correlated with received support even though they did not achieve statistical significance

● **H3: Controlling for the benefits of received support, the expression of supportive affection is positively associated with immunocompetence**

- Partially supported
 - 4 immunological outcomes were correlated with expressed support while controlling for the benefits of received support
 - 2 of the remaining immune markers were positively associated with expressed support
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Findings

H2: The expression of supportive affection is positively associated with immunocompetence

- Mostly supported
- 6/8 immunological outcomes examined were significantly correlated with the expression of support



Implications

- Show socially supportive interactions can help us avoid or reduce our exposure to some types of negative health measures
- Explanations for only slight correlations with immune health
 - Concept-matching hypothesis: support is only effective when it meets recipients' perceived needs
 - If the desired support is esteem support but a sender offers physical support, the supportive act may be seen as unhelpful despite the senders' best intentions
 - Participants' reception of support was not in line with the levels of stress they experienced
 - Meaning, in situations where support levels are sufficient and stress levels are high, there is the greatest chance the receiver will feel perceived social support



Grandma or Grandpa?

- Who do you personally have a better nurturing relationship with?
 - Your grandmother or grandfather?



Effects of received grandmothers' affection on adult grandchildren's health behaviors



Purpose

- The purpose of this study is to further the understanding of the Affection Exchange Theory (AET) and find the value of this theory in relation to the well-being of family relationships.
- This study investigates AET in grandmother-grandchild relationships and how this affects the grandchild's well-being through the affection they are receiving from their grandmother.
 - affect health-related behaviors, including diet, exercise, substance abuse, and sleep.



How Was AET Used?

- This study uses the Affection Exchange Theory to investigate the grandmother-grandchild relationship, and the reason for this is because AET states that receiving affection can lead to positive health outcomes.
 - AET is grounded on the principle that humans exchange affection to be able to achieve survival and procreation.
 - AET in this study is used to understand the grandmother-grandchild relationship in terms of love and esteem, caring, memories and humor, and celebratory affection.



Hypotheses

H1: Received affection from grandmothers (i.e., love and esteem, caring, memories and humor, and celebratory) is positively related to grandchildren's reports of their dietary behaviors.

H2: Received affection from grandmothers (i.e., love and esteem, caring, memories and humor, and celebratory) is positively related to grandchildren's reports of their exercise behaviors.

H3: Received affection from grandmothers (i.e., love and esteem, caring, memories and humor, and celebratory) is inversely related to grandchildren's reports of their substance abuse behaviors.

H4: Received affection from grandmothers (i.e., love and esteem, caring, memories and humor, and celebratory) is positively related to grandchildren's reports of their sleep habit behaviors.



● **Participants:**

- **229 students from a large Western university in the United States that participated in the study**
- **Average age of 19**
- **The nature of their perceived relationship with their grandmother was identified as 82.5% biological and 17.5% non-biological.**
- **Ethnic Background**
 - **18.8% European-American,**
 - **6.1% African-American**
 - **2.6% Native-American**
 - **16.6% Asian-American**
 - **44.5% Hispanic-American**
 - **11.4% Other**



Method

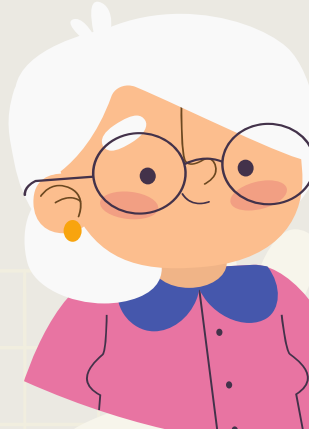
- **Quantitative Research Study**

- **They used a Likert scale and used a wide range of items depending on what they were measuring at the time.**
 - **Likert scale measured received affection, health behaviors, diet, exercise, substance abuse, and sleep.**
 - **They also relied on self-report surveys that were conducted online via the use of Qualtrics..**
 - **used SPSS to calculate Cronbach's alpha reliability values.**
 - **In the end, they did multiple regression analysis to find if there was a relation or not depending on the area that they were studying at that point**



Data

- **The data was analyzed by correlation analysis to determine how strong the relationships were and if there was high internal reliability.**
 - **If there were a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, then it would demonstrate that AET does, in fact, have an influence on the outcome, whether it be health, sleep, substance abuse, etc.**
 - **They also used p-value, which, if it was below .05, then there was a statistical difference.**
 - **Still, if the p-value was above this criteria, then this would indicate nonsignificant findings.**



Findings



H1



Received affection from grandmothers did positively relate to grandchildren's reports of their dietary behaviors

H2



Received affection from grandmothers positively affected grandchildren's reports of exercise behaviors.

H3

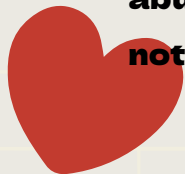


Received affection did not influence their grandchildren in reports of substance abuse, they found that this hypothesis was not supported.

H4



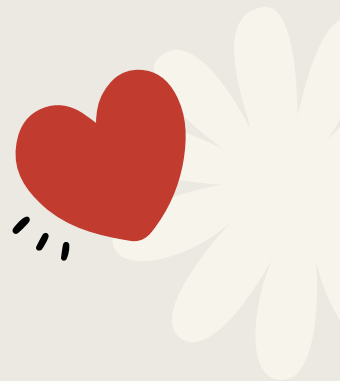
Received affection from grandmothers was positively related to sleep habit behaviors.



Implications

- **Demonstrated that the AET provided the framework to address the aim of this study which explained the relationship between grandmothers and grandchildren and how this affected the grandchild's individual health.**
- **Reinforces that receiving forms of the AET can help a person live a more healthy and happy life.**
- **This study ultimately did demonstrate that grandparents' affection correlated with the mental health of their grandchildren which promoted more healthy decision-making in their daily lives.**





Application



5 Love Languages

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1. Words of Affirmation
 2. Physical Touch
 3. Receiving Gifts
 4. Quality Time
 5. Acts of Service

Highlight different forms of affectionate communication behaviors, like Floyd and Morman's tripartite model of affectionate communication (verbal communication, direct nonverbal communication, & indirect nonverbal communication)

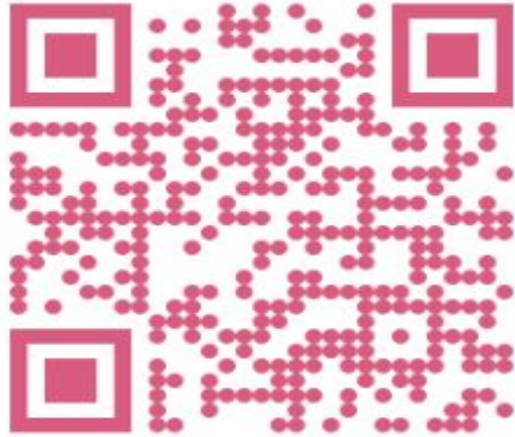




How to Improve Your Relationship With the 5 Love Languages



SCAN ME





Discussion Questions



- **What were your results? What was your top love language?**
 - **Do you agree/disagree? Why?**
- **Considering the support-matching hypothesis and affection exchange theory, why are love languages so important?**
- **Can you think of a relationship (romantic/friendship/familial) where your love language differs from the other person?**
 - **How might that OR has that affected your relationship (viability and procreative success)?**
 - **The sense of support you feel?**



Thank You!

