

HOPE AND SOCIAL SUPPORT: WHAT TYPES OF PARENT, PEER, AND TEACHER
SUPPORT MATTER TO EARLY ADOLESCENT FEMALES AND MALES?

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

In the past decade, researchers in psychology have paid increased attention to identifying psychological qualities in individuals that indicate positive mental health and flourishing. Hope has been proposed to be one of these qualities (Day, Hanson, Maltby, Proctor, & Wood, 2010; Marques, & Lopez, 2014). The majority of the hope literature has concentrated on the outcomes of differing levels of hope, but has not thoroughly examined the antecedents of hope differences. The current study provides a unique investigation of hope that looks at hypothesized antecedents of positive hope development in adolescents. For example, this study looks at the relationships among gender, social support, and hope, providing a more nuanced understanding of the development of individual differences among hope in early adolescents. The results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses revealed that after controlling for socioeconomic status, all three sources (parent, teacher, peer) of support contributed unique variance to adolescents' hope levels. More specifically, parent social support showed the largest contribution to the explained variance. Additionally, the findings revealed that parent emotional, informational, and instrument support, teacher emotional and informational support, and peer emotional and instrumental support were all uniquely related to hope in adolescents, with emotional support contributing the most, unique variation to the explanation of hope difference among this age group. The findings of this study did not demonstrate evidence of gender playing a moderating role in the relationship between hope and the sources of social support or the types within each source of social support. Thus, the nature and magnitude of the relationships between the sources and types of social support and hope generalized across both gender groups. Implications of the results of the study are discussed.