Attuned autonomy support and internalisation of social norms: Results from an exploratory study

(Simões, Calheiros, Alarcão, Silva, & Santos, 2016)
1. Contextualization
2. The notion of attuned social support
3. The study
4. Implications
5. Conclusions
1. Contextualization
SOCIAL NETWORK

SOCIAL CAPITAL

MEDIATION

ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

MULTIPLE SOCIAL SUPPORT

PARENTAL (IN)CONSISTENCIES

SOCIAL BONDS
2. The notion of attuned social support
“The degree or type of attunement, integration, or consistency of perceptions regarding different formal and/or informal sources of support co-occurring within personal social networks”.

(Simões, Calheiros, & Alarcão, submitted)
### ATTUNED SOCIAL SUPPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIMENSIONS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE OR TYPE</td>
<td>Level of attunement between support sources (high/low consistency); type of attunement (relatedness, autonomy, or competence support).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOURCES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT</td>
<td>(In)formal, but preferably from the same type (comparisons between persons or groups)</td>
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<td>NATURE</td>
<td>Perceived social support (as opposed to enacted or tangible social support)</td>
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</table>
2. The notion of attuned social support

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AN ATTUNED SOCIAL SUPPORT PERSPECTIVE FOR MENTORING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE QUALITY
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GREATER DISCUSSION OF MENTORING AS A RELATIONSHIP “IN BETWEEN”
2. The notion of attuned social support

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MENTORING
COUNSELING
PARENTING
2. The notion of attuned social support

GREATER DISCUSSION OF MENTORING AS A RELATIONSHIP “IN BETWEEN”
2. The notion of attuned social support

GREATER DISCUSSION OF MENTORING AS A RELATIONSHIP “IN BETWEEN”

(C goldner & Mayseless, 2008)
2. The notion of attuned social support

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AN ATTUNED SOCIAL SUPPORT PERSPECTIVE FOR MENTORING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE QUALITY

GREATER DISCUSSION OF MENTORING AS A RELATIONSHIP “IN BETWEEN”

EFFECTIVELY TESTING AN ADDITIVE MODEL IN THE YOUTH MENTORING FIELD OF INQUIRY
Central question: do individual supportive relationships have incremental effects on personal outcomes (additive model) or does one highly supportive relationship suffices to foster positive outcomes, in general (threshold model)?

(Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Guay et al., 2013; Laursen & Mooney, 2008)
2. The notion of attuned social support

CONTRIBUTIONS OF AN ATTUNED SOCIAL SUPPORT PERSPECTIVE FOR MENTORING RESEARCH AND PRACTICE QUALITY

GREATER DISCUSSION OF MENTORING AS A RELATIONSHIP “IN BETWEEN”

EFFECTIVELY TESTING AN ADDITIVE MODEL IN THE YOUTH MENTORING FIELD OF INQUIRY

TESTING DEVELOPMENTALLY RELEVANT ADDITIVE EFFECTS FOR ADOLESCENTS
2. The notion of attuned social support
3. The study
3. The study

ATTUNED AUTONOMY SUPPORT

The parent seen as more interventive in terms of behavioral issues
3. The study

ATTUNED AUTONOMY SUPPORT

- The parent seen as more interventive in terms of behavioral issues
- The most important teacher in relation to behavioral issues
3. The study

**ATTUNED AUTONOMY SUPPORT**

- The parent seen as more interventive in terms of behavioral issues
- The most important teacher in relation to behavioral issues
- Natural mentor
3. The study

Research goal

- To compare the effects of high levels of attuned autonomy social support with the effects of intermediate and low levels of attuned autonomy support on four indicators of the internalization of social norms:
  - Self-regulation
  - Prosocial behavior
  - Antisocial behavior
  - Substance use (Alcohol use/substance use intention in general)
Research hypothesis

- Compared to adolescents’ depicting intermediate or low levels of atuned autonomy support, the participants showing higher levels of perceived attuned autonomy social support will denote:
  - Lower levels of antisocial behavior
  - Higher levels of prosocial behavior
  - Higher levels of self-regulation
  - Lower levels of substance use (alcohol use/substance use intention in general)
Participants

- 864 adolescents drawn from a larger sample ($n = 1419$)
- Aged 12-17 years old ($M = 12.32; DP = 1.05$)
- 54.2% female
- 30.2% had a record of at least one school retention
- 76.1% of their fathers and 73.7% of the mothers had concluded high-school or lower school levels
3. The study

**Instruments**

- Social network map (Sluzki, 1996)
- Basic Needs Satisfaction in General Scale (autonomy support subscale) (Sousa et al., 2012)
- Youth Self-Report (antisocial behavior) (Achenbach, 1991; Gonçalves, Dias & Machado, 2015);
- Prosocial Tendencies Measure-Revised (PTM-R) (Carlo et al., 2003; portuguese version: Simões & Calheiros, 2016);
- Abbreviated Dysregulation Inventory (ADI) (Mezznich et al., 2001; portuguese version: Motta et al., in press);
- Substance use intention inventory (Johnson, 2002; portuguese version: Simões, in press).
Procedures

• The study was approved by the Ethics committee of the University Institute of Lisbon, by the educational department of the region where the study took place and by all school boards invited to participate in the research;
• Informed consent was obtained from the participants’ legal representatives and from the participants when data was collected;
• Collective administration of the study protocol in the Citizenship class;
• In average, classes included 20 participants.
Results

Cluster 1: low attuned autonomy support (n = 171; 19.8%)

Cluster 2: intermediate attuned autonomy support (n = 297; 34.4%)

Cluster 3: high attuned autonomy support (n = 398; 45.8%)
### Results - Ordinal regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Antissocial behavior</th>
<th>Prosocial behavior</th>
<th>Self-regulation</th>
<th>Alchool use</th>
<th>Substance use intention</th>
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<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>0.25 (0.10)</td>
<td>6.24*</td>
<td>-0.48 (0.09)</td>
<td>27.17*</td>
<td>-0.67 (0.16)</td>
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<td>0.34 (0.16)</td>
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<td>0.27 (0.14)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>0.34 (0.08)</td>
<td>16.50**</td>
<td>-0.23 (0.08)</td>
<td>8.64**</td>
<td>-0.68 (0.13)</td>
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<td>0.43 (0.14)</td>
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<td>0.38 (0.12)</td>
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<td>C3</td>
<td>0$^a$</td>
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$^a$ Cluster 3 (high attuned social support) is the reference group

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$
4. Implications
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

• Formal social interventions (mentoring, parental education, interventions aimed at improving children and youth social capital, child and youth protection services) should start incorporating the issue of key supports attunement (e.g. communication, coordination) to improve the internalisation of social norms.

• The same perspective may be relevant in health and educational-related areas.

• This perspective strengthens the need to address (in)consistencies between mentors and key supports (e.g. parents and teachers) in formal mentoring programs to improve mentoring quality (Simões & Alarcão, 2014; Spencer et al., 2011).
4. Implications

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

• Further analyses within an attuned social support framework are required to:
  - Compare the effects of (in)consistent perceptions of attuned social support on outcomes of interest;
  - Analyse the impact of attuned social support in general as well as of its different types (relatedness, autonomy and competence support) on relevant indicators of children and youth health, social development, and education.
• Research within the attuned social support framework must balance the focus on its impact with an analysis of the processes through which parents, teachers, mentors and other significant persons coordinate their support.
LIMITATIONS

• Cross-sectional nature of the study

• The research did not involve parents, teachers, or mentors as sources of information

• The participants’ age distribution
5. Conclusions
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• Adolescents’ perspectives of greater autonomy support attunement between the parent perceived as more involved in behavior issues, the most important teacher in that matter and a natural mentor contributes to a greater internalisation of social norms.

• The expansion of an attuned social support perspective seems a promising avenue to fully understand the conditions of optimal multiple social support.

• Mentoring may greatly benefit from this perspective, given its complex nature as an “in between” type of relationship, and its potential additive power for adolescents’ adjustment.
5. Conclusions
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