
Perceived Social Support from Teammates: Direct and Stress-Buffering Effects on Self-Confidence

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Abstract

In this study, we examined whether the perceived support available from teammates predicted levels of self-confidence. Four dimensions of support were examined: emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible. The sample consisted of 152 university athletes (74 females, 78 males) with a mean age of 20.1 years ($SD = 1.4$). Participants completed measures of perceived support, stressors, and self-confidence at the training session before an important match. Moderated hierarchical regression analyses revealed that all four dimensions of support had direct effects on self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .13 - .17$, $ps < .01$), with support positively predicting self-confidence. Perceived emotional ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $p < .05$), esteem ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $p < .05$), and informational ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, $p < .05$) support also had stress-buffering effects on self-confidence. The findings suggest that although university athletes perceived different levels of emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support to be available from their teammates, all four dimensions of support positively predicted self-confidence.

Keywords: Social support, stress-buffering, self-confidence.
Perceived Social Support from Teammates: Direct and Stress-Buffering Effects on Self-Confidence

Previous research has implicated social support in relation to a range of important aspects in sport, such as dealing with competitive stress (Crocker, 1992), slumps in performance (Madden, Kirkby, & McDonald, 1989), burn-out (Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1996), and recovery from injury (Smith, Smoll, & Ptacek, 1990). Social support has also been associated with processes underpinning performance (Rees & Hardy, 2004) and performance outcome (Rees, Hardy & Freeman, 2007). Athletes have therefore been encouraged to use social support (Richman, Hardy, Rosenfeld, & Callanan, 1989), and Rosenfeld and Richman (1997) argued that support should be developed within the team-building process. However, Bianco (2001) noted that many studies have reported on the cumulative impact of various support providers without specifying the providers of support. There is therefore limited empirical evidence regarding the levels of social support available from specific providers such as teammates and whether this support is associated with beneficial outcomes including higher self-confidence.

Social support is a complex construct (Bianco & Eklund, 2001), encompassing structural and functional aspects of interpersonal relationships (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Functional aspects refer to the particular functions served by interpersonal relationships (Cohen, 1988). Functional support may be divided into perceived availability of support (perceived support) or support received (received support). Perceived and received support typically share only 12% common variance (e.g., Haber, Cohen, Lucas, & Baltes, 2007) and may have different relationships with outcomes including self-confidence (Barrera, 1986; Lakey & Cohen, 2000; Rees & Freeman, 2007). Researchers (e.g., Holt & Hoar, 2006) have therefore argued that authors need to be clear in their conceptualisation and measurement of social support function. The present study focuses
on perceived support. Empirical evidence in social psychology has found that perceived support is more consistently related to outcome variables than received support (e.g., Goodwin, Costa, & Adonu, 2004; Helgeson, 1993; Wethington & Kessler, 1986). For example, in sport psychology, perceived support has been positively associated with self-confidence (Rees & Freeman, 2007), performance outcome (Freeman & Rees, 2008), and performance-related factors in tennis (e.g., Rees & Hardy, 2004).

Although different dimensions of perceived support have been proposed, Cutrona and Russell (1990) noted that there appears to be fundamental agreement on emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible dimensions of support. These four dimensions are congruent with those found by Rees and Hardy (2000), who conducted interviews with high-level sportspeople about their social support experiences. Although teammates, along with coaches, parents, and friends, are key providers of support, these network members may vary in the dimensions of support they provide (Rosenfeld, Richman, & Hardy, 1989). Whether a network member provides specific dimensions of support may depend on various factors such as the provider’s relationship with the recipient and if network members possess the specific knowledge and expertise that the support dimension requires (Rosenfeld & Richman, 1997; Rosenfeld et al., 1989).

Bianco (2001) found that the teammates of injured skiers provided emotional, informational, and tangible support. Corbillon, Crossman, and Jamieson (2008) found that emotional support was the dimension most available from teammates and tangible support was the least available. Rosenfeld et al. (1989) found that teammates were key providers of esteem support (termed technical challenge in their study). Given the inconsistent findings in previous studies, further research is needed to understand the support available from teammates. However,
in addition to understanding the dimensions of support available, it may be important to identify
the effects of the support available from specific providers; this may help to develop effective
support interventions by highlighting which dimensions of support are beneficial and from
whom. In the present study, we examined the relationships between the support available from
teammates and self-confidence. Social support has been noted as an important source of self-
confidence (Hays, Maynard, Thomas, & Bowden, 2007; Vealey, Hayashi, Garner-Holman, &
Giacobbi, 1998), and recently emotional and esteem support were found to be positively
associated with self-confidence (Rees & Freeman, 2007). The relationship between self-
confidence and both informational and tangible support has not been examined.

The stress and coping theoretical perspective has been the principal framework used in
social support research. Within this perspective, social support is hypothesised to moderate the
relationship between stressful life events and outcomes such as self-confidence (Lakey & Cohen,
2000; Rees & Freeman, 2007). Specifically, support is hypothesised to reduce (buffer) the
detrimental effect of stressful events (Cohen, Gottlieb, & Underwood, 2000; Cohen & Wills,
1985). The belief that support is available is hypothesised to help redefine the potential threat of
a situation, bolster an individual’s perceived ability to cope, or alter the affective, physiological,
or behavioural response (Cohen et al., 2000). Perceived support may also have direct effects on
health and performance-related outcomes (Cohen et al., 2000; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Rees &
Freeman, 2007). Because evidence of direct effects is provided from the demonstration of a
statistical main effect of support on health and performance-related outcomes, direct effects are
also referred to as main effects (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Holt & Hoar, 2006). An examination of
direct and stress-buffering effects could help to identify the conditions under which the support
available from teammates may benefit athletes. Stress-buffering effects would imply that support
primarily predicts self-confidence only for individuals under high levels of stress. Direct effects
would imply that support predicts self-confidence, irrespective of levels of stress.

In light of the preceding discussion, the purpose of this study was to examine the levels
of perceived support available from teammates and whether this support predicted self-
confidence. In order to examine potential stress-buffering effects of perceived support from
teammates, four performance-related stressors were selected from the literature on sources of
stress in sport: high performance expectations from others, injury concerns, stamina/fitness
concerns, and doubts about current form (e.g., Gould, Jackson, & Finch, 1993; Noblet & Gifford,
2002; Scanlan, Stein, & Ravizza, 1991). These stressors were chosen for their relevance to
university athletes and their potential to apply to a range of team sports. Moderated hierarchical
regression analysis was used to determine if perceived support exerted direct effects and/or
stress-buffering effects on self-confidence. Stress-buffering was tested using a stressors x
perceived support interaction (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Significant increments in explained
variance due to this interaction, over and above the direct effects of the stressors and perceived
support would suggest that perceived support moderates the effect of stressors on self-confidence
(Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Previous research has found that perceived support may have both direct and stress-
buffering effects on self-confidence (Rees & Freeman, 2007) and other performance-related
factors in tennis (e.g., Rees & Hardy, 2004). We therefore hypothesised that perceived
emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support would directly predict self-confidence;
specifically, higher levels of support would predict higher levels of self-confidence, irrespective
of levels of stressors. Further, we hypothesised that perceived emotional, esteem, informational,
and tangible support would also have stress-buffering effects on self-confidence; specifically, the
detrimental relationship between the performance-related stressors and self-confidence would be reduced for those with high perceived support compared to those with low perceived support.

Method

Participants

Participants were 152 university athletes (74 females, 78 males), mean age 20.1 years (SD = 1.4). All participants were involved in the knockout stages of the British Universities Sports Association (BUSA) competition and competed in football (n = 37), hockey (n = 44), netball (n = 31), or rugby (n = 40).

Procedures

The study was approved by an institutional ethics review committee, and participants provided informed consent. Recruitment of participants was opportunistic (convenience sample) at the final training session prior to the first round of the knockout stages of the BUSA competition. Participants completed measures of perceived support, stressors, and self-confidence in relation to the upcoming match. The presentation of measures was systematically rotated to minimise order effects.

Measures

Perceived support. Perceived support was assessed using a 16-item self-report questionnaire, which was adapted from a questionnaire used by Freeman and Rees (2008). As Freeman and Rees examined social support in golfers, some of the items were replaced in the present study. This followed two recommendations from the social support literature: a) social support measures should be relevant to the situational context in which they are being used; and b) social support researchers should write new items to capture specific aspects of the support needs of the target population (Bianco & Eklund, 2001; House & Kahn, 1985; Wills & Shinar,
All the items were derived from statements made by high-level sportspeople about their social support experiences (Rees & Hardy, 2000), and represented dimensions of emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support. Prior to data collection, both authors scrutinised the items making up each scale for their relevance to university athletes across a range of team sports. All the items (and all other items in this study) were also scrutinised for relevance and representativeness by two hockey players, two footballers, one rugby player, and one netballer. All the items were deemed relevant and appropriate for athletes in team sports. The items were preceded by a generic stem that asked, “To what extent do you have someone within your team . . .,” with participants responding on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot). Sample items included “who helps take your mind off things” (emotional), “who encourages you” (esteem), “who gives you advice about coping with competitive situations” (informational), and “who helps you organise and plan your training” (tangible). The factor structure of the perceived support measure was examined using confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). The sequential model testing approach recommended by Jöreskog (1993) was used. All the single-factor and two-factor models revealed acceptable fits. The four-factor model also revealed a good fit ($\chi^2(98) = 150.89, p = .00; \text{RMSEA} = .06; \text{SRMR} = .06; \text{CFI} = .95; \text{NNFI} = .93$). Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficients for the four subscales ranged from .72 to .85.

Stressors. Stressors were measured by way of four examples drawn from the literature on sources of stress in sport: high performance expectations from others, injury concerns, stamina/fitness concerns, and doubts about current form (e.g., Gould et al., 1993; Noblet & Gifford, 2002; Scanlan et al., 1991). These stressors were chosen for their relevance to university athletes and their potential to apply to a range of team sports. The measure asked, “Please
indicate to what extent you have encountered these situations over the past two weeks . . . ,” with participants responding on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a lot). The four items were summed to create a total score. This served to reduce the number of models to be tested and aided clarity.

**Self-Confidence.** Self-confidence was assessed using the scale from the revised version of the Competitive State Anxiety Inventory-2 (CSAI-2R) (Cox, Martens, & Russell, 2003). Cox et al. recommended researchers use the CSAI-2R instead of the CSAI-2 (Martens, Burton, Vealey, Bump, & Smith, 1990), and the self-confidence scale of the CSAI-2R has been used in previous research into social support and self-confidence (Rees & Freeman, 2007). The self-confidence scale in the CSAI-2R has five items, with participants responding on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much so) to statements about how confident they felt about their upcoming match. Sample items included “I’m confident I can meet the challenge” and “I’m confident about performing well.” Confirmatory factor analysis of the one-factor model using the data in this study revealed a good fit ($\chi^2(5) = 5.64, p = .34; \text{RMSEA} = .03; \text{SRMR} = .02; \text{CFI} = 1.00; \text{NNFI} = 1.00$). Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficient for the scale in this study was .87.

**Analyses**

The direct and stress-buffering effects of perceived support on self-confidence were tested using moderated hierarchical regression analyses (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Jaccard, Turrisi, & Wan, 1990). The independent variables were entered in a three step process. The stressors score was entered at step 1, perceived support was entered at step 2, and the product term (stressors*perceived support) was entered at step 3. The significance of increments in explained variance in self-confidence at each step, as well as the sign of the
regression coefficients, was assessed. In all the models the independent variables were standardised before the product term was created (Jaccard et al., 1990). The unstandardised solution was then examined. Significant interactions were plotted following the guidelines of Aiken and West (1991). Values for perceived support of -1, 0, and +1 were substituted into the regression equations. The subsequent regression lines were plotted to depict the relationship between stressors and self-confidence at low (1 SD below mean), moderate (mean), and high (1 SD above mean) levels of perceived support. Following the recommendation of Aiken and West (1991), the slopes of the regression lines were examined to determine at which levels of perceived support the relationships between stressors and self-confidence significantly differed from zero. This examination of the slopes involved calculating the standard errors of the slopes of the regression lines using values from the variance-covariance matrix of the regression coefficients. The significance of the slopes was assessed by their t values, which were calculated by dividing the value of the slope by its standard error. An alpha level of 0.05 (t = 1.96) was used for all tests.

Results

Means and standard deviations for all variables are displayed in Table 1. The means suggest that participants perceived esteem support (M = 3.37, SD = 0.90) to be the most available dimension from their teammates. Informational (M = 3.10, SD = 0.79) and tangible support (M = 3.10, SD = 0.82) were perceived to be the least available dimensions. Results from the moderated hierarchical regression analyses are shown in Table 2.

**Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analyses**

**Stressors and perceived emotional support upon self-confidence.** There was a significant direct effect for stressors upon self-confidence ($R^2 = .09$, $b = -.12$, $p < .05$), with higher levels of
stressors predicting lower levels of self-confidence. Over and above the effect of stressors, there was a significant direct effect for perceived emotional support upon self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .17$, $b = .28$, $p < .01$), with higher levels of perceived emotional support predicting higher levels of self-confidence. There was a significant interaction of stressors and perceived emotional support upon self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, $b = .13$, $p < .05$). The plot of the stressors and perceived emotional support interaction is displayed in Figure 1. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence was significantly different from zero at low ($t = -4.60$, $p < .01$) and moderate ($t = -2.64$, $p < .01$) levels of perceived emotional support, but not at high levels ($t = 0.16$, $p > .05$).

Specifically, the relationship between stressors and self-confidence significantly differed from zero at levels of perceived emotional support less than .22 standard deviations above the mean.

The analyses provide evidence that the interaction was consistent with a stress-buffering explanation: The negative relationship between stressors and self-confidence was smaller for those with high levels of perceived emotional support compared to those with low levels of perceived emotional support.

Stressors and perceived esteem support upon self-confidence. There was a significant direct effect for stressors upon self-confidence ($R^2 = .09$, $b = -.09$, $p < .05$), with higher levels of stressors predicting lower levels of self-confidence. There was a significant direct effect for perceived esteem support upon self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .26$, $b = .34$, $p < .01$), with higher levels of perceived esteem support predicting higher levels of self-confidence. There was a significant interaction of stressors and perceived esteem support upon self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, $b = .08$, $p < .05$). The plot of the stressors and perceived esteem support interaction is displayed in Figure 2. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence was significantly different from zero at low ($t = -3.05$, $p < .01$) and moderate ($t = -2.06$, $p < .05$) levels of perceived esteem support, but
not at high levels ($t = -0.31, p > .05$). Specifically, the relationship between stressors and self-confidence significantly differed from zero at levels of perceived esteem support less than .05 standard deviations above the mean. The analyses provide evidence that the interaction was consistent with a stress-buffering explanation: The negative relationship between stressors and self-confidence was smaller for those with high levels of perceived esteem support compared to those with low levels of perceived esteem support.

**Stressors and perceived informational support upon self-confidence.** The direct effect for stressors upon self-confidence was significant ($R^2 = .09, b = -.15, p < .01$). The direct effect for perceived informational support upon self-confidence was also significant ($\Delta R^2 = .17, b = .29, p < .01$), with higher levels of perceived informational support predicting higher levels of self-confidence. There was a significant interaction of stressors and perceived informational support upon self-confidence ($\Delta R^2 = .03, b = .09, p < .05$). The plot of the stressors and perceived informational support interaction is displayed in Figure 3. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence was significantly different from zero at low ($t = -3.75, p < .01$) and moderate ($t = -3.24, p < .05$) levels of perceived informational support, but not at high levels ($t = -.84, p > .05$). Specifically, the relationship between stressors and self-confidence significantly differed from zero at levels of perceived informational support less than .50 standard deviations above the mean. The analyses provide evidence that the interaction was consistent with a stress-buffering explanation: The negative relationship between stressors and self-confidence was smaller for those with high levels of perceived informational support compared to those with low levels of perceived informational support.

**Stressors and perceived tangible support upon self-confidence.** The direct effect for stressors upon self-confidence was significant ($R^2 = .09, b = -.14, p < .01$). The direct effect for
perceived tangible support upon self-confidence was also significant ($\Delta R^2 = .13$, $b = .25$, $p < .01$). The effect of the interaction of stressors and perceived tangible support upon self-confidence was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, $b = .04$, $p > .05$). The non-significant interaction suggests that perceived tangible support did not buffer the detrimental effect of stressors on self-confidence.

Discussion

In this study, esteem support was the dimension of support perceived to be most available from teammates followed by emotional support. Previous research has also found that teammates are valuable sources of esteem (Rosenfeld et al., 1989) and emotional (Corbillon et al., 2008) support. Whether a network member provides specific dimensions of support may depend on various factors such as the provider’s relationship with the recipient and if the dimension of support requires specific knowledge and expertise that network members may not possess (Rosenfeld & Richman, 1997; Rosenfeld et al., 1989). Emotional and esteem support may be most likely to come from those people to whom one feels closest (Dakof & Taylor, 1990). The close bonds that may facilitate the availability of emotional and esteem support from teammates were evident in a study by Udry, Gould, Bridges, and Tuffey (1997), with skiers describing their teammates as “like family to me” (p. 379). It has been argued that informational support and practical assistance may require the provider to possess specific knowledge and expertise (Gottlieb, 2000; Hardy & Crace, 1993; Martin, Davis, Baron, Suls, & Blanchard, 1994). The lower levels of informational and tangible support found in the present study might be due to teammates lacking the knowledge and expertise required to be considered providers of these dimensions of support. Further, informational and tangible support might be perceived to be available from other providers, such as coaches and medical personnel (Bianco, 2001).
Although the individuals in this study reported perceiving different levels of emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support to be available from teammates, all four dimensions of support predicted self-confidence. The findings suggest that high levels of perceived emotional, esteem, and informational support from teammates may have buffered the detrimental effect of performance-related stressors on self-confidence. At low and moderate levels of support, stressors negatively predicted self-confidence. However, at high levels of support, stressors did not significantly predict self-confidence. The findings add to previous literature on the buffering effects of perceived support (e.g., Rees & Freeman, 2007; Rees & Hardy, 2004), but enhance understanding of the effects of support in different contexts and on a different outcome variable. Rees and Hardy (2004) found that perceived emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support buffered the detrimental effects of stressors on flow and feeling flat in a sample of high-level tennis players. Rees and Freeman (2007) found that perceived emotional and esteem support buffered the detrimental effect of stressors on self-confidence in athletes from a range of sports. However, these previous studies assessed the cumulative impact of various support providers and failed to specify the providers of support. The present study focused on the support available from teammates. Identifying the effects of support available from specific providers may help in the development of effective support interventions by highlighting which dimensions of support are beneficial and from whom. It has been argued that the effectiveness of social support may depend on similarities between the provider and recipient (Suitor, Pillemar, & Keeton, 1995). As teammates may encounter similar demands and situations, they may be able to offer empathy and understand which dimension of support may be helpful (Suitor et al., 1995; Thoits, 1986).
In addition to the stress-buffering effects, all four dimensions of support were found to have direct effects on self-confidence. That is, high levels of emotional, esteem, informational, and tangible support predicted higher levels of self-confidence. The findings are consistent with previous literature that has found perceived support can exert both stress-buffering and direct effects on outcomes, including performance-related factors (e.g., Rees & Hardy, 2004), performance outcome (e.g., Freeman & Rees, 2008), and self-confidence (Rees & Freeman, 2007). The significant direct effects for perceived support suggest that support may have a direct effect on self-confidence, irrespective of the stressors that individuals encounter. However, future research is required to identify why perceived support is associated with beneficial effects on self-confidence, because the specific mechanisms through which perceived support operates remain poorly understood (Lakey & Cohen, 2000; Saltzman & Holahan, 2002). Research into the relationship between social support and another confidence-related construct might offer an indication of potential mediators of the perceived support and self-confidence relationship. Schwarzer and Knoll (2007) proposed various mediators that may explain the relationship between social support and self-efficacy, which has been defined as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). These potential mediators were linked to sources of efficacy expectations, such as vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion. Although self-efficacy represents a more situation-specific view of confidence than was adopted in the present study, future research could examine if the relationship between perceived support and self-confidence is mediated by sources of self-confidence. For example, the availability of tangible support in the form of material assistance, practical help, and the setting of training sessions might increase self-confidence via influencing athletes’ preparation or helping them to feel more comfortable in a competitive environment.
Both physical/mental preparation and environmental comfort have been noted as important sources of self-confidence (Vealey et al., 1998).

The findings of this study have important applied implications. Overall, the positive relationship between all four dimensions of support and self-confidence suggests that teams should be encouraged to develop perceived social support. Rosenfeld and Richman (1997) provided a number of suggestions that may help teams to recognise the importance of support and develop a supportive environment. For example, educating teams on the benefits of support, encouraging individuals to be proactive in seeking and developing support, and providing communication training and opportunities for support may all be useful strategies. The stress-buffering effects imply that perceived emotional, esteem, and informational support may be particularly important for individuals encountering high levels of performance-related stressors.

The simple slopes analyses provide an indication of the level of support that may be necessary for stress-buffering effects. Individuals with levels of perceived emotional support greater than .22 standard deviations above the mean were protected against the negative relationship between stressors and self-confidence. Similarly, individuals with levels of esteem support and informational support greater than .05 and .50 standard deviations above the mean respectively were protected against the negative relationship between stressors and self-confidence.

Some potential limitations of the present study should be noted. First, due to the correlational nature of the study, it is important to note that no causal relationships can be inferred from the data. For example, rather than perceived support leading to self-confidence, it may be that confident individuals take the initiative to cultivate supportive relationships (Schwarzer & Knoll, 2007). Second, Gardner, Cummings, Dunham, and Pierce (1998) noted that a major concern with self-report research is that any empirical demonstration of a relationship
between two variables can be attributed, at least in part, to shared method variance. Future research could consider manipulating social support under experimental conditions to help overcome both of these concerns. Third, the present study examined the relationship between perceived support and self-confidence within the context of specific performance-related stressors. Future research is required to identify if the perceived support available from teammates buffers the detrimental effect of other types of stressors on self-confidence and/or other outcomes. Finally, all the participants were competing in university teams. The similarity between teammates in this study may have influenced the level of support that was available. Indeed, perceived similarity has been noted as an important factor in determining recipients’ support perceptions (Neely et al., 2006). Future research could examine the levels of support available from teammates in non-university based teams to identify if the present findings generalise to other contexts.

In summary, although previous research has reported teammates as key support providers (Bianco, 2001; Corbillon et al., 2008; Rosenfeld et al., 1989), little empirical evidence has demonstrated that the support available from teammates predicted favourable outcomes. Overall the findings of this study demonstrate that the support available from teammates positively predicted self-confidence. It has been argued that support may be more effective from individuals with experience of similar situations (Suitor et al., 1995; Thoits, 1986), which might explain why the support available from teammates is associated with beneficial effects. As a result of their own experiences, teammates may be adept at recognising support needs and offering appropriate help and support to enhance self-confidence.
References


Perceived Social Support


Table 1

*Means and Standard Deviation of Stressors, Perceived Support, and Self-Confidence*

<table>
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<th>SD</th>
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<td>5. Perceived Tangible Support</td>
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<td>6. Self-Confidence</td>
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Table 2

*Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analyses: Effects of Stressors, Perceived Support, and Products upon Self-Confidence*

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<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
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<th>$P(F)b$</th>
<th>$b^c$</th>
<th>$p(t)d$</th>
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</tr>
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*Note.* $n = 152$. All variables standardised except for Product. Product formed from the two preceding (standardised) variables.

*aStepwise change in $R^2$. bProbability of $F$ for $\Delta R^2$. cUnstandardised regression coefficient in final equation. dProbability of $t$ for $b$.*
Figure Captions

*Figure 1.* Interaction of stressors and perceived emotional support upon self-confidence. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence at low (1 standard deviation below mean moderate (mean), and high (1 standard deviation above mean) levels of perceived emotional support.

*Figure 2.* Interaction of stressors and perceived esteem support upon self-confidence. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence at low (1 standard deviation below mean moderate (mean), and high (1 standard deviation above mean) levels of perceived esteem support.

*Figure 3.* Interaction of stressors and perceived informational support upon self-confidence. The relationship between stressors and self-confidence at low (1 standard deviation below mean moderate (mean), and high (1 standard deviation above mean) levels of perceived informational support.
Perceived Social Support

![Graph showing the relationship between stressors and self-confidence with different levels of social support.](image)