SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

Reference:
Sarason, I.G., Levine, H.M., Basham, R.B., et al. (1983). Assessing social support: The Social Support Questionnaire. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 44*, 127-139.

Description of Measure:

A 27-item questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of social support and satisfaction with that social support. Each item is a question that solicits a two-part answer: Part 1 asks participants to list all the people that fit the description of the question, and Part 2 asks participants to indicate how satisfied they are, in general, with these people.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:

Sarason, I. G., Sarason, B. R., Shearin, E. N., Pierce, G. R. (1987). A brief measure of social support: Practical and theoretical implications. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 4*, 497-510.

Two studies leading to the development of a short form of the Social Support Questionnaire (SSQ) are reported. In Study 1 three items selected for high correlations with the total score (SSQ3) were administered to 182 university students together with several personality measures. SSQ3 had acceptable test-retest reliability and correlations with personality variables similar to those of the SSQ. Internal reliability was marginal although acceptable for an instrument with so few items. Study 2 employed three sets of data in developing a six-item instrument (SSQ6). The SSQ6 had high internal reliability and correlated highly with the SSQ and similarly to it with personality variables. The research findings accompanying the development of the short form social support measure suggest that perceived social support in adults may be a reflection of early attachment experience.

Schaefer, C., Coyne, J. C., Lazarus, R. S. (1981). The health related functions of social support. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine, 4*, 381-406.

Social support research has been hampered by a lack of clarity both in the definitions of social support and in the conceptualization of its effects on health outcomes. The present study compared social network size and three types of perceived social support—tangible, emotional, and informational —in relation to stressful life events, psychological symptoms and morale, and physical health status in a sample of 100 persons 45–64 years old. Social network size was empirically separable from, though correlated with, perceived social support and had a weaker overall relationship to outcomes than did support. Low tangible support and emotional support, in addition to certain life events, were independently related to depression and negative morale; informational support was associated with positive morale. Neither social support nor stressful life events were associated with physical

health. It was concluded that social support research would benefit from attention to the multidimensionality of support and greater specificity in hypotheses about the relationship between types of support and adaptational outcomes.

Pierce, G. R., Sarason, I. G., & Sarason, B. R. (1991). General and relationship-based perceptions of social support: are two constructs better than one? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61*, 1028-1039.

Two hypotheses derived from a theory of perceived social support were investigated: (a) relationship-based perceptions of social support are distinct from general perceptions of support, and (b) measures of each construct contribute uniquely to the prediction of loneliness. Ninety-four male and 116 female undergraduates completed measures of loneliness and general perceived social support and the Quality of Relationships Inventory, a new instrument to assess relationship-based perceptions of social support, conflict, and depth in specific relationships. General and relationship-based perceptions of social support were found to be related, but empirically distinct, constructs. Relationship-based perceptions of support and conflict from mothers and friends each added to the prediction of loneliness after considering the contribution of general perceived social support. Implications of these findings for understanding the perceived social support construct are discussed.

Scale:

The SSQ instructions, Questionnaire Items, and Scoring Information is available at
http://web.psych.washington.edu/research/sarason/files/SocialSupportQuestionnaire.pdf