

Teachers' Autonomy Support and Students' Motivation and Intention of Preventing H1N1 Influenza

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Aims: Applying self-determination theory and the theory of planned behaviour to examine whether presenting H1N1 preventive message in an autonomy supportive manner would enhance students' sense of initiatives, intrinsic values, and behavioural adherence towards wearing facemask, as the way to prevent the spread of H1N1.

Introduction

■ According to a recent report from the World Health Organization (2010), H1N1 (Type A influenza) pandemic was found in 209 countries across the globe, resulting at least 147,000 deaths in 2009. Wearing facemask is an effective strategy for preventing the spread of the H1N1 in enclosed public spaces (World Health Organization, 2009).

■ This quasi-experiment examined the effects of University professors' autonomy support on students' motivation, social cognitive factors, and intention to wear facemasks in the lecture hall during a hypothetical H1N1 pandemic.

■ We tested the effects of manipulating students' perception of autonomy support on the components of self-determination theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB, Ajzen, 1985) regarding the prevention of H1N1 by wearing facemask. We applied theoretical integration between SDT and TPB (Hagger et al. 2009) as the central framework for the psychological mechanism.

Methods

Participants: 705 Chinese undergraduate students (M-age = 20.30, SD = 1.31; 269 male (38.16%))

Procedures: Participants were randomly divided into two groups and had the following procedures:

Group 1 (N = 362)

1. Autonomy Supportive Message
2. Questionnaire
3. Controlling Message

Group 2 (N = 343)

1. Controlling Message
2. Questionnaire
3. Autonomy Supportive Message

Materials:

Autonomy Supportive Message

- In a hypothetical scenario about H1N1 pandemic, your professor asked you to wear a facemask in the lecture hall in an autonomy supportive manner (e.g., care, support, rationale).

Controlling Message

- In the hypothetical scenario about H1N1 pandemic, your professor asked you to wear a facemask in the lecture hall in a controlling manner (e.g., pressure, punishment).

Questionnaire:

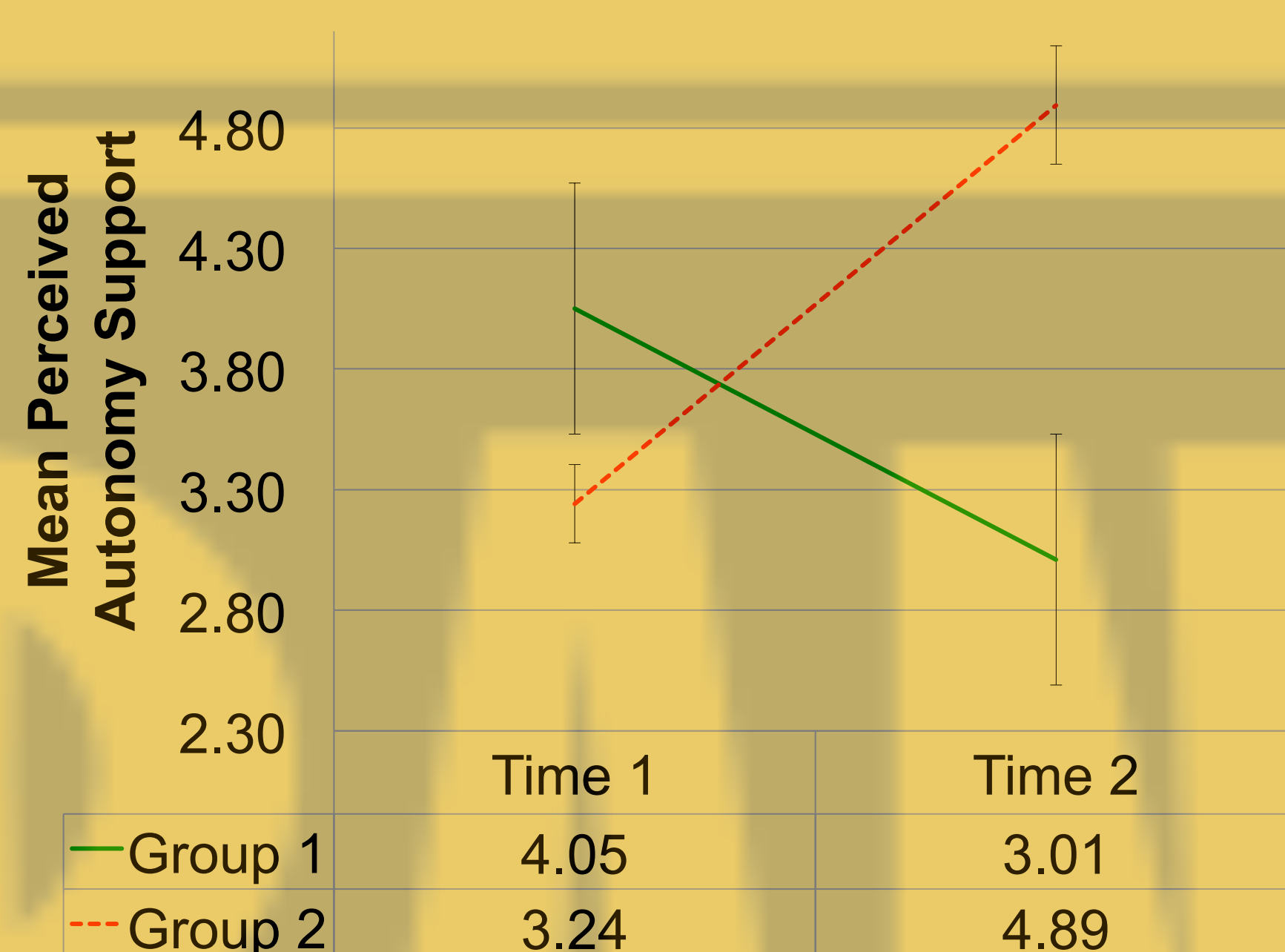
- Perceived Autonomy Support from Professors (HCCQ; Williams et al., 1996)
- Autonomous and Controlled Motivation (TSRQ; Levesque et al., 2007)
- Social Cognitive Variables (Ajzen, 2002)
- Control variables: Susceptibility, Severity, Knowledge, Flu

Results

1. Manipulation Check:

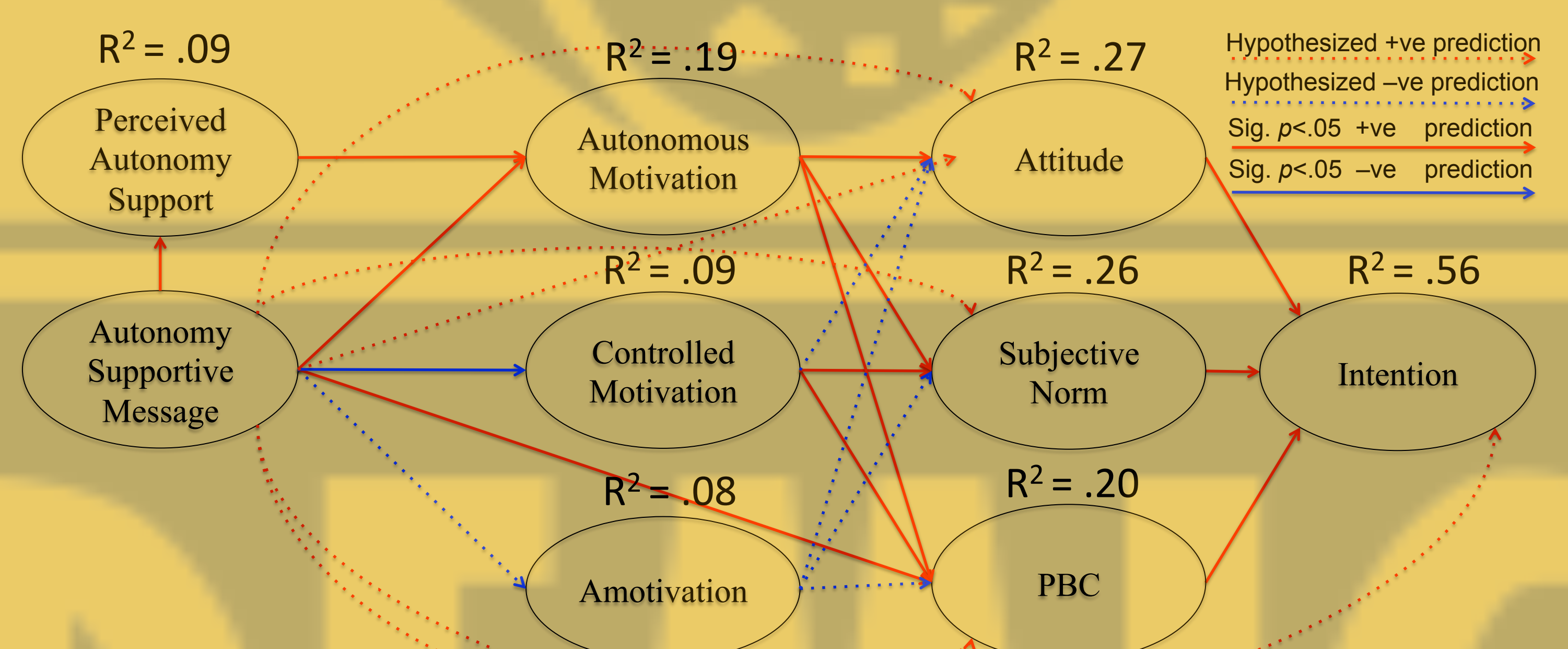
Two-Way Repeated Measures ANOVA

- Group ($F(1, 684) = 31.86, p < .001, \eta^2 = .05$)
- Time ($F(1, 684) = 18.23, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$)
- Group x Time ($F(1, 684) = 353.18, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$)



2. Effects of Autonomy Support on the SDTxTPB Model

Variance-based structural equation modeling with 5000 bootstraps



- Cronbach alphas (range = .72 to .93)
- Composite reliability scores (range = .95 to .84)
- AVEs (range = .59 to .75)
- Mean item-to-corresponding-factor loadings (range = .77 to .90)

Conclusions

- Students who received autonomy supportive message from their professors were more likely to adopt self-determined motivation for H1N1 prevention.
- Self-determined motivation was a positive predictor of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, and behavioural intention of wearing facemask in the lecture hall during a H1N1 pandemic.
- For the prevention of infectious diseases such as H1N1, health messages presented in an autonomy supportive style might be more effective than using controlling or punitive methods.