

May 29th, 10:45 AM - 11:15 AM

Multicultural youth in Canada: Comparing friendships and perceived social support

Samantha Daniel
University of Windsor

Julie Hakim-Larson
University of Windsor

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholar.uwindsor.ca/arabyouthsymp>



Part of the [Psychology Commons](#)

Samantha Daniel and Julie Hakim-Larson, "Multicultural youth in Canada: Comparing friendships and perceived social support" (May 29, 2013). *International Symposium on Arab Youth*. Paper 6.

http://scholar.uwindsor.ca/arabyouthsymp/conference_posters/conference_posters/6

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Psychology at Scholarship at UWindsor. It has been accepted for inclusion in International Symposium on Arab Youth by an authorized administrator of Scholarship at UWindsor. For more information, please contact scholarship@uwindsor.ca.

Multicultural Youth in Canada: Comparing Friendships and Perceived Social Support

Samantha Daniel, B.A., and Julie Hakim-Larson, Ph.D.

Department of Psychology, University of Windsor



Abstract

There is paucity of research examining the differences between friendships among multicultural youth. Specifically, youth of Arab, East Asian, South Asian, and European descent were examined in this study because these groups are among the largest ethnic groups in Canada and are diverse for the purpose of comparison. Previous researchers have assessed differences between immigrant generations when comparing same- and cross-ethnicity friendships (e.g., Harker, 2001), whereas the effect of cultural group has been neglected. Thus, examination of same- and cross-ethnicity friendships was largely exploratory. Researchers in the past have theorized that individuals of Arab descent may be more likely to have an overlap between family and friends (Abu-Laban & Abu-Laban, 1999). Thus, we hypothesized that Arab youth may be more likely to have related friends (i.e., to identify friends that also happen to be related to them). The results of this study may have implications for improving our understanding of the social support networks of immigrant youth.

Objective

- The purpose of this study was to examine differences in friendships and in perceived support among Canadian youth of Arab, East Asian, South Asian, and European descent. We hypothesized that there may be differences among the groups both in terms of the number of same-ethnicity friends and number of related friends.

Method

Participants:

- 122 17-25 year olds ($M = 20.01$; $SD = 1.469$)
- 18 males and 104 females
- Cultural groups included Arab ($n=30$), East Asian ($n=18$), South Asian ($n=16$) and European-Canadian ($n=58$).

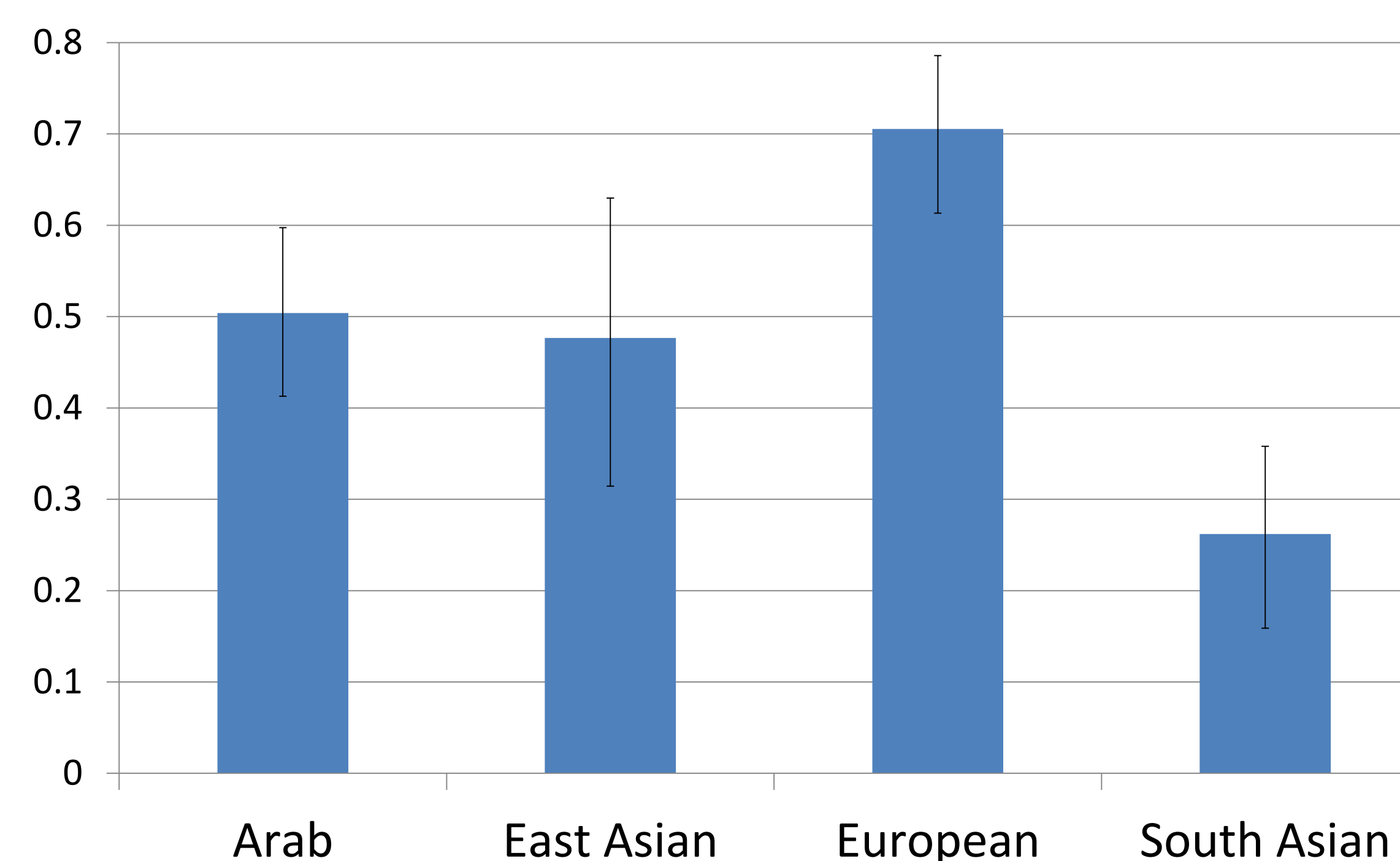
Procedure and Measures:

- Participants completed an online survey.
- Participants were asked to nominate up to 10 best friends, which would result in a proportion of friends who were same-ethnicity, cross-ethnicity, or related to them. Participants also provided ratings for perceived level of social support for each of these groups of friends using items based on the Social Support Microsystems Scales (Seidman et al., 1995).

Results

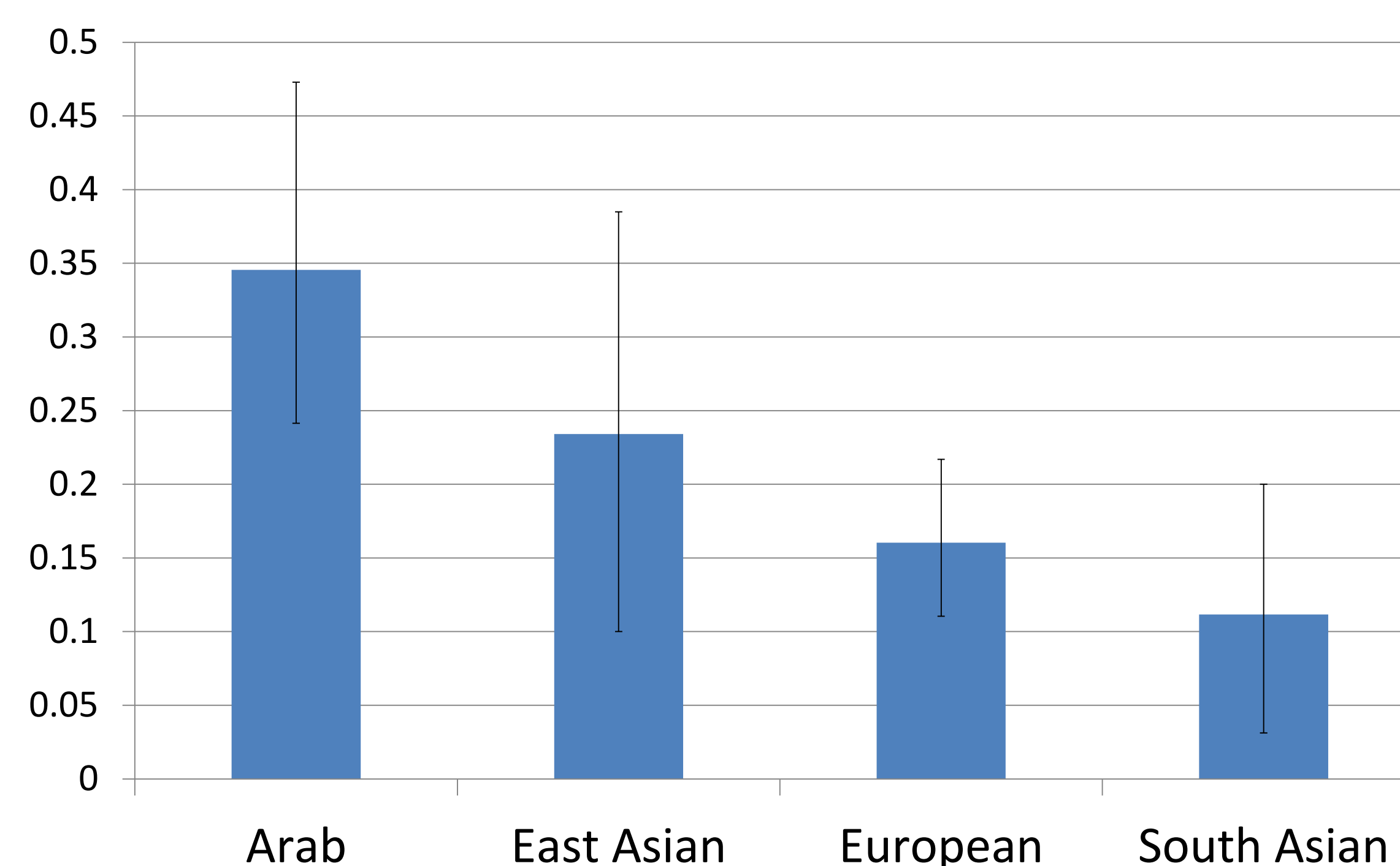
- One-way ANOVAs indicated differences among ethnic groups both in terms of number of same-ethnicity friends and number of related friends
- Planned contrasts indicated that those of European descent were significantly more likely to have same-ethnicity friends, and those of South Asian descent were significantly less likely to have same-ethnicity friends

Proportion of Same-Ethnicity Friends



- Youth who identified as Arab were significantly more likely to identify friends who were also relatives, whereas South Asians were significantly less likely to have friends who were also relatives

Proportion of Related Friends



Results

- It should be noted that statistical assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance have been violated for some of the dependent variables, so results should be interpreted with caution; however, nonparametric tests (i.e., Kruskal-Wallis H test) were also run and the same results were found.
- ANOVAs indicated differences between ethnic groups in terms of perceived support from same-ethnicity friends; however, this result was not replicated when a nonparametric test was used.

Discussion

- These data suggest that there are differences in the friendship patterns of multicultural youth that warrant further exploration.
- The data supports Abu-Laban and Abu-Laban's (1999) hypothesis that individuals of Arab descent are likely to have an overlap between friends and family.
- The data also indicate the youth of European descent may be more likely to have same-ethnicity friends, whereas youth of South Asian descent may be less likely to have same-ethnicity or related friends. However these results should be replicated with a larger sample.
- Based on the present data, conclusions regarding differences in perceived social support are uncertain and should be investigated in future studies.
- Based on the preliminary data that we have collected, Arab youth may be more likely than other ethnic groups to spontaneously identify relatives that are considered friends. Data collection for this study is ongoing and will be reanalyzed upon completion.

References

- Abu-Laban, S. M., & Abu-Laban, B. (1999). Teens between: The public and private spheres of Arab-Canadian adolescents. In M. W. Suleiman (Ed.), *Arabs in America* (pp. 113-128). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Harker, K. (2001). Immigrant generation, assimilation, and adolescent psychological well-being. *Social Forces*, 79(3), 969-1004.
- Seidman, E., Allen, L., Aber, J. L., Mitchell, C., Feinman, J., Yoshikawa, H., Comtois, K. A., et al. (1995). Development and validation of adolescent-perceived microsystem scales: Social support, daily hassles, and involvement. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23(3), 355-38

Contact

Correspondence regarding this research should be addressed to Samantha Daniel, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor. Email: daniel11@uwindsor.ca



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

