

Dynamic Associations Between Attention, Stress, and Negative Affect in Daily Life

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Introduction

- Attention difficulties, perceived stress, and negative affect are common transdiagnostic variables.
- These variables may not operate in isolation but mutually reinforce one another thereby contributing to psychopathology.
- Most studies focus on these associations from a cross-sectional, between-person perspective, which does not fully capture their real-time dynamics.
- This study uses a network analysis with ecological momentary assessment (EMA) data to examine how attention, stress, and negative affect interact in real time at the within-person level.

Methods

- Participants were 37 undergraduate Psychology students (Fatimah et al., 2023).
 - Demographics: 78% Female; 62% White, 19% Hispanic/Latinx, 11% Asian, 5% African American, 3% Multiracial/Other
- Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA)
- Survey sent 2x a day for 40 days
 - Measures collected: Momentary attention instability, perceived stress, and negative affect (sadness, anger, nervousness).
 - Dynamic Network Analysis: Multilevel timeseries vector autoregressive modeling (mIVAR).

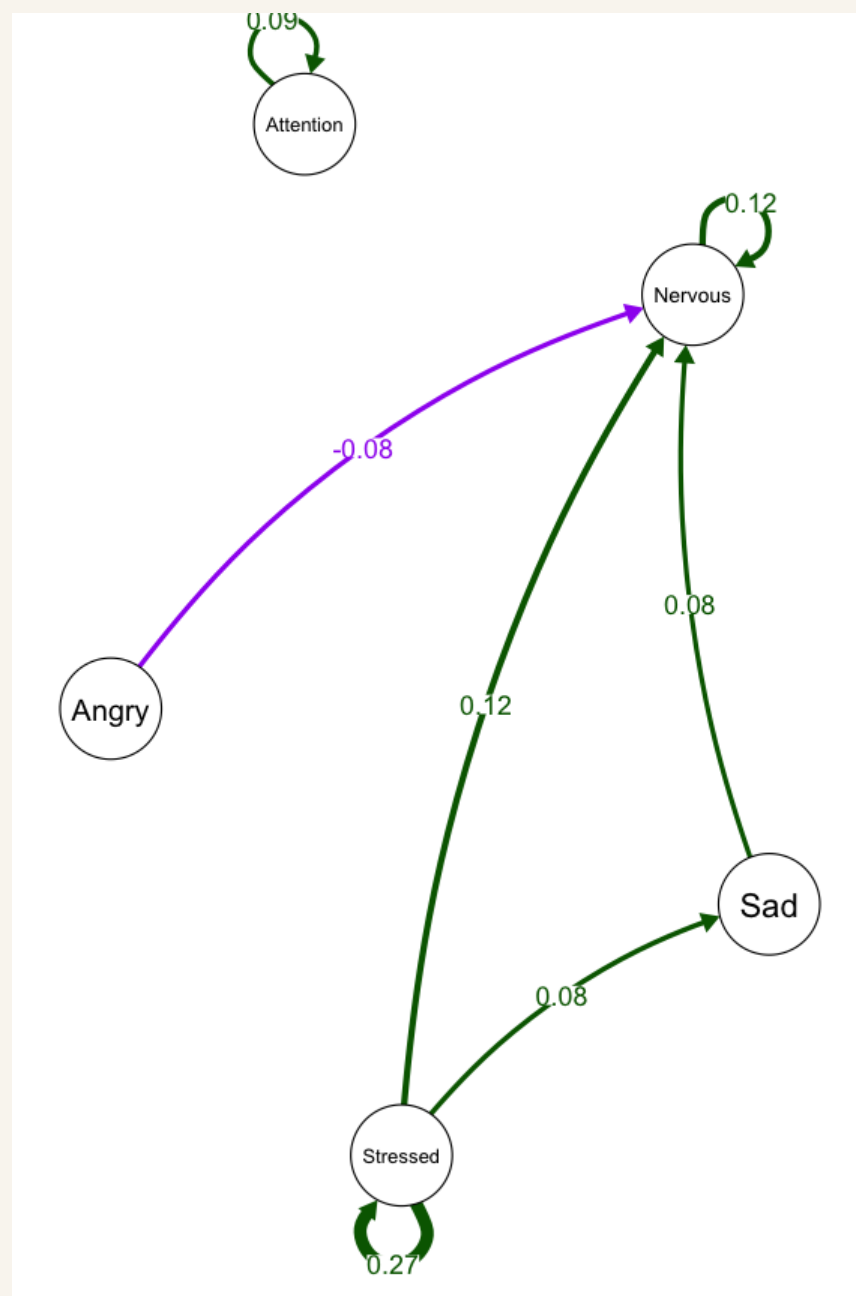
Findings

- Stress emerged as the most influential variable, contributing to increases in negative affect.
- Attention instability was contemporaneously connected to stress and nervousness but not over time.

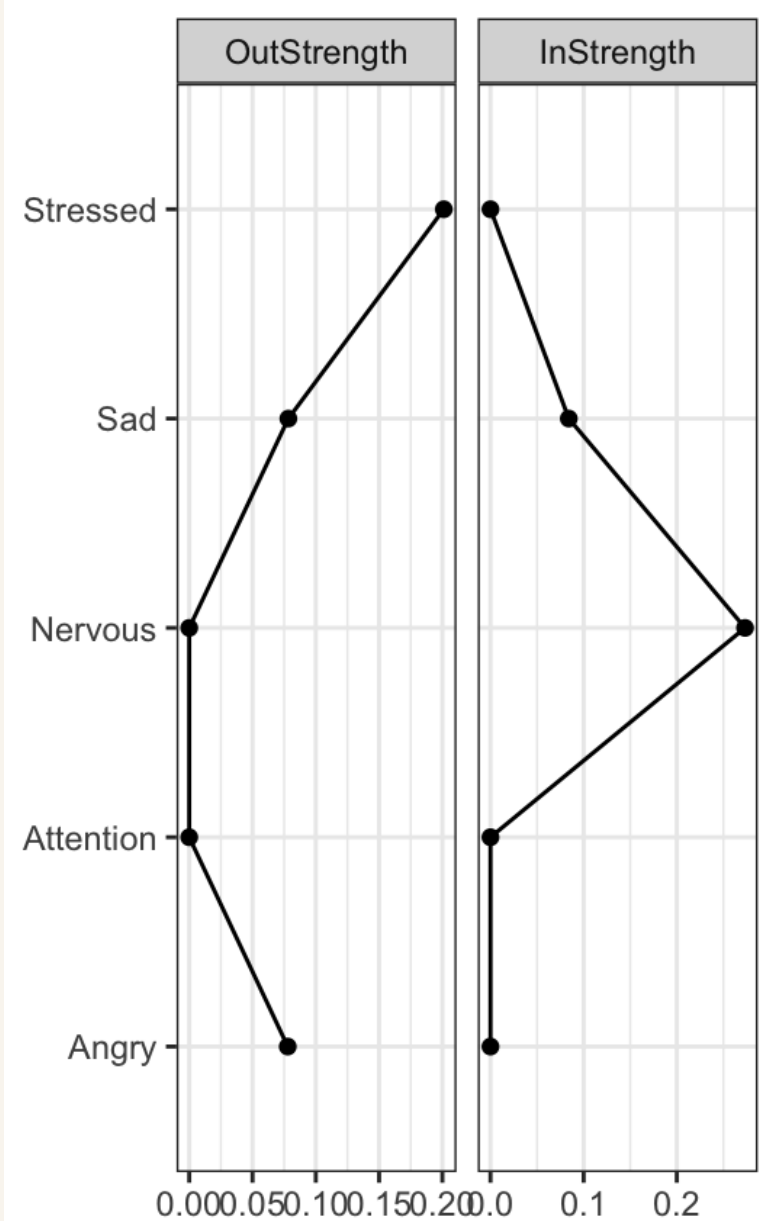
Limitations

- Single-item measures.
- Small, student sample.
- Need higher density data.

Temporal Network



Results



Contemporaneous Network

