Effects of Co-rumination & Co-distraction on State-level Rumination in Women

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INTRODUCTION

- Rumination tendency to repeatedly think about and dwell on one’s problems and distress
  - Linked to higher negative affect and depression
  - More commonly observed among women
- But trait rumination does not always => state rumination (amount of rumination at that moment)

Is trait rumination associated with state rumination during interpersonal interactions?

We assigned women to one of two interpersonal interactions (co-rumination or co-distraction) following a stress induction, and looked at whether levels of trait rumination were associated with levels of state rumination in each condition

Interpersonal emotion regulation conditions:

- Co-rumination - Dwelling on problems and feelings with another person
- Co-distraction – Distracting from problems by engaging in conversation with another person

(Hansen & Whisman, 2013; Zoccola & Dickerson, 2015)

RESULTS

- As expected, women ruminated more in the co-rumination (M = 10.48), than co-distraction condition (M = 7.98)
- Trait rumination was not associated with levels of state rumination in either the co-rumination (b = .02, p = .74, R² = .01) or co-distraction conditions (b = 0.15, p = .15, R² = .15)

LIMITATIONS & DISCUSSION

- Women could be prompted to engage in co-rumination or co-distraction, irrespective of their trait tendency towards rumination
- Trait rumination was not associated with the level of state rumination for the co-distraction condition
  - Clinical implication: suggests that we can support women in redirecting their focus through conversations with others, irrespective of their predisposition to ruminate

- Limitations: Lab-induced co-rumination and co-distraction may not fully capture real-life experiences
- Future directions: examining a larger sample may provide a larger effect size and generalizable results

METHOD

- Data collected as part of a larger experimental study
- Participants included women
  - (N = 27, M_age = 21.69 years, SD = 4.29)

  Independent Variable
  - Trait-level rumination

  Dependent Variable
  - State-level rumination
    - (Scale: 1-6; “Just before I started this survey, I was dwelling on my negative feelings and problems"

  Post co-rumination
    - (M = 10.48, SD = 3.56)
  Post co-distraction
    - (M = 7.98, SD = 2.69

HYPOTHESES

1. State rumination would be higher in the co-rumination versus co-distraction condition
2. Higher trait rumination would be associated with higher state rumination in both conditions