

Introduction

- Challenging behavior (CB)** is any aggressive, self-injurious, or destructive behavior which limits a person's ability to participate in the community or daily life activities.¹
- Professionals supporting adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities who engage in CB are at an increased risk for experiencing burnout.²
- Burnout** is a psychological phenomenon characterized by high emotional exhaustion (EE), high depersonalization (DP), and low personal accomplishment (PA).³
- Staff burnout greatly contributes to the workforce crisis in the developmental services sector.^{4,5}
- Numerous demographic, organizational, client-related, and person-related variables influence burnout, which comprises a growing body of literature.⁶
- Self-confidence:** a person-related variable defined differently based on the context, population, and field of interest.⁷
- Self-confidence is likely a key aspect of effective support for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities engaging in CB since it enhances safety and proactivity.^{8,9}
- The literature suggests a relationship exists between self-confidence and burnout for populations outside the developmental services sector^{10,11,12} and that correlations exist between self-efficacy in managing aggressive types of CB and some subscales of burnout.^{13,14}

Research Questions

- How do support professionals define what it means to be confident in responding to the CB of the adult(s) they support?
- Is self-confidence in responding to CB predictive of feelings of burnout amongst support professionals for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities who engage in CB?
- What variables may influence, or be influenced by, levels of self-confidence?

Method

- Convergent mixed methods design** using an online survey:
 - ❖ Open- and closed-ended questions on demographic, organizational, person-related, and client-related variables
 - ❖ Maslach Burnout Inventory–Human Services Survey (MBI-HSS)³
 - ❖ Self-confidence instrument⁸
- Distributed across Ontario, Canada, to 72 agencies
- Participants included (1) direct support professionals (DSP) and (2) leaders in direct support (LDS) employed in the developmental services sector supporting adults who engage in CB

DSP Direct support workers, instructor-therapists, registered behavior technicians, autism support associates, etc...

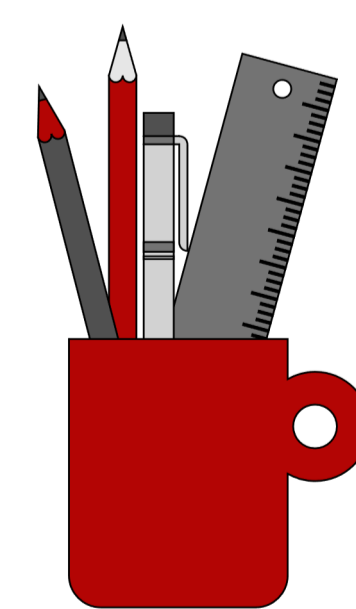
LDS Managers, directors, supervisors, or organizers of support teams or environments for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

Qualitative Analysis (MAXQDA software)

- Directed content analysis with deductive category application

Quantitative Analysis (SPSS Statistics software)

- Correlational and linear regression analyses
- Descriptive analysis (e.g., mean and median)



Contact Information & Resources

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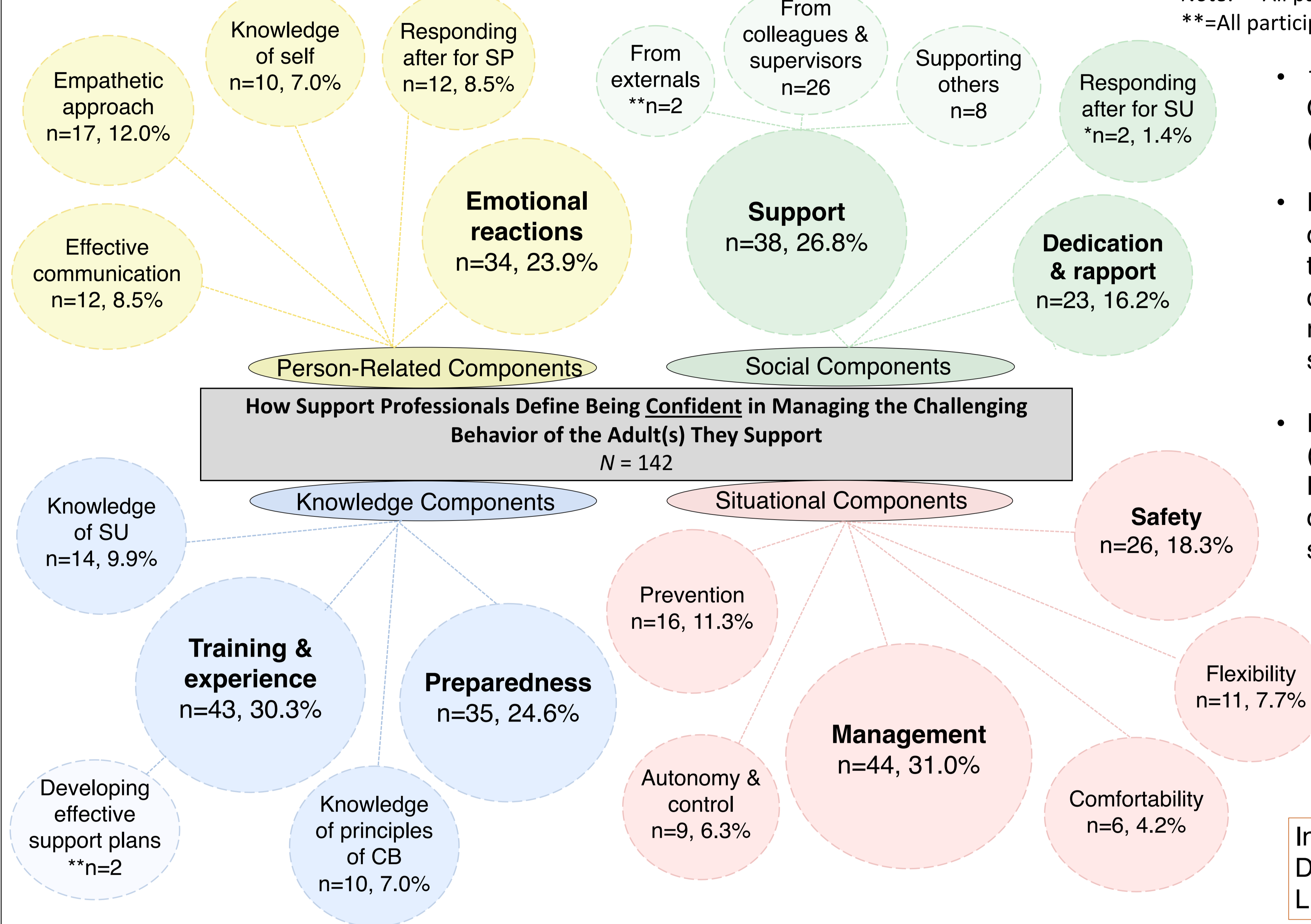
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Results: Research Question 1

Figure 1

Mind Map of Codes Related to Participant Definitions of Self-Confidence in Responding to CB of Adults with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities



- 156 DSP and 46 LDS from across Ontario participated in the study (N = 202).
- Participants described self-confidence in responding to CB of the adult(s) they support as consisting of several person-related, social, knowledge, and situational components (**Figure 1**).
- Frequently discussed codes (consistent across both DSP and LDS) in the definition of self-confidence across the entire sample were:
 - Emotional reactions
 - Support
 - Dedication and rapport
 - Training and experience
 - Preparedness
 - Management
 - Safety

Intercoder reliability kappa value:
DSP responses = .80
LDS responses = .90

Results: Research Question 2

Table 1

Linear Regression Coefficients of Self-Confidence on Burnout

Burnout Subscale	B	SE	β	BCa 95% CI		R ²	p
				LL	UL		
EE	-.040	.015	-.218	-.070	-.009	.048	.008*
DP	-.022	.011	-.162	-.047	.003	.026	.049*
PA	.036	.009	.311	.017	.055	.097	<.001*

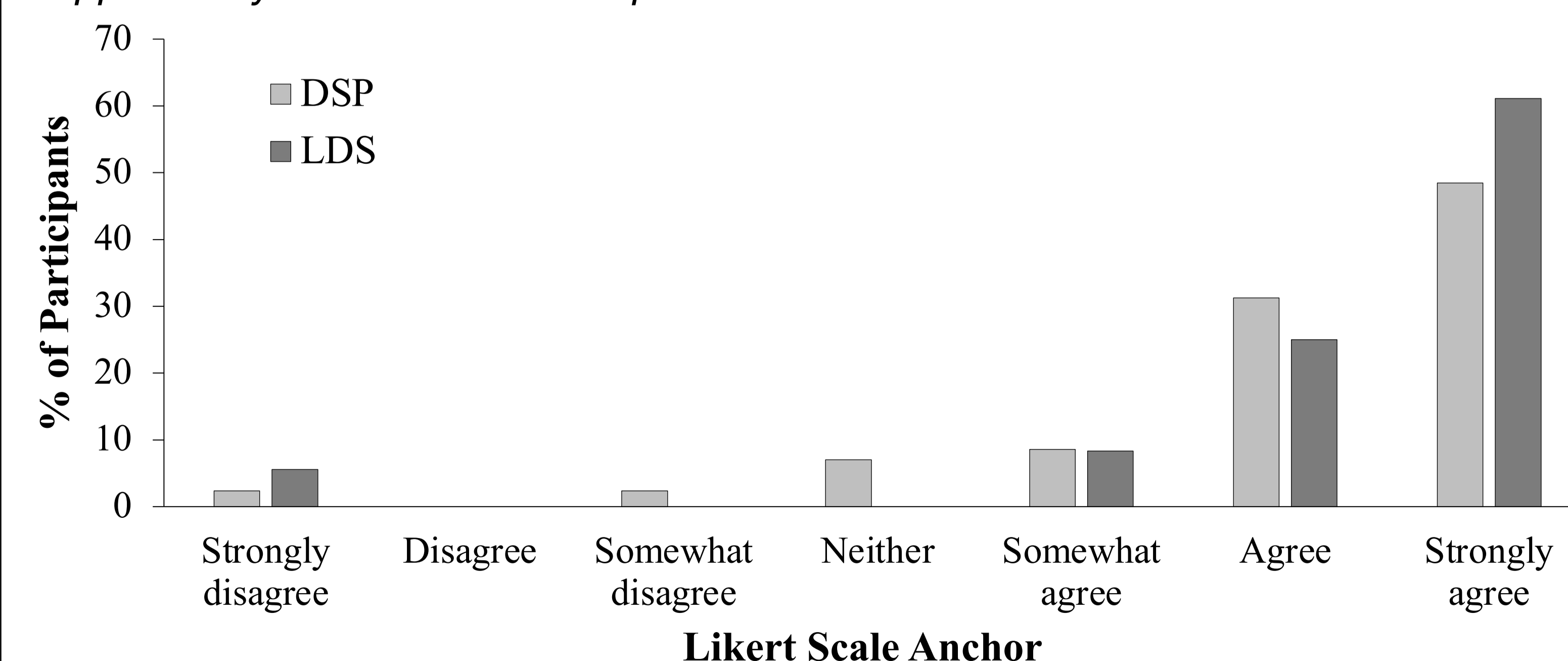
Note. B = Unstandardized beta coefficient. SE = Standard error. β = Standardized beta coefficient. BCa = Bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals with lower and upper limits.

- Increased self-confidence significantly predicted decreased burnout scores (i.e., lower EE, lower DP, and higher PA; **Table 1**).
- Exploratory moderation analyses yielded significant interaction effects with EE ($p = .0035$) and DP ($p = .0009$) as moderating variables in the relationship between PA and self-confidence.

Results: Research Question 3

Figure 2

Participant Agreement with Self-Confidence Increasing When Feeling Highly Supported by Others in the Workplace



- Most participants agreed or strongly agreed that **length of time in the field, level of support** from others (**Figure 2**), and the **type of CB** exposed to were variables influencing their levels of self-confidence.
- Most participants somewhat agreed or agreed that their levels of self-confidence influenced **their thoughts and emotions towards their job** and the **adult(s) they support**.

Discussion

- Burnout is a significant concern** for professionals in the developmental services sector.
- Increased self-confidence appears significantly associated with decreased burnout scores for participants of this study; however, a causal direction cannot be implied.
- Results may enhance understanding of burnout, reduce burnout risk, and enhance supports provided to service users.
- This research presents a preliminary, multicomponent model of self-confidence in responding to CB
 - ❖ Core factors of self-confidence appear to be *management, training and experience, support, preparedness, emotional reactions, safety, and dedication and rapport*
- The model of self-confidence, and variables influencing/influenced by self-confidence, may increase self-awareness for service providers and inform pertinent training targets and support goals for organizations employing support professionals in this sector.

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