



Mediation Effects and Analysis

Definition

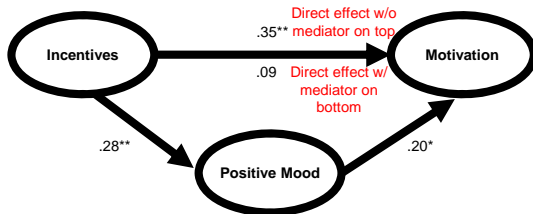
An effect that identifies a mechanism that underlies an observed relationship between an independent and dependent variable

Answers "Why"

- Begin with two variables and their association, assuming a causal direction
 - Ex. Incentives and motivation are positively correlated (assuming the presence of incentives causes people to work harder)
- Although this association may be well-established, we might not know why it is the case
- Mediation attempts to answer this

Reporting Results

- Because most mediation analyses involve a mediation model, it makes more sense to report as a figure



Full vs. Mediation

- _____ Mediation
 - The direct effect is non-significant (not different from zero) when the mediator is added
 - May want to ask if the mediator is enough (is the IV irrelevant to the DV?)
- _____ Mediation
 - The direct effect is significantly reduced, but does not drop below significance (i.e., $p < .05$) even when the mediator is added

Problems with B & K Method

- Just because the direct path drops below statistical significance does not mean that the magnitude of the drop is significant
 - Ex. Depending on sample size, you could have a direct path of $\beta = .17, p < .05$ without the mediator and a direct path of $\beta = .15, n.s.$ with the mediator (is a drop of .02 a significant drop?)
- SPSS does not calculate the significance of the indirect effect for you
- Solution
 - Only do the B & K Method as a preliminary test
 - Conduct follow-up structural equation model analyses using AMOS or LISREL (Drs. Palmer or Gore can help)
