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INTRODUCTION

Venting, which is defined as giving free expression to a strong emotion, is a normal part of many people's lives and there is much research on it; however, most research examines the positive and negative outcomes of it through different attributions as well as better alternatives to venting (Nils and Rime 2012). The Social Facilitation Theory suggests that a human presence may increase activation and arousal in people. The aim of the present study is to test the hypothesis that people who vent in the mere presence of a person will have amplified mood afterward, for better or worse.

METHODS

Participants

Participants would be undergraduates from Oklahoma State University.

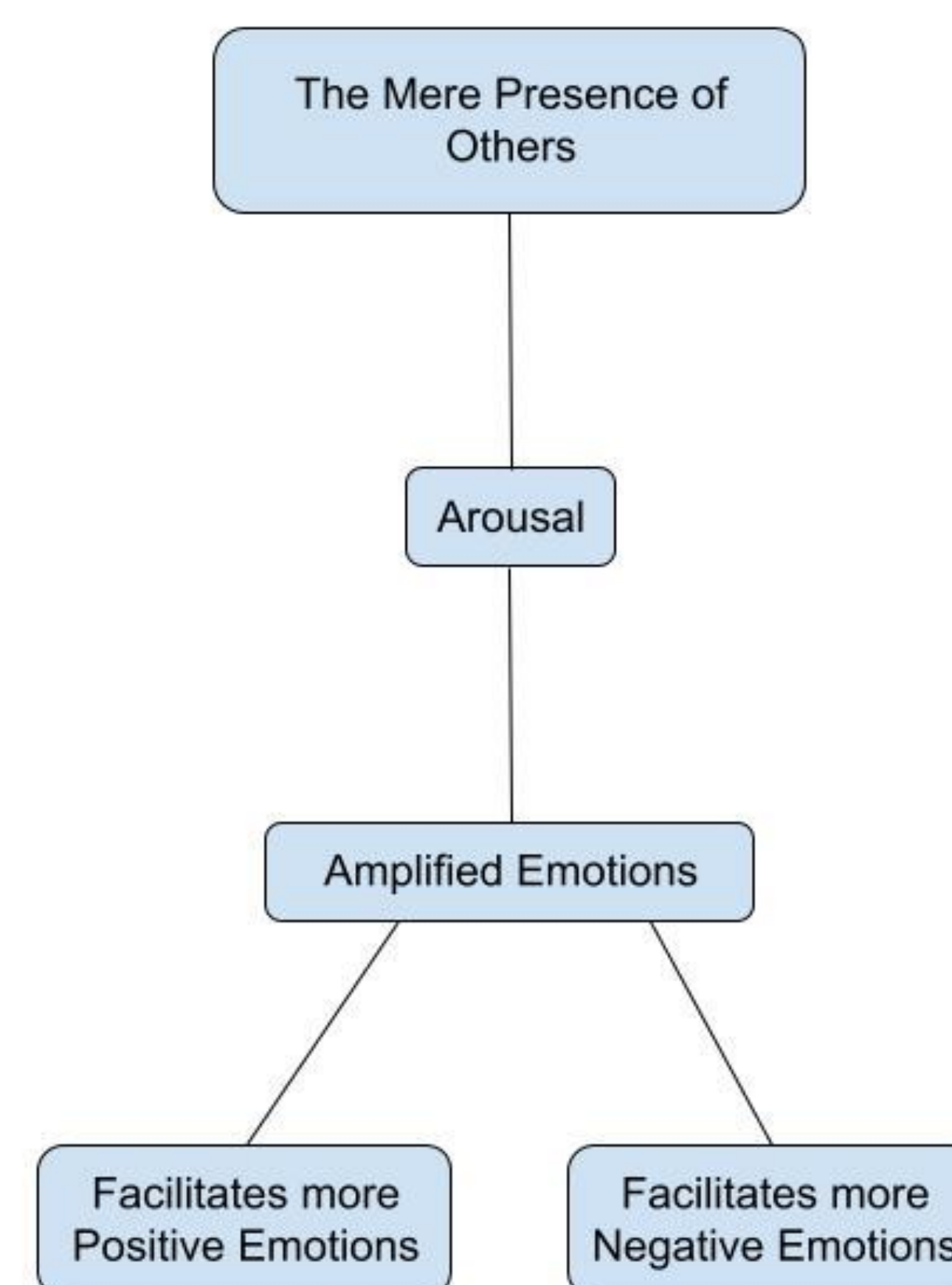
Measures

We would assess participant mood before and after venting using the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (Watson 1988), assess participant mood during venting session with the Discrete Emotions Questionnaire (Harmon-Jones & Bastian 2016), and overall emotional control using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (Ochsner & Gross 2005).

Procedure

Participants would sign up through the OSU SONA system and set up an in-person appointment. Participants will complete a pre- and post-survey in order to gauge their mood and overall emotions. There are four different variables of human presence: A human at the table, a human across the room, a dressed mannequin, and a rock. There will also be a control group. The results from each variable will be compared to each other and the control.

A human presence may subconsciously change how we regulate emotions.



Social Facilitation Theory Regarding Emotional Venting

DISCUSSION & RESULTS

I predict that those who vent in the presence of a real person would report a higher emotional change after venting than those who vented to the non-human variables. The research on the presence of people regarding venting is limited and requires more study to be understood. The hypothesis would go against the findings of previous research that found emotional inhibition when talking to strangers. Future research should investigate the effects of positive and negative venting as well as the physiological effects of venting in different environments.

References

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