

ACTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN PSICOLÓGICA

PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH RECORDS

Volumen 1, Número 2, Agosto 2011.

**ISSN versión impresa en trámite
ISSN versión electrónica en trámite**

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO
FACULTAD DE PSICOLOGÍA**

Acta de Investigación Psicológica

Editor General - Chief Editor Rolando Díaz Loving Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	John Adair University of Manitoba	Ruben Ardila Universidad Nacional de Colombia
Editor Ejecutivo- Executive Editor Sofía Rivera Aragón Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	John Berry Queen's University	Ruth Nina Estrella Universidad de Puerto Rico
Editor Asociado- Associate Editor Nancy Montero Santamaría Gerardo Benjamín Tonatiuh Villanueva Orozco Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	José Luis Saiz Vidallet Universidad de la Frontera	Sandra Castañeda Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Consejo Editorial - Editorial Board	José María Peiró Universidad de Valencia	Scott Stanley University of Denver
Alfredo Ardila Florida International University	Klaus Boehnke Jacobs University	Silvia Koller Universidad Federal de Rio Grande do Sul
Aroldo Rodrigues California State University	Laura Acuña Morales Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Steve López University of South California
Brian Wilcox University of Nebraska	Laura Hernández Guzmán Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Víctor Manuel Alcaraz Romero Universidad Veracruzana
Carlos Bruner Iturbide Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Lucy Reidl Martínez Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Victor Corral Verdugo Universidad de Sonora
Charles Spilberger University of South Florida	María Cristina Richaud de Minzi Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas	William Swann University of Texas at Austin
David Schmitt Bradley University	María Elena Medina-Mora Icaza Instituto Nacional de Psiquiatría	Ype H. Poortinga Tilburg University
Emilia Lucio Gómez-Maqueo Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Michael Domjan University of Texas at Austin	© UNAM Facultad de Psicología, 2011
Emilio Ribes Iñesta Universidad Veracruzana	Mirta Flores Galaz Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán	
Feggy Ostrosky Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Peter B. Smith University of Sussex	
Felix Neto Universidade do Porto	Reynaldo Alarcón Universidad Ricardo Palma	
Harry Triandis University of Illinois at Champaign	Ronald Cox Oklahoma State University	
Heidemarie Keller University of Osnabruck	Roque Méndez Texas State University	
Isabel Reyes Lagunes Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Rozzana Sánchez Aragón Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	
Javier Nieto Gutiérrez Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México		

Acta de Investigación Psicológica, Año 1, Vol. 1, No. 2, mayo-agosto 2011, es una publicación cuatrimestral editada por la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México a través de la Facultad de Psicología, Av. Universidad 3004, Col. Copilco-Universidad, Del. Coyoacán, CP. 04510, México, D.F., Tel/Fax. (55)56222305 y (55)56222326, <http://www.psicologia.unam.mx/pagina/es/155/acta-de-investigacion-psicologica>, actapsicologicaunam@gmail.com, Editor Responsable: Dr. Rolando Díaz Loving, Reserva de derechos al uso exclusivo N° 04-2011-040411025500-203, ISSN en trámite, Responsable de la última actualización de este número: Unidad de Planeación, Facultad de Psicología, Lic. Augusto A. García Rubio Granados, Av. Universidad 3004, Col. Copilco-Universidad, Del. Coyoacán, C.P. 04510, México, D.F., Fecha de última modificación: 03, 08, 2011.

Las opiniones expresadas por los autores no necesariamente reflejan la postura del editor de la publicación.
Se autoriza la reproducción total o parcial de los textos e imágenes aquí publicados siempre y cuando se cite la fuente completa y la dirección electrónica de la publicación.

Acta de Investigación Psicológica

Índice Index

Agosto 2011
August 2011

Volumen 1
Volume 1

Número 2
Issue 2

Prólogo / Preface

Susan Sprecher 187

Relationship Compatibility, Compatible Matches, and Compatibility Matching
Compatibilidad de la Relación, Parejas Afines y Compatibilidad del Emparejamiento

Mirta Margarita Flores Galaz 216

Comunicación y Conflicto: ¿Qué Tanto Impactan en la Satisfacción Marital?
Conflict and Communication: their Impact on Marital Satisfaction

Judith A. Feeney 233

Adult Attachment and Conflict Behavior: Delineating the Links
Apego Adulto y Conflicto: Acotando su Relación

Rozzana Sánchez Aragón..... 254

La Estructura Emocional de la Intensidad de la Pasión Romántica
Emotional Structure of Romantic Passion Intensity

Miriam Sang-Ah Park, Robin Goodwin, Szabolcs Gergő Harsányi & Jung-Ae Kim 274

Macro-Level Factors & their Influence on Family Perceptions in Two Cultures
Factores Macro y su Influencia en las Percepciones Familiares en Dos Culturas

Sofía Rivera Aragón, Rolando Díaz Loving, Gerardo Benjamín Tonatiuh Villanueva Orozco & Nancy Montero Santamaria 298

El Conflicto como un Predictor de la Infidelidad
Conflict as a Precouser of Infidelity

Clyde Hendrick, Susan S. Hendrick & Tammy L. Zacchilli..... 316

Respect and Love in Romantic Relationships
Respeto y Amor en las Relaciones Románticas

Rolando Diaz Loving 330

Current Mesoamerican Couples: Cultural Heritage; Families in Transition; Sustainable Relationships
Parejas Mesoamericanas Contemporáneas: Herencia Cultural; Familias en Transición; Relaciones Sustentables

Acta de Investigación Psicológica

Índice Index

Agosto 2011
August 2011

Volumen 1
Volume 1

Número 2
Issue 2

Marianne Dainton.....	352
Linking Theoretical Explanations for the Use of Marital Maintenance: Equity, Uncertainty, Attachment, and Reciprocity	
Vinculando las Explicaciones Teóricas de Mantenimiento Marital: Equidad. Incertidumbre, Apego y Reciprocidad	
Lineamientos para los Autores	375
Proceso Editorial.....	377
Guidelines for Authors	378
Editorial Process.....	380

Acta de Investigación Psicológica

Página dejada intencionalmente en blanco

Prólogo

El propósito de este Número Especial del Acta de Investigación Psicológica, es tomar una muestra de la investigación que se realiza en la actualidad en diferentes partes del mundo y en México, sobre temas vinculados a las Relaciones de Pareja; para con ello estimular la creatividad de investigadores principiantes y ya formados. A través de este ejemplar, surgen una serie de variables valiosas y potenciales que generarán nuevos cuestionamientos y que desatarán esos impulsos –en ocasiones- difíciles de controlar, que quien investiga sabe la pasión por conocer, por descubrir y por escudriñar.

Pero ¿por qué un número especial sobre pareja? Bueno, habría que decir que dentro de la Psicología, el estudio de las relaciones personales está sembrado en el área de la Psicología Social, donde se concibe al individuo como un ser “por naturaleza” social y cuyo desarrollo (desde su concepción), ya se encuentra determinado por pertenecer a un grupo socio-cultural particular. El hecho de que al nacer el individuo sea objeto de una serie de interacciones humanas, que se dan a partir de ciertos rituales que favorecen la formación de vínculos afectivos únicos, le da a éste el carácter innegable de “ser social”. Así, a través del tiempo, el individuo va formando parte de distintos grupos que le son significativos, y que le proveen de elementos fundamentales para su sobrevivencia psicológica. Por su parte, la formación de una relación cercana como la de pareja, se vuelve fundamental en muchas culturas por ser fuente de interacción y convivencia, de experiencias emocionales inéditas, un compromiso que involucra el ser, así como intimidad, la cual permite a sus miembros compartir, comunicarse e involucrarse voluntaria y libremente en lo físico, emocional y cognoscitivo.

Se invitaron a especialistas en el área, que colaboraron con su mejor disposición y tiempo. De la Universidad de la Salle en Philadelphia, Estados Unidos, Marianne Dainton, Miriam Sang-Ah Park y Robin Goodwin de la Universidad de Brunel en Londres, con Szabolcs Gergő Harsányi de la Universidad de Szeged y la Universidad ELTE y Jung-Ae Kim de la Universidad Chung-Ang, Clyde Hendrick, Susan S. Hendrick de la Universidad de Texas Tech y Tammy L. Zacchilli de la Universidad Saint Leo, Judith Feeney de la Universidad de Queensland en Australia y Susan Sprecher de la Universidad Estatal de Illinois. En lo que toca a la participación de especialistas de nuestra máxima casa de estudios, la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, se tiene a Rolando Díaz Loving, Sofía Rivera Aragón y a Rozzana Sánchez Aragón. Aunado a ellos, Mirta Margarita Flores Galaz de la Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán también contribuyó a este número especial. En general las aportaciones fueron variadas pero siempre con una perspectiva científica, original y con un abordaje sistemático y parsimonioso que permite una lectura interesante y ¿por qué no?, placentera.

Quiero agradecer al Editor del Acta de Investigación Psicológica, Rolando Díaz Loving por compartir mi visión y por permitirme ser editora invitada para esta edición especial. En conjunto, los artículos de este ejemplar, representan investigación novedosa, teóricamente sustentada en teorías y conceptos psicológicos, culturales y particulares al área de las relaciones personales y de pareja. Espero que este número, estimule a los estudiosos de las ciencias sociales y del comportamiento a considerar el valor de los constructos aquí presentados y –por supuesto– del impacto de las relaciones de pareja en la vida del individuo.

Rozzana Sánchez Aragón
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Preface

The aim of this special issue of the Psychological Research Minutes focusing on Personal Relationships is to showcase the research conducted by the leading figures of Mexico and the world in the field of close relationships; and with it, stimulate interest and new research trails in this fascinating and increasingly applied area of the social and behavioral sciences. Throughout the issue, the antecedents, processes and consequences of variables involved in the positive and negative outcomes of close encounters is masterfully conceptualized, analyzed and researched in each article.

But even the obvious requires justification. Why a special issue on interpersonal relations with emphasis on couples? In general, the area has had such a growth that two major high impact Journals have indulged in the study of these close relationships. Personal Relations and Social and Personal Relations are examples of the high profile of the area. Specifically in Psychology and more particularly in Social Psychology individuals are conceived as social and gregarious creatures by nature, and their development and determination grows out of being part of a socio-cultural group. The fact that even before birth each individual is object to a series of human interactions that provide the construction of unique affective bonds which give meaning and guide their lives gives our species an undeniable social character. Thus, with time, each individual creates significant relations that provide the fundamental elements for survival. In terms of couple relations, through numerous cultural niches these pairs are fundamental given that they provide a source of interaction of emotional experiences, commitment, intimacy, communication, and the possibility of a voluntary intermingling of emotional and cognitive structures.

In order to fulfill the task, a select group of specialists were invited to collaborate by submitting research papers to a double blind editorial process. I personally wish to extend my appreciation for their sharing their data and knowledge in this special issue. Marianne Dainton from the University of La Salle in Philadelphia in the United States; Miriam Sang-Ah Park and Robin Goodwin from the University of Brunel in England with Szabolcs Gergő Harsányi from the University of Szeged and the University ELTE in Hungary and with Jung-Ae Kim from the University of Chung-Ang in South Korea; Clyde Hendrick, Susan S. Hendrick from the University of Texas Tech and Tammy L. Zacchilli from the University of Saint Leo in the United States; Judith Feeney from the University of Queensland in Australia and Susan Sprecher from the State University of Illinois in the United States. With regards from the experts who collaborated with the issue that reside in Mexico, I also extend my thanks for articles submitted by Rolando Díaz Loving and Sofía Rivera Aragón from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. In addition, Mirta Margarita Flores Galaz from the Autonomous University of Yucatan contributed with another article. Each research article is original and unique, and provides a wide perspective of the field; however, they all share a rigorous scientific view, a systematic approach, and a parsimonious, and why not pleasurable read.

I would finally like to acknowledge the work of the editor of the Journal, Rolando Díaz-Loving for sharing a vision of basic rigorous research combined with applied implications and allowing me to engage in this crusade for this issue. In conclusion, the articles provided in this issue represent original research, accurately grounded in the psychological, cultural and theoretical concepts of the field, rigorous in their methodology and incisive and profound in their discussions. I only expect that this issue will stimulate more researchers to consider the value of the concepts, constructs and phenomena inserted in the field of couple relationships and accompany us in the journey to study the impact of close encounters on individual's lives.

Rozzana Sánchez Aragón
National Autonomous University of Mexico

Relationship Compatibility, Compatible Matches, and Compatibility Matching

Susan Sprecher¹
Illinois State University

Abstract

Many leading Internet dating sites claim to be able to find compatible matches for singles, and that they use principles from Relationship Science to generate their matching algorithms. In this article, I first discuss how “relationship compatibility” has been studied in Relationship Science. It is generally not directly studied, but inferred from related constructs, including satisfaction, commitment, and endurance of the relationship. Second, I discuss three principles that are referred to in Relationship Science as defining a pair being a “compatible match.” These principles are similarity, complementarity, and matching (on same level of socially desirable characteristics, regardless of whether they are the same or different between partners). In the final section, I discuss what aspects of science are being used at the Internet dating sites to create compatible matches.

Keywords: Relationship Compatibility, Matches, Compatibility Matching, Internet Dating Sites.

Compatibilidad de la Relación, Parejas Afines y Compatibilidad del Emparejamiento

Resumen

Muchos de los sitios líderes en “la búsqueda de pareja” se dicen capaces de lograr coincidencias compatibles para solteros, usando los principios de la Ciencia de las Relaciones para generar sus algoritmos de emparejamiento. En este artículo primero se discute cómo la “compatibilidad en las relaciones” ha sido estudiada en la Ciencia de las Relaciones. Generalmente no es directamente estudiada, pero sí inferida a partir de constructos relacionados, incluyendo satisfacción, compromiso y mantenimiento en la relación. En segundo lugar, se discuten los tres principios referidos por la Ciencia de las Relaciones que definen lo que es “el emparejamiento compatible. Estos principios son similitud, complementariedad, y emparejamiento (el mismo nivel de características socialmente deseables, relativas a si ellos son iguales o diferentes entre ambos miembros de la parejas). En la sección final, se discuten qué aspectos de la ciencia han sido usados en los sitios de internet de búsqueda de pareja para crear emparejamientos compatibles.

Palabras Clave: Compatibilidad, Emparejamiento, Emparejamiento compatible, Sitios de internet de búsqueda de pareja.

¹ Portions of this paper were given in a keynote address at the conference for the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR) at the Interdisciplinary Center at Herzliya, Israel, July 24, 2010; and in a Distinguished Professor Lecture at Illinois State University, November 2, 2010.

Please address correspondence to Susan Sprecher, Department of Sociology and Anthropology (also of Department of Psychology), Illinois State University, Normal, IL 61790-4660, sprecher@ilstu.edu

“Enter eHarmony and the new generation of dating sites, among them PerfectMatch.com and Chemistry.com. All have staked their success on the idea that long-term romantic compatibility can be predicted according to scientific principles – and that they can discover those principles and use them to help their members finding lasting love. To that end they’ve hired high-powered academics, devised special algorithms for relationship-matching, developed sophisticated personality questionnaires, and put into place mechanisms for the long-term tracking of data. Collectively, their efforts mark the early days of a social experiment of unprecedented proportions, involving millions of couples and possibly extending over the course of generations. The question at the heart of this grand trial is simple: In the subjective realm of love, can cold, hard science help?”

Lori Gottlieb – “How Do I Love Thee”, *Atlantic Monthly*, March 2006 (pp. 58-59).

Relationship compatibility and compatible matches have come to the media’s and public’s attention because of the popularity of Internet matching sites which state that they can find compatible matches for their members and that their compatibility matching is based on principles from Relationship Science. Recent estimates are that hundreds of millions of singles, worldwide, have gone to a dating website to seek a partner (Shtatfeld & Barak, 2009)^{II}. Even those who would have no interest or need for “logging on for love” but who view media are exposed to the claims about compatibility made by the various dating sites. For example, U.S. based eHarmony advertises that that they match singles based on a Compatibility Matching System that “narrows the field from thousands of single men or single women to match with a highly select group of compatible singles.”^{III} Perfectmatch.com (also U.S. based) uses a Duet Total Compatibility System to “find highly compatible matches.”^{IV} Thus, “compatibility” is the industry buzz word *and* several of the major matching sites claim that they use Relationship Science to identify compatible matches for their members.

This chapter focuses on relationship compatibility, compatible matches, and compatibility matching, three distinct but inter-related topics. In the first section of this article, I discuss how *relationship compatibility* is presented in relationship science. The second section focuses more specifically on *compatible matches*, also from the perspective of relationship science. The final section discusses the *compatibility matching procedures* used at the Internet matching sites. Although the focus of Internet matching services is on compatibility in *romantic relationships*, compatibility is a concept relevant to all types of relationships, including friendships, parent-child relationships, and co-workers. Compatibility is also a

^{II} http://www.comscore.com/Press_Events/Press_Releases/2007/02/Top_Dating_Sites
<http://www.thedatingjournal.com/2010/02/20/the-emergence-of-romantic-relationships-online-main-findings/>
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0EIN/is_2007_Feb_12/ai_n17218532/
http://www.businesswire.com/portal/site/home/permalink/?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20080211005037&newsLang=en

^{III} <http://www.eharmony.com/why>

^{IV} <http://www.perfectmatch.com/>

relationship state that is good and desirable (Berscheid, 1985; Berscheid & Regan, 2005).

Relationship Compatibility in Relationship Science

Although compatibility may be the buzz word at Internet matching services, it is not a central construct in the scientific field of personal relationships. The subject indices for recent handbooks and textbooks in the field of close relationships have either no entries for compatibility (e.g., Bradbury & Karney, 2010; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000; Miller & Perlman, 2009) or only a few (e.g., Berscheid & Regan, 2005; Vangelisti & Perlman, 2006). For example, in Vangelisti and Perlman's (2006) almost 800-page *Cambridge Handbook on Personal Relationships* "compatibility" is referenced on only three pages.

As noted by Berscheid (1985), however, "compatibility seems to be known largely by the company it keeps; that is, it appears to acquire much of its meaning from its assumed cohorts; those *other* properties of relationships that appear to be the traveling companions of compatibility." (p. 144). Traveling companions of compatibility include satisfaction, commitment, and stability, relationship outcome variables that *are* frequently examined in the close relationships field (Berscheid, 1985).

The Concept of Compatibility

The exception to the lack of focus on compatibility in the relationship field is an edited volume published by Ickes (1985), entitled *Compatible and Incompatible Relationships*. Because there has not been a scholarly book or chapter published on the topic of relationship compatibility since 1985, the Ickes volume (also summarized recently by Ickes & Charania [2009] in an entry in the *Encyclopedia of Human Relationships*) remains the major published source of scientific discussion of compatibility per se, as well as its opposite – incompatibility. (For an empirical article on compatibility, however, see Houts, Robins, & Huston, 1996).

In the opening chapter to this book, Ickes (1985) distinguished between compatibility and incompatibility by referring to two sets of gears:

Consider the relationships within two sets of gears; In the first set, the two gears are precisely matched to each other; in the second set, the two gears are badly mismatched. When the two gears are compatible (i.e., precisely matched), their relationship "works," and they operate together in a smooth, synchronized manner. On the other hand, when the two gears are incompatible (i.e., badly mismatched), their relationship does not "work," and instead of meshing together and integrating their respective movements without unnecessary friction, they grind and grate against each other, producing heat, discordant noise, mutual wear and tear, and – in some cases – complete mutual inhibition of movement." (p. 3).

Ickes also noted, however, the limitation of this metaphor because it depicts primarily behavioral interdependence, whereas compatibility is likely to also include

feelings and cognitions. The Ickes (1985) volume presented 14 chapters that focused on relationship compatibility and incompatibility in various behavioral, emotional, and cognitive contexts, and across a variety of relationships, ranging from parent-infant relationships to long-term marriage. Because of the generosity of my mentor (Elaine Hatfield) in offering publication opportunities to her graduate students, I was a co-author of Chapter 4 (Hatfield, Traupmann, Sprecher, Utne, & Hay, 1985), which focused on reviewing evidence that equitable relationships are compatible relationships. Equity is defined as existing when the person evaluating the relationship perceives one partner's ratio of outcomes to inputs is equal to his or her partner's (e.g., Hatfield et al., 1985).

Compatibility was conceptualized in various ways by the authors in the Ickes (1985) volume. One theme to the definitions of compatibility throughout the chapters was a positive affective state or emotional tenor to the relationship. Phrases and words used to describe this emotional state included "feelings of affection or interpersonal attraction" (Furman, p. 6), "getting along with another in a congenial, harmonious fashion" (Clark, p. 119), "emotional serenity and tranquility" (Berscheid, p. 145) and "whether two people like each other, and whether they like the way they spend time together" (Reis, p. 227). Likewise, reference was made to the absence of negative emotions. In addition, many authors in the book, in defining compatibility, referred to the behaviors of the two people in the dyad, including frequent rewarding or positive interaction (Furman, p. 6), equitable and fair exchanges of resources (Hatfield et al.), synchronous behaviors (Lamb & Gilbride; Furman), "the behavior of the two individuals are well meshed, and therefore [they are] able to communicate efficiently and accurately" (Lamb & Gilbride, p. 36), and "the ability to co-act with another person in creating social events that are satisfying to both partners" (Reis, p. 210). Ickes, in his opening chapter, acknowledged that Berscheid's analysis of compatibility, which focused on behavioral patterns, may be the "definitive one." Berscheid, drawing from Kelley et al.'s (1983) behavioral interdependence model, defined compatibility as "the ratio of facilitating to interfering and conflictual events in partners' interactions" (Berscheid, 1985, p. 153). As noted by Berscheid, this facilitation is associated with having positive feelings for each other (Levinger & Rands, in the same volume, provided a similar definition).

Variation in Perspectives on Compatibility Across Perceivers and Time

Regardless of whether compatibility is assessed directly or is assessed indirectly through its traveling companions, different observers and actors may vary in their perceptions of a relationship's compatibility. For example, one person may view the relationship to be very compatible, whereas his or her partner may view it as less compatible, differences that occur because the two may come to the relationship with different comparison levels or general expectations (Rusbult, 1983). In addition, outside observers (family and friends) may have different opinions of the compatibility of a relationship than do the insiders. For example, research by Chris Agnew and his colleagues suggests that social networks'

opinions of the compatibility of relationships may be more realistic, predictive, and negative than that of the insiders (Agnew, Loving, & Drigotas, 2001; Etcheverry, Le, & Charania, 2008; Loving, 2006; MacDonald & Ross, 1999).

In addition, perceived relationship compatibility is likely to change over time. A relationship may be compatible in early interaction, but the pair may later discover that they are not compatible for a long-term relationship. This is an obvious truism. In fact, one use of the concept compatibility in the relationship literature is in the context of compatibility testing for mate selection. According to “compatibility testing models,” such as Murstein’s (1987) Stimulus-Value-Role theory, partners gain new information about each other as they go through stages of increasing relationship development which involves becoming interdependent in new contexts. Compatibility can continue to change over time in long-term relationships. The major longitudinal research studies on married couples, including Huston’s PAIR project (e.g., Huston, Niehuis, & Smith, 2001) and Orbuch’s (e.g., Orbuch, Veroff, Hassan, & Horrocks, 2002) Early Years of Marriage Project, have found that compatibility – or at least its traveling companions – change over years of marriage. Some couples who begin in marital bliss find themselves several years later divorced, or, if still together, in unhappy/incompatible relationships. Such marriages have been described in various ways, including empty-shell, conflict-habituated, and mixed-blessing marriages. A recent study of 1,000 married couples across the U.S. (e.g., Whisman, Beach, & Snyder, 2008) found that 31% of marriages can be classified as “unhappy.”

Furthermore, the assessment of compatibility at any point in time may include both a present focus and a future focus. As noted by Berscheid (1985), people are likely to use the word compatibility not only to refer to whether a pair is presently in harmony, but “are also making some prediction about how likely this state is to endure into the foreseeable future” (p. 145). When insiders and outsiders have different views of the compatibility of a relationship, it may be because they are focused, to different degrees, on the current state versus the predicted state.

Causal Conditions Affecting Relationship Compatibility

Gottlieb’s quote that opened this article referred to the stake that the Internet dating sites have in the idea that “long-term romantic compatibility can be predicted according to scientific principles (p. 58).” A primary goal of relationship science is, in fact, to make predictions and identify causal conditions that influence important relationship phenomena, such as attraction, satisfaction, and stability (e.g., Kelley et al., 1983). As is true of any complex relationship construct that is likely to have reciprocal associations with other relationship phenomena, there are no definitive models or statements that can be offered about which variables are causal conditions of compatibility versus are outcomes or indicators of compatibility. However, Figure 1 provides a summary of the types of variables likely to influence the interaction patterns in relationships that result in compatibility. These causal

factors can affect a pair's current compatibility as well as the likelihood that the relationship will be compatible in the long-run.

The causal conditions are divided into personal, relational, and environmental factors (Kelley et al., 1983). Personal causal conditions are the relatively stable characteristics of the partners in the relationship, who I will abbreviate as P (Person) and O (Other), following the notation used by Kelley et al. (1983). Individuals with a high level of certain personal characteristics are more likely than their counterparts who are characterized by a low level of these traits, to have compatible relationships with others. For example, personal characteristics that are found to be associated with relationship satisfaction and the other traveling companions of relationship compatibility include agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, high self-esteem, and secure attachment style (e.g., Barelds, 2005). Conversely, the personality characteristics, neuroticism and insecure attachment style, have been linked to lower quality relationships (Caughlin, Huston, & Houts, 2000; Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Kelly & Conley, 1987).

The second category of causal conditions is the combination or intersection of P's and O's characteristics (including their personality characteristics, attitudes and values, interests), which can refer specifically to being a *compatible match*. This causal factor is a focus on static personal characteristics of both partners and represents the crux of what is being considered by Internet matching sites in their efforts to create matches based on relationship science. The three "principles" from the close relationships field that refer to the intersection of partners' characteristics are: (1) similarity (or "birds of a feather flock together"), (2) complementary (or "opposites attract"); and 3) matching on socially desirable characteristics. As will be discussed further in the next section, considerable research indicates that similarity contributes to compatibility. In fact, some writers have equated similarity with compatibility. For example, Houts et al. (1996) wrote, "the standard paradigm for studying the role of compatibility in courtship focuses on whether people who marry are more similar than would be expected by chance" (pp. 7-8).

The third causal condition that can influence the compatibility of a relationship are processes that emerge out of P-O interactions. Certain norms (such as the norm of communality) communication patterns, and exchange patterns that emerge out of P x O interaction can contribute to relationship compatibility. Research by communication scholars (e.g., Sunnafrank & Miller, 1981) have indicated that these are the factors most likely to lead to attraction and early compatibility, and are more important than the joint consideration of static characteristics, i.e., the degree of similarity. It may be difficult, however, to distinguish causal P x O emergent variables (e.g., communication) conceptually from compatibility (the outcome variable) as defined by synchronous meshing of behaviors that result in a positive emotional state in the relationship. However, early P x O emergent conditions may predict later relationship compatibility. In addition, some P x O emergent variables may mediate the effects of other causal variables on compatibility.

The final causal conditions are environmental conditions, considered to be the neglected variables in the study of personal relationships (Berscheid, 1999;

Ridley & Avery, 1979). These are physical and social factors outside of the relationship that can impact the internal dynamics of the relationship. As a sociologist in the relationship field, one of my contributions has been to highlight the role of social networks in affecting relationships. When social network members approve of the couple, they are likely to facilitate experiences that help the couple's compatibility and satisfaction. Conversely, when network members are interfering or at least not supportive, this can have a negative effect on the outcome of the relationship (Sprecher & Feinlee, 1992; Sprecher & Feinlee, 2000; Sprecher, Feinlee, Orbuch, & Willetts, 2002). Other environmental influences on the compatibility of the relationship include stressful external events (e.g., loss of a job) and the erosive effect of one or both partners' attention directed toward alternative relationships (Karney & Bradbury, 1995, 2005). Compatibility is also likely to be affected by more distal factors – such as factors located within the social structure and culture.

Figure 1. Causal Factors Contributing to Relationship Compatibility

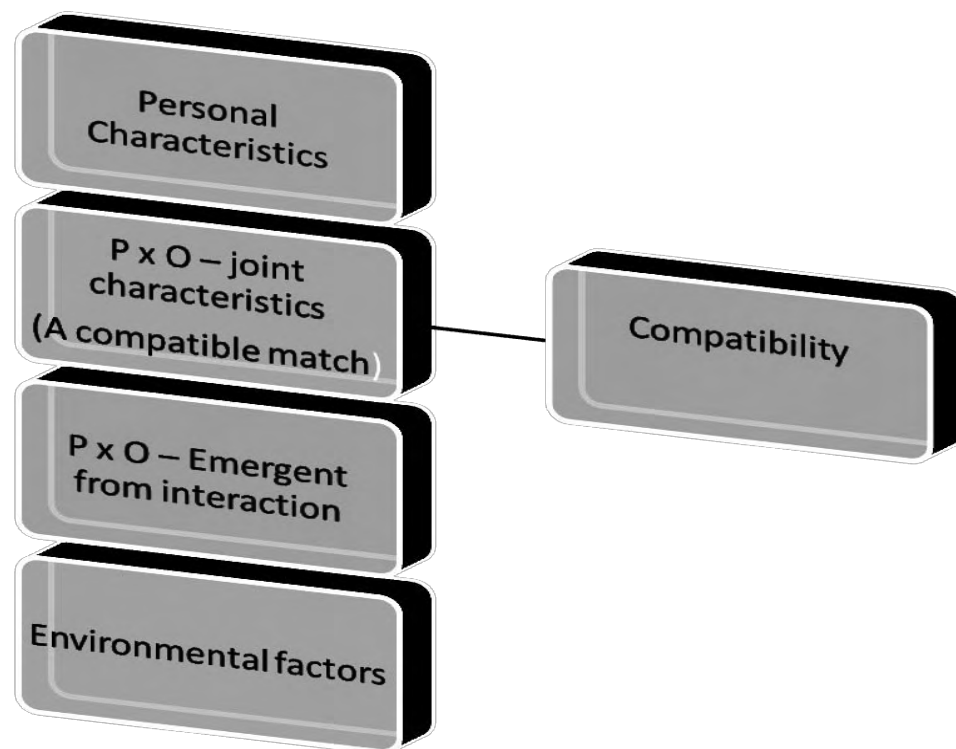


Figure 1. To understand the relationship compatibility we can find casual factors as personal characteristics as: agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion; the union between personality partners, which reflects the compatible match (i.e. communication patterns), the result of this match in interaction and the environmental factors as social networks.

In sum, relationship compatibility can be conceptualized as consisting of behaviors that are rewarding, facilitating, and fair, and these behaviors result in positive feelings. In scholarship in the close relationships field, compatibility is inferred from related constructs, including satisfaction, commitment, and endurance of the relationship, although there is no reason that compatibility could not be measured more directly. Although compatibility may be thought of as a property of a relationship, members of the relationship and outside observers may have different views of the compatibility of a relationship. Perceptions of compatibility may include both a present and a future orientation, and the compatibility of the relationship is likely to change over time.

Compatible Matches in Relationship Science

As noted above, the joint consideration of P's and O's characteristics can refer specifically to being a *compatible match*, one causal factor of relationship compatibility. Just as little has been written in the scientific relationship field directly on the topic of relationship compatibility (the Ickes [1985] volume being an exception), little has been written specifically about the meaning of *compatible matches*. Nonetheless, when matching or matches are discussed in the literature, it is often in context of the three principles referred to above. That is, similarity, matching on socially desirable characteristics, and to a much lesser degree complementarity (or being opposites), are the three principles referred to in scientific discussion of good or compatible matches. All three principles refer to the alignment of P's and O's characteristics (e.g., traits, attitudes, interests, goals). Below, I provide a brief summary of the degree of empirical support for each principle, with an emphasis on recent research.

Similarity. The similarity effect, referring to similarity leading to attraction and satisfaction, has been described as one of the most well-established findings in the study of interpersonal attraction (Berscheid & Reis, 1998) and, indeed, "one of the most robust relationships in all of behavioral sciences" (Berger, 1975, p. 281). The importance of similarity has been demonstrated in many types of research, including mate selection studies, bogus stranger paradigm studies, brief interaction studies, and assessments of existing couples.

Although not generally referred to as studies on similarity, *mate selection studies* (in which participants are asked how much they desire various traits in a partner) have, in some cases, included items that refer to similarity. For example, several years ago, I asked university students to indicate the degree to which they desired various characteristics in a relational partner (the type of relationship that they were asked to consider was manipulated) (Sprecher & Regan, 2002). Included in the list, in addition to traits such as physical attractiveness, ambition, warmth and kindness, were four types of similarity: similarity on background characteristics (e.g., race, religion, social class), similarity on attitudes and values, similarity on social skills (e.g., interaction styles), and similarity on interests and leisure activities. Participants expressed preferences for all four types of similarity, as indicated by mean scores to the items that were above the midpoint of the

response scales. Of the different types of similarity, similarity in attitudes and values was most preferred. The order in which the other types of similarity were rated in importance was: similarity in interests, similarity in social skills (interaction styles), and similarity in background characteristics. Although similarity was generally desired across all types of relationships, it was preferred to a greater degree in a marital partner, particularly as compared to in a friend.

Similar results were found in an earlier partner preference study that I and my colleagues conducted (Regan, Levin, Sprecher, Christopher, & Cate, 2000). The participants rated the same four types of similarity to be moderately important in a partner. In addition, similarity in attitudes and values was rated more important than similarity in interests and leisure activities, which was judged to be more important than similarity in social skills (interaction styles) and similarity in background characteristics. This study also demonstrated that a preference for similarity was greater in a long-term romantic partner than in a short-term sexual fling.

In some mate selection studies, participants' own characteristics are assessed in addition to their preferences for the same characteristics in a partner. For example, Dijkstra and Barelds (2008) had their participants complete measures of the Big Five Personality characteristics (openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism) and then indicate how much they would desire the same personal characteristics in a potential mate. Strong correlations were found between the individuals' own personality characteristics and the degree to which they desired the personality characteristics in a mate.

In a second type of research, *the bogus stranger paradigm* (e.g., Byrne, 1971), participants respond to a hypothetical or phantom other, about whom information is manipulated so that the hypothetical other varies in the level of similarity to the participant. Similarity research using this paradigm has led to the "law of attraction" (Byrne & Rhamey, 1965), which describes a positive linear association between the degree of similarity (e.g., attitudinal similarity) and attraction for another. Although the use of the bogus stranger paradigm to examine the similarity effect is less likely to appear in recent literature (the focus has shifted to the study of ongoing relationships), Aron, Steele, Kashdan, and Perez (2006) used this method to examine the effect of similarity of interests on initial attraction to a same-gender other. In their design, they manipulated not only the level of similarity of the other but also the expectation that a relationship could develop. Based on self-expansion theory (Aron & Aron, 1986), they predicted that when participants are not led to believe that a relationship was certain, the similarity effect will occur, but when there is certainty of a relationship, the effect of similarity may be reduced or even disappear (because a dissimilar other can be desirable for the self-expansion opportunities offered). The findings supported the predictions, particularly for men. The lack of effect found for women was explained as due to the lesser relevance of activities to the friendships of women.

In a third type of similarity research, referred to as the *brief-interaction study* (Montoya, Horton, & Kirchner, 2008), pairs of strangers engage in a brief interaction, and/or their perceptions of similarity to each other or their actual similarity are correlated with their degree of liking after the brief interaction. Effects

of actual similarity involve measuring the previously unacquainted individuals' attributes prior to interaction and then examining how a calculated degree of similarity (e.g., a difference score) is associated with the liking for each other. Testing the effects of perceived similarity involves examining how the partners' beliefs about similarity (after the interaction) are associated with feelings of attraction. As an example of such a study, many years ago I had pairs of previously unacquainted individuals of the opposite sex engage in a "get-acquainted" hour interaction in a public location (Sprecher & Duck, 1994). The participants completed a questionnaire before and after their interaction. Participants' beliefs about their similarity (as assessed in the post-interaction survey) were found to be associated with both dating and friendship attraction for the other. Perceived similarity was also found to be associated with the perceived quality of communication in the interaction. In multivariate analyses, perceived similarity remained a significant predictor of romantic and friendship attraction, even controlling for perceived physical attractiveness of the other and ratings of the quality of the communication. Perceived similarity can be strongly associated with attraction and compatibility in early stages of a relationship, for a number of reasons beyond the role it plays as a proxy variable for actual similarity, including that the reverse causal direction could be operating – attraction can lead to perceptions of similarity (Morry, 2005, 2007). For other brief-interaction studies that provide support for actual or perceived similarity leading to attraction, see, for example, Tenny, Turkheimer, and Oltmanns (2009); and Sunnafrank and Ramirez (2004).

In a fourth type of research, based on *surveys with actual ongoing couples*, degree of actual similarity is assessed. One issue that is examined is whether there is greater than chance similarity in existing couples, which is referred to as positive assortative mating (Buss, 1984). The correlations between partners are generally strong for age, degree of education, physical attributes, overall physical attractiveness, leisure pursuits, and role preferences; somewhat moderate for political and religious attitudes; and weak or inconsistent for personality characteristics and attitudes (Buss, 1984; Barelds, 2005; Feingold, 1988; Gonzaga, Campos, & Bradbury, 2007; Houts et al., 1996; Luo & Klohnen, 2005; Rammstedt & Schupp, 2008). Barelds and Barelds-Dijkstra (2007) found that couples who were friends before their relationship had transitioned to a romantic one had greater personality similarity than those who had rapid onset to a romantic relationship, presumably because those who were friends first had the opportunity to learn more about each other and therefore more effectively engage in positive assortative mating. Research has also yielded evidence that active assortative mating (preference for similarity) that occurs at greater than chance cannot be explained away by social homogamy (shared background leading to similarity) or convergence (couples becoming more similar over time) (Houts et al., 1996; Luo & Klohnen, 2005).

More relevant to the topic of similarity leading to compatibility is another issue examined in some research that has studied similarity in ongoing couples -- how degree of similarity between partners is associated with relationship quality, such as satisfaction. Findings have been weak or inconsistent, however. Some

research has found that dyadic similarity is associated with greater satisfaction or relationship quality (e.g., for a review of early work, see Karney & Bradbury, 1995; for more recent research, see Gonzaga et al., 2007; Luo & Klohnen, 2005), whereas other research has found weak or non-existent associations (Barelds, 2005; Gattis, Berns, Simpson, & Christensen, 2004; Gaunt, 2006). When perceived similarity is the focus, individuals in ongoing relationships report that they are similar (more than they are different) with their partner, and beliefs about similarity are associated with relationship quality (e.g. Lutz-Zois, Bradley, Mihalik, & Moorman-Eavers, 2006; Sprecher, 1998a & b).

Montoya et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analysis study of the impact of actual and perceived similarity on attraction and satisfaction across studies using three of the methods referred to above: no-interaction (phantom other) studies, brief-interaction studies, and studies focused on existing couples. Reflecting the types of similarity most often examined in the literature, the meta-analysis focused on the similarity effect for attitudes and personality traits. The researchers reported that the effect for actual similarity was strong for no-interaction studies, moderate for brief-interaction studies, and weak for studies with existing couples. The effect of perceived similarity was found to be equally strong across the three types of research.

More recently, similarity effects have been examined with data collected from users at Internet dating sites, although this research has been limited to data from online dating sites (e.g., Match.com) that focus on self-selection, and not from the Internet sites that involve scientific compatibility matching (e.g., eHarmony). The standardized items that all members complete at such sites (e.g., Match.com) are generally limited to a few questions; therefore, similarity cannot be examined for personality and attitudes, the dimensions most frequently examined in prior research. With this caveat, the recent research indicates that users have preferences for similar others. For example, Fiore and Donath (2005) obtained from 65,000 users profile information, reported preferences for partners, and actual communication with other members at the site. They found that the users preferred others who were similar to themselves on several variables such as marital history, desire for children, self-reported physical appearance, and smoking behavior. Skopek, Schulz, and Blossfeld (2010), using data from 13,573 users at a German online dating site, found that both men and women were likely to initiate contact and respond to messages with those others who were similar in education. Similar results were found with users in a dating site in Israel (Shtatfeld & Barak, 2009). Studies conducted with data collected from matching sites have also indicated a preference for someone of the same race (Hitsch, Hortacsu, & Ariely, 2009).

Complementarity

One implication of the overwhelming evidence for the similarity effect is that little support is found for complementarity, or the notion that opposites attract or that differences lead to relationship compatibility. In fact, most of the similarity

research referred to above is also evidence for a lack of the complementarity effect. Some recent studies, however, have shown that in some contexts or for some variables, complementarity may occur and/or be associated with a positive outcome for the relationship. I referred earlier to Aron et al.'s (2006) phantom other study, which provided suggestive evidence that when there is a guarantee of being liked, attraction to differences can occur, at least among men for a same-gender other (based on differences in interests) in an experimental context. Benefits of differences were also found in a study by Baxter and West (2003), in which members of friendships and romantic couples were interviewed and asked to discuss both how they were similar and how they were different. The participants identified both similarities and differences in their relationships, and the differences (as well as the similarities) were described as having both good and bad consequences for the relationship. Individual growth was seen as the primary advantage of differences. Baxter and West concluded "our results suggest that, at any given point in time, the snapshot of a relationship contains both similarities and differences, sometimes lodged in the same phenomenon" (p. 510). Another recent study (Amodio & Showers, 2005) found that while perceived similarity was associated with liking in high-committed dating relationships of college students, in relationships characterized by low commitment, dissimilarity was associated with greater liking. In a study that focused on assortative mating across a range of variables in newlywed couples, Luo and Klohen (2005) found similarity on attitudes and some personality traits, but also found some evidence for complementarity (negative assortment) for the personality trait, extraversion. Although differences can sometimes be initially attractive (see, also, Dijkstra & Barelds, 2008), research by Feinlee (2001) on fatal attractions suggests that differences can lead to problems in the relationship over time.

Matching

The matching principle refers to the notion that individuals tend to pair up with others who have about the same level of socially desirable characteristics, regardless of whether the socially desirable traits are the same or different between partners (Hatfield & Sprecher, 2009). Many years ago, Sociologist Erving Goffman (1952) observed that a proposal of marriage occurs when a man calculates his own social worth and suggests to a woman that her assets are not so much better as to "preclude a merger." Influenced by Kurt Lewin's (Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, & Sears, 1944) Level of Aspiration theory, Walster, Hatfield, Aronson, Abrahams, and Rottman (1966) proposed that in making dating and mate choices, people will choose someone of their own level of social desirability and they will do so because of being influenced by both the desirability of the other's traits and the chances of obtaining the other (Walster et al., 1966).

In the simplest form of the matching hypothesis, the focus is on physical attractiveness matching (Berscheid, Dion, Walster, & Walster, 1971; Feingold, 1988; Lee, Loewenstein, Ariely, Hong, & Young, 2008; Straaten, Engles, Finkenauer, & Holland, 2009). In more complex forms of matching, many factors

are considered when two people decide whether they are a well-matched couple. For example, one person can compensate for being unattractive by offering other characteristics, such as an exciting personality and material assets (Hatfield & Sprecher, 1986, 2009). Further research on matching (Kalick & Hamilton, 1986; see, also, Aron, 1988) has distinguished among *preferences*, *realistic choices*, and *what actually occurs* (i.e., what people settle for). Very little evidence has been found for matching when the focus is on preferences; instead, people want as much as they can get (e.g., Walster et al., 1966). But, in reality -- when everything is considered -- including what P desires, whether O likes P in return, whether P thinks O will like him/her, how much P is willing to risk a rejection to overtures, and market considerations (alternatives for P and O) -- matching on socially desirable characteristics often occurs. In addition, a traditional type of matching is gender-linked. In some matches, an older, wealthy, successful man pairs with a younger, attractive woman.

Analyses of data from a dating website collected recently by a team of economists demonstrated the complex matching that occurs in choices made at dating websites (Hitsch, Hortacsu, & Ariely, 2009; see also Hitsch, Hortacsu, & Ariely, 2010). In their study of 22,000 users of a major dating service over a three-month period, the researchers collected data on activities that included browsing profiles, sending messages, and actual two-way interactions. They also downloaded the photos that were posted and had University of Chicago students rate them on physical attractiveness. One issue that the researchers examined was the “trade-off” between different traits, i.e., how much a particular person with a negative trait or deficiency would need to make up on a positive trait in order for there to be a “trade-off” desirable to others. For example, using economic modeling, they estimated that with each decile decrease in a man’s physical attractiveness, an increase of \$8,000 to \$49,000 annual income would be needed to compensate, to receive the same number of responses from women at the site. The researchers estimated that the most unattractive men would need to earn \$186,000 above the median income (\$62,500), i.e., have an annual salary of \$248,500, to obtain an equivalent amount of interest from women. They also concluded that women could not make up in income what they lacked in physical attractiveness because men are not as attracted to income in women as women are to income in men.

In sum, compatible matches in the scientific relationship field most often refers to similar matches, although complementarity and matching on socially desirable characteristics are also considered. Being a compatible match may be a necessary but not sufficient condition for achieving relationship compatibility. If the two people are mismatched, they are not likely to be able to make their relationship compatible in the long run regardless of how hard they work at it. As noted by Berscheid (1985), “Some people are simply and irrevocably incompatible with each other” (p. 146) and “no amount of negotiation or ‘conflict resolution skills,’ no amount of relationship counseling, or ‘working on’ the relationship, may produce compatibility.” (p. 146). On the other hand, a compatible match at the beginning of the relationship is not a sufficient condition for long-term relationship compatibility. Returning to the causal model in Figure 1, relationship compatibility is influenced

by many other factors in addition to the P x O joint characteristics (i.e., matching). A couple could make a perfect match, but bad things can happen to good couples, and the relationship can become incompatible over time. In the next section, I turn to a discussion of the procedures used at the Internet matching sites to create compatible matches using scientific principles.

Compatibility Matching at the Internet Dating Sites

Although there were early attempts to use computers for matching, both for science (e.g., Coombs & Kenkel, 1966) and as a service for college students frustrated with traditional ways of meeting partners (see summary in Leonhardt, 2006, of "Operation Match" at Harvard University), High-speed Internet and personal computers needed to be created before successful modern day Internet matching could be developed. The first Internet matching site in the U.S., Match.com, was launched in 1995. Match.com, as well as many other matching sites (e.g., Yahoo! Personals, American Singles), primarily offer a venue for online personal advertisements or profiles. The profile information typically contains a combination of responses to check-box questions (questions about age, height, body type, occupation, etc.) and open-ended responses (e.g., "In my own words"), and also allows the user to post a photograph or photographs and sometimes also videotapes. Search engines are available for the members to narrow their search to a particular gender, age group, and geographical area; and to people with specific interests.

While Match.com (including Match.International which operates in approximately 25 countries, including Mexico) and other similar sites offer primarily a "searching" venue through electronic personal advertisements, a "scientific" Internet matching service was launched with eHarmony in 2000, followed by Perfectmatch.com in 2002 and Chemistry.com (part of Match.com) in 2005. (True.com also claims to provide scientific, compatibility matching.) These sites distinguish themselves from others by offering a "scientific approach" to matching (e.g., Gottlieb, 2006). Members who seek matches at these sites complete a lengthy questionnaire, which the sites state have "science" behind their construction (e.g., "PhD designed"). "Matching algorithms," also claimed to be guided by scientific principles, are used to sift through the data and match pairs (Orenstein, 2003). Users pay more for the scientific matching sites than for the sites based on posting profiles.

What "science" is being used at these scientific matching sites, and how does this science correspond with what we know about compatibility and compatible matches based on the published science on relationships, as reviewed above? In addition, is it possible that the Internet sites that use scientific matching can create more compatible matches than alternative ways of meeting partners? Before I provide answers to these questions, a caveat is in order. There is not a definitive source of information available on the science used at the matching sites because such information is considered proprietary (intellectual property). Information on the science behind the match-making, however, can be gleaned

from their websites, from media summaries of interviews conducted with the major researchers and CEOs at the Internet sites, and from an examination of their surveys. In addition, the rationale behind the eHarmony matching system can be found in the company's patent application, available online (Buckwalter, Carter, Forgatch, Parsons, & Warren, 2004, 2008)^V.

Scientific expertise. All three major scientific matching sites have hired academic Ph.Ds. At Perfectmatch, this is sociologist and University of Washington Professor, Pepper Schwartz. Helen Fisher, a biological anthropologist at Rutgers University, is the academic scientist at Chemistry.com. Both Schwartz and Fisher, who work in a consulting capacity at the sites, were hired prior to the development of the sites' matching procedures, and were instrumental in creating them. At eHarmony, Gian Gonzaga is the chief (full-time) relationship scientist, although he was not part of the original team that created the matching survey. The survey at eHarmony was created by Neil Clark Warren, the original founder, who has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Chicago, and Galen Buckwalter, who has a Ph.D in psychology and expertise in statistics and methods (e.g., Gottlieb, 2006). In addition, there are many other scientists who work at eHarmony or are serving in the role of advisors.

Use of prior scientific literature. All three sites have referred to the development of their compatibility survey as being based on prior literature in the relationship field. eHarmony states that its patented matching technique is "based on 35 years of clinical research and rigorous relationship research to determine which commonalities between partners are consistently associated with successful relationships."^{VI} In his interview with Gottlieb (2006), Buckwalter (who appears to have been the primary creator of the survey at eHarmony) referred to reviewing the psychology literature "to identify the areas that might be relevant in predicting success in long-term relationships" (p. 60). Perfectmatch.com states that their approach is based on "over 30 years of research."^{VII} And, Chemistry.com has stated about their scientific matching, "Our singles matching models are based on 35 years of clinical experience and rigorous relationship research..."

The scientific principles behind the matching. The primary scientific principle for compatibility matching used at eHarmony, according to public domain information, is similarity. In an interview summarized in Gottlieb (2006), Warren said, "Similarities are like money in the bank. Differences are like debts you owe. It's all right to have a few differences, as long as you have plenty of equity in your account."^{VIII} He also has stated that after counseling many failing couples, he concluded that "opposites attract, but then they attack"^{IX}. But which types of similarity are emphasized at eHarmony? As discussed above, there are many

^V <http://www.google.com/patents?vid=USPAT6735568>
<http://www.google.com/patents?vid=USPAT7454357>

^{VI} <http://www.eharmony.com/why>

^{VII} <http://www.perfectmatch.com/hp/indexaff.asp?p=n>

^{VIII} <http://old.nationalreview.com/interrogatory/warren200502140751.asp>

^{IX} <http://old.nationalreview.com/interrogatory/warren200502140751.asp>

ways in which partners can be similar to each other. In addition, prior research has indicated that similarity on one dimension is not necessarily associated with similarity on another dimension (e.g., Houts et al., 1996). The eHarmony website refers to matching on 29 dimensions, which are grouped into four categories: personality, character, emotional skills, and family and values. The survey measures these dimensions and many other variables with a survey of over 250 items. Greg Waldorf, eHarmony's CEO, has stated in a recent interview: "We found that over time the superficial stuff doesn't matter. It doesn't matter that you both love tennis or skiing. What's important is that you have the same attitudes to family and finances."^x

The Duet Total Compatibility System at Perfectmatch.com is based on both similarity and complementarity, and Pepper Schwartz has argued that both are necessary for romantic compatibility (see interview reported in Gottlieb, 2006). The test is described as being based on the same theory behind the famous Myers Briggs Type indicator. In a relatively brief questionnaire (with items that are dichotomous yes/no questions), eight personality characteristics are measured: romantic impulsivity, personal energy, outlook, predictability, flexibility, decision-making style, emotionality, and self-nurturing style. Schwartz has stated (see Gottlieb, 2006) that similarity operates for the first four factors, and either similarity or differences for the final four. The Perfectmatch.com website also refers to matching "not only with people who are similar to you but also people who complement you."^{xi}

Chemistry.com's survey and matching process focus more on chemistry than compatibility. The survey has approximately 150 questions, with responses to questions designed to measure four personality types, each associated with a particular hormone or chemical: Explorer (Dopamine), Builder (Serotonin), Director (Testosterone), and Negotiator (Estrogen). For example, users are asked in one question to indicate the length of their index finger relative to their ring finger (which can be related to the level of testosterone). In another question, users are asked to recognize sincere versus insincere faces, which Fisher argues is related to estrogen (being a Negotiator) (Gottlieb, 2006). Based on their responses to a variety of questions, people are classified according to a primary personality type and a secondary personality type. In media interviews, Fisher has argued that falling in love depends on both similarity and complementarity^{xii}. For example, in one recent interview she stated, "I think we are unconsciously attracted to those who complement ourselves biologically, as well as socially, psychologically, and

^x <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/retailandconsumer/6142658/Appliance-of-science-in-finding-love-online.html>

^{xi}

<http://www.perfectmatch.com/?p=n&OVRAW=perfectmatch.com&OVADGRPID=18556335400&OVKEY=perfectmatch.com&OVMTTC=standard&OVADID=57164700512&OVKWID=417229309012&OVCAMPID=8516457012&OVNDID=ND1>

^{xii} <http://www.chemistry.com/drhelenfisher/interviewdrfisher.aspx>
http://www.scientificblogging.com/run_and_tumble/helen_fisher_who_we_love_and_how_science_can_help_us_find_our_soulmate
<http://www.webmd.com/sex-relationships/features/the-science-behind-romance>

intellectually. I think we fall in love with someone who has a different chemical profile for dopamine, serotonin, estrogen, and testosterone that complements our own. This is the basic premise behind my work with Chemistry.com"^{XIII} She has also stated that it is the prominent neurochemical within an individual that determines whether the preference is for similarity or complementarity. Explorers and Builders will prefer similarity, whereas Directors and Negotiators will select each other (Fisher, 2009).^{XIV}

In-house empirical research. The sites also refer to their own scientific research for the purpose of developing their matching procedures. eHarmony has stated that their patented scientific model for matching is based on data collected from 5,000 married couples. Although I could not find the detail of this study (see also discussion of this omission by Houran, Lange, Rentfrow, & Bruckner, 2004), the study is referred to in various published sources (e.g., Gottlieb, 2006). For example, Carter (2005) wrote that his first involvement as a research scientist with eHarmony was to conduct construct validity for a set of factors from a 1000+ item survey that had been administered to approximately 3,000 married couples. He also refers to replicating the factor structure with a second sample of couples.^{XV} In addition, as can be gleaned from various sources, including the eHarmony patent (Buckwalter et al., 2004, 2008), this large sample of couples has been used to determine what combination of traits is found in couples who have the highest level of satisfaction.

The sites also appear to use data collected from their members to improve their matching procedures. At eHarmony, users' actions after they are sent matches (e.g., whether they click on particular matches to obtain more information) are used as input into the model for the particular users almost immediately.^{XVI} Chemistry.com has had a post-meeting "chemistry check" in which members give feedback after a date. Helen Fisher has stated in several media interviews that she is using the data and feedback from the users to modify the Chemistry.com matching procedure. In addition, Fisher has referred to having data from 28,000 users and being prepared to publish the Chemistry's matching procedure for peer review.^{XVII} She has classified these users into different profiles and followed their dating experiences. According to interviews, these data have led to her conclusions that people with the primary personality associated with dopamine and serotonin prefer each other while those with the personality type associated with testosterone are attracted to those with a personality type of estrogen.

^{XIII} Interview with Helen Fisher. <http://www.chemistry.com/drhelenfisher/interviewdrfisher.aspx> Downloaded 6/8/10

<http://www.elle.com/Life-Love/Sex-Relationships/The-Laws-Of-Attraction>

^{XIV} http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/politics/ci_11602383

^{XV} <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/getArticle.cfm?id=1726>

^{XVI} http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9127711/Online_dating_The_technology_behind_the_attraction

^{XVII} http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9127711/Online_dating_The_technology_behind_the_attraction

Finally, eHarmony is the industry leader in scientific research designed to answer basic research questions about relationships and contribute to peer-reviewed, academic research. The eHarmony research labs include research by Gian Gonzaga, Thomas Bradbury, and other relationship scientists (<http://www.eharmony.com/labs/>). The current eHarmony research facilities, which opened in spring of 2007, include a state-of-the-art laboratory for studying couple interaction. As noted at the website for eharmonyLabs, “While some of the research we conduct is for product development, and therefore proprietary, much of our research is submitted for peer review and academic publication. We are committed to sharing the knowledge we gain and we collaborate with an expert advisory committee to better the field of research and improve relationships.”^{xviii} Several online studies are advertised at the Lab’s website. In addition, a marriage study is currently underway which involves extensive data collected from couples, including observations of their interaction.

The “algorithms.” The matching algorithms, regardless of the underlying scientific principles, can be considered a form of science. Calculations are conducted with mega-data to determine the best matches for the sites’ members. A media interview with the CEO at eHarmony refers to “1 billion calculations each day.”^{xix} He (Greg Waldorf) also gives credit to the group of Ph.Ds behind the science, who he refers to as the company’s “big brain.” Waldorf states: “The Ph.D.s are a special breed, they have expertise in everything from psychology, how do relationships get formed, all the way through from computer science and mathematics to really figure out the complexity of the massive scale of our system, how to make it all happen in a very predictable way for the user, knowing we have a lot of choices that we can make to which choices we can deliver.”^{xx}

The exact matching algorithms at the various sites may never be publically known, but even if we could know, they are likely to change and be fluid depending on a number of factors. One aspect of the calculations is likely to involve psychometric theory and analyses^{xxi} guiding the process of combining items into factor scores, for each individual. Then, these scores are likely compared to benchmarks determined by prior data sets and to current data from potential matches’ responses on the same dimensions. One description for eHarmony’s matching procedure was found in an early report by Carter (2005): “...users’ factor scores are compared to various benchmarks to determine which compatibility models are statistically valid for them, and then these models are used to compute compatibility coefficients for each logically possible pairing in the user pool.” In addition, the eHarmony patent (Buckwalter et al., 2004, 2008) suggests that users are first classified according to an individual satisfaction score, representing the likelihood that they would be satisfied in relationships and then further collapsed

^{xviii} <http://www.eharmony.com/labs/about/>

^{xix} http://www.electronicretailermag.com/er0209_eharmony/
http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9127711/Online_dating_The_technology_behind_the_attraction

^{xx} <http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=10701151>

^{xxi} <http://www.eharmony.com/labs/about/>

into three groups based on likelihood of being satisfied: unlikely, average, good. This consideration of an individual satisfaction score is similar to the consideration of personal factors affecting compatibility, as displayed in Figure 1. Then, within each of these groups, a satisfaction score is approximated with each possible match within the same category. This approximated satisfaction score is likely based on a similarity index. For example, in a recent empirical report, eHarmony scientists Carter and Buckwalter (2009) wrote that their online system: “accurately understood at a broad level to create pairings based on a schema of maximizing the intra-dyad levels of traits observed in empirical research to be positively related to marriage quality, and minimizing intra-dyad differences on traits where similarities have been observed to be positively related to marriage quality.” (Carter & Buckwalter, 2009, p. 107).

In sum, there are scientists and a scientific stamp at the three major Internet matching sites. eHarmony seems to focus exclusively on the principle of similarity, although on dimensions (e.g., personality) that have shown in some published relationship literature to have only modest, positive assortative mating in actual couples (e.g., Montoya et al., 2008). Chemistry.com and PerfectMatch.com claim to focus on both similarity and complementarity, with the dominant principle seeming to depend on the particular variable, circumstances, and individual preferences. As reviewed earlier in this article, however, almost no published research exists to indicate that complementarity on attitudes, values, or personality is associated with relationship satisfaction or success in long-term relationships. In addition, variables associated with neurochemicals and brain chemistry (as at Chemistry.com) are not among the variables measured in the published social scientific research on attraction and close relationships. Therefore, although there may be science behind the Internet match-making services, it is not always the same science as in the published relationship literature. Nonetheless, the “proof is in the pudding;” future peer-reviewed publications from the scientists at the matching sites may provide validity for their choices of variables and their emphasis on complementarity for at least some variables or for some people. eHarmony appears to be the leader in terms of several aspects of science, including the use of published scientific literature behind their matching, conducting their own scientific research to improve the matching, and in contributing to academic research on couples.

Can the Science Behind the Matching Create More Compatible Matches than Alternative Ways of Meeting?

The theoretical perspective underlying the online matchmaking paradigm is that who you are and who you choose to be with will have an enormous impact on the quality of your marriage. Matchmaking services also assume it is possible to affect your selection when looking for a mate in a way that will improve on the outcome in a manner that would likely not occur without intervention (Carter & Buckwalter, 2009, p. 106).

This is one of the major arguments of scientific matching internet sites -- that they can provide something more than just another (efficient) way to meet partners. The argument is that that they offer a better way because the scientific procedures that they use for match-making can result in more compatible matches, which can

then lead to long-term compatibility. Warren (founder of eHarmony) has stated, "Seventy-five percent of what makes for a great marriage has to do with successful selection of a partner."^{xxii} At this time, however, the "social experiment of an unprecedented proportions" referred to in the opening quote (Gottlieb, 2006) to this article has yielded only limited and mixed evidence for the premise that Internet scientific-based matches are more compatible than those that have their origin in more traditional ways.

In a recent published study, Carter and Buckwalter (2009), scientists at eHarmony, compared a group of 157 couples who had been matched through eHarmony with a comparable group of couples (matched on marriage length and age of spouses) who were recruited through a separate online sampling procedure. On a number of variables that referred to personality, affect, and values, the couples who had been matched through the eHarmony site were more similar than those who met in other ways. In addition, the online matched couples had higher satisfaction scores, as indicated by their scores on Dyadic Adjustment scale. Similar results had been found in an earlier study reported by Carter and Snow (2004), using a similar sampling procedure. This research could be considered as supportive evidence that scientific matching leads to compatible relationships, although it is difficult to draw valid conclusions based on a comparison of two convenient samples that each have unknown selection biases. In addition, independent verification is needed by researchers unassociated with a dating website.

In a recent study *not* funded by a dating website, Sociologist Rosenfeld (2010) analyzed a new data set, Wave 1 of the "How Couples Meet and Stay Together." The sample consisted of a U.S. national representative sample of 4002 individuals, 3009 who were partnered. Rosenfeld found that the Internet has clearly gained in importance as a way to meet partners. Of those who had met in the two years prior to the study, 23% of heterosexual couples and 61% of gay couples had met through the Internet. Rosenfeld compared couples, based on how they met, on a relationship quality score, and found no significant differences. In additional analyses that controlled for a large number of variables, including relationship duration, how the couple met continued to be unrelated to relationship satisfaction. Although Rosenfeld's study was based on a representative sample, it is also limited in what it can tell us about scientific-based matches at Internet sites because: 1) the analyses did not distinguish between those meeting through dating services versus those meeting in other on-line ways (e.g., chatrooms); and 2) the satisfaction measure was only one item. Therefore, more research is needed on this issue of whether scientific matching can create more compatible matches. In fact, OnlineDatingMagazine.com has advertised a survey that assesses whether online relationships are more successful than offline relationships.^{xxiii} Regardless of the findings, however, this study will also be limited by self-selection biases of the couples who respond.

^{xxii} <http://old.nationalreview.colm/interrogatory/warren200502140751.asp>

^{xxiii} <http://www.onlinedatingmagazine.com/columns/2009editorials/modernlovestudy.html>

Speculation also exists on how the attraction process differs between relationships that meet in traditional face-to-face contexts versus those that meet on-line, regardless of the specific on-line venue (Cooper & Sportolari, 1997; Merkle & Richardson, 2000; Sprecher, 2009; Sprecher, Schwartz, Harvey & Hatfield, 2009). The speculations offer suggestions as to how components of or pathways to compatibility can differ as a function of how the relationship begins. For example, the process of attraction in a face-to-face romantic relationship is likely to involve first the influence of proximity and physical attractiveness, and then the discovery of similarity, followed by the rewards of self-disclosure (Merkle & Richardson, 2000). In contrast, Internet-initiated relationships have been described as involving “an inverted developmental sequence,” (Merkle & Richardson, 2000) which first often involves a high level of mutual and sometimes intense self-disclosure, and an initial minimal role for physical attractiveness and proximity. Although there may be an exchange of photographs between potential matches, physical attractiveness and other “chemistry” factors generally play less of a role initially. Furthermore, once two people meet, the impact of physical attractiveness can be reduced because it follows learning other information about each other. As Cooper and Sportolari speculate, “the felt intensity and meaning of any unappealing physical traits are then more likely to be mitigated by the overall attraction that exists” (p. 9).

Another difference is that social networks may play a lesser role in aiding the development of Internet-based relationships. In traditional ways of forming relationships, people are often introduced by friends or two people meet based on friend-created social settings that bring people together (e.g., Parks, 2007). Relationships formed through the Internet need to overcome barriers of geographic distance (in some cases) and lack of integration of the couple in a larger social network in order to become compatible for the long-term.

Conclusions

Recent Internet studies have brought “compatibility” and “compatible matches” to the public’s attention. In addition, the publicity from the sites has drawn public’s attention to relationship science and its potential role in helping to create compatible matches. This article first reviewed the scientific perspective on relationship compatibility and compatible matches. Although a compatible match (e.g., similarity) is one major factor leading to relationship compatibility (i.e., satisfaction, commitment), many other factors play a role as well. Some dating sites recognize this. For example, eHarmony has advertised that they use science not only to help in mate selection, but also for “relationship enhancement.” Relationship information, based on scientific research, is available on their website to help couples maintain their relationship and achieve happiness.

In the last section of this article, I reviewed what public domain information reveals about scientific-based compatibility at the Internet dating sites. There is some “compatibility” between the sites’ science and the published science on

relationships, but also some “incompatibility.” For example, there is very little evidence in the published science that complementarity can lead to long-term compatibility, although this is a principle used at some of the sites for matching. In addition, even when the similarity principle is emphasized at the sites, it is sometimes in regard to variables that have not been investigated in prior scientific literature. Furthermore, although complex matching and trade-offs occur in regard to socially desirable traits in relationship formation that occurs in both traditional contexts for meeting and in the self-selection process at Internet dating sites such as Match.com (Hitsch et al., 2009), it is unclear whether the scientific-based matching sites also use this principle in their matching.

Regardless of the validity of the science at the matching sites, one important function they offer is to provide legitimization for matches, similar to that provided by other third parties. My first scientific paper, at the first International Conference on Personal Relationships (Madison, Wisconsin, USA, in 1982), was a paper on the *legitimizing factors in the initiation of relationships* (Marwell, Sprecher, McKinney, DeLamater, & Smith, 1982). Based on a random sample of college sophomores at the University of Wisconsin, we discussed the important role of friends and family in introducing romantic partners. We stated that friends and family are important because they help to legitimize the relationship. Let me end this paper, written almost 30 years after my first conference paper, by stating that this legitimization factor may also be an important function served by the scientific-based Internet matching. Even if the science behind the compatibility matching does not result in relationships that are any more compatible than those formed through traditional ways of meeting, the science-based matches, similar to a friend-initiated matches, provide a “legitimization” of the relationship. The sites can vouch for the fact that based on their matching procedures, this is not a poor match, and may even be a very compatible one.

References

- Agnew, C. R., Loving, T. J., & Drigotas, S. M. (2001). Substituting the forest for the trees: Social networks and the prediction of romantic relationship state and fate. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*, 1042-1057.
- Amodio, D. M., & Showers, C. J. (2005). ‘Similarity breeds liking’ revisited: The moderating role of commitment. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 22*, 817-836.
- Aron, A. (1988). The matching hypothesis reconsidered again: Comment on Kalick and Hamilton. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*, 441-446.
- Aron, A., & Aron, E. (1986). *Love and the expansion of self: Understanding attraction and satisfaction*. New York: Hemisphere.
- Aron, A., Steele, J. L., Kashdan, T. B., & Perez, M. (2006). When similar do not attract: Tests of a prediction from self-expansion model. *Personal Relationships, 13*, 387-396.
- Barelds, D. P. H. (2005). Self and partner personality in intimate relationships. *European Journal of Personality, 19*, 501-518.

- Barelds, D. P. H., & Barelds-Dijkstra, P. (2007). Love at first sight or friends first? Ties among partner personality trait similarity, relationship onset, relationship quality, and love. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *24*, 479-496.
- Baxter, L. A., & West, L. (2003). Couple perceptions of their similarities and differences: A dialectical perspective. *Journal of Personal and Social Relationships*, *20*, 491-514.
- Berscheid, E. (1985). Compatibility, interdependence, and emotion. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 143-161). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Berscheid, E. (1999). The greening of relationship science. *American Psychologist*, *54*, 260-266.
- Berscheid, E., Dion, K., Walster, E., & Walster, G. W. (1971). Physical attractiveness and dating choice: A test of the matching hypothesis. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *7*, 173-189.
- Berscheid, E., & Regan, P. (2005). *The psychology of interpersonal relationships*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education (Prentice Hall).
- Berger, C. R. (1975). Task performance and attributional communication as determinants of interpersonal attraction. *Speech Monographs*, *40*, 280-286.
- Berscheid, E., & Reis, H. T. (1998). Attraction and close relationships. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology* (Vol. 2, 4th ed. Pp. 193-281). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bradbury, T. N., & Karney, B. R. (2010). *Intimate relationships*. New York: Norton.
- Buckwalter, J. G., Carter, S. R., Forgatch, G. T. Parsons, T. D., & Warren, N. C. (2004, May 11). *Method and system for identifying people who are likely to have a successful relationship*. U.S. Patent 6,735,568. Washington, DC.
- Buckwalter, J. G., Carter, S. R., Forgatch, G. T. Parsons, T. D., & Warren, N. C. (2008, Nov. 18). *Method and system for identifying people who are likely to have a successful relationship*. U.S. Patent 7,454,357B2. Washington, DC.
- Buss, D. M. (1984). Marital assortment for personality dispositions: Assessment with three different data sources. *Behavior Genetics*, *14*, 111-123.
- Byrne, D. (1971). *The attraction paradigm*. New York: Academic Press.
- Byrne, D., & Rhamey, R. (1965). Magnitude of positive and negative reinforcements as a determinant of attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *2*, 884-889.
- Carter, S. R. (2005, Feb.), For modern-day Cupids, data replaces dating: Psychological science is behind the successful matches made at eHarmony. *Association for Psychological Science Observer*, *18*. Downloaded from <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/getArticle.cfm?id=1826>.
- Carter, S. R., & Buckwalter, J. G. (2009). Enhancing mate selection through the Internet: A comparison of relationship quality between marriages arising from an online matchmaking system and marriages arising from unfettered selection. *Interpersona: An International Journal on Personal Relationships*, *3*, 105-125.

- Carter, S., & Snow, C. (2004, May). *Helping singles enter better marriages using predictive models of marital success*. Paper presented at the 16th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Society.
- Caughlin, J., Huston, T., & Houts, R. (2000). How does personality matter in marriage? An examination of trait anxiety, negativity, and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*, 326-336.
- Clark, M. S. (1985). Implications of relationship type for understanding compatibility. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 119-140). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Coombs, R. H., & Kenkel, W. F. (1966). Sex differences in dating aspiration and satisfaction with computer-arranged partners. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 28*, 62-66.
- Cooper, A., & Sportolari, L. (1997). Romance in cyberspace: Understanding online attraction. *Journal of Sex Education and Therapy, 22*, 7-14.
- Dijkstra, P., & Barelds, D. P. H. (2008). Do people know what they want: A similar or complementary partner? *Evolutionary Psychology, 6*, 595-602.
- Feingold, A. (1988). Matching for attractiveness in romantic partners and same-sex friends: A meta-analysis and theoretical critique. *Psychological Bulletin, 104*, 226-235.
- Felmlee, D. H. (2001). From appealing to appalling: Disenchantment with a romantic partner. *Sociological Perspectives, 44*, 263-280.
- Fisher, H. (2009). *Why him? Why her? Finding real love by understanding your personality type*. Henry Holt.
- Etcheverry, P. E., Le, B., & Charania, M. R. (2008). Perceived versus reported social referent approval and romantic relationship commitment and persistence. *Personal Relationships, 15*, 281-295.
- Felmlee, D. H. (2001). From appealing to appalling: Disenchantment with a romantic partner. *Sociological Perspectives, 44*, 263-280.
- Fiore, A. T., & Donath, J. (2005). Homophily in online dating: When do you like someone like yourself? *CHI*, conference on human factors in computing systems. 1317-1374.
- Furman, W. (1985). Compatibility and incompatibility in children's peer and sibling relationships. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 61-87). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Gattis, K. S., Berns, S., Simpson, L. E., & Christensen, A. (2004). Birds of a feather or strange birds? Ties among personality dimensions, similarity, and marital quality. *Journal of Family Psychology, 4*, 564-574.
- Gaunt, R. (2006). Couple similarity and marital satisfaction: Are similar spouses happier. *Journal of Personality, 74*, 1401-1420.
- Goffman, E. (1952). On cooling the mark out: Some aspect of adaptation to failure. *Psychiatry, 15*, 451-463.
- Gonzaga, G. C., Campos, B., & Bradbury, T. (2007). Similarity, convergence, and relationship satisfaction in dating and married couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 93*, 34-48.

- Gottlieb, L. (March, 2006). How do I love thee? *The Atlantic Monthly*, 58-70. Retrieved June 14, 2009 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200603/online-love>.
- Hatfield, E., & Sprecher, S. (1986). *Mirror, mirror: The importance of looks in everyday life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Hatfield, E., & Sprecher, S. (2009). Matching hypothesis. In H. T. Reis & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of human relationships* (Vol. 2, pp. 1065-1067). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hatfield, E., Traupmann, J., Sprecher, S., Utne, M., & Hay, J. (1985). Equity and intimate relations: Recent research. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 91-117). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Hendrick, C., & Hendrick, S. S. (Eds.) (2000). *Close relationships: A sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hitsch, G. J., Hortacsu, A., & Ariely, D. (2009). What makes you click? Mate preferences in online dating. http://home.uchicago.edu/~ghitsch/Hitsch-Researc/Guenter_Hitsch_Files/Mate-Preferences.pdf.
- Hitsch, G. J., Hortacsu, A., & Ariely, D. (2010). Matching and sorting in online dating. *American Economic Review*, 100, 130-163.
- Houran, J., Lange, R., Rentfrow, J. P., & Bruckner, K. H. (2004). Do online matchmaking tests work? An assessment of preliminary evidence for a publicized 'predictive model of marital success'. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 6, 507-526.
- Houts, R. M., Robins, E., & Huston, T. L. (1996). Compatibility and the development of premarital relationships. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 58, 7-20.
- Huston, T., Niehuis, S., & Smith, S. (2001). The early marital roots of conjugal distress and divorce. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 10, 116-119.
- Ickes, W. (Ed.) (1985) *Compatible and incompatible relationships*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Ickes, W. (1985). Introduction. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 1-7). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Ickes, W., & Charania, M. R. (2009). Compatibility. In H. T. Reis & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of human relationships* (Vol. 1, pp. 283-286). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kalick, S. M., & Hamilton III, T. E. (1986). The matching hypothesis reexamined. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 673-682.
- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability: A review of theory, methods, and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118, 3-34.
- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1997). Neuroticism, marital interaction, and the trajectory of marital satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 1075-1092.
- Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (2005). Contextual influences on marriage: Implications for policy and intervention. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 14, 171-174.

- Kelley, H. H., Berscheid, E., Christensen, A., Harvey, J. H., Huston, T. L., Levinger, G.,...Peterson, D.R. (1983). Analyzing close relationships. In H. H. Kelley, E. Berscheid, A. Christensen, J. H. Harvey, T. L. Huston, G. Levinger... D. R. Peterson (Eds.), *Close relationships* (pp. 20-67). New York: Freeman.
- Kelly, E. L., & Conley, J. J. (1987). Personality and compatibility: A prospective analysis of marital stability and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*, 27-40.
- Lamb, M. E., & Gilbride, K. E. (1985). Compatibility in parent-infant relationships: Origins and processes. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 33-60). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Lee, L., Loewenstein, G., Ariely, D., Hong, J., & Young, J. (2008). If I'm not hot, are you hot or not?: Physical-attractiveness evaluations and dating preferences as a function of one's own attractiveness. *Psychological Science*, *19*, 669-677.
- Leonhardt, D. (2006, March 28). The famous founder of Operation Match. *New York Times*. Retrieved December 22, 2007, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/28/business/29leonside.html>.
- Levinger, G., & Rands, M. (1985). Compatibility in marriage and other close relationships. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 309-331). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Lewin, K., Dembo, T., Festinger, L., & Sears, P. (1944). Level of aspiration. In J. McV. Hunt (Ed.), *Personality and the behavior disorders* (Vol. 1, pp. 333-378). New York: Ronald Press.
- Loving, T. J. (2006). Predicting dating relationship fate with insiders' and outsiders' perspective: Who and what is asked matters. *Personal Relationships*, *13*, 349-362.
- Luo, S., & Klohnen, E. C. (2005). Assortative mating and marital quality in newlyweds: A couple centered approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 304-326.
- Lutz-Zois, C. J., Bradley, A. C., Mihalik, J. L., & Moorman-Eavers, E. R. (2006). Perceived similarity and relationship success among dating couples: An idiographic approach. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *23*, 865-880.
- Madden, M., & Lenhart, A. (2006). *Online dating*. Washington, DC: Report for the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Retrieved January 21, 2009, from <http://www.pewinternet.org>.
- MacDonald, T. K., & Ross, M. (1999). Assessing the accuracy of predictions about dating relationships: How and why do lovers' predictions differ from those made by observers? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *25*, 1417-1429.
- Marwell, G., Sprecher, S., McKinney, K., DeLamater, J., & Smith, S. (1982). Legitimizing factors in the initiation of heterosexual relationships. Paper presented at the First International Conference on Personal Relationships, Madison, WI.

- Merkle, E.R., & Richardson, R.A. (2000). Digital dating and virtual relating: Conceptualizing computer mediated romantic relationships. *Family Relations, 49*, 187-192.
- Miller, R. S., & Perlman, D. (2009). *Intimate relationships* (5th edition). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Montoya, R. M., Horton, R. S., & Kirchner, J. (2008). Is actual similarity necessary for attraction? A meta-analysis of actual and perceived similarity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 25*, 889-922.
- Morry, M. M. (2005). Relationship satisfaction as a predictor of similarity ratings; A test of the attraction-similarity hypothesis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 22*, 561-584.
- Morry, M. M. (2007). The attraction-similarity hypothesis among cross-sex friends: Relationship satisfaction, perceived similarities, and self-serving perceptions. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 24*, 117-138.
- Murstein, B. I. (1987). A clarification and extension of the SVR theory of dyadic pairing. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49*, 929-947.
- Orbuch, T. L., Veroff, J. Hassan, H., & Horrocks, J. (2002). Who will divorce: A 14-year longitudinal study of black couples and white couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 19*, 179-202.
- Orenstein, S. (August 1, 2003). The love algorithm Match.com thinks it has found a formula for ruling the online dating business: A scientific way to find Mr. or Ms. Right. *Business 2.0 Magazine*. Retrieved on June 14, 2009 from http://money.cnn.com/magazines/business2/business2_archive/2003/08/01/346313/index.htm.
- Parks, M. R. (2007). *Personal relationships, personal networks*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Rammstedt, B., & Schupp, J. (2008). Only the congruent survive – Personality similarities in couples. *Personality and Individual Differences, 45*, 533-535.
- Regan, P. C., Levin, L., Sprecher, S., Christopher, S., & Cate, R. (2000). Partner preferences: What characteristics do men and women desire in their short-term sexual and long-term romantic partners? *Journal of Psychology and Human Sexuality, 12*, 1-21.
- Reis, H. T. (1985). The role of the self in the initiation and course of social interaction. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 209-231). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Ridley, C. A., & Avery, A. W. (1979). Social network influence on the dyadic relationship. In R. Burgess & T. Huston (Eds.), *Social exchange in developing relationships* (pp. 223-246). New York: Academic Press.
- Rosenfeld, M. J. (2010, April). Meeting online: The rise of the Internet as a social intermediary. Presentation at the Population Association of America Meetings, Dallas, TX.
- Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45*, 101-117.

- Shtatfeld, R., & Barak, A. (2009). Factors related to initiating interpersonal contacts on Internet dating sites: A view from the social exchange theory. *Interpersona: An International Journal on Personal Relationships*, 3, 19-37.
- Skopek, J., Schulz, F., & Blossfeld, H-P. (2010). Who contacts whom? Educational homophily in online mate selection. *European Sociological Review*.
- Sprecher, S. (1998a). Insiders' perspectives on reasons for attraction to a close other. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 61, 287-300.
- Sprecher, S. (1998b). What keeps married partners attracted to each other? *Free Inquiry in Creative Sociology*, 26, 193-200.
- Sprecher, S. (2009). Relationship initiation and formation on the Internet. *Marriage and Family Review*, 45, 1-21.
- Sprecher, S., & Duck, S. (1994). Sweet talk: The importance of perceived communication for romantic and friendship attraction experience during a get-acquainted date. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 391-400.
- Sprecher, S., & Feinlee, D. (1992). The influence of parents and friends on the quality and stability of romantic relationships: A three-wave longitudinal investigation. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 54, 888-900.
- Sprecher, S., & Feinlee, D. (2000). Romantic partners' perceptions of social network attributes with the passage of time and relationship transitions. *Personal Relationships*, 7, 325-340.
- Sprecher, S., Feinlee, D., Orbuch, T. L., & Willetts, M. C. (2002). Social networks and change in personal relationships. In A. Vangelisti, H. Reis, & M. A. Fitzpatrick (Eds.), *Stability and Change in Relationships* (pp. 257-284). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sprecher, S., & Regan, P. C. (2002). Liking some things (in some people) more than others: Partner preferences in romantic relationships and friendships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 19, 463-481.
- Sprecher, S., Schwartz, P., Harvey, J., & Hatfield, E. (2008). Thebusinessoflove.com: Relationship initiation at Internet matchmaking services. In S. Sprecher, A. Wenzel, & J. Harvey (Eds.), *Handbook of relationship initiation* (pp. 249-265). New York: Psychology Press/Taylor & Francis.
- Straaten, I., Engles, R. C. M. E., Finkenauer, C., & Holland, R. W. (2009). Meeting your match: How attractiveness similarity affects approach behavior in mixed-sex dyads. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35, 685-697.
- Sunnafrank, M., & Miller, G. R. (1981). The role of initial conversations in determining attraction to similar and dissimilar strangers. *Human Communication Research*, 8, 16-25.
- Sunnafrank, M., & Ramirez, A. (2004). At first sight: Persistent relational effects of get-acquainted conversations. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 21, 361-379.
- Tenny, E. R., Turkheimer, E., & Oltmanns, T. F. (2009). Being liked is more than having a good personality: The role of matching. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 43, 479-585.

- Vangelisti, A. L., & Perlman, D. (Eds.) (2006). *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships*. Cambridge University Press.
- Walster, G.W., Hatfield, E., Aronson, V., Abrahams, D., & Rottman, L. (1966). Importance of physical attractiveness in dating behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4, 508-516.
- Watson, D., Klohnen, E. C., Casillas, A., Simms, E N., Haig, J., & Berry, D. S. (2004). Match makers and deal breakers: Analyses of assortative mating in newlywed couples. *Journal of Personality*, 72, 1029-1068.
- Whisman, M. A., Beach, S. R. H., & Snyder, D. K. (2008). Is marital discord taxonic and can taxonic status be assessed reliably? Results from a national, representative sample of married couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 76, 745-755.

Comunicación y Conflicto: ¿Qué Tanto Impactan en la Satisfacción Marital?

Mirta Margarita Flores Galaz ¹
Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán

Resumen

El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo determinar el mejor predictor de la satisfacción marital a partir de la comunicación y la percepción de los conflictos en la pareja en hombres y mujeres. Participaron 76 hombres y 111 mujeres seleccionados mediante un muestreo no probabilístico accidental, de la Ciudad de Mérida, que respondieron al Inventario de Estilos de Comunicación de la Pareja (Sánchez Aragón & Díaz-Loving, 2003), a la Escala de Conflicto (Rivera Aragón, Díaz-Loving & Cruz del Castillo, 2005) y al Inventario Multifacético de Satisfacción Marital (Cañetas Yerbes, Rivera Aragón & Díaz-Loving, 2000). El análisis de regresión múltiple paso a paso mostró que la presencia de estilos de comunicación positivos y la ausencia de conflictos son factores que contribuyen a la satisfacción marital. Asimismo, se observan diferencias por sexo en el modelo de predicción que son explicadas culturalmente.

Palabras Clave: Comunicación, Conflicto, Satisfacción marital, Pareja.

Conflict and Communication: their Impact on Marital Satisfaction

Abstract

The objective of this study was to determine the best predictor of marital satisfaction through the communication styles and the couple's conflict perception in both men and women. The participants were 76 men and 111 women from the city of Merida, Yucatan, Mexico, who were selected through an accidental non-probabilistic sampling procedure. These participants answered the Couple Communication Styles Inventory (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2003), the Conflict Scale (Rivera Aragon, Diaz-Loving & Cruz del Castillo, 2005) and the Marital Satisfaction Multifaceted Inventory (Cañetas Yerbes, Rivera Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2000). Multiple regression analysis showed that the presence of positive communication styles and the absence of conflict were factors that contributed to marital satisfaction. Likewise, differences by gender, that can be culturally explained, were observed in the prediction model.

Key Words: Communication, Conflict, Marital satisfaction, Couple relationships.

¹ Para dirigir correspondencia Mirta M. Flores Galaz: Calle 31 A No. 300 X 8 Fraccionamiento San Esteban, Mérida, Yucatán, México, C. P. 97149; fgalaz@uady.mx
© UNAM Facultad de Psicología, 2011

La pareja es sin duda una de las formas más comunes de relación interpersonal. Como otras, conlleva a un proceso interactivo en el cual se van desarrollando ciertas dependencias y maneras de convivencia, conformados sobre el tiempo, las experiencias y espacios compartidos (Díaz-Loving & Sánchez Aragón, 2002). Su dinámica conforma un proceso de cambios complejos, progresivos, estáticos y cambiantes, con oscilación entre periodos de cercanía y distanciamiento, en el cual la pareja nace, se desarrolla y muere (Sánchez Aragón, 1995).

Para Díaz-Loving y Rivera Aragón (2010) la vida en pareja ha sido descrita como el más dulce de los gozos y el más perdurable de los bienes, es una fuente de satisfacción y desarrollo, sin embargo es compleja y en ocasiones hasta inalcanzable, debido a ello, el gran auge de investigaciones para conocer cuáles son esas variables que hacen que las parejas sean exitosas.

En México, hombres y las mujeres creen que las relaciones de pareja deben ser satisfactorias y equitativas, además indican que las parejas deben solucionar problemas y comunicarse para lograr que la relación funcione (Díaz-Loving & Rivera Aragón, 2010; Flores Galaz, Cauich Pasos & Marentes Castillo, 2007; Nina Estrella, 1991; Roca Cogordan, 2003; Sánchez Aragón & Díaz-Loving, 2003). En este sentido, se puede decir que un componente central en cualquier relación es la comunicación y es a través de este proceso de comunicación que la pareja puede tener un intercambio de información sobre sentimientos, temores y percepción hacia el otro miembro, impresiones y pensamientos (Fitzpatrick, 1988), asimismo sobre su vida pasada, actitudes, situaciones relacionadas con su vida presente (Navran, 1967), y sobre lo que se relaciona con el funcionamiento de la relación marital (Lewis, Beavers, Gosset & Phillips, 1976). De ahí que se diga que la comunicación cumple las funciones de organizar la relación; construir y validar en forma conjunta una visión sobre el mundo y proteger vulnerabilidades (Flores, 2009).

La comunicación dentro de la pareja es fundamental para el funcionamiento de la misma, en cualquier etapa en la que se encuentre, ya que es el medio por el cual se expresan pensamientos, temores, sentimientos y se solucionan problemas (Armenta Hurtarte & Díaz-Loving, 2006). La comunicación incorpora dos elementos, la información en sí misma y la forma en que se comunica. Para Norton (1983) el estilo de comunicación en cada individuo es un reflejo de su personalidad, incluso se ha argumentado que los estilos de comunicación están fuertemente influenciados por factores genéticos los cuales los hacen resistentes al cambio (Cole & McCroskey, 2000). Norton (1983), considera que el estilo de la comunicación es la manera en que uno se comunica, y lo define como la forma en que verbal y no verbalmente se interactúa ante un código el cual debe ser interpretado o comprendido, son señales que ayudan en el proceso de la comunicación a interpretar, filtrar o entender el significado. Es decir, el estilo es aquello con lo cual se le da forma al significado literal de la información que se esté brindando (Nina Estrella, 1991), asimismo, diversos autores (p.e. Miller, Nunnally & Walkman, 1976; Norton 1978; Nina Estrella, 1991, Gudykunst et al. 1996; Sánchez Aragón & Díaz-Loving, 2003) han propuesto diferentes tipologías de estilos de comunicación en la pareja. Tradicionalmente, el estudio de los

patrones de comunicación que usa una pareja ha sido relacionado con la satisfacción marital (Caughlin, 2002; Caughlin y Huston, 2002), investigaciones al respecto, han demostrado una mejoría en las relaciones de pareja al utilizar estilos positivos de comunicación (Díaz-Loving & Rivera Aragón, 2010).

Empero, así como la comunicación en la pareja puede llevar a relaciones positivas, el conflicto puede llevar a relaciones destructivas. Peterson (1983) definió el concepto de conflicto como un proceso interpersonal que se produce siempre que las acciones de una persona interfieren con la otra. En la pareja el conflicto puede ser definido como una forma de expresar diferencias en sentimientos, cogniciones y conductas en las que las parejas pueden ponerse o no de acuerdo (Sillars, Roberts, Leonard & Dun, 2000).

Es así que las parejas a menudo se encuentran en situaciones de conflicto y las razones para ello son múltiples: el dinero, las actividades de la casa, las relaciones con los parientes, las diferencias de valores, las expectativas sobre la relación y filosofías de vida, las diferencias religiosas, el uso del tiempo libre, la falta de atención, la sexualidad, la crianza y planificación de los hijos, las relaciones con las amistades, la carencia de conocimientos y destrezas de comunicación constructiva-efectiva, la carencia de conocimientos y habilidades en la solución de conflictos, y la carencia de conocimientos y habilidades de negociación (Rivera Aragón & Díaz-Loving, 2002).

Kline, Pleasant, Whitton y Markman (2006) menciona que es normal que en las relaciones románticas exista cierto grado de conflicto. Al respecto, Cahn (1992) señala que por más que las parejas quieran evitar el conflicto, es más común que ocurra por medio de desacuerdos frecuentes e intensos. Desafortunadamente muchas parejas utilizan estilos dañinos para el manejo del conflicto, los más comunes son el uso de afectos negativos (frustración, enojo, tristeza., miedo), comportamientos destructivos (quejas, críticas, acusaciones, menosprecio, etc.), el escalamiento (cuando una de las partes se dirige hacia la otra con afectos negativos y comportamientos destructivos y la otra le responde de igual manera) y la evasión (utiliza el humor inapropiadamente para expresarse de algo amenazante, inaceptable o embarazoso o bien negar el problema, cambiar de tema, hacer comentarios contradictorios sobre la situación para cambiar el foco de atención) (Fantauzzi Marrero, 2008). Por lo que si esos momentos de tensión y conflicto no son manejados adecuadamente pueden resultar dañinos a distintos niveles e instancias de la vida en pareja.

Tanto la comunicación como el conflicto son aspectos que tienen un gran impacto en la relación de pareja, específicamente en la satisfacción marital, la cual es uno de los factores que promueve el fortalecimiento de la relación (García Méndez & Vargas Nuñez, 2002). El término de satisfacción marital se ha empleado para describir principalmente la percepción subjetiva que los cónyuges tienen sobre su pareja y su relación (Cortés Martínez, Reyes Domínguez, Díaz-Loving, Rivera Aragón & Monjaraz Carrasco, 1994; Díaz-Loving, 1990). Sin embargo, el concepto de satisfacción marital también se ha usado para describir las actividades que realizan las parejas en su matrimonio y que son satisfactorias para ellos (p.e. Baucom & Epstein, 1990; Snyder & Aikman, 1999). Kaplan y Maddux (2002) establecen que la satisfacción marital es una experiencia individual

en el matrimonio que puede ser evaluado por cada persona en respuesta del grado de placer marital. Ellos piensan que, la satisfacción marital depende de las expectativas, necesidades y deseos individuales con respecto al matrimonio. La satisfacción marital se refiere al grado de satisfacción entre una pareja, es decir, el grado de satisfacción que ellos sienten con su relación (Edalati & Redzuan, 2010).

Para Márquez Domínguez y Rivera Aragón (2010) cuando se habla de satisfacción en la relación de pareja, se hace referencia a percibir y sentirse bien con la forma en que reacciona cada miembro de la pareja dentro de la relación, implicando aspectos emocionales, la relación en sí mismo y aspectos estructurales tales como la manera de organización y la forma en como se cumplen los acuerdo en la relación (Cortés Martínez et al. 1994).

La satisfacción en la pareja se ha considerado un derivado del grado de cercanía y amor en la relación, centrandos en aspectos emocionales, la interacción con la pareja y qué tan funcional resulta la relación en la cotidianidad; la promoción de la confianza, la intimidad, la unión, respeto y tolerancia son importanmtes para la relación de pareja (Armenta Hurtarte & Díaz-Loving, 2006).

Específicamente en cuanto al impacto de la comunicación en la satisfacción marital desde ya hace varias décadas, Archer y Burleson (1980) encontraron que, aunque la auto-divulgación va disminuyendo conforme avanza el tiempo en la relación, ésta es fundamental para incrementar la intimidad y la atracción. Asimismo, las investigaciones sobre los estilos de comunicación y la satisfacción marital señalan correlaciones significativas entre los estilos de comunicación positivos y una buena calidad en la relación (Roca Cogordan, 2003). En este sentido, Fowers, Montel y Olson (1996) mencionan que las parejas vitalizadas con fuertes habilidades en comunicación tienen un alto grado de satisfacción marital.

En México, Armenta Hurtarte y Díaz-Loving (2006) realizaron un estudio que tuvo como objetivo determinar si la autodivulgación y los estilos de comunicación predicen la satisfacción marital, los resultados mostraron que los factores que predicen la satisfacción son el que la pareja no sea percibida con un estilo de ocmunicación evitante ni impulsiva y que la persona sea simpática al comunicarse. De tal manera que concluyen que los temas sobre los cuales platican las parejas no predicen la satisfacción marital no así en cambio los estilos o forma de comunicarse. Estos resultados implican que cuando las personas identifican que otro miembro de la relación no se comunica de forma destructiva, fría, intolerante, severa, inexpresiva y distante y tienen un estilo más platicador, oportuno y optimista al comunicarse que producirá mayor satisfacción en la relación.

Por su parte, Fitzpatrick y Winke (1979, en Rivera Aragón, Díaz-Loving, Cruz del Castillo & Arnaldo Ocadiz, 2004) mencionan que el conflicto se relaciona de manera negativa con la satisfacción marital. En este sentido, las parejas que manejan el conflicto negativamente son más infelices y están más insatisfechos en su relación, llevándolos en muchas ocasiones al deterioro y separación. Diversos autores (p.e. Greeff & Bruyne, 2000; Pape, 2001) indican que el manejo del conflicto es uno de los factores más relevantes para el bienestar y satisfacción en la pareja.

Finalmente, a lo largo del estudio de la satisfacción marital, se han encontrado que el sexo es uno de los factores que influyen de manera significativa sobre su evolución. Particularmente, se ha observado que los hombres se sienten más satisfechos que las mujeres en su interacción marital (Rivera Aragón, 1992). Asimismo, se ha encontrado que las mujeres tienden a estar más satisfechas si sus necesidades sexuales son cubiertas mientras que los hombres se sienten más satisfechos con la ayuda que la mujer da en el hogar, dejando claro que en los hombres predomina la instrumentalidad, es decir, las conductas necesarias para el buen funcionamiento en el hogar y en las mujeres la exclusividad y el afecto (Cortés et al., 1994) que son factores que ayudan a mantener la atracción interpersonal entre el esposo y su pareja. A partir de lo anterior, el presente estudio tuvo como objetivos: 1) Describir la comunicación en la pareja, la percepción de conflictos y la satisfacción marital en hombres y mujeres; 2) Establecer las diferencias en la comunicación, el conflicto y la satisfacción marital por sexo y 3) Determinar el mejor predictor de la satisfacción marital a partir de la comunicación y la percepción de los conflictos en la pareja.

Método

Participantes

76 hombres y 111 mujeres seleccionados mediante un muestreo no probabilístico accidental, de la Ciudad de Mérida, con una edad promedio de 35.56 años y una desviación estándar de 10.00. De los éstos, el 88.2% (165) son casados y el 11.8% (22) en unión libre en promedio tenían 11.71 años en la relación y dos hijos.

Instrumentos

Inventario de Estilos de Comunicación de la Pareja. Fue desarrollado por Sánchez Aragón y Díaz-Loving (2003), evalúa el estilo de comunicación de la pareja y del propio individuo: Cuando me comunico con mi pareja yo soy (63 adjetivos) y Cuando mi pareja se comunica conmigo es (68 adjetivos). Para este estudio se utilizó una versión corta del mismo, ya que se eligieron los primeros seis adjetivos de aquellos factores que estaban conformados por 10 o más y se tomaron íntegros aquellos factores que estaban constituidos por menos de seis adjetivos, quedando en este caso 131 adjetivos. El instrumento está conformado por cuatro áreas: Yo Positivo, Yo Negativo, Mi Pareja Positiva y Mi Pareja Negativa, las cuales a su vez, constan de diferentes factores que a continuación se describen junto con las consistencias internas obtenidas para la muestra estudiada:

El área Yo positivo esta conformada por siete factores: Social Afiliativo (Alpha = 0.83), Social Automodificador (Alpha = 0.77), Simpático (Alpha = 0.87), Abierto (Alpha = 0.67), Social Normativo (Alpha = 0.78), Reservado Reflexivo (Alpha = 0.50), Claro (0.60). El área Yo negativo consta de cinco factores: 1)

Violento Instrumental (Alpha = 0.83), Evitante (Alpha = 0.76), Hiriente Expresivo (Alpha = 0.84), Autoritario (0.76), Irritante Expresivo (Alpha = 0.78).

Por otra parte, el área de Mi pareja positiva, consta de siete factores: Social Afiliativo Humorístico (Alpha = 0.90), Social Normativo (Alpha = 0.80), Abierto (Alpha = 0.69), Automodificador Constructivo (Alpha = 0.85), Empático (Alpha = 0.83), Claro (Alpha = 0.72) y Social Expresivo (Alpha = 0.80). En cuanto a Mi pareja negativa, ésta está conformada por siete factores: Violento Instrumental y Expresivo (Alpha = 0.92), Evitante (Alpha = 0.85), Autoritario (Alpha = 0.83), Ambiguo Rechazante (Alpha = 0.70), Maquiavélico (Alpha = 0.61), Chismoso (Alpha = 0.70) e Impulsivo (Alpha = 0.73).

Escala de Conflicto (Rivera Aragón et al. 2005). Mide la percepción del conflicto en la relación de pareja un formato tipo Likert, con cinco opciones de respuesta que van de nunca (5) a siempre (1). El análisis factorial obtenido en una muestra yucateca realizado por Flores, Chi y Rivera (2006) reveló 12 factores con 66 reactivos. Los factores y las consistencias internas en la muestra son: incompatibilidad de intereses y/o apatía (Alpha = 0.90), educación de los hijos (Alpha = 0.91), personalidad (Alpha = 0.78), desconfianza (Alpha = 0.84), religión (Alpha = 0.81), sexualidad (Alpha = 0.84), dinero (Alpha = 0.72), actividades propias (Alpha = 0.68), familia de origen y política (Alpha = 0.77), irresponsabilidad (Alpha = 0.81), adicciones (Alpha = 0.48) y celos (Alpha = 0.78).

Inventario Multifacético de Satisfacción Marital (IMSM). Desarrollado y elaborado por Cañetas Yerbes et al. (2000) y posteriormente utilizado y validado por Rivera Aragón (2000) constituido por 62 reactivos El inventario esta formado por tres subescalas: actitud, gusto y frecuencia en la satisfacción, cada una de ellas tiene cinco opciones de respuesta que van de (5) Totalmente de acuerdo a (1) totalmente en desacuerdo, de me gusta mucho (5) a me disgusta mucho (1) y de siempre(5) a nunca (1), respectivamente, los cuales a su vez están conformados por diferentes dimensiones:

I Subescala de actitud: Esta compuesta por 23 reactivos que miden: a) Satisfacción afectiva-sexual (Alpha = 0.88); b) Satisfacción con la relación comunicación-apoyo (Alpha = 0.86); c) Insatisfacción con la relación (Alpha = 0.87) d) Insatisfacción con las características de la pareja y la interacción (Alpha = 0.76) e 5) Insatisfacción con la familia extendida y amigos de la pareja (Alpha = 0.80).

II Subescala de gusto: Consta de 20 reactivos que miden: a) Atracción física y romance (Alpha = 0.86); b) Intimidad (Alpha = 0.89); c) Insatisfacción con el trato hacia los hijos (Alpha = 0.72); y d) Incomprensión y desvalorización (Alpha = 0.77).

III Subescala de frecuencia. Esta conformada por 19 reactivos que miden: a) Satisfacción con las características de organización y funcionamiento (Alpha = 0.93); b) Satisfacción físico-sexual (Alpha = 0.90); c) Satisfacción con el trato que la pareja da hacia los hijos (Alpha = 0.92) y d) Satisfacción con la participación y distribución de las tareas del hogar (Alpha = 0.92).

Procedimiento

La aplicación se realizó en el ambiente natural de las personas, es decir, en centros de trabajo, casas, escuelas, etc. explicándoles el objetivo de la investigación y garantizándoles en todo momento el anonimato de sus respuestas. El tiempo aproximado de respuesta fue de 40 minutos.

Resultados

En las tablas 1 a la 3 se presentan las medias y desviaciones estándar obtenidas para cada uno de los factores de los instrumentos para los hombres y mujeres de la muestra estudiada. Es importante señalar que también se realizó un análisis de diferencias por medio de la prueba *t* de Student, sin embargo, solo se encontraron diferencias en dos factores de la escala de conflicto y uno en el IMSM. Para la escala de comunicación en la dimensión Yo positivo, la media más alta tanto para hombres como para mujeres fue en el estilo social afiliativo. En el Yo negativo fue el estilo autoritario. En la percepción del estilo de comunicación positivo que utiliza la pareja fue también el social afiliativo y para Mi pareja negativa nuevamente el autoritario.

Para la escala de percepción del conflicto se observó que la media más alta fue en los conflictos debidos a la personalidad. Sin embargo, se observaron diferencias significativas en el factor de desconfianza $t(185) = 2.19; p = 0.02$ y en el factor de actividades propias $t(185) = 1.93; p = 0.04$ en donde los hombres obtienen medias más altas en este factor que las mujeres.

En el caso del IMSM las medias más altas se obtuvieron en los factores de satisfacción afectiva-sexual, atracción física y romance y físico-sexual. Y el factor en el que se encontraron diferencias significativas entre hombres y mujeres fue en el de satisfacción con la participación y distribución de las tareas en el hogar $t(185) = 2.27; p = 0.02$ siendo los hombres los que obtuvieron la media más alta.

Se realizó un análisis de regresión múltiple paso a paso con el objetivo de determinar los mejores predictores de la satisfacción marital a partir de los factores de los estilos de comunicación y la percepción del conflicto por sexo.

Para los hombres, se encontró un coeficiente de correlación múltiple de 0.849 y un porcentaje de varianza explicada de 72.1%. El análisis reportado hasta el sexto paso indica que las dimensiones que predicen la satisfacción marital son: el que la pareja se comunique de manera social afiliativa humorística, que no existan conflictos por la irresponsabilidad de la pareja, que la pareja no se comunique de manera ambigua y rechazante, que no haya conflictos por las adicciones de la pareja que no se utilice un estilo de comunicación empático y que existan conflictos por la sexualidad $F(6,69) = 29.77; p = 0.000$.

Tabla 1
 Medias y desviaciones estándares obtenidas en el Inventario de Estilos de Comunicación en la Pareja por hombres y mujeres

Factores	Hombres		Mujeres	
	Media	Desviación estándar	Media	Desviación estándar
Yo POSITIVO				
Social Afiliativo	3.81	.81	3.81	.75
Social Automodificador	3.57	.68	3.59	.74
Simpático	3.67	.81	3.74	.80
Abierto	3.68	.84	3.72	.80
Social Normativo	3.64	.78	3.72	.75
Reservado Reflexivo	3.43	.79	3.50	.79
Claro	3.65	.77	3.67	.83
Yo NEGATIVO				
Violento Instrumental	2.48	.83	2.32	.85
Evitante	2.64	.76	2.45	.80
Hiriente Expresivo	2.43	.74	2.25	.85
Autoritario	2.92	.85	2.89	.75
Irritante Expresivo	2.69	.83	2.55	.80
Mi pareja POSITIVA				
Social Afiliativo	3.77	.84	3.65	.95
Humorístico				
Social Normativo	3.69	.80	3.49	.79
Abierto	3.66	.87	3.56	.81
Automodificador constructivo	3.57	.87	3.48	.94
Empático	3.55	.84	3.55	.83
Claro	3.50	.88	3.51	.91
Social Expresivo	3.64	.90	3.46	.96
Mi pareja NEGATIVA				
Violento Instrumental y Expresivo	2.36	.98	2.44	1.11
Evitante	2.38	.89	2.62	.95
Autoritario	2.94	.82	2.82	.97
Ambiguo Rechazante	2.62	.87	2.61	.89
Maquiavélico	2.74	.78	2.79	.87
Chismoso	2.70	.84	2.66	.94
Impulsivo	2.67	.89	2.63	.96

Tabla 2
 Medias y desviaciones estándares obtenidas en la Escala de Conflicto por hombres y mujeres

Factores	Hombres		Mujeres	
	Media	Desviación estándar	Media	Desviación estándar
Incompatibilidad de intereses y/o apatía	2.39	.81	2.33	.70
Educación de los hijos	2.32	.85	2.20	.75
Personalidad	2.68	.84	2.59	.64
Desconfianza	2.31	.97	2.03	.74
Religión	1.95	.96	1.90	.87
Sexualidad	2.37	.98	2.23	.91
Dinero	2.34	.85	2.18	.74
Actividades propias	2.60	.79	2.37	.80
Familia de origen y política	2.15	.93	2.09	.77
Irresponsabilidad	2.24	.96	2.23	.88
Adicciones	2.00	.86	2.16	.79
Celos	2.32	1.00	2.05	.84

Tabla 3
 Medias y desviaciones estándares obtenidas en el Inventario Multifacético de Satisfacción Marital (IMSM) por hombres y mujeres

Factores	Hombres		Mujeres	
	Media	Desviación estándar	Media	Desviación estándar
<i>Subescala de Actitud</i>				
Satisfacción afectiva-sexual	4.09	.90	3.92	.86
Satisfacción con la relación comunicación-apoyo	3.60	.94	3.49	.90
Insatisfacción con la relación	2.17	.99	2.25	.95
Intolerancia-falta de aceptación	2.32	.88	2.27	.86
Insatisfacción con la familia de origen	2.24	1.06	2.30	1.10
<i>Subescala de gusto</i>				
Atracción física y romance	3.92	.92	3.85	.90
Intimidación	3.70	.93	3.57	.94
Insatisfacción hacia el trato de los hijos	2.33	.81	2.35	.78
Incomprensión y desvalorización	2.28	.88	2.29	.83

Tabla 3
Medias y desviaciones estándares (continua)

Factores	Hombres		Mujeres	
	Media	Desviación estándar	Media	Desviación estándar
<i>Subescala de frecuencia</i>				
Satisfacción con las características de organización y funcionamiento	3.76	.95	3.69	.97
Satisfacción físico-sexual	3.87	.90	3.82	.90
Satisfacción con el trato que la pareja da hacia los hijos	3.83	.88	3.64	.94
Satisfacción con la participación de las tareas del hogar	3.65	.87	3.32	1.04

Tabla 4
Análisis de regresión múltiple obtenido para la predicción de la satisfacción marital en hombres

Variables independientes	B	Beta	t	Prob.
Mi pareja (Social Afiliativo Humorístico)	0.58	0.63	5.84	0.000***
Conflictos por la Irresponsabilidad	-0.26	-0.32	-3.54	0.001***
Mi pareja (Ambiguo Rechazante)	-0.18	-0.20	-2.87	0.005**
Conflictos por las adiciones	-0.21	-0.23	-2.74	0.008**
Mi pareja (Empática)	-0.22	-0.24	-2.49	0.01**
Conflictos por la sexualidad	0.15	0.19	2.29	0.02*

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ *** $p \leq 0.001$

R = 0.84 R² = 0.721

Por su parte, para las mujeres se encontró un coeficiente de correlación múltiple de 0.847 y un porcentaje de varianza explicada de 71.7%, asimismo el análisis reportado hasta el noveno paso muestra que los factores que predicen la satisfacción marital son un estilo de comunicación social afiliativo humorístico de la pareja, que no exista un estilo evitante de comunicación de la pareja, que por el contrario la pareja utilice un estilo abierto, que no utilice un estilo chismoso para comunicarse, que las mujeres se comuniquen con su pareja de manera social afiliativa, no así que utilicen el estilo social normativo y que no existan conflictos debidos a la desconfianza $F(7,103) = 37.29$; $p = 0.000$.

Tabla 5
Análisis de regresión múltiple obtenido para la predicción de la satisfacción marital en mujeres

Variables independientes	B	Beta	t	Prob.
Mi pareja (Social Afiliativo Humorístico)	0.15	0.19	2.58	0.01**
Mi pareja (Evitante)	-0.20	-0.25	-3.07	0.003**
Mi pareja (Abierta)	0.25	0.26	3.63	0.000***
Mi pareja (Chismosa)	-0.12	-0.15	-2.34	0.02*
Yo (Social Afiliativo)	0.29	0.29	3.59	0.000***
Yo (Social Normativo)	-0.24	-0.23	-3.06	0.003**
Conflicto por la desconfianza	-0.21	-0.20	-3.69	0.000***

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$ *** $p \leq 0.001$

R = 0.84 R² = 0.7171

Discusión

Los resultados obtenidos mostraron que la muestra estudiada considera que uno de los estilos de comunicación más importantes tanto en la persona misma como en la pareja es el social afiliativo es decir, hacer uso de expresiones de cariño, comprensión, dulzura y afecto como formas de complacer y ser sociable con la pareja. Estos datos muestran por un lado, el efecto de la cultura en las relaciones interpersonales, al respecto, Díaz-Guerrero (1994) mencionaba que el para el mexicano es muy importante mantener las relaciones interpersonales en armonía y ser atento y cortés y la relación de pareja no es la excepción. Y por otro lado, el hecho de que el uso de estilos de comunicación positivos facilitan la mutua comprensión, el respeto y la toma responsable de decisiones en la pareja y que esta relación funcione (Armenta Hurtarte & Díaz-Loving, 2006, Flores Galaz, Cauch Pasos & Marentes Castillo, 2007, Díaz-Loving & Rivera Aragón, 2010).

También se observó que nuevamente los conflictos que se perciben con mayor frecuencia en la relación de pareja son los debidos a la personalidad, resultados que coinciden con lo reportado por McGonale, Kessler y Shilling (1992), en donde encuentra que la personalidad de la pareja adquiere mayor importancia como fuente de conflicto y por los estudios realizados en la ciudad de México por Rivera Aragón, Cruz del Castillo, Arnaldo Ocadiz y Díaz-Loving (2004) y en Yucatán por Flores Galaz y Chi Cervera(2005). Además, las diferencias entre hombres y mujeres en la percepción de los conflictos en cuanto a la desconfianza y las actividades propias son similares a los reportados por Flores Galaz y Chi Cervera (2005) quienes encuentran también diferencias por sexo, para ellos, los conflictos son principalmente por desconfianza y celos de su pareja y para ellas es por una incompatibilidad de intereses y/o apatía y sus adicciones. Asimismo, es importante mencionar que el hecho de que se perciban en la relación conflictos

(aunque hay que aclarar que esta percepción en todos los factores del instrumento estuvo por debajo de la media teórica) esto no deja de indicar tal y como lo han reportado diversos estudios que cuando hay conflictos en un área, hay una mayor probabilidad de un deterioro general de la relación tanto para hombres como para las mujeres (Rivera Aragón et al. 2004).

En cuanto a la satisfacción marital los datos mostraron que la muestra obtiene los puntajes más altos en los factores afectivo sexual, atracción física y romance y físico-sexual, lo cual indica que las personas evalúan su relación como romántica y atractiva, les gusta complacer, pasar el tiempo juntos, la forma en como hacen el amor, con la apariencia física de la pareja, en las muestras de atención, comprensión y cariño, en la forma y frecuencia de expresiones tales como besos, caricias, abrazos y relaciones sexuales, resultados similares a los reportados por Flores Galaz, Díaz-Loving y Rivera Aragón (2002) en un estudio también en una muestra yucateca. En lo que se refiere a las diferencias por sexo, los hombres se sienten más satisfechos con la participación y la distribución de las tareas en el hogar, resultados que muestran como para los hombres son importantes las conductas necesarias para el buen funcionamiento del matrimonio, datos que coinciden con los reportados en estudios realizados tanto en la ciudad de México como en Yucatán (p. e. Beltrán Poot, Flores Galaz & Díaz-Loving, 2001; Flores Galaz, Díaz-Loving & Rivera Aragón, 2002; Pick de Weiss & Andrade Palos, 1988).

Referente al modelo de predicción de la satisfacción marital, se encontró que para los hombres, el primer factor que lo explica es el que se perciba que la pareja tiene un estilo de comunicación social afiliativo humorístico, es decir perciba que la pareja sea amistosa, amable, cortés y atenta, que haga uso de expresiones de cariño, comprensión, dulzura y afecto como formas de complacer y ser sociable, sea simpática, encantadora, juguetona y ocurrente. La segunda variable que entra al modelo es que no se perciban conflictos debidos a la irresponsabilidad, es decir, a la falta de responsabilidad de la pareja en las actividades del hogar y en los gastos realizados. La tercera variable es que la pareja no utilice el estilo de comunicación ambiguo rechazante, estilo que refleja una forma de agresión encubierta, ya que se es rebuscado, limitante y rechazante. La cuarta variable que entra al modelo es que no se perciban conflictos por las adicciones que implican el fumar, tomar y ser infiel. La siguiente variable que entra al modelo es el que la pareja tenga un estilo de comunicación empático, es decir que sea consecuente, considerada, complaciente y comprensiva. Y la última, variable que entra al modelo es el factor de conflictos por la sexualidad, es decir, la frecuencia e interés que se tiene en las relaciones sexuales.

Estos hallazgos señalan que para que los hombres, se sientan satisfechos en su relación efectivamente la comunicación juega un papel muy importante y congruente a las expectativas estereotipadas culturalmente (Díaz-Guerrero, 1994), puesto que quieren que las mujeres sean comprensivas, cariñosas, juguetonas complacientes, consideradas, dulces, apapachadoras (Rocha Sánchez, 2000, Rocha Sánchez & Díaz-Loving, 2005) pero no los conflictuen con si cumplen o no sus responsabilidades en el hogar, si toman, fuman, son infieles y que las

relaciones sexuales no representen algún conflicto (Flores Galaz, 2007; Rivera Aragón, 2000; Rivera Aragón et al. 2004).

Por el contrario, para las mujeres fueron siete las variables que entraron al modelo de predicción de la satisfacción marital pero curiosamente seis de ellas se refirieron a los estilos de comunicación ya sea de ellas mismas o de su pareja y uno solo para la percepción de conflictos en la relación. La primera variable que entró al modelo fue al igual que para los hombres el que se perciba a la pareja con un estilo de comunicación social afiliativo humorístico, es decir percibir que su pareja es amable, cortesa y atenta, cariñosa y comprensiva. La segunda variable que entra al modelo es que no se perciba a la pareja con un estilo de comunicación evitante, que implica que este sea frío, serio, severo, intolerante, distante, limitante, indiferente e inexpresivo. La tercera variable fue el estilo de comunicación abierto en la pareja, es decir que sea franco, directo y expresivo. La cuarta variable fue que no se perciba a la pareja con un estilo de comunicación chismoso, estilo que favorece el conflicto al criticar y confundir a la pareja. Las siguientes dos variables que entran al modelo hacen referencia a la propia percepción de los estilos de comunicación de las mujeres, la presencia del estilo también social afiliativo ser cariñosas, comprensivas, dulces como formas de complacer y ser sociable. Y la ausencia del estilo social normativo el cual se basa en las normas sociales que dictan que las mujeres en este caso deben ser correctas, educadas, ordenadas y cordiales. La última variable que entra al modelo es que no se perciban conflictos en la relación por la desconfianza que incluye mentiras de parte de uno mismo y de la pareja, la falta de confianza, y el que los miembros de la pareja no platican tanto sobre lo que hacen como a su pareja les gustaría.

Estos datos señalan que sobretodo para las mujeres el factor de comunicación es muy importante para sentirse satisfechas en su relación y que este no es unidireccional sino que implica que tanto, ellas están dispuestas a mantener una comunicación positiva pero también requieren que la pareja se comunique de una forma positiva y que evite ciertos estilos de comunicación negativos. Asimismo, para ellas probablemente si existe comunicación positiva no se va a llegar al conflicto o se van a negociar constructivamente los mismos al hacer uso de precisamente estilos positivos de comunicación. Estudios previos han demostrado que los estilos de comunicación positivos están asociados a una mayor satisfacción marital (Armenta Hurtarte & Díaz-Loving, 2006; Fowers, Montel & Olson, 1996; Roca Cogordan, 2003) y el conflicto a la insatisfacción (Greeff & Bruyne, 2000; Rivera Aragón et al. 2004; Pape, 2001).

Finalmente, es indudable que la satisfacción marital va a estar influenciada por diferentes factores individuales y sociales-culturales que influyen de manera significativa sobre su evolución, tal como lo demuestran estos hallazgos, en donde la comunicación juega un importante papel en la percepción de la relación, dado que en la medida que la pareja utilice estilos de comunicación positivos, disminuye la percepción del conflicto y aumenta la satisfacción marital, por lo que los programas de intervención deberán considerar este elemento para la promoción de relaciones más saludables.

Referencias

- Archer, R. I., & Burleson, J. A. (1980). The effects of timing of self-disclosure on attraction and reciprocity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 38, 120-130.
- Armenta, Hurtarte. C. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2006). Comunicación y satisfacción: Analizando la interacción de pareja. *La Psicología Social en México*, México: AMEPSO, XII, 173-178.
- Baucom, D. C. & Epstein, N. (1990). *Cognitive-behavioral marital therapy*, Nueva York: Brunner/Maze.
- Beltrán Poot, A., Flores Galaz, M. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2001). Efectos del sexo, escolaridad y tiempo en la relación en la satisfacción marital. *Ethos*, 2, 2, 5-14. Octubre.
- Cahn, D. D. (1992). *Conflict in intimate relationships*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Cañetas, E., Rivera, S. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2000). Desarrollo de un instrumento Multidimensional de Satisfacción Marital. *La Psicología Social en México*. México: AMEPSO, VIII, 266-274.
- Caughlin, J. P. (2002). The demand/withdraw pattern of communication as a predictor of marital satisfaction over time: Unresolved issues and future directions. *Human Communication Research*, 28, 49-85.
- Caughlin, J. P. y Huston, T. L. (2002). A contextual analysis of the association between demand/withdraw and marital satisfaction. *Personal Relationships*, 9 (1), 95-119.
- Cole, J. G. & McCroskey, J. C. (2000). *Temperament and socio-communicative orientation*. Paper presented in the Annual Convention of the Eastern Communication Association, Pittsburgh. PA.
- Cortés, S., Reyes, D., Díaz-Loving, R., Rivera, S. & Monjaraz, J. (1994). Elaboración y análisis psicométrico del Inventario Multifacético de Satisfacción Marital (IMSM). *La Psicología Social en México*. México: AMEPSO, V, 123-130.
- Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1994). *Psicología del Mexicano: descubrimiento de la etnopsicología*. México: Editorial Trillas.
- Díaz-Loving, R. (1990). Configuración de los factores que integran la relación de pareja. *Revista de Psicología Social en México*, 3, 133-143.
- Díaz-Loving, R. & Rivera, Aragón. S. (2010). Relaciones sustentables: el papel del amor y otras especias en la promoción de parejas positivas. En R. Díaz-Loving & S. Rivera (2010). *Antología psicosocial de la pareja*. México: UNAM/ Miguel Angel Porrúa. 737-761.
- Díaz-Loving, R. & Sánchez-Aragón, R. (2002). *Psicología del amor: una visión integral de la relación de pareja*. México: UNAM/Miguel Ángel Porrúa.
- Edalati, A. & Redzuan, M. (2010). A Review: Dominance, Marital Satisfaction and Female Aggression. *Journal of Social Sciences*. 6, 2, 162-166, 2010.
- Fantauzzi Marrero, L. (2008). Conflicto marital: Evaluación de un taller educativo. *La Psicología Social en México*, México: AMEPSO, XII, 221-226.

- Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1988). A typological approach to communication in relationships. En B. Rubin (Ed.). *Communications yearbook* (pp. 263-275). New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books.
- Flores Galaz, M. (2007). Aspectos positivos y negativos de la satisfacción marital. En T. Castillo y I. Cortés (2010). *Psicología Social en Yucatán. Avances y Prospectiva*. México: Facultad de Psicología. Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán, 291-311.
- Flores Galaz, M. & Chi Cervera, A. (2005). *Percepción y evaluación del conflicto en la pareja*. Ponencia presentada en el V Congreso Iberoamericano de Evaluación Psicológica. 1 y 2 de Julio de 2005. Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Flores Galaz, M., Cauich Pasos, A. & Marentes Castillo, M. (2007). *Asertividad y estilos de comunicación*. Presentado en el XXXI Congreso Interamericano de Psicología. Sociedad Interamericana de Psicología. Del 1 al 5 de Julio de 2007 en la Ciudad de México.
- Flores Galaz, M., Chi Cervera, A. & Rivera Aragón, S. (2006). *Validez factorial de la escala de conflicto*. Documento inédito. Facultad de Psicología. Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.
- Flores Galaz, M., Díaz-Loving, R. & Rivera Aragón, S. (2002). El paso del tiempo, los hijos y el ingreso en la relación con la satisfacción marital. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad*, 18, 1, 37-54.
- Fowers, B. J., Montel, K. H. & Olson, D. H. (1996). Communication in the marriage. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 22, 1, 103-119.
- García Méndez, M. & Vargas Nuñez, I. (2002). Satisfacción marital y evitación del conflicto. *La Psicología Social en México*, México: AMEPSO, IX, 756-762.
- Greeff, A. & Bruyne, T. (2000). Conflict management style and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 26, 321-334.
- Gudykunst, W. B., Matsumoto, Y., Ting-Tooney, S., Nishada, T., Kun, K. & Heyman, S. (1996). The influence of Individualism-Collectivism, self construals and individual values on communication styles across cultures. *Human Communications Research*, 22, 4, 510-543.
- Kaplan, M. & Maddux, J. E. (2002). Goals and marital satisfaction: Perceived support for personal goals and collective efficacy for collective goals. *Journal of Social Clinical Psychology*, 21, 157-164.
- Kline, G. H., Pleasant, N. D., Whitton, S. W. & Markman, H. J. (2006). Understanding couple conflict. En A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.). *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lewis, J. M., Beavers, W. R., Gossett, J. T. & Phillips, V. A. (1976). *No single thread: psychological health in family systems*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Márquez, D. J. & Rivera, A. S. (2010). Apego, cultura y satisfacción en la relación de pareja: que pesa más ¿Nuestros vínculos afectivos o nuestros vínculos culturales? *La Psicología Social en México*, México: AMEPSO, XIII, 81-87.
- McGonagle, K., Kessler, R. C. & Schilling, E. A. (1992). The frequency and determinants of marital disagreements in a community sample. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 9, 507-524.

- Miller, S., Nunally, E. & Wackman, D. (1976). An communication training program for couples. *Social Casework, (January)* 57, 9-18.
- Navran, L. (1967). Communication and adjustment in marriage. *Family Process*, 6, 173-184.
- Nina Estrella, R. (1991). *Comunicación Marital y Estilos de Comunicación: construcción y validación* (Tesis de doctorado no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Norton, R. (1978). Foundations of a communication style construct. *Human Communication Research*, 4, 2, 99-112.
- Norton, R. (1983). *Communicator style: theory. Applications and measures*. Beverly Hills. CA: Sage Publishers.
- Pape, A. W. (2001). Conflict resolution satisfaction. A study of satisfied marriages across 16 domains of marital conflict. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 62, U:S: University Microfilms International.
- Peterson, D. (1983). Conflict. *Close Relationships*, 3, 360-396.
- Pick de Weiss, S. y Andrade Palos, P. (1988). Desarrollo y validación de una escala de satisfacción marital. *Psiquiatría*, 4, 29-40.
- Rivera Aragón, S. (1992). *Atracción interpersonal y su relación con la satisfacción marital y la reacción ante la interacción de pareja* (Tesis de maestría no publicada) Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.
- Rivera Aragón, S. (2000). *Conceptualización, medición y correlatos de poder y pareja: Una aproximación etnopsicológica* (Tesis de doctorado no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Rivera Aragón, S. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2002). *La cultura del poder en la pareja*. México: Porrúa-UNAM.
- Rivera Aragón, S., Cruz del Castillo, C., Arnaldo Ocadiz., & Díaz-Loving, R. (2004). Midiendo el conflicto en la pareja. *La Psicología Social en México*. México: AMEPSO, X, 229-236.
- Rivera Aragón, S. Díaz-Loving, R. & Cruz del Castillo, C. (2005). *Escala de Conflicto*. Documento Inédito. Facultad de Psicología. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Roca Cogordan, M. (2003). *Efectos de los estilos de comunicación y los estilos de negociación en la satisfacción de pareja* (Tesis de licenciatura no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Rocha Sánchez, T. (2000). *Roles De Género en los Adolescentes y Rasgos de Masculinidad-Feminidad* (Tesis de doctorado no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Rocha Sánchez, T. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2005). Cultura de género: la brecha ideológica entre hombres y mujeres. *Anales de Psicología*, 21, 1 (junio), 42-49.
- Sánchez, Aragón, R. (1995). *El amor y la cercanía en la satisfacción de pareja a través del ciclo de vida* (Tesis de maestría no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Sánchez Aragón, R. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2003). Patrones y estilos de comunicación de la pareja: Diseño de un inventario. *Anales de Psicología*. 19, 202, 257-277.

- Sillars, A., Roberts, L. Leonard, K. & Dun, T. (2000). Cognition during marital conflict: the relationship of thoughts and Talk. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationship*. 17, 4-5, 479-502.
- Snyder, D. K. & Aikman, G. G. (1999). The marital satisfaction inventory-revised. En Maruish, M.E. (Ed.). *Use of Psychological Testing for Treatment Planning and Outcomes Assessments* (pp. 1173-1210). Mahwah, New Jersey: Erlbaum.

Adult Attachment and Conflict Behavior: Delineating the Links

Judith A. Feeney
University of Queensland

Abstract

In couple relationships, intense or protracted conflict can activate the attachment system, raising concerns about the partner's availability and the future of the relationship. Hence, individuals with different attachment orientations are expected to respond differently to conflict. This article summarises a series of studies into adult attachment and conflict processes, examining four issues: conflicts regarding closeness and distance in dating couples, patterns of marital conflict, reactions to anger-evoking and hurtful events, and the role of attachment and conflict patterns in the intergenerational transmission of relationship difficulties. The studies point to complex links between attachment and conflict variables. Insecurity - particularly attachment anxiety – is associated with high levels of conflict, and with maladaptive responses such as coercion and conflict avoidance. These conflict behaviors are likely to fuel disagreement, hence maintaining or exacerbating insecurity. There is also evidence that insecurity and maladaptive conflict behaviors create relational dissatisfaction, and that conflict behaviors partially mediate the link between insecurity and dissatisfaction. Research further suggests that parents' insecurity and destructive conflict behaviors have negative consequences for adolescent offspring, in terms of attachment difficulties and appraisals of loneliness. These findings highlight the importance of interventions designed to ameliorate insecurities and communication difficulties.

Key words: Adult attachment, Conflict behaviours, Intergenerational transmission.

Apego Adulto y Conflicto: Acotando su Relación

Resumen

En las relaciones de pareja, el conflicto intenso o prolongado puede activar el sistema del apego, genera preocupaciones acerca de la disponibilidad de la pareja y el futuro de la relación. Por lo tanto, se espera que los individuos con diferentes tipos de apego, respondan en forma diferencial al conflicto. Este artículo, resume una serie de estudios en apego adulto y procesos de conflicto, examinando cuatro aspectos: conflictos relativos a la cercanía y distancia en parejas, patrones de conflicto marital, reacciones a eventos dolorosos que evocan enojo, y el papel del apego y los patrones de conflicto en la transmisión intergeneracional de las dificultades en las relaciones. Los estudios se enfocan en vínculos complejos entre el apego y variables relacionadas al conflicto. La inseguridad –particularmente el apego ansioso- está asociado con altos niveles de conflicto y con respuestas poco adaptativas tales como coerción y evitación al conflicto. Estas conductas de conflicto son probablemente lo que estimulan el desacuerdo, generando con ello el mantenimiento o exacerbación de la inseguridad. Hay también evidencia de que la inseguridad y las conductas poco adaptativas del conflicto crean insatisfacción en la relación, y que dichas conductas juegan un papel parcialmente intermediario del vínculo entre inseguridad e insatisfacción. Además la investigación sugiere que la inseguridad de los padres y sus conductas destructivas durante el conflicto, tienen consecuencias negativas para los hijos adolescentes, en términos de las dificultades en el apego y apreciación de soledad. Estos hallazgos reflejan la importancia de las intervenciones diseñadas para aliviar inseguridades y dificultades en comunicación.

Palabras clave: Apego adulto, Conductas de conflicto, Transmision intergeneracional.

According to Bowlby's attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980), the attachment system is an organized set of behaviors and motivation that serve the function of maintaining proximity to the caregiver (attachment figure). The system is thought to have evolved to offer young children a survival advantage by keeping them close to nurturing and protective adults. The attachment system is a homeostatic control system that maintains a balance between attachment (proximity-seeking) and exploratory behavior, taking account of the accessibility of attachment figures and potential dangers in the physical and social environment (Bowlby, 1969/1982). Thus, attachment behavior tends to be elicited by situations that appear threatening or stressful.

It is important to note that despite his major focus on the bonds that form between young children and their primary caregivers, Bowlby (1979) acknowledged that attachment behavior persists across the lifespan. Similarly, Ainsworth (1989) and Weiss (1986, 1991) argued that attachment bonds exist in both childhood and adulthood, and that similar functions, emotions and elicitors are involved, regardless of stage of life. According to attachment theorists, 'secure dependence' is an adaptive phenomenon that promotes healthy adjustment across the life cycle; somewhat paradoxically, it is the security afforded by attachment figures that allows the individual to function autonomously and effectively.

For both children and adults, then, stressful situations activate the attachment system and raise questions about the attachment figure's accessibility (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). If the attachment figure is seen as available and responsive, the individual experiences 'felt security', and can employ constructive approaches to the stressor, such as problem-solving and support-seeking. If the individual considers (based on experience) that the attachment figure is unavailable or unresponsive, two main alternatives exist. If proximity-seeking is seen as a viable option for dealing with feelings of insecurity, the individual engages in hyperactivating strategies, which seek to get the partner to pay more attention and give more support (intense monitoring; efforts to get closer). These strategies are characteristic of those high in attachment anxiety (preoccupied or anxious-ambivalent). On the other hand, if proximity-seeking is seen as dangerous or disallowed, the individual engages in deactivating strategies, which involve denying attachment needs and maintaining distance and control. These strategies are characteristic of those high in avoidance (particularly dismissing-avoidance). Individuals high in fearful-avoidance may show a combination of hyperactivating and deactivating strategies.

Because attachment behavior is elicited by stressful situations, it is most readily apparent at these times. Bowlby (1969/1982) proposed that conditions of apparent threat fell into three types: conditions of the child (e.g., hunger, pain), conditions of the environment (e.g., frightening noises, presence of unfamiliar people), and conditions of the attachment relationship (e.g., caregivers' departure or discouraging of proximity). Although some of these specific conditions (such as the presence of unfamiliar persons) may elicit attachment behavior only in helpless infants, the broad typology is applicable to adult behavior. For example, conflict between adult partners may challenge or threaten their attachment bond. Conflict is an inevitable consequence of the interdependence between intimates, and

although minor conflicts may be readily resolved, intense or protracted conflict is stressful and can cast doubt on the viability of the relationship (Kobak & Duemmler, 1994; Pietromonaco, Greenwood, & Feldman Barrett, 2004). In other words, serious conflict can activate the attachment system, leading to attachment-style differences in immediate conflict behaviors and longer-term outcomes.

This article summarises findings from my own research program into adult attachment and conflict processes, and also notes relevant findings from other researchers. The article examines four broad issues: conflicts regarding closeness and distance in dating couples, patterns of marital conflict, reactions to anger-evoking and hurtful events, and the role of attachment and conflict patterns in the intergenerational transmission of relationship difficulties. It is important to note that because these studies were conducted at varying points in time, and because of the rapid proliferation of measures of adult attachment, results will refer variously to the three-group model (secure, anxious/ambivalent and avoidant; see Hazan & Shaver, 1987), the four-group model (secure, preoccupied, dismissing and fearful; see Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), and the major attachment dimensions of avoidance and anxiety (e.g., see Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998).

Closeness and distance in long-term dating couples

Distance regulation, which focuses on individuals' needs for closeness and distance and the strategies used to meet these needs, is fundamental to the negotiation of couple bonds (Baxter & Simon, 1993). Distance regulation involves seeking opportunities for both separateness (autonomy) and closeness (connection). Indeed, relationship partners need to balance these opposing forces or tendencies: Relationships cannot exist unless partners give up some individual autonomy in order to forge a connection, but too much connection can stifle the individual entities and destroy the relationship. Further, these issues are never fully resolved; needs for autonomy and connection shift as partners and situations change, and hence must be managed on an ongoing basis (Baxter & Montgomery, 1997). Because proximity-seeking is a central feature of the attachment system, individual differences in attachment security are likely to shape responses to issues of closeness and distance. In fact, proximity-seeking has been described as the major goal of attachment behavior Bowlby (1973), and as one of the key criteria of attachment bonds (Weiss, 1991).

Open-ended reports of attitudes to closeness and distance

One of our earliest studies of adult attachment (Feeney & Noller, 1991) reflected our concern that administering structured questionnaire measures of attachment style to participants might overstate the importance of attachment

issues; that is, attachment-related issues may not be very important to individuals except when they are introduced by measurement procedures. To address this problem, we asked participants in dating relationships to provide open-ended verbal descriptions of their relationships, telling 'what kind of person your partner is, and how you get along together.'

In this study, content analysis of the descriptions showed that core attachment issues, including closeness and distance, were raised spontaneously by most respondents. Further, the specific themes raised were consistent with participants' responses to the forced-choice (three-group) attachment measure, completed two weeks later. For example, those identifying as secure advocated a balance between closeness and autonomy. Avoidant individuals clearly reported the desire to limit intimacy and commitment, together with fears of partners wanting to get too close. In contrast, those identifying as anxious-ambivalent reported craving more closeness and affection. Although this study did not focus specifically on conflict, it could be expected that such contrasting attitudes to closeness and distance could prove a source of conflict for many couples.

To examine this proposition, a later study (Feeney, 1999a) involved both members of 72 dating couples completing measures of attachment security; namely, the four-group forced-choice measure and scales assessing avoidance (discomfort with closeness) and attachment anxiety. Again, open-ended descriptions of relationships were obtained (separately from each partner), and content analysis was used to calculate the proportion of each transcript devoted to the discussion of closeness-distance issues. Overall, the mean proportion of the transcripts devoted to these issues was .34, suggesting that issues concerning closeness and distance are highly salient in long-term dating relationships. Regression analyses were also conducted in which avoidance and anxiety were used to predict the proportion of the transcript dealing with closeness-distance, separately for each gender. This proportion was related positively to males' avoidance and females' anxiety; as expected, these results point to the *particular* salience of closeness-distance issues to those who are insecurely attached. Of the 72 couples, 37 included at least one partner who explicitly mentioned overall differences in partners' needs for closeness-distance. Consistent with the finding based on the 'proportion' measure, reported difference in needs was related positively to males' avoidance and females' anxiety.

More detailed analyses focused on participants who reported cyclical patterns of closeness and distance over time (32 individuals, including both partners in 11 couples). Almost half of these attributed the cyclical patterns to regular changes in work or study commitments, whereas the remaining 15 (including both partners in 5 couples) attributed them to interpersonal dynamics involving distancing and pursuing. All 12 couples who reported these recurring struggles over closeness-distance, involving 'push-pull' dynamics, included at least one insecure partner. Their reports of the relational dynamics involved in these struggles were lengthy and highly emotional, pointing to the difficult emotional climate that can accompany insecure attachment, especially when partners have very different relational styles (Bartholomew & Allison, 2006; Pistole, 1994). The concepts of hyperactivation and deactivation are relevant here: An anxious

person's needs and demands (e.g., 'wanting to be showered with attention') frustrate an avoidant partner's preference for distance. Conversely, an avoidant person's preference for distance (not wanting to be 'smothered' or controlled) frustrates an anxious partner's desire for intense closeness, exacerbating their tendency to cling and control. The clearest finding concerned the role of dismissing-avoidant men; 7 of the 15 couples with a dismissing man reported cycles of distancing and pursuing, compared with only 5 of the remaining 59 couples.

Laboratory studies of closeness and distance

Conflicts over closeness and distance can also be studied in the laboratory. For example, the 'improvisation scenes' developed by Raush, Barry, Hertel, and Swain (1974) involve explicit conflicts of interest, primed by researchers. In another study (Feeney, 1998), the same dating couples from the previous study took part in three interactions involving such conflicts. Immediately before one scene (the 'leisure scene'), each member of the couple was separately primed to argue for a different leisure activity, to be undertaken in a time previously set aside for shared couple activity. In the other scenes, one partner was primed to behave in a cold and distant manner toward the other, who was primed to try to establish closeness. The roles of the man and woman were reversed in the two interactions, which were counterbalanced. The major focus was on responses to partner's distancing; this type of core relational conflict is likely to be seen as threatening the future of the relationship, and hence, to activate attachment behavior. The leisure scene enabled a comparison of relational conflict (closeness-distance) with more concrete (issue-based) conflict.

For each of the three scenes, trained observers rated participants' responses to the conflict. Based on factor analyses, summary measures were developed: Verbal behavior was rated for levels of reason, affiliation, and coercion; nonverbal behavior was assessed in terms of touch and avoidance (which tap the extent of interactional involvement); and finally, affect was defined in terms of worry (fear and sadness) and hostility (anger and disgust).

In the leisure (issue-based) scene, the number of significant relations between attachment scales and conflict behavior did not exceed that expected by chance. In contrast, responses to partner distancing showed many significant effects. Verbal behavior showed effects of both own and partner's attachment characteristics. For example, males high in attachment anxiety used more coercion; females high in avoidance used less reason, and their partners were less affiliative. With regard to nonverbal behavior, males high in avoidance and females high in anxiety showed less active involvement in the interaction (i.e., less touch and more avoidance). Finally, with regard to emotion, females high in avoidance showed more negative affect (both worry and hostility).

The finding that attachment-related effects were restricted to the partner-distant scene supports the proposition that attachment behavior is activated particularly by conflict pertaining to proximity-seeking and distancing, which

threatens the viability of the relationship. Similarly, Simpson, Rholes, and Phillips (1996), in another laboratory study of conflict in dating couples, found that the detrimental effects of anxiety and avoidance on couples' interactions patterns and levels of distress were more pronounced for couples who were asked to discuss major, rather than minor, conflicts.

Marital conflict

Our first study of attachment and marriage, the Young Couples Study (Feeney, Noller, & Callan, 1994), provided a comprehensive picture of marital conflict. This study employed multiple methods and a longitudinal design to address the relations among attachment, conflict behavior, and marital satisfaction. Four aspects of conflict were assessed. First, couples filled out interaction diaries six months after marriage, assessing the quality of their day-to-day interactions in terms of recognition, disclosure, involvement, satisfaction, conflict, and domination. The remaining measures were completed at assessment sessions conducted after 12 months and 21 months of marriage. At these sessions, couples completed questionnaire measures of attachment: avoidance (discomfort with closeness) and attachment anxiety. With regard to conflict behavior, a structured questionnaire was used to assess levels of mutuality, coercion, destructive process such as demand-withdraw, and post-conflict distress (lingering hurt, guilt and resentment). They also discussed two issues causing conflict in their relationship, and provided reports of their own influence strategies; these reports were coded to yield scores on positivity (reason and support), negativity (manipulation and threat), and conflict avoidance (physical and emotional retreat). Finally, a series of ambiguous messages was used to assess spouses' accuracy at exchanging positive, neutral and negative nonverbal messages (negative messages are particularly relevant here, as they imply disagreement or disapproval).

Effects of own and partner's attachment characteristics

For husbands only, own avoidance was related to diary reports of less involvement, recognition, disclosure and satisfaction in everyday interactions, and to questionnaire reports of less mutuality (mutual negotiation). For wives, own avoidance was negatively related to accuracy of decoding neutral and negative messages. Links between own attachment anxiety and conflict behavior were even more widespread, although they were somewhat stronger for wives. Anxiety was linked to diary ratings of low involvement, disclosure, and satisfaction, and high conflict and domination; to questionnaire reports of low levels of mutuality and high levels of coercion, destructive process, and post-conflict distress; and to reported use of negative influence strategies in conflict-centred discussions. For

husbands, anxiety was also negatively related to accuracy at decoding all types of nonverbal messages. In addition, wives' anxiety predicted their *later* reports of destructive process and post-conflict distress, even when earlier conflict scores were controlled. These concurrent and predictive links suggest that anxiety about attachment issues drives a range of destructive conflict behaviors, which may contribute to relationship breakdown and exacerbate insecurity. Similarly, other researchers have linked attachment anxiety with higher levels of conflict and with conflict escalation, in both long-term dating (Campbell, Simpson, Boldry, & Kashy, 2005) and married couples (Gallo & Smith, 2001).

As noted in regard to the observational study of dating couples (Feeney, 1998), conflict behavior in couple bonds tends to be shaped by the attachment characteristics of the *partner*, as well as those of the reporter. In our study of newly-weds, the most consistent partner effects involved husbands' avoidance and wives' anxiety. When husbands were high in avoidance, wives reported less involvement, recognition, and satisfaction in their day-to-day interactions. Conversely, when wives were high in anxiety, husbands reported more domination and less involvement in day-to-day interactions, and more coercion and destructive process in response to conflict.

Together, these results suggest that in the early years of marriage, insecure spouses struggle to resolve differences and disagreements. Avoidance seems to interfere with husbands' constructive responses to conflict, such as involvement, disclosure, and negotiation. Anxiety is linked to higher levels of conflict, as well as to coercive and dominating conflict behavior, and lingering feelings of hurt and resentment.

In another study of attachment and marital conflict (Feeney, 1994), 361 couples were systematically sampled to represent different durations of marriage: 1 to 10 years, 11 to 20 years, and more than 20 years. This study focused only on questionnaire reports of communication patterns (mutuality, coercion, destructive process, and post-conflict distress); further, because the primary focus was on attachment and marital satisfaction, the analyses of conflict scales addressed only the effects of individuals' own (rather than partner's) attachment.

Preliminary analyses showed that scores on the conflict scales were similar for husbands and wives, and for the three groups defined by length of marriage. The findings also pointed to associations between attachment dimensions and conflict behavior that were very robust across length of marriage. For both husbands and wives, avoidance and anxiety were related negatively to mutuality, and positively to all three scales measuring destructive responses to conflict (coercion, destructive process, and post-conflict distress); generally, the correlations tended to be slightly stronger for the anxiety dimension of attachment. These results again point to the detrimental effects of attachment insecurities on couple interaction patterns and on post-conflict distress; they also indicate that these effects are not confined to the early years of marriage.

Interaction effects of partners' attachment characteristics

In couple relationships, as already noted, both partners' attachment characteristics are likely to shape relationship processes and outcomes. Beyond these 'main effects', it is possible that interactive effects may occur – that is, the effect of one person's avoidance or anxiety may *depend on* the partner's attachment profile. To date, two of our studies have addressed this issue in relation to conflict variables (Feeney, 2003).

The first of these was the study of dating couples' responses to interactions involving conflicts of interests, discussed earlier. Re-analyses assessing interactive effects were conducted at a later date, and focused specifically on participants' responses to partner distancing. Men's responses to partner's distancing showed only main effects of attachment (own and partner effects, discussed previously). However, for women's responses to partner's distancing, male anxiety and female anxiety interacted to predict three dependent variables: coercive verbal behaviour, and levels of touch and avoidance. Interestingly, this interaction effect varied in form. For coercion and avoidance, couples in which both partners were high in anxiety functioned most poorly; that is, they engaged in nonverbal avoidance but were demanding, threatening and disparaging in their comments. In contrast, the highest levels of friendly touch occurred when the man was anxious but the woman was not, suggesting that the low-anxious women may have been taking account of their partners' insecurities and trying hard to show support and encouragement.

In the Young Couples Study mentioned earlier, we also examined possible interactive effects of partners' attachment characteristics. Again, the most consistent effect involved husbands' and wives' anxiety levels, which had interactive effects on wives' reports of conflict behaviors. Further, because this study was longitudinal, we were able to show that the effects emerged both concurrently and over time. Again, the interactive effects varied in form. For example, wives reported the most conflict avoidance when both spouses were anxious about the relationship, suggesting that the avoidance behavior was driven by the insecurities of both partners. This finding, which highlights the problematic combination of two anxious spouses, fits with the results for coercion and avoidance in response to partner distancing (above). It is not surprising that this combination can prove difficult: Both partners are excessively focused on their own insecurities and on trying to control the other's behaviour, and both tend to feel misunderstood. Moreover, neither seems able to recognize or meet the other's needs, leading to mutual frustration and increasing anxiety.

Interestingly, however, anxious wives with anxious husbands reported *less* coercion than those with low-anxious husbands. This finding suggests that anxious wives may perceive their non-anxious husbands as unable or unwilling to understand their insecurities; this may lead to escalating coercion, or to the misattribution of partners' behavior as coercive. Similarly, Gallo and Smith's (2001) study of marital conflict showed complex effects of spouses' anxiety levels: Couples with two anxious spouses reported the most conflict, but couples in which only the wife was anxious reported slightly less conflict than those with two low-

anxious spouses. Anxious wives generally strive hard to retain their partners, and non-anxious husbands may take this into account when facing their needs and demands.

Conflict as a mediator of the security-satisfaction association

The association between secure attachment and relationship is now well established (see Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, for a review). More recently, increasing attention has been paid to variables that may *mediate* this association. Such variables act as a link in the causal chain; hence, understanding the mechanisms by which insecurity leads to unhappy relationships can suggest additional points of intervention for counselors and clinicians. Given that communication is the vehicle by which attachment relationships are negotiated (Bretherton, 1988; Kobak & Duemmler, 1994), it seems likely that patterns of communication (including conflict-centred communication) mediate the effects of insecurity on relationship outcomes. We have examined this issue with two married samples: the newly-weds, and those sampled across the life cycle of marriage.

In the Young Couples Study, we assessed the role of attachment dimensions and conflict variables (measured after a year of marriage) in predicting later marital satisfaction. We conducted hierarchical regression analyses in which marital satisfaction at Time 2 was predicted by earlier scores on own and partner's attachment (step 1) and own conflict behavior (step 2). These analyses were carried out separately for the questionnaire scales (mutuality, coercion, destructive process, and post-conflict distress) and the nonverbal accuracy task, both of which constitute general measures of communication skill.

For the full sample (i.e., pooled across gender to increase statistical power), Time 1 attachment dimensions predicted later marital satisfaction, with own anxiety being the strongest predictor. When the questionnaire scales were added, the overall prediction was marginally significant. Own anxiety remained the only significant predictor, and the regression weights associated with the attachment scales did not change substantially with the inclusion of the conflict variables. These findings suggest that for these young couples, communication patterns during conflict did not add to the prediction of marital satisfaction afforded by attachment dimensions, and that the effect of attachment dimensions on satisfaction is not mediated to any large degree by conflict patterns.

When nonverbal accuracy scores for the three message types were entered (in place of the questionnaire scales) at step 2, own anxiety was again the only significant predictor of marital satisfaction, and the influence of attachment on satisfaction was unaffected by the decoding measures. Hence, again, it does not appear that communication accuracy plays a substantial mediating role in the link between attachment and satisfaction.

In the study of couples across the life cycle of marriage, the possible role of the four questionnaire scales as mediators of the attachment-satisfaction link was again explored. Six hierarchical regression analyses were conducted, one for each

combination of gender and length of marriage. The dependent variable was marital satisfaction, and the predictors were participants' scores on the attachment scales (step 1) and conflict scales (step 2).

In all six analyses, the attachment scales provided significant prediction of marital satisfaction at step 1. Husbands' marital satisfaction was negatively related to anxiety, irrespective of length of marriage. For wives, satisfaction was negatively related to both avoidance and anxiety. At step 2, in sharp contrast to the Young Couples Study, addition of the conflict scales resulted in a highly significant increase in explained variance in all six analyses. Results were consistent across the three stages of marriage. In the full model, mutuality was the strongest predictor of husbands' satisfaction, with anxiety maintaining a significant or near-significant relationship with the dependent variable. Mutuality was also the strongest predictor of wives' satisfaction, with both attachment scales becoming nonsignificant predictors. These findings indicate that for husbands, the negative association between anxiety and satisfaction was *partially* mediated by communication patterns adopted during conflict - for husbands, anxiety seems to have some deleterious effects over and above those attributable to conflict patterns. For wives, the link between secure attachment and satisfaction was fully mediated by conflict patterns.

In recent years, several studies have confirmed the importance of conflict-related variables as mediators of the association between insecure attachment and relationship distress (see Feeney, 2008, and Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007, for summaries of this work). Examples of relevant conflict variables include problems in negotiation, negative attributions for partner behaviors, and reluctance to forgive transgressions.

Affect regulation: Dealing with anger and hurt

In intimate relationships, conflict and negative emotion are closely linked (Sillars, 1998; Sillars & Scott, 1983). Emotions are felt most strongly and expressed most spontaneously between intimates. Conflicts also have greater potential to become emotional in intimate relationships, because they are more involving and threatening. In turn, emotionality has important effects on conflict-centred interactions: It increases the likelihood of biased interpretation of messages (often leading partners to overgeneralize their differences), of selective attention to behavior that is visually salient or negative, and of reduced ability to engage in complex thought. All these effects are likely to maintain or exacerbate conflict.

The importance of negative emotion to attachment behavior is also highlighted by attachment theorists' emphasis on affect regulation. Caregivers' reactions to the child's needs and signals provide a critical context in which the child learns how to deal with negative emotions and achieve 'felt security' (Sroufe & Waters, 1977). If caregivers are mostly available and responsive, children can regulate distress by turning to them for comfort; however, if caregivers are unavailable or unpredictable, alternative strategies develop (Mikulincer & Shaver,

2008). These varying strategies are gradually incorporated into rules that guide responses to stressful situations. Secure attachment is associated with rules that allow the individual to acknowledge distress and engage in support seeking. Avoidant attachment is associated with rules that restrict expression of distress and support seeking (deactivating strategies), and anxious-ambivalent attachment reflects rules that encourage heightened awareness and expression of distress (hyperactivating strategies).

Dealing with anger

This section describes two studies of attachment and emotional control, focusing on participants' reported responses to anger in their relationship. The studies were designed to investigate the extent to which participants controlled ('bottled up') their anger, rather than expressing and acknowledging it. This issue has important implications for individual and couple well-being, as high levels of emotional control have been linked to health problems and relational dissatisfaction (Fitness, 2006; Kotler, Buzwell, Romeo, & Bowland, 1994).

In the first study (Feeney, 1995), participants in dating relationships reported on the frequency with which they experienced anger in their relationship. They also rated the extent to which they controlled their anger, and the extent to which they thought their relationship partner *wanted* them to control (rather than express) their anger. Finally, an open-ended question asked participants to describe any other reaction they often had when experiencing anger within their relationship.

Insecure participants reported experiencing anger more frequently in their relationships. Further, females high in avoidance (discomfort with closeness) reported controlling ('bottling up') their anger, as did males high in anxiety. These relations with emotional control remained significant after controlling for the frequency of anger. Although the finding for avoidance is consistent with the concept of deactivating strategies, the link between anxiety and control of anger does not fit with the notion that anxious individuals engage in *heightened* expressions of distress. However, the basic formulation relating attachment anxiety to extreme displays of negative affect may be overly simplistic. Although emotions such as anger, sadness and anxiety are all rated as negative in hedonic tone (i.e., as unpleasant), they differ in important ways. In particular, the experience of anger is associated with tension, impulsiveness and a tendency to engage in destructive behaviour. For this reason, social norms often discourage the expression of anger (Wallbott & Scherer, 1988), and those who are very anxious about their relationships may inhibit expressions of anger to attachment figures so as not to alienate them. Consistent with this argument, anxious men and women in this study perceived that their partners *wanted* them to control their anger.

For the open-ended question about 'other' responses to anger, self-reported responses were coded into categories; a frequency comparison showed that the categories were strongly related to the forced-choice (four-group) measure of

attachment style. Secure participants reported active negotiation of anger situations; that is, open and honest discussion and expression. This kind of direct, bilateral strategy has been shown to be the most constructive in terms of relationship outcomes (see Wilson & Morgan, 2004, for a discussion). In contrast, insecure individuals reported less constructive reactions: Preoccupied participants reported using indirect influence (e.g., letting their actions or silence convey their anger); dismissing participants reported avoidance behaviors (e.g., leaving the scene); and fearful participants reported verbal and physical aggression.

A later study (Feeney, 1999b) explored the issue of emotional control of anger in a sample of married couples. Apart from the sampling, this study differed from the previous one in two respects. First, participants were asked to rate the intensity, as well as the frequency, with which they experienced anger. Second, participants made their ratings (of frequency, intensity and emotional control) for each of two contexts: when the anger was caused by 'something the partner had done' (partner-related context), and when it was caused by 'something not involving the partner' (other context). This distinction was designed to assess whether rules and strategies for regulating distress, learned with caregivers, generalize to other emotionally-laden situations (as predicted by attachment theory).

In terms of emotional experience, attachment anxiety was linked to reports of more frequent and intense anger, both partner-related and other; avoidance was linked to more frequent anger in the partner-context only. Attachment-related effects for emotional control were more robust across gender than in Study 1; for both husbands and wives, anxiety and avoidance were linked to greater control of anger, both partner-related and other. Although anger may be controlled in the interests of denying distress or placating the partner, it may have the unfortunate consequence of impeding the expression of grievances and legitimate requests for change.

Together, these two studies provide substantial evidence that insecure individuals experience more frequent and intense anger than secure individuals, and are more likely to 'bottle up' their anger or respond in other maladaptive ways. These results are largely consistent with those from Mikulincer's (1998) questionnaire- and laboratory-based studies of anger. In these studies, insecure attachment (avoidant or anxious) was associated with greater anger-proneness and less adaptive responses to anger. In addition, avoidance was linked to high levels of control of anger, and anxious attachment was linked to tendencies to internalize or displace anger (Mikulincer did not find that anxiously attached persons used more emotional control, but unlike my own work, he assessed responses to anger generally, rather than anger in the relationship).

Understanding psychological hurt

Another issue relevant to conflict behavior is that of hurt feelings. Hurt and conflict can be connected in various ways (Caughlin, Scott, & Miller, 2009): Hurt

can lead either to conflict or to conflict avoidance, and conflict can either increase or diminish hurt (depending on how it is handled).

'Hurt feelings' are common in close relationships, but researchers continue to debate the exact nature of the emotional experience. In a study of the hierarchical organization of emotion concepts, Shaver and colleagues reported that 'hurt' belonged within the basic emotion of sadness, in a sub-cluster of terms (e.g., 'anguish') tapping the theme of suffering (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987). However, hurt is often regarded as a blend of emotions. According to Vangelisti (2001; Vangelisti & Young, 2000), hurt involves a combination of sadness (at a felt loss) and fear (of being vulnerable to harm). Other data suggest that hurt may be a unique emotion in its own right. Ratings by victims indicate that hurt feelings are not simply reducible to other negative emotions, although other negative emotions do often arise (Leary & Springer, 2001). Further, in a recent retrospective study of separate events that had elicited hurt, sadness and anger, respondents were able to differentiate between the three types of events; hurtful events were characterized as unexpected and incomprehensible, as eliciting distress and confusion, and as producing urges to cry and to exit the situation (Fitness & Warburton, 2009).

What are the defining features of hurtful events?

In a retrospective study of diverse relationship types, Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, and Evans (1998) reported that victims described six types of hurtful events: active disassociation (explicit rejection or abandonment); passive disassociation (implicit rejection); criticism; betrayal; teasing; and feeling unappreciated or taken for granted. Adapting this typology for couple relationships, Feeney (2004) found support for five types of hurtful events: active disassociation (denying or retracting love and commitment), passive disassociation (ignoring or excluding partner from plans and activities), criticism, sexual infidelity, and deception (lying; breaking promises and confidences).

Although it is useful to understand the various types of hurtful behavior, it is equally important to understand their 'common denominator'. Researchers agree that the common theme involves particular cognitive appraisals, but differ somewhat in their analysis of those appraisals. One view (Leary, 2001) links hurt feelings to perceived *relational devaluation*; that is, to the perception that the offender regards the relationship as less valuable or important than the victim would like. In another approach, Vangelisti (2001) suggested that the defining feature of hurt feelings is *relational transgression*; that is, the offender is seen as having broken a relationship rule, and the target appraises his or her own role in the interaction as that of victim.

More recently, I have suggested that hurt feelings stem from relational transgressions that involve a sense of *personal injury* to one's self-worth or basic trust in others (Feeney, 2005). That is, consistent with attachment theory, hurt results when partners' behavior threatens core beliefs about the lovability of the self or the availability of others (positive working models). This perspective has

received indirect support from an analysis of victims' accounts of hurtful events in couple relationships: Although sadness, fear, and anger were common elements, the *dominant* theme was a sense of pain and injury, and a considerable number of idiosyncratic terms focused on pain and damage (e.g., 'cut to the quick', 'pierced'). Expert judges' ratings of rule transgressions also suggested that hurt is elicited specifically by transgressions that threaten positive working models; these transgressions generally (but not invariably) also imply relational devaluation. In a variant of this view, Shaver and colleagues have proposed that the key feature of hurtful events is their capacity to destroy an individual's sense of safety and security, which is deep, visceral and generally unconscious (Shaver, Mikulincer, Lavy, & Cassidy, 2009).

Attachment-style differences in responses to hurtful events

Given theoretical links among attachment insecurity, psychological hurt and difficulties with affect regulation, we would expect individual differences in attachment security to constitute an important source of differences in perceptions of, and responses to, hurtful events. Victims' ratings of emotional reactions support this argument. Consistent with the notion of deactivating strategies, respondents high in avoidance report lower levels of hurt, as well as lower levels of general distress and fear. In contrast, those high in attachment anxiety report higher levels of hurt, fear, general distress and shame (Feeney, 2005).

In a more detailed analysis of hurtful events (Feeney, 2004), Structural Equations Modeling was used to develop integrative models of the longer-term effects of these events on the victim (continued worry and lack of confidence) and on the couple relationship (continued distrust and distancing). With regard to effects on the victim, the relevant dimension of insecurity was attachment anxiety. In the short term, individuals who were anxious about their relationships responded to hurtful partner behavior with high levels of distress and self-blame. Further, attachment anxiety had a direct effect on victims' adjustment problems in the longer-term, together with indirect effects via the immediate increases in distress and negative self-perceptions (Feeney, 2004).

When predicting effects on the relationship, avoidance was the important attachment dimension. Avoidant individuals tended to perceive partners as lacking remorse for hurtful behavior, and this perception served to fuel conflict and impede relationship repair (Feeney, 2004). There was also a direct path from avoidance to ongoing relationship problems; this path may reflect an overlearned tendency to deny attachment needs, especially in stressful situations (Fraley & Shaver, 1997). Interestingly, although avoidance had the overall effect of *increasing* relationship problems, it also had an indirect path through less destructive victim behavior; that is, avoidant individuals were less likely to resort to sarcasm, anger and tears, and this effect served to *decrease* relationship problems. This finding suggests, somewhat paradoxically, that the controlled interpersonal style associated with avoidance may sometimes prevent conflicts from escalating.

Attachment, conflict and intergenerational transmission of relationship difficulties

The next study to be discussed (Feeney, 2006) was designed to examine parent-child conflict, and to assess the implications of parental attachment and conflict behavior for offspring's relational adjustment (attachment security and loneliness). This was a cross-sectional study; in each family, mothers, fathers and adolescents completed attachment scales (avoidance and anxiety). In addition, mothers and fathers reported on their own conflict behavior toward their offspring (problem-solving, attacking and avoiding), and offspring reported on each parent's conflict behavior toward them. (Because parents' conflict behavior with offspring was central to the study, both parents and offspring reported on these variables.) Finally, offspring completed a measure of loneliness.

First, to assess systematic differences in family members' perceptions of conflict behavior, MANOVAs were conducted. For ratings of mothers' conflict behavior, the overall effect of reporter (mother, offspring) was highly significant. Mothers and offspring differed in their reports of attacking and problem-solving: Mothers saw themselves as less attacking and more problem-solving than did their offspring. For ratings of fathers' conflict behavior, the multivariate effect of reporter was not significant, but univariate tests showed that fathers saw themselves as less attacking than did their offspring. These effects are consistent with the generational stake hypothesis: Different generations have a different stake in how they view the family, depending on their investment in it and the centrality of the family to their future life (Bengtson & Troll, 1978). Adolescents are in the process of seeking autonomy from the family and hence describe it more negatively than their parents, who have usually made a huge investment in family life over many years.

Although the generational stake hypothesis implies that parents and offspring tend to differ in their perceptions of the family, it seems plausible that attachment insecurity (which involves a range of fears and defences) might be associated with *greater* differences than usual. This issue was examined in two ways: first, by correlating family members' attachment scales with 'difference scores' on conflict (offspring's score minus parent's score), and second, by regressing parental attachment on parents' reports (step 1) and offspring's reports (step 2) of parent-child conflict, thus 'unconfounding' the effects of the two components (Griffin, Murray, & Gonzalez, 1999). Both these methods yielded similar conclusions; as expected, attachment insecurity was linked to larger difference scores, and parents' and offspring's reports of conflict provided independent prediction of parental insecurity. Specifically, when fathers were highly anxious, offspring reported less paternal problem-solving than fathers did. In addition, when mothers were highly anxious, offspring reported less maternal problem-solving than mothers did, together with more maternal avoiding and attacking. Finally, when offspring were highly anxious, offspring reported more maternal avoiding and attacking than mothers did.

Parental attachment and parental conflict behavior

To assess links between parental attachment security and conflict behavior, parents' attachment scores were correlated with their reports of parent-child conflict. For both mothers and fathers, anxiety and avoidance were associated with reports of attacking behavior (although the link between fathers' avoidance and attacking behavior was only a trend). In addition, problem-solving was related negatively to mothers' avoidance and fathers' anxiety. These results provide substantial support for the link between parental security and constructive conflict behavior. Although these associations could be inflated by the use of a common reporter (i.e., ratings of both attachment and conflict behavior may be affected by parents' general relational attitudes and biases), additional analyses in which parents' reports of attachment security were correlated with *offspring's* reports of parental conflict again supported the link between parental security and constructive conflict styles.

Parental variables and offspring's relational difficulties

Given the pivotal role of conflict-centred communication in the negotiation of attachment relationships, parents' conflict behaviors were expected to predict child outcomes, and to mediate the link between parental security and child outcomes. Correlations showed that both parental attachment security and conflict behavior were related to offspring's avoidance, anxiety and loneliness, although the specific pattern of association varied across these three dependent measures. Further, regarding the possible mediating role of conflict behavior, the results provided preliminary support for links between the independent variables (parental attachment) and proposed mediators (conflict behaviors).

Regression analyses and Sobel tests were used to further test the mediational model. In four instances, these analyses supported the hypothesis that parental conflict behavior mediates the association between parental attachment and offspring's relational adjustment. Low maternal problem-solving mediated the association between maternal avoidance and offspring's avoidance. However, evidence of mediation was strongest for the prediction of offspring's loneliness: The association between maternal avoidance and loneliness was mediated by low maternal problem-solving, and the association between paternal anxiety and loneliness was mediated by both paternal attacking and low paternal problem-solving. (There was no evidence of mediation for the prediction of offspring's anxiety, although parental anxiety and offspring's anxiety did show direct links). The observed mediated relationships probably involve complex and overlapping mechanisms – for example, parents who engage in verbal attack, rather than problem-solving, may discourage open discussion of emotion, send implicit messages that foster distrust of others, and model relationship behaviors that put offspring at risk of rejection by their peers (Bretherton & Munholland, 2008; Feldman, 1997).

In considering these findings, it is important to note that attachment and conflict patterns are not necessarily stable over long periods of time, and to acknowledge the difficulty, with cross-sectional studies, of inferring patterns of causation. For instance, in contrast to the proposed mediational model, it could be argued that offspring's attachment may influence parent-child conflict patterns, rather than being influenced *by* them. Specifically, parent-child conflict behaviors might be shaped by the attachment characteristics of both partners; or parents' attachment might influence offspring's attachment, in turn affecting conflict behavior. In this study, however, analyses testing these alternative models were less effective in explaining the data; indeed, offspring's attachment was relatively unimportant in predicting parental conflict, providing no support for its direct or indirect effects.

Summary and conclusions

As researchers have pointed out (Bretherton, 1988; Kobak & Duemmler, 1994), communication is the vehicle by which attachment bonds are established and maintained. In couple relationships, the association between attachment security and conflict-centred communication is likely to be bi-directional. As we have seen, there is extensive support for attachment-style differences in conflict behaviors. Insecure individuals - particularly those high in attachment anxiety - are prone to perceive high levels of conflict and negativity in their relationships. They are also likely to respond to conflict in negative ways. In particular, conflict over serious issues, including closeness and distance, can create severe challenges for insecure individuals. In couple bonds, both partners' attachment orientations shape conflict behavior; there is also evidence of interactive effects, whereby the effects of one person's attachment characteristics depend on the characteristics of the partner. The conflict behaviors adopted by insecure individuals - including conflict avoidance and coercion - are likely to result in ongoing conflict and lingering anger and resentment. In this way, couple interactions in the context of conflict may maintain, or even exacerbate, insecurity.

Both insecurity and destructive responses to conflict tend to fuel dissatisfaction with the relationship. Further, there is evidence that destructive responses to conflict mediate the association between insecure attachment and relational dissatisfaction; that is, insecurity drives maladaptive responses to conflict, which contribute to insecure persons' tendency to evaluate their relationships negatively. Importantly, research suggests that the negative effects of adults' insecurity and destructive responses to conflict are not confined to the couple relationship. Rather, these variables appear to have negative consequences for adolescent offspring, in terms of their own attachment difficulties and appraisals of loneliness. Fortunately, many therapeutic interventions now focus on ameliorating attachment insecurities and communication difficulties, thus providing a means of breaking negative relational patterns.

References

- Ainsworth, M. D. S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, *44*, 709-716.
- Bartholomew, K., & Allison, C. J. (2006). An attachment perspective on abusive dynamics in intimate relationships. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodman (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 102-127). New York: Guilford.
- Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *61*, 226-244.
- Baxter, L. A., & Montgomery, B. M. (1997). Rethinking communication in personal relationships from a dialectical perspective. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 325-349). New York: Wiley.
- Baxter, L. A., & Simon, E. P. (1993). Relationship maintenance strategies and dialectical contradictions in personal relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *10*, 225-242.
- Bengtson, V. L., & Troll, L. (1978). Youth and their parents: Feedback and intergenerational influence in socialization. In R. M. Lerner & G. B. Spanier (Eds.), *Children's influences on marital and family interaction: A lifespan perspective* (pp. 106-130). New York: Academic Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1969/1982). *Attachment and loss: Vol.1. Attachment*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol.2. Separation: Anxiety and anger*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1979). *The making and breaking of affectional bonds*. London: Tavistock.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Vol.3. Loss*. New York: Basic Books.
- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 46-76). New York: Guilford.
- Bretherton, I. (1988). Open communication and internal working models: Their role in the development of attachment relationships. *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (pp. 57-113). Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- Bretherton, I., & Munholland, K., A. (2008). Internal working models in attachment relationships: Elaborating a central construct in attachment theory. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 102-127). New York: Guilford.
- Campbell, L., Simpson, J. A., Boldry, J., & Kashy, D. A. (2005). Perceptions of conflict and support in romantic relationships: The role of attachment anxiety. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *88*, 510-531.

- Caughlin, J. P., Scott, A. M., & Miller, L. E. (2009). Conflict and hurt in close relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), *Feeling hurt in close relationships* (pp. 143-166). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Feeney, J. A. (1994). Attachment style, communication patterns, and satisfaction across the life cycle of marriage. *Personal Relationships, 1*, 333-348.
- Feeney, J. A. (1995). Adult attachment and emotional control. *Personal Relationships, 2*, 143-159.
- Feeney, J. A. (1998). Adult attachment and relationship-centered anxiety: Responses to physical and emotional distancing. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), *Attachment theory and close relationships* (pp. 189-218). New York: Guilford.
- Feeney, J. A. (1999a). Issues of closeness and distance in dating relationships: Effects of sex and attachment style. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 16*, 571-590.
- Feeney, J. A. (1999b). Adult attachment, emotional control, and marital satisfaction. *Personal Relationships, 6*, 169-185.
- Feeney, J. A. (2003). The systemic nature of couple relationships: An attachment perspective. In P. Erdman & T. Caffery (Eds.), *Attachment and family systems: Conceptual, empirical and therapeutic relatedness* (pp. 139-163). New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Feeney, J. A. (2004). Hurt feelings in couple relationships: Toward integrative models of the negative effects of hurtful events. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 21*, 487-508.
- Feeney, J. A. (2005). Hurt feelings in couple relationships: Exploring the role of attachment and perceptions of personal injury. *Personal Relationships, 12*, 253-271.
- Feeney, J. A. (2006). Parental attachment and conflict behavior: Implications for offspring's attachment, loneliness, and relationship satisfaction. *Personal Relationships, 13*, 19-36.
- Feeney, J. A. (2008). Adult romantic attachment: Developments in the study of couple relationships. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 456-481). New York: Guilford.
- Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1991). Attachment style and verbal descriptions of romantic partners. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 8*, 187-215.
- Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Callan, V. J. (1994). Attachment style, communication and satisfaction in the early years of marriage. In K. Bartholomew & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships Vol.5: Attachment processes in adulthood* (pp. 269-308). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Feldman, C. M. (1997). Childhood precursors of adult interpartner violence. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, 4*, 307-334.
- Fitness, J. (2006). Emotion and cognition in close relationships. In P. Noller & J. A. Feeney (Eds.), *Close relationships: Functions, forms and processes* (pp. 285-303). New York & Hove, UK: Psychology Press.

- Fitness, J., & Warburton, W. (2009). Thinking the unthinkable: Cognitive appraisals and hurt feelings. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), *Feeling hurt in close relationships* (pp. 34-49). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (1997). Adult attachment and the suppression of unwanted thoughts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*, 1080-1091.
- Gallo, L. C., & Smith, T. W. (2001). Attachment style in marriage: Adjustment and responses to interaction. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 18*, 263-289.
- Griffin, D., Murray, S., & Gonzalez, R. (1999). Difference score correlations in relationship research: A conceptual primer. *Personal Relationships, 6*, 505-518.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*, 511-524.
- Kobak, R. R., & Duemmler, S. (1994). Attachment and conversation: Toward a discourse analysis of adolescent and adult security. In K. Bartholomew & D. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in personal relationships Vol.5: Attachment processes in adulthood* (pp. 121-149). London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Kotler, T., Buzwell, S., Romeo, Y., & Bowland, J. (1994). Avoidant attachment as a risk factor for health. *British Journal of Medical Psychology, 67*, 237-245.
- Leary, M. R. (2001). Toward a conceptualization of interpersonal rejection. In M. R. Leary (Ed.), *Interpersonal rejection* (pp. 3-20). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Leary, M. R., & Springer, C. A. (2001). Hurt feelings: The neglected emotion. In R. M. Kowalski (Ed.), *Behaving badly: Aversive behaviors in interpersonal relationships* (pp. 151-175). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Leary, M. R., Springer, C., Negel, L., Ansell, E., & Evans, K. (1998). The causes, phenomenology, and consequences of hurt feelings. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 1225-1237.
- Mikulincer, M. (1998). Adult attachment style and individual differences in functional versus dysfunctional experiences of anger. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74*, 513-524.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2007). *Attachment in adulthood: Structure, dynamics, and change*. New York: Guilford.
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2008). Adult attachment and affect regulation. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (2nd ed., pp. 503-531). New York: Guilford.
- Pietromonaco, P. R., Greenwood, D., & Feldman Barrett, L. (2004). Conflict in adult close relationships: An attachment perspective. In W. S. Rholes & J. A. Simpson (Eds.), *Adult attachment: Theory, research, and clinical implications* (pp. 267-299). New York: Guilford.
- Pistole, M. C. (1994). Adult attachment styles: Some thoughts on closeness-distance struggles. *Family Process, 33*, 147-159.
- Raush, H.L., Barry, W.A., Hertel, R. K., & Swain, M.A. (1974). *Communication, conflict and marriage*. San Fransisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Shaver, P. R., Mikulincer, M., Lavy, S., & Cassidy, J. (2009). Understanding and altering hurt feelings: An attachment-theoretical perspective on the generation and regulation of emotions. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), *Feeling hurt in close relationships* (pp. 92-119). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Shaver, P., Schwartz, J., Kirson, D., & O'Connor, C. (1987). Emotion knowledge: Further exploration of a prototype approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*, 1061-1086.
- Sillars, A. L. (1998). (Mis)understanding. In B. H. Spitzberg & W. R. Cupach (Eds.), *The dark side of close relationships* (pp. 73-102). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Sillars, A. L., & Scott, M. D. (1983). Interpersonal perception between intimates: An integrative review. *Human Communication Research*, *10*, 153-176.
- Simpson, J. A., Rholes, W. S., & Phillips, D. (1996). Conflict in close relationships: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*, 899-914.
- Sroufe, L. A., & Waters, E. (1977). Attachment as an organizational construct. *Child Development*, *48*, 1184-1199.
- Vangelisti, A. L. (2001). Making sense of hurtful interactions in close relationships. In V. Manusov & J. H. Harvey (Eds.), *Attribution, communication behavior, and close relationships* (pp. 38-58). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Vangelisti, A. L., & Young, S. L. (2000). When words hurt: The effects of perceived intentionality on interpersonal relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *17*, 393-424.
- Wallbott, H. G., & Scherer, K. R. (1988). How universal and specific is emotional experience? In K. R. Scherer (Ed.), *Facets of emotion* (pp. 31-56). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Weiss, R. S. (1986). Continuities and transformations in social relationships from childhood to adulthood. In W. W. Hartup & Z. Rubin (Eds.), *Relationships and development* (pp. 95-110). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Weiss, R. S. (1991). The attachment bond in childhood and adulthood. In C. M. Parkes, J. Stevenson-Hinde, & P. Marris (Eds.), *Attachment across the life cycle* (pp. 66-76). London: Tavistock/Routledge.
- Wilson, S. R., & Morgan, W. M. (2004). Persuasion and families. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), *Handbook of family communication* (pp. 447-471). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

La Estructura Emocional de la Intensidad de la Pasión Romántica

Rozzana Sánchez Aragón¹
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Resumen

Las emociones juegan un papel esencial en la vida del ser humano, y aunque éstas determinan el matiz de nuestras experiencias más significativas; su naturaleza, causas y consecuencias son de los aspectos de la experiencia humana más difíciles de comprender. De entre las aportaciones psicológicas más significativas al estudio de estos estados afectivos, la propuesta de Frijda (1986, 1996, 2009) ha identificado: al interés por experimentar la emoción, su apreciación, su intensidad y predisposición individual hacia vivir emociones como las columnas que erigen su experiencia. De entre muchas, la pasión ha sido considerada un universal cultural (Brown, 1991; Buss, 1988, Hatfield & Rapson, 1993), además de una emoción precursora de conductas tanto positivas como negativas. Con base en lo anterior, el presente estudio tuvo por objetivo el diseño y validación de varios instrumentos que miden los factores identificados por Frijda aplicadas a la emoción de la pasión en adultos de la Ciudad de México, explorar las relaciones entre dichos factores tanto en hombres como en mujeres y por último examinar las diferencias sexuales en torno a ellos. Los resultados muestran la obtención de escalas con cualidades psicométricas aceptables, patrones de relación característicos para hombres y mujeres, y predominancia femenina en intensidad y masculina en control emocional.

Palabras clave: Intensidad, Interés, Emociones, Pasión, Medición.

Emotional Structure of Romantic Passion Intensity

Abstract

Emotions play an essential role in the human being life. Although emotions define the meaningful individual experiences; their nature, causes and consequences, are very difficult issues to understand. Among the relevant psychological contributions about affective states, the work done by Frijda (1986, 1996, 2009) had identified as fundamental basis of emotions: the interest to experience emotion, its appraisal, its intensity and individual predisposition to feel emotions. On the other hand, passion has been considered as a cultural universal (Brown, 1991; Buss, 1988, Hatfield & Rapson, 1993), and as an emotion that triggers positive and negative behaviors (Sánchez-Aragón, 2007). Based on this, present research was oriented to: 1) design and validate several measures that operationalize the constructs proposed by Frijda in the case of passion in Mexican adults, 2) explore the interrelations among those in males and females; and finally, 3) examine the gender differences about them. Findings show good psychometric qualities in measures developed, some characteristic patterns in the correlations for males and females, and a feminine predominance on intensity and a masculine one about emotional control.

Key words: Intensity, Interest, Emotions, Passion, Measurement.

¹ E-mail: rozzara@servidor.unam.mx.

Al tener unos meses de vida, los seres humanos van manifestando y adquiriendo emociones básicas como miedo, enfado o alegría; que se comparten con algunos animales; pero que se encuentran más *complejizadas* en los seres humanos, debido a la influencia de elementos relativos al ecosistema socio-cultural como el lenguaje, el uso de símbolos, signos y significados propios (Mesquita & Albert, 2010). Así, cada individuo experimenta una emoción de forma particular, dependiendo de sus experiencias y/o aprendizaje, personalidad, la situación concreta que se le presenta y su contexto cultural. No obstante, hay que mencionar que algunas reacciones fisiológicas y conductuales que desencadenan las emociones son innatas y otras pueden adquirirse (Frijda, Manstead & Bem, 2000).

Tratar de definir una emoción parece relativamente fácil, sin embargo, es difícil llegar a una concepción consensuada de ella. Una definición con una fuerte aceptación y muy utilizada es la siguiente: ***un estado afectivo experimentado; una reacción subjetiva al ambiente, acompañada de cambios fisiológicos y endocrinos innatos, influidos por la experiencia*** (Damasio, 1994). Las emociones tienen una función adaptativa de nuestro organismo al medio que nos rodea; por ello, su naturaleza permite que sobrevenga súbita y bruscamente, en forma de crisis más o menos pasajeras e incluso en –ocasiones– violentas (Elster, 2001).

El hecho de que las emociones puedan revelar estas variaciones en su aparición, se debe –entre otras cosas– a su intensidad. Por lo que las últimas décadas, muchos estudios se encaminaron a buscar correlaciones entre parámetros fisiológicos de las emociones y variables del comportamiento, no obstante sus hallazgos mostraron coeficientes bajos (Frijda, 1986; Hodgson & Rachman, 1974; Lang, 1984; Rachman, 1990; Venables, 1984); lo cual indica lo problemático de operacionalizar la intensidad de una emoción. Por supuesto, era factible tomar arbitrariamente la intensidad de sensaciones subjetivas como un criterio válido.

Las emociones se pueden sentir intensas por razones absolutamente diversas. Un fuerte ruido repentino puede causar el sobresalto que hace al individuo brincar, causando una experiencia que sería llamada intensa; y una pérdida personal puede causar que alguien se pierda por horas y sentir que la vida se haya desprovista de significado, esto también se pudo llamar una sensación intensa; y aunque las dos clases de intensidad no parecerían ser comparables, parece que incluyen los mismos elementos, por ejemplo ***una sensación de agrado o desagrado, el conocimiento del significado de la emoción, la disposición conductual que favorece y los cambios que puede generar en el sistema de creencias dicha emoción*** (Frijda, Ortony, Sonnemans & Clore, 1992; Scherer, 1984). Esta idea de similitud entre emociones se aplica también a los **componentes objetivos**: comportamiento expresivo, preparación de la acción de la respuesta fisiológica; y a los **componentes subjetivos**: la valoración y a los cambios de la creencia.

También, las emociones tienen consecuencias que reflejan la magnitud de impacto del acontecimiento que sea, y que pudieron (o no) influenciar la estimación del individuo de la intensidad de su emoción, tal como la repetición del

último acontecimiento en el pensamiento, puede influenciar sobre su conducta de la vida y la formación de metas a largo plazo.

Con base en estas reflexiones, Frijda propuso una hipótesis en la que integra varios aspectos de la configuración de la intensidad emocional subjetiva (Frijda, 1986; Frijda et al., 1992; Ortony, Clore & Collins, 1998):

***Intensidad de la Emoción =
f (interés, apreciación, intensidad, predisposiciones individuales)***

En donde el **interés** refleja la valoración que hace el sujeto del acontecimiento en términos de su relevancia para él mismo, la **apreciación** se refiere al proceso clave del despertar emocional real, en el que se evalúa el contexto con respecto a las posibilidades de hacerle frente. Un tercer paso (**intensidad**), es la generación de la respuesta emocional, es decir, el cambio en la respuesta fisiológica que da la pauta a la preparación de la acción, y la sensación consciente, con base en la valoración previa. A estos elementos se añaden las tendencias del individuo a responder ante situaciones, es decir, a su **comportamiento expresivo**, lo cual incluiría las preferencias y el umbral emocional.

Al respecto y en torno a la idea de existen diferencias sexuales en torno a la experiencia emocional, Brody (2000) aborda el papel de la socialización emocional indicando que ésta determina las reglas, normas sociales que dictan cómo, cuándo y dónde las emociones se deben expresar por hombres y mujeres, por ejemplo, la expresión de tristeza, miedo y euforia o vergüenza, aún considerándolas universales, son más aceptadas en mujeres que en hombres. En contraste, la emoción del enojo es mejor vista en ellos que en ellas. Asimismo, los padres –motivados por educar niños que sean aceptables socialmente- socializan a sus hijos a conformarse con reglas que eventualmente los llevarán a lograr sus metas; y esto se ejemplifica en cómo a los niños se les enseña a controlar sus emociones y sentimientos, mientras que a las niñas les fomentan su expresión de afectos a través de besos, abrazos y también a través de la auto-divulgación. En congruencia, Feldman, Robin, Pietromonaco y Eysell (1998) señalan que las mujeres se describieron a sí mismas como más emocionales que los hombres; es decir, más intensas emocionalmente, más abiertas a sus sentimientos, más ansiosas, más tristes y más complacidas que los hombres. Además, los participantes experimentaron y expresaron más emoción cuando se encontraban -durante el experimento- con una pareja del sexo opuesto. Aunado en lo anterior, los datos marcan que la intensidad de la emoción y las expresiones emocionales incrementan conforme incrementa la intimidad, este efecto es mucho más marcado en las mujeres que en los hombres.

Así, en el terreno romántico, la pasión es una variable identificada y reconocida por su intensidad (Sánchez Aragón, 2007). A saber, algunas de las definiciones que reconocen esta dimensión dentro de sus propiedades son: la definición de Lee (1976) quien al reconocer la existencia del amor pasional vierte su ímpetu en la atracción inmediata y poderosa hacia el otro, la motivación sexual que incluye síntomas fisiológicos tales como excitación, shock, reacciones

químicas, transpiración, presión estomacal, incremento de la respiración y del pulso cardíaco etc. Por su parte, Hatfield y Walster (1978) plantea a esta emoción como un estado salvajemente emocional, una confusión de sentimientos, ternura y sexualidad, alegría y pena, ansiedad y alivio, altruismo y celos. Brehm (1992) indica que el amor pasional es una intensa experiencia sexual que representa la combinación de la imaginación y emoción y que sirve, al motivar al ser humano a construir una mejor visión del mundo.

Con base en la propuesta de Frijda (1986) y las conceptualizaciones que se han hecho sobre la pasión, el presente estudio se enfocó a traducir, adaptar y validar las medidas que operacionalizan la teoría de la estructura de la intensidad emocional aplicada a la pasión, para luego explorar sus relaciones internas y diferencias sexuales.

Método

Participantes

Se trabajó con una muestra no probabilística de participantes voluntarios que consistió en 423 personas de las cuales 231 son mujeres y 192 hombres residentes de la Ciudad de México. Los participantes oscilaban en edad de los 16 a los 48 años con un promedio de 20 años y una moda de 17. En términos de escolaridad, el 46.6% reportaron tener estudios de preparatoria, y el 53.4% contaban con estudios de licenciatura.

Instrumento

El instrumento-base de este estudio fue un inventario de auto-reporte que incluyó preguntas cerradas que exploraban aspectos de la emoción de la pasión como lo son:

- el interés por vivir la experiencia de la pasión que consta de 44 reactivos,
- el contexto de apreciación del evento pasional con 20 reactivos,
- la intensidad de la pasión con 23 reactivos, y
- la predisposición individual hacia la experiencia emocional, evaluada por 12 reactivos.

El formato de respuesta en la evaluación de cada uno de los componentes mencionados fue en escala tipo Likert de cinco puntos de respuesta que - dependiendo de la variable- tomaban valores relativos de 0% a 100%, acuerdo a desacuerdo, nada intenso a muy intenso, muy débil a muy fuerte, nunca a siempre, no cambió a cambió mucho. Cabe mencionar que con el fin de lograr unas buenas medidas psicológicas (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1995), cada instrumento tomó como base las nociones dictadas por Frijda (1986), se tradujo-retradujo y adaptó aquella información con capacidad de fungir como reactivo y con base en ésta, se diseñaron nuevos reactivos que respondían a las definiciones conceptuales de los elementos de la fórmula de la intensidad emocional.

Procedimiento

Se acudió a lugares públicos para la aplicación del instrumento. Se les preguntó a las personas si habían sentido pasión y ya que respondían afirmativamente se les pedía respondieran a las preguntas. Se les garantizó la confidencialidad de sus respuestas y agradeció su participación. Ya aplicados y capturados los instrumentos, se siguió el procedimiento dictado por Reyes Lagunes y García y Barragán (2008) para su validación.

Resultados

Una vez aplicado el instrumento y siguiendo el procedimiento antes mencionado, se eliminaron algunos reactivos de cada escala: 12 de Interés por vivir la experiencia de la pasión, 7 de contexto de apreciación del evento, 11 de intensidad de la pasión y 5 de predisposición individual hacia la experiencia emocional, quedando 59 que cumplieron con el criterio de sensibilidad y claridad conceptual. Posteriormente, se realizaron análisis factoriales y de confiabilidad para cada medida con el propósito de explorar los factores que constituían cada una de las dimensiones de la emoción de la pasión.

En el caso de la medida de **Interés por Vivir la Experiencia de la Pasión**, se corrió una rotación varimax a los 32 reactivos que discriminaron en el procedimiento de validación, que arrojó 5 factores que explicaron el 60.86% de la varianza; de los cuales 4 fueron los más claros conceptualmente hablando. Posteriormente se realizó un análisis de confiabilidad alpha de Cronbach para conocer la estabilidad de la prueba, obteniéndose coeficientes de moderados a altos (ver tabla 1).

El factor de **Auto-realización** se refiere a qué tanto influye en el individuo su necesidad de bienestar, disfrute, libertad, realización y seguridad en la experiencia de la pasión. El factor de **Aventura** define qué tanto influye en el individuo su necesidad de aventura, experimentar emociones y búsqueda del desenfreno en su experiencia de pasión. El factor de **Satisfacción sexual** refleja la influencia que percibe el individuo de sus necesidades de satisfacción, placer, contacto físico y goce sexual en la vivencia de la pasión. El factor de **Intimidad y pareja** aborda la influencia que ejerce en el individuo su necesidad de amar, explorar a la pareja, compartir y dar afecto así como de estar a gusto con la pareja en la experiencia de la pasión.

El factor de **Auto-realización** se refiere a qué tanto influye en el individuo su necesidad de bienestar, disfrute, libertad, realización y seguridad en la experiencia de la pasión. El factor de **Aventura** define qué tanto influye en el individuo su necesidad de aventura, experimentar emociones y búsqueda del desenfreno en su experiencia de pasión. El factor de **Satisfacción sexual** refleja la influencia que percibe el individuo de sus necesidades de satisfacción, placer, contacto físico y goce sexual en la vivencia de la pasión.

Tabla 1. Factores de Interés por Vivir la Experiencia de la Pasión

Auto-realización	$\alpha=.91$
	.786
Mi necesidad de realizarme	.777
Mi necesidad de sentirme bien	.768
Mi salud	.761
Mi necesidad de libertad	.737
Mi necesidad de disfrutar el arte	.728
Mi necesidad de desarrollarme	.714
Mi necesidad de disfrutar la naturaleza	.670
Mi necesidad de sentirme seguro (a)	.566
Mis ganas de vivir intensamente	
Media=3.35 DS= 1.04	
Aventura	$\alpha=.78$
Mi búsqueda por el desenfreno	.786
Mi necesidad de aventura	.779
Mis deseos de divertirme	.779
Mi búsqueda de experimentar emociones	.731
Mi necesidad de repetir y sentir de por vida esa sensación	.527
Media=3.16 DS= .92	
Satisfacción sexual	$\alpha=.86$
Mi necesidad de una buena vida sexual	.788
Mi deseo sexual	.782
Mi búsqueda de placer	.781
Mi necesidad de contacto físico	.753
Mi necesidad de satisfacción	.741
Mi necesidad de ser atractivo (a)	.540
	.478
Mi necesidad de hacerlo (a) sentir bien	
Media=3.53 DS= .88	
Intimidad y pareja	$\alpha=.90$
Mi deseo de estar siempre con esa persona	.794
Mi necesidad de pensar siempre en esa persona	.763
Mi necesidad de dar afecto	.723
Mi necesidad de amar	.712
El querer estar a gusto con mi pareja	.709
Mi necesidad de contacto emocional	.696
Mi necesidad de compartir mis sentimientos con otros	.674
Mi necesidad de explorar a mi pareja	.642
Mi capacidad de dar	.604
Mi necesidad de recibir afecto	.532
Mi necesidad de sentirme feliz	.460
Media=3.85 DS= .81	

El factor de **Intimidad y pareja** aborda la influencia que ejerce en el individuo su necesidad de amar, explorar a la pareja, compartir y dar afecto así como de estar a gusto con la pareja en la experiencia de la pasión.

Posteriormente, se llevó a cabo otro análisis factorial para explorar las dimensiones que constituían al **Contexto de la Apreciación del Evento Pasional**. Para ello se corrió una rotación ortogonal de tipo varimax a 13 reactivos, que arrojó 2 factores que explicaron el 53.10% de la varianza. Después, se realizó un análisis de confiabilidad alpha de Cronbach que mostró coeficientes moderados (ver tabla 2).

Tabla 2. Factores de Contexto de la Apreciación del Evento Pasional

Bienestar		$\alpha=.82$
Fue muy importante para mi		.790
Me hizo sentir feliz		.720
Forma parte de algo en mi vida		.719
Fue placentero		.681
Fue real		.621
Aumentó mi autoestima		.618
Hizo sentir bien a la otra persona		.536
	Media=4.08	DS= .73
Malestar		$\alpha=.75$
Me hizo sentir triste		.725
Disminuyó mi autoestima		.645
Me hizo sentir culpa		.644
Requirió de que yo cambiara algo de mi mismo (a)		.567
No me hizo darme cuenta de las consecuencias de esa experiencia		.492
No fue una experiencia novedosa		.476
	Media=2.41	DS= .75

El factor **Bienestar**, se refiere a los efectos positivos que trae consigo el evento pasional a nivel de la auto-estima, placer, hacer sentir bien al otro y a uno mismo, etc. Mientras que el segundo factor llamado **Malestar** tiene que ver con los efectos negativos que el evento pasional provoca en la persona como decremento en la auto-estima, modificación de la propia persona, tristeza e incluso culpa.

Para explorar la configuración factorial de la **Intensidad de la Pasión**, se realizó otro análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación de tipo varimax a 9 reactivos que identificó 4 factores con valor propio mayor a 1 y que explicaba el 57.52% de la varianza. Así, los factores y sus coeficientes de confiabilidad quedaron de la siguiente manera (ver tabla 3):

Tabla 3. Factores de Intensidad de la Pasión

Fuerza, cambios corporales y acciones		$\alpha=.80$
¿Qué tan intenso fue el momento más culminante (clímax) de la pasión?		.846
¿Qué tan intensa fue la pasión durante el evento emocional completo?		.828
De manera general, ¿Qué tan intensa fue la pasión que viviste?		.805
En general, ¿Qué tan fuertes fueron esos cambios en tu cuerpo?		.559
¿Qué tan fuerte sentiste el impulso de realizar tales acciones?		.519
Media=4.00 DS= .62		
Recuerdo e intensidad		$\alpha=.71$
Los recuerdos que tuviste después del evento... ¿iban acompañados con una emoción?		.851
¿Qué tan fuerte fue esa emoción?		.790
Durante la siguiente semana... ¿surgió algún recuerdo de dicho evento pasional? (contada después de las primeras 24 horas)		.673
¿Hasta qué grado, las emociones que experimentaste durante el evento pasional cambiaron tu opinión o tus sentimientos hacia ciertas personas?		.439
Media=3.46 DS= .82		

El primer factor de **Fuerza, Cambios Corporales y Acciones** refleja el vigor de la vivencia pasional y con ello sus efectos en los cambios corporales y conductas experimentadas durante el evento. Y el segundo factor de intensidad denominado **Recuerdo de la Emoción** se refiere a la evocación que hace el sujeto del evento pasional pasadas 24 hrs. o una semana, de si iba acompañada de emoción y qué tan fuerte era ésta.

Finalmente, para explorar los factores que integran la **Predisposición Individual hacia la Experiencia Emocional**, se corrió un análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación ortogonal de tipo varimax a 5 reactivos, del cual se obtuvieron 2 factores con valor propio mayor a 1 y que explican el 46.12%

Los resultados muestran que en la medida en que los hombres están interesados en vivir la pasión por motivos relativos a su realización personal (p. e. necesidad de desarrollarme, mi éxito en la vida, mi necesidad de realizarme), tienden a apreciar el contexto pasional en términos de bienestar (p.e. me siento feliz, forma parte de mi vida, aumentó mi auto-estima) y malestar (p.e. me hizo sentir culpa, triste), lo recuerdan con intensidad y fuerza dados los cambios fisiológicos y conductuales desencadenados; mientras que en las mujeres motivadas por la auto-realización presentan más recuerdos vinculados al evento pasional. Cuando los hombres están motivados por su deseo de aventura (p.e. mis deseos de divertirme, mi búsqueda por experimentar emociones y desenfreno), tienden a sentir más intensidad en su cuerpo y mente así como a experimentar bienestar ante el evento pasional; mientras que en las mujeres, su motivación por la aventura favorece que ellas recuerden en mayor medida el evento. En la medida en que hombres y mujeres desean vivir pasión como un mecanismo de obtención de satisfacción sexual (p.e. mi necesidad de una buena vida sexual, satisfacción, repetir y sentir de por vida esa sensación), e intimidad y acceso a una pareja (p.e. mi deseo de estar siempre con esa persona, mi necesidad de amar, mi necesidad de contacto emocional), es que perciben al evento pasional como proveedor de bienestar e intensidad (tanto en lo físico, emocional y cognoscitivo). Cabe señalar que el motivador de intimidad y pareja ofrece coeficientes de correlación mucho más altos en comparación a los otros y más en hombres que en mujeres.

En la medida en que el evento pasional es percibido como fuente de bienestar para hombres y mujeres, éste es percibido como más intenso, se recuerda más y no permite al individuo que surja su predisposición a controlar lo que le está sucediendo. Este patrón es más fuerte en ellos que en ellas hacia la intensidad pero en las mujeres ésta apreciación de bienestar exige más control (p.e. no expresar mis emociones, reservo mis emociones para mí mismo, controlo mis emociones). Cuando el evento pasional es evaluado como fuente de malestar, las mujeres no viven la experiencia con intensidad y tanto hombres como mujeres tienden a disponerse ejerciendo control hacia la situación pasional. Y por último, cuando hombres y mujeres sienten mayor intensidad en su experiencia pasional evidenciado en su experiencia física durante el encuentro, tienden a no ejercer control.

Finalmente, se llevaron a cabo algunas pruebas *t de Student* para conocer las diferencias en las dimensiones obtenidas por sexo. Al respecto de la variable **Interés por Vivir la Experiencia de la Pasión**, se observa un efecto significativo que señala que son las mujeres a quienes les importa más tener dicha vivencia con el propósito de lograr vincularse más cercanamente a su pareja, de compartir sus emociones en un espacio íntimo y privado para explorar, dar a la pareja y amarla, en comparación con los hombres (ver tabla 6). Cabe mencionar que el mismo patrón se observa (aunque no significativo) en el caso de la auto-realización y la satisfacción sexual, notándose que en el caso de la aventura, ésta es una motivación predominante en hombres.

Tabla 6. Diferencias por sexo en interés por vivir la experiencia de la pasión

	Mujeres	Hombres	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Auto-realización	3.41	3.28	-	-
Aventura	3.14	3.20	-	-
Satisfacción sexual	3.60	3.45	-	-
Intimidad y pareja	3.95	3.73	2.716	.007

Por su parte, en cuanto a la **Contexto de Apreciación del Evento Pasional**, se evidenció que ésta es principalmente positiva y vista como una fuente de bienestar, lo cual predomina en las mujeres (aunque los hombres también puntúan por encima de la media) (ver tabla 7).

Tabla 7. Diferencias por sexo en contexto de la apreciación del evento pasional

	Mujeres	Hombres	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Bienestar	4.15	4.00	2.151	.032
Malestar	2.43	2.38	-	-

En torno a la **Intensidad de la Pasión**, no se encontraron diferencias estadísticamente significativas pero si se observan efectos que señalan la predominancia femenina en su reporte de fuerza de la emoción, los cambios corporales, su efecto en sus conductas y en el recuerdo del evento (ver tabla 8).

Tabla 8. Diferencias por sexo en Intensidad de la Pasión

	Mujeres	Hombres	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Fuerza, cambios corporales y acciones	4.01	3.91	-	-
Recuerdo e intensidad	3.52	3.37	-	-

Y en cuanto a la **Predisposición Individual hacia la Experiencia Emocional**, los hallazgos señalan que los hombres son más reservados y controlan más su expresión emocional que las mujeres (ver tabla 9).

Tabla 9. Diferencias por sexo en Predisposición Individual hacia la Experiencia Emocional

	Mujeres	Hombres	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Control	2.58	2.81	-2.667	.008

Discusión

De entre las cualidades de las emociones, su intensidad es quizá el atributo medular por excelencia. Por ello, su estudio desde la perspectiva de la Psicología Social se torna complejo, pero no por eso imposible. En un intento de explorar la naturaleza de la pasión, la psicometría brindó -desde su capacidad- la oportunidad de operacionalizar a la intensidad de esta emoción con base en las nociones que la definen según Frijda et al. (1992) en una muestra mexicana.

Así se diseñaron algunas pruebas que miden los componentes de la intensidad emocional como lo son: el interés por vivir la pasión, la apreciación de ésta, la intensidad de la experiencia pasional y la predisposición del individuo a vivir sus emociones. A partir de su aplicación y análisis estadístico, se puede decir, que se obtuvieron medidas válidas y estables con coeficientes de confiabilidad de moderados a robustos que dan fe de sus cualidades psicométricas. Así, se analizaron en forma separada cada uno de los aspectos que en interacción producen la intensidad de la emoción de la pasión -de acuerdo a Frijda-, lo que generó dimensiones más finas en el análisis de ésta.

Las emociones se presentan solamente si un acontecimiento se valora como relevante para el individuo, por lo tanto, la variable de **interés**, es el término usado para denotar los motivos, metas presentes y futuras, así como las preferencias o aversiones hacia los estímulos que pueden ser consideradas como importantes para los individuos. Cuando un acontecimiento resulta más relevante para la persona, entonces la emoción se intensifica (Frijda et al., 1992). Tomando como guía esta definición, la presente investigación se propuso validar una medida de Interés por vivir la experiencia de la pasión romántica.

A partir de los datos, la escala mostró la presencia de cuatro factores que reflejan los principales motivos por vivir dicha emoción: el primero llamado **Auto-realización**, representa el interés del individuo a vivir la pasión como una forma de trascender y sentirse satisfecho. Al respecto, Maslow (1954) señala que la también llamada "auto-actualización" es una necesidad que se encuentra en la cima de la jerarquía que plantea, y que su satisfacción está dada cuando el individuo logra desarrollarse armónicamente con su hábitat, en sus relaciones personales y consigo mismo. El segundo factor se denominó **Aventura** ya que en él se encuentran aspectos de descubrimiento y novedad en la experiencia de la pasión que como menciona Scherer (1984) es uno de los aspectos desencadenantes para que dicha experiencia se presente. Además este factor se apoya en el estudio realizado por Villanueva Orozco (2004) en el que identifica a través de un estudio exploratorio la existencia de una categoría denominada: misterio que tiene que ver precisamente con la necesidad de novedad y evitación de la rutina en pro de la experiencia pasional. Y por último, cabe mencionar que la búsqueda por la aventura es también un componente de la variable búsqueda de sensaciones que se relaciona el gozo sexual (Sánchez Aragón, 2010).

Por su parte, el factor de **Satisfacción sexual**, se refiere a qué tanto las personas consideran importante dentro de la experiencia de la pasión a aspectos como el deseo, el placer, la atracción y el goce sexual. A la par, el factor de **Intimidad y pareja** toca puntos como lo son el gusto de estar con la pareja,

deseos de tener un mayor acercamiento emocional lo que va creando con esto un vínculo de comunicación. Ambos factores, se ven apoyados por la literatura sobre sexualidad y relaciones cercanas que indica que la combinación entre la cercanía y la búsqueda por la consumación y satisfacción sexual favorecen la experiencia plena del amor (Sternberg, 1986). En lo que toca al factor de satisfacción sexual, definido en la literatura como la evaluación subjetiva o actitud hacia las conductas sexuales propias y de la pareja (Carrasco Chávez, 2010), puede involucrar el lado grato de la experiencia sexual que -en muchos casos- se halla totalmente vinculada con la pasión romántica y con el deseo sexual (Hatfield & Rapson, 1993). En cuanto al factor de intimidad y pareja, éste conjunta los elementos esenciales de la unión e intimidad que se busca tener en la relación romántica. Al respecto, autores como Osnaya Moreno y Díaz Loving (2010) han recalcado el papel y la supremacía del conocimiento profundo, la auto-divulgación, y la calidez, como los principales determinantes de las relaciones duraderas.

La **apreciación** afecta a la intensidad emocional proporcionando al evento relevancia a través de su proceso de evaluación contextual (Frijda, 1986). El contexto y lo inesperado del estímulo, determina tanto la emoción particular que se despierta, como su intensidad. Otros aspectos vinculados con las reacciones a partir del enfrentamiento al estímulo, son el grado de dificultad en resolver el evento o en obtener satisfactores o la evaluación de los propios recursos para responder (Sánchez Aragón, 2008), así como el control que se tiene ante ella (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

Dentro de esta variable de apreciación, se reveló una medida conformado por dos factores: el primero nombrado **Bienestar**, ya que en él se conjugaron los reactivos que hacen referencia a la percepción de la pasión como fuente de auto-estima, brindar placer, hacer sentir bien al otro y a uno mismo. Y el segundo factor lleva por nombre **Malestar** porque tiene que ver con los efectos negativos que el acontecimiento pasional provoca, como decremento de auto-estima, tristeza e incluso culpa; cabe señalar que dichos efectos pueden causar tal disgusto que modifique todas las conductas relacionadas a esa experiencia. La obtención de estos factores, resulta muy interesante y congruente con lo encontrado por Sánchez Aragón (2006), quien encuentra que la evaluación subjetiva que una muestra de adultos mexicanos tienen de la pasión se compone por tres factores relacionados al bienestar y malestar percibido. A saber la evaluación positiva implica confianza, cercanía, ilusión, bienestar y felicidad; la evaluación negativa se define por la experiencia de incertidumbre, dolor, inconformidad y decepción; y un tercer factor llamado sexual que tiene que ver con el deseo, erotismo y adrenalina. Como se puede apreciar la emoción de la pasión está llena de matices claros y oscuros que llevan al individuo a vivir experiencias extremas como señala Hatfield y Rapson (1993) al indicar que en la pasión se viven celos y ternura, por ejemplo. Asimismo, Spinoza (1989) desde su perspectiva argumentó que la esencia de las emociones es poderosa y amplia, lo que favorece que se desaten reacciones emocionales extremas.

En congruencia, cabe señalar que la **intensidad emocional** puede ser causada por la interacción de muchos elementos que propician variaciones en su calidad, valencia y magnitud (Frijda et al., 1992; Sonnemans, 1991). En términos

de las características propias de la intensidad, su evento desencadenante, duración, cambios físicos e intenciones conductuales que provocó, su recurrencia en la mente, su fuerza y las creencias acerca de las implicaciones de la pasión en la vida del individuo; la medida mostró la existencia de dos factores. El primero se llamó **Fuerza, Cambios Corporales y Acciones** y refleja el vigor de la vivencia pasional y con ello sus efectos en los cambios corporales y conductas experimentadas durante el evento. Esta dimensión retoma el ímpetu con el que la pasión provoca reacciones corporales e intenciones conductuales durante el evento pasional desencadenante, mostrando con ello el alcance de la experiencia. Cabe mencionar que de entre los **cambios corporales** que los participantes en la investigación reportaron a través de una pregunta abierta y analizados en otro espacio de divulgación científica, las alteraciones en la temperatura, respiración acelerada, excitación, bienestar, estremecimiento, alivio y placer físico muestran el grado de perturbación que un evento pasional a nivel no solo emocional sino fisiológico, puede desencadenar. Al respecto, Delamater (1991) menciona que cada emoción es acompañada por una serie de eventos fisiológicos distintivos y que el sentimiento o experiencia subjetiva es el resultado de una serie de sensaciones internas que son reconocidas concientemente por el individuo.

El segundo factor nombrado **Recuerdo e Intensidad**, se refiere a la evocación que hace el individuo del evento pasional pasadas 24 hrs. o una semana, ya sea acompañada de emoción (o no) y qué tan fuerte era ésta. Esta dimensión refleja la propuesta de Frijda pues incorpora las dimensiones de intensidad o fuerza de la pasión, la recurrencia del evento en mente y las reacciones emotivas concomitantes. Esto se ve apoyado por Leventhal (1984) quien afirma que un estímulo desencadena no solo una excitación autónoma, sino también un procesamiento cognoscitivo que contiene prototipos de experiencias emocionales cuyos episodios previos organizan la vivencia de la emoción y su conducta subsecuente. Aplicado esto a la pasión, se puede decir que ésta libera no solo lo fisiológico sino también lo emotivo y con ello conductas que refuerzan los elementos antecedentes como puede ser el reconstruir el evento pasional; para de esta forma reforzar la emoción, su cognición y decisión (Sternberg, 1986).

En cuanto a la **predisposición del individuo hacia la experiencia emocional**, hay que mencionar que ésta se genera a partir de los propósitos, motivos y valores de la persona. Dicha tendencia surge ante la apreciación de un evento u objeto ya sea como algo positivo, dañino o amenazante al individuo, de hecho, es plausible suponer que mientras más fuerte o más importante es la inquietud que despierta, más intensa es la emoción.

Al respecto, la medida realizada en esta investigación para operacionalizar dicha predisposición, arrojó un solo factor denominado **Control**, que versa sobre la tendencia del individuo a ser reservado en la emisión de información relativa a las emociones tanto positivas como negativas que experimenta. En este tenor, Frijda (1986, 1988) menciona que la apreciación puede actuar directamente, suprimiendo la preparación del individuo hacia la acción, o indirectamente afectando la valoración que se tiene de la emoción, generando con ello un dominio claro sobre aquello vinculado a la emoción experimentada.

Ya validadas las pruebas relativas a la operacionalización de la estructura emocional de la intensidad planteada por Frijda, resultó interesante explorar las relaciones entre el interés por vivir la experiencia y el contexto de apreciación del evento pasional, la intensidad emocional y la predisposición individual a vivir la emoción.

Los resultados muestran que en la medida en que los hombres están interesados en vivir la pasión por motivos relativos a su realización personal (p. e. necesidad de desarrollarme, mi éxito en la vida, mi necesidad de realizarme), tienden a apreciar el contexto pasional en términos de bienestar (p.e. me siento feliz, forma parte de mi vida, aumentó mi auto-estima) y malestar (p.e. me hizo sentir culpa, triste), lo recuerdan con intensidad y fuerza dados los cambios fisiológicos y conductuales desencadenados; mientras que en las mujeres motivadas por la auto-realización presentan más recuerdos vinculados al evento pasional. Esto, básicamente está reflejando que los hombres están más orientados hacia sí mismos, por un lado y que requieren de más indicadores que les señalen la importancia de experimentar este tipo de amor, por el otro. Al respecto, la Teoría de los Papeles Sociales (Alexander & Wood, 2000) señala que la cultura en su orientación de género, "inculca" a sus miembros la relevancia que tiene -socialmente- la experiencia, en el sentido de realización, auto-aceptación del propio individuo y con sus pares y parejas. En el caso de las mujeres, dicho interés reside en el hecho que recreen en sus mentes del evento desencadenador de pasión, es decir, la cognición en ellas es el detonante para desear vivir la pasión y conservar su valor aún en otros momentos de su vida. En congruencia a este hallazgo, autores como Fernández-Berrocal, Ramos y Extremera (2001), afirman que son las mujeres quienes hacen mayor uso de la rumia, misma que es usada para re-crear su pasión –entre otras cosas-.

Cuando los hombres están motivados por su deseo de aventura (p.e. mis deseos de divertirme, mi búsqueda por experimentar emociones y desenfreno), tienden a sentir más intensidad en su cuerpo y mente así como a experimentar bienestar ante el evento pasional; mientras que en las mujeres, su motivación por la aventura favorece que ellas recuerden en mayor medida el evento. Esto puede explicarse desde lo señalado por Díaz Loving (2010) quien al señalar que para los hombres, el amor pasional es sexo, locura-arrebato, erótico, deseo, pasajero, emocionante y ardiente, está implicando el carácter positivo, intenso y deseable de vivir esta experiencia en forma divertida, libre y como una andanza. En congruencia se observó que en la medida en que hombres y mujeres desean vivir la pasión como un mecanismo de obtención de satisfacción sexual (p.e. mi necesidad de una buena vida sexual, satisfacción, repetir y sentir de por vida esa sensación), e intimidad y acceso a una pareja (p.e. mi deseo de estar siempre con esa persona, mi necesidad de amar, mi necesidad de contacto emocional), es que perciben al evento pasional como proveedor de bienestar e intensidad (tanto en lo físico, emocional y cognoscitivo). Cabe señalar que el motivador de intimidad y pareja ofrece coeficientes de correlación mucho más altos en comparación a los otros factores y más en hombres que en mujeres; lo que puede explicarse con base en lo reportado por múltiples autores del área de las relaciones personales (p.e. Brehm, 1992; Kelley et al., 1983) quienes a través de décadas han señalado

que la búsqueda por tener una pareja casual (en donde el factor sexual puede ser el motivador principal) o bien, una pareja estable (donde tanto lo sexual como el conseguir intimidad son fundamentales) implican la expectativa de felicidad, le dan sentido a la vida ya que satisface una necesidad casi-universal de pertenencia que posibilita a la creación de vínculos afectivos (Perlman & Vangelisti, 2006). Asimismo, Fletcher, Overall y Friesen (2006) indican que dada la importancia de las relaciones íntimas o de pareja es que el ser humano dedica gran parte de su procesamiento cognoscitivo a este tema.

En la medida en que el evento pasional es percibido como fuente de bienestar para hombres y mujeres, éste es percibido como más intenso, se recuerda más y no permite al individuo que surja su predisposición a controlar lo que le está sucediendo. Asimismo, cuando hombres y mujeres sienten mayor intensidad en su experiencia pasional evidenciado en su experiencia física durante el encuentro, tienden a no ejercer control alguno. Esto puede visualizarse desde la perspectiva de la personalidad ya que la impulsividad (característica propia de la pasión romántica) (Sánchez Aragón, 2007) motiva al individuo hacia la experiencia pasional, misma que es generadora de placer y descontrol. Asimismo, Hatfield y Rapson (1993) apoyan el dato sobre las implicaciones de la percepción de bienestar y el recuerdo ya que enfatizan el aspecto cognoscitivo de la pasión al señalar que la pasión es definida como un amor obsesivo, una enfermedad del amor o encaprichamiento... cuyos pensamientos se caracterizan por una preocupación constante por el objeto de amor, por la idealización de la pareja y el deseo de conocer y ser conocido por ésta en forma constante. Este patrón es más fuerte en ellos que en ellas hacia la intensidad pero en las mujeres ésta apreciación de bienestar exige más control (p.e.no expresar mis emociones, reservo mis emociones para mí mismo, controlo mis emociones); lo que resulta congruente con el hecho de que –culturalmente- a ellos les sea más permitido guiarse por sus impulsos y sentir pasión por más de una mujer, mientras que a ellas se les pide “recato” y con ello automáticamente se les limita en cuanto a su experiencia emocional.

Cuando el evento pasional es evaluado como fuente de malestar, las mujeres no viven la experiencia con intensidad y tanto hombres como mujeres tienden a disponerse ejerciendo control hacia dicha situación. Esto resulta entendible considerando que –de acuerdo a Sánchez Aragón (2010)- ante la pasión las personas pueden generar estrategias de regulación emocional tanto para incrementar como para disminuir dicha emoción. Para el caso del control o disminución de la intensidad emocional de la pasión, esta autora indica estrategias como: desgane, racionalizar, bajar el ritmo, consumir, desconcentrarse, restringirse y distraerse –entre otras-; cuyo objetivo es bloquear la continuidad del evento y con ello, “sabotear” el desborde emocional correspondiente.

En lo tocante a las diferencias sexuales encontradas en algunas de las dimensiones estudiadas, el patrón de resultados muestra que a las mujeres les interesa más experimentar pasión, dada su necesidad de tener contacto emocional, amar, compartir y estar con la pareja; evalúan como más intenso el evento pasional y al mismo tiempo lo recuerdan y reviven con la misma emoción; y son más expresivas de sus emociones en comparación con los hombres. Esto se

ve apoyado por Feldman et al., (1998) quienes mencionan que las mujeres se describieron a sí mismas, como más intensas emocionalmente, más abiertas a sus sentimientos que los hombres. Además, los datos señalan que la intensidad de la emoción y sus expresiones incrementan conforme incrementa la intimidad, este efecto es mucho más marcado en las mujeres que en los hombres.

En cuanto a la apreciación del evento pasional, se evidenció que ésta es principalmente positiva y vista como una fuente de bienestar, lo cual predomina en las mujeres (aunque los hombres también puntúan por encima de la media). Esto concuerda con lo hallado por Villanueva Orozco (2004) quien al preguntar a los participantes a su investigación acerca de lo positivo y negativo de la pasión, encontró 18 descriptores del primer tipo (p.e. felicidad, intimidad, éxtasis) y solo 12 del segundo (p.e. obsesión, ansiedad, tristeza). Asimismo, ellas fueron quienes brindaron más información relativa a las categorías positivas en comparación a ellos.

Y en cuanto a la predisposición del individuo a la experiencia de la pasión, los hallazgos señalan que los hombres son más reservados y controlan más su expresión emocional que las mujeres. Al respecto, Sánchez Aragón (2010) encontró que efectivamente son ellos quienes utilizan más estrategias de decremento de la pasión que las mujeres como lo son el desgane, ser racional, jugar, bajar el ritmo y distraerse, lo cual puede explicarse desde un enfoque fisiológico pues su respuesta ante la excitación es más breve y tarda más tiempo en volver a reaccionar. Aunado a lo anterior, lo psicológico va generando respuestas en función del contexto, de su percepción de la persona y de las propias metas del evento.

Para finalizar, hay que mencionar que este estudio representa una aportación fundamental al estudio de los determinantes psicológicos de la intensidad de la pasión –vista como emoción- en una muestra de adultos de la Ciudad de México, ya que el estudio original se enfocó en el estudio de la emoción en general y únicamente en 37 estudiantes alemanes, lo cual limita no solo la generalización de los resultados sino su aplicación en lo específico a cada emoción. Con los datos obtenidos en este estudio, la investigación en torno a la pasión es prometedora, ya que las herramientas aportadas son solo algunas de las variables que pueden ser consideradas como intermediarias de la experiencia pasional y abre la posibilidad hacia la inclusión de otras –como la personalidad- que continúen enriqueciendo el conocimiento de ésta emoción tan anhelada.

Referencias

- Alexander, M. G. & Wood, W. (2000). Women, men and positive emotions: A social role interpretation. In A. H. Fisher (Ed.) *Gender and emotion: social psychological perspectives* (pp.189-210). Paris: Cambridge University Press.
- Brehm, B. (1992). *Intimate Relationships*. USA: McGraw-Hill.

- Brody, L. R. (2000). The socialization of gender differences in emotional expression: display rules, infant temperament, and differentiation. In A. H. Fisher (Ed.) *Gender and emotion: social psychological perspectives* (pp. 24-47). Paris: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, D. F. (1991). *Human Universals*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Buss, D. M. (1988). The evolution of human intrasexual competition: tactics of mate attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 616-628.
- Carrasco Chávez, E. (2010). *Sedución, una forma de expresión emocional femenina* (Tesis de Licenciatura no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Carver, C. & Scheier, M. (1990). Origins and functions of positive and negative affect: A control-process view. *Psychological Bulletin*, 97, 19-35.
- Damasio, A. (1994). *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain*. New York: Avon Books.
- DeLamater, J. (1991). Emotions and Sexuality. En K. MacKinney & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Sexuality in Close Relationships* (pp. 49-70). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Díaz Loving, R. (2010, septiembre). *Crisis en la pareja: atracción, mantenimiento o separación*. Conferencia presentada en el XIII Congreso Mexicano de Psicología Social, Hermosillo, Sonora, México.
- Elster, J. (2001) *Sobre las pasiones; emoción, adicción y conducta humana*. Paidós. México.
- Feldman, L., Robin, L., Pietromonaco, P. & Eysell, K. (1998). Are women the "more emotional" sex?. Evidence from emotional experiences in social context. *Cognition and Emotion*, 12(4), 555-578.
- Fernández-Berrocal, P., Ramos, N. & Extremera, N. (2001). Inteligencia emocional, supresión crónica de pensamientos y ajuste psicológico. *Boletín de Psicología*, 70, 79-95.
- Fletcher, G. J. O., Overall, N. C. & Friesen, M. D. (2006). Social Cognition in Intimate Relationships. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.). *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships* (pp. 353-368). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Frijda, N. H. (1986). *The emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frijda, N. H. (1988). The laws of emotion. *American Psychologist*, 43, 349-358.
- Frijda, N. H. (1996). Passions: emotion and socially consequential behavior. En Kavanaugh, R. D., Zimmerberg, B. & Fein, S. (Eds.). *Emotion: interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 1-25). New Jersey N. J. US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- Frijda, N. H. (2009, august). *Slaves of passion or masters of free will?* Paper presented International Society for Research on Emotion in Lueven, Belgium.
- Frijda, N. H., Manstead, A. S. R. & Bem, S. (2000). *Emotions and beliefs: how feelings influence thoughts*. Paris: Cambridge University Press.

- Fridja, N. H., Ortony, A., Sonnemans, J. & Clore, G. (1992). The complexity of intensity: Issues concerning the structure of emotion intensity. In M.S. Clark (Ed.), *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*. (pp. 60-89). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Gross, J. J. & Thompson, R. A. (2007). Emotion Regulation: Conceptual Foundations. En J. J. Gross (Ed.) *Handbook of Emotion Regulation* (pp. 3-26). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Hatfield, E. & Rapson, R. (1993). *Love, sex and intimacy: their psychology, biology and history*. New York; HarperCollins.
- Hatfield, E. & Walster, G.W. (1978). *A new look at love*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Hodgson R.O. & Rachman, S.J. (1974). Desynchrony in measures of fear. *Behavioral Research and Therapy*, 12, 319-326.
- Kelley, H. H., Berscheid, E., Christensen, A., Harvey, J. H., Huston, T. L., Levinger, G.,... Peterson, D.R. (1983). *Close relationships*. New York: Freeman.
- Lang, P.J. (1984). Cognition in emotion: concept and action. En C.E. Izard, J. Kagan, & R.B. Zajonc (Eds.), *Emotions, cognitions and behavior*. 192-226. Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, J. A. (1976). *Love styles*. London: J.M. Dent & Sons.
- Leventhal, H. (1984). A perceptual-motor theory of emotion. En Berkowitz (Ed.). *Advances in experimental social psychology* (pp. 117-182) New York: Academic Press.
- Maslow, A. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.
- Mesquita, B. y Albert, J. (2010). La Regulación Cultural de la Emociones. En R. Sánchez Aragón (Ed.). *Regulación Emocional: una travesía de la cultura al desarrollo de las relaciones personales* (pp. 46-75). México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Nunnally, J. C. y Bernstein, I. J. (1995). *Teoría Psicométrica*. México: McGraw-Hill.
- Ortony, A., Clore, G. L., & Collins, A. (1998). *The cognitive structure of emotions*. Cambridge University Press.
- Osnaya Moreno, M. y Díaz Loving, R. (2010). Circunstancias en torno a la intimidad en la relación de pareja. En Díaz Loving, R. y Rivera Aragón (Com.). *Antología Psicosocial de la Pareja Clásicos y Contemporáneos*. (pp. 575-603). México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa y AMEPSO.
- Perlman, D. & Vangelisti, A. L. (2006). Personal Relationship: An Introduction. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.). *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships* (pp. 3-7). New York : Cambridge University Press.
- Rachman, S. J. (1990). *Fear and courage* (2nd ed.). New York: Freeman.
- Reyes Lagunes, I. y García y Barragán, L. F. (2008). Hacia un procedimiento de validación psicométrica culturalmente relevante. En S. Rivera Aragón, R. Díaz Loving, R. Sánchez Aragón e I. Reyes Lagunes (Eds.). *La Psicología Social en México* (pp. 625-630). México: AMEPSO.
- Sánchez Aragón, R. (2006). Validación de una escala de evaluación subjetiva de la experiencia pasional y su relación con el amor pasional. En Sanchez Aragon, R., Diaz Loving, R. y Rivera Aragon, S. (Eds.). *La Psicología Social en Mexico* (pp.429-436). Mexico: AMEPSO y UJAT.

- Sánchez Aragón, R. (2007). *Pasión Romántica: más allá de la intuición una ciencia del amor*. México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa.
- Sánchez Aragón, R. (2008). Ser auténtico o como los demás esperan: el dilema del Auto-monitoreo. En R. Díaz Loving, S. Rivera Aragón, R. Sánchez Aragón e I. Reyes Lagunes (Eds.). *La Psicología Social en México* (pp. 637-642). México: AMEPSO.
- Sánchez Aragón, R. (2010). Del Desenfreno al Control en la Pasión Romántica: Medición, Efectos Diferenciales y Correlatos. En R. Sánchez Aragón (Ed.). *Regulación Emocional: de la Cultura al Desarrollo de las Relaciones Personales* (pp. 191-218). México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Scherer, K. R. (1984). On the Nature and function of emotion: A component process approach. En K.R. Scherer & P. Ekman (Eds.), *Approaches to emotion*. 293-318. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Sonnemams, J. (1991). *The structure and determinants of emotional intensity*. PhD dissertation, University of Amsterdam.
- Spinoza, B. (1989). *Ethics*. (G. H. R. Parkinson, Trans.). London: Everyman's Library. (Trabajo original publicado en 1967).
- Sternberg, R. J. (1986). Triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review*. April, 93(2): 119-135.
- Venables P.H. (1984). Arousal and aggression. En R.G. Green & E.I. Donnerstein (Eds.), *Aggression: Theoretical and empirical reviews*, 75-101. New York: Academic Press.
- Villanueva Orozco, G. B. T. (2004). *De la atracción al acoso: ¿Tipos o fases del amor pasional?* (Tesis de Licenciatura no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.

Macro-Level Factors & their Influence on Family Perceptions in Two Cultures

Miriam Sang-Ah Park*, Robin Goodwin*, Szabolcs Gergő Harsányi**
& Jung-Ae Kim***

*Brunel University, **University of Szeged and ELTE University,
***Chung-Ang University

Abstract

Values, political beliefs, and family perceptions are sensitive to cultural change, which embraces change in the political, economic, and other societal-level spheres. This study investigated the impact of culture-level individualism and gender on family perceptions and the interrelations between the macro-level and individual level factors in South Korea and Hungary, two countries that have undergone recent social change. The study included data from 288 university students. Cultural and gender influences on Postmodernist values, democratic beliefs, political interest, political conservatism, perceptions of family relatedness and democratisation were found, and the overall model of interrelations between all the variables was tested using SEM (structural equation modelling) analysis.

Key words: Family perceptions, Culture, Gender, Postmodernist values, Political beliefs.

Factores Macro y su Influencia en las Percepciones Familiares en Dos Culturas

Resumen

Los valores, creencias políticas y percepciones familiares son sensibles a los cambios culturales, los cuales implican modificaciones en las esferas política, económica y a otros niveles sociales. Este estudio investigó el impacto del nivel de individualismo cultural y el género en las percepciones familiares y en las inter-relaciones entre factores de nivel macro e individual en Corea del Sur y Hungría, dos países que han experimentado cambios sociales recientes. Este estudio incluyó los datos de 288 estudiantes universitarios. Se encontraron influencias culturales y del género en los valores post-modernistas, creencias democráticas, intereses políticos, conservadurismo político, percepciones de la conexión familiar y la democratización. Para probar el modelo general de relaciones entre todas las variables se usó el análisis de Ecuaciones Estructurales.

Palabras clave: Percepciones familiares, Cultura, Género, Valores post-modernistas, Creencias políticas.

Culture and gender have an important role to play in shaping values and beliefs, as well as perceptions of family relatedness and democratisation. The family can be viewed as embedded in the socio-cultural environment, making a contextual approach to studying the family, which takes the societal and ecological factors into account, particularly valuable (Georgas et al., 1997, p.304). Despite the significance of family life, the increasing importance of individuation means that family and gender relations need to be continually re-evaluated (Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001).

This study presents a multi-level model that delineates the links between family perceptions, and factors at societal and individual levels. We examine interrelations between macro-level factors, and values and beliefs measured at the individual level, and perception of family relatedness and democratisation. At the individual level, Goodwin & Gaines (2004) found that the correlation between fatalistic beliefs and relationship quality was moderated by country, suggesting a possible influence of the level of Individualism on the extent to which negative beliefs about the relationship actually affected the quality of the relationship. At the group/family level, Kagitcibasi (1996) notes that, as family is an integral part of the society, beliefs, expectations, and values regarding family are sensitive to both cultural history and social change. Rindfuss and his colleagues (1992) claimed that individuals' socialisation experiences in the family are important in connecting the individuals to the norms, values, and customs of a society which are continued and maintained in the intimate social setting of the family. Trent & South (1992) also outline the influence of experiences that are typical to individuals' social or ethnic group on family perceptions, suggesting links between individuals' cultural and social background and their attitudes towards the family. Although the directions and nature of these interrelations can be viewed in different ways, this study will focus only on one-directional influences, from the macro-level factors to individual-level factors, then leading onto family perceptions.

Culture

Georgas et al. (2001) outline the significance of the impact of culture on various family outcomes; in their study, culture accounted for 20% of the total variance on the perceived emotional distance in the family. Kagitcibasi (2007) claimed that these cultural views lead to differences in the meaning and structure of the family in different societies. She found that traditionally, the Western families tend to emphasise autonomy, whereas the Eastern families emphasised relatedness. The dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism may be one way of examining the manner in which opposing cultural views shape individuals' relationships with close others. Those from individualistic cultures place more importance on autonomy and independence of the self, whereas those from collectivistic cultures emphasise harmony and cohesion to the groups and entities they belong to (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Markus & Kitayama (1991) claimed that these cultural views shape the perception of self in relation to others, and have implications for the individuals' behaviours. For instance, tendency for

interdependent and malleable self-views is found in Mexico, where the need for affiliation, belonging, and acceptance is high (Diaz-Loving, 2005). Georgas and his colleagues (1997) found that for the members of the extended family, the strength of emotional closeness was higher in the more collectivistic countries of Cyprus and Greece than in the more individualistic countries of Britain, Germany, and the Netherlands. Cultural differences in social desirability can also be found. For example, Diaz-Loving (1998) discussed that Mexicans, in comparison to Americans, are likely to show higher acceptance of hierarchical relations and obedience to authority, especially at the family level.

Hofstede (2009) provides a series of cultural-level Individualism (IDV) scores which can be used to inform cross-cultural comparisons. This score has correlations with social, economic, and historical aspects of a nation; a country's Individualism score was highly correlated with its Gross National Product (GNP), Human Development Index (HDI), international transparency, and religious and philosophical background (Basabe & Ros, 2005). This suggests that this cultural dimension has close ties with the social and cultural factors and economic state.

In our study, we focus on two cultures- Hungary and South Korea- that have undergone significant but rather different social transformations and development in the last few decades. Such changes are liable to have important implications for individual values and political beliefs (e.g. Inglehart, 1997; Schwartz & Bardi, 1997), and in our study, cross-cultural differences in the political beliefs and Postmodernist values were investigated as mediators of family change.

Changes in Central/Eastern Europe have been dramatic in the past decades. Inglehart (1997; 2008) claims that the shift to Postmodernist values occur as individuals place stronger emphases on autonomy, self-expression, and the quality of life. Postmodernist values were considered less important in the Eastern European countries compared to the Western European ones (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997). Less importance was placed on autonomy and egalitarianism values in the Eastern European countries, possibly because of the economic hardships and political conditions the citizens faced. In particular, Schwartz & Bardi (1997) suggest that the constraints and instabilities that were brought to the citizens pushed them to adhere strongly to conservatism and hierarchy values, favouring social order and self-discipline.

The political unrest of the recent decades could also have resulted in high level of mistrust toward the government and lose of interest in politics, as well as low level of Postmodernist value endorsement. These types of changes were reflected in the values in different settings, especially in countries that have undergone or undergoing social change. Flanagan (2003) points to the rising importance of active involvement in politics among the young generations through learning of new principles of social contract, where participation in most community, family, and social affairs is becoming highly encouraged. Thus, he claims that changing social norms had impact on values and attitudes desired in children at school and in the family in Hungary and other Eastern European countries, and that these changes had implications for political stability as well. Hungary is unique among these countries, however, for its high Individualism; it scores 82 on Hofstede's Individualism, which is higher than most other ex-Communist countries.

South Korea, with its strong Confucian traditions, is seen as a collectivistic country, where there is emphasis on harmonious, cooperative, and strong interpersonal relationships and group identities. Indeed, on Hofstede's Individualism dimension, South Korea scores 18, which places her on the highly collectivistic end of the continuum. Political changes in South Korea have been dramatic throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Despite the establishment of the first democratic government in the history with the first president in 1948, the war with North Korea, heavy influence from the United States, rapid economic and social development, and the ruling military dictators, have left the country under authoritarian leadership. Strong protests against authoritarian rule in the 1970s and 1980s have led onto democratisation and restoration of free elections in 1987 in South Korea (US Department of State, 2009). The desire for better democracy, along with growing distrust for the political situations, politicians, and the government and more active voicing of opinions and participation has been observed in South Korea (Dalton & Shin, 2003). Moreover, Dalton & Shin (2003) argue that these changes in political views and opinions are coupled with more democratic values, positive views toward democracy, and belief in democratic government by the Koreans.

In discussing the family culture in Korea, the influence of Confucianism and the virtue of Filial Piety are one of the most important themes (Cumings, 2005). Hierarchical relations among family members determined by age, gender, and the role in the family, and strict adherence to the defined roles have been characteristic features of a Korean family. Moreover, Cumings (2005) notes the collectivistic nature of the Korean family, where each person is regarded as a 'building block' of the family as well as the society, and his/her attachment and relatedness to the family very strong (p.16).

Family, Gender, & Culture

Family Relatedness

This study discusses the impact of culture and gender on one of the family perception variables, 'family relatedness'. Family relatedness combines the concepts of family bond, cohesion, intimacy, and closeness. North and her colleagues (2008) found a particularly strong link between family cohesion, defined by the strength of the family bond and relatedness in the family, and personal happiness. In discussing 'relatedness', Markus & Kitayama (1991) argue that although the appreciation and need for maintaining relatedness with others is universal, its significance can differ depending on the emphasis placed on either the independent or the interdependent self (p. 229). The dimensions of Individualism-Collectivism, and the emphasis on the independent versus interdependent selves, can thus influence the perception of appropriate level of family relatedness and the degree of independence from the family.

Cross-cultural differences in the level of family allocentrism, or norm-

oriented family relationship, were found in Eastern cultures (Chinese and East Indian samples), and Western culture, White Canadian samples (Lay et al., 1998). This finding demonstrates that cultural background and teachings, which promote the sense of either independent or interdependent self, affect the level of family relatedness and its importance in that culture. The importance of the concept of familism, which includes aspects of family relatedness, on the individuals' social, personal, and psychological developments has been emphasised in various literature (e.g., Yabiku, Axinn, & Thornton, 1999). This study compares the perceptions of family relatedness in the more individualistic country of Hungary and the more collectivistic country of South Korea to confirm the cultural influence on views regarding self in relation to family. It can be hypothesised that South Koreans, due to the collectivistic influences, would perceive this dimension to be more important than Hungarians, and score higher.

Family Democratisation

Family democratisation incorporates views about decision making, gender roles, and equalities in the family. It includes what Larson (1974) termed as 'family power', views, norms and attitudes concerning family decisions and conflict managements. Family members can view relations in the family as equal or hierarchical, attribute certain roles to the members, and have differing expectations about each members of the family (for example, deciding that the father has the most say in the decisions or that the mother is in charge of child-caring). Socio-cultural context often shapes the expectations and opinions about gender roles and gender equality in the family. Normative gender expectations reflect the culturally shared norms of the society about the men and women's roles in the family (Kwon et al., 2003). In South Korea, for example, the strong influence of Confucianism, with heavy emphases on social hierarchy and clearly defined roles for the different genders and ages, has led to clearly divided gender roles and hierarchical relations in the family (Kwon et al., 2003). Therefore, we might find stronger beliefs in family democratisation among Hungarians than South Koreans.

Gender

Gender differences in beliefs such as importance of egalitarianism in work and family have been found to be significant and relatively invariant across cultural, demographic, and situational factors (Sidanius & Pratto, 2001). Markus & Kitayama discuss gender differences in construals of the self, where women are more likely than men to construct interdependent self and are naturally more inclined to form close ties and deep-rooted relatedness with those around them. Roberts & Helson (1997) found that women find it easier to combine individuality or autonomy and relatedness successfully, which can be seen as desirable. These findings provide ample reasons to believe that gender differences exist in self-beliefs in relation to

close others, and that these can lead towards differences in various family processes and meanings.

The processes and the benefits of family integration might also be dependent on the individual's gender, their experiences of gender relations, interactions, and roles (Yabiku, Axinn, & Thornton, 1999). In particular, gender differences in the importance of gender equality in the family seem to exist in many cultures, where women view it as more important than men. These findings demonstrate that women and men may differ in the way they view relationship dynamics and roles, and interact with close others.

Postmodernist Values

Values and value systems serve as 'frames of reference that guide individuals to behave or think in certain ways in the situations and contexts they face' (Feather, 1979, p.1619). It is thus important to consider individuals' value priorities when looking at other aspects of the beliefs and opinions they hold. Schwartz (1990) claims that values vary in importance, transcend situations, and that the relative importance of certain value types might be closely linked to the interests that are specific to those from individualistic or collectivistic cultures (p. 142). Values, in the context of culture, include beliefs about what is considered to be good, right, and desirable that is shared among the members of the same cultural group (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997, p. 386). Oishi and his colleagues (1998)' study of values found significant relationships between values and Individualism-Collectivism, and self-concepts. Using Schwartz (1992)' individual value types, they found that those from the collectivistic cultures placed more emphasis on the values that favour conservation and serving the group rather than self, whereas those from the individualistic cultures placed relatively high importance on the values serving self-interest. Therefore, values and value priorities are culture-sensitive, for they often reflect the goals transmitted to the individuals through social learning and experiences that are specific to the culture.

Although relatively stable, values are also sensitive to societal influences, and can thus be influenced by general social trends as well as unique historical and cultural background (Bardi & Goodwin, in press; Feather, 1979, p. 1629). Roberts & Helson (1997) claim that individuals are turning away from traditional roles, social norms and values and are paying more attention to the aspects of self including thoughts, feelings, and traits. Therefore, while culture has influence on values, social change often leads to changes in the existing value priorities and goals. Schwartz & Bardi (1997) discuss the adaptive nature of values; economic or political climate, such as communism, can impact on the formation and change of values. The relationship between cultural values, cultural change, and economic growth has been found, the types of values that are emphasised, such as Autonomy versus Embeddedness and Hierarchy versus Egalitarianism, and changes to these value priorities in conjunction with economic development are repeatedly demonstrated in this and other studies of value change (e.g., Allen et al., 2007; Schwartz, 2004).

The current study focuses on the Postmodernist values. Inglehart (1997, 2008) distinguishes between different priorities in people's values using two dimensions of opposing emphases: traditional versus secular-rational values and survival versus self-expression values. Whereas traditional values place emphases on religion, authority, and national pride, rational-secular values would include the opposites. Survival values stress both the survival of the individual and the society, self-expression values stress enhancement of the individuals' freedom of choice, control, and overall well-being. Inglehart (1997) proposes that individuals in the 'Postmodernist' societies are likely to be high on secular-rational and self-expression values and those in the 'Modernist' societies the opposite. This pattern reflects the interaction between the sociocultural conditions and values priorities, for certain conditions of a society are likely to encourage individuals to endorse certain types of views and values that will be useful or beneficial to them. Both the level of economic development and cultural history and background that is unique to the country accounted for most of the cross-national differences found (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). The observed changes included shifts of opinions and preferences toward many aspects of life, such as individuals' beliefs about the self and identity, relationships, the family, and the larger society (Beck, 1997; Giddens, 1992; Inglehart, 1997).

De Graaf & De Graaf (1988) have suggested the role of Postmaterialism, or Postmodernist values, as a predictor variable for aspects of the individual including political attitudes and beliefs, where Postmaterialist attitudes influence the individuals' political interest, party identification, political dissatisfaction, and voting behaviour (p. 51). The rising importance of individual freedom and quality of life, and decreasing importance of material success and maintenance of status quo, result in more democratic ideals for the society. Postmaterialism is also correlated with anti-establishment orientation, less nationalism, enthusiasm and support for 'third force' movements in countries with long histories of dominant two-party systems, and peace movements (Lesthaeghe & Meekers, 1986, p. 229). Moreover, Inglehart (1981) claims that those holding postmaterialist values are only about one third as likely to hold conservative views compared to those holding materialist values, and that they are likely to favour new ideas and social change. Therefore, the impact of gender and the cultural dimensions of Individualism and Collectivism on Postmodernist values, and its relations to political beliefs and family perceptions will be one focus of this study.

Political Beliefs

Political ideologies are often discussed in conjunction with values, various other aspects of political beliefs that the individual hold, and individual and societal factors that are at work. Barnea & Schwartz (1998) discuss the importance of value priorities in predicting support for political parties. They find that those who attribute importance to conservation values, which emphasise the importance of protecting social order, certainty, and the status quo, were predisposed to vote for conservative parties. Inglehart (1990) claims that political culture is closely tied to

and embedded in values, which are shaped by years of historical experience shared, transmitted, and altered by generations. Michauld and her colleagues (2009) also discuss both the effect of cultural values, which include the social norms and rules for behaviour and individual's interactional patterns, and the role of political knowledge on political ideologies. This points to the importance of investigating the links between societal factors that shape individuals' values and beliefs, and mediating values and political beliefs.

These values and beliefs also impact on family perceptions. Conservatism is linked to societal, individual, and family level factors. For example, Van Hiel and his colleagues (2004) argue that cultural conservatism is highly related to authoritarian parent-child relationships, traditional work ethics, and conventional female roles. Feather (1979) found significant positive relations between total conservatism and national security and family security, and a negative relation with equality. Jost and his colleagues also claim that resistance to change and opposition to equality are the main components of political conservatism (e.g., Jost et al., 2003). Therefore, it can be hypothesised that higher political conservatism will predict weaker support for family democratisation, that there will be gender differences in level of political conservatism, although the direction of this relation is unclear, and that women will demonstrate higher support for family democratisation. Societal atmosphere impacts on political opinions and beliefs, where changes and instabilities in the country may lead individuals to hold more conservative political opinions in association with the psychological needs to reduce uncertainty and threat (Jost et al., 2007). It is possible, thus, to posit that the security and stability of the country influence the individuals' general and political conservatism, and that these conservative views in turn can have impact on family perceptions, especially in regards to democratisation within the family. Inglehart (1997) demonstrated the link between societal change and increasing tolerance for non-traditional family forms and women's freedom of decision concerning the family. For the purpose of the study, political conservatism is measured as political orientation, as there is a significant correlation between level of political conservatism and left-right political orientation (Collani & Grumm, 2009).

Democratic beliefs are likely to be related to cultural beliefs, values, and norms (Kim et al., 2002). How democracy is understood, how strong the belief that democracy is good, and how these beliefs form and spread across different aspects of life can be dependent on the factors that shape or influence both cultural and political atmosphere surrounding the individuals. Greater affluence, a higher emphasis on emotional as well as physical well-being, and social equality are likely to lead to belief in democracy at the societal level and democratic beliefs at the individual level (Lipset, 1994). A growing importance of individual rights and freedom, which arise from increasing stability in the society, leads individuals to hold more democratic beliefs, and this in turn can allow for more democratic institutions (Inglehart, 2000). These patterns of change have been observed in the parts of the world where rapid economic and social development took place, such as in East Asian countries of South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore (Lipset, 1994). The relationship between cultural-level individualism, individual-level democratic beliefs, and family closeness/dependence and family democratisation will be

closely investigated in this study.

Differences in endorsement of Postmodernist values or political beliefs in South Koreans and Hungarians can also be traced to the recent political histories of these nations. Although both have gone through significant political changes, expansion of democracy spread to East Asian countries earlier than to ex-Communist Eastern European countries (Lipset, 1994). Moreover, it can be said that these changes were less abrupt in Asia than in Eastern Europe, where the former ideology and system of government was replaced with new democracy. In this sense, comparing the beliefs and values of South Koreans and Hungarians can be useful in understanding the possible effects of historical events, in this case the nature, magnitude, and recency of political change.

Hypotheses

In this study, culture and gender are considered as macro-level factors, as contextual factors that shape the experiences of the individuals. This conceptualisation of culture, where it is seen as an independent variable that influences factors such as level of development and psychological processes at the individual level, is commonly found in cross-cultural psychology (Miller, 2002). Individuals actively construct, and co-construct with others, explanations and stories that enable themselves to understand and make sense of the world around them, as well as self-concepts and identities, in their particular social context (Haste, 2004). In this sense, variables such as culture and gender provide individuals with a context in which they formulate and stabilise a view of the self, close others, and the world. Therefore, it is possible to conjecture that family perceptions are influenced by these macro-level factors via individual values and beliefs.

In this paper, these links and the mediating effects of the political beliefs and Postmodernist values on family perception will be investigated. The following can be proposed as hypotheses:

1) With the relatively more stable social, economic, and political conditions in recent years, Koreans would score higher on Postmodernist values, demonstrate less support for conservative parties and more democratic beliefs, and show more political interest than Hungarians.

2) Culture should impact on family perceptions, with values and political beliefs mediating the relationship. Higher democratic beliefs should be conducive to beliefs in more democratic family relations, represented as family democratisation in this study.

3) Postmodernist values, which should be related to both democratic beliefs and political interest, should also lead to more support for family democratisation. Therefore, higher level of Postmodernist Values should be positively related to democratic beliefs and political interest, and predict higher support for family democratisation.

4) South Koreans, who are believed to be more collectivistic than Hungarians, should emphasise relatedness in the family, and score higher on perception of

family relatedness.

5) Males and females in each culture, depending on their cultural teachings and differential socialisation experiences, might have different value priorities or hold different views about politics and the family. Therefore, there might be interactional effects of culture x gender on political beliefs, Postmodernist values, and family perceptions where cultural or gender effects might be minimised or mediated by each other.

6) Significant gender differences in family perceptions should be found, where women should rate the importance of family closeness and family democratisation higher than do men.

Method

Participants

The participants for this study consisted of university students from South Korea and Hungary. The study was run in South Korea and Hungary simultaneously in the Fall of 2009. Both samples of South Korean and Hungarian were relatively homogenous: Most of the participants were from the culture of origin; all of the participants included for the final analysis were born in the country, spent most of their lives in the country, and were fluent in their national language. In order to ensure relatively equal and matching socioeconomic status of the participants across groups, participants from universities in medium-sized cities were recruited for the study. All sessions began with the researcher's introduction to the study and brief explanation of the participants' duties and responsibilities. All participants included in the study gave informed consent prior to their participation, and were debriefed at the end of the session. After deleting cases with large amount of data missing, the final selected data included 140 Hungarians [M age=22.49, SD=4.16; 49 men (35%) and 91 women (65%)], and 148 Koreans [M age=22.01, SD=2.04; 97 men (65.5%) and 51 women (34.5%)].

Questionnaire

With the original items in English, Korean and Hungarian versions of the questionnaire were created and back-translated (e.g., Van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996). Translators were both fluent in both the language to be translated (English) and the translated language (Korean or Hungarian). For most parts of the questionnaire except for demographic questions and the political orientation scale,

Individualism (IDV): According to Hofstede (2009), country-level Individualism score measures the relative importance of autonomy and independence in each country. Instead of measuring Individualism directly in the study, the country-level score provided in Hofstede (2009) is applied.

Demographic Information: Participants were asked to give information on their age, nationality, and gender.

Family perception: This part included 8 questions regarding views toward the family relationship, and participants were asked to rate how much they agree to each of the statements ranging from 1 (very strongly disagree) to 6 (very strongly agree). Four selected questions taken from Kagitcibasi (2007)'s *Autonomous-Related Self-in Family Scale* were included to test the participants' level of closeness, sense of relatedness, and family relatedness to the family. The questions included statements such as 'A person may be attached to his/her family', and at the same time 6-point Likert scale with forced choice method was used; participants were asked to choose from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 6 (*very strongly agree*), based on their level of agreement or the opinion regarding the statement. Data with missing values for items were deleted listwise in order to avoid the problem of invariance. It was believed that the missing or incomplete cases in the study were completely at random and the number of missing cases in each of the variables was quite small, which then validated the choice to employ the method, as discussed in Acock (2005)., expect respect for any differences of opinion' Four items from Spence & Helmreich (1978)'s *Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS)* that are relevant to areas related to gender equality and women's role in the family, such as 'Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing laundry' are included to test the participants' views on family democratisation.

Postmodernist Values: Inglehart (1997)'s 12-item *Index of Materialism & Postmaterialism* was used to measure the participants' endorsement of Postmodernist values. Instead of the ranking method of the items originally proposed by the author, a rating method employing 6-point Likert scale was used in order for this scale to be congruent to the rest of the scales used in the questionnaire. For all 12 items, participants were asked to rate the extent to which they think each goal is important. Modernist value items included statements such as '*Maintaining a high rate of economic growth*', and Postmodernist value items included statements such as '*Progress towards a less impersonal, more humane society*'. Placing the two types of values on each end of the continuum (Modernist versus Postmodernist), the final composite score for the Postmodernist value was computed by subtracting the mean of all the statements advocating Modernist value from the mean of those advocating Postmodernist value.

Political Beliefs: 6 questions regarding participants' level of interest in politics and belief in democracy were used. Questions included: *how important do you think politics is?; how interested are you in politics?; do you believe in democracy?; how important it is for you to live in a country governed democratically?; how much do you believe in the goodness of democracy?; did you vote in the last national election?* These items were categorised into two aspects of political beliefs: political interest and democratic beliefs. Confirmatory factor analysis was performed to test the relevance of the items tapping on these dimensions. For the item measuring the level of political conservatism, participants were asked to rate their beliefs on the political dimensions of conservatism, socialism, and liberalism was added. Participants were asked to rate their position on each of these dimensions on a scale of 1 to 10. A final score for political conservatism was

calculated by subtracting the mean value on socialism and liberalism from the conservatism score.

Analysis

Firstly, the impact of culture and gender, the independent variables, on other variables were tested. Mean scores of the variables were compared by culture and gender using one-way ANOVA tests. Moreover, two-way ANOVA analyses tested the independent and interactional effects of the independent variables on the other variables. Correlations between all of the variables included in the model were tested as well, in order to look at the significance of the relationships between the variables. Structural equation modelling (SEM) technique was used for confirmatory factor analyses of the sets of variables in the model, the family perceptions and the political beliefs, and for testing of the full hypothesised model. In the analyses, both the goodness of the fit of each of the models and the regression weights of the pathways in the model were considered, and these results are reported in the following section.

Results

ANOVA: Correlations between the Variables, Culture & Gender Effects

For the purpose of this part of the analysis, the significance of culture and gender's influences on the individual-level political beliefs and Postmodernist values, and the family perception variables are considered together. Culture and gender, the independent variables in the study, were found to have significant influence on aspects of political beliefs and Postmodernist values, and the two family perception variables. The results from one-way ANOVA tests comparing scores from the more individualistic and more collectivistic cultural groups and the male-female gender groups demonstrated that culture and gender had different but significant impact on political beliefs, Postmodernist values, and family perceptions. The correlations between all the variables are demonstrated in table 1. Some significant correlations were found among the individual-level factors; Postmodernist values were correlated with the level of political interest $r(286) = .14$, $p < .05$, and democratic beliefs were correlated with political interest $r(286) = .33$, $p < .01$.

Cross-cultural and cross-gender effects were investigated. Analyses of interactional effects of culture and gender on all of the mediating and dependent variables in the study were not significant; none of culture x gender effects for Postmodernist values $F(1, 286) = .16$, democratic beliefs $F(1, 286) = .29$, political interest $F(1, 286) = .56$, political conservatism $F(1, 286) = .90$, family relatedness $F(1, 286) = .04$, and family democratisation $F(1, 286) = .25$ was significant at $p < .05$ level. These results suggest that in all probability, culture and gender influence the variables independently.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, and Pearson's correlations between variables included in the model

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Individualism	49.11	32.04	.31**	-.14*	-.22**	.05	-.32**	.04	-.04
2. Gender	-0.49	-0.5		-.11	-.05	.09	.02	.16**	.14*
3. Political Conservatism	0.25	2.94			.10	-.06	.10	.05	.08
4. Postmodernist Values	-0.12	0.99				.02	.14*	-.03	.03
5. Democratic Beliefs	2.33	0.9					.33**	-.23**	.19**
6. Political Interest	2.61	0.74						-.06	-.05
7. Family Closeness	4.89	0.88							.24**
8. Family Democratisation	4.24	0.65							

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Culture had influence on Postmodernist values, political conservatism, and political interest; Cross-cultural differences were significant for three of the variables, Postmodernist values $F(1, 286) = 13.41$; $p < .01$, political conservatism $F(1, 286) = 5.33$; $p < .05$, and political Interest $F(1, 286) = 33.25$; $p < .01$. Koreans held more Postmodernist values than Hungarians, showed less support for conservative political parties and less interest in politics. For the family perception variables however, culture did not have any direct impact; Cultural influence on family relatedness $F(1, 286) = .01$ and on family democratisation $F(1, 286) = 2.03$ were not significant at $p < .05$ level. On the contrary, gender did not have significant impact on the political beliefs or Postmodernist values, and had influence only on the family perception variables. For the family perceptions variables, gender had direct impact on Family relatedness $F(1, 286) = 6.86$ and Family democratisation $F(1, 286) = 7.51$, and the effects were both significant at $p < .05$ level. Women scored higher than men for both of the variables. Neither culture $F(1, 286) = .14$ nor gender $F(1, 286) = .19$ had significant influence on democratic beliefs.

In the following section, the results from the structural equation modelling testing the significance of the individual pathways between the three levels of variables, the independent, mediating, and dependent variables, and the fit between the implied and the observed covariance matrices will be discussed in greater detail.

Model fitting

Three models, including two measurement models for different levels of variables and a structural model including all latent variables, were tested independently for their abilities to account for the hypothesised model. Full diagrams of the measurement and structural models for the study including parameter estimates and regression weights of the estimates can be found in Figures 1 to 3. Two separate testing of measurement models, one for the family perception variables and their indicators (Measurement Model I), and the second one for political belief variables (Measurement Model II) were performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables. After checking for these variables, full structural model was drawn and its goodness of fit with the hypothesised model was tested. Fit indices of chi-square (CMIN= minimum discrepancy) divided by degree of freedom (CMIN/df), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) are reported for the analysis of the final model in the study. We can assume a good fit if the CFI is greater than .9, RMSEA is below .08, and relative chi-square (CMIN /df) below 3 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Maxwell et al., 2005). As can be found in table 2, analyses of the measurement models proved the adequacy of both models. Fit indices for the full structural equation model including all latent and manifest variables for the study, also indicate good fit (CMIN/df=1.335, $p=.052$; CFI=.968; RMSEA=.034). Reporting of the specific results of the full SEM model, which includes each of the parameters and their regression weights follows in the next section.

Figure 1. Measurement Model I (Dependent Variables)

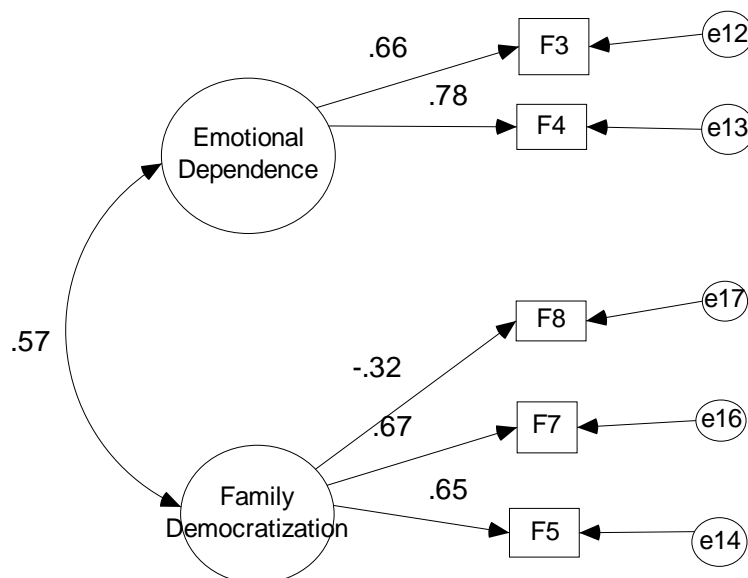


Figure 1. One measurement model for the family perception variables and their indicators was performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables.

Figure 2. Measurement Model II (Mediating Variables)

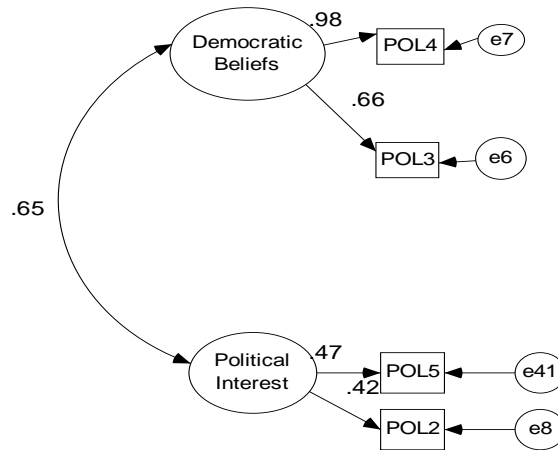
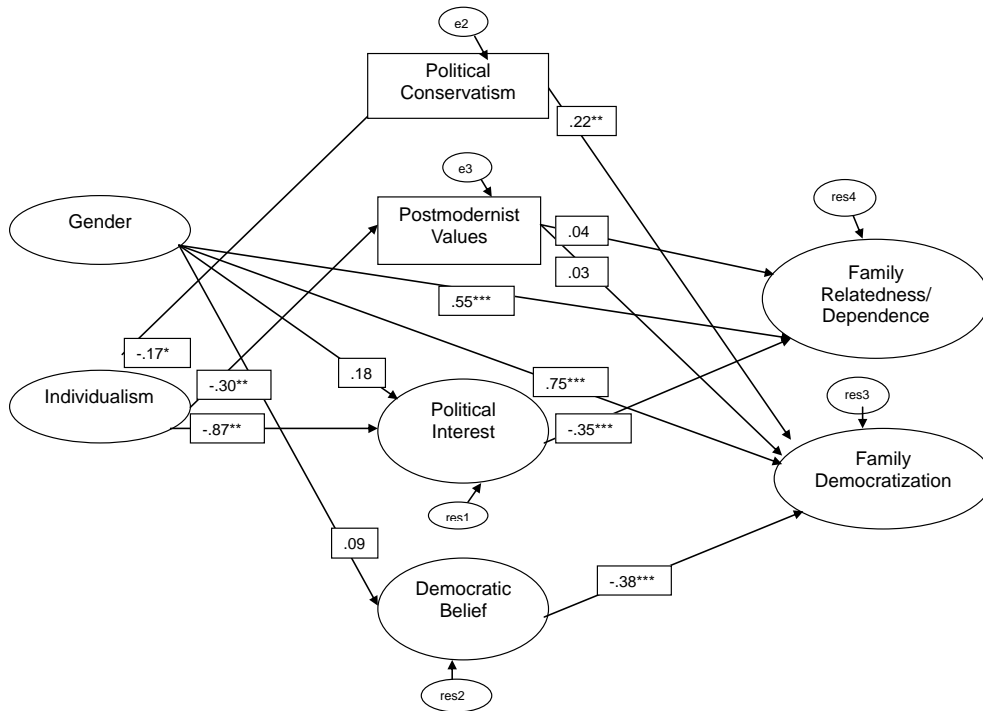


Figure 2. A second testing of measurement models for political belief variables was performed, to check the validity of the groups of items testing each of the variables.

Figure 3. Full SEM Model



CMIN/DF=1.335 ; p=.052 ; CFI=.968;
RMSEA=.034

Figure 3. These results suggest that stronger belief in democracy and higher political conservatism predict stronger belief in family democratisation, or, equality in the family, and that higher interest in politics predicts stronger belief in the importance of family closeness.

SEM results

In this part of the analysis, culture is represented by the country-level Individualism (IDV) score provided by Hofstede (2009). Country-level Individualism had significant impact on Postmodernist values $\beta = -.30$, $p < .01$, political conservatism $\beta = -.17$, $p < .05$, and political interest $\beta = -.87$, $p < .01$, but not on democratic beliefs $\beta < |.10|$. Higher score of country-level Individualism predicted lower political conservatism, political interest, and level of Postmodernist values. Political interest and democratic beliefs did not have mediating effect on gender's influence on family perceptions. However, gender had a direct effect on family perception; gender had a significant influence on family relatedness $\beta = .55$, $p < .001$, and family democratisation $\beta = .75$, $p < .001$ which indicates that the females perceived family relatedness/dependence and democratisation to be more important than the males in this study. Mediating variables in this study had various significant effects on family perceptions: 1) Democratic beliefs on family democratisation $\beta = -.38$, $p < .001$; 2) Political interest on family closeness/dependence $\beta = -.35$, $p < .001$; 3) Political conservatism on family democratisation $\beta = .22$, $p < .01$. These results suggest that stronger belief in democracy and higher political conservatism predict stronger belief in family democratisation, or, equality in the family, and that higher interest in politics predicts stronger belief in the importance of family closeness. However, Postmodernist values failed to predict family perception.

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of culture and gender on values, political beliefs, and family perceptions. The results are in line with the findings from other studies; the links between culture and value priorities (Schwartz, 1994), cultural heritage and values (Inglehart, 1900; 2000), political instability and societal conditions and value priorities (Schwartz & Bardi, 1997), culture and political views and participation (Ross, 1997), culture and the family (Kagitcibasi, 2007) have been demonstrated. This study demonstrated that that macro-level factors of culture and gender, affect individuals' values and beliefs, and furthermore, their family perceptions, and the interrelations between these variables were found to be significant in the SEM analysis.

Firstly, let us consider cross-cultural differences in the political dimensions, Postmodernist values were found to be significantly different amongst the students from the two countries. In accordance to Inglehart (1997; 2000), these cross-cultural differences can most likely be accounted by the differences in the historical and cultural backgrounds, as well as recent developments in the social and political spheres of these countries. In particular, Inglehart (1997; 2008) noted that the shift to Postmodernist values reflect the broader societal change which is reshaping different dimensions of life, including political outlook, gender roles, and religious/spiritual beliefs. This study clearly demonstrated cross-cultural differences in the endorsement of Postmodernist values, level of political interest, and political

conservatism in the two countries.

Cultural influences on the dimensions under investigation were also examined by a modelling the culture and gender effects. This study found that Hungarian students had lower levels of Postmodernism than the students in South Korea did. Inglehart (1997) argues that stable conditions of a country lead its citizens to adopt more Postmodernist values, and in this sense, the lower endorsement of Postmodernist values in the Hungarians may reflect the current changes and instabilities in political and other arenas of life in Hungary. Consistent with previous work, societal conditions of the country, and the ensuing Postmodernist values were closely related to political beliefs and attitudes, such as political interest (De Graaf & De Graaf, 1988). Inglehart (1997) claims that Postmodernist values extend to family values as well, where emphasis on women's self-realisation grows, and women's place and role outside the house are recognised and encouraged. However, an examination of the link between Postmodernist values and family democratisation did not find a significant relationship in this study. This may be due to the method of calculating Postmodernist values here, considering Postmodernist values and Modernist values on each end of the spectrum and deducting one score from the other, rather than following the standard ranking method suggested by Inglehart (1997), where individuals are categorised as 'Postmodernist', 'Modernist', or 'Mixed' depending on which two most important goals they have selected.

In this study, individuals from the more Individualistic country of Hungary were more interested in politics more than the Koreans, believed more in a democratic society, and were more likely to vote in national elections. These factors are also likely to be influenced by macro-level factors other than Individualism such as cultural background and economic development. The impact of cultural background on self and political beliefs is commonly found. For example, Basabe & Ros (2005) have noted the link between Confucianism and low Individualism, where the centuries-long beliefs held by the Asians lead them to believe less in challenging the existing order, and thus may be less inclined to make political participation or believe in their own political influence. On the other hand, the importance of considering recent economic development and current societal condition is also often highlighted. The claim made by Inglehart and other proponents of social change and Postmodernist values is that economic development and stability leads individuals to have more participation in politics, declining beliefs in institutional forms of government, and increasing support for third parties, peace movements, and equality. For example, Kim and his colleagues (2002) argued that rapid social change and economic development in East Asian countries such as South Korea and Taiwan brought democratic ideals and beliefs to these countries. Therefore, in investigating political beliefs in countries like the ex-Communist states of Hungary, or the new democratic states of South Korea, and have undergone rapid and significant changes, and feature different cultural backgrounds, it becomes difficult to predict whether the more traditional cultural influences prevail, or if social change brings significant changes to these beliefs. Future studies should thus attempt to separate out these two lines of influences, and examine them more closely.

Gender did not have a significant influence on the political factors (political interest, democratic beliefs, or conservatism). However, gender had a direct positive relationship with the family perception variables of emotional closeness and family democratisation. Our finding that women place higher importance on close relationship to their family, and on democratic family values, is in line with Duncan & Smith (2002)'s claim that individuals' own gendered expectations impact women's roles in the family. Our findings are also in line with Sidanius & Pena (2003)'s claim that gender differences in egalitarian views are caused by the behavioural predispositions and learning and experiences in the early years, and are thus relatively invariant across culture. Re-negotiation of gendered roles in the family, as is suggested by Duncan and Smith (2002) seems to be influenced by gender directly, and by culture indirectly, through shaping of other types of views. The significance and strength of these links can be found on the diagram of the full SEM model (Figure 3). Along with gender, both political conservatism and democratic beliefs were significant predictors of family democratisation, where lower level of conservatism and stronger democratic ideals were conducive to more democratic family relations. This link between conservatism and family democratisation is in agreement with earlier work (e.g. Feather, 1979), who found significant negative relations between conservatism and the importance placed on equality values.

Beck (1997) discusses the importance of socialisation experiences in the family as a way of making 'the spirit of democracy the spirit of a society' (p.156). How individuals are brought up by their parents in the family influence their democratic views, and it is also likely that their socialisation experiences reflect the societal norms and atmosphere. In advocating democratic views and relations, individuals' attitudes can carry over from the broader level of society to the more intimate setting of family and vice versa. Delsing and his colleagues (2003) argued that in recent decades, more equal relations in the family have become the norm alongside an overall democratisation in the social spheres. This study confirmed the link between individuals' level of democratic beliefs in politics and in the family, which suggests that democratic views usually extend over different arenas of life. Those who held more democratic political views also perceived equality in family as important. This result clearly suggests a link between individuals' perception of equality and democracy both in the politics and the family, and universality of these beliefs across different spheres of life/settings.

Many researchers have looked into political conservatism and other aspects of individual beliefs and values that are believed to be interlinked. Previous research has demonstrated the close link between political conservatism and individuals' resistance to change, reluctance to accept new ideas, uncertainty avoidance, authoritarianism, and opposition to equality (Kossowosk & Van Hiel, 2003; Jost et al., 2007; Van Hiel et al., 2004). Those who were high in political conservatism were also found to exhibit tendencies to resist change or new ideas, avoid uncertainty, believe in authoritarianism and hierarchy, and oppose equality. The results of this study indicate that political conservatism influenced the perception of family democratisation, whereas those who are high in political conservatism also believed less in the importance of equality in family roles and

relations, and less in equal gender relations and decision making at home. This finding confirms previous work by Jost and his colleagues (2003), that resistance to change and opposition to equality are the main components of political conservatism.

Country-level Individualism score also had significant relations to the individuals' political conservatism. The results seem to indicate that the Hungarians, who are higher in Individualism than the Koreans, tend to be more conservative. However, as discussed in the previous paragraphs, other factors such as economic growth, country-level or individual-level affluence, or recent political changes can be affecting this relationship, and thus it is unclear if the differences in conservatism can be explained by Individualism or rather, if they reflect the societal, cultural, or political atmosphere of the countries. Archival research suggests that right-wing ideologies become more attractive at times of social, economic, or political turmoil (Jost et al., 2007). In this sense, it might be the case that the Hungarians, who are going through the more recent political instability and other rapid social changes, advocate conservative ideas and choose more conservative leaders than the Koreans do.

Postmodernist values did not have a significant influence on either of the family perception variables, which leads us to speculate that the issues relating to Postmodernist-Modernist values might not have such a direct connection to the issues and views regarding the family covered in this study. According to Inglehart (1997), individuals whose basic survival needs are guaranteed will become more Postmodernist, which means they will value goals such as ensuring autonomy and freedom of individuals and ensuring high quality of life more than they value material wealth or strength of the nation. He also suggested that Postmaterialists, or those who hold Postmodernist views, are more likely to advocate more equal relations in the family, be more accepting toward the non-traditional family forms, and be more open toward women's choice in the family and the work. However, the results of this study did not find this link, which suggests that individuals' position on this value orientation might not always predict their perceptions of the family, or the importance of closeness and equal relations in the family. However, this study found very little correlations between Postmodernist values and other variables. Alternatively, it may be possible that views regarding the family stand independent of individual values, for value priorities concern individuals' views on the larger society and are broader in spectrum than their views on the family in specific. Including other value priorities such as those theorised by Schwartz might be useful in investigating the link between individual values and family perceptions further.

Concluding Remarks

This study has a few methodological and theoretical limitations. The length of the questionnaire used in the study was cut short for practical reasons. In the future, use of a lengthened questionnaire, which includes full scales rather than only individual items for enhanced reliability of the scales, is advisable. Future

studies should also include more macro-level variables, for the inadequacy of country-level Individualism alone as indicator of cultural differences was clear in this study. The relation between the level of economic development and the level of Postmodernist values endorsed, as well as the link between the more individual-level economic variables of education, employment, wealth, and income, and the types of family attitudes are often found (e.g., White & Rogers, 2000). Therefore, inclusion of economic indicators such as GDP per capita can be helpful in explaining for recent cultural and social trajectories of different countries, as well as accounting for the differences in childhood experiences. Bergh (2007) demonstrated in his study that social or cultural change, and especially economic development, led individuals of both sexes to views these relations in a more egalitarian way. Thus, impact of economic development on views regarding gender roles and decision making in the family should be investigated.

Moreover, the impact of social change on other aspects of family relationship and perceptions should also be examined further. Roseneil & Budgeon (2004) argue that even the concept of 'family' is changing in the current times, with the breakdown of the traditional family forms, increasing levels of divorce, and rising importance of individuation and gender equalities. A more comprehensive study of the impact of contextual factors and social change on family perceptions across cultures will be useful. There is a possibility that social change is mediating the link between the cultural dimensions of Individualism-Collectivism and family perceptions, where individuals from the individualistic and collectivistic cultures have come to merge their views together, perceiving the benefit and the importance of having both independence and interdependence in the family (Kagitcibasi, 2005; 2007). Future studies should thus look closely into differing types of self-beliefs, prevalence of new type of self-belief, the autonomous-related self, across cultures and between generations, and the links between the self-beliefs and perceptions of the self in relation to the family.

References

- Acock, A.C.(2005). Working with Missing Values. *Journal of Marriage & Family*, 67, 1012-1028.
- Allen, M.W., Ng, S.H., Ikeda, K., Javan, J.A., Sufi, A.H., Wilson, M., & Yang, K. (2007). Two Decades of Change in Cultural Values & Economic Development in Eight East Asian & Pacific Island Nations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 38(3), 247-269.
- Bardi, A., Goodwin, R. (In press). The dual route to value change: Individual processes and cultural moderators. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*.
- Barnea, M.F. & Schwartz, S.H. (1998). Values and Voting. *Political Psychology*, 19(1), 17-40.
- Basabe, N. & Ros, M. (2005) Cultural Dimensions and Social Behavior Correlates: Individualism-Collectivism and Power Distance. *International Review of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 189-225.
- Beck, U. (1997). Democratization of the family. *Childhood*, 4, 151-168.
- Bergh, J. (2007). Gender Attitudes & Modernisation Processes. *International*

- Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 19(1), 5-23.
- Collani, G. & Grumm, N. (2009). On the Dimensional Structure of Personality, Ideological Beliefs, Social Attitudes, & Personal Values. *Journal of Individual Differences*, 30(2), 107-119.
- Cumings, B. (2005). *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Dalton, R.J. & Shin, D. (2003). Democratic Aspirations & Democratic Ideals: Citizen Orientations toward Democracy in East Asia. *Proceedings of the Hawaii International Conference on the Social Sciences, Honolulu, Hawaii, June, 2002*, 1-25.
- De Graaf, N.D. & P. De Graaf (1988). Family Background, Postmaterialism and Life Style. *The Netherlands Journal of Sociology*, 24, 50-64.
- Delsing, M.J.M.H, Oud, J.H.L, De Bruyn, E.E.J., & Van Aken, M.A.G. (2003). Current & Recollected Perceptions of Family Relationships: The Social Relations Model Approach Applied to Members of Three Generations. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17(4), 445-459.
- Diaz-Loving, R. (1998). Contributions of Mexican Ethnopsychology to the Resolution of the Etic-Emic Dilemma in Personality. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 29, 104-118.
- Díaz-Loving, R. (2005). Site Under Construction: An Ethnopsychological Representarion of the Mexican Self-Concept. *Revista Interamericana de Psicología*. 39(2), 247-252.
- Duncan, S. & Smith, D. (2002). Geographies of Family Formations" Spatial Differences & Gender Cultures in Britain. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 27(4), 471-493.
- Feather, N.T. (1979) Value Correlates of Conservatism. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 37(9), 1617-1630.
- Flanagan, C.A. (2003). Developmental Roots of Political Engagement. *Political Science & Politics*, 36(2), 257-261.
- Georgas, J., Christakopoulou, S., Poortinga, Y.H., Angleitner, A., Goodwin, R., & Charalambous, N. (1997). The relationship of Family Bonds to Family Structure & Function across Cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 28 (3), 303-320.
- Georgas, J., Mylonas, K., Bafiti, T., Poortinga, Y.H., Christakopoulou, S., Kagitcibasi, C., Kwak, K., Ataca, B., Berry, J., Orung, S., Sunar, D., Charalambous, N., Goodwin, R., Wang, W., Angleitner, A., Stepanikova, I., Pick, S., Givaudan, M., Zhuravliova-Gionis, I., Konatambigi, R., Gelfand, M.J., Marinova, V., McBride-Chang, C., & Kodicek, Y. (2001). Functional Relationships in the Nuclear & Extended Family: A 16-Culture Study. *International Journal of Psychology*, 36(5), 289-300.
- Giddens, A. (1992). *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, & Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Goodwin, R. & Gaines, S.O. (2004). Relationships Beliefs & Relationship Quality across Cultures: Country as a Moderator of Dysfunctional Beliefs & Relationship Quality in Three Former Communist Societies. *Personal Relationships*, 11, 267-279.

- Haste, H. (2004). Constructing the Citizen. *Political Psychology, 25*(3), 413-439.
- Hofstede, G. (2009). *Cultural Dimensions*. Retrieved from the Web. March 27, 2010. http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.
- Hu & Bentler (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: criteria versus new alternatives, *Structural Equation Modeling, 6*(1), 1-55.
- Inglehart, R. (1981). Post-materialism in an Environment of Insecurity. *American Political Science Review, 75*(4), 880-900.
- Inglehart, R. (1990). *Cultural Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization & Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic, & Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Inglehart, R. (2000). Globalization & Postmodern Values. *The Washington Quarterly, 23*(1), 215-228.
- Inglehart, R. & Baker, W.E. (2000). Modernization, Cultural Change, & the Persistence of Traditional Values. *American Sociological Review, 65*, 19-51.
- Inglehart, R. (2008). Changing Values among Western Publics from 1970 to 2006. *West European Politics, 31*, 130-146.
- Jost, J. T., Glaser, J., Kruglanski, A. W., & Sulloway, F. (2003). Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin, 129*, 339-375.
- Jost, J.T., Napier, J.L., Thorisdottir, H., Gosling, S.D., Palfai, T.P., & Ostafin, B. (2007). Are Needs to Manage Uncertainty and Threat Associated with Political Conservatism or Ideological Extremity? *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*(7), 989-1007.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (1996). *Family & Human Development across Cultures: A View from the Other Side*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2005). Autonomy & Relatedness in Cultural Context: Implications for Self & Family. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*(4), 403-422.
- Kagitcibasi, C. (2007). *Family, Self, & Human Development Across Cultures: Theory & Applications*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.
- Kim, U., Helgesen, G. & Ahn, B. (2002). Democracy, Trust, & Political Efficacy: Comparative Analysis of Danish & Korean Political Culture. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 51*(2), 318-353.
- Kossowsk, M. & Van Hiel, A. (2003). The Relationship Between Need for Closure & Conservative Beliefs in Western and Eastern Europe. *Political Psychology, 24*(3), 501- 518.
- Kwon, H., Rueter, M.A., Lee, M., Koh, S., & Ok, S. (2003). Marital Relationships Following the Korean Economic Crisis: Applying the Family Stress Model. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 65*, 316-325.
- Larson, L.E. (1974). System & Subsystem Perception of Family Roles. *Journal of Marriage & the Family, 36*(1), 128-138.

- Lay, C., Fairlie, P., Jackson, S., Ricci, T., Eisenberg, J., Sato, T., Teeaar, A., & Melamud, A. (1998). Domain-Specific Allocentrism-Idiocentrism: A Measure of Family Connectedness. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 29*(3), 434-460.
- Lesthaeghe, R. & Meekers, D. (1986). Value Changes & the Dimensions of Familism in the European Community. *European Journal of Population, 2*, 225-268.
- Lipset, S. M. (1994). The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited: 1993 Presidential Address. *American Sociological Review, 59*(1), 1-22.
- Markus, H. & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review, 98*(2), 224-253.
- Maxwell, J. P., Sukhodolsky, D.G., Chow, C.C.F. & Wong, C.F.C. (2005). Anger Rumination in Hong Kong & Great Britain: Validation of the Scale & a Cross-Cultural Comparison. *Personality & Individual Differences, 39*(6), 1147-1157.
- Michaud, K.E.H., Carlisle, J.E., & Smith, E.R.A.N. (2009). The Relationship between Cultural Values and Political Ideology, and the Role of Political Knowledge. *Political Psychology, 30*(1), 27-42.
- Miller, J.G. (2002). Bringing Culture to Basic Psychological Theory- Beyond Individualism & Collectivism: Comments on Oyserman et al. (2002). *Psychological Bulletin, 128*(1), 97-109.
- North, R.J., Holahan, C.J., Moos, R.H., & Cronkite, R.C. (2008). Family Support, Family Income, & Happiness: A 10-Year Perspective. *Journal of Family Psychology, 22*(3), 475-483.
- Oishi, S., Schimmack, U., Diener, E., & Suh, E.M. (1998). The Measurement of Values & Individualism-Collectivism. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin, 24*(11), 1177-1189.
- Rindfuss, R.R., Liao, T.F., & Tsuya, N.O. (1992). Contact with Parents in Japan: Effects on Opinions Toward Gender & Intergenerational Roles. *Journal of Marriage & the Family, 54*, 812-822.
- Roberts, B.W. & Helson, R. (1997). Changes in Culture, Changes in Personality: The Influence of Individualism in a Longitudinal Study of Women. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 72*(3), 641-651.
- Roseneil, S. & Budgeon, S. (2004). Cultures of Intimacy & Care beyond 'the Family': Personal Life & Social Change in the Early 21st Century. *Current Sociology, 52*(2), 135-159.
- Ross, M.H. (1997). The Relevance of Culture for the Study of Political Psychology & Ethnic Conflict. *Political Psychology, 18*(2), 299-326.
- Schwartz, S.H. (1990). Individualism-Colectivism: Critique & Proposed Refinements. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 21*(2), 139-157.
- Schwartz, S.H. (1992). Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theory & Empirical Tests in 20 Countries, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 25*, 1-65.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the content and structure of values? *Journal of Social Issues, 50*, 19-45.

- Schwartz, S.H. (2004). Mapping & Interpreting Cultural Differences around the World. In H.Vinken, J. Soeters, & P. Ester (Eds.), *Comparing Cultures* (pp.43-73). Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers.
- Schwartz, S.H. & Bardi, A. (1997). Influences of Adaptation to Communist Rule on Value Priorities in Eastern Europe. *Political Psychology*, 18(2), 385- 410.
- Sidanius, J. & Pena, Y. (2003). The Gendered Nature of Family Structure & Group-based Anti-egalitarianism: A Cross-national Analysis. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 143(2), 243-251.
- Sidanius, J. & Pratto, F. (2001). *Social Dominance: An Intergroup Theory of Social Hierarchy & Oppression*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Spence, J. T., & Helmreich, R. L. (1978). *Masculinity and femininity: Their psychological dimensions, correlates and antecedents*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Thornton, A. & Young-DeMarco, L. (2001). Four Decades of Trends in Attitudes toward Family Issues in the United States: The 1960s through the 1990s. *Journal of Marriage & Family*, 63, 1009-1037.
- Trent, K. & South, S.J. (1992). Sociodemographic Status, Parental Background, Childhood Family Structure, & Attitudes toward Family Formation. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 54, 427-439.
- US Department of State (2009). *Background Notes*. Retrieved from the Web. April 10, 2010. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/index.htm>
- Van de Vijver, F. & Hambleton, R.K. (1996). Translating Tests: Some Practical Guidelines. *European Psychologist*, 1(2), 89-99.
- Van Hiel, A., Pandelaere, M., & Duriez, B. (2004) The Impact of Need for Closure on Conservative Beliefs & Racism: Differential Mediation by Authoritarian Submission & Authoritarian Dominance. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(7), 824-837.
- White, L. & Rogers, S.J. (2000). Economic Circumstances & Family Outcomes: A Review of the 1990s. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 62, 1035-1051.
- Yabiku, S.T., Axinn, W.G., & Thornton, A. (1999). Family Integration & Children's Self-Esteem. *American Journal of Sociology*, 104(5), 1494-1524.

El Conflicto como un Predictor de la Infidelidad¹

Sofía Rivera Aragón, Rolando Díaz Loving, Gerardo Benjamín Tonatiuh Villanueva
Orozco & Nancy Montero Santamaria
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

Resumen

El estudio tuvo como objetivos, conocer la relación entre el conflicto y la infidelidad (Platt, Nalbone, Casanova & Wetchler, 2008; Sánchez & Cortes, 1996), y evaluar que tanto el conflicto predice la infidelidad (Platt, Nalbone, Casanova & Wetchler, 2008).

Se contó con 903 participantes voluntarios, 412 hombres y 491 mujeres. Se aplicaron tres instrumentos, la Escala de Conflicto (Rivera, Cruz, Arnaldo & Díaz-Loving, 200), la Escala de Conducta Infiel (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007) y la Escala de Consecuencias de la Infidelidad (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007). Los resultados muestran por un lado, que en general el conflicto y la infidelidad están relacionados tanto en hombres como en mujeres; y por otro, que cuando las personas tienen conflictos por celos, relaciones sexuales, los hijos y las actividades propias y de la pareja, es más probable que se involucren en una relación infiel ya sea a nivel sexual o emocional.

Palabras claves: Conflicto, Infidelidad, Pareja, Cultura, Fidelidad.

Conflict as a Precouser of Infidelity

Abstract

In order to study the association between relationship conflict and infidelity set forth by Platt, Nalbone, Casanova and Wetchler (2008) and assess the effect size of conflict as a predictor of infidelity (Sánchez & Cortes, 1996), among Mexican subjects, 903 volunteers, 412 men and 491 women, responded to the Relationship Conflict Scale (Rivera, Cruz, Arnaldo & Díaz-Loving, 2004), The Unfaithful Behavioral Scales (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007) and the Consequences of Infidelity Scale (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007). Statistical analysis significantly confirms that relationship of conflict and infidelity are correlated both in men and in women. In addition, when participants had conflicts related to jealousy, sexual relationships children and personal needs and activities, it increased the probability of engaging both emotional and sexual infidelity.

Key Words: Conflict, Infidelity, Couple, Culture, Fidelity.

¹ Proyecto PAPIIT No. IN305706-3

Enviar correspondencia a Sofía Rivera Aragón: Av. Universidad 3004, Facultad de Psicología, UNAM, Cubículo 12, Edif. "D" Mezzanine, C.P. 04510, México, D.F., sofiar@servidor.unam.mx.

© UNAM Facultad de Psicología, 2011

En las relaciones interpersonales existen muchas situaciones en las cuales se puede presentar el conflicto (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000) sin embargo no se sabe si solo la situación o la personalidad de los individuos es lo que determina el tipo de conflicto que estos presentan. El vivir con otros incrementa la interacción de todo tipo, especialmente de conflicto; las parejas presentan frecuentes ocasiones donde se violan los límites interpersonales (Vuchinich, 1986) y tales violaciones frecuentemente conducen a conflictos entre los miembros de la pareja.

Por otra parte, dentro de las etapas que las parejas atraviesan en el Ciclo de Acercamiento-Alejamiento (Díaz Loving, 1999) la etapa de Conflicto se caracteriza por una intensa carga afectiva, donde se presentan un gran número de emociones, cogniciones y conductas, que van desde lo que se puede considerar como positivo hasta lo negativo, además de que cuando las parejas atraviesan por este período, todo su contexto se ve afectado.

Potencialmente existen una cantidad enorme de factores estructurales que pueden estar asociados con el conflicto y la disolución en una relación íntima (Laner, 1978; Newcomb & Bentler, 1981).

Los conflictos están vinculados a una lucha provocada por la incompatibilidad en las metas, escasa recompensa, e interferencia de otras partes en los logros de las metas de la pareja (Hocker & Wilmot, 1991); precisamente en esta última parte, se encuentra implicada la infidelidad, la cual es un problema significativo para muchas parejas (Treas & Giesen, 2000).

Sánchez y Cortes (1996) encuentran que el conflicto está definido por conceptos tales como peleas, problemas, enojo, infidelidad y desconfianza. Como se observa en este estudio, una definidora del conflicto es la infidelidad. Gottman (1979 en Cahn, 1992) encuentra que un tema vinculado al conflicto también es la infidelidad; y Mead, Vatcher, Wyne y Roberts (1990) por su parte, observan de la misma forma, que las aventuras amorosas igualmente son un tema de conflicto frecuentemente mencionado por las parejas. No obstante, estos autores no le llaman infidelidad.

Atwood y Seifer (1997) explican que la infidelidad está construida socialmente y cargada de múltiples significados, primordialmente negativos.

Se ha estimado que del 26% al 70% de las mujeres casadas y que del 33% al 75% de los hombres casados se han involucrado en una infidelidad (e.g. Johnson, 1972; Shackelford & Buss, 1997). Las relaciones sexuales extramaritales son la causa más comúnmente citada de disolución marital (Amato & Rogers, 1997) así mismo se ha planteado como un área común de conflicto en las relaciones de pareja (Platt, Nalbone, Casanova & Wetchler, 2008).

Debido a la alta probabilidad de aparición, la infidelidad se ha convertido en un aspecto relevante dentro del estudio de las relaciones de pareja. Tradicionalmente ha sido concebida como una trasgresión al vínculo establecido dentro de la relación primaria (Pittman, 1994) que se presenta por problemas dentro de la relación, pero que también impacta en la calidad de la misma (Bonilla, 1993). Weeks, Gambescia y Jenkins (2003) mencionan que la infidelidad es la violación a un contrato establecido con respecto a la exclusividad sexual y/o emocional. Por su parte Milewski-Hertlein, Ray, Wetchler, y Kilmer (2003) y Platt, Nalbone, Casanova y Wetchler (2008) definen infidelidad como la interacción

sexual y/o emocional que ocurre fuera de la relación romántica la cual pone en peligro la intimidad emocional de la relación.

La mayoría de los trabajos reportados por la literatura acerca del tema de infidelidad se han centrado en la conducta infiel y sus consecuencias (Harmatz & Novac, 1983; Kinsey, 1953; Buunk & Dijkstra, 2000). Y otros han abarcado los motivos de este fenómeno (Roscoe, Cavanaugh & Kennedy, 1988; Drigotas, Safstrom & Gentilia, 1999; Bonilla, 1993) y han encontrado que la infidelidad en la mujer está más relacionada con la satisfacción en su relación primaria (Pick, Díaz Loving & Andrade, 1988) mientras que en el hombre la infidelidad se relaciona más con la satisfacción sexual y los aspectos culturales (Strean, 1986).

En la actualidad, las personas han cambiado la manera cómo viven las relaciones de pareja y de familia. En épocas anteriores, las normas, valores, cultura y conducta que guiaban estas situaciones eran radicalmente distintas a como son ahora. Gottman (1993) afirma que durante mucho tiempo los actos infieles, divorcio y las consecuencias que éste atraía a las familias fueron vistos como un problema que afectaba no sólo a los individuos sino también a la sociedad. Ante estas nuevas concepciones, las personas marcan la fidelidad de manera esencial dentro de la relación, y la falta de ésta incluso puede llevar a la anulación del vínculo afectivo (Álvarez, 2008).

Hoy en día es cada vez más importante como valor la fidelidad de la pareja, y tanto para hombres como para mujeres la violación de esta regla de exclusividad puede llevar a diferentes conflictos. La mayoría de las parejas establecen sus propias reglas acerca de lo que es permitido o no en su relación. En cualquier decisión tomada en pareja, es conveniente que exista acuerdo entre ambos; pero si esto no se da, si alguno de los miembros de la pareja mantiene una relación extradiádica, esta actitud traiciona los acuerdos de ambos miembros de la pareja. Entonces, la infidelidad tiene lugar cuando se da una conducta contraria a lo convenido (Álvarez, 2008).

Tanto en hombres como en mujeres siempre ha existido la posibilidad de ser infieles en algún campo de la existencia, ya que, infidelidad (del latín *in fides*), es un término que etimológicamente hace referencia a la falta de creencia, de confianza, convicción o de fe. En este sentido, las palabras infidelidad o infiel, pueden aplicarse sin problema a todas aquellas personas que con sus actos han mostrado que han perdido, o que han hecho perder la confianza, la convicción o la fe en algo que se tenía en común, como la religión, las ideas políticas, los intereses, sin embargo, la más frecuente de las formas de aplicarlo y entenderlo, es en el terreno de las relaciones afectivas y sexuales (Valdez, Díaz-Loving & Pérez, 2005).

Por otro lado, la infidelidad también se puede definir como una traición y/o violación de la confianza, promesa o voto, en las reglas o límites acordados de una relación, independientemente de si hubo o no, algún convenio formal ante la ley y no necesariamente tiene que ser sexual o de otro tipo; el hecho es que el engaño está presente y eso no minimiza o clasifica el daño que puede ocasionar la infidelidad (Álvarez, 2008).

Buss & Shakelford (1997) y Wiederman & Allgeier (1993), marcan una diferencia entre dos tipos posibles de infidelidades: la infidelidad sexual (coito) y la infidelidad emocional (enamoramamiento):

- La infidelidad sexual se refiere a la actividad sexual con alguien más además de la pareja estable (Shakelford, LeBlanc & Drass, 2000).
- La infidelidad emocional ocurre cuando uno de los miembros de la pareja centra sus fuentes de amor romántico, tales como tiempo y atención, en alguien más (Shakelford et al., 2000).

Específicamente, los hombres más que las mujeres encuentran más difícil perdonar la infidelidad sexual de su pareja y son más propensos a terminar con la relación en estos casos. Las mujeres más que los hombres encuentran más difícil perdonar la infidelidad emocional de su pareja, y son más propensas a terminar con la relación en estos casos (Shackelford, Buss & Bennett, 2002).

Basset (2005) encontró que actualmente tanto hombres como mujeres sienten mucho más dolor cuando se presenta una infidelidad emocional ya que ellos perciben que esta es una señal muy fuerte de la disolución de la relación que tiene con su pareja y los resultados consecuentes es devaluar la relación que tienen y a su persona ya que probablemente pueden caer en un estado depresivo.

Algunos autores comentan que el miembro de la relación formal que descubre la relación extradiádica experimenta pérdida de confianza y pertenencia hacia su pareja, sentimientos de abandono y coraje y una creciente necesidad de abandonarla. Otras consecuencias de la infidelidad en la pareja incluyen el divorcio (cuando se trata de matrimonio) (Betzig, 1989), y sufrimiento emocional (Buunk & Van Driel, 1989). Después del descubrimiento de la infidelidad, el miembro traicionado fácilmente siente demasiadas emociones desagradables: depresión, enojo, autoreproche y celos (Buss, 2000). Otros autores (Spainer & Margolis, 1983), indican que hay una alta desaprobación hacia la parte que ha tenido un amorío extramarital, y que estos sentimientos se añan a los de enojo, tristeza y miedo que se constituye en celos reactivos, los cuales pueden afectar seriamente la relación (Buunk, 1989).

Las justificaciones que la gente ofrece para involucrarse en una infidelidad son numerosas y diversas. Drigotas, Safstrom y Gentilia (1999) dividen la literatura de éstas explicaciones en cinco categorías: sexual, satisfacción emocional, contexto social, actitudes-normas y venganza-hostilidad. En una revisión de diferentes estudios (Glass & Wright, 1992 en Treas & Giesen, 2000), se identificaron 31 razones para la infidelidad: la mayoría caen bajo las categorías de sexo, intimidad emocional, amor, aumento del ego y mayor gratificación personal.

Sea como sea, la consecuencia última de una aventura, independientemente de si fue o no descubierta, es que la relación original de pareja nunca volverá a ser, para bien o para mal de sus integrantes, la misma (Zumaya, 1994).

Tomando en cuenta lo anteriormente expuesto, esta investigación se propone, basado en los hallazgos de que al definir el conflicto, se encuentra a la infidelidad como un aspecto vinculado a él (Sánchez & Cortes, 1996), y que a su vez se encuentra que la infidelidad genera conflictos (Platt, Nalbone, Casanova & Wetchler, 2008) la primera hipótesis a comprobar es que la infidelidad y el

conflicto, están relacionados. Por otro lado, si bien no se sabe que fue primero, el conflicto o la infidelidad, se parte de la perspectiva de que el conflicto predice la infidelidad, donde a mayor conflicto en una relación de pareja, habrá mayor probabilidad de que un miembro de la misma se involucre en una relación extramarital. Esto sustentado, en que en varias investigaciones encuentran que un motivo de infidelidad es la insatisfacción con la relación (Bonilla, 1993; Drigotas, Safstrom & Gentilia, 1999; Pick, Díaz Loving, & Andrade, 1988; Romero, 2007; Roscoe, Cavanaugh & Kennedy, 1988), generada por los conflictos que se dan dentro de la misma (Platt, Nalbone, Casanova & Wetchler, 2008).

Método

Participantes

La investigación se llevó a cabo en 903 participantes voluntarios, 412 hombres y 491 mujeres con un rango de edad de 18 a 60 años $M = 40.11$, $DE = 11.23$. El 75.6% eran casados y el 24.4% vivían en unión libre. En cuanto a los hijos el rango iba de 1 a 9 $M = 2$, $DE = 1.32$. El tiempo en la relación oscilo entre 1 y 48 años $M = 15.43$, $DE = 10.56$.

Instrumentos

1. *Escala de Conflicto (Rivera, Cruz, Arnaldo & Díaz-Loving, 2004)*. Evalúa las áreas de la relación de pareja en las que se presenta mayor conflicto. Consta de 66 reactivos en un formato tipo Likert, con cinco opciones de respuesta que van de nunca (5) a siempre (1). Mide las dimensiones: hijos, intereses y gustos diferentes, actividades de la pareja, actividades propias, relaciones con la familia, religión, personalidad, relaciones sexuales, dinero, celos y orden/cooperación. La escala explicó el 66.10% de la varianza dentro del análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación ortogonal y tiene un alpha de Cronbach total de .86 (ver tabla 1).

2. *Escala de Conducta Infidel (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007)*. Se refiere a todas aquellas conductas que denotan un acto o deseo de infidelidad. Consta de 50 reactivos tipo Likert, con cinco opciones de respuesta que van de siempre (1) a nunca (5). Los cuatro factores que la componen son: infidelidad sexual; deseo de infidelidad emocional; deseo de infidelidad sexual e infidelidad emocional. La escala presenta validez de constructo y explicó el 70.16% de la varianza en el análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación ortogonal. Tiene una confiabilidad por consistencia interna, con un alfa de Cronbach total de .984 (ver tabla 2).

Tabla 1
Definiciones de las áreas de conflicto

ÁREA	DEFINICIÓN
Hijos	Incluye aspectos como el trato hacia los hijos, forma en que se les disciplina y el tiempo que se pasa con ellos.
Intereses y gustos	Habla de que los problemas con la pareja se presentan cuando se sostienen puntos de vista divergentes, cuando los gustos e intereses de cada quien son diferentes, y por lo tanto es difícil tomar decisiones y llegar a un acuerdo.
Actividades de la Pareja	Señala lo que la pareja hace, el tiempo que dedica a sus actividades, por lo que se percibe que no pone atención suficiente a la pareja ni a la relación.
Actividades Propias	Enfatiza las actividades que se realizan, el tiempo que se les dedica y que ocasiona que no se tenga tiempo para la pareja, así mismo incluye el que se prefiere estar en otro lado o hacer otras cosas que estar con la pareja.
Religión	Abarca las creencias religiosas y la forma de vivir la religión que cada miembro de la pareja considera adecuadas.
Personalidad	Problemas que surgen debido al carácter y forma de ser de cada uno.
Relaciones Sexuales	Señala el conflicto que aparece respecto a la frecuencia e interés que se tiene en las relaciones sexuales.
Dinero	Señala las diferencias causadas por el gasto y distribución del dinero, que se relacionan con la falta de responsabilidad de la pareja.
Celos	Se refiere a las discusiones que surgen cuando cualquiera de los dos miembros de la pareja platica o salen con personas del sexo opuesto.
Orden / Cooperación	Conjunta el hecho de que la pareja sea, o bien muy desordenada, o exageradamente ordenada e irresponsable.
Familia	Se refiere a las discusiones que surgen porque la familia trata de influir o intervenir en la relación, y por el hecho de que es necesario realizar visitas a los padres.

2. *Escala de Conducta Infiel (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007)*. Se refiere a todas aquellas conductas que denotan un acto o deseo de infidelidad. Consta de 50 reactivos tipo Likert, con cinco opciones de respuesta que van de siempre (1) a nunca (5). Los cuatro factores que la componen son: infidelidad sexual; deseo de infidelidad emocional; deseo de infidelidad sexual e infidelidad emocional. La escala presenta validez de constructo y explicó el 70.16% de la varianza en el análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación ortogonal. Tiene una confiabilidad por consistencia interna, con un alfa de Cronbach total de .984 (ver tabla 2).

Tabla 2

Definiciones de los factores de la Escala de Conducta Infidel

FACTOR	DEFINICIÓN
Infidelidad Sexual	Conductas que indican el mantenimiento de un vínculo sexual con otra persona además de la pareja primaria.
Deseo de Infidelidad Emocional	Manifiestan el deseo de un vínculo romántico con otra persona además de la pareja primaria, sin necesariamente llevarlas a cabo.
Deseo de Infidelidad Sexual	Es el deseo de un vínculo sexual con otra persona además de la pareja primaria, sin necesariamente llevarlas a cabo.
Infidelidad Emocional	Aquellas conductas que demuestran el mantenimiento de un vínculo emocional romántico con otra persona además de la pareja primaria.

3. *Escala de Consecuencias de la Infidelidad (Romero, Rivera & Díaz Loving, 2007)*. Se refiere las consecuencias positivas y negativas que la infidelidad puede acarrear hacia la relación primaria. La versión consta de 13 reactivos tipo Likert, con cinco opciones de respuesta que van de totalmente en desacuerdo (1) a totalmente de acuerdo (5). Presenta una validez de constructo y explicó el 56.8% de la varianza en el análisis factorial de componentes principales con rotación ortogonal. Presenta un alpha de Cronbach total de .772. Está conformada por dos factores: Consecuencias negativas de la infidelidad y consecuencias positivas de la infidelidad (ver tabla 3).

Tabla 3

Definiciones de los factores de la Escala de Consecuentes de la Infidelidad

FACTOR	DEFINICIÓN
Consecuencias negativas de la infidelidad	Se refiere al perjuicio que el acto de infidelidad puede acarrear hacia la relación primaria, propiciando incluso la disolución del vínculo.
Consecuencias positivas de la infidelidad	Se refiere al beneficio que el acto de infidelidad puede acarrear hacia la relación primaria propiciando el acercamiento y la resolución de la problemática dentro del vínculo.

Procedimiento

Los participantes se localizaron en diferentes zonas de la Cd. de México: parques, centros comerciales, oficinas, escuelas y domicilio. Respondieron los instrumentos de manera voluntaria, se hizo énfasis en que la información era anónima y confidencial.

Resultados

Para comprobar la primera hipótesis se aplicó un coeficiente producto-momento de Pearson, los resultados muestran en general que el conflicto se relaciona tanto con la conducta como con el deseo de infidelidad. De la misma forma se encuentra que el conflicto se relaciona con las consecuencias negativas y positivas de la infidelidad. Lo cual comprueba la primera hipótesis planteada.

En el caso de los hombres, se ve que la infidelidad sexual se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(411)=0.193$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades de la pareja $r(411)=0.169$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(411)=0.200$; $p\leq 0.01$, celos $r(411)=0.308$; $p\leq 0.01$, familia $r(411)=0.132$; $p\leq 0.01$ y relaciones sexuales $r(411)=0.165$; $p\leq 0.01$. En el caso de la infidelidad emocional se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(411)=0.114$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(411)=0.141$; $p\leq 0.01$, y de la pareja $r(411)=0.101$; $p\leq 0.01$, celos $r(411)=0.277$; $p\leq 0.01$, y relaciones sexuales $r(411)=0.140$; $p\leq 0.01$. Así mismo se encuentra que los hombres que perciben consecuencias negativas en la infidelidad disminuyen sus conflictos, no obstante cuando observan consecuencias positivas se incrementan los mismos en todas las áreas (ver tabla 4).

Por su parte para las mujeres, se ve que la infidelidad sexual se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(490)=0.140$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades de la pareja $r(490)=0.161$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(490)=0.155$; $p\leq 0.01$, celos $r(490)=0.164$; $p\leq 0.01$, dinero $r(490)=0.162$; $p\leq 0.01$, orden y cooperación $r(490)=0.121$; $p\leq 0.01$, familia $r(490)=0.122$; $p\leq 0.01$ y relaciones sexuales $r(490)=0.256$; $p\leq 0.01$. En el caso de la infidelidad emocional se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(490)=0.145$; $p\leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(490)=0.179$; $p\leq 0.01$, y de la pareja $r(490)=0.138$; $p\leq 0.01$, celos $r(490)=0.175$; $p\leq 0.01$, dinero $r(490)=0.143$; $p\leq 0.01$, orden y cooperación $r(490)=0.116$; $p\leq 0.01$, familia $r(490)=0.132$; $p\leq 0.01$, y relaciones sexuales $r(490)=0.265$; $p\leq 0.01$. Así mismo se encuentra que al igual que en los hombres, las consecuencias negativas en la infidelidad disminuyen sus conflictos, y la percepción de consecuencias positivas incrementan los conflictos en todas las áreas (ver tabla 5).

Tabla 4
Correlaciones entre infidelidad y conflicto en hombres

Áreas de Conflicto	Conducta y Deseo				Consecuencias de la Infidelidad	
	Infidelidad Sexual	Deseo de Infidelidad Emocional	Deseo de infidelidad Sexual	Infidelidad Emocional	Negativas	Positivas
Personalidad	.193**	.277**	.231**	.114*	-.157**	.141**
Hijos					-.121*	
Actividades de la Pareja	.169**	.140**	.117*	.101*	-.109*	.104*
Actividades Propias	.200**	.227**	.192**	.141**	-.151**	.098*
Celos	.308**	.297**	.242**	.277**	-.171**	.212**
Religión	.102*					.118*
Intereses y gustos				.127**		
Dinero		.101*	.126*		-.155**	.124*
Orden y cooperación		.137**	.142**		-.162**	
Familia	.132**	.116*			-.122*	.153**
Relaciones Sexuales	.165**	.155**	.164**	.140**		.125*

** $p \leq .01$ * $\leq .05$

Por su parte para las mujeres, se ve que la infidelidad sexual se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(490)=0.140$; $p \leq 0.01$, actividades de la pareja $r(490)=0.161$; $p \leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(490)=0.155$; $p \leq 0.01$, celos $r(490)=0.164$; $p \leq 0.01$, dinero $r(490)=0.162$; $p \leq 0.01$, orden y cooperación $r(490)=0.121$; $p \leq 0.01$, familia $r(490)=0.122$; $p \leq 0.01$ y relaciones sexuales $r(490)=0.256$; $p \leq 0.01$. En el caso de la infidelidad emocional se relaciona con conflictos de personalidad $r(490)=0.145$; $p \leq 0.01$, actividades propias $r(490)=0.179$; $p \leq 0.01$, y de la pareja $r(490)=0.138$; $p \leq 0.01$, celos $r(490)=0.175$; $p \leq 0.01$, dinero $r(490)=0.143$; $p \leq 0.01$, orden y cooperación $r(490)=0.116$; $p \leq 0.01$, familia $r(490)=0.132$; $p \leq 0.01$, y relaciones sexuales $r(490)=0.265$; $p \leq 0.01$. Así mismo se

encuentra que al igual que en los hombres, las consecuencias negativas en la infidelidad disminuyen sus conflictos, y la percepción de consecuencias positivas incrementan los conflictos en todas las áreas (ver tabla 5).

Tabla 5
Correlaciones entre infidelidad y conflicto en mujeres

Áreas de Conflicto	Conducta y Deseo				Consecuencias de la Infidelidad	
	Infidelidad Sexual	Deseo de Infidelidad Emocional	Deseo de infidelidad Sexual	Infidelidad Emocional	Negativas	Positivas
Personalidad	.140**	.313**	.243**	.145**		.115*
Hijos		.091*	.153**		-.100*	.108*
Actividades de la Pareja	.161**	.322**	.282**	.138**		.133**
Actividades Propias	.155**	.279**	.249**	.179**		.149**
Celos	.164**	.278**	.258**	.175**		.131**
Religión	.189**	.155**	.241**	.202**	-.091*	.123**
Intereses y gustos	.102*	.210**	.188**	.116**		.136**
Dinero	.162**	.221**	.208**	.143**		.113*
Orden y cooperación	.121**	.198**	.144**	.116**		
Familia	.122**	.203**	.214**	.132**		.100*
Relaciones Sexuales	.256**	.303**	.304**	.265**	-.134**	.197**

** $p \leq .01$ * $\leq .05$

Con el objetivo de observar si el conflicto es un predictor de la infidelidad (segunda hipótesis de este estudio), se aplicó una regresión múltiple paso a paso, una para cada variable dependiente: infidelidad sexual, infidelidad emocional, deseo de infidelidad sexual, deseo de infidelidad emocional, consecuencias positivas de la infidelidad y consecuencias negativas de la infidelidad.

Regresión múltiple 1 (Infidelidad Sexual).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor de la infidelidad sexual, estos explicaron el 5.9% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 56.10$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación las relaciones sexuales como predictor, explicaron el 7.5% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 36.68$; $p < .00$. En el tercer paso, se incluyeron las actividades propias, explicaron el 8.0% de la varianza, $F(1, 899) = 25.90$; $p < .00$. En el cuarto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, los hijos, como predictor, explicaron el 8.6% de la varianza, $F(1, 898) = 21.24$; $p < .00$. En el quinto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, la religión, como predictor, explicaron el 9.1% de la varianza, $F(1, 897) = 17.90$; $p < .01$.

Regresión múltiple 2 (Infidelidad Emocional).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor de la infidelidad emocional, estos explicaron el 5.3% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 50.07$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación las relaciones sexuales como predictor, explicaron el 6.9% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 33.60$; $p < .00$. En el tercer paso, se incluyeron las actividades de la pareja, explicaron el 7.6% de la varianza, $F(1, 899) = 24.49$; $p < .00$. En el cuarto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, los religión, como predictor, explicaron el 8.1% de la varianza, $F(1, 898) = 19.68$; $p < .00$. En el quinto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, los hijos, como predictor, explicaron el 8.5% de la varianza, $F(1, 897) = 16.65$; $p < .01$. En el sexto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, los intereses y gustos diferentes, como predictor, explicaron el 9.0% de la varianza, $F(1, 897) = 14.74$; $p < .01$.

Regresión múltiple 3 (Deseo de Infidelidad Sexual).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor del deseo de infidelidad sexual, estos explicaron el 6.5% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 62.9$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación las actividades propias como predictor, explicaron el 9.0% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 44.55$; $p < .00$. En el tercer paso, se incluyeron las relaciones sexuales, explicaron el 9.9% de la varianza, $F(1, 899) = 33.04$; $p < .00$.

Regresión múltiple 4 (deseo de infidelidad emocional).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor del deseo de infidelidad emocional, estos explicaron el 8.5% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 84.15$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación las actividades propias como predictor, explicaron el 11.4% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 57.69$; $p < .00$. En el tercer paso, se incluyeron los hijos, explicaron el 12.3% de la varianza, $F(1, 899) = 41.99$; $p < .00$. En el cuarto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, la personalidad, como predictor, explicaron el 13.8% de la varianza, $F(1, 898) = 35.95$; $p < .00$. En el quinto paso, se incorporó en la ecuación, las relaciones sexuales, como predictor, explicaron el 14.4% de la varianza, $F(1, 897) = 30.19$; $p < .01$ (ver tabla 6).

Tabla 6

Resumen del análisis de regresión paso a paso para las áreas del conflicto que predicen la infidelidad ($N = 902$)

Infidelidad Sexual			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	.265	.035	.242***
Relaciones Sexuales	.209	.032	.139**
Actividades Propias	.080	.040	.077*
Hijos	-.096	.037	-.094**
Religión	.080	.039	.070*

Nota. $R^2 = .059$ para el paso 1 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .075$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .080$ para el paso 3 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .086$ para el paso 4 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .091$ para el paso 5 ($p < .001$).

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Infidelidad Emocional			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	.237	.034	.229***
Relaciones Sexuales	.122	.030	.139**
Actividades de la Pareja	-.094	.039	-.100*
Religión	.081	.037	.075*
Hijos	-.073	.035	-.076*
Intereses y gustos diferentes	.059	.027	.077*

Nota. $R^2 = .053$ para el paso 1 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .069$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .076$ para el paso 3 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .081$ para el paso 4 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .085$ para el paso 5 ($p < .001$), $R^2 = .090$ para el paso 6 ($p < .001$).

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Deseo de Infidelidad Sexual			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	.303	.038	.256***
Actividades Propias	.198	.040	.174**
Relaciones Sexuales	.111	.036	.111**

Nota. $R^2 = .065$ para el paso 1 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .090$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .099$ para el paso 3 ($p < .001$).
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Deseo de Infidelidad Emocional			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	.338	.037	.292***
Actividades Propias	.206	.038	.185**
Hijos	-.114	.037	-.107**
Personalidad	.176	.044.	.166**
Relaciones Sexuales	.092	.037	.094*

Nota. $R^2 = .085$ para el paso 1 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .114$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .123$ para el paso 3 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .138$ para el paso 4 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .144$ para el paso 5 ($p < .001$).
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Regresión múltiple 5 (Consecuencias negativas de la infidelidad).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor de las consecuencias negativas de la infidelidad, estos explicaron el 1.2% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 11.21$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación los hijos como predictor, explicaron el 2% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 9.24$; $p < .00$.

Regresión múltiple 6 (Consecuencias Positivas de la infidelidad).

En el primer paso del análisis, se incorporó en la ecuación los celos como predictor del de la infidelidad sexual, estos explicaron el 3.0% de la varianza, $F(1, 901) = 27.65$; $p < .00$. En el segundo paso, se incluyó en la ecuación las relaciones sexuales como predictor, explicaron el 4.1% de la varianza, $F(1, 900) = 19.38$; $p < .00$ (ver tabla 7).

Tabla 7

Resumen de análisis de regresión paso a paso para las variables que predicen las consecuencias de la infidelidad ($N = 902$)

Consecuencias Negativas			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	-.163	.049	-.111**
Hijos	-.114	.046	-.091*

Nota. $R^2 = .012$ para el paso 1 ($p = .001$); $R^2 = .020$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$).
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Consecuencias Positivas			
Áreas de Conflicto	B	EE	β
Celos	.210	.040	.173**
Relaciones Sexuales	.118	.036	.115*

Nota. $R^2 = .030$ para el paso 1 ($p < .001$); $R^2 = .041$ para el paso 2 ($p < .001$).
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Discusión

Como se observó en los datos obtenidos en general el conflicto se encuentra vinculado a la infidelidad y aunque con un porcentaje bajo también la predice. Haciendo un análisis específico por área de conflicto e infidelidad, se encuentra, que en el caso de la infidelidad sexual en los hombres, los conflictos que más se relacionan a esta (en orden descendente por valor de la correlación), son los celos, las actividades propias, la personalidad y las relaciones sexuales, teniendo un comportamiento muy similar en el caso de las mujeres, no obstante, el valor más alto de la correlación se encuentra en los conflictos debidos a las relaciones sexuales, seguida de los celos. Al respecto, Díaz-Loving, Pick y Andrade (1988), señalan que la satisfacción marital, la comunicación en la pareja (Scarf, 1987; Thompson, 1983) y los celos son factores íntimamente relacionados con la aparición de la infidelidad.

Por otro lado, la forma de expresar el afecto, la frecuencia y la satisfacción del sexo intensifican y/o aceleran los procesos psicológicos que llevan a involucrarse en una relación extramarital (Perlman & Abramson, 1982).

Con referencia a la infidelidad emocional, los conflictos que están más relacionados tanto en hombres como en mujeres son aquellos asociados a los celos, las relaciones sexuales y las actividades propias. Como se observa son conflictos que también se encuentran interrelacionados con la infidelidad sexual. Esto implicaría que sin importar el tipo de infidelidad, las áreas de conflicto que se supeditan a esta, son las mismas. De hecho en las investigaciones, se encuentra a los celos y a las relaciones sexuales como los motivos y/o explicaciones por los cuales una persona se involucra en una relación infiel (Drigotas, Safstrom &

Gentilia, 1999; Glass & Wright, 1992 en Treas & Giesen, 2000). Así mismo la sospecha acerca de una posible infidelidad por parte de la pareja elicitaba celos en hombres y mujeres (Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Daly & Wilson, 1988; García, Gómez & Canto, 2001).

Por último, mientras que la infidelidad es universal (Hatfield & Rapson, 2006), rara vez es socialmente aceptable y existen dobles estándares entre la expresión pública y la práctica privada (Feldman & Cauffman, 2000).

En conclusión, la infidelidad en la mayoría de los casos denota una crisis en la pareja, pero **no necesariamente implica** el rompimiento del vínculo o la falta de amor.

Finalmente, la presencia o ausencia de infidelidad dependerá de un conjunto de variables bio-psico-socio-culturales que interactúan entre sí, no es un hecho aislado, y como tal, debe ser estudiado y abordado tanto en el ámbito social, como clínico de la psicología.

Referencias

- Álvarez, S., C. (2008). *Causas de la conducta infiel masculina*. Tesina de licenciatura, Universidad Americana de Acapulco, Facultad de Psicología.
- Amato, P., & Rogers, S. (1997). A longitudinal study of marital problems and subsequent divorce. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 59, 612–624.
- Atwood, J. D. & Seifer, M. (1997). Extramarital Affairs and Constructed Meanings: A Social Constructionist Therapeutic Approach. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 25, 55-75.
- Basset, F. J. (2005). Sex Differences in Jealousy in Response to a Partner's Imagined Sexual or Emotional Infidelity with a Same or Different Race Other. *North American Journal of Psychology*, 7, 1, 71-84.
- Betzig, L. (1989). Causes of conjugal dissolution: A cross-cultural study. *Current Anthropology*, 30, 645-676.
- Bonilla, M. P. (1993). *Infidelidad en la pareja. Conceptualización e implicación en hombres y mujeres mexicanos* (Tesis de Doctorado no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Buunk, B. P. & Dijkstra, P. (2000). Extradyadic Relationships and Jealousy. En C. Hendrick & S. Hendrick (Eds) (2000). *Close Relationships. A Sourcebook*. (p.p. 255- 278). CA: Sage.
- Buss, D.M. & Shackelford, T.K. (1997). Susceptibility of infidelity in the first year of marriage. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31, 193-221.
- Buss, D.M. (2000). *The dangerous passion*. New York: The Free Press.
- Buunk, B.P. & Van Driel, B. (1989). *Variant lifestyles and relationships*. Newbury Park, C.A: Sage.
- Buunk, B.P. (1989). Types and manifestations of jealousy: An exchange-theoretical perspective. En: G.L. White, *Themes for progress in jealousy research*. Simposio presentado en la inauguración de la Conferencia sobre relaciones personales (Iowa Conference on Personal Relationships) en Iowa, IA, USA.
- Cahn, D. D. (1992). *Conflict in Intimate Relationships*. New York: The Guilford Press.

- Daly, M., Wilson, M., & Weghorst, S. J. (1982). Male Sexual Jealousy. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 83, 1103-1116.
- Díaz Loving, R. (1999). Una Teoría Bio-Psico-Socio-Cultural de la Relación de Pareja. En R. Díaz Loving (comp.), *Antología psicossocial de la pareja* (11 – 33). México: Porrúa.
- Drigotas, S., Safstrom, C., & Gentilia, T. (1999). An investment model prediction of dating infidelity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 509-524.
- Feldman, S. S., & Cauffman, E. (2000). Your cheatin' heart: Attitudes, behaviors, and correlates of sexual betrayal in late adolescents. *Journal of research on Adolescence*, 9, 227-253.
- García, L.P., Gómez, J.L., y Canto, J.M. (2001). Relación de celos ante una infidelidad: Diferencias entre hombres y mujeres y características del rival. *Psicothema*, 13, 611-616.
- Gottman, J. M. (1993). The roles of conflict engagement, escalation, or avoidance in marital interaction: A longitudinal view of five types of couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 61, 6-15.
- Harmatz, M. G. & Novac, M. A. (1983). *Human Sexuality*. N. Y. Harper & Row Publishers.
- Hatfield, E. & Rapson, R. L. (2006). Love and sexual health. In J. Kuriansky (Series Ed.), M. S. Tepper & A. F. Owens (Volume Eds.) *Sex, love, and psychology: Sexual health, Vol. 1. Psychological Foundations*. New York: Praeger, 93-97.
- Hendrick, C. & Hendrick, S. (Eds) (2000). *Close Relationships. A Sourcebook*. (p.p. 255- 278). CA: Sage.
- Hocker, J.L., & Wilmot, W.W. (1991). *Interpersonal conflict* (3ª ed.). Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown
- Johnson, R. E. (1972). Attitudes toward extramarital relationships. *Medical Aspects of Human Sexuality*, 6, 16–191.
- Kinsey, A. C. Pomeroy, W. B. Martin, C. E. & Gebhard, P. H. (1953). *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female*. Philadelphia & London: W.B. Saunders, Co.
- Laner, M. R. (1978). Love's labours lost: A theory of marital dissolution. *Journal of Divorce*, 1, 163–174.
- Mead, D. E., Vatcher, G. M., Wyne, B. A., & Roberts, S. L. (1990). The comprehensive areas of change questionnaire: Assessing marital couples' presenting complaints. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 18, 65-79.
- Milewski-Hertlein, K., Ray, R., Wetchler, J., & Kilmer, J. (2002). The role of differentiation in extradyadic relationships. *Journal of Couple & Relationship Therapy*, 2, 33–50.
- Newcomb, M.D., & Bentler, P.M. (1981). Marital Breakdown. En S. Duck & R. Gilmour (Eds.), *Personal Relationships 3: Personal relationships in disorder* (pp. 57 – 94). New York: Academic Press.
- Perlman, S. D. & Abramson, P. R. (1982). Sexual satisfaction among married and cohabiting individuals. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 50, 458-460.

- Pick, S., Díaz Loving, R. y Andrade, P. (1988). Conducta Sexual, Infidelidad y Amor en relación a sexo, edad y número de años de la relación. *La psicología social en México*, 2, 197-203. Mexico: AMEPSO.
- Pittman, F. (1994). *Mentiras privadas. La infidelidad y la traición de la intimidad*. Buenos Aires: Amorrortu editores.
- Platt R., Nalbone D. P., Casanova G. M. & Wetchler J. L. (2008). Parental Conflict and Infidelity as Predictors of Adult Children's Attachment Style and Infidelity. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 36, 149–161.
- Rivera A. S., Cruz C. C., Arnaldo O. O. Y. y Díaz Loving R. (2004). Midiendo el conflicto en la pareja. *La Psicología Social en México*, X, 229-236, AMEPSO. ISBN: 968541109-1.
- Romero P. A. (2007). Infidelidad: Conceptualización, Correlatos y Predictores (Tesis de Doctorado no publicada) Universidad Autónoma Nacional de México, México.
- Romero P. A., Rivera A. S. y Diaz-Loving R. (2007). Desarrollo del Inventario Multidimensional de Infidelidad (IMIN) [Development of an Infidelity Multidimensional Inventory]. *Revista Iberoamericana de Diagnóstico y Evaluación Psicológico*. 1(23), 121-148.
- Roscoe, B., Cavanaugh, L. E. & Kennedy, D. R. (1988). Dating infidelity: Behaviors, reasons and consequences. *Adolescence*, 13, 35-43.
- Sánchez A. R. y Cortés S. (1996). *Semántica de Celos y Conflicto*. Trabajo presentado en el II Congreso Internacional de Psicología. Cholula, Puebla.
- Scarf (1987). *Intimate Partners*. New York: Random House.
- Shackelford, T.K., LeBlanc, G.J., & Drass, E. (2000). *Emotional Reactions to Infidelity. Cognition and Emotion*, 14 (5), 643-659.
- Shackelford, T., & Buss, D. (1997). Cues to infidelity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 1034–1045.
- Shakelford, T., Buss, D. & Bennett, K. (2002). Forgiveness or breakup. Sex differences in responses to a partner's infidelity. *Cognition and Emotion*, 12, 299-307.
- Spainer, G.B., & Margolis, R.L. (1983). Marital separation and extramarital sexual behavior. *Journal of Sex Research*, 19 (23-48).
- Strean, H. S. (1986). *La pareja infiel: Un enfoque Psicológico*. México: Pax.
- Thompson, A. (1983). Extramarital Sex: A review of the Research Literature. *The Journal of Sex Research*. 19, 1-22.
- Treas, J., & Giesen, D. (2000). Sexual infidelity among married and cohabitating Americans. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 48–60.
- Valdez M. J. L., Díaz-Loving R. & Pérez B. M. (2005). Los Hombres y las mujeres en México: dos mundos distantes y complementarios. México, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México.
- Vuchinich, S. (1986). On attenuation in verbal family conflict. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 49, 281-293.
- Weeks, G., Gambescia, N., & Jenkins, R. (2003). *Treating infidelity*. New York: Norton.

- Wiederman, N.M., & Allgeier, E.R. (1993). Gender differences in sexual jealousy: Adaptionist or social learning explanation? *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 14 (115-140).
- Zumaya, M. (1994). La infidelidad. En CONAPO (Comp.) *Antología de la Sexualidad Humana, III*. México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa.

Respect and Love in Romantic Relationships

Clyde Hendrick, Susan S. Hendrick¹ & Tammy L. Zacchilli*
Texas Tech University, *Saint Leo University

Abstract

Respect is conceptualized as one of the fundamental bases of most relationships, particularly close relationships. Respect in close, romantic relationships has been studied only recently (Frei & Shaver, 2002; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006), and the current paper describes a study designed to build on notions of respect as deeply important in relationships. Some 314 college students participated in the study. Participants read a scenario about a dating couple, John and Linda, who were ostensibly in a psychology experiment during which they rated their respect for each other. John (or Linda) had rated self as having either "extremely high respect" or "moderately low respect" for the partner. Participants were asked to imagine that they were John (or Linda) and then rate the hypothetical partner on love attitudes, relationships satisfaction, commitment, and self-disclosure. Participants also gave their own personal ratings of John (or Linda) on several trait adjectives. The design was a 2 (gender of participant) x 2 (John/Linda) x 2 (high/low respect) factorial experiment. The main effect for respect was significant for 15 of 18 total variables, with an extremely high versus moderately low respected partner garnering more favorable ratings in nearly every case. Respect thus appears to be an important part of the intrinsic meaning of a close, romantic relationship.

Palabras clave: Secuencias, Respect, Love, Relationship satisfaction, Commitment, Self-disclosure.

Respeto y Amor en las Relaciones Románticas

Resumen

El respeto es conceptualizado como una de las bases fundamentales de la mayoría de las relaciones, particularmente a las relaciones cercanas. El respeto en las relaciones cercanas o románticas ha sido estudiado solo recientemente (Frei & Shaver, 2002; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006), y el presente artículo describe un estudio diseñado para construir la noción de respeto en su esencia más profunda en las relaciones. Participaron 314 estudiantes universitarios quienes leían un escenario sobre una relación, John y Linda, quienes aparentemente estaban en un experimento de psicología durante el cual ellos reportaron el respeto que sentían el uno por el otro. John (o Linda) se habían evaluado a sí mismos como poseedores de un "respeto extremadamente alto" o "respeto moderadamente bajo" hacia la pareja. Se pidió a los participantes que imaginaran que ellos eran John (o Linda) y luego calificaran a una pareja hipotética al respecto de actitudes amorosas, satisfacción con la relación, compromiso y auto-divulgación. Los participantes también dieron sus propios puntajes para John (o Linda) en varios adjetivos de rasgo. El diseño factorial fue de 2 (sexo del participante) x 2 (John/Linda) x 2 (respeto alto/bajo). El efecto principal para respeto fue significativo para 15 de las 18 variables, con un respeto extremadamente alto vs. moderadamente bajo hacia la pareja recogiendo puntajes más favorables en casi todos los casos. Respeto parece –entonces- ser una parte importante del significado intrínseco de las relaciones cercanas o románticas.

Key Words: Respeto, Amor, Satisfacción con la relación, Compromiso, Auto-divulgación.

¹ Correspondence regarding this manuscript should be sent to Susan S. Hendrick: Department of Psychology, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX, 79409-2051, s.hendrick@ttu.edu.
© UNAM Facultad de Psicología, 2011

The Nature of Respect in Close Relationships

What is respect? The definition depends on the setting and type of relationship, which is why dictionaries typically offer several alternate definitions of respect. The definitions most applicable to close, romantic relationships appear to reflect regard, admiration, and appreciation of the worthiness of another person. In writing about intimate relationships, a psychotherapist (Alper, 2005) targeted respect as a core condition of intimacy. “*Respect ... basically means regarding ... someone as worthy of investing one’s time and energy*” (p. 7, emphasis in original). Respect is an important aspect of human relating, both in intimate, personal relationships and in more formal role relationships, where respect is part of interpersonal civility. In fact it is implicitly tied to nearly all relationships (e.g., partner, family, friends).

Philosophical Considerations of Respect

Simon (2007) provided a valuable distinction between two kinds of respect, vertical respect and horizontal respect. Horizontal respect means equality or mutuality within a group of people, whereas vertical respect means difference on some defined status dimension. For most of recorded history, humans were organized vertically, with masses of people at the bottom and a small group of ruling elite at the top. This approach to social life was so pervasive that even organized religions formed in this way.

Against this historical backdrop, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) brought about a veritable revolution in thinking about morality and ethics, as he did in other knowledge domains as well. In brief, Kant developed several versions of what is called the Categorical Imperative of moral behavior. Perhaps the most popular version is found in Kant (1785/1998) as follows: “*So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, and never merely as a means*” ([italics in original], p. 38). Kant believed that only persons are ends-in-themselves, and they are so because persons are rational beings, capable of setting their own ends and therefore capable of engaging in moral behavior. Kant’s notion of an end-in-itself is something that is of supreme worth; its worth is absolute and does not have “degrees” of worthiness. This supreme worth is called “dignity,” and only persons have it. The only proper behavior toward persons who have inherent dignity is respect. Thus only persons deserve respect, and all persons deserve respect equally, a strong implication of Kant’s theory of morality.

Although one area of philosophical research has attempted to classify various types of respect, there is a growing consensus that the various classifications can be reduced to two basic kinds of respect specified by Darwall (1977): *Recognition* respect and *appraisal* respect. Recognition respect, as applied to people, is the basic respect owed to all persons simply because of the fact that they are human beings. It is thus unconditional. Appraisal respect is paid to some

trait, attribute, role, or behavior that a person possesses or displays, and is thus conditional. Recognition respect is very consistent with Kant's notions of persons as "ends-in-themselves, whereas appraisal respect is more akin to persons as "means."

It seems apparent that respect is fundamental to human relating and that horizontal respect, linked with the view of persons as ends-in-themselves and consistent with recognition respect as described by Darwall (1977), is a major component of the mutuality inherent in truly intimate relationships. As noted earlier, respect is tied to nearly all relationships, and it may function as a ground for positive relationships in general. As a basic ground, it is easy to assume respect's presence, and thus ignore it as a topic for serious research. If respect grounds relationships, perhaps respect also grounds personal identity in modern life.

This thesis is explored by philosopher Charles Taylor (1989). Elaboration of the modern concept of respect in relation to the concept of self is complex. Taylor's thesis is that humans have slowly developed a basic "respect for the life, integrity, and well-being, even flourishing, of others" (p. 4). There is a tendency toward universalization of respect to all other humans, a tendency that implies a set of natural rights. "To talk of universal, natural, or human rights is to connect respect for human life and integrity with the notion of autonomy" (p. 12). Thus, growth in the importance of respect implies that persons are also autonomous agents. Taylor viewed two other features as flowing from the notion of an autonomous agent: avoidance of suffering, and a sense of dignity as an inherent property of the agent (consistent with Kant). Taylor also stressed the relational nature of the modern conception of self.

These specific changes in human moral conceptions of personhood required a movement from idealization of the elites to idealization of ordinary people, in Taylor's (1989) phrasing "the affirmation of ordinary life" (p. 13), in other words, the evolution of respect from vertical to horizontal (Simon, 2007). The importance of everyday life is firmly linked to societal growth of respect of persons for each other. "The sense of the importance of the everyday in human life, along with its corollary about the importance of suffering, colours our whole understanding of what it is truly to respect human life and integrity" (Taylor, p. 14).

In an essay celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, Steve Duck (2008) commented perceptively on the need to focus on everyday human relating. "Everyday life is actually a rather mysterious thing and not at all explained by the insistence that we study the spectacular, the unrepresentative or the unusual ..." (Duck, p. 194). Clearly Duck understands Taylor's point that an axial shift to ordinary everydayness had to occur before the complex of ideas of self, human rights, autonomy, and respect could emerge as components of a new moral compass for humanity. Linked to philosophical conceptions of respect are psychological conceptions.

Psychological Considerations of Respect

Social and behavioral scientists have commented on respect from several vantage points, though respect in romantic relationships has not necessarily been a primary focus. For example, Gaines (1994, 1996) studied the giving and denying of respect in cross-gender friendships, finding that respect was “expected” in both friendships and partnered relationships. The denial of respect was a surprisingly important negative behavior in friendships, and reciprocity of respect was very important in partnered relationships. In research examining factors in marital quality, Feeney, Noller, and Ward (1997) found five important dimensions of quality, one of which was respect. Scholars who work with couples clinically have also highlighted respect’s significance. For example, Gottman (1994) commented that the majority of married couples want “just two things from their marriage – love and respect” (p. 18).

Anthropologist Jennifer Hirsch (2003) lived with and studied Mexican couples who resided in Mexico, the United States, and/or who traveled back and forth between the two countries (i.e., “transnational” couples). Respect (*respeto*) has long been a component of Mexican marriages, but it is a type of formal role respect for one’s partner as “wife” or “husband” rather than a respect for the qualities of the person who occupies the role. It is more complex than mere formality, however, as Peck and Diaz-Guerrero (1967) discovered when assessing respect in Mexican, United States, and Border residents. “The American pattern was a relatively detached, self-assured equalitarianism. The Mexican pattern was one of close-knit, highly emotionalized, reciprocal dependence and dutifulness, within a firmly authoritarian framework” (p. 281). For Border residents, there was some “assimilative semi-acculturation of Mexican-Americans ... to the ‘American’ pattern. But there was also ... certain acculturations of border Anglo-Americans to Mexican values” (pp. 281-282). Thus *respeto* has been far from a unidimensional construct. More recently, trust (*confianza*) has joined *respeto* in Mexican marriages. According to Hirsch, *respeto* intertwined with *confianza* could only occur alongside greater gender equality. “Respect ... comes into play among equals: to demand respect is to assert equality” (p. 106). This emphasis on equality is consistent with Peck and Diaz-Guerrero (1967) and echoes philosophers’ discussions of human dignity and equality, as well as Simon’s (2007) distinction between vertical and horizontal respect.

Most recently, Frei and Shaver (2002) employed several studies and methodologies to study respect, developing a 45-item measure entitled the “Respect for Partner Scale.” This measure appears to focus largely on a partner’s respectworthiness (somewhat similar to appraisal respect (Darwall, 1977)). Interestingly, Frei and Shaver found considerable agreement across several ethnic groups on the central features of respect. Elements of the “universality” of respect were also found by Hendrick, Hendrick, and Logue (2010) in their overview of respect in families.

Hendrick and Hendrick (2006) focused on how one displays respect for one's partner, disregarding the partner's worthiness of respect. They operationalized respect as having two overarching conceptual components: caring/supportiveness and equality/mutuality. Within these components were embedded Lawrence-Lightfoot's (2000) six themes of respect: Attention, Curiosity, Dialogue, Empowerment, Healing, and Self-respect. Across three studies, they developed a six-item scale assessing a person's respect for a romantic partner. They found that respect was correlated positively with a variety of positive relationship constructs (e.g., passionate and altruistic love, commitment) and concluded that respect is a powerful – if relatively unexplored – relational variable. Extending this nascent research area of respect in romantic relationships was the goal of the current study.

The Current Research

If respect is an important factor in human relating, it is puzzling why it has been relatively neglected in relationship research. Perhaps its very importance, its necessary existence in relationships that are to succeed, is the reason it has been mentioned widely yet left relatively unexplored. Respect may just be assumed to be important in relationships and has therefore seemed unnecessary to study. In fact, research on *disrespect* has been more common, perhaps because disrespect ruptures the social order and catches people's attention.

We assume in broad outline that Taylor's (1989) analysis of the modern self as an object of intrinsic respect is correct. As such, the self has a web-like structure of natural rights: dignity, autonomy, and freedom from suffering. The right to receive respect becomes an implicit natural right of each self, and two selves in interaction are expected to treat each other respectfully.

This line of argument construes respect as part of the deep background of human relationships. As such, it is implicit, part of the everyday, taken-for-granted facets of ongoing human relations. How might this implicit nature of respect be demonstrated?

One way to demonstrate an implicit social phenomenon is to break the rules as to how the relevant social interaction is supposed to be conducted. For example, two people in a romantic relationship would be expected to express respect for each other. What happens if that expectation is violated?

More specifically, if respect is intrinsic to a romantic relationship, what would happen if dating partners contemplating a future together were interviewed separately, and one of the two people claimed to have "moderately low respect" for the partner rather than "high respect?" This response of low respect breaks the symmetry of the expected "high respect" from both partners. Planning a future with someone that you have low respect for is jarring, because it appears to violate part of the meaning of having a close relationship partner (someone you *should* respect). How would we evaluate such a person, one who perhaps plans to marry the partner, but has moderately low respect for the partner? Further, how would

such a person be expected to evaluate her or his partner? We hypothesized that such a person would evaluate the partner less positively on relational constructs as compared to a person who has high respect for the partner. The person showing a discordance between planning a future with and respecting the partner would also be expected to garner less positive or even negative trait attributions from an external observer.

A relevant question centers on the relational constructs and trait attributions that would likely be related to respect in romantic relationships. Based on previous research (Frei & Shaver, 2002; Hendrick & Hendrick, 2006), love styles, relationship satisfaction, commitment, and self-disclosure have all been found to correlated positively with respect. Thus, it was expected that these variables would be influenced by the level of respect that one romantic partner expressed for the other romantic partner.

In addition to the relationship variables, we expected that people would view someone who was planning a future with a partner for whom they expressed high respect would be viewed more positively on personality and behavioral trait ratings than someone who was planning a future with a partner for whom they had low respect. We thus employed both relational constructs and trait ratings to test the following hypotheses in an experiment that varied gender of participants (male/female), gender of a pseudo-stimulus person (female/male), and degree of respect the stimulus person claimed to hold for their partner (high/low). Because we had not found gender differences for respect in our previous work, nor had gender emerged as a powerful influence in other research on respect, hypotheses were proposed only for the respect factor. They were as follows (see Measures section for details regarding measures as well as sample items):

H1 Participants taking the role of a stimulus person rating the partner and who has “very high respect” for the partner will be significantly more endorsing of passionate love, friendship love, altruistic love, relationship satisfaction, commitment, and self-disclosure than a stimulus person who expresses “moderately low respect” for the partner.

H2 Conversely, participants in the condition of “very high respect” for the partner will be significantly less endorsing of game-playing love than will participants in the condition of “moderately low respect” for the partner.

H3 Stimulus persons showing high respect for the partner will be rated by participants significantly more favorably on positive traits and significantly less negatively on negative traits than stimulus persons showing low respect for the partner.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 130 men and 184 women enrolled in introductory psychology at a large Southwestern university in the United States. Some 65% of the sample was aged 19 or less. European Americans comprised a majority of the

sample (65%), with 11% Mexican American/Hispanic, 7% African American, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 15% self-identifying as Other.

Procedures

Design. The experiment was a 2 (participant gender) x 2 (stimulus person gender: John/Linda) x 2 (level of respect: extremely high or moderately low) factorial design. As noted, it was predicted that John's (or Linda's) partner would generally be rated more negatively when John (or Linda) claimed "moderately low respect" for the partner, as compared to the condition of "extremely high respect" for the partner. We used "moderately low respect" instead of "extremely low respect" because we assumed that the latter condition simply would not be credible.

On a random basis, participants were given one of four versions of a questionnaire within the constraint of equal allocations of the four versions. The cover page (Page 1) was entitled "The role of respect in close relationships" and gave the same general procedural instruction to everyone. Page 2 was entitled "Couple Attitudes" and had four variations: The basic first paragraph introduced John and Linda, who were juniors in college and had been "dating seriously for about a year." They had met each other's parents and had talked about "a long-term future." John and Linda were in a psychology experiment together and completed a questionnaire that included an item that asked "How much do you respect your romantic partner?" Five response alternatives were given, ranging from extremely high respect to extremely low respect." Two manipulations were introduced at this point. The focus was on either John or Linda, and the script stated that John (or Linda) chose either "extremely high respect" or "moderately low respect" in reference to their romantic partner. In this way, the four versions of the questionnaire formed a 2 (stimulus person – John or Linda) x 2 (respect rating – high or low respect) portion of the total design. Thus, either John or Linda rated themselves as having extremely high or moderately low respect for the partner. Two types of ratings were requested of the research participants. For the first several relational measures, they were asked to "Pretend that you are John (or Linda). Then rate the following questions in terms of how you, John (or Linda) would answer the question, based on your relationship with Linda (or John)."

The second type of measure was a short list of trait ratings. Here, the participants were to take their own personal perspective and rate their stimulus person John (or Linda) on the traits provided.

Measures

The measures the participants completed from the stimulus person's point of view included the following scales and alphas (pooled over all participants). The *Love Attitudes Scale: Short Form* (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Dicke, 1998) is a 24-item scale with six four-item subscales. It is based on the longer Love Attitudes Scale

(Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). The Love Attitudes Scale was developed to measure the six major love styles proposed by Lee (1973). These include the following: Eros (alpha=.79) is a passionate, intense form of love that includes physical attraction yet seeks fidelity and open communication. "I feel that my partner and I were meant for each other" is a sample item. Ludus (alpha = .80) is a type of love style that experiences love as a game in which partners avoid serious commitment and just have a good time together. "I believe that what my partner doesn't know about me won't hurt him/her" is a sample item. Storge (alpha = .86) is love that grows slowly over time and is based on friendship and shared values. "Our friendship merged gradually into love over time" is a sample item. Pragma (alpha = .72) is a practical form of love that looks for a partner who meets predetermined criteria of appropriateness. "An important factor in choosing my partner was whether he/she would be a good parent" is a sample item. Mania (alpha = .66) is a love style characterized by both possessiveness and dependence, and it may often be accompanied by somatic symptoms. "When my partner doesn't pay attention to me, I feel sick all over" is a sample item. Agape (alpha = .90) is altruistic love that cares more for the partner than for the self. "I cannot be happy unless I place my partner's happiness before my own" is a sample item.

The *Relationship Assessment Scale* (Hendrick, 1988) is a seven-item measure of relationship satisfaction, with two items reverse-scored (alpha = .89). It was designed as a generic measure of relationship satisfaction so that it could be used with all types of romantic couples, not just married ones. Sample items are "How well does your partner meet your needs?" and "How many problems are there in your relationship?" (reverse-scored).

Four commitment items were drawn from Lund's (1985) much longer commitment scale and have been used by the first and second authors in a number of studies. Although commitment tends to be strongly correlated with satisfaction, the two constructs define somewhat different domains (alpha = .85). Sample items include "How likely is it that your current relationship will be permanent?" and "How committed are you to this relationship?"

The *Self-Disclosure Index* (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983) is a ten-item scale measuring self-disclosure relevant to ten different topics (alpha = .91). The scale can vary the target person of the disclosure and so can be used to assess disclosure to a friend, sibling, parent, romantic partner, and the like. Sample topics of disclosure include "My worst fears" and "What is important to me in life."

At the top of each page of these measures, a prompt in large bold letters stated "Answer as John (Linda) would answer." All measures and items were scored on a 1-5 likert basis, so that the higher the score, the greater the endorsement of the scale/item. A last page of ratings asked participants to give their own personal judgment of the stimulus person, John or Linda. Participants were asked to rate John (Linda) on a five-point scale, ranging from Very low to Very high, on the trait adjectives of intelligent, friendly, gullible, warm, kind, sexual, and successful. These traits were selected to draw a variety of possible reactions. Another question asked for a rating on a five-point scale of how much the stimulus person loved the partner, and another question (also on a five-point scale) asked

for an estimate of how often the couple had sex. A final page asked research participants for basic demographic information.

Since the instructions asked the participants to role-take the viewpoint of either John or Linda, it was reasonable that they retained that role set when making their ratings (reinforced by prompts at the top of each page). At the same time, we wanted to see if participants' *personal* judgments might be different from their *role* judgments. Ideally, we might have manipulated this variable, but the number of participants required would have been unwieldy. Thus, we settled for a few trait ratings of the stimulus persons from the participants' own perspective.

Results

Assuming our reasoning about the implicit nature of respect as a ground for close relationships was correct, we predicted strong effects from varying the level of respect for partner, both for participants' role-taking ratings of the partner and for participants' own personal trait ratings of John (or Linda). The two types of ratings could have diverged widely, but we did not expect that outcome.

To assess this basic issue, a 2 x 2 x 2 analysis of variance was conducted to examine the three main effects and four interactions (seven effects in all) between participant gender, stimulus person gender, and level of respect for each of 18 relationship variables and personality traits. The analysis of most interest was the main effect of level of respect. But first we should note that for the other 108 effects for the 18 measures, only eight effects were significant: five main effects for gender of participants, two main effects for stimulus person, and one three-way interaction. We consider these eight effects briefly later.

The main effect of level of respect was the most interesting. This main effect was significant for 15 of the 18 total variables. The means and F-ratios are shown in tables 1 and 2. Only the trait word "gullible," the love style of Pragma, and how often the couple had sex failed to achieve significance for the manipulation of level of respect.

Table 1 indicates that for the love attitude scales (LAS) there was greater endorsement of passionate, friendship, possessive, and altruistic love in the high respect condition than in the low respect condition, and there were comparable findings for relationship satisfaction (RAS), commitment, and self-disclosure as well. These findings all supported Hypothesis 1. The game-playing love style of Ludus showed reverse findings, supporting Hypothesis 2. The mean was 3.07 in the moderately low respect condition, but only 2.10 in the extremely high respect condition. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was also supported.

The trait ratings shown in table 2 showed the expected results, with one exception. Means for four of the seven personality traits (intelligent, friendly, warm, kind) were above 4.0 in the "extremely high respect" condition, and "successful," at 3.96 approached 4.0. "Gullible" may have been poorly chosen by us. It is also possible that many participants were not clear on the meaning of this trait.

Table 1
Means and F-Ratios for Respect Conditions for Participants' Role-Taking Perspective of John or Linda in Rating Partner on Relational Measures

Measure	Moderately Low Respect	Extremely High Respect	F-ratio
LAS			
Eros	3.71	4.46	100.97**
Ludus	3.07	2.10	83.27**
Storge	3.14	3.67	22.75**
Pragma	3.13	3.28	2.43
Mania	2.86	3.09	6.22*
Agape	2.84	3.82	93.46**
RAS	3.29	4.32	200.96**
Commitment	3.38	4.35	120.65**
Disclosure	3.67	4.18	32.34**

Note: LAS = Love Attitudes Scale; RAS = Relationship Assessment Scale; Disclosure = Self-Disclosure Inventory. Means could range from 1.00 to 5.00, and the higher the mean, the more of the variable attributed to John or Linda.
 ** $p < .01$. * $p < .02$.

“Sexual” showed results counter to our expectation. Participants rated John or Linda higher on “sexual” in the “moderately low respect” condition ($M = 3.95$) than in the “extremely high respect” condition ($M = 3.58$). Without having any other context than the word “sexual,” participants apparently assumed a negative connotation for that trait.

The results for “How much does John (Linda) actually love Linda (John)” were interesting. Participants role-taking either John or Linda attributed much more love for the partner in “extremely high respect” (4.59) than in “moderately low respect” ($M = 2.81$). This result suggests that degree of love and respect were linked closely for participants in making their attributions.

Hypothesis 3 was largely supported. With the exceptions of “gullible” and “sexual,” mean ratings on the other traits met expectations.

Table 2
Means and F-Ratios for Respect Conditions for Participants' Trait Ratings of Stimulus persons

Trait	Moderately Low Respect	Extremely High Respect	F-Ratio
Intelligent	3.52	4.02	34.64*
Friendly	3.54	4.36	75.23*
Gullible	2.86	3.05	2.43
Warm	2.96	4.08	113.23*
Kind	3.06	4.27	136.98*
Sexual	3.95	3.58	13.23*
Success	3.56	3.96	18.54*
Love	2.81	4.59	258.40*
Have sex	2.29	2.42	1.15

Note: Means could range from 1.00 to 5.00, and the higher the mean, the more of the trait attributed to John or Linda.

* $p < .01$.

Additional effects. In addition to the main effect of level of respect for "sexual" (discussed above), the main effects of stimulus person and participant gender were also significant for "sexual." John ($M = 3.89$) was rated as more "sexual" than Linda ($M = 3.64$), $F(1,307) = 4.95$, $p < .05$. Also, the males' mean rating of "sexual" ($M = 3.91$) was significantly higher than the females' mean rating ($M = 3.62$), $F(1, 307) = 8.47$, $p < .05$. Thus, all three pairs of means appear to be in line with stereotypical attitudes about male sexuality as compared to female sexuality.

For the other four significant main effects of participants' gender, female means were higher than male means for Pragma and Commitment, but the reverse was true for Mania and Agape. No clear interpretation of these differences is apparent, and they may be chance effects.

As noted, there was no main effect of respect for "gullible." However, Linda was rated as more "gullible" than John $F(1, 307) = 5.23$, $p < .05$. Women may be stereotyped as more "gullible" than men, or this may also be a chance finding.

The only significant interaction was a triple interaction for "kind," and it was marginally significant, $F(1, 307) = 4.58, p < .05$. We believe this interaction is best attributed to chance.

Discussion

A scan of tables 1 and 2 suggests that the participants did not distinguish between rating from a personal point of view, versus taking the role of John or Linda. The power of the manipulation of respect simply overrode any niceties of possible viewpoints.

Although the findings largely supported the hypotheses as expected, they were in some ways even more powerful than we had supposed. Of course there was no "neutral" control group to be compared to the high respect and low respect groups. However, it is very likely that a "neutral" respect rating would still have a negative connotation and thus be a negative manipulation. The means for extremely high respect were comparable to means for other data collections for the relational variables. The data for the moderately low respect condition suggest that participants formed a highly negative impression of a stimulus person who (a) sees the partner every day, (b) expresses love for the partner, and (c) is planning a long-term future with the partner, but has only "moderately low respect" for the partner. The juxtaposition does not make sense for common sense psychology. These ratings support our reasoning that a rating of moderately low respect is a violation of what it means to love one's partner in a close romantic relationship. Love implies respect in a loving relationship.

This research presents evidence that respect may be foundational in the sense that respect is implicitly assumed to be a facet of close relationships, and perhaps all relationships that have a positive tone. If respect is part of the "deep background" of most relationships, that fact would explain why it has been understudied. Respect in relationships is so omnipresent that no one thought to study it, at least before Frei and Shaver (2002).

Implicit in the design of the study was the idea that people expect respect to be equal, mutual, and reciprocal between romantic partners. Such reciprocity and mutuality was at least implied by several philosophers and was proposed by Hendrick and Hendrick (2006) as one of the two underlying substrates of Lawrence-Lightfoot's (2000) six dimensions of respect. The current study did not address the question of mutuality, other than just assuming it, so future research should address directly the matter of mutuality.

Respect is used in many relational senses. We have examined only one kind of relationship, a romantic one that has expectations of caring/supportiveness and equality/mutuality. But respect is also used for other, more formal role relations, such as respecting one's boss, teacher, mentor, etc. Does the superior equally respect the inferior in such examples? We do not know, but we think it is an important research question. Stated more formally, how does respect operate in relationships that are asymmetrical in terms of formality, status, and power? We believe that respect in such relationships deserves careful study. After all, half of

our life is spent within the loving mutuality of a partner and home, and the other half is spent within various organizations with complex networks of mutuality and asymmetry. We would expect the rules for giving and receiving respect to be equally complex within such organizations.

It is entirely possible to have read the paper carefully to this point and ask “so what?” We would posit that the basic question that was answered was what happens when a deeply held assumption is violated, in this case our conjecture that respect plays a foundational role in the meaning of romantic love. No law required that the results turn out the way they did it could have been otherwise. But it was not. Our participants had implicit but deep expectations of how persons in close – in this case romantic – relationships should relate to each other, and when those expectations were violated, participants responded accordingly (see Garfinkel, 1967, for an ethnomethodological analog to our study).

Of course we do not presume that findings such as these would be invariant across cultures, although respect as a fundamental value seems to be relatively invariant (Hendrick et al., 2010). For societies that have arranged marriages and/or very formal marital roles, the link between respect and love may be weak initially. Most likely, such marital relations begin with mutual respect for the roles involved (i.e., wife and husband), and feelings of love develop over time. So, in this sense respect comes first, followed by love. In contrast, western norms prescribe “falling in love” as a basis for marriage. Implicit in the love contract is the norm that respect for the partner develops as love develops. The two are intertwined. When respect fails to develop or is too low, the relationship is devalued by onlookers. However, we note that today’s linkage of love with respect is an historical contingency and has been otherwise in past eras.

In conclusion, if Taylor (1989) is correct that respect functions both as an ordinary variable and as a meta-variable, and that we are constantly in situations where respect is given and received, then respect must be studied carefully and broadly. Giving and receiving of respect is often unconscious, operating implicitly as deep background, or, said differently, operating as a meta-variable. We believe that a broad approach to the study of respect will be of benefit both to the study of close relationships, and to the sociological study of the structure of institutions.

References

- Alper, G. (2005). Voices from the unconscious. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 10, 73- 81.
- Darwall, S. (1977). Two kinds of respect. *Ethics*, 88, 36-49.
- Duck, S. (2008). A past and a future for relationship research. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 25, 189-200.
- Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Ward, C. (1997). Marital satisfaction and spousal interaction. In R. J. Sternberg & M. Hojjat (Eds.), *Satisfaction in close relationships* (pp. 160-189). New York: Guilford.

- Frei, J. R., & Shaver, P. R. (2002). Respect in close relationships: Prototype definition, self-report assessment, and initial correlates. *Personal Relationships, 9*, 121-139.
- Gaines, Jr., S. O. (1994). Exchange of respect-denying behaviors among male-female friendships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 11*, 5-24.
- Gaines, Jr., S. O. (1996). Impact of interpersonal traits and gender-role compliance on inter-personal resource exchange among dating and engaged/married couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 13*, 241-261.
- Garfinkel, H. (1967). *Studies in ethnomethodology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *Why marriages succeed or fail*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Hendrick, C., & Hendrick, S. S. (1986). A theory and method of love. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 50*, 392-402.
- Hendrick, C., Hendrick, S. S., & Dicke, A. (1998). The Love Attitudes Scale: Short Form. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 15*, 147-159.
- Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 50*, 93-98.
- Hendrick, S. S., & Hendrick, C. (2006). Measuring respect in close relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 23*, 881-899.
- Hendrick, S. S., Hendrick, C., & Logue, E. M. (2010). Respect and the family. *Journal of Family Theory and Review, 2*, 126-136.
- Hirsch, J. S. (2003). *A courtship after marriage: Sexuality and love in Mexican transnational families*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kant, I. (1998). *Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals* (M. Gregor, Trans.). Cambridge, UK. (original work published in 1785).
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. (2000). *Respect: An exploration*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.
- Lund, M. (1985). The development of investment and commitment scales for predicting continuity of personal relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 2*, 3-23.
- Miller, L. C., Berg, J. H., & Archer, R. L. (1983). Openers: Individuals who elicit intimate self-disclosure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 44*, 1234-1244.
- Peck, R. F., & Diaz-Guerrero, R. (1967). Two core-value culture patterns and the diffusion of values across their border. *International Journal of Psychology, 4*, 275-282.
- Simon, B. (2007). Respect, equality, and power: A social psychological perspective. *Gruppendynamik und Organisationsberatung, 38*, 309-326.
- Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Current Mesoamerican Couples: Cultural Heritage; Families in Transition; Sustainable Relationships

Rolando Diaz-Loving¹
National Autonomous University of Mexico

Abstract

In order to describe the development and status of couples of any region, the historic, psychological and socio-cultural ecosystem in which they unfold must be specified. For this paper, the roots of Mesoamerican-Hispanic couples are described with emphasis on the norms and values that underlie the beliefs and behavioral patterns of contemporary males and females of this vast region. In a second section, the effects of modernization and female and child empowerment on traditional roles and couple relationships is covered. A third section is devoted to the analysis of the impact on family function and structure due to migration and acculturation of Mexicans and Central Americans who move north. As a corollary, an extensive description of research on the variables conducive to relationship maintenance with Mexican males and females is presented.

Key Words: Couple relationships, Culture, Family, Attachment, Conflict, Closeness, Interaction.

Parejas Mesoamericanas Contemporáneas: Herencia Cultural; Familias en Transición; Relaciones Sustentables

Resumen

Con el afán de describir el desarrollo y estatus actual de las relaciones de pareja en cualquier territorio, es necesario especificar en amplitud y con rigor el ecosistema histórico, psicológico y socio-cultural en que estas se escenifican. En éste artículo se describen en primera instancia las raíces de las parejas que surgen del crisol indígena e hispano de la región mesoamericana, con énfasis en la descripción de las normas y valores que subyacen las creencias y patrones conductuales contemporáneos de hombres y mujeres de esta vasta región. Una segunda sección se enfoca en el análisis de los efectos de los procesos de modernización como son el apoderamiento por parte de las mujeres y el desarrollo personal de los niños, sobre los roles tradicionales y las formas de interacción de las parejas. Como derivación de esta sección, se presentan los cambios sufridos en la estructura y funciones de la familia debido a los procesos de aculturación vividos por familias e individuos al migrar hacia el norte. Como corolario, se hace una extensa descripción de los datos que se han generado en la Unidad de Investigaciones Psicosociales en torno a las variables que conducen al mantenimiento de relaciones sustentables en hombres y mujeres mexicanos.

Palabras clave: Relaciones de pareja. Cultura, Familia, Apego, Conflicto, Cercanía, Interacción.

¹ Dirigir correspondencia al autor al correo electrónico rdiazl@unam.mx

Effects of culture on behavior

Aronson (1988) clearly states the undeniable and deeply rooted social character of the human race. Following his argument, basic to the survival of the species are security, reproduction and nutritional needs, which can only be achieved thru the protection and guidance, provided by social groups. It is no wonder, that the most important biological characteristic of human evolution is our socially based capacity to create and communicate culture. Once created, for norms and values to serve their leading role in the determination of the human way of life, it is necessary to insure the transmission and understanding of thoughts, customs and feelings. The process necessarily implies the use of heuristics to sift thru the information and the use of generalization, integration, discrimination, deletion, accommodation, assimilation, and completion strategies (Triandis, 1994). These allow human beings to subsist thru the creation of expectancies, beliefs, norms, roles, status, traits, values and attitudes about self and others, which provide meaning, stability and predictability to their worlds (Diaz-Loving & Draguns, 1999). In this process, culture sets the norms, traditions and expectancies for perceiving, interpreting and acting out social behavior (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992). In other words, culture is present in the establishment of how people perceive, how they construct themselves (self-concept and personality), how they perceive others, and subsequently in the way they are perceived by others (stereotypes and prototypes).

Culture is thus derived from the experience of peoples who inhabit a common geographic and cultural ecosystem. In the case of Mesoamericans, their character and identity stems to the combined heritage which is derived from the cultural groups which inhabited Mesoamerica – literally, "middle America" in Greek –first used by the German ethnologist Paul Kirchhoff (1943), who noted that similarities existed among the various pre-Columbian cultures within the region that included southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, western Honduras, and the Pacific lowlands of Nicaragua and northwestern Costa Rica. In the tradition of cultural-history, the prevalent archaeological theory of the early to middle 20th century, Kirchhoff defined this zone as a culture area based on a suite of interrelated cultural similarities brought about by millennia of inter- and intra-regional interaction (i.e., diffusion). Mesoamerica has also been shown to be a linguistic area defined by a number of grammatical traits that have spread through the area by diffusion. The second source of influence came when the Spanish arrived in the region in 1492, over three centuries the Spanish Empire expanded from early small settlements in the Caribbean to include Central America, most of South America, Mexico, what today is Southwestern United States, the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of North America, reaching Alaska. The cultural and counter-cultural movements of the Mesoamerican and Hispanic integration developed the norms, values, habits and behavioral systems of the current "Mestizos" which is a Spanish term that was formerly used in the Spanish Empire and continues to be used today in Latin America, Guam, and the Philippines to refer to people of mixed European (most often Spanish) and local indigenous ancestry of each of the former colonies. The importance of this mixed heritage is the formation of specific belief

systems, social norms and values that guide appropriate behavior for this particular ecosystem and culture.

The study of the norms which regulate the behavior within the Mesoamerican Hispanic region, have been described by Diaz-Guerrero (1982, 1986), who specifies that the socio-culture in which individuals grow and develop delineates the norms and rules of accepted and desirable social behavior and interaction. In other words, interpersonal behavior is directed and determined by the extent to which each subject addresses and believes the cultural dictates. In order to understand today's families and their culture, a historic ecosystem contextualization is necessary.

Heritage of Current Mesoamerican Couples: the roots of commitment

With the arrival of the Spaniards to Mesoamerica, the indigenous family structure was uprooted and profoundly modified. Monogamy and extended families became prevalent and special emphasis was placed on loyalty and cohesion. The centuries that followed the Spanish conquest saw marriage fall into the arms of the Catholic Church, which principal objective was "decency". Under these conditions, family honor was a must and sex was basically territory of marriage, with virginity until marriage becoming a must. The Church also sanctioned marriage and indicated the appropriate behaviors and roles to be played by the family members. In a patriarchal arrangement, the father was to be the provider and head of the family; the mother was expected to give tenderness, caring, education and protection to the children; the sons and daughters were supposed to return love and show respect and obedience to their parents. Marriage was arranged by the social groups and families, and separation was not acceptable. As a matter of fact, it was almost impossible, given the moral codes, the prohibition voiced by the Catholic Church, and the functional reliance of the family on the fathers. As a result, marriage was conceived throughout the 19th and a good part of the 20th century as a stable union destined for procreation. In this format, the place of the female was the home and her role was motherhood, giving her ample veneration, admiration and respect. On the other hand, males were to love and respect their spouses. The combination of roles and expectations for males and females within the family creates women who are supposed to be adaptable, obedient and in need of protection and security. However, at the same time several historians and sociologists indicate that she is the one that really holds the power in the house, in fact, they have described the family as a place of an absent father, a mother that governs, many children, and little sex (Díaz-Guerrero, 1994).

The transition of the families in the region has witnessed many changes, which become faster and profound when education, migration and acculturation processes are factored in. As Central American and Mexican people obtain higher education or they migrate to more individualistic settings, more and more people are marrying based on their own free will and they are doing so into uncharted relationships. Furthermore, they are selecting their spouses and they are increasingly doing so even without the consent from their parents. In addition,

couples initiate their relationship based on love, a sign of individual commitment, while in legal terms, in Mexico, people can divorce as many times as they wish, provided they wait for a year before getting married again. Some effects of the changes can be seen in data from the Mexican Institute of Geography and Information for the year 2000, showing one out of every two urban marriages will end up in divorce, with a much smaller percentage for rural areas, going as low as 1 to 3 % in some traditional states. In addition, females file over 60% of divorces and families provided for by fathers were down to 53.3% of families; both parents shared being the main provider in 16.9% of the cases and females appeared as the main provider in 8% of the families; while males who dedicate themselves exclusively to house chores have increased to .7%. However, it has also dragged with it many monolithical structures from the past. Social sanctions against divorce are as strong as ever and as recently as 1990, in Mexico, 82% of marriages were performed in churches; 93.3% of Mexicans live within an extended or nuclear family; the groom's parents ask for the bride's hand, and females invariably take on the husband's family name.

Something to keep in mind in the description of these families is that their geographic distribution is only paralleled by the social diversity of this ethnic group. In this regard, we should stress that there is a variety of families in this vast ecosystem. In fact, Leñero (1982) was able to identify 20 categories and 53 family types, depending on the social context (degree of urban or rural development and social class), the structure (nuclear or extended; exogenous or endogamous), the power dynamics (patriarchal, matriarchal or single parent), and the stage of the relationship (courtship, newlyweds), which have a definite effect on the family interaction and composition. Although nuclear families are becoming more common, extended families continue to exist, especially in lower socioeconomic levels and in rural areas. However, even in these cases of housing independence, there are strong economic ties to the families of origin which transcends to the grandchildren. In fact, these clans of affiliative and functional support re-emerge and are transformed with economic difficulties and migration.

The study of the family values and norms which regulate the thoughts, feelings and behaviors within the Mexican culture have been deeply researched and described by Diaz-Guerrero (1982; 1994). If we were to depict the Mexican family, its past and its future, a good way to synthesize would be to focus on the family roles, values and functions. Generalizing, the father has been the perennial official head of the family who is supposed to command respect and scold the children. Without hesitation, we can affirm that the mother is still the most sacred and important element of the family. The mother, whose unquestioned place is the home, is the affectionate intermediary between the father and the children. At the same time, nowadays women are more than compromising good mothers; women are developing personally outside of the home sphere and do not only live to take care of a husband and children. More and more, Mesoamerican Hispanic women choose to go to school, select a carrier, work outside the home, and decide when to get married and when to have children. This process of differentiation of traditional roles among women is accelerated when they migrate to individualistic oriented cultures and as they have more years of school.

Derived from this dialectic historic socio cultural process, Diaz-Guerrero (1994) derives three basic propositions that emerge and engulf the description of the traditional Mexican family: the power, supremacy and protection responsibility of the father; the love and absolute and necessary sacrifice of the mother; and the indisputable obedience of children towards their parents, for which they get love and protection in return. These norms show the central position that fathers, mothers and children have within this culture, indicating that the most important and defining social group for Mexicans is the family. Psychometric analyses of the responses to statements in the study yield a central traditionalism factor called Affiliative Obedience vs. Active Self-Affirmation, stressing that, "children and people in general should always obey their parents", and that "everyone should love their mother and respect their father." This ultimately means children should never disobey parents and should show respect in exchange for security and love from them.

The traditionalism factor is complemented by the gender dimension "machismo vs. virginity-abnegation," which refers to the degree of agreement with statements such as "men are more intelligent than women," "docile women are better," "the father should always be the head of the home" and "women should remain virgins until marriage." Interestingly, abnegation reflects that both men and women believe that it is important to first satisfy the needs of others and then of self; that is to say that self modification is preferred over self affirmation as a coping style in relationships. Finally, the importance of family status quo and cultural rigidity in relation to the roles played by men and women in the family appears in statements like "women always have to be faithful to their husbands," "most girls would prefer to be like their mothers," "women should always be protected," "married women should be faithful to the relationship," "young women should not be out alone at night" and "when parents are strict, children grow up correctly."

In summary, cultural norms, values and beliefs are essential to understanding the families of different ethnic groups and their dynamics. Specifically, the traditional premises established for Hispanics have a determinant effect on the relationships between Mexican males and females, and adults and children, and should thus be considered for interpretation, intervention and evaluation in any field. According to Diaz-Guerrero (1986; 1994), the primary rule is that the family's well being and maintenance has precedence over any individual need (*familismo*). This paramount notion is built on the emphasis on traditional roles which indicate males are superior and are responsible for protecting and providing for the family (benevolent *machismo*), while females should remain virgins until marriage, be abnegate mothers and faithful wives (*marianismo*). Additionally, children should always obey their parents from whom they receive love and protection in return (affiliation obedience). In general, this particular form of collectivism protects the family unit and promotes health and security in its members; however the same premises could stunt children's and female's personal growth and also may disguise violence (Diaz-Loving, 2004).

Culture in transition: The effects of education and women's and children's empowerment on relationships

There is a long standing debt of traditional cultures with the power and personal growth of women and children. Equity, the possibility of personal development and the eradication of violence from the home are definite and imperative social goals (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2011). The road to suppressing poverty, dependency, violence and neglect stresses education and work opportunities for women and their children. The expectation is that with female emancipation, there will also be an emergence of better life conditions. However, it is also producing a shift in traditional premises on which the family is built leading to family dissolution and economic peril, as well as confusion and frustration in those who had already committed to the values and norms of their heritage.

In the recent epidemiological National Mexican Survey of Violence against Women (Olaiz, Rojas, Valdez, Franco & Palma, 2006), 26, 042 women between the ages of 15 and 92 years were interviewed related to violence in relationships. Physical violence during childhood was reported at 42.2 %. Only 7.8% of the respondents reported general violence in their marriage, but 21.5% reported having suffered some form of violence in the last year. The most frequent violence (19.6%) was psychological. Of those with pregnancy in their history, 14.1% indicated receiving some form of violence. Sexual violence was suffered by 17.3% of the respondents, and half of these suffered it before the age of 15. Violence is more prevalent among women with lower education, those who do not live in their own home and those who live in crowded environments.

There is an additional consideration derived from the National Survey. When women have more education, violence is attenuated, but this effect seems to be currently correlated with increases in family breakup and abortion. In other words, the positive lessening of violence in the household is tied to weaker traditional family relationships. Among other effects, there is a diminished acceptance of males' responsibilities toward providing, and females' seem less inclined toward offering support and affection to the family; while with less affiliation obedience instilled in the children, they grow to neglect their duties as caretakers of the elderly. In summary, recent statistics show that with increasing education and work indices for females, also come increases in abortions, divorce and child neglect (National Mexican Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information, Spanish acronym is *INEGI*)

Summing up, there is a definite transition from some of the traditional norms and values of the Mexican culture, including the negative aspects of machismo, towards a position that enhances the empowerment of females and children. This in turn is related to higher education for females, more work opportunities and the reduction of violence in the home, especially when the male is equally educated (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2006). This may be in part because self-sufficient females are choosing less violent partners or are starting to leave violent partners. At the same time, the transition reduces females' interest in self-modifying and sacrificing for the family, as their individual desires become more important than

family needs. Unfortunately, this has been coupled with a minimal movement of males toward more home-oriented activities or attitudes which could compensate for females emancipation.

Among the impacts of cultural changes, a void is being created where neither Mexican females nor males are taking full responsibility for children and family. In essence, the changes toward androgynous (presence of both positive masculine traits like responsible and provider, and positive feminine traits like tender and caring in each individual), and gender-equitable positions is growing much faster in females than males (Diaz-Loving, Rocha-Sanchez & Rivera-Aragon, 2007). As males hold on to their traditional gender roles and do not move toward androgyny, an empty space surfaces that is tied into increases in loneliness, depression and anxiety at the individual level and drug use and generalized violence at the social level. Ultimately, more research is needed to fully understand the complexities of these phenomena.

Effects of migration and acculturation of family relationships

Latinos are the fastest growing socio-demographic group in the U.S. While the U.S. population grew by 13% between 1990 and 2000, the Latino population increased by 58% during the same period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). As the growth trends of Hispanics in the U.S. continues over the next 40 years, they will constitute one fourth the overall U.S. population (Negy, Snyder & Diaz-Loving, 2004). In addition to the population changes and the migration and acculturation forces involved, even before Latinos come to the US, a constant movement away from traditional family premises (Diaz-Guerrero, 2003) and into transitional more individualistic premises is present (Garcia-Mendez, Rivera-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2007). The movement goes from a socio-centric perspective and philosophy of life to an ego-centric position. Among the main shifts are increases in personal growth, individualism and egalitarian relationships which are especially beneficial to females and children. These trends have two immediate implications: 1) With the transition more individuals have the opportunity to select their own paths and concentrate on their economic and personal growth; while less attention is placed on maintaining the more traditional capacities to carry on the positive relationships prevalent when the self-modifying, amiable, and serene forms of relating to others are present (Diaz-Loving & Draguns, 1999). 2) As females transition towards modernism and productivity and creativity, no one seems to be held responsible for the tenderness, caring and support previously offered by females (Diaz-Loving et al., 2007).

The historical movement away from traditional premises, norms, values and beliefs in Latin-American countries is accelerated after individuals migrate to the United States where they face diverse acculturation processes (Cuellar, Arnold & Maldonado, 1995) which carry additional negative effects of acculturation stress on the Hispanic families (Padilla & Borrego, 2006). There are several phenomena occurring among Mesoamerican-Hispanics living in the U.S. which need to be further researched. For example, there appear to be increases in abortion rates,

family breakups, teenage pregnancy, unwanted births, and family conflict as these groups acculturate into the U.S. One of the problems appears to be that the path from traditional collective norms to more individualistic ideals can create confusion and distress (Padilla & Borrego, 2006). Basically, it seems that transit from traditional socio-centric values which stress social responsibility and the well being of others, towards unchecked emphasis on the self and the solution of personal needs, paired with little knowledge of individual rights and rules, make people think of getting ahead regardless of the means or the damage their behavior inflicts on others.

Additionally, traditional cultural premises are tied to language. As children learn English faster than their parents, they question traditional values producing an additional stress on family relationships. Further extensive research is still needed to determine the rate to which these changes contribute to increased drug use, low tolerance to frustration, diminished resiliency, violence and the break up of the family unit. This research should include gender issues, cultural premises, acculturation, couple relationships and how to incorporate findings into public policy, intervention programs as well as the evaluations of such programs. As the Hispanic population continues to grow in the U.S. there is an even more pressing need to determine how to best assist them in the transition to a new culture. Research on multiculturalism suggests that an ideal move would accommodate the values of a collectivistic culture that stresses the emotional and relational well being of people while also encouraging personal and economic growth, achievement, and productivity present in U.S. values and norms. Ultimately, this requires including the process of transformation in values, norms, habits and believes to understand their effects on acculturation stress and changes in gender roles. Knowledge of the perils of migration and acculturation would enhance educational programs and interventions directed at increasing Latinos capacity to constructively cope with more individualistic and egalitarian relationships perspective which helps them in the economic arena; while at the same time maintaining a collectivistic social responsibility orientation which favors family well-being.

Models of sustainable relationships; lessons from research with Mexican couples: Meshing universal theory with indigenous empiricism

As was stressed in the opening remarks of this paper, human behavior is a collage that emerges from the constant interaction of universal human needs, the parameters set by specific ecosystems and by the norms and values derived from the idiosyncratic historical and cultural heritage of every social group. One way of considering cultural phenomena is to take theoretical constructs from main stream social and behavioral sciences and integrate them into a broad multi-method qualitative-quantitative approach that will allow for the cultural manifestations to emerge. Once this is achieved, any nuances that spring out of the process can be added to the theoretical and research models. In the following section, research conducted with Mexican samples using an inclusive approach that incorporates

universal theoretical constructs with idiosyncratic ethno-psychological variables, as well as a multi-method approach that allowed studies to go from concepts, to indigenous operationalizations, to research, and to culturally sensitive interpretations is presented.

The field of positive psychology has introduced fundamental changes in the way that human well-being is understood. First, a new definition of health surfaced which promotes the presence of a positive state over the simple absence of discomfort (Stone, 1979). Following this definition, the new vision has focused on the encouragement of educational processes and preventions directed at persuading people to alter their practices to increase the possibility of a healthy and satisfactory lives (Reynoso-Erazo & Seligson-Nisenbaum, 2002). From an evolutionary position, the importance of company to the survival of the species is well documented, from the socio-cultural perspective of Hispanics; families guide these substantive functions for coping with life. At the same time, as part of the Latino family, a couple can be a fountain of protection to the children, satisfaction, well-being and development, as well as a protective agent against poverty, insecurity and neglect. Yet, to building constructive families requires identifying the individual characteristics, and those from the ecosystem, that predict the development of abilities that allow constructive individuals, relationships and societies to foster.

Given the diversity, the importance and the influence of intimate relationships on survival, evolution, and well-being for human beings, a theoretical and empirical approximation that permits the scrutiny of their significance, dynamics and functionality from a perspective that incorporates multiple aspects as well as facets of the family, and that unites them in all of their complexity is needed. In fact, there are an endless number of proposals, empirical findings and theoretical concepts that unfortunately have displayed inconsistency, partiality and certain contradictions. This is especially true when the research does not consider some of the cultural values and norms of the sample from which the data were extracted. In response to the challenge, a systematic, rigorous, structural and functional historic-bio-psycho-socio-cultural model, that allows the definition, categorization, diagnosis, and therefore indicates the relationship and temporality of a series of variables related to human relationships has been advanced by Diaz-Loving and Sanchez-Aragon (2002; see Figures 1 and 2).

According to the model, the necessities of affection, attachment, care, interdependence, companionship and love are basic genetic conditions that are determinant for the survival of the species (Harlow & Harlow, 1962). Such that through evolution the genetic composition of humans have been molded by specific ecosystems to insure appropriate mating, reproductive and security behavioral patterns (Fisher, 2004). Likewise, the establishment and management of early emotional and social interactions guides learning about the normative and expected behavioral and emotional patterns necessary for the coexistence and development of human beings (Bowlby, 1969).

Figure 1. Schematic depiction of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural couple's relationship model

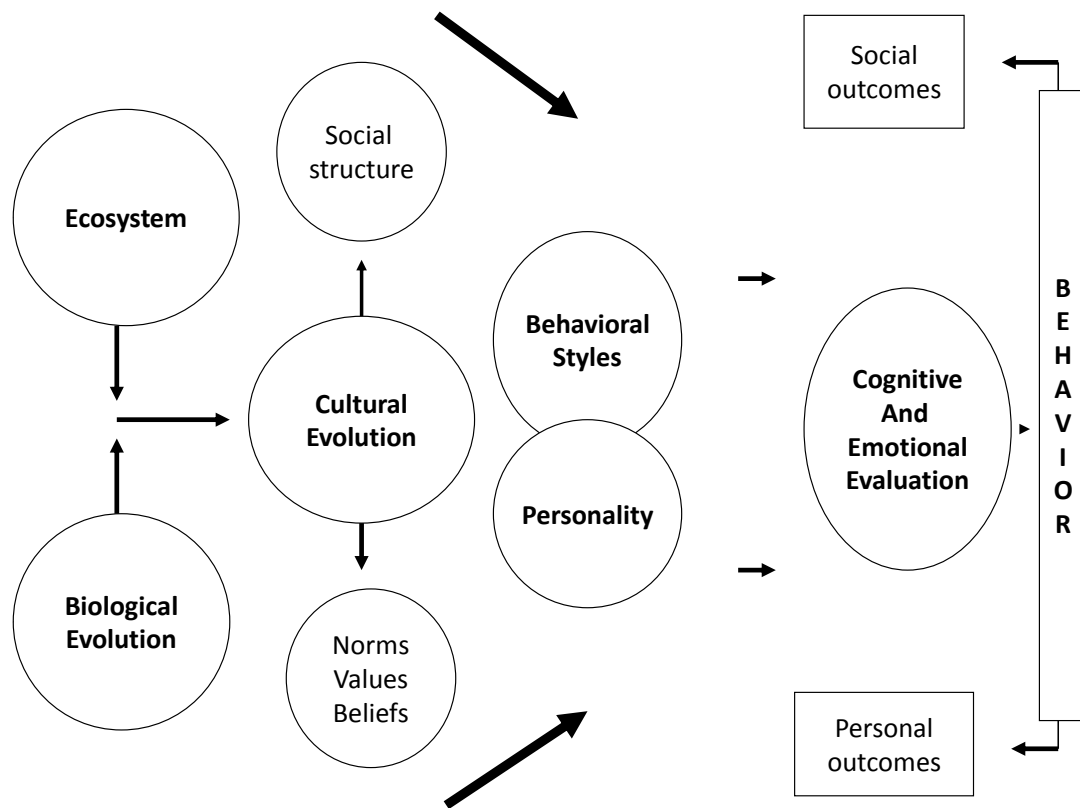


Figure 1. Bio-psycho-socio-cultural model of behavior in couples. The model is pertinent to the dialectic relationship between evolution and environment as the precursors of the cultural evolution in which individual characteristics including personality, behavioral styles, cognitive and emotional perception processes are construed from norms, values, beliefs and social structure. In summary the model predicts and explains the presences of particular behavioral patterns.

One basic principal of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980) is that infants require the support of a caregiver and that these early relationships mark interactions throughout their life. If a care giver offers support that is contingent upon the infants needs, they develop a feeling of security that indicates that the love object is permanent and trustworthy. Conversely, when an infant requires assistance which is nonexistent or arrives too late, they acquire a feeling of lack of control, insecurity and anxiety in the presence, as well as in the absence of the object of love. Finally, when an infant is hurt early on, he or she will build a protective armor that inhibits future social interaction. In general, it can be said that the presence/absence and quality of infant-parent interaction is crucial in delimiting a life of growth and well being or one of stress, anxiety and low-self esteem.

Early interaction also affects the exploration and social support behavioral systems (Mikulincer, 2006). Those who have safe constructive interactions during

infancy grow into a secure attachment style that allows them to explore their environment and learn new abilities; while at the same time they develop an inclination to give support and help to those who require it.

Figure 2. Psychological expression of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural couple's relationship theory

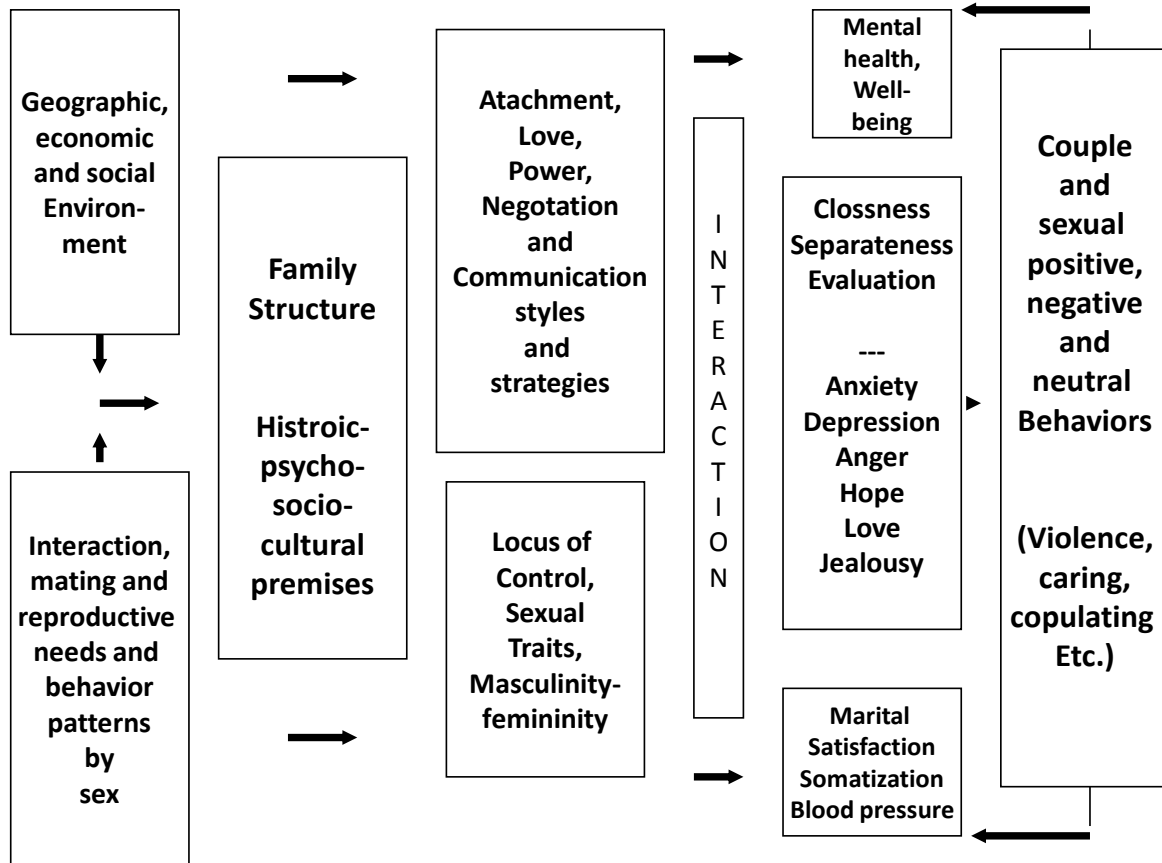


Figure 2. Proposed model of the biological, environmental, historical, cultural and structural variables that provide the context for human development and the creation of the structural and functional aspects that give rise to the psychological characteristics that individuals carry to the relationships. The model implies a dialectical process in which the above mentioned variables impact on the behavior patterns in couples which in turn impact the quality of the relationship which at the same time has an effect on previous components of the model

On the other hand, those with anxious and insecure attachment styles live fearful in the absence of the object of love, and as a coping strategy follow it obsessively when it is gone, and monopolizes it with the same eagerness when it is present. Insecure attachment inhibits any movement towards autonomy and does not allow the space or time to explore or grow. In addition, the anxiety felt by the anxious individual interferes with the perception of needs of others and detracts

from being able to help or give support to others when they need it. As far as the avoiders go, they seem content to dwell in their own selves and live in solitude, and are not willing to waste energy strengthening emotional bonds. Not paying attention to others allows the avoiding style time and energy to turn to the physical world for excellence and the development of their individual potential. They are additionally uninterested and unequipped to form close relationships and are aloof to the requests for support from others. When relating early experiences, it is clear that the different styles directly influence intimacy, support and solidarity behaviors, problem solving, listening and making constructive decisions. For example, secure attachment is a precursor to behaviors linked with harmony and well, which appears to be directly related to the development of abilities necessary to promote behaviors congruent with the construction of healthier interpersonal relationships (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

The pattern of findings with Mexicans (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002) clearly reveals the affect that style of attachment has on the development of abilities to become close to and support others. Fearful avoiders and rejecters simply do not want, or cannot, foster intimacy and are not willing to provide support to others. This calls attention to the contrasting pattern displayed by anxious ambivalent men and women. While Mexican women display their ambivalence to their partner by offering minimal support and having tense intimacy which extends and wanes, Mexican men are completely devoted to appearing affectionate and ready to offer support in every moment. For the women, it appears that maintaining a state of uncertainty with her partner by her pattern of erratic affection and assistance will assure her constant attention by her partner. For the men, it appears that their preoccupation with abandonment drives them to go to indescribable lengths for their partner. As final confirmation, it is obvious that, independent of the distance between those who are fearful and those who are rejecters, neither are willing nor interested in forming close relationships or offering their services for the well being of others.

As previously mentioned, a fast pace of change from traditional norms to transitional premises is present as higher education and migration into individualistic cultures is undertaken which occurs at a faster pace among females and children who's families originated in Central America and Mexico and who are now living in the U.S.. Among other dilemmas, this acculturation process poses a question as to the effects that this has on the consolidation of different attachment styles within a couple relationship among Mesoamerican Hispanics in the United States. It can be speculated that movement toward a more individualistic approach to life should move them from insecure and secure attachment styles towards avoiding and secure styles. This movement would be triggered by less need of intimacy and higher degrees of acculturation stress.

Within the socio-cultural component of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural model we find fixed rules for the appropriate initiation, interaction, maintenance, and possible breakup of relationships—which are specified by norms based on premises of socio-cultural behavior (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). The specific norms, rules and roles of human interaction, idiosyncratic of each cultural group, form part of what Triandis (1994) designates Subjective Culture. Among other

things, Subjective Culture is charged with regulating the manner in which intimate interactions are developed. In an attempt to obtain a socio-cultural basis for the behaviors of Mexican couples, young adults were asked what they considered to be the most appropriate form of interaction during different stages of a relationship. In general, it can be said that the dimensions evaluated reflect the internalized norms about the development (Attraction, Passion, Romance-Sadness, Companionship Love), maintenance (Compromise-Maintenance, Companionship Love) and dissolution of a relationship (Dislike-Separation, Tragic Love), as well as traditional aspects that reflect more antiquated beliefs (Culture) in the Mexican socio-culture.

It can be indicated that two groups of Mexican family norms exist. One emphasizes the traditional view of male superiority and female abnegation. The other refers to the importance of equity in relationships and the feasibility of leaving a partner whenever the interaction is intolerable. The results show, that more educated men and women in Mexico actually believe that couple relationships should be satisfactory and equitable. Furthermore, they indicate that couples should resolve problems and communicate to make the relationship work. Also, the women demonstrate a strong disagreement with rules that limit their personal growth (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). What is undeniable from the findings is the gradual yet constant movement of women in search of more equitable relationships (Diaz-Loving et al., 2007). Without a doubt this has an effect on the struggle for power in the relationship requiring men to change by recognizing the potential of their partner in the traditional areas of affection and in the postmodern fields of production and personal development (Rivera-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2002). The path to the promotion of today's constructive relationships crosses with the fertile field of androgynous men and with strong trends to promote the emancipation of women (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2006).

For those who grew up with the traditional catholic epistle in which the male projects an image of lacking nothing in the home, and the female receives the signal that he will protect her, these levels of freedom and searching for personal development in women's behavior, like the lack of a clear line of power in the home, could appear almost offensive. For modern women and men with more years of secular education, the pattern could appear more normal and healthy. Extracted from this diversity is the convincing fact that these values, beliefs and rules are normative. That is to say, they suggest a response in a moment of history and in a particular ecosystem and are perpetuated over time under the umbrella of good customs.

Adopting specific values, beliefs, attitudes and abilities utilized in relationships are determined by a combination of individual personality traits that fulfill a central role in shaping the couple experience for the individuals (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002). The research executed about the impact of these personality characteristics on marital satisfaction among Mexicans (Diaz-Loving, 1999a). show a clear pattern in which both sexes report being happier in their relationship when each individual has both positive masculine attributes (responsible, hard working, provider) and positive feminine attributes (friendly, caring, attentive to the needs of others). In the same way, the measurement of the impact of these personality

characteristics on marital satisfaction shows, a clear pattern in which both sexes report being happier in their relationship when each individual has as many positive masculine characteristics as feminine (androgynous). Furthermore, positive feminine characteristics improve marital satisfaction, particularly when found in males; while positive masculine attributes increase the probability of having constructive relationships, but only in those cases where the other member of the couple has high positive female characteristics (Alvarado-Hernandez, Ojeda-Garcia, Rivera-Aragón & Diaz-Loving, 1996).

The psychological literature also summarizes behavioral styles related to couple relationships. These cognitive and motivational mechanisms represent the memory of behavior strategies developed from past experiences in similar situations which evoke automatic responses to particular stimuli. Some of the most cited behavior types are confrontation styles, love styles, negotiation styles, and communication styles. Confrontation styles are behavior strategies derived from past experiences or situations. When a situation is familiar, an automatic response is generated. However, when new situations are encountered, the cognitive and affective systems, joined with personal history determine the best confrontation style from one's repertoire and create a new behavioral response (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986).

When operationalizing negotiation strategies, which indicate a person's reaction to a typical problematic situation with his/her partner, the following styles can be found: Avoidance, Collaboration, Accommodation and Rivalry (Levinger & Pietromonaco, 1989). A culturally sensitive measure of these styles was developed and psychometrically validated for Mexican people (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002). Avoidance is a style characterized by low preoccupation for oneself and the other. When confronted by a conflict, avoiders simply postpone any action; they remove themselves or allow the other person to take responsibility for solving the problem. Collaboration is a technique utilized to increase harmony by creating solutions where everyone wins. When confronted with a problem, collaborators integrate the needs of each member in the solution to maximize the interests of both. Accommodation implies the adjustment of certain behaviors and the sacrifice of personal goals to satisfy the needs and decisions of the couple. Finally, repression is a self-affirmative and imposing solution to interpersonal relationships. In this style, people intend to maximize personal advantages even if this means high costs for others. Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon (2002) also report that in Mexican subjects, those who utilize collaboration or accommodation create better interpersonal relationships while those who are inclined to compete or avoid reduce the satisfaction and viability of their relationships. An exception should be made for relationships where only one member of the couple accommodates, in these cases it is important that the partner at least appreciates the support and wants to try to reciprocate in the future; when there is no reciprocity, one could be taken advantage of and will destroy the relationship in the long run. It should be remembered that people with a secure attachment style, who know how to support and explore, will tend to help and yield--characteristics needed to conduct constructive relationships. On the other hand, people who have insecure attachment are interested only in the resolution of their needs for

attention, collaborate only when they see that they can benefit themselves and impose their needs on the partner the majority of the time. With respect to those with avoidant attachment, they constantly look to resolve conflicts by ignoring or escaping them. In general, as a rule within the Mexican culture, both males and females tend to self-modify looking to make others happy, which is especially true in the case of the mother role who actually is expected to abnegate to the family needs (Diaz-Guerrero, 1994).

A central component of any relationship is communication. This element which includes a content component has been widely shown to increase the intimacy and commitment to relationships (Diaz-Loving & Nina-Estrella, 1982). An additional component is the various communication styles people use to communicate which on the positive side include: Positive, Constructive and Romantic. The positive styles include an open strategy where the information is expressed in a direct, sincere, and clear manner. The constructive style is exemplified by one person listening to the other and trying to understand by being accessible, polite and appeasing. Finally the romantic style is associated with being friendly, caring and affectionate (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2003). A constant finding with Mexican samples is the improvement in couple relationships by using positive communication styles and the general importance of style over content. This is to say that for Mesoamerican-Hispanic populations it's more important how you say things and less what you actually are saying when it comes to predicting couple satisfaction (Armenta-Hurtarte & Diaz-Loving, 2008).

Additional behavioral styles pertinent to couple relationships are common in the psychological literature. Within the area of couple relationships, Lee (1977) studied the styles that people use to affectionately link themselves together. This author set forth love styles whose philosophical foundation is based on the descriptions of the way that people display love for their partner. This theory indicates that people can exhibit different styles of love at the same time depending on their partner and the unique situational factors in every relationship. The principle love styles are erotic, friendly, playful, unstable, pursuant, jealous, practical, functional, and altruistic. Diaz-Loving (2002) reports for Mexican populations a presence of behaviors, positive perception and evaluation of the couple relationship when men and women use practical, friendly, erotic and altruistic styles. Basically, the person who is habitually interested in the well-being of others and has abilities to support, leans toward communication, trust and intimacy and is passionate yet affectionate will have happier partners, will value their relationship and will feel generally more satisfied with their interaction.

Going to an additional set of variables addressed in the couple relationship literature are does studies which refer to the interaction of cognition with behavior. When relationships are formed, people need to know how to interpret and understand the behavior of others (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). The process of the perception, interpretation and exchange of feelings allows the members to express why, when and how they are emotionally involved in a relationship. The diagnosis points to the requirements of the relationship, the stage which it's at, the behavioral route to take and the interpretation and possible future consequences from the interaction. The creation of interaction schemes,

based on what one thinks and feels in response to social stimuli, brings forth the creation of expectations and decisions regarding what type of relationship one is having. Taking into account that this cognitive and affective evaluation is a continuous process, it specifies what works not only with first impressions, but permeates something every moment throughout the history of a relationship. Finally, the constant diagnosis of a relationship is dictated, supervised and distinct depending on who the personal stimulus is his/her characteristics, the situation where the interactions occur, the history perceived, his/her state of being and the stage of the relationship.

Relationships imply interaction (true or imaginary) across time. According to this, before any generalization is made about the processes underlying the systems of cognitive and affective evaluation, the stages through which the individuals in a relationship pass should be specified chronologically as well as psychologically. In order to provide the psychological stages which individuals may experience in the evolution of a relationship, a psychological pattern of closeness and separateness is proposed which gives context to the establishment, development, maintenance, and dissolution of interpersonal relationships (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). Every stage describes an estimation of closeness or separation in the relationship, as well as the type of relationship and the information each member chooses to emphasize in order to describe the relationship. The theoretical proposal for the pattern of Closeness-Separateness of the couple permits the establishment and categorization of the type of relationship and information that the members of a couple are processing—from perception to the interpretation of another stimulus Diaz-Loving and Sanchez-Aragon (2002).

The empirical results described by Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving (1999) for Mexican couples show how the pattern specifies a stranger as the most distant or least intimate stage; intimacy grows through friendship, attraction, passion, romance and commitment. It is solidified by maintenance and can become weakened by conflict which, if frequent and intense, fosters stages like loss and separation. Of particular importance to the functioning of relationships is the maintenance stage. With respect to the components that make up this dimension, it is interesting to observe the attention given to remembering positive moments in the relationship which, for couples with problems, is not a common practice. Given that survival requires constant reinforcement (feeding, care, etc.), which could be habitually produced, it appears necessary to constantly remind couples of the good times which initially united them. On the other hand, punishment marks an organism for a long time because it is related to death. Remembering negative moments in the relationship is much easier because these moments are distinct and probably more accessible in the memory. This reinforces the importance of thinking twice about actions and comments which will affect the relationship. The findings indicate that for a couple to be moderately satisfied with the relationship 10 reinforcements are required for every punishment, making the remembrance of positive aspects and the avoidance of punishment even more important.

The second aspect of maintenance is the importance given to negotiation in romantic relationships, confronting and solving problems, and coming to equitable agreements. Various theorists have accentuated the emancipation and

empowerment of women as a previous requirement for couple relationships in the twentieth century. This is evident in the proportionate role of constructive negotiation within adequately functioning relationships. Finally, in order for a couple to grow, it is also necessary for the partners to grow in intimacy, trust and friendship. As previously noted regarding the socio-cultural premises evidencing a movement toward more egalitarian rules for couples, the fact that the forms of maintenance with most success include equitable negotiation strategies shows the cultural affect on the way that couples evaluate their relationships.

Mesoamerican-Hispanic cultural statements specify that love is action, not good intentions. At the end of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural model, each member of the couple must decide what line of action is possible, and most convenient (Diaz-Loving, 1999b). In this stage of the process, the individuals refer to their styles and personal habits of behavior as guides for the evaluation of actual behaviors and as precursors to future actions. The final component of the model is centered on the emission of behaviors. The open manifestation of behaviors in a relationship includes the totality of internal and external actions of the organism in its interactions with the physical and social environment. The behavior promotes the initiation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships as well as its problems and dissolution. Every open behavior toward other produces social consequences (interpersonal and personal) which alternately disable and bring forth the evaluation of the relationship and the subsequent behaviors. Included in the particular case of couple interaction, are instrumental, affectionate and companionship behaviors. Positive behaviors can be supportive (giving support, laughing together), expressive (kissing, telling the other that you love them, recognizing their qualities) and instrumental behaviors of company (distributing money, dividing responsibilities).

The exhibition of positive, physical-affiliative behaviors obtained from focus groups and in depth interviews with Mexican men include: kissing, caressing, hugging, and securing a relationship. They would also have a positive profile for communicating themselves (open, romantic and positive) and confront disagreement with their partner by collaborating in the search of a satisfactory solution for both. The relationship would be described in stages of closeness, and above all with respect to maintenance, romance, attraction and passion and would display positive feminine characteristics like being affectionate, caring, expressive and having a secure attachment style (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

Another characteristic of behaviors promoting health for the Mexican individual and the couple is the practical (analytic) male's search for the well-being of his partner despite himself. This requires self-modification and methods of negotiation that include collaboration and accommodation in order to maintain the friendly relationship for the long run. It also includes making use of supportive behaviors like encouragement, listening and solving problems. A man of this style coexists intimately and closely with his partner (resting, traveling or dividing responsibilities) and bestows special importance on sex. Evaluating the relationship, he is perceived as highly committed with ample abilities in the maintenance of the relationship and with positive androgynous attributes like being

hardworking, responsible, affectionate and tender. He also holds socio-cultural principles of equity in relationships and displays a secure attachment style.

Congruent with the Mesoamerican-Hispanic socio-cultural expectation of women as an axis and stabilizer of relationships utilizing romantic and open styles (Diaz-Guerrero, 1994), they think of their partner as the love of their life and modify themselves in search of tranquility in their relationship. Mexican women indicate high level responses for the stages of friendship, maintenance and attraction and are affectionate and tender. Similar to the men, the second profile reflects women whose positive behaviors flow into their relationship by caressing, kissing, conversing, recognizing qualities of the other, caring for and satisfying their needs—such as intensely supporting the daily experience with their partner. These women highlight the romantic and passionate stages of the relationship; they are highly affectionate and caring, slightly defensive, openly believe in the need for closeness and have a secure attachment style. As a complement, some of these women are altruistic and look for the best for their partner, adapting themselves to what the relationship requires and avoiding situations of conflict. The combination of behaviors and characteristics contained in these women is clearly related to relationship satisfaction with the couple and the well-being of each member (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

Other Mexican women emphasize the functional part of relationships and with this the behaviors of dividing resources and responsibilities. These pragmatic women create a profile where planning the relationship is fundamental. They find themselves in the stages of commitment and maintenance in the closeness-separateness cycle and display predominately positive masculine characteristics like being hardworking, punctual and organized. They also show an instrumental internal locus of control and have an attachment style aimed at avoidance. The pattern of these women foretells difficulty in the formation of relationships because of the high expectations and criteria they have to evaluate the functionality of the interaction. However, if they find a man that affectionately complements them, they can develop stable and pleasant relationships. In the event that they unite with men like them, they normally create very organized relationships with clearly defined limits and great economic success however, with little intimacy and affectionate closeness (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

In general, the data obtained with Mesoamerican Hispanic couples described in this article points toward the fact that the positive behaviors (support, affection, companionship) increase when individuals have secure attachment, believe in and follow norms of equality in relationships, are responsible, hard working, caring and affectionate, are in the relationship stages of friendship, attraction, romance, passion, commitment and maintenance, and have developed collaborative negotiation styles and open, caring and friendly forms of communication. The data advanced regarding the life of these couples seems to point towards an integral evaluation involving a historic-bio-psycho-socio-cultural approach to its study. It looks like in order to understand couple relationships theory and research should be constructed an integral holistic approach that starts from evolution and biology, which offer the parameters of possible human behavior and thus would yield hypothesis which are universally applicable. Biology in turn interacts with

ecosystems and depending on the ecosystem, couple relationship patterns arise that include monogamy (“*forever, for better or for worse, in sickness and health...*”) when family and security are necessary for survival, matriarchal polygamy when it is necessary to control population growth, patriarchal polygamy when faced with accumulating possessions and serial monogamy when equity is emphasized and conditions exist for the care of future generations. From the dialectic and perennial interaction between biology and ecosystems, appropriate cultural norms and values, are developed that through history and human development interact with individual temperament from which arise the individual characteristics and the interaction styles that each member of the couple puts into practice in each stage of interaction. In this process, the couple will observe information about their thinking and feelings for every moment of the relationship, clearly distinguishing that the same behavior does not have the same significance or value in distinct periods of the relationship. The fearful “I love you” in the beginning can become passionate with sexuality, and even depressed by daily living. Based on their previous experiences (either good or bad), and the evaluation of stimuli that the couple understands, each member prods at his/her essence and acts with a style that is congruent with how he/she feels. This act represents his/her contribution for the moment to the growth, maintenance, or dissolution of the life of the couple relationship.

Finally, the contribution on each member, on the couple and on their social surroundings can be fleeting, lethal, saving, transcendent, unforgettable, unbearable, divine, natural, passionate, sweet, or violent. Francios Mauriac is quoted as saying, “*We are modeled and remodeled by those who have loved us; and although love may pass, we are its work, for good or for bad*”. In other words, the couple relationships of today and those of the next generation are built by every human and his/her companion. The biology is already put forth its part through evolution, what remains is for us to incorporate some promising practices which would include a direct a cultural revolution geared to: Formation of socio-cultural norms that promote individual development encapsulated in social responsibility; the encouragement of secure interaction and attachment in infancy; strengthening the development of communication, negotiation, love and positive power interaction styles; urging combining positive characteristics of production and affection; and forming empathetic abilities to appreciate the other, his/her acts and his/her essence; encourage habits and behavior patterns prone solidify and improve the daily hustle and bustle of the couple’s daily life. All of this and more is inserted into the human potential. The only thing lacking is the patience and creativity to implement it.

References

- Alvarado Hernández, V. I., Ojeda García, A., Rivera Aragón, S. y Díaz Loving, R. (1996). Rasgos de Masculinidad-Feminidad: Efectos sobre la Satisfacción Marital en hombres y mujeres. *La Psicología Social en México, VI*, 268-274. México: Ed. AMEPSO.

- Armenta Hurtarte, C. y Díaz Loving, R. (2008). Comunicación y satisfacción: analizando la interacción de pareja. *Revista Psicología Iberoamericana* 16(1) 23-27.
- Aronson, E. (1988). *The social animal*. New York: Freeman.
- Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y., Segall, M. & Dasen, P. (1992). *Cross-cultural Psychology*. New York: Cambridge Press.
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss: Attachment (Vol. 1)*, New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Separation, Anxiety and Anger (Vol. 2)*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Sadness and Depression (Vol. 3)*. New York: Basic Books
- Cuellar, I., Arnold, B., & Maldonado, R. (1995). Acculturation ratings scale for Mexican Americans-II. A revision of the original ARSMA scale. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 17, 275-304.
- Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1982). The Psychology of the Historic-Sociocultural Premises. *Spanish Language Psychology*, 2, 383-410.
- Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1986). Historio-Sociocultura y Personalidad. Definición y características de los factores en la familia mexicana. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad*, 2 (1), 15-42.
- Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1994). *Psicología del Mexicano: Descubrimiento de la Etnopsicología*. México: Trillas.
- Díaz-Loving, R & Draguns, J. (1999). Socioculture. Meaning and Personality in Mexico and in the United States. In Y. T Lee, C. McCauley y J. Draguns. (Eds.) *Personality and Person Perception Across Cultures*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers: New Jersey, London.
- Díaz-Loving, R. (1999a). Una Teoría bio-psico-socio-cultural de la relación de pareja. En R. Díaz-Loving (Ed.). *Antología psico-social de la pareja*. México: Porrúa, UNAM, AMEPSO. 11-34, ISBN 968-842-942-2.
- Díaz-Loving, R. (2002). A bio-psychosocial-cultural approach to couple relationships. In C. Von Hofsten & L. Backman (Eds.) *Psychology at the turn of the millennium, 2: Social, Developmental and Clinical Perspectives*, 361-392. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group: Psychology Press.
- Díaz-Loving, R. (2004) Una aproximación Bio-Psico-Socio-Cultural a la procuración de conductas sanas y al alejamiento de conductas nocivas en la relación de pareja *Revista Mexicana de psicología*, 21(2), 157-165.
- Díaz-Loving, R. & Nina Estrella, R. (1982). Factores que influyen en la reciprocidad de auto-divulgación. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología Social*, 2 (2), 91-109.
- Díaz-Loving, R. & Sánchez-Aragón, R. (2002). *La psicología del amor: Una visión integral de la relación de pareja*. Ciudad de México: Editorial Miguel Ángel Porrúa. ISBN 970-701-216-1 (ISBN968-36-9274-5).
- Díaz-Loving, R., Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Rivera-Aragón, S. (2007). *La instrumentalidad y la expresividad desde una perspectiva psico-socio-cultural*. México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa. ISBN 978-970-701-942-3.

- Fisher, H. (2004). *Why we love: The Nature and Chemistry of Romantic Love*. New York: Henry Holt. ISBN: 0-8050-6913-3.
- García-Méndez, M., Rivera-Aragón, S. & Díaz-Loving, R. (2007). Diferencias del funcionamiento familiar y las premisas histórico-socio-culturales en hombres y mujeres. Paper presented at XXXI Congreso Interamericano de Psicología. Del 1 al 5 de Julio del 2007. Ciudad de México.
- Harlow, H. & Harlow, M. K. (1962). The effects of rearing conditions on behavior. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*, 26, 213-224.
- Kirchhoff, P. (1943). Mesoamérica: sus límites geográficos, composición étnica y caracteres culturales. *Acta Americana* 1, 92.
- Lazarus, R.S. & Folkman, S. (1986). *Estrés y procesos cognitivos*. Barcelona: Martínez Roca.
- Lee, J. A. (1977). A typology of styles of loving. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 3, 173-182.
- Leñero, O.L. (1982). *El niño y la familia*. México: SCPEIN.
- Levinger, G. & Pietromonaco, P. (1989). *Conflict style inventory*. Manuscrito no publicado. Universidad de Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Mikulincer, M. (2006). Attachment, caregiving, and sex within romantic relationships: A behavioral systems perspective. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodman (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 23-44). New York: Guilford Press.
- Negy, C., Snyder, D. K., y Díaz-Loving, R. (2004). A cross nacional comparison of Mexican and Mexican American Couples using the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (Spanish). *Assessment*, 11, 1, 49-56
- Olaiz, G., Rojas, R., Franco, A. & Palma, O. (2006). Prevalencia de diferentes tipos de violencia en usuarios del sector salud en México. *Salud Pública de México*, 48, 2, 232-238.
- Padilla, A.M., & Borrego, N.E. (2006). The effects of acculturative stress on the Hispanic family. In P.T.P. Wong & L.C.J. Wong (Eds.) *Handbook of Multicultural Perspectives on Stress and Coping* (pp.299-317). New York: Springer.
- Reynoso-Erazo, L. y Seligson-Nisenbaum, I. (2002). Psicología y Salud en México. En L. Reynoso Erazo e I. Seligson-Nisenbaum (Coords.). *Psicología y Salud*. México: Facultad de Psicología UNAM y CONACyT.
- Rivera-Aragón, S. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2002). *La Cultura del poder en la pareja*. Miguel Ángel Porrúa, UNAM. ISBN 970-701-290-0.
- Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2006). Predictores del rol instrumental vs. el rol expresivo en la pareja y el hogar. *La Psicología Social en México*, XI, 818-825. AMEPSO. ISBN: 9685411115.
- Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2011). *Identidades de género*. México: Editorial Trillas.
- Sánchez-Aragón, R. y Díaz-Loving, R. (1999). Evaluación del ciclo de acercamiento alejamiento. En R. Díaz-Loving (Ed.). *Antología psico-social de la pareja*. México: Porrúa, UNAM, AMEPSO. 35-88.

- Sánchez-Aragón, R. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2003). Patrones Y Estilos De Comunicación De La Pareja: Diseño De Un Inventario. *Anales de Psicología* 19 (2), 257-277.
- Stone, G.C. (1979). Health and the health system: A historical view and conceptual framework. En G.C. Stone, F. Cohen y N.E. Adler (Eds.). *Health Psychology –A Handbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Triandis, H. C. (1994). *Culture and Social Behavior*. USA: McGraw-Hill.

Linking Theoretical Explanations for the Use of Marital Maintenance: Equity, Uncertainty, Attachment, and Reciprocity

Marianne Dainton ¹
La Salle University

Abstract

Research provides support for four theoretical explanations for relationship maintenance: equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity. This study focused on the relationships among these theoretical explanations, as well as whether the concepts might be combined to provide a single explanation for why an individual enacts maintenance behavior. Survey data were collected from 179 married individuals. Path-modeling techniques revealed that, counter to predictions, uncertainty did not mediate the relationship between equity and maintenance enactment. Further, there were significant correlations among variables associated with all four theories. A series of multiple regression equations indicated that the four theoretical concepts predicted between 16% and 68% of the variance in maintenance enactment. Among the four theoretical explanations, reciprocity was the strongest and most consistent predictor.

Keywords: Maintenance, Equity Theory, Relationship Uncertainty, Attachment, Reciprocity.

Vinculando las Explicaciones Teóricas de Mantenimiento Marital: Equidad, Incertidumbre, Apego y Reciprocidad

Resumen:

La investigación apoya cuatro explicaciones teóricas para el mantenimiento en las relaciones maritales: equidad, incertidumbre, apego y reciprocidad. Este estudio se enfoca en las relaciones entre estas teorías, así como en la posibilidad de que los conceptos puedan ser combinados para brindar una sola explicación del porqué un individuo realiza conductas de mantenimiento. Los datos se obtuvieron de 179 individuos casados. Las técnicas de Path-modeling revelaron que –en contra de las predicciones- la incertidumbre no juega un papel que mediatice entre equidad y mantenimiento. Además, se obtuvieron correlaciones significativas asociadas con las cuatro teorías. Asimismo se encontró por medio de ecuaciones de regresión múltiple que los cuatro conceptos teóricos predijeron entre el 16% y 68% de la varianza en el establecimiento del mantenimiento. De las cuatro teorías, la reciprocidad fue el predictor más fuerte y consistente.

Palabras claves: Mantenimiento, Teoría de la Equidad, Incertidumbre en la Relación, Apego, Reciprocidad.

¹ The author would like to thank La Salle University for a summer research grant, which paid for the costs associated with data collection. She would also like to thank Jamie Gross for data entry. E-mail: dainton@lasalle.edu

The study of relationship maintenance has moved from its infancy in the late 1980s to a sustained and significant area of interest for scholars of interpersonal relationships today. To date, several theoretical frameworks have been considered, including equity (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 1992, 1993, 2001) and relationship uncertainty (e.g., Dainton, 2003; Dainton & Aylor, 2001). In fact, in a direct comparison of these two theoretical approaches to maintenance, Dainton (2003) found that both uncertainty and equity predicted the use of maintenance, but uncertainty predicted a larger amount of the variance in maintenance enactment than did equity. She speculated that these two constructs might be conceptually linked, such that perceptions of inequity lead to feelings of uncertainty, which in turn affect maintenance use. The present study tests that speculation.

Two additional theoretical explanations are also considered. First, recent work has focused on the extent to which attachment theory predicts maintenance enactment (Author, in press; Guerrero & Bachman, 2006). Results indicate that attachment "plays a subtle yet important role" in maintenance (Guerrero & Bachman, 2006, p. 353). Second, associated with social exchange theory, the norm of reciprocity suggests that people are driven to match rewarding behavior, such as relationship maintenance (Gouldner, 1960). Indeed, previous research confirms that relationship maintenance strategies are reciprocated, such that an individual's perception of his or her partner's use of maintenance predicts that individual's own use of maintenance (Dainton & Stafford, 2000; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999a). Additional goals of this study, then, are to determine if there are any relationships among the four theoretical concepts, as well as to ascertain the extent to which some combination of the four theories might be a good fit for explaining the use of relationship maintenance behavior.

Relational Maintenance

Of primary importance is the clarification of the dependent variable. There are several definitions of relational maintenance, some of which focus on maintenance as a particular relationship stage, and some of which focus on actions or activities used to keep a relationship in a specified state (Stafford, 1994). Communication scholars most often use the latter approach, with communication considered the mechanism by which relationship maintenance is achieved. Regarding the "specified state," scholars have alternatively considered such relational qualities as commitment, love, liking, and intimacy (Dindia & Canary, 1993). By far, however, the most frequent dependent variable is relationship satisfaction (Dindia, 2000). Accordingly, the present manuscript defines relational maintenance as efforts to sustain desired levels of relationship satisfaction.

Although numerous maintenance strategies have been proposed, according to Dindia (2000) no typology matches the heuristic influence of that developed by Stafford and colleagues (Stafford & Canary, 1991; Canary & Stafford, 1992; Stafford, Dainton, & Haas, 2000). Using two samples, one with open-ended data

and a second that used the open-ended responses for scale development, Stafford and Canary (1991) identified five maintenance behaviors. Stafford and colleagues (2000) later expanded the typology to seven behaviors by focusing on both routine and strategic maintenance activity, as follows.

First, *positivity* refers to being cheerful and upbeat around the partner. Second, *openness* includes self-disclosure, and the honest discussion of one's thoughts and feelings. *Assurances* are verbal and nonverbal messages that stress one's love and commitment. Fourth, *networks* involve spending time with common friends and affiliations. *Sharing tasks* is the fifth strategy; it involves performing instrumental activities including household chores. Next, *conflict management* involves integrative strategies such as cooperation and apologizing. Finally, *advice* refers to sharing one's opinions in support of the partner. Research has consistently found moderate to strong correlations between the use of these maintenance behaviors and relational satisfaction (e.g., Dainton, Stafford & Canary, 1994; Stafford & Canary, 1991; Stafford et al., 2000). Indeed, programmatic research reliably finds that the use of these maintenance behaviors predicts satisfaction (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 1992, 1993; Stafford & Canary, 1991; Stafford et al., 2000).

At question is what predicts the use of maintenance behavior. A number of variable-analytic studies have considered possibilities such as sex (e.g., Stafford & Canary, 1991), gender role (e.g., Aylor & Dainton, 2004), self-monitoring (e.g., Ragsdale & Brandau-Brown, 2005), locus of control (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 1993), and relationship ideology (e.g., Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999b). However, these variables explained relatively little of the variance in maintenance use. More importantly, there are few theoretical reasons for using these variables as substantive explanations for relationship maintenance enactment. Instead, this study considers four theoretical explanations for the use of maintenance: equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity of partner's behavior.

Equity Theory

The first theoretical predictor of maintenance enactment is equity. Relatively early in their investigations of maintenance, Canary and Stafford (1992) argued for the use of equity theory in understanding relational maintenance processes. Equity theory predicts that relational satisfaction is highest when a relational partner believes that the ratio of inputs to outputs is equal for both members in the relationship (Hatfield, Traupmann, Sprecher, Utne, & Hay, 1985). Individuals who receive more rewards relative to inputs as compared to their partner are deemed *over-benefited*. Individuals who receive fewer rewards relative to inputs as compared to their partner are deemed *under-benefited*. Those who perceive a balance are said to have an equitable relationship.

As regards relational maintenance, Canary and Stafford (2001) argued that maintenance behaviors operate as both inputs and outputs in equity calculations; inputs (costs) can be conceived as one's own maintenance enactment, and outputs (rewards) can be understood as perceptions of the partner's maintenance

enactment. In the first study they published linking equity and maintenance, Canary and Stafford (1992) predicted that individuals in equitable relationships would be most likely to use maintenance behaviors, and that under-benefited individuals would be least likely to use maintenance, as their inputs already exceed their rewards. They found support for their predictions when using wives' perceptions of equity. More recently, Canary and Stafford (2001) found that an individual's perceived equity differentially predicted between 3% and 28% of the variance in his/her perception of the partner's maintenance strategy use.

Relationship Uncertainty

As described earlier, recent research has highlighted the role that uncertainty might play in relationship maintenance, with a particular focus on relationship uncertainty. Based on the work of Knobloch and Solomon (1999, 2002; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001), relationship uncertainty refers to the "degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within close relationships" (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999, p. 264). These authors propose four types of relationship uncertainty, which are strongly correlated: *behavioral norms uncertainty* refers to uncertainty over what is considered to be acceptable and unacceptable behavior within a relationship; *mutuality uncertainty* refers to uncertainty over the similarity of feelings between relational partners; *definitional uncertainty* is uncertainty about the current status of the relationship; and *future uncertainty* assesses uncertainty over the long-range outcomes of the relationship.

Regarding the role of uncertainty in maintenance enactment, Ficara and Mongeau (2000) found negative associations between uncertainty and the use of assurances, openness, and positivity. Dainton and Aylor (2001) found moderate to strong, negative correlations between uncertainty and all five of Stafford and Canary's (1991) original maintenance strategies. Finally, Dainton (2003) found that the use of assurances was strongly, negatively associated with uncertainty, with all of the remaining maintenance strategies also evidencing a negative relationship with uncertainty. At question is the direction of the relationship: does uncertainty predict maintenance enactment, or does maintenance enactment predict uncertainty? Although research methods to date have not allowed for causality to be determined, Dainton (2003) did find that between 2% (for advice) and 42% (for assurances) of the variance in maintenance enactment could be predicted by uncertainty. In short, although maintenance enactment might in turn predict uncertainty, the focus of this effort is on the predication of self-reported maintenance.

Moreover, building on the work of Canary and Stafford, Dainton (2003) studied the relative importance of equity and uncertainty in predicting relational maintenance enactment. She found that uncertainty was a stronger predictor of self-reported maintenance use than was equity. The original formulation of equity theory suggested that inequity causes anxiety (Hatfield et al., 1985). Dainton (2003) speculated that this anxiety might take the form of uncertainty. As such, she hypothesized that perceived inequity might lead individuals to experience

relationship uncertainty, which in turn influences the use of maintenance. The first goal of the present study is to test this hypothesis:

H1: Uncertainty mediates the relationship between equity and the self-reported use of maintenance behavior.

Attachment Theory

The third theoretical approach to maintenance is attachment theory. Attachment refers to behavior oriented toward attaining or retaining closeness with a preferred individual who provides a sense of security (Bowlby 1969, 1973, 1980). Bowlby's original theory focused on early childhood relationships, but attachment theory has been established as a primary means for explaining marital relationships as well (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Hazan and Shaver (1987) focused on three attachment styles, including the *secure* style (comfort with intimacy, lack of anxiety), the *avoidant* style (discomfort with intimacy, difficulty depending on others), and the *anxious-ambivalent* style (desire for extreme intimacy, but high anxiety). More recently, Bartholomew (1990) argued for a four-group typology, which in essence splits the anxious-ambivalent style in two. Specifically, Bartholomew suggested that working models of self and others could differentiate attachment styles. Two continua are used to make this distinction: whether the self is viewed as worthy or unworthy, and whether the other is viewed as caring or uncaring. *Secure* individuals have positive views of both self and other; *preoccupied* individuals have negative views of self, and positive views of others; *fearful avoidant* individuals have a negative view of both self and others; and *dismissive* individuals have a positive view of self and a negative view of others.

Research connecting attachment theory with the maintenance of romantic relationships is sparse but growing. Simon and Baxter (1993) found that securely attached individuals used more pro-social maintenance (assurances and romance) than individuals in other attachment groups. They also found that the use of maintenance provided a strong explanation for secure individuals' relatively higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

Guerrero and Bachman (2006) found that secure individuals used more assurances, affection, and openness than did dismissive individuals; that preoccupied individuals reported comparatively high levels of assurances, openness, and comfort/support; that avoidance was negatively associated with affection, openness, and social networks; and that anxiety was negatively associated with sharing tasks, providing support, and the use of social networks.

Finally, Dainton (2007) also found that a dismissive attachment was negatively associated with maintenance, and a secure attachment style reported was positively associated with maintenance. Also similar to the work of Guerrero and Bachman, Dainton (2007) found that the fearful avoidant and preoccupied attachment styles were positively associated with the use of assurances, and negatively associated with the use of integrative conflict management and positivity.

Reciprocity

The final theoretical predictor of maintenance enactment is reciprocity. Although both reciprocity and equity can be considered under the rubric of social exchange, they vary in the extent to which rewards and costs are considered. As described earlier, equity theory considers the relative contribution of inputs (rewards) and outputs (costs). The norm of reciprocity is concerned primarily with the exchange of rewards, suggesting that the receiver of a reward is obligated to provide a reward back to the giver (Gouldner, 1960).

Roloff (1987) argued that there are particular rules for exchange within intimate relationships such as marriage. For example, he suggested that although intimate partners need not reciprocate the identical rewarding behavior, these exchanges should be roughly equivalent. Within the realm of relationship maintenance, this would mean that partners would not feel obligated to match positivity with positivity, for example, but that if the partner uses positivity the other partner should respond with some form of maintenance enactment.

There is both indirect and direct evidence that the norm of reciprocity is associated with relationship maintenance. Regarding indirect indicators, Dainton and Stafford (1993) found that married spouses were more similar than expected by chance in their reports of all but four (of 12) maintenance behaviors, suggesting that some degree of reciprocity might be at play. In addition, Spiegelhoff and Dindia (2001) found moderate correlations between romantic partner's use of positivity, assurances, and networks.

More directly, two studies suggest that maintenance is reciprocal. First, Dainton & Stafford (2000) found that the single best predictor of an individual's maintenance enactment is his or her perception that the partner has engaged in that maintenance behavior. This finding is supported by the work of Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1997), who found that husbands' self-reported use of maintenance behaviors was a significant predictor of wives' self-reported use of maintenance behaviors.

To summarize, four theoretical explanations for the use of relationship maintenance have been described. At question are the associations among these four variables, and the extent to which they jointly or independently predict relationship maintenance use. As indicated earlier, Dainton (2003) found that uncertainty and equity are correlated, and that uncertainty might mediate the relationship between equity and maintenance use. However, conceptually there are other possible associations among the theories. For example, equity and reciprocity should be related to each other, as the perception of the partner's rewarding behavior is taken into account in both of these social exchange calculations. Further, one study has found that attachment is associated with equity. Grau and Doll (2003) found that both secure and avoidant individuals perceived their relationships as equitable, whereas individuals with anxious attachment styles see perceived their relationships as inequitable and under-benefited. Despite these possible connections between the theories, to date no studies have looked specifically at the associated between reciprocity, uncertainty,

and attachment, nor how all of the theoretical predictors might jointly predict relationship maintenance. This leads to two research questions:

RQ1: How are equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity related?

RQ2: To what extent do equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity predict the self-reported use of maintenance behavior?

Method

The goal of the present study was to survey married individuals in order to assess the associations among, and the relative importance of, four theoretical explanations for marital maintenance. Data collection centered exclusively on marriage because previous research has indicated that dating relationships and married relationships reflect different developmental states, with differences in the behaviors used to maintain these distinct relational forms (Dainton & Stafford, 1993). Moreover, Dainton (2003) speculated that the reason her results did not match the results of Canary and Stafford (1992, 2001) is because she had used a sample that included both married and dating individuals, whereas Canary and Stafford sampled only married individuals. The respondents in this study were not required to be satisfied with the marriage at the time s/he filled out the questionnaire. Only one marital partner was permitted to fill out the questionnaire to prevent non-independence of data. Individuals were instructed neither to discuss nor to show their survey to their spouse.

A total of 179 individuals were recruited via network sampling. Specifically, the researcher attended 31 graduate courses in professional programs (MBA, Nursing, and Education) at a private, urban university. Because respondents were required to be married, it was assumed that individuals in graduate courses would more likely meet the inclusion requirements. Given possible academic exposure to the concept of relationship maintenance, graduate students in psychology and communication were not solicited for participation.

The researcher spent the first five minutes of the class describing the research, and assuring class members that their participation was voluntary and that their decision about whether or not to take part in the study would have no effect on their grade or experience in the class. Participation was anonymous. No extra credit or other incentives were offered. However, the researcher offered to provide summary results of the study to any individual interested in the study, regardless of whether that individual took part in the study or not. Sealed packets holding the research materials were distributed to those who met the eligibility requirements and expressed interest in participating in the study. Participants who chose to take part in the study opened and completed the packet outside of class time. Inside the packet was a consent letter, the survey itself, and a pre-addressed stamped envelope. Participants completed the survey and mailed it directly to the researcher. A 39% return rate was achieved.

Sample

The average age of the sample was 41.7 years ($SD = 11.44$, range from 24 to 68). The average length of the marriage was 15 years ($SD = 11.70$, range from 5 months to 41 years). The majority of respondents were in their first marriage (82.5%, $N = 148$). There were 68 men and 111 women. Regarding ethnicity, 81% described themselves as white, not of Hispanic origin ($N = 145$), 12.3% described themselves as black, not of Hispanic origin ($N = 22$), 2.8% described themselves as Hispanic ($N = 5$), 2.2% described themselves as Asian/pacific Islander ($N = 4$), and 1.7% described themselves as "other" ($N = 3$). Given the make-up of graduate students in professional programs, this sample appears to be a representative sample of that population.

Instrumentation

Maintenance was measured using Stafford et al.'s (2000) measure. Respondents were asked to fill out the scale twice, once for their own maintenance enactment, and once for perception of the partner's maintenance enactment. Responses were based on a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree, and 7 = strongly agree. Sample items include "I say 'I love you'" (self-reported assurances) and "My partner discloses what s/he needs or wants from the relationship" (perception of partner's openness). Scale reliabilities and means were as follows for self-reported maintenance: advice ($\alpha = .83$, $M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.29$), assurances ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 5.66$, $SD = 1.63$), conflict ($\alpha = .89$, $M = 5.53$, $SD = 1.33$), network ($\alpha = .94$, $M = 5.46$, $SD = 1.64$), openness ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.74$), positivity ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 5.59$, $SD = 1.27$), and tasks ($\alpha = .91$, $M = 6.15$, $SD = 1.25$). Scale reliabilities and means were as follows for perception of partner's maintenance: advice ($\alpha = .82$, $M = 5.62$, $SD = 1.33$), assurances ($\alpha = .92$, $M = 5.71$, $SD = 1.33$), conflict ($\alpha = .92$, $M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.76$), network ($\alpha = .85$, $M = 5.08$, $SD = 1.75$), openness ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.96$), positivity ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 5.48$, $SD = 1.41$), and tasks ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 5.61$, $SD = 1.67$).

A measure of reciprocity was created by calculating the absolute discrepancy score between self-reported maintenance of a behavior and perceived partner use of that same behavior. Accordingly, a score of zero meant that both partners were perceived as using the same behavior with the same frequency. The higher the score, the less the use of the behavior was perceived as similar between the partners. The mean reciprocity scores were as follows: advice $M = 2.22$ (range 0-12, $SD = 2.30$), assurances $M = 4.61$ (range 0-30, $SD = 5.13$), conflict management $M = 5.99$ (range 0-26, $SD = 6.02$), networks $M = 1.56$ (range 0-10, $SD = 1.99$), openness $M = 9.58$ (range 0-37, $SD = 9.30$), positivity $M = 2.19$ (range 0-10, $SD = 2.06$), and tasks $M = 7.27$ (range 0-30, $SD = 7.17$).

Equity was measured using the procedures described by Canary and Stafford (2001) and Sprecher (1986). Specifically, two single-item equity indexes were used: Hatfield et al.'s (1979) global equity measure and Sprecher's (1986) equity scale. Hatfield et al.'s measure asks respondents to consider "how much

you and your partner put into this relationship and how much you and your partner get out of it." On a seven-point scale, item responses span from 1 = "I am getting a much better deal than my partner" to 7 = "My partner is getting a much better deal." Sprecher's (1986) measure states "Consider all the times when your relationship has become unbalanced and one partner has contributed more for a time. When this happens, who is more likely to contribute more?" Again, a 7-point scale is used, with 1 = "My partner is much more likely to be the one to contribute more" to 7 = "I am much more likely to be the one to contribute more." Accordingly, lower scores on both measures indicate over-benefitedness and higher scores indicate under-benefitedness.

Sprecher (1986) has argued that these two measures likely assess inequity for different sorts of resources, with the Hatfield measure assessing stable resources and the Sprecher measure assessing more dynamic resources. As such, the Sprecher measure tends to have more variability than the Hatfield measure. Citing psychometric theory, Sprecher (1986) suggests that the two measures should be combined in order to provide a more reliable and precise measure of equity than either measure alone. Accordingly, in this study the two items were summed ($\alpha = .76$, $M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.44$).

Because theoretically equity should demonstrate a curvilinear relationship with maintenance, standard statistical techniques cannot be used. In order to overcome this challenge, two continuous measures for inequity were constructed, one measuring over-benefitedness, and one measuring under-benefitedness (see Canary & Stafford, 2001; Sprecher, 1986). This allows for a version of dummy coding; significant results for *either* under-benefitedness or over-benefitedness are interpreted as an indicator of that form of inequity, whereas significant results for *both* under-benefitedness and over-benefitedness are interpreted as an indication of equity.

To create the continuous measures, midpoint responses on the combined index (i.e., those scoring between 7 and 9) were defined as equitable. To create a scale for over-benefitedness, individuals scoring a seven or above were assigned a "0," indicating no presence of over-benefitedness (this is analogous to dummy coding in regression). Those scoring a six were assigned a "1," five was assigned a "2," and so on, with the most over-benefited individuals, those scoring a two on the combined index, being assigned a "5." A similar method was used to create a measure of under-benefitedness; individuals scoring a nine or below were assigned a "0." Those scoring a 10 on the combined index were assigned a "1," and those indicating the most under-benefitedness (i.e., a 14 on the combined index) were assigned a "5." Accordingly, continuous measures of over-benefitedness and under-benefitedness were constructed.

In this sample, 44.7% of the respondents reported being in an equitable relationship ($n = 80$), 22.3% reported being over-benefited ($n = 40$), and 33% reported being under-benefited ($n = 59$). This is relatively consistent with previous research, although this sample seems to report being relatively more under-benefited than is typical: Buunk and VanYperen (1991) found that 47% of their sample perceived themselves to be in equitable relationships, with the remainder nearly evenly divided between under-benefited and over-benefited. In the present

study, the mean over-benefitedness score was .48 ($SD = 1.06$) and the mean under-benefitedness score was .69 ($SD = 1.26$).

Relationship uncertainty was operationalized by Knobloch and Solomon's (1999) mutuality uncertainty measure. Mutuality uncertainty was selected because married individuals conceptually are less likely to express behavioral, definitional, or future uncertainty than other relational types because of the cultural norms about marriage (i.e., what marriage means and how one should behave when married). Respondents are asked to respond to each statement using a six-point scale, wherein 1 = completely or almost completely uncertain, and 6 = completely or almost completely certain. Note that higher scores represent more certainty with the Knobloch and Solomon (1999) scale. Means and reliabilities were $\alpha = .92$ ($M = 5.34$, $SD = .93$).

Attachment was measured using Guerrero's (1996; 1998) continuous measure of attachment. The scale includes four factors, with high scores on each factor associated with a particular attachment type. Previous research has validated the scale, finding the subscales to be predictably related to a forced-choice measure (e.g., Guerrero & Burgoon, 1996; Guerrero & Jones, 2003).

All items use a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree. Specifically, the secure attachment style is indicated by high scores on the confidence sub-scale. Items include "I am confident that other people will like me" and "I worry that others will reject me" (reverse coded). Alpha reliability = .84, $M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.58$. The preoccupied attachment style is indicated by high scores on the relational worry subscale. Sample items are "I worry that others do not like me as much as I like them" and "I wonder how I would cope without someone to love me." Alpha reliability = .86, $M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.81$. The fearful avoidant attachment style is indicated by high scores on the fear of intimacy subscale. Sample items are "I would like to depend on others, but it makes me nervous to do so" and "I worry about getting hurt if I allow myself to get too close to someone." Alpha reliability = .83, $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.72$. Finally, the dismissive attachment style is indicated by high scores on the self-sufficiency subscale. Because initial reliability for this subscale was low, items that detracted from the reliability were dropped from the scale. Accordingly, only three items were used. They included "I put more time/energy into my relationships than other activities" (reverse coded), "Maintaining relationships is my highest priority" (reverse coded), and "Intimate relationships are the most central part of my life" (reverse coded). Alpha reliability = .71, $M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.65$.

Results

Path analysis was used to test the first hypothesis, which predicted that uncertainty mediates the relationship between equity and self-reported maintenance use. The least squares criterion was used to estimate the parameters, and the fit of the model was assessed. Results did not support the fit of the model $\chi^2 (2 df) = 17.683$, $p < .001$; CFI = .843. Accordingly, the hypothesis

failed to achieve support. Equity and uncertainty appear to independently predict the use of maintenance.

The first research question asked about the relationships among equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity. Pearson correlations were computed, and are reported in table 1.

Table 1
Correlations Among the Four Theoretical Concepts

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1													
2	-.25**												
3	.01	.31**											
4	-.01	-.01	-.17*										
5	.07	-.06	.16*	-.71**									
6	.06	.08	.09	-.58**	.66**								
7	.05	.14*	.24**	.18*	-.32**	-.11							
8	-.03	-.19*	-.32**	.06	-.05	-.01	-.08						
9	-.03	-.20**	-.30**	.02	.02	-.09	-.15*	.21**					
10	.01	-.45**	-.25**	.01	-.04	.02	-.16*	.13	.19*				
11	.01	-.27**	-.15*	.04	-.02	-.03	-.01	.20**	.05	.15*			
12	-.13	-.17*	-.22**	-.06	.01	.02	-.17*	.23**	.27**	.41**	.02		
13	-.03	-.18*	-.20**	.17*	-.23**	-.15*	-.03	-.01	.19*	.31**	.10	.25**	
14	-.03	-.48**	-.23**	.04	.04	-.06	-.22**	.24**	.22**	.34**	.20**	.27**	.22**

** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$

1 = over-benefited

2 = under-benefited

3 = mutuality uncertainty

4 = secure attachment

5 = preoccupied attachment

6 = fearful avoidant attachment

7 = dismissive attachment

8 = reciprocity advice

9 = reciprocity assurances

10 = reciprocity conflict management

11 = reciprocity network

12 = reciprocity openness

13 = reciprocity positivity

14 = reciprocity tasks

Note that for the purposes of interpretability, the uncertainty measure was recoded so that higher scores indicate more uncertainty, and the reciprocity measure was recoded so that higher scores indicate more reciprocity. Results indicate that there were predictable significant correlations within theoretical frames (e.g., being over-benefited and being under-benefited were negatively correlated, as would be predicted; the attachment styles were correlated in predictable ways; and reciprocity was correlated in predictable ways). Further, variables from each theoretical frame were also associated with variables from all other theoretical frames, with under-benefitedness, a dismissive attachment style, and reciprocity of positivity showing the most inter-theory correlations.

The final research question asked about the extent to which equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity predicted the self-reported use of maintenance behavior. Because the larger the number of factors in any one regression the higher the probability of both Type I and Type II errors (Cohen & Cohen, 1975), the researcher investigated whether scores for each maintenance sub-scale might be combined to represent a single global indicator of self-reported maintenance, eliminating the need for multiple tests. A test for nonadditivity was significant $F(1, 30) = 84.24, p < .001$. Accordingly, a single index of maintenance use is not appropriate. Nonetheless, when there is a minimum of 20 subjects per factor, the likelihood of error is reduced (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). Because the number of subjects in this sample exceeds this parameter, the possibility of error is reduced. Therefore, in order to answer the research question, a series of stepwise multiple regressions were calculated, with the theoretical variables as the independent variables and each self-reported use of maintenance behavior serving as the dependent variable in a separate equation. Note that for these equations, perceptions of the partner's use of maintenance were included as the independent variable rather than the reciprocity score; conceptually, since the prediction is for an individual's own use of maintenance, reciprocity would be at work if the perceptions of the partner's behavior lead the individual to perform the behavior.

Results are reported in table 2.

The four theoretical explanations predicted on average about one-third of the variance in maintenance use, with a few exceptions. Only 16% of the variance in advice was explained, but 68% of the variance in assurances and 53% of the variance in networks was explained by these four theories. Variables associated with all four theories appeared in at least one equation. However, reciprocity and attachment variables appeared in every equation, indicating that these theories might be the most consistent explanation for maintenance enactment. Further, the reciprocity variables were the strongest predictor in five of the seven equations, suggesting that reciprocity effects outweigh equity, uncertainty, and attachment as a predictor of self-reported maintenance.

Table 2
Equity, Uncertainty, Attachment, and Reciprocity Regressed on Self-Reported Maintenance Behaviors

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Beta	R2 Ch.	Adj. R2	F Ch.
Advice	Partner's Assurances	.33	.14	.16	26.65
	Dismissive Attachment	-.17	.03		16.38
Assurances	Partner's Assurances	.61	.62	.68	265.44
	Partner's Network	.19	.05		160.88
	Dismissive Attachment	-.12	.01		113.58
	Mutuality Uncertainty	-.12	.01		88.08
Conflict Mgmt	Partner's Network	.31	.15	.29	28.74
	Fearful Avoidant Attachment	-.26	.05		11.00
	Partner's Openness	.18	.05		10.30
	Under-Benefitedness	-.27	.05		10.42
	Partner's Assurances	.21	.02		5.23
Networks	Partner's Network	.66	.50	.53	165.61
	Dismissive Attachment	-.11	.02		5.87
	Partner's Task	-.20	.02		5.50
	Partner's Conflict Management	.16	.01		4.49
Openness	Partner's Assurances	.29	.19	.26	37.62
	Dismissive Attachment	-.22	.06		12.67
	Partner's Network	.18	.03		5.66
Positivity	Mutuality Uncertainty	-.20	.18	.32	37.67
	Partner's Assurances	.27	.05		11.30
	Fearful Avoidant Attachment	-.20	.05		11.42
	Over-Benefitedness	-.19	.04		8.43
	Partner's Networks	.15	.02		4.21
Tasks	Over-Benefitedness	-.41	.21	.33	44.85
	Dismissive Attachment	-.17	.05		11.32
	Partner's Tasks	-.27	.03		6.21
	Partner's Conflict Management	.29	.02		4.99
	Secure Attachment	.15	.02		6.92

Note: All Beta weights are significant, $p < .05$; all F values are significant, $p < .01$

Discussion

The overarching purpose of this study was to assess the relationships among four theoretical approaches to relationship maintenance, as well as to ascertain the extent to which a combination of these theories might provide a useful means to understand the maintenance process. The results of this study indicate that equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity explain a moderate amount of the variance in maintenance enactment.

Does Uncertainty Mediate the Relationship Between Equity and Maintenance?

The first specific goal of the study was to test Dainton's (2003) hypothesis that uncertainty mediates the relationship between an individual's perception of (in)equity and his or her performance of maintenance behavior. The results of this study indicate that, counter to the hypothesis, uncertainty does not mediate the relationship between inequity and maintenance. Dainton (2003) originally suggested the possibility of mediation because inequity and uncertainty were moderately correlated with each other, and also because uncertainty was a stronger predictor of maintenance behavior than was equity in her study. Further, there were theoretical reasons for the supposition, as the original formulation of equity theory suggested that inequity leads to anxiety, which might take the form of uncertainty (Hatfield et al., 1985). Consistent with Dainton's (2003) findings, in the present study, uncertainty and inequity, at least in the form of under-benefitedness, were again moderately correlated with each other. Yet, as will be discussed in greater detail shortly, neither equity nor uncertainty emerged as particularly robust predictors of maintenance in this study.

At first glance, the rejection of the hypothesis is disappointing, as a link between these two theories might strengthen both equity theory and relationship uncertainty models. However, the correlation between under-benefitedness and mutuality uncertainty is conceptually important, and deserves attention. Although not tested as part of this study, results indicate that both under-benefitedness and uncertainty were negatively correlated with the perception of the partner's use of all seven maintenance behaviors, with correlations between under-benefitedness and partner's maintenance ranging from $-.32$ (for network) to $-.58$ (for tasks), and correlations between uncertainty and partner's maintenance ranging from $-.34$ (for openness and tasks) to $-.60$ (for assurances). As such, one might surmise that the key to the correlation between inequity and uncertainty may be an individual's perception that his or her partner is performing relationship maintenance. That is, if an individual perceives that his or her partner is not performing maintenance, then he or she feels under-benefited and is uncertain about the mutuality of feelings in the relationship.

Such an explanation is consistent with both theories. An equity theory approach to maintenance suggests that the partner's use of maintenance counts as a reward in equity calculations (Canary & Stafford, 1992). Accordingly, and as the results of this study indicated, a lack of rewarding behavior (i.e., the partner not performing maintenance) could very well lead to perceptions of inequity. This conclusion is supported by the work of Canary and Stafford (2001), who found

associations between perceptions of the partner's behavior and inequity, especially under-benefitedness. Similarly, a relationship uncertainty approach suggests that partner behaviors can serve as uncertainty inducing events (Emmers & Canary, 1996; Planalp & Honeycutt, 1985; Planalp, Rutherford, & Honeycutt, 1988). It is likely that a partner's failure to perform maintenance behaviors might lead an individual to be uncertain about the extent to which the partner cares about him or her. Future research might examine whether partner maintenance (or lack thereof) causes feelings of both (in) equity and (un) certainty.

Relationships Among the Theories

The second goal of the study was, in fact, to investigate the relationships among four theoretical approaches to maintenance. Results indicate some relationship among all four approaches. In addition to the correlation between being under-benefited and feelings of uncertainty, being under-benefited and feeling uncertain were also negatively correlated with the reciprocity of all seven maintenance behaviors. This makes theoretical sense. First, since both reciprocity and equity are social exchange approaches that rely on assessing rewards, conceptually the two should be related to each other. Moreover, if one is to follow the logic of the causal links hypothesized above, perceptions of the partner's maintenance is likely to influence feelings of equity and uncertainty, which in turn have been established as affecting one's own maintenance enactment (Canary & Stafford, 2001; Dainton, 2003). Logically, then, since both partner and self-reported maintenance are used to assess reciprocity, it is no surprise that being under-benefited and feeling uncertain are related to the reciprocity of maintenance enactment.

Reciprocity was also related to the attachment dimensions. Specifically, the more dismissive an individual, the less likely she or he was to reciprocate the use of assurances, integrative conflict management, openness, and sharing tasks. This is consistent with both the work of Guerrero and Bachman (2006) and Dainton (2007), who found that dismissive individuals were the least likely to perform pro-social maintenance. Interestingly, and unlike these two previous studies, the secure attachment dimension was not positively associated with the reciprocation of any of the maintenance behaviors, with the exception of positivity. Perhaps secure individuals perform maintenance without concern for reciprocity. Roloff (1987) proposed that as relational partners become more intimate, they are more obligated to initiate (rather than simply reciprocate) rewarding behavior. For secure individuals, who are most comfortable with intimacy and independence, performing maintenance might simply be something that is done for the sake of the relationship, regardless of perceptions of the maintenance behavior used by the partner.

There were also relatively few associations between attachment and equity. There was a single significant correlation; being under-benefited also was associated with a dismissive attachment orientation. This makes sense. An individual who places a high value on him or herself and a low value on relationships is likely to believe that he or she is not getting what he or she deserves in the relationship. Note that the correlation was relatively small,

however. The relative lack of associations between attachment and equity is not consistent with the work of Grau and Doll (2003), who found that secure and avoidant individuals perceived their relationships to be equitable, and anxious individuals perceived their relationships to be under-benefited. However, Grau and Doll used fictitious vignettes rather than assessing respondents' actual attachment scores. Clearly, the relationship between attachment and equity is still up in the air.

A final link between the four approaches is in the association between uncertainty and attachment. Not surprisingly, the secure orientation was negatively associated with uncertainty; these individuals are comfortable with intimacy and have relatively high self-esteem. As such, they are less likely to feel concern about the mutuality of the relationship. Conversely, it is also not surprising that the preoccupied dimension was positively associated with uncertainty. Preoccupied individuals have a negative view of themselves, often viewing themselves as unlovable or unworthy. As such, they are likely to be particularly susceptible to suspicions that their partner does not care for them as strongly as they care for their partner. The positive relationship between the dismissive dimension and uncertainty was initially surprising, however. These individuals are the mirror opposite of the preoccupied style, with a positive view of self and a negative view of others. Why, then, would they be uncertain? A careful review of the measure might provide an answer. Questions ask about an individual's certainty about the partner having the same level of commitment to the relationship. Dismissive individuals might be quite certain that they do NOT have the same level of commitment, skewing the results.

Predicting Self-Reported Maintenance

The final research question sought to determine the extent to which these four theoretical approaches predicted the self-reported use of maintenance behavior. A series of regression equations indicated that between 16% and 68% of the variance in the use of maintenance behavior could be predicted by a combination of the theories. The amount of variance explained is larger than previous studies that included only one or two of these theories (e.g., Canary & Stafford, 2001; Dainton, 2003; Guerrero & Bachman, 2006), indicating that using all four theories provides superior predictive ability to any one approach alone.

As indicated earlier in this discussion, equity and uncertainty demonstrated at best a modest predictive ability. Being over-benefited was a negative predictor of both positivity and tasks, and being under-benefited was a negative predictor of integrative conflict management. This is partially consistent with Dainton's (2003) results. It seems that the privilege associated with being over-benefited makes one less likely to be "nice" in a relationship; such individuals do not feel a need to do household tasks or be pleasant to their partners. Further, being under-benefited seems to be associated with a decreased likelihood to apologize or cooperate in conflict. Interestingly, equity itself was not a predictor of maintenance enactment. Recall that equity was coded such that significant scores for both over-benefitedness and under-benefitedness indicated equity. In this study, there were no equations that included both indices of inequity. Accordingly, it seems that

inequity might be a better predictor of pro-social maintenance than is equity. This is also consistent with Canary & Stafford (2001). Future research should more closely examine whether equity actually leads to maintenance performance, or whether inequity might inhibit it.

Continuing a discussion of the results, counter to Dainton's (2003) finding, uncertainty was not a particularly strong predictor of self-reported maintenance. Uncertainty was a minor contributor in the equation for assurances, and it was the primary predictor in the equation for positivity. There are two possible reasons for the difference in the results in this study as compared to that of Dainton (2003). First, it may simply be that when other theoretical contributions are added to the equation, the relative importance of uncertainty when predicting maintenance behavior diminishes. Indeed, the equations in this study predicted substantially more of the variance in maintenance than did the equations reported by Dainton (2003), ranging from an increase of 11% of the variance explained in conflict management and openness, to an increase of 49% of the variance explained for the use of networks. Clearly, the addition of attachment and reciprocity provided an important means of predicting self-reported maintenance that may supersede the importance of uncertainty in and of itself.

A second explanation might be provided by the sample used in this study. This study sampled only married individuals so that better comparisons might be made to the results of Canary and Stafford (1992, 2001). Dainton (2003) sampled both married and dating individuals. It may be that uncertainty is a stronger driving force for dating individuals than for married individuals. Uncertainty reduction theory, after all, was initially developed to explain initial interactions. Despite research that supports that uncertainty levels are in flux throughout the lifespan of the relationship, uncertainty about the future or mutuality of the relationship might be particularly salient prior to marriage. Future research should examine this possibility.

The third theoretical approach used in this study, attachment, was a more consistent predictor of maintenance, appearing in all seven equations. Of particular importance was a dismissive attachment style, which appeared as a negative predictor of maintenance in five of the equations. This is consistent with the work of Dainton (2007) and Guerrero and Bachman (2006), who found that dismissive individuals were the least likely attachment group to use pro-social maintenance. Less consistent with these authors, the secure attachment style was a positive predictor of only one maintenance activity, the use of sharing tasks. This is surprising, as previous research has indicated that secure individuals are more likely to be open and to use integrative conflict management than other attachment types (Feeney, Noller, & Roberts, 2000). Similar to the discussion with equity, it appears that the "negative" (inequity, a dismissive style) plays a stronger role in predicting behavior than does the "positive" (equity, security). Again, this is an intriguing area for future research.

Fearful avoidance was also a negative predictor in two equations. This attachment orientation was a negative predictor of integrative conflict management and of positivity, which is consistent with Dainton (2007) and Guerrero and Bachman (2006). Fearful avoidant individuals have a strong fear of being hurt,

which leads them to avoid emotional expressiveness (Guerrero & Jones, 2003), such as being upbeat and cheerful and apologizing.

The final theoretical framework was reciprocity, which was the most consistent and strongest of the theoretical variables when predicting maintenance enactment. The two most consistent predictors of an individual engaging in maintenance activity was the perception of the spouse's use of assurances and social networks. The relative importance of assurances is not surprising, as assurances consistently has emerged as the single most potent predictor of relational characteristics such as satisfaction and commitment (e.g., Dainton et al., 1994; Stafford & Canary, 1991; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1997). It appears that telling one's partner "I love you," and talking about the future is a highly valuable way to ensure that the partner will engage in maintenance, thereby engendering one's own marital satisfaction.

The relative importance of social networks is a bit of a surprise, however, as previous research has found only modest relationships between the use of social networks as a maintenance technique and relationship satisfaction. Moreover, the perception of the partner's use of social networks predicted only one's own use of networks in the Dainton and Stafford (2000) study, and did not appear in the equations for the other six maintenance behaviors. Still, previous research has indicated that sharing social networks is important for married couples; Sprecher and Felmlee (1992) found that couples are more in love, more satisfied, and more committed if the people in their lives support the relationship. As Felmlee argued "Couples exist within systems of networks that frequently alter their interactions, affect their roles, and influence their decisions" (2001, p. 1260). Accordingly, the use of social networks might provide an atmosphere of support that encourages the use of relationship maintenance.

What is particularly intriguing about the relative importance of the perception of the partner's use of maintenance is that in this study the couples did not appear to be matching particular maintenance behaviors. That is, consistent with the propositions associated with the norm of reciprocity, the use of maintenance behaviors appears to be heteromorphic; married partners use maintenance to meet each other's needs, rather than to repay a specific debt (Rolloff, 1987). In only three of the seven equations produced in this study did the perception of the partner's use of a particular behavior predict an individual's own use of that behavior. In this study, homeomorphic exchanges emerged for assurances and networks. In both cases, the perception of the partner's use of these behaviors was the strongest predictor that an individual would also report using those behaviors. Of course, as discussed previously, perception of partner's use of assurances and social networks predicted many behaviors, so it is not surprising that these behaviors also predicted an individual's own use of these maintenance techniques.

Interestingly, although the perception of the partner's use of tasks appeared in the equation for an individual's own use of tasks, it was a negative predictor. It appears that an individual is more likely to engage in tasks because the partner is not doing so. In this case compensation seems to be taking place rather than reciprocity.

Limitations and Conclusions

Despite the relatively large amount of variance explained by the four theoretical approaches used in this study, there are several significant limitations. First, this study did not include any measurements over time. As such, causality could not be determined. Despite the fact that the theories used in this study clearly suggest that they function as predictors of rewarding behavior such as maintenance, the reality is that the directions of causality are not clear. Canary and Stafford (2001) admit that an individual's perceptions of equity are both a cause and a consequence of maintenance behavior. Similarly, Berger and Calabrese (1975) proposed that communication can function to create certainty, but it is also a means to reduce uncertainty. Finally, current theorizing about attachment styles indicates that attachment styles can vary as a function of a particular relationship (Feeney & Noller, 1996). Thus, despite the causal directions proposed by these theories, the actual direction is unclear.

Related to the use of concurrent measurements, a second limitation of this study is that a true assessment of reciprocity could not be determined. Nevertheless, Schaap (1984) differentiates between simultaneous reciprocation (immediate reciprocation), base-rate reciprocation (sums of partners' behaviors over a period of time), and contingency reciprocation (how one behavior follows a previous behavior). The norm of reciprocity suggests that within intimate relationships the amount of time to return a reward becomes more variable (Rolloff, 1987). Moreover, the norm of reciprocity also suggests that within intimate relationships the appropriateness of non-contingent exchanges increases (Rolloff, 1987). Accordingly, base-rate reciprocation might be best way to assess reciprocity of marital maintenance behaviors, softening the effects of this limitation. The extent of simultaneous and contingent reciprocation of maintenance behaviors is an area for future research.

There are also some sample biases that may have affected the results. Because these data were collected in graduate classes, the sample is more highly educated than the U.S. norm. Cate and Lloyd (1992) have argued that level of education affects marital quality because it provides additional insights into performing the marital role. Accordingly, the results in this study may have been skewed because of the education level of the participants, who may have more insight into their own expectations and understanding of relationships, and who may also engage in different marital behaviors. Future research should focus on how education might impact the relationship maintenance process.

Finally, Guerrero and Bachman (2006) found that respondents' perceptions of their partner's attachment style influence his or her own maintenance enactment. This is similar to the tenets of the norm of reciprocity, which hold that in intimate relationships an individual is most likely to initiate an exchange to meet the partner's needs (Rolloff, 1987). The present study focused only on an individual's own needs, in the form of attachment style and feelings of uncertainty and equity. The partner's needs were not considered, but clearly can contribute to an understanding of marital maintenance.

Future Directions

Although a relatively large amount of the variance in an individual's enactment of maintenance was explained in this study as compared to previous studies that looked at only one or two theories, there is still a significant amount of the variance that is yet to be explained. As described above, it is likely that married partners are concerned about both their own and their partner's needs. Including a measure of these needs may very well increase the variance explained.

Further, previous research that has sought to predict maintenance enactment has successfully included sex, gender, satisfaction, commitment, personality, and relationship length as possible explanations for why an individual uses particular maintenance behaviors (e.g., Aylor & Dainton, 2004; Canary & Stafford, 1993; Dainton & Stafford, 2000; Stafford et al., 2000; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1997). The current study focused exclusively on equity, uncertainty, attachment, and reciprocity. Again, additional variables should be considered in order to more fully explain the use of maintenance.

Finally, the results of this study raised some interesting questions that warrant future research. Does perception of the partner's behavior cause feelings of (in) equity and uncertainty? Are securely attached individuals more likely to perceive themselves to be in an equitable relationship than those in other attachment groups? Do positive relationship states (i.e., equity, certainty) or individual characteristics (secure attachment) engender maintenance use, or do negative relationship states (i.e., inequity, uncertainty) or individual characteristics (e.g., dismissive attachment) inhibit maintenance use? To what extent does compensation occur with maintenance use, and why do individuals choose to compensate instead of reciprocate? Is maintenance behavior simultaneously reciprocated, or does contingent reciprocation occur? These questions, and many others, ensure that researching relationship maintenance will be sustained, and that an additional theory or theories will be necessary to clarify the complexity of why some relationships stay together and others do not.

References

- Aylor, B., & Dainton, M. (2004). Biological sex and psychological gender as predictors of routine and strategic relational maintenance. *Sex Roles, 50*, 689-697.
- Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 7*, 147-178.
- Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research, 1*, 99-112.
- Bowlby, J. (1969/1982). *Attachment and loss, Vol. 1: Attachment* (2nd ed.). New York: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss, Vol. 2: Separation*. New York: Basic Books.

- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss, Vol. 3: Loss, sadness, and depression*. New York: Basic Books.
- Buunk, B. P., & Van Yperen, N. W. (1991). Referential comparisons, relational comparisons, and exchange orientation: Their relation to marital satisfaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 17*, 709-717.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1992). Relational maintenance strategies and equity in marriage. *Communication Monographs, 59*, 243-267.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1993). Preservation of relational characteristics: maintenance strategies, equity, and locus of control. In P. J. Kalbfleisch (Ed.) *Interpersonal communication: Evolving interpersonal relationships* (pp. 237-259). Hillsdale, NJ: LEA.
- Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (2001). Equity in the preservation of personal relationships. In J. H. Harvey & A. Wenzel (Eds.), *Close romantic relationships: Maintenance and enhancement* (pp. 133-151). Mahwah, NJ: LEA.
- Cate, R. M., & Lloyd, S. A. (1992). *Courtship*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. (1975). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analyses for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dainton, M. (2007). Attachment and marital maintenance. *Communication Quarterly, 55*, 283-298.
- Dainton, M. (2003). Equity and uncertainty in relational maintenance. *Western Journal of Communication, 67*, 164-186.
- Dainton, M., & Aylor, B. A. (2001). A relational uncertainty analysis of jealousy, trust, and the maintenance of long-distance versus geographically-close relationships. *Communication Quarterly, 49*, 172-188.
- Dainton, M., & Stafford, L. (1993). Routine maintenance behaviors: A comparison of relationship type, partner similarity, and sex differences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 255-272.
- Dainton, M. & Stafford, L. (2000). Predicting maintenance enactment from relational schemata, spousal behavior, and relational characteristics. *Communication Research Reports, 17*, 171-180.
- Dainton, M., Stafford, L., & Canary, D. J. (1994). Maintenance strategies and physical affection as predictors of love, liking, and satisfaction in marriage. *Communication Reports, 7*, 88-98.
- Dindia, K. (2000). Relational maintenance. In C. Hendrick & S. S. Hendrick (Eds.) *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 287-300). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dindia, K., & Canary, D. J. (1993). Definitions and theoretical perspectives on maintaining relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 163-173.
- Emmers, T. M., & Canary, D. J. (1996). The effect of uncertainty reduction strategies on young couples' relational repair and intimacy. *Communication Quarterly, 44*, 166-182.
- Feeney, J. A., & Noller, P. (1996). *Adult attachment*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Roberts, N. (2000). Attachment in close relationships. In C. Hendrick & S. S. Hendrick (Eds.) *Close relationships: A sourcebook* (pp. 185-202). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Felmlee, D. H. (2001). No couple is an island: A social network perspective on dyadic stability. *Social Forces*, 79, 1259-1287.
- Ficara, L. C., & Mongeau, P. A. (2000, November). *Relational uncertainty in long-distance college student dating relationships*. Paper presented at the National Communication Association annual conference, Seattle, WA.
- Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American Sociological Review*, 25, 161-178.
- Grau, I., & Doll, J. (2003). Effects of attachment styles on the experience of equity in heterosexual couples relationships. *Experimental Psychology*, 50, 298-310.
- Guerrero, L. K. (1996). Attachment-style differences in intimacy and involvement: A test of the four-category model. *Communication Monographs*, 63, 269-292.
- Guerrero, L. K. (1998). Attachment-style differences in the experience and expression of romantic jealousy. *Personal Relationships*, 15, 273-291.
- Guerrero, L. K., & Bachman, G. F. (2006). Associations among relational maintenance behaviors, attachment-style categories, and attachment dimensions. *Communication Studies*, 57, 341-361.
- Guerrero, L. K., & Burgoon, J. K. (1996). Attachment styles and reactions to nonverbal involvement change in romantic dyads: Patterns of reciprocity and compensation. *Human Communication Research*, 22, 335-370.
- Guerrero, L. K., & Jones, S. M. (2003). Differences in one's own and one's partner's perceptions of social skills as a function of attachment style. *Communication Quarterly*, 51, 277-295.
- Hatfield, E., Traupmann, J., Sprecher, S., Utne, M., & Hay, M. (1985). Equity in close relationships. In W. Ickes (Ed.), *Compatible and incompatible relationships* (pp. 91-171). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Hatfield, E., Utne, M., & Traupmann, J. (1979). Equity theory and intimate relationships. In R. L. Burgess & T. L. Huston (Eds.), *Social exchange in developing relationships* (pp. 99-133). New York: Academic Press.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Conceptualizing romantic love as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524.
- Knobloch, L. K., & Solomon, D. H. (1999). Measuring the sources and content of relational uncertainty. *Communication Studies*, 50, 161-278.
- Planalp, S., & Honeycutt, J. M. (1985). Events that increase uncertainty in personal relationships. *Human Communication Research*, 11, 593-604.
- Planalp, S., Rutherford, D. K., & Honeycutt, J. M. (1988). Events that increase uncertainty in personal relationships II: Replication and extension. *Human Communication Research*, 14, 516-547.
- Ragsdale, J. D., & Brandau-Brown, F. E. (2005). Individual differences in the use of relational maintenance strategies in marriage. *Journal of Family Communication*, 5, 61-75.

- Roloff, M.E. (1987). Communication and reciprocity within intimate relationships. In M. E. Roloff & G. R. Miller (Eds.) *Interpersonal processes: New directions in communication research* (pp. 11-38). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Schapp, C. (1984). A comparison of the interaction of distressed and nondistressed married couples in a laboratory situation: Literature survey, methodological issues, and an empirical investigation. In K. Hahlweg & N.S. Jacobson (Eds.), *Marital interaction: Analysis and modification* (pp. 133-158). New York: Guilford.
- Simon, E. P., & Baxter, L. A. (1993). Attachment-style differences in relationship maintenance strategies. *Western Journal of Communication*, 57, 416-430.
- Solomon, D. H., & Knobloch, L. K. (2001). Relationship uncertainty, partner interference, and intimacy within dating relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 18, 804-820.
- Spiegelhoff, M., & Dindia, K. (2001, June-July). *Partners' perceptions of relational maintenance strategies and relationship satisfaction*. Paper presented at the International Network on Personal Relationships Conference, Prescott, AZ.
- Sprecher, S. (1986). The relation between inequity and emotions in close relationships. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 49, 309-321.
- Sprecher, S., & Felmlee, D. (1992). The influence of parents and friends on the quality and stability of romantic relationships: A three-wave longitudinal investigation. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 54, 888-900.
- Stafford, L. (1994). Tracing the threads of spider webs. In D. J. Canary and L. Stafford (Eds.), *Communication and relational maintenance* (pp. 297-306). New York: Academic Press.
- Stafford L., & Canary, D. J. (1991). Maintenance strategies and romantic relationship type, gender, and relational characteristics. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 8, 217-242.
- Stafford, L., Dainton, M., & Haas, S. (2000). Measuring routine and strategic relational maintenance: Scale development, sex versus gender roles, and the prediction of relational characteristics. *Communication Monographs*, 67, 306-323.
- Tabachnik, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (1989). *Using multivariate statistics* (2nd Edition). New York: Harper Collins.
- Weigel, D. J. & Ballard-Reisch, D. S. (November, 1997). *The role of relational maintenance similarity in marital satisfaction, commitment, and love*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Chicago.
- Weigel, D. J., & Ballard-Reisch, D. S. (1999a). How couples maintain marriages: A closer look at self and spouse influences upon the use of maintenance behavior in marriages. *Family Relations*, 48, 263-269.
- Weigel, D.J. & Ballard-Reisch, D. S. (1999b). All marriages are not maintained equally: Marital type, marital quality, and the use of maintenance behaviors. *Personal Relationships*, 6, 291-303.

Lineamientos para los autores

La Revista Acta de Investigación Psicológica (AIP) tiene como propósito publicar simultáneamente en papel y en forma electrónica artículos científicos originales de investigación empírica en todos los ámbitos de la psicología. El manuscrito no debe someterse al mismo tiempo a consideración de otra revista. Además, se debe garantizar que los contenidos del manuscrito no han sido publicados y que todas las personas incluidas como autores han dado su aprobación para su publicación.

Se pueden someter a la revista manuscritos describiendo investigación original en español o en inglés. En ambos casos, la primera página debe incluir el título en ambos idiomas, el título no mayor a 85 caracteres incluyendo espacios, se recomienda que sea claro, preciso y que contenga las variables del estudio, nombre(s) del(os) autor(es) completo(s) y afiliación institucional. En la parte inferior de la página se debe incluir el nombre del autor o el de la autora a quien se dirigirá cualquier correspondencia, número telefónico, correo electrónico y domicilio completo.

El manuscrito debe presentarse en un único documento escrito a doble espacio con letra Arial 12 puntos, y no debe exceder de 25 páginas, incluyendo tablas y figuras. El formato del texto debe apegarse estrictamente al Manual de Estilo de Publicaciones APA (2da. Ed., en español, 2002, Editorial El Manual Moderno) y a los lineamientos descritos a continuación.

En la segunda y tercera páginas debe presentarse el título en los dos idiomas, en caso de que el manuscrito este en Español, llevará un resumen con un máximo de 200 palabras, y en Inglés un abstract de 300 a 400 palabras, en caso de que el texto este en Inglés un abstract de 200 palabras y un resumen en Español de 300 a 400 palabras.

Se deberá incluir también 5 palabras clave en español y 5 en inglés. Se recomienda que las palabras claves se refieran a las variables del estudio, la población, la metodología utilizada, al campo de conocimiento, el país donde se llevó a cabo la investigación. Debido a que la revisión editorial se realiza de forma anónima por 2 jueces, es responsabilidad del autor verificar que dentro del cuerpo del artículo no haya elementos que puedan identificar a los autores.

En las páginas siguientes debe aparecer el cuerpo del manuscrito, marco teórico, método, resultados, discusión y referencias. En el mismo archivo, al final del cuerpo del manuscrito, en páginas separadas, deben aparecer las leyendas de figuras y tablas, las figuras, las tablas, los anexos y nota del autor. Dentro del texto del artículo se debe señalar claramente el orden de aparición, y su formato se apegará estrictamente al formato APA.

Dado el corte estrictamente empírico de la publicación, es indispensable que la introducción justifique claramente la importancia del problema de investigación, el cual debe derivarse directamente de la revisión de la investigación antecedente relevante, incluyendo resultados contradictorios, vacíos en el conocimiento y/o ausencia de conocimiento que el estudio pretenda resolver. En la sección de método deberá incluir la formulación de las hipótesis o las preguntas de investigación en las que se consideraren claramente las variables de estudio y se vinculen directamente con el problema. Las hipótesis o preguntas de investigación deben considerarse clara y exclusivamente las variables del estudio, es decir, que se vinculan directa y explícitamente con el problema de investigación, enuncian claramente la dirección de la relación entre las variables y están apoyadas por la revisión de la literatura.

Incluya una descripción amplia y clara de la muestra, procedimientos y mediciones. En el apartado de resultados presente solo datos que se derivan de las hipótesis de estudio y asegure que los análisis estadísticos sean pertinentes. Se ha de proveer información de la magnitud de los efectos, así como de la probabilidad de todos los resultados significativos. Los datos que apoyen los resultados de la investigación deberán conservarse por 5 años después de la publicación, para garantizar que otros profesionales puedan corroborar los argumentos que se sostienen en el trabajo escrito, siempre y cuando al hacerlo no se violen derechos legales o éticos. Por último, la discusión debe derivarse congruente y directamente del marco teórico, la pregunta de investigación y los resultados obtenidos. Finalmente, asegurarse de que cada una de las referencias debe estar citada en el texto y cada cita debe estar en la lista de referencias.

El manuscrito debe enviarse adjunto vía electrónica en un solo archivo nombrado con el primer apellido del primer autor y la (s) inicial (es) del nombre y en formato compatible con PC (.doc, .rtf), a Rolando Díaz Loving al correo electrónico: **actapsicológicaunam@gmail.com**. Los autores deben conservar una copia del manuscrito sometido, en caso de que éste sufra algún daño al enviarlo a la AIP.

Todo manuscrito sometido a AIP se someterá a un filtro inicial, antes de ingresar al proceso editorial. Una vez soslayado este cedazo, se revisarán manuscritos de investigación que cumplan con rigor conceptual y metodológico; esta decisión depende de los miembros del Consejo Editorial, de dictaminadores y en última instancia, del Editor. Los autores de los artículos aceptados deben proveer por escrito las autorizaciones de material con derechos de autor, como pruebas psicológicas, fotografías, figuras, tablas, entre otros, que son utilizados en su artículo.

Proceso editorial

El proceso de recepción, evaluación, dictamen y publicación que se sigue en la revista es el siguiente:

- El Autor principal lee y acepta las políticas de publicación de la revista y será el encargado del seguimiento y comunicación con la misma.
- El Autor principal prepara y envía su artículo y autorizaciones de acuerdo al formato solicitado.
- El Editor recibe el material y revisa que cumpla con los requisitos establecidos (formato, autorizaciones, etc.), de no ser así, se devuelve al Autor para su corrección y posterior postulación. Sí el artículo cumple con todos los requisitos establecidos, el Editor emite confirmación de la recepción y del envío a revisión del artículo. El Editor selecciona a los miembros del Comité Editorial que realizarán la revisión del artículo (entre 2 y 3 miembros).
- Los miembros del Comité Editorial seleccionados, que desconocen la (s) autoría (s) del manuscrito, revisan y emiten un dictamen razonado sobre el artículo basado en la rigurosidad científica, el impacto de la contribución, la congruencia del método de investigación, la sistematicidad y lo adecuado de los resultados, la claridad y contundencia de los argumentos de la presentación (tiempo estimado: 4 semanas máximo).
- El Editor recibe y pondera las evaluaciones de los revisores y emite alguno de los siguientes dictámenes:
 - 1) Aprobado para publicación.
 - 2) Aprobado para publicación condicionado a los cambios sugeridos.
 - 3) Cambios sugeridos mayores que requieren de una nueva evaluación.
 - 4) La temática, contenido, abordaje o metodología no corresponden a los criterios de evaluación de la revista.
- En el caso 2, el Editor hace del conocimiento del Autor los cambios sugeridos al artículo para su publicación.
- El Autor recibe y realiza los cambios sugeridos al artículo, y en un plazo máximo de 4 semanas a partir de conocer los cambios sugeridos remite el artículo corregido al Editor.
- El Editor revisa los cambios y en caso de requerirse sugiere tantas modificaciones como sean necesarias. El Autor las realiza y lo reenvía al Editor.
- En el caso 3, el Autor realiza los cambios sugeridos y lo reenvía al Editor quien a su vez lo envía a evaluación por el Comité Editorial.
- Una vez aceptado un manuscrito sin cambios adicionales, el Editor informará a todos los autores el número de la revista donde será publicado su artículo, conciliando la composición y tamaño de cada uno.
- Cuando el número es publicado, se proporcionarán dos revistas a cada autor.

Guidelines for Authors

The purpose of Psychological Research Records (PRR) is to publish original empirical scientific articles in all fields of psychology, simultaneously in hard copy and electronically. Contents of submitted manuscripts should be approved by all authors and have not appeared in other publications. In addition, manuscripts should not be sent to consideration in other journals while in the process of evaluation.

Articles describing original empirical research may be submitted either in English or in Spanish. In any case, the cover page should include title in both languages, no longer than 85 characters with spaces included. The title should be clear, precise and include variables under study, complete names of authors and institutional affiliation. As a footnote to this first page, interested parties should include the full name of author to whom correspondence should be directed, phone number, e-mail and full address.

Manuscripts must be sent in one single document (**actapsicologicaunam@gmail.com**), double spaced, Arial type 12, and should not exceed 25 pages including tables and figures. Text format should strictly adhere to APA Publication Manual stipulations and to the norms described below.

Second and third pages should include titles in both languages. When the paper is in Spanish, an abstract in this language of maximum 200 words and an abstract in English of minimum 300 and maximum 400 words should be presented. When the submission is in English, then the abstract should be no longer than 200 words and a Spanish abstract of minimum 300 and maximum 400 words should be presented. 5 key words in each language should also be provided. It is recommended that key words include study variables, population characteristics, methodology and field of knowledge referred to. Since the editorial revision is conducted by two judges blind to authors identity, it is the authors responsibility to insure that no identification clues are in the body of the paper.

The following pages must include the main body of the manuscript, theoretical framework, methodology, results, discussion and references. At the end of the same file, in separate pages, authors should insert tables, figures, attachments and author's notes.

Given the strict empirical orientation of the journal, it is essential that the introduction clearly justifies the weight of the study, which should be directly derived from relevant previous research, including contradictory results, omissions, or lack of knowledge which the study intends to rectify. The methods section must include clear research questions, hypothesis and include all conceptual and operational definitions of variables under scrutiny. In addition, an ample description of the sample, procedures, and research design and measurement instruments should be included.

In the results section, only present data that respond to hypothesis and make sure that statistical analysis are appropriate and justified. Give information on significance and effect sizes. Data for the study should be kept for 5 years after the publication, to insure that other researchers can revise them if needed, unless ethical or legal rights preclude this action. For the discussion section, it is imperative that it strictly address only content that is derived from the introduction, the research question and the results. Finally, insure that all cited references from the body of the text are included in the reference list.

All manuscripts submitted to PRR will go through an initial screening before entering the formal editorial process. Once APA format and minimum research specifications have been met, research manuscripts will be sent to 2 to 3 members of the Editorial Board for who will assess the conceptual and methodological rigor of the proposal. The decision will be informed to the authors by the Editor, and in cases of acceptance, the authors should provide written consent of any materials under publishers rights used in the article.

Editorial Process

The reception, evaluation, verdict and publication for the journal are as following:

- Principal Author should read and accept the journals publication norms and will be assigned to follow up and communicate with the editor.
- Prepares and submits manuscripts and required authorizations in adherence to specified formats and norms.
- Editor confirms receiving the manuscript and revises text for adequate form; if the paper does not meet the standards the Editor sends the manuscript back to the Authors for corrections before it can enter the editorial revision.
- If Authors consider it adequate, they resubmit with proper format.
- Editor confirms receiving manuscript and sends it to 2 to 3 members of the Editorial Board who are blind to Author's identity. Editorial board members revise and give a reasoned judgment on article based on scientific rigor, importance of contribution, congruence of research method, adequacy of results and clarity and impact of arguments and discussion (estimated time, one month).
- Editor receives evaluation, considers strengths and weaknesses and gives one of the following verdicts:
 - 1) Approved for publication.
 - 2) Approved if suggested changes are made.
 - 3) Major changes require resubmission and a new evaluation.
 - 4) Theme, content or methodologies do not match the journals evaluations standards.
- For case 2, Authors makes changes and sends manuscript to the Editor (time limit one month). Editor reviews changes and suggests as many additional changes as necessary. Once all issues are resolved, the article is approved for publication.
- For case 3, Authors make required changes and resend manuscript to the Editor who assigns new judges from the Editorial Board.
- Once an article is fully approved, the Editor informs the Authors in what date and number the text will be published. When the journal appears, each author receives 2 copies of the journal where the articles came out.

Contenido:

Relationship Compatibility, Compatible Matches, and Compatibility Matching
Compatibilidad de la Relación, Parejas Afines y Compatibilidad del Emparejamiento
Susan Sprecher

Comunicación y Conflicto: ¿Qué Tanto Impactan en la Satisfacción Marital?
Conflict and Communication: their Impact on Marital Satisfaction
Mirta Margarita Flores Galaz

Adult Attachment and Conflict Behavior: Delineating the Links
Apego Adulto y Conflicto: Acotando su Relación
Judith A. Feeney

La Estructura Emocional de la Intensidad de la Pasión Romántica
Emotional Structure of Romantic Passion Intensity
Rozzana Sánchez Aragón

Macro-Level Factors & their Influence on Family Perceptions in Two Cultures
Factores Macro y su Influencia en las Percepciones Familiares en Dos Culturas
Miriam Sang-Ah Park, Robin Goodwin, Szabolcs Gergő Harsányi & Jung-Ae Kim

El Conflicto como un Predictor de la Infidelidad
Conflict as a Precouser of Infidelity
Sofía Rivera Aragón, Rolando Díaz Loving, Gerardo Benjamín Tonatiuh Villanueva Orozco & Nancy Montero Santamaria

Respect and Love in Romantic Relationships
Respeto y Amor en las Relaciones Románticas
Clyde Hendrick, Susan S. Hendrick & Tammy L. Zacchilli

Current Mesoamerican Couples: Cultural Heritage; Families in Transition; Sustainable Relationships
Parejas Mesoamericanas Contemporáneas: Herencia Cultural; Familias en Transición; Relaciones Sustentables
Rolando Díaz Loving

Linking Theoretical Explanations for the Use of Marital Maintenance: Equity, Uncertainty, Attachment, and Reciprocity
Vinculando las Explicaciones Teóricas de Mantenimiento Marital: Equidad, Incertidumbre, Apego y Reciprocidad
Marianne Dainton