

EXPLORING FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN THE CONTEXT OF
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

By

Nicole Campbell

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Communication—Master of Arts

2019

ABSTRACT

EXPLORING FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN THE CONTEXT OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

By

Nicole Campbell

According to family communication patterns theory (FCP; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002), families vary in the extent that they encourage open discussion on a wide range of topics (conversation orientation) and the extent to which children are pressured to adopt the parents' attitudes and beliefs (conformity orientation). Research has indicated that having a high family conformity orientation can be later problematic for children in terms of adjustment and psychosocial outcomes (Hesse, Rauscher, Goodman, & Couvrette, 2017, Ledbetter, 2009; Orrego & Rodriguez, 2001) and that family communication environments can influence communication in adult romantic relationships (Young & Schrodt, 2016). The following study tests whether growing up in an environment that discourages independent thought and requires one to adhere to family beliefs leads to a greater tendency of that individual to conform to a romantic partner. In addition to conceptualizing conformity orientation in romantic relationships and measuring it with a new conformity orientation scale adapted for romantic relationships (RRCOS), the current study explores associations between family and romantic conformity orientation, family conversation orientation, attachment style, and relationship satisfaction. In line with previous findings regarding family environments' influence on relationships, a significant association was found between family and romantic partner conformity.

Keywords: Family communication patterns, romantic relationships, conformity orientation, attachment, relationship satisfaction

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS.....	vi
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
Family Communication Patterns	4
Family conformity orientation.	6
Attachment Theory	7
FCPs and Attachment	9
Romantic Conformity Orientation and FCPs	11
Romantic Conformity Orientation and Attachment	14
Conformity Orientation and Relationship Satisfaction	14
CHAPTER 2: METHOD.....	17
Participants	17
Procedures	17
Measures	18
Family communication patterns (conversation and conformity orientation).	19
Romantic relationship conformity orientation.	19
Insecure attachment.	20
Relationship satisfaction with parents and partner.	21
Data Analysis	21
CHAPTER 3: RESULTS.....	23
Post-Hoc Analyses	24
CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION.....	26
Theoretical and Practical Implications	27
Strengths and Limitations	32
Future Directions	34
APPENDICES.....	37
APPENDIX A: Survey and Scales	38
APPENDIX B: RRCOS Scale Development	47
REFERENCES.....	56

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.....	51
Table 2. Zero Order Correlations.....	52
Table 3. Partial Correlations Controlling for Sex.....	53
Table 4. Independent Samples T Test.....	54
Table 5. EFA Results of Pilot and Final Study.....	55

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Distribution of Scores for the Romantic Conformity Orientation Variable.....	51
--	----

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

AAI	Adult Attachment Interview
ECOS	Extended Conformity Orientation Scale
ECR-R	Experiences in Close Relationships Revised
FCP	Family Communication Patterns
RAS	Relationship Assessment Scale
RFCP	Revised Family Communication Patterns
RRCOS	Romantic Relationships Conformity Orientation Scale

INTRODUCTION

Intimate romantic relationships are critical to young adults' development and well-being (Conger, Cui, Bryant, & Elder, 2001; Rauer, Pettit, Lansford, Bates, Dodge, 2013). While social relationships have been broadly found to promote health and protect against disease and effects of stress (House, Landis, & Umberson, 1988), research on developmental tasks and well-being trajectories suggests a lack of romantic involvement and a delay or inability to develop and maintain intimacy in early adulthood could prove detrimental later in terms of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social support (Schulenberg, Bryant, and O'Malley, 2004). A rising median age at which U.S. citizens marry—an increase of about seven years since 1965 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018)—has extended the length of pre-marital relationship time and allowed for even more variations in romantic relationship experiences, making it difficult to identify a typical path for early adults navigating romantic relationships. Despite this, researchers have recognized the need for identifying variations in quality and experience in early adulthood, a time when much social relationship development is occurring (Meier & Allen, 2008), taking special interest in the antecedents of early adult relationships (Conger et al., 2001; Rauer et al., 2013).

Interpersonal skills important to the success of intimate relationships include problem solving, affect regulation, and conflict management (Conger et al., 2001). Together, these skills describe one's overall romantic relationship competence. Conger and colleagues (2001) argue that it is parents' socialization of children, not marital interactions or sibling interactions, that influences relationship competence and the quality of early adult relationships. Given the key role that a child's socialization plays in their early adult romantic relationships, this paper focuses on (a) parents/ parent figures' influence on early adult romantic relationships through the family communication patterns they instill early on in parent-child interactions and (b)

understanding the communication patterns of romantic relationships. While a great deal of research has been done using family communication patterns (FCP) theory (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002), its dimensions have not been adapted for romantic partners. Applying them to a romantic relationship context, however, has the potential to help us better understand communication dynamics in adult romantic relationships.

With the distinctness of parent-child and romantic relationships (e.g. power dynamics between parents and children, voluntary vs. involuntary relationships) adaptation of patterns from a family to a romantic context is complicated both conceptually and operationally. At the root of all relationships, however, are basic interaction goals—one of which is the desire to be understood (Rommetveit, 1974). In order to achieve mutual understanding with a relationship partner, a dynamic and continuous process of social verification, or establishing shared truth with others, is necessary. Through this back-and-forth process of sharing individual experiences, having those experiences validated, then doing the same for the other person, shared reality is created and subjective experiences eventually become considered objective and reliable (Hardin & Higgins, 1996). This social verification process has been studied in social psychology as a collaborative effort wherein “you accept my verification of one thing, I yours of another,” and we “trade on each other’s truths” (Hardin & Higgins, 1996). In the context of families, shared reality is created together, but not all families achieve this the same way (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Some parents are more insistent on children attaining shared reality through adopting (or conforming to) their parents’ attitudes and beliefs. Although shared reality can increase family member understanding and allow for more efficient interactions and fewer arguments (Samek & Reuter, 2011), there are negative psychosocial outcomes associated with high conformity orientation (Schrodt, Witt, Messersmith, 2008) and, while conformity orientation has been linked

to less competent communication behaviors (Young & Schrodt, 2016) required for healthy relationships, it is not completely clear what the implications of family communication patterns are for communication patterns in romantic relationships.

Below, FCP is discussed as a guiding framework for a study which tests the association between high conformity orientation with parents and partners and the impact of conformity orientation on relationship satisfaction with both parents separately and with one's partner. Because both FCP and attachment theory explain how childhood experiences can shape people and relationships in adulthood and there seem to be similarities in psychosocial outcomes of high conformity oriented individuals and insecurely attached individuals, associations between attachment behavior and a tendency to conform in relationships are also considered. In examining conformity orientation in romantic relationships with a newly adapted conformity orientation scale (RRCOS), the following research extends FCP to better understand how family communication environments are associated with communication behavior in romantic relationships. Specifically, this paper stresses that growing up in an environment that discourages independent thought and requires a person to adhere to certain shared beliefs, may lead to a greater tendency of that individual to conform in other close relationships in order to maintain harmony and understanding with other relational partners.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

Family Communication Patterns

The original model of Family Communication Patterns (FCP) developed by McLeod & Chaffee (1972) was based on the cognitive theory of co-orientation. It was intended, not solely to study communication within a family, but to investigate how parents socialize their children to process outside information such as mass media messages. Co-orientation, described as focusing and evaluating the same object in an environment, results in two different thoughts in an individual; one's own evaluation of the object and one's perception of another person's evaluation of that object. There are three attributes of this shared evaluation of an object; accuracy, agreement, and congruence (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). *Accuracy* refers to how close person A's perception of person B's evaluation is to person B's actual evaluation. If person A and person B's evaluations are the same, they are also in *agreement*. *Congruence* has to do with the closeness of person A's evaluation to the perception of person B's evaluation. There is both a desire and practical need for families to understand one another. Their level of understanding relies on congruence and accuracy of evaluations, but because all three attributes depend on each other, agreement is usually high and shared reality within the family is typically achieved. There are two ways to achieve agreement; either conform to other family members' evaluations of the object or discuss the object and create a shared perception of it together (McLeod & Chaffee, 1972). Family preferences for these two strategies result in different communication behaviors; therefore, children in different families are socialized to process information differently.

Realizing that this original model had the potential to apply more generally to the study of family communication, Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) created a revised Family Communication Patterns instrument (RFCP) and Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002) proposed FCP

theory. Socio-orientation, previously defined as adopting other family members' evaluations, was reconceptualized as conformity orientation. In families that emphasize a traditional, hierarchical structure, parents discourage discussion and opposing viewpoints instead encouraging their children to look to others to form their evaluations to create more harmony within the family and avoid conflict (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Concept-orientation was reconceptualized as conversation orientation. Parents in high conversation orientation families promote discussion and exploration and encourage children to form their own opinions. High conversation-oriented families challenge each other's opinions and value the strength of an argument over the position of the speaker within the family. Conformity orientation and conversation orientation, the two revised dimensions of FCP, now one of the most well-known and well supported theories in family communication research, create four distinct family types: pluralistic, consensual, laissez-faire, and protective (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002).

The four family types vary by levels of conversation orientation and conformity orientation. Pluralistic families have open and frequent communication, and decisions are made together as a family, meaning they are high in conversation orientation and low in conformity orientation. Laissez-faire families similarly do not believe in a family hierarchy and allow their children to make decisions; however, they do not make these decisions together as a family because the parents are generally uninvolved and do not engage in deep conversations with their children. Consensual families are high in both conformity and conversation orientation, and parents from these families often pressure children to engage in and agree during conversation. While consensual parents are interested in their children's thoughts, they believe the parents should be the ones making decisions for the family and that their children should not question them. Protective families, on the other hand, are similarly high in conformity orientation but low

in conversation orientation. For these types, emphasis is placed on family norms and adopting parents' beliefs, however, exchange of ideas is not encouraged.

Family conformity orientation. While both dimensions (and the resulting four family types) are part of FCP theory, the current study focuses more on conformity orientation and specifically understanding how that dimension may function in romantic relationships. In an FCP meta-analysis, Schrodtt, Witt, and Messersmith (2008) showed that while conversation orientation is a stronger predictor of behavioral and psychosocial outcomes than conformity, conformity is more context-dependent when it comes to predicting resiliency (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002) and has been found to predict important outcomes such as communication apprehension, conflict avoidance, and young adult perceived stress (Elwood & Schrader, 1998; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 1997; Schrodtt, Ledbetter, & Ohrt, 2007). In general, research on conformity orientation has been mixed regarding positive versus negative outcomes, has been primarily studied within the family, and is worth further investigation in the context of intimate romantic relationships. Recent research recognizes the potential for negative implications of high conformity orientation and suggests that there may be two types of conformity orientation: a “warm” conformity, or a focus on conforming to promote closeness, and a “cold” conformity with a greater focus on hierarchy (Hesse et al., 2017), which could be the reason for the inconsistency in support for conformity orientation's effect on behavioral outcomes. In line with Orrego and Rodriguez's (2001) assertion that people from high conformity oriented families have a more difficult time adjusting to college life, a study done by Ledbetter (2009) found that high conformity was inversely associated with friendship closeness due to inflexible parental rules that prevented tight bonds between friends in childhood. The study also found that high conformity individuals struggled with face-to-face relationship maintenance in comparison to

online messaging where they could spend time crafting a message. It is evident in these studies that growing up in high conformity families can negatively impact close relationships both inside and outside of the family.

Attachment Theory

One way of understanding how FCPs may characterize communication in other relationships is through the lens of attachment theory. Attachment theory explains how parent-child relationships form and, like FCP theory, shows the significant impact parents have on later development (Stayton & Ainsworth, 1973). In Ainsworth and Wittig's "strange situation" procedure (1969), the researchers found that if a caregiver is perceived to be close, accessible, and responsive, the child is securely attached and feels loved and free to explore the environment and socialize with others. If the caregiver is not present and does not provide a secure base from which the child feels comfortable exploring, then the child will experience varying levels of anxiety and engage in behaviors intended to promote reunion with the caregiver, such as crying or vocal signaling until closeness is either reestablished or the child is worn out. While it is typical for any child to experience some separation anxiety in a caregiver's absence, the child should be easily comforted by their return. If a child is insecurely attached, possibilities for behavior when the "attachment system" is activated include *anxious* behavior and *avoidant* behavior (Bowlby, 1969). If a child has attachment-related *anxiety*, he or she will be "extremely distressed" during separation and upon return, will be difficult to soothe and may wish to punish the parent for leaving. Children with attachment-related *avoidance* experienced caregivers who were inconsistent in their attentiveness. For this reason, the child avoids the caregiver and is neither comforted nor upset by their return.

This early childhood system of behavior referred to as the attachment system revolves around regulating physical and psychological distance to an attachment figure (Bowlby, 1982; Ainsworth 1989). Patterns of interpersonal interactions with caregivers create complementary and stable inner working models of the self and the attachment figure that influence behavior in relationships lasting into adulthood. The extent to which the child's needs are met and exploration is encouraged determines whether the child develops a working model of her/himself as valued and reliable or unworthy and incompetent (Bowlby, 1969). According to Bowlby (as cited in Bretherton, 1992), the type of internal working model of the self and attachment figure that develops is of great importance as these are used throughout an individual's life to predict behavior of an attachment figure and to plan responses to the behavior accordingly.

Bowlby (1982) offers four criteria for determining a person's attachment figure(s) and insists that all be true to categorize a person as such. Attachment figures must be (1) targets of physical and psychological proximity-seeking behavior, (2) distinguished from non-attachments in that they are the target of more attachment behavior than non-attachments, (3) preferred when the attachment system is activated, and (4) able to terminate proximity-seeking attachment behavior in the individual when present and provide a secure base from which they can explore. Although it is true for most that a mother is the first caregiver of an infant, it is the function of mother-child relationships that is important for healthy attachment, not the mother herself (Doherty & Feeny, 2004; Fraley, 2002). If there is another available and attentive caregiver for the child to bond with, early separation from the mother will not necessarily induce any irreparable emotional damage. As the definition of attachment figure is broadly the person who provides support and care, it is possible to have multiple attachment figures at once and

attachment tends to shift from parents to a long-term romantic partner in adulthood (Ainsworth, 1989; Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

According to longitudinal research, the type of attachment established in infancy remains relatively stable into adulthood and across attachment figures (Weinfield, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Jones et al., 2017). While Bowlby's (1982) criteria for attachment figures was intended to be used in infant-caregiver relationships, attachment in romantic relationships is comparable to a mother-child bond in infancy in that (a) securely attached adult partners feel safe when they are near each other and the other partner is responsive to their needs, (b) both relationships engage in close physical contact, (c) both share discoveries, and (d) both can feel insecure when the other is inaccessible (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). Adult attachment research has shown that parents play a key role in a child's later romantic relationship behaviors and that insecurity (both anxious and avoidant) can persist despite shifts in who provides the support, protection, and care (Fraley & Davis, 1997; Heffernan, Fraley, Vicary, & Brumbaugh, 2012).

FCPs and Attachment

It is likely that attachment style is related to FCPs in terms of the construction of internal working models of self previously discussed. According to Bowlby (1973), if an attachment figure meets the needs of the child and respects his or her need for independent exploration, the child will grow up stable, self-reliant, and securely attached. If the parent frequently rejects the child in terms of comfort or exploration, the child will develop an incompetent view of self and likely be insecurely attached (Bretherton, 1992). Research to date has not yet explored the association between FCP and attachment styles, but based on the two theories, it is likely that those who come from high conformity oriented families are not as encouraged to explore independently as those from lower conformity oriented families because they are expected to

follow the rules and ideals of the parents rather than verbally questioning and pushing boundaries. While the parents may be willing to provide support and comfort, a lack of exploration of the environment can still have negative consequences for the child's construction of working models of self and others, specifically regarding one's attachment-related anxiety. Conversation orientation, which is usually negatively associated with conformity orientation (Keating, 2016), encourages children to openly discuss a wide range of topics. For children to feel comfortable opening up and willing to be close to their attachment figure, they most likely need to feel secure—meaning they would not feel anxious that their relationship with their parents was at stake during conversations. Additionally, it is probably true that laissez-faire parents, who are characterized as not being very involved in their children's decisions and not discussing a variety of topics in childhood, also lacked attentiveness in the first two years of the child's life—a critical stage for development of an attachment style as humans are the most dependent and in need of parental support in infancy, and brain development occurs very rapidly when beginning to organize experiences (Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969). In protective families where there may be uncertainty around gaining approval of the parent and a question of whether the parent will be attentive if they do not conform to the family's values, children may also be anxiously attached. The inhibition of independent exploration of the environment as well as uncertainty surrounding the availability and attentiveness of a high conformity oriented caregiver when a child does not conform, leads me to two hypotheses regarding attachment-related anxiety and family communication patterns below. Attachment-related avoidance, another component of insecure attachment, is however, not predicted to be related to family and romantic conformity orientation in the same way. As avoidantly attached individuals were prematurely required to be independent and learned early on that they need to self-soothe and suppress the urge to go to a

caregiver in times of stress (Bowlby, 1973), it is unlikely that high conformity oriented individuals who rely heavily on others to form their evaluations would avoid close relationship partners and feel that they can completely take care of themselves. Having an avoidant attachment style with a focus on independence and disconnecting from relationship partners, frequent and open discussions with relational partners are probably not likely, therefore, a negative association between attachment-related avoidance and family conformity orientation is predicted.

H1: Attachment-related anxiety is positively associated with family conformity orientation.

H2: Attachment-related avoidance is negatively associated with family conformity orientation

H3: Attachment-related anxiety is negatively associated with family conversation orientation.

H4: Attachment-related avoidance is negatively associated with family conversation orientation.

Romantic Conformity Orientation and FCPs

Similar to how attachment tends to follow an individual across attachment figures because of working models for attachment figure behavior, it is predicted that patterns of family communication create expectations for other close relationship partners and are associated with communication behaviors in other relationships, such as romantic relationships. This study conceptualizes romantic conformity orientation as creating a shared reality with a romantic partner or (co-orienting) by holding the same views, attitudes, and beliefs as a result of the pressure felt to agree and the duty felt to maintain harmony in close relationships. According to this definition, individuals high in romantic conformity orientation feel pressure to be on the same page as their relational partner about almost everything. Because of the stress disagreements may cause them and the effort it likely takes to align their beliefs with someone, it is possible that high conformity oriented individuals seek partners who similarly come from

family environments that emphasized the importance of shared attitudes and values in relationships and would be more willing to meet them halfway. If this is true, it would mean that family communication environments not only shape the way we communicate in adult relationships but also our ideas and expectations about the type of people with whom we should have relationships.

Previous research explains the significance of the family in determining expectations of a romantic partner being willing to use communication to get on the same page by describing families as primary socialization agents influencing children's communication behaviors into adulthood through schemas created for how loved ones should communicate (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Koerner & Schrodtt, 2014). For example, Young and Schrodtt (2016) show how childhood family communication dynamics influence adult relationship communication dynamics later in life. Young and Schrodtt (2016) discuss social modeling, or socially transmitted behavioral examples from influential people in one's life (Bandura, 1973), as a link between parent-child communication and romantic relationship behaviors. Their study looked at interparental confirmation (or validating messages that make individuals feel accepted, valuable, and respected as well as challenge through questions and pushing their existing abilities) and whether the adult child chose to enact similar confirming behaviors in their romantic relationships. Confirming someone is a way of socially verifying them and is necessary for people to feel legitimized and for relationships to therefore develop (Young & Schrodtt, 2016). Because use of these messages is required for someone to be considered a competent communicator—which has been positively associated with conversation orientation (Schrodtt, Ledbetter, Jernberg, Larson, Brown, & Glonek, 2009)—it was hypothesized that family conversation orientation would positively relate to confirming communication behaviors

(accepting and challenging one's relationship partner), and that family conformity orientation would negatively relate to confirming behaviors towards one's romantic partner. The researchers' findings supported this and suggest that family communication environments impact communication behaviors in romantic relationships. Because less competent communication behaviors in the family negatively influence children's communication in adult romantic relationships, it seems logical that conformity orientation in romantic relationships would be positively associated with less competent communication behaviors such as topic avoidance in an effort to maintain harmony rather than openly discussing topics that they may disagree about.

With this in mind, it follows that interactions with parents growing up could set an expectation of shared viewpoints in future relationships and a greater need for verification of ideas if that was established as important to the family. In line with the idea that competent communication, including an openness to discussing and challenging a person's existing beliefs, is associated negatively with family conformity orientation and positively with family conversation orientation, the same inverse relationship was predicted for romantic conformity orientation and family conversation orientation. Based on FCP theorizing, family socialization, and empirical evidence of family communication dynamics influencing expectations of communication dynamics in adult relationships, I predict:

H5: Family conformity orientation will be positively associated with romantic conformity orientation.

H6: Romantic conformity orientation will be negatively associated with family conversation orientation.

Romantic Conformity Orientation and Attachment

Internal working models of the self and others are not finished developing once a child leaves home. Early experiences with caregivers and internalization of these relationships form a representation of reality and a script for future relationship behaviors which continues to be modified into adulthood throughout changes in who the attachment figure is (i.e. the individual distinguished from others who is sought for comfort and support in times of stress and used as a base from which to explore; usually a significant other in adulthood) and the positive versus negative experiences one has with every following attachment figure (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth, 1989; Fraley, 2002). Because internal models and expectations for relationships connect attachment and FCP theory, it follows that attachment would not only be related to family conversation and conformity orientation but also romantic conformity orientation once an attachment to a romantic partner forms. If patterns of family and romantic conformity orientation determine the type of partner that one may look for and those high in conformity seek other high conformity individuals because of the learned importance of sharing beliefs with relational partners, experiences with attachment figures would likely not alter internal working models but rather solidify them. In relation to my predictions about family conformity orientation and attachment, my predictions for associations between insecure attachment (attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance) and romantic conformity orientation remain the same.

H7: Attachment-related anxiety is positively associated with romantic conformity orientation.

H8: Attachment-related avoidance is negatively associated with romantic conformity orientation.

Conformity Orientation and Relationship Satisfaction

Communication patterns also play a role in perceptions of relationship quality. Past research found that individuals from high conversation-oriented families are more competent

communicators and intelligent in their use of self-disclosure and relationship maintenance (Koesten, 2004; Ledbetter, 2009; Wang, Roaché, & Pusateri, 2018); all factors linked to romantic relationship quality (Conger et al., 2000) and potential mediators of the relationship between family and romantic communication patterns. Conformity orientation on the other hand, has been found to be negatively associated with communication competence (Schrodt, 2009) and lead to a more self-oriented view than other-oriented view in interpersonal interactions (Koerner & Cvancara, 2002). This suggests high conformity-oriented individuals may be more concerned with themselves and less genuinely interested in the other person with whom they are interacting (Young & Schrodt, 2016). Although FCPs are usually measured using one parent because shared reality is co-created and should not differ between parents, Young and Schrodt (2016) found sex differences in confirmation when comparing mothers and fathers leading me to believe there could be differences in relationship satisfaction stemming from differing expectations for relationships with mothers versus fathers. Because doing so would provide more information than collapsing parents into one perception, mothers and fathers will be considered separately regarding relationship satisfaction. The communication skills required for maintaining relationships along with previous research illustrating a link between conformity and negative implications for the parent-child relationship leads me to ask a research question about the association between conformity orientation and relationship satisfaction with (a) mothers and (b) fathers.

RQ1: How is family conformity orientation associated with relationship satisfaction with one's (a) mother and (b) father?

The self-focus (versus others focus) and lower communication competence associated with conformity orientation (Young & Schrodt, 2016) may carry forward into adult relationships

and would be detrimental to a relationship leading to lower relationship satisfaction within the romantic relationship. Because no research has yet provided evidence of associations between romantic conformity orientation and relationship satisfaction, the following research question is posed.

RQ2: How is romantic conformity orientation associated with relationship satisfaction with one's partner?

CHAPTER 2: METHOD

Participants

Participants were 251 college students ($n = 123$ males, $n = 128$ females) recruited from a large Midwestern university. The sample contained a variety of cohorts with sophomores having the highest frequency ($n = 68$, 27%). Most of the sample was heterosexual ($n = 238$, 95%) with three students identifying as homosexual and nine as bisexual. Regarding race/ethnicity, 70% of the sample identified as White, 15% as Black/ African American, 10% as Asian, and 5% as other. The most common family size of this sample was four people including the participant ($n = 77$, 31%) and most were raised by both biological parents¹ ($n = 206$, 82%). Just over half of the sample (54%) reported coming from families where both parents worked while someone else watched them, and 31% reported their father going to work during the day and their mother watching them, with a small percentage reporting their father stayed home with them, their parents alternated staying home, or they could not recall who took care of them.

Procedures

Participants were convenience sampled through SONA and asked to complete an approximately 15-minute-long Qualtrics survey in exchange for course credit. College students were determined to be an appropriate sample for this study because this “emerging adult” group represents a significant time period characterized by change and exploration of worldviews, love, and work (Arnett, 2000). During this time, offspring are transitioning to a more independent lifestyle and shifting their attachments for potentially the first time. Participants were told in the study description that they were taking a survey about young adults in long-term close relationships—which was intended to be vague enough that participants were not likely thinking

¹ “Raised by both biological parents” means that the parents could be either married or divorced, but that both biological parents were involved in the child’s life.

about conformity. The first screen reminded participants that their participation was completely voluntary and were given the researcher's contact information. In the description, it was noted that, in addition to the requirement of being enrolled in a course participating in SONA, the participant must be currently in a relationship that has lasted at least one year to limit the number of participants who have not yet shifted their attachment to a romantic partner. While in the past it was believed that it took two years for a full attachment shift to take place and that relationships of couples who had been together for less than two years were qualitatively different from those who had been together for more than two years (Hazan & Zeifman, 1994; Fraley & Davis, 1997), other research has found that attachment to a relational partner can happen very quickly and that the two year mark is a relatively insignificant relationship time point (Heffernan, Fraley, Vicary, & Brumbaugh, 2012). For this reason and the greater difficulty associated with finding college participants who had been in a relationship for at least two years, a one year minimum relationship length was decided on and participants determined for themselves the seriousness of their relationship. Participants self-selected into the current study by indicating they are currently in a serious and exclusive romantic relationship that has lasted for at least one year to increase the likelihood that a transfer in attachment from parent to partner has taken place. If participants answered "yes" to the first three screening questions regarding seriousness, exclusivity, and relationship length, participants were able to continue with the rest of the survey. If participants answered "no" to any of the three questions, the survey immediately ended. Upon completion of the survey, participants were thanked for their time.

Measures

The online survey consisted of both established and adapted measures of communication patterns (family and romantic relationship), adult attachment style, and relationship satisfaction

(parents and partner) (see Appendix A). The following scales were used to measure each of these variables and Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) was computed in SPSS to test the reliability of each scale.

Family communication patterns (conversation and conformity orientation). The Revised Family Communication Patterns Scale (RFCP; Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) was used to measure participants' family conversation orientation. This revised scale has higher internal reliability than the original FCP and focuses more on actual communication behavior rather than consequences of interactions (Schrodt, Witt, & Messersmith, 2008). This scale is comprised of 15 Likert-type scale items that include, "I can tell my parents almost anything" and "My parents are very open about their emotions." The Extended Conformity Orientation Scale (ECOS; Horstman et al., 2018) was used to measure participants' family conformity orientation. This extended scale reflects a more modern concept of conformity orientation in families and has been found to be more reliable than the RFCP (Horstman et al., 2018). This scale includes 24 5-point Likert scale items (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*) such as, "My parents have clear expectations of how a child should behave," and "I am expected to adopt my parents' views." The scales were both reliable (conformity orientation $\alpha = .84$, conversation orientation $\alpha = .92$) and skew and kurtosis values were within acceptable range (see Table 1). Higher scores on these two variables indicate higher conversation or higher conformity oriented families.

Romantic relationship conformity orientation. While the Extended Conformity-Orientation Scale (ECOS; Horstman et al., 2018) is reliable for measuring family conformity-orientation, most of the items are not applicable to romantic relationships as they are written. Initially, I believed only slight modifications to the ECOS would be necessary to adapt it for romantic relationships, however, the slightly modified list of items lacked face validity.

Conformity-orientation in a romantic dyad likely looks and sounds very different in comparison to conformity-orientation in a family where there are multiple interactants with different roles. Thus, in order to accurately measure the construct of conformity-orientation in a new context, a new scale was developed.

I wrote a wide variety of items that ultimately varied in quality and whether they accurately tapped the construct of romantic conformity orientation (definition on pg. 14). The process of moving from 54 items to a valid and reliable ($\alpha = .80$) six item Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*) appears in Appendix B. The final unidimensional scale included items such as, “My partner becomes irritated by my views if they are different from his/her views” and “I have changed some of my attitudes out of fear my partner would like me less because of them.” All items can be found in Table 5. Skew, kurtosis, and mean values can be found in Table 1 and exploratory factor analysis results can be found in Table 5.

Insecure attachment. In order to measure the degree to which participants are insecurely attached, an 18 item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring avoidance and 18 item 5-point Likert-type scale measuring anxiety (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*) regarding their romantic relationship was used from the Revised Experiences in Close Relationships scale (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller & Brennan, 2000). Avoidance items from this scale include statements such as “I don’t feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners” and “I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.” Anxiety related items included “I often worry that my partner doesn’t really love me” and “I worry that romantic partners won’t care about me as much as I care about them.” Items for attachment-related (a) avoidance and (b) anxiety were averaged into two separate composite variables as recommended by Fraley and colleagues (2000); scores for items 1-18 were averaged to give participants an overall attachment-related avoidance score, and

scores for items 19-36 were averaged to determine participants' overall attachment-related anxiety score. For both scales, higher scores indicated more insecure attachment. Both were reliable (anxiety $\alpha = .93$, avoidance $\alpha = .92$) and skew and kurtosis values were in an acceptable range (see Table 1).

Relationship satisfaction with parents and partner. An assessment of three relationships was conducted using Hendrick's brief (1988) relationship assessment scale (RAS). The RAS has strong test-retest reliability and is favored for its brevity and consistency across couples of different ages and ethnicities (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998). This scale, intended to measure general relationship satisfaction, consists of seven items rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from low to high satisfaction. Examples of items included "How well does your (mother/father/partner) meet your needs?" with options ranging from 1 = *poorly* to 5 = *extremely well*, as well as "How good is your relationship compared to most?" with options ranging from 1 = *poor* to 5 = *excellent*. Items 4 and 7 were reverse coded and the scores were averaged. Participants were asked to respond to three RAS scales; one for each relationship of interest (partner, mother, and father). These scales were reliable for all three relationship types (mother $\alpha = .89$, father $\alpha = .92$, partner $\alpha = .87$), however their means were unsurprisingly negatively skewed given that most people love their parents and partner and this is consistent with past RAS findings (Hendrick, 1988; Dinkel & Balck, 2005).

Data Analysis

Pearson bivariate correlation tests were run to evaluate all hypotheses and additional analyses included partial correlations that controlled for sex. The two research questions were also answered using correlation tests. Independent variables in the study included family conformity orientation, family conversation orientation, attachment related anxiety, and

attachment related avoidance. Dependent variables included romantic conformity orientation, and relationship satisfaction with one's parents and partner. The decision to control for sex was made after a Pearson correlation matrix revealed that participants' sex was significantly related to several outcome variables. Post-hoc analyses included independent samples *t*-tests to examine differences between male and female participant variable means. Descriptive statistics including skew and kurtosis, correlations for all variables, and *t*-test results can be found in Tables 1-5.

CHAPTER 3: RESULTS

H1 predicted that attachment-related anxiety would be positively associated with family conformity orientation. This hypothesis was **supported** in both the zero-order Pearson correlation ($r = .23, p < .001$), and when controlling for sex on the relationship between attachment-related anxiety and family conformity orientation ($r = .23, p < .001$).

H2, or the prediction that attachment-related avoidance would be negatively associated with family conformity orientation, was **not supported**. Controlling for sex did not decrease the association's significance level (zero-order correlation, $r = .10, p = .13$; partial correlation controlling for sex, $r = .07, p = .26$).

H3 predicted that attachment-related anxiety would be negatively associated with family conversation orientation. H3 was **supported** in both tests ($r = -.15, p = .02$; partial correlation controlling for sex $r = -.13, p = .05$).

H4 predicted that attachment-related avoidance would be negatively associated with family conversation orientation. This was found to be **supported** in both correlation tests ($r = -.27, p < .001$) (partial correlation controlling for sex $r = -.26, p < .001$).

Regarding **H5**, or the prediction that family conformity orientation would be positively associated with romantic conformity orientation, results of the Pearson correlation test **supported** this hypothesis ($r = .25, p < .001$; partial r controlling for sex = $.22, p < .001$).

H6 predicted that romantic conformity orientation would be negatively associated with family conversation orientation. While this prediction was **supported** in the zero-order correlation test, the partial correlation test controlling for sex decreased the association to **trend level** significance ($r = -.17, p = .006$; partial r controlling for sex = $-.12, p = .07$).

H7 predicted that attachment-related anxiety would be positively associated with romantic conformity orientation. This hypothesis about anxious attachment styles' relationship with romantic conformity was **supported** with a strong correlation. For H7, the correlation coefficient was $r = .49$, it was significant at the $p < .001$ level, and the partial correlation controlling for sex was $r = .48, p < .001$.

H8, or the association between attachment-related avoidance and romantic conformity orientation, was **not supported**. The correlation between the two was very strong but not in the direction that was expected. The correlation coefficient was $r = .49$, the significance level was $p < .001$, and the partial correlation controlling for sex was $r = .44, p < .001$.

Two research questions were investigated as well. The first was to identify how family conformity orientation was related to relationship satisfaction with the participant's (a) mother and (b) father. A Pearson correlation test suggested that relationship satisfaction with one's mother is unrelated to one's family conformity orientation ($r = -.07, p = .30$), but relationship satisfaction with one's father is significantly and negatively related to family conformity orientation ($r = -.14, p = .03$). Partial correlations controlling for sex changed slightly for mothers ($r = -.08, p = .23$) and did not change for fathers ($r = -.14, p = .03$).

The second research question asked how romantic conformity orientation would relate to relationship satisfaction with one's partner. A Pearson correlation test indicated that these two variables are negatively associated ($r = -.44, p < .001$) and the partial correlation controlling for sex changed slightly ($r = -.40, p < .001$).

Post-Hoc Analyses

Post hoc analyses indicated significant differences in the way that males and females answered items on the romantic conformity orientation scale, family conformity orientation

scale, family conversation orientation scale, attachment-related avoidance, and partner relationship satisfaction. Males reported significantly higher romantic conformity, family conformity, and attachment avoidance than females, and reported lower family conversation and partner satisfaction than females (see Table 4).

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

This project used the concept of internal working models for the self and others (Bowlby, 1969) to test multiple associations (e.g., family and romantic communication patterns, insecure attachment, and relationship satisfaction) with the goal of conceptualizing and measuring an FCP dimension in a romantic relationship context to expand the scope of the theory and better explain the influence of family interactions on later romantic relationship interactions. A significant positive association was found between family and romantic partner conformity orientation meaning that a tendency to create a shared view of reality with one's partner and co-orient by holding the same beliefs, attitudes, and values and placing high value on agreement is related to a strong family expectation that children should adopt the beliefs, attitudes, and values of their parents without questioning them. A negative association between romantic conformity and family conversation, a positive association between attachment-related anxiety and family conformity and romantic conformity, and a negative relationship between attachment-related anxiety and family conversation were also found. Attachment-related avoidance was positively related to romantic conformity and negatively related to family conversation orientation which assesses the new RRCOS's convergent validity and shows it is consistent with family conformity in its inverse relationship with family conversation. Tests aimed at answering research questions regarding family and romantic conformity orientation's association with relationship satisfaction revealed sex differences in relationship satisfaction with parents, as did post hoc analyses in terms of how males and females answered family and romantic relationship communication patterns and attachment items. These findings will be discussed further below.

Results of the study support the idea that family communication environments are associated with communication behaviors in close adult relationships outside of the family and

also related to insecure adult attachment and relationship dissatisfaction with one's parents and partner. Possible mediators of the relationship between family communication patterns and romantic communication patterns should be explored in the future, however, it may be that family environments impact who a person chooses as a romantic partner (e.g. someone who similarly values shared attitudes and learned this from their experiences in their own family, or someone who is intentionally very different from their parents and in how they were raised) which may change one's communication patterns. Implications of associations between family and romantic conformity orientation, attachment, and relationship satisfaction are discussed below followed by the study's strengths and limitations and future directions for FCP theory.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The positive association between family and romantic conformity orientation provides support for the argument that growing up in an environment that prioritizes shared attitudes and values influences communication behavior in adult romantic relationships and possibly the partners people choose. The adapted romantic conformity orientation items not only appeared to be in line with items on the revised family communication patterns measure (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1992) and related in terms of their definitions, but the scales were found to be statistically related. Therefore, socialization in families does seem to set expectations for relational partners' communication behavior in other close adult relationships outside of the family—including but not limited to romantic relationships, supporting past research (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994; Koerner & Schrodtt, 2014; Young & Schrodtt, 2016). Because the romantic conformity construct that was added in this study shows that conformity orientation can be measured in relationships outside of the family, this study adds to what is known about FCPs and contributes new ideas to the direction of future research focused on the theory.

Negative implications of high romantic conformity should be explored beyond relationship dissatisfaction and insecure attachment, but if individuals feel pressured to change who they are and what they believe in every time they enter into close relationships this could be taxing especially in young adulthood when forming and maintaining intimate relationships is a critical period of development and important for one's health (Conger et al., 2001). Emerging adulthood is characterized as a time of exploration and experimentation in developmental research with the goal of determining what one does and does not want, developing a sense of identity through entering and ending relationships based on developmental needs for both interdependence and independence (Norona et al., 2017). Establishing an identity independent from the family prior to a committed romantic relationship is important in terms of one's autonomy or ability to think, decide, and react on one's own (Collins & Steinberg, 2006). Because independence is required for identity formation in emerging adult relationships, an unfulfillment of autonomy needs is a common reason for relationship termination (Norona et al., 2017). As break ups can be beneficial in helping young adults develop an independent identity (Tashiro & Frazier, 2003; Norona et al, 2017), it may be true that high romantic conformity oriented individuals are unsatisfied with their relationships because their independency needs are not being met. It could also be true that these high conformity oriented individuals are less likely to view this emerging adulthood time as one of experimentation and may not be inclined to explore other possibilities for relational partners given that high conformity oriented individuals are not known to question the relational partners. This would result in fewer relationship experiences in young adulthood possibly hindering identity development. Without a stable identity, transitions between attachments following the loss of an attachment figure may be much more challenging for these individuals to endure.

Exploring conformity orientation in a romantic relationship context helps researchers better understand relationship dynamics and the antecedents of poor relationship quality as romantic conformity orientation was associated with lower relationship satisfaction. In the context of other close relationships (e.g., friends, extended family), high conformity orientation may also be related to poor relationship satisfaction consistent with family and romantic conformity, however, best friends have been found to be selected to fulfill attachment needs less often in emerging adulthood (Markiewicz, Lawford, Doyle, Haggart, 2006). Instead, Markiewicz and colleagues (2006) found that romantic partners are preferred safe havens when attachment systems are activated following adolescence. Because it is unlikely that a person would feel a strong need to align all of their beliefs with just anyone, applying family or romantic communication patterns to less significant individuals is not suggested.

Notably, romantic conformity orientation was significantly associated with all variables tested—including relationship satisfaction with both parents and partner. This indicates that romantic conformity orientation is an important construct related to many variables that can significantly impact relationship experiences. Connections between romantic conformity and insecure attachment are clear when considering Bowlby's (1969) inner working models for relationships; people who feel the need to conform may be fearful of what will happen if they do not conform, and similar to anxiously-attached individuals, may see their relationships as being constantly "on the line." Changing attitudes and values to align with their partner's attitudes and values may also lead a person to feeling later resentful toward their partner, especially if their partner does not share a belief in the importance of shared attitudes and values in relationships and is unwilling to meet them halfway.

While compromising (i.e. sacrificing or giving something up to reach a resolution) (Lin, Lin, Huang, & Chen, 2016) has potential to settle interpersonal disputes, this style of conflict management leads to depressive symptoms in individuals over time who are having to make many sacrifices (Whitton et al., 2007; Lin et al., 2014.) Compromising's effect on well-being during conflict depends on how one interprets the conflict. It is perceptions of their partner's commitment to the relationship and to developing "cognitive interdependence" that determines their psychological outcomes—operationally, their use of the word "we" during conflict management—that can positively impact well-being (Lin et al., 2016). In terms of FCPs, those on the higher end of the conformity orientation spectrum may see themselves as having to accommodate their partner much more to resolve dissimilarities in attitudes and beliefs, which, as in Lin and colleagues' (2016) study, could be moderated by relational focus and use of "we" in conversations. More research, however, on FCPs, sacrifice, and resentment is needed to understand romantic conformity orientation's negative association with relationship satisfaction.

Findings to the two research questions posed relating to relationship satisfaction and conformity orientation shed light on differences in relationship satisfaction with and expectations for mothers and fathers. Interestingly, family conformity orientation was not significantly related to relationship satisfaction with one's partner or mother, but family conversation orientation was positively associated with all of these variables. Differences between mothers' and fathers' parenting and relationships with their children is debated in the literature, however, some research suggests that mothers and fathers are socialized to parent differently and that fathers' parenting can be more influenced by parental factors (e.g., working hours, educational level) and child factors such as age or gender (Van Holland De Graaf et al., 2018). Attachment literature has mainly focused on who is sought for comfort during times of stress, which is why the focus

has been on mothers. However, fathers play an important but oftentimes different role in a child's life than mothers as a secure base that allows children to feel safe and comfortable engaging in exciting challenges and "rough and tumble" play (play-fighting) which are important to children's development (Newland & Coyle, 2010; Fletcher, St. George, & Freeman, 2013). If fathers are believed to be the ones who should encourage exploration and exciting new things, relationship satisfaction could be more impacted if high conformity oriented fathers are failing to meet this need. Mothers, on the other hand, are often the nurturing ones sought in times of stress, and would not be expected to encourage exploration as much and satisfaction with the relationship may be impacted less by a failure to do this. This could be one reason for the differences in associations between mother and father relationship satisfaction and family and romantic communication patterns, however parents should continue being studied independently rather than only as a parental unit to examine this further. The fact that fathers and mothers have mostly been studied together in the RFCP may be the reason that differences between mothers and fathers in terms of relationship satisfaction and conformity orientation were not found sooner. It may be that fathers, given their different role as stereotypically primary disciplinarians of the household, may be the ones driving this conformity dimension of family communication patterns.

Romantic conformity orientation was negatively associated with partner, mother, *and* father relationship satisfaction. An explanation for romantic conformity orientation being associated with lower relationship satisfaction with partners and parents may be that trying to please everyone and align their beliefs with multiple attachment figures makes it difficult to feel satisfied in any of their relationships in terms of closeness and harmony of attitudes and values.

If sacrifices are being made in all of these relationships, all this compromising to resolve dissonant beliefs and values could, again, lead to anxiety and depression (Whitton et al., 2007).

Overall, this study expands FCP theory by using it to explain communication dynamics in other close relationships and tying it into the extensive social psychology research on attachment thus adding to FCP theory's predictive power, heuristic value, and consistency with other theories—strengths outlined in Chaffee and Berger's (1987) criteria for evaluating a theory.

Strengths and Limitations

To expand FCP and contribute to understanding adult romantic relationships, this study added a new construct to the literature on communication patterns and relationships as well as a way of measuring it with the RRCOS developed from a pilot study. Although this scale was completely new, testing it in a preliminary survey of 50 participants, revising it, and finding it to be unidimensional in the final EFA, is a strength of this study. Another is that the relationship satisfaction scale was measured for both parents individually rather than only one parent or both parents together. If participants had been told to choose one or to think of both, some information would have been lost regarding findings for relationship satisfaction—for example, relationship satisfaction with fathers being significantly related to family conformity orientation but not relationship satisfaction with mothers. Romantic conformity orientation and the significant associations found in this study contribute to our understanding of how our relationships with our parents and our relationships with our partners are connected and emphasize the importance of family communication and child socialization.

Although participants reported being in a serious, exclusive relationship lasting for at least one year, it is unknown whether these college-aged participants had fully shifted their attachment from their parents to their partner and that may have affected how participants

responded to the RRCOS and the partner RAS. Future research should continue testing the RRCOS with romantic relationships at various relationship lengths in order to improve its reliability and validity. Another limitation was that the RFCP scale asked participants to report their family communication experiences retrospectively. Future romantic relationship research would benefit from hearing couples actually interact as well as longitudinal data on family communication patterns and environments.

The ECR-R, similarly, is a self-report and retrospective scale. For this reason, the ECR-R is convenient to administer to a large sample and is more often used to measure adult attachment in the field of social psychology, whereas the AAI (adult attachment interview) (George, Kaplan, & Main, 1996) is considered the gold standard for adult attachment measurement in developmental psychology (Warmuth & Cummings, 2015). While the ECR-R was determined to be more suitable given the timeframe of this study, future studies could gain from qualitative data collected in a semi-structured attachment interview that gives a more nuanced look at how attachment insecurity may relate to family communication environments.

Future research should also measure the *partners'* FCPs, romantic conformity, attachment, and relationship satisfaction for information on the dyads' communication patterns. Obtaining partners' scores on the RRCOS would provide information on whether people choose similar partners and tend to have the same communication patterns as their partner or not. In the future, the newly created RRCOS could be not only used on both partners but also refined on more diverse couples in terms of ethnicity, sexual orientation, and age as the limited diversity in the sample used to create the scale makes it difficult to generalize to the broader population. As evidenced by the low mean scores on the romantic conformity orientation scale and the insecure attachment scales, this study's sample consisted of mostly secure people who do not come from

high conformity families and are not currently in high conformity oriented romantic relationships. This makes it difficult to make claims about the broader population and know whether high family conformity leads to high romantic partner conformity. However, there is some evidence that patterns of nonconformity in the family may be associated with patterns of nonconformity in other relationships. Future research should try testing the scale with insecure participants and examining less stable relationships to test whether people who rate their families high on conformity orientation tend to be in high conformity oriented romantic relationships.

Because this scale was successfully modified for relationships in that an association was found between family and romantic conformity orientation, family conversation (the other FCP dimension) should also be adapted for romantic relationships. Additionally, more information could be gathered when asking about demographics. I asked participants who stayed home with them growing up and who they were raised by in an attempt to determine which parent they may be more attached to, and although most said their biological parents, information regarding the parents' marital status was not obtained and these survey questions were not used in testing relationship satisfaction. Divorced parents, however, could very well be a factor in relationship satisfaction and perceived closeness to parents and should be considered in future studies regarding romantic communication patterns.

Future Directions

This new scale, in combination with the ECR-R and the RFCP, may allow researchers to determine who may be predisposed to frequently change beliefs and attitudes in close relationships and why. The idea that there is a choice involved in entering romantic relationships makes it difficult to translate FCP theory perfectly for romantic relationships, but it is something

that should continue to be explored given the associations with family conformity and implications for relationship satisfaction that were found.

Recent research by Hesse and colleagues (2018) suggests there may be two types of family conformity orientations—warm and cold conformity. Because past research has been inconsistent in regard to findings that show that a strong family emphasis on adopting parents’ attitudes, beliefs, and values is beneficial or disadvantageous, the conformity orientation dimension should continue to be especially studied. In the context of romantic relationships, Hesse et al.’s (2018) warm and cold conformity may moderate the relationship between romantic conformity-orientation and relationship satisfaction with parents and partners such that warm conformity, or conforming to promote closeness and harmony, positively affects the relationship quality whereas a dominating partner who coldly demands agreement would likely predict poor relationship quality. Items could be incorporated into the RRCOS that tap both warm and cold conformity.

In terms of attachment theory, future research should look into individuals’ experiences with relationship partners who have different attachment styles. Some research has been done on “earned security” which suggests that having a more secure relationship partner in adulthood may lessen attachment-related anxiety in anxious individuals who had poor childhood experiences (Saunders, Jacobvitz, Zaccagnino, Beverung, & Hazen, 2011). Earned attachment may also impact conformity orientation and whether the partners’ conformity orientation in the relationship is “warm” or “cold” and influence their ability to be more self-reliant and independent in other close relationships rather than seeing all of their relationships as being “on the line” if they do not conform.

Partial correlation tests controlling for sex found that males tend to score higher than females in attachment-related avoidance. This is consistent with findings from a previous meta-analysis (Del Giudice, 2011). Reasons for higher family and romantic conformity orientation in males could be explored and tested further however their connection to attachment and the sex differences previously found in attachment research may explain this.

Additionally, more research should consider the role FCPs play in selecting potential relationship partners. While this study did not investigate the type of partners that high conformity oriented individuals choose, this study's results and previous theorizing suggest that high conformity oriented individuals may seek partners who similarly find sharing beliefs and attitudes to be extremely important and were raised in this way. This, it is argued, results in continued patterns of high conformity in other close relationships and reinforces the idea that social verification from others is necessary thus amplifying the consequences of family conformity orientation. For this reason in addition to the negative associations found in this study relating to romantic conformity orientation, the ability to predict future relationship partners and increase awareness of these patterns that may follow children into other adult relationships could be helpful in preventing negative psychosocial outcomes and relationship dissatisfaction with parents and partners.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Survey and Scales

(Initial screening of the participant. The survey will end for those who answer “No” to any of the following.) Please select the answer that makes the statement true.

My partner and I have agreed to be in an exclusive relationship.

Yes No

I consider my relationship to be pretty serious.

Yes No

I have been with my current relationship partner for at least one year.

Yes No

Demographics:

What year in college are you?

First year
Second year
Third year
Fourth year
Fifth year
Sixth year or above

What is your sex?

Male
Female
Other: please specify ____

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual (straight)
Homosexual (gay/lesbian)
Bisexual
Transgender
Prefer not to answer
Other _____

Choose one or more race that best describes you:

White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Other

Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino?

Spanish
Hispanic
Latino
No

How many people are in your immediate family? (Include yourself, parents/ parent-figures, and siblings in this total)

2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11+

Were you raised by both of your biological parents?

Yes
I was raised by one biological parent. No one else is in the picture.
I was raised by one biological parent and one step parent.
No, I'm adopted.
No different explanation _____

Growing up...

My father went to work, and my mother stayed home with me.
My mother went to work, and my father stayed home with me.
Both of my parents went to work, and someone else watched me.
My parents alternated who stayed home with me.
I don't know who watched me.

ECR-R Experiences in Close Relationships Scale Revised (Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000)

Please rate the following items on a scale of 1-5 (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*)

Avoidance Items

1. I prefer not to show a partner how I feel deep down.

2. I feel comfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with my partner*
3. I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on romantic partners.
4. I am very comfortable being close to romantic partners*
5. I don't feel comfortable opening up to romantic partners.
6. I prefer not to be too close to romantic partners.
7. I get uncomfortable when a romantic partner wants to be very close.
8. I find it relatively easy to get close to my partner*
9. It's not difficult for me to get close to my partner*
10. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner*
11. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need*
12. I tell my partner just about everything*
13. I talk things over with my partner*
14. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.
15. I feel comfortable depending on romantic partners*
16. I find it easy to depend on romantic partners*
17. It's easy for me to be affectionate with my partner*
18. My partner really understands me and my needs*

Anxiety Items

1. I'm afraid that I will lose my partner's love.
2. I often worry that my partner will not want to stay with me.
3. I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.
4. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.
5. I often wish that my partner's feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for him or her

6. I worry a lot about my relationships.
7. When my partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.
8. When I show my feelings for romantic partners, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.
9. I rarely worry about my partner leaving me*
10. My romantic partner makes me doubt myself.
11. I do not often worry about being abandoned*
12. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
13. Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.
14. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
15. I'm afraid that once a romantic partner gets to know me, he or she won't like who I really am.
16. It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from my partner.
17. I worry that I won't measure up to other people.
18. My partner only seems to notice me when I'm angry

NOTE: *items are reverse-coded

RFCP Revised Family Communication Pattern Scale (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1992)

Please rate the following items on a scale of 1-5 (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*)

Conversation Orientation Items

1. In my family, we often talk about politics and religion where some persons disagree with others

2. My parents often say something like “every member of the family should have some say in family decisions.”
3. My parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something
4. My parents encourage me to challenge their ideas and beliefs
5. My parents often say something like, “You should always look at both sides of an issue.”
6. I usually tell my parents what I am thinking about things
7. I can tell my parents almost anything
8. In our family, we often talk about our feelings and emotions.
9. My parents and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.
10. I really enjoy talking with my parents even when we disagree.
11. My parents like to hear my opinions even when they don’t agree with me
12. My parents encourage me to express my feelings.
13. My parents tend to be very open about their emotions.
14. We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day.
15. In my family, we often talk about our plans and hopes for the future

ECOS Expanded Conformity Orientation Scale (Horstman et al., 2018)

Please rate the following items on a scale of 1-5 (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*)

Dimension 1: Respecting Parental Authority

1. My parents expect us to respect our elders
2. In our home, I am expected to speak respectfully to my parents
3. My parents have clear expectations about how a child is supposed to behave
4. When I am at home, I am expected to obey my parents’ rules

5. My parents insist that I respect those who have been placed in positions of authority
6. My parents emphasize certain attitudes that they want the children in our family to adopt
7. In our home, my parents have the last words.
8. My parents expect me to trust their judgment on important matters.
9. I am expected to follow my parents' wishes

Dimension 2: Experiencing Parental Control

10. My parents feel it is important to be the boss
11. My parents become irritated by my view if they are different from their views
12. My parents try to persuade me to view things the way they see them
13. My parents say things like, "You'll know better when you grow up."
14. My parents say things like, "You may not understand why we are doing this right now, but you will someday."
15. My parents say things like, "My ideas are right, and you should not question them."

Dimension 3: Adopting Parents' Beliefs and Values

16. In my family, family members are expected to hold similar values
17. I am expected to adopt my parents' views
18. My parents encourage me to adopt their views
19. Our family has a particular way of seeing the world
20. I feel pressure to adopt my parents' beliefs.

Dimension 4: Questioning Parents' Beliefs / Authority

21. I am expected to challenge my parents' beliefs
22. In our home, we are allowed to question my parents' authority
23. My parents encourage open disagreement

24. In our home, we are encouraged to question my parents' authority

RRCOS (Romantic Relationship Conformity Orientation Scale)

With your current relationship in mind, please rate the following items on a scale of 1-5 (1 = *strongly disagree* 5 = *strongly agree*)

1. If I do something out of line with my partner's values, I fear he/she will leave me.
2. I have changed some of my attitudes out of fear my partner would like me less because of them.
3. My partner likes me more when I agree with him/her.
4. My partner becomes irritated by my views if they are different from his/her views.
5. My partner says things like, "I don't know why you question me when you know I'm always right!"
6. I often tell my partner things like, "You're right." and "I don't know what I was thinking."

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS partner) Hendrick (1988)

Please select the option that best answers each question.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Poorly		Average		Extremely well

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your romantic relationship?

1	2	3	4	5
Unsatisfied		Average		Extremely satisfied

3. How good is your romantic relationship compared to most?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in a romantic relationship with your partner?

- | | | | | |
|-------|---|---------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never | | Average | | Very often |
5. To what extent has your romantic relationship met your original expectations?
- | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Hardly at all | | Average | | Completely |
6. How much do you love your partner?
- | | | | | |
|----------|---|---------|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not much | | Average | | Very much |
7. How many problems are there in your romantic relationship?
- | | | | | |
|----------|---|---------|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very few | | Average | | Very many |

NOTE: Items 4 and 7 are reverse scored.

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS Mom) (Hendrick, 1988)

Please select the option that best answers each question.

How well does your mother/mother figure meet your needs?

- | | | | | |
|--------|---|---------|---|----------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Poorly | | Average | | Extremely well |

In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship with your mother/mother figure?

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unsatisfied | | Average | | Extremely satisfied |

How good is your relationship with your mother/mother figure compared to most?

- | | | | | |
|------|---|---------|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Poor | | Average | | Excellent |

How often do you wish you had a different mother/ mother figure?

- | | | | | |
|-------|---|---------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Never | | Average | | Very often |

To what extent has your relationship with your mother/mother figure met your expectations?

- | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------|---|------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Hardly at all | | Average | | Completely |

How much do you love your mother/ mother figure?

- | | | | | |
|----------|---|---------|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Not much | | Average | | Very much |

How many problems are there in your relationship with your mother/mother figure?

1	2	3	4	5
Very few		Average		Very many

NOTE: Items 4 and 7 are reverse scored.

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS Dad) (Hendrick, 1988)

Please select the option that best answers each question.

How well does your father/father figure meet your needs?

1	2	3	4	5
Poorly		Average		Extremely well

In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship with your father/father figure?

1	2	3	4	5
Unsatisfied		Average		Extremely satisfied

How good is your relationship with your father/father figure compared to most?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor		Average		Excellent

How often do you wish you had a different father/father figure?

1	2	3	4	5
Never		Average		Very often

To what extent has your relationship with your father/father figure met your expectations?

1	2	3	4	5
Hardly at all		Average		Completely

How much do you love your father/father figure?

1	2	3	4	5
Not much		Average		Very much

How many problems are there in your relationship with your father/father figure?

1	2	3	4	5
Very few		Average		Very many

NOTE: Items 4 and 7 are reverse scored.

APPENDIX B: RRCOS Scale Development

To begin, seven original items that were determined to apply to romantic relationships were kept but modified for the new scale. For these, phrases such as “In this family,” were changed to “In this relationship,” and “My parents” were changed to “My partner.” Examples of items that were modified slightly for the new scale were, “My partner and I like to debate our different viewpoints*,” “I often feel pressure to adopt my partner’s attitudes towards things,” “My partner often tries to persuade me to view things the same way as him/her,” “I expect my relationship partner to hold the same values as me,” and, “My partner says things like, “I don’t know why you question me when you know I’m always right!” In addition to these items, I wrote 47 new items that I believed would capture the definition of romantic conformity-orientation, which is creating a shared reality with a romantic partner or (co-orienting) by holding the same views, attitudes, and beliefs as a result of the pressure felt to agree and the duty felt to maintain harmony in close relationships.

The 54-item RRCOS scale was piloted using a sample of 52 participants in order to test the reliability of the scale and whether the items were measuring a single construct. Examples of the new items developed include, “I feel like I should run all of my ideas by my partner,” “I have a difficult time making decisions without my partner’s input,” “If my partner didn’t like one of my friends, I would talk to that friend less,” “If my partner tells me s/he thinks I should or should not do something, I usually listen,” and, “I hate when my partner has inside jokes with other people. I always have him/her explain.” The RRCOS items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree 5 = strongly agree) with higher scores indicating greater expectations of uniformity of beliefs and attitudes in romantic relationships. While the RFCP (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990) scale in this study will measure family conversation-orientation, only the

conformity-orientation portion of the scale was adapted for the ECOS (Horstman et al., 2018) and that is the portion that was adapted for romantic relationships.

After gathering the pilot data, I conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) which showed 17 different components with eigenvalues above 1.0. As there was no clear cut off point on the Scree plot, the decision of how many items to keep was made by looking at the specific items that loaded onto each component. The items that loaded onto component two were all asking about how similar the partner was to the participant (i.e., “My partner and I were raised similarly,” “My partner and I have similar relationships with our parents,” “One of the things that attracted me to my partner was how similar he/she was to me,” and “We have the same taste in friends, so I like all the people my partner hangs out with”). Although participants who are high in conformity would likely rate these similarity items highly, it is possible for those who are low in conformity to be very similar to their partners. Because a high score in this component would not be indicative of high conformity, these items were removed.

After running the EFA again with only 49 items, component two revealed two more items that hung together but did not seem to be capturing romantic conformity as I defined it. For this reason, “I need my partner to like my parents” and “My parents’ approval of my partner is extremely important to me” were removed. After running it again with 47 items, I considered factors that had a single item loaded onto them and removed three more items. “I am often the one who apologizes in the relationship” was one of these which seemed like it could be true of high conformity individuals, but not necessarily for those individuals alone; a relationship partner could be low conformity but be the one making more mistakes that require an apology. Regarding the item “I frequently say things like, “Does that make sense?” and “Do you understand what I’m saying,” it is possible that participants did not know how to respond to this

and did not understand that I was asking about the importance of being on the same page with beliefs and attitudes as this is something that might be said in everyday conversations which would not exactly get at romantic conformity-orientation. “I am not afraid to tell my partner what he or she should do,” was another single-item component that was removed.

At this point, components one and two were making sense in terms of my definition. The next step was to look at items that cross-loaded and to keep only those that had coefficients above .40 and did not cross-load above .40 on any other components. Items that cross-loaded negatively were removed as well as any components that did not have three or more items. Examples of items that cross-loaded were “I get very frustrated if my partner does not understand where I’m coming from” and “I have difficulty focusing if my partner and I are in a fight.” A potential issue with these items is that they may be true of nearly everyone in a relationship rather than just those who have high relationship conformity. After cutting these out and therefore significantly decreasing the scale, I repeated these steps by running the EFA again and removing a few more items that did not cleanly load onto a single factor or have enough items on the component. After this was done, 11 items cleanly loaded onto two non-rotated factors. When rotated using varimax, a commonly used orthogonal rotation method due to its propensity to display more cross-loadings (Carpenter, 2017), another item dropped out which was “I have a difficult time making decisions without my partner’s input.” This is understandable as it was measuring decision-making more than it was measuring conformity-orientation. Although this is something conformity-orientation should correlate with, including it would not be tapping into romantic conformity alone.

After rerunning the EFA, the final version of the newly developed romantic relationship conformity-orientation scale contained six items and a single factor. These six items explained

about 55% of the total variance, aligned with my definition of romantic conformity-orientation, focus, in part, on communication from both partners, and had a strong reliability of .82. Of the seven items that had been adapted from the ECOS, one was included in the final six-item RRCOS (My partner says things like, “I don’t know why you question me when you know I’m always right!”). Figure 1 shows there was variation in the way participants responded to these six items ($M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.02$) and the factor loadings from this pilot study can be found in Table 5. Skew and kurtosis values for the scale were also within an acceptable range (-.07, -.91).

With the final sample of 250 valid participants and the six items selected from the pilot survey, a final EFA test was done rotating using direct oblimin and maximum likelihood which produced a unidimensional solution. After rotating, the items clearly loaded onto to one factor with items all above .4 (see Table 5), explained about 50% of the variance, and had an eigenvalue of approximately 3.0.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skew	Kurtosis
Romantic Conformity Orientation	251	1.00	5.00	2.42	0.88	0.30	-0.48
Family Communication Patterns							
<i>Conformity Orientation</i>	250	1.43	5.00	3.21	0.52	0.08	0.88
<i>Conversation Orientation</i>	251	1.07	5.00	3.56	0.80	-0.45	-0.06
Attachment							
<i>Attachment-Related Avoidance</i>	251	1.00	3.56	1.91	0.69	0.43	-0.93
<i>Attachment-Related Anxiety</i>	251	1.00	4.83	2.29	0.86	0.39	-0.66
Relationship Satisfaction							
<i>Partner</i>	251	1.57	5.00	4.14	0.75	-1.05	0.80
<i>Mother/mother figure</i>	251	1.29	5.00	4.38	0.85	-1.69	2.46
<i>Father/father figure</i>	249	1.00	5.00	4.10	1.01	-1.25	0.79

Figure 1. Distribution of Scores for the Romantic Conformity Orientation Variable

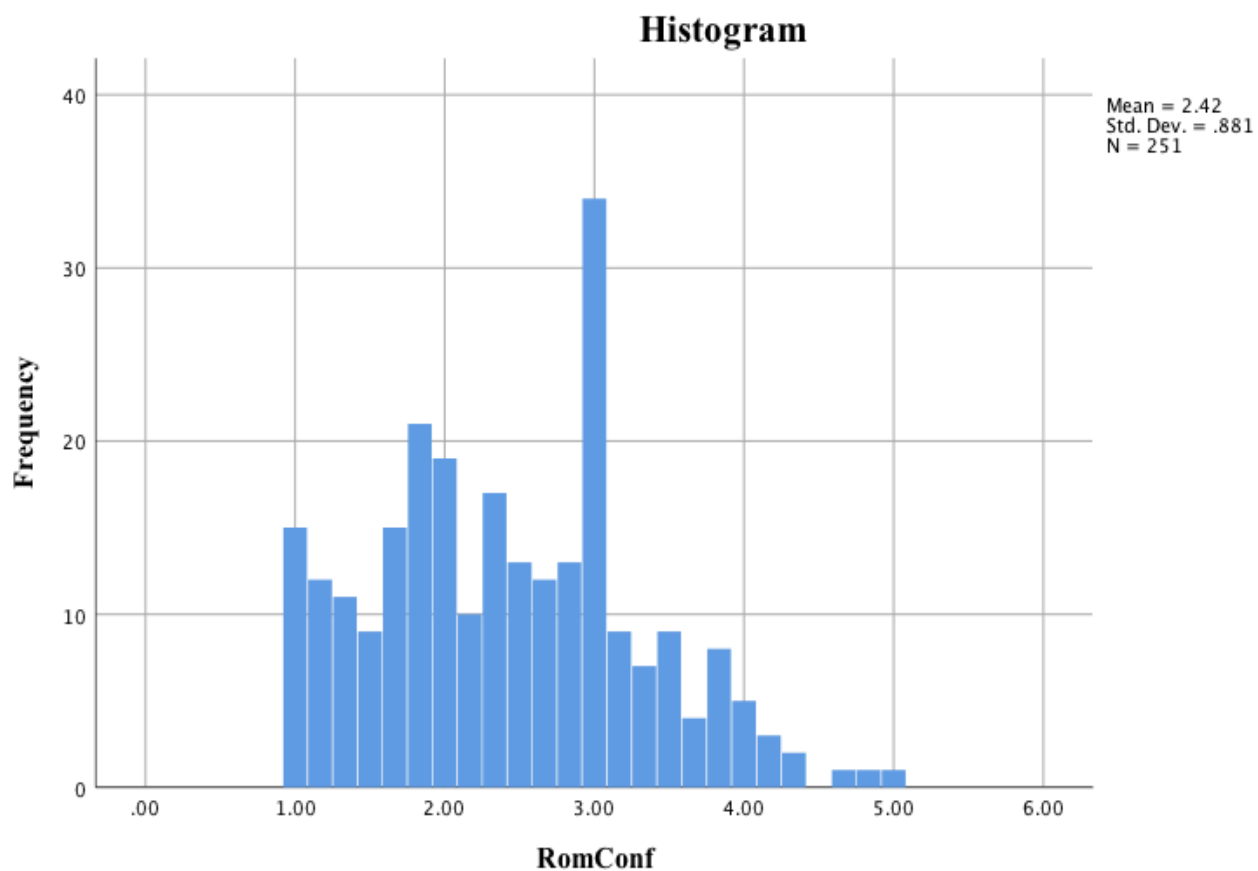


Table 2. Zero Order Correlations

N = 251

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Romantic Conformity Orientation	-							
Family Communication Patterns								
2. Conformity Orientation	.251***	-						
3. Conversation Orientation	-.171**	-0.08	-					
Attachment								
4. Attachment-Related Avoidance	.491***	0.10	-.273***	-				
5. Attachment-Related Anxiety	.493***	.233***	-.148*	.591***	-			
Relationship Satisfaction								
6. Partner	-.439***	-0.08	.131*	-.643***	-.529***	-		
7. Mother/mother figure	-.136*	-0.07	.381**	-.127*	-.238***	.186**	-	
8. Father/father figure	-.219***	-.138*	.324**	-.299***	-.321***	.279***	.312***	-

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 3. Partial Correlations Controlling for Sex

N = 251

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Romantic Conformity Orientation	-							
Family Communication Patterns								
2. Conformity Orientation	.209**	-						
3. Conversation Orientation	-0.115†	-0.05	-					
Attachment								
4. Attachment-Related Avoidance	0.444***	0.07	-.260***	-				
5. Attachment-Related Anxiety	0.501***	.232***	-.127*	.592***	-			
Relationship Satisfaction								
6. Partner	-.412***	-0.07	.131*	-.623***	-0.523***	-		
7. Mother/mother figure	-0.142*	-0.08	.397***	-0.147*	-.218**	0.193**	-	
8. Father/father figure	-.235***	-.139*	.314***	-.299***	-.318***	.290***	.323***	-

Note: † p= trend level, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Table 4. Independent Samples T Test

Variable	Female		Male		<i>t</i>	df
	M	SD	M	SD		
Romantic Conformity Orientation	2.07	0.81	2.79	0.80	7.09***	249
Family Communication Patterns						
<i>Conformity Orientation</i>	3.13	0.52	3.29	0.50	2.45*	248
<i>Conversation Orientation</i>	3.68	0.82	3.42	0.76	-2.64**	249
Attachment						
<i>Attachment-Related Avoidance</i>	1.76	0.65	2.08	0.70	3.83***	249
<i>Attachment-Related Anxiety</i>	2.22	0.90	2.37	0.81	1.47	249
Relationship Satisfaction						
<i>Partner</i>	4.26	0.69	4.01	0.78	-2.69**	249
<i>Mother/mother figure</i>	4.34	0.89	4.42	0.80	0.80	249
<i>Father/father figure</i>	4.12	1.01	4.09	1.01	-0.251	247

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 5. EFA Results of Pilot and Final Study

Item from the RRCOS	Pilot (N= 52)	Final (N= 251)	
	Component 1	Component 1	Component 2
1. If I do something out of line with my partner's values, I fear he or she will leave me.	0.729	0.638	
2. I have changed some of my attitudes out of fear my partner would like me less because of them.	0.783	0.735	-0.427
3. My partner likes me more when I agree with him/her.	0.748	0.587	
4. My partner becomes irritated by my views if they are different from his/her views.	0.830	0.754	0.394
5. My partner says things like, "I don't know why you question me. You know I'm always right!"	0.692	0.568	
6. I often tell my partner "You're right" and "I don't know what I was thinking."	0.638	0.591	

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Ainsworth, M. S. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist*, 44, 709-716. doi:10.1037//0003-066X.44.4.709
- Ainsworth, M. D., & Wittig, B. A. (1969). Attachment and exploratory behavior of one-year-olds in a strange situation. In B. M. Foss (Ed.), *Determinants of infant behavior*, 4, 13-136. London: Methuen.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55, 469-480. doi:10.1037//0003-066X.55.5.469
- Bandura, A. (1973). *Aggression: A social learning analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss*. Attachment, 1. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss*. Separation: anxiety and anger, 2. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1982). Attachment and loss: Retrospect and prospect. *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 52, 664-678. doi:10.1111/j.1939-0025.1982.tb01456.x
- Bretherton, I. (1992). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology* (1992), 28, 759-775. doi: 10.1037/0012-1649.28.5.7579
- Chaffee, S. H., & Berger, C. R. (1987). What communication scientists do. In C.R. Berger & S. H. Chaffee (Eds.), *Handbook of communication science*, 99-122. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Collins, W. A., & Steinberg, L. (2006). Adolescent development in interpersonal context. In N. Eisenberg, W. Damon, & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Social, emotional, and personality development*, 1003-1067. Hoboken, NJ, US: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Conger, R. D., Cui, M., Bryant, C. M., & Elder, G. H. (2000). Competence in early adult romantic relationships: A developmental perspective on family influences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 224-237. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.79.2.224
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16, 297-334. doi: 10.1007/BF02310555
- Dinkel, A., & Balck, F. (2005). An evaluation of the German relationship assessment scale. *Swiss Journal of Psychology/Schweizerische Zeitschrift Für Psychologie/Revue Suisse De Psychologie*, 64, 259-263. doi:10.1024/1421-0185.64.4.259

- Del Giudice, M. (2011). Sex differences in romantic attachment: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37, 193-214. doi:10.1177/0146167210392789
- Doherty, N. A. & Feeney, J. A. (2004) The composition of attachment networks throughout the adult years. *Personal Relationships*, 11, 469-488. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.2004.00093.x
- Elwood, T. D., & Schrader, D. C. (1998). Family communication patterns and communication apprehension. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 13, 493-502. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.msu.edu.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/docview/1292312616?accountid=12598>
- Fitzpatrick, M. A., & Ritchie, L. D. (1994). Communication schemata within the family: Multiple perspectives on family interaction. *Human Communication Research*, 20, 275-301. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.1994.tb00324.x
- Fletcher, R., St. George, J., & Freeman, E. (2013). Rough and tumble play quality: Theoretical foundations for a new measure of father-child interaction. *Early Child Development and Care*, 183, 746-759. doi:10.1080/03004430.2012.723439
- Fraley, R. C. (2002). Attachment stability from infancy to adulthood: Meta-analysis and dynamic modeling of developmental mechanisms. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 6, 123-151. doi:10.1207/S15327957PSPR060203
- Fraley, R. C., & Davis, K. E. (1997). Attachment formation and transfer in young adults' close friendships and romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships*, 4, 131-144. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6811.1997.tb00135.x
- Fraley, R. C., Waller, N. G., & Brennan, K. A. (2000). An item response theory analysis of self-report measures of adult attachment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 350– 365. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.78.2.350
- George C., Kaplan N., Main M. (1996) *Adult attachment interview* (2nd ed.). Unpublished manuscript, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
- Hardin, C. D., & Higgins, E. T. (1996). Shared reality: How social verification makes the subjective objective. In R. M. Sorrentino & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Motivation and Cognition*, 3, 28-84. New York: Guilford.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511
- Hazan, C., & Zeifman, D. (1994). Attachment processes in adulthood. In K. Bartholomew and D. Perlman (Eds.), *Advances in Personal Relationships*, 5, 151-178. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

- Heffernan, M. E., Fraley, R. C., Vicary, A. M., & Brumbaugh, C. C. (2012). Attachment features and functions in adult romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 29*, 671-693. doi:10.1177/0265407512443435
- Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 50*, 93-98. doi: 10.2307/352430
- Hendrick, S. S., Dicke, A., & Hendrick, C. (1998). The relationship assessment scale. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 15*, 137-142. doi:10.1177/0265407598151009
- Hesse, C., Rauscher, E. A., Goodman, R. B., & Couvrette, M. A. (2017). Reconceptualizing the role of conformity behaviors in family communication patterns theory. *Journal of Family Communication, 17*, 319-337. doi:10.1080/15267431.2017.1347568
- Higgins, E. T. (2016). Shared-reality development in childhood. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 11*, 466-495. doi:10.1177/1745691616635595
- Horstman, H. K., Schrodtt, P., Warner, B., Koerner, A., Maliski, R., Hays, A., & Colaner, C. W. (2018). Expanding the conceptual and empirical boundaries of family communication patterns: The development and validation of an expanded conformity orientation scale. *Communication Monographs, 85*, 157-180. doi:10.1080/03637751.2018.1428354
- House, J. S., Landis, K. R., & Umberson, D. (1988). Social relationships and health. *Science, 241*, 540-545. doi:10.1126/science.3399889
- Jones, J. D., Fraley, R. C., Ehrlich, K. B., Stern, J. A., Lejuez, C. W., Shaver, P. R., & Cassidy, J. (2017). Stability of attachment style in adolescence: An empirical test of alternative developmental processes. *Child Development, 89*, 871-880. doi:10.1111/cdev.12775
- Jung, E., Pick, O., Schlüter-Müller, S., Schmeck, K., & Goth, K. (2013). Identity development in adolescents with mental problems. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health, 7*, 26-26. doi:10.1186/1753-2000-7-26
- Keating, D. M. (2016). Conversation orientation and conformity orientation are inversely related: A meta-analysis. *Communication Research Reports, 33*, 195-206. doi:10.1080/08824096.2016.1186622
- Koerner, A. F., & Cvancara, K. E. (2002). The influence of conformity orientation on communication patterns in family conversations. *Journal of Family Communication, 2*, 133-152. doi:10.1207/S15327698JFC0203_2
- Koerner, A. F., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1997). Family type and conflict: The impact of conversation orientation and conformity orientation on conflict in the family. *Communication Studies, 48*, 59-75. doi: 10.1080/10510979709368491

- Koerner, A. F., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (2002). Toward a theory of family communication. *Communication Theory*, 12, 70-91. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2885.2002.tb00260.x
- Koerner, A. F., & Schrodt, P. (2014). An introduction to the special issue on family communication patterns theory. *Journal of Family Communication*, 14, 1-15. doi:10.1080/15267431.2013.857328
- Koesten, J. (2004). Family communication patterns, sex of subject, and communication competence. *Communication Monographs*, 71, 226-244. doi:10.1080/0363775052000343417
- Ledbetter, A. M. (2009). Family communication patterns and relational maintenance behavior: Direct and mediated associations with friendship closeness. *Human Communication Research*, 35, 130-147. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2958.2008.01341.x
- Lin, W., Lin, Y., Huang, C., & Chen, L. H. (2016). We can make it better: "we" moderates the relationship between a compromising style in interpersonal conflict and well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 17, 41-57. doi:10.1007/s10902-014-9582-8
- Markiewicz, D., Lawford, H., Doyle, A. B., & Haggart, N. (2006). Developmental differences in adolescents' and young adults' use of mothers, fathers, best friends, and romantic partners to fulfill attachment needs. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 35, 121-134. doi:10.1007/s10964-005-9014-5
- McLeod, J. M., & Chaffee, S. H. (1972). The construction of social reality. In J. T. Tedeschi (Ed.), *The social influence processes*. Chicago, IL: Aldine Atherton. doi:10.4324/9781315134970-2
- Meier, A., & Allen, G. (2008). Intimate relationship development during the transition to adulthood: Differences by social class. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*, 2008, 25-39. doi:10.1002/cd.207
- Newland, L. A., & Coyl, D. D. (2010). Fathers' role as attachment figures: An interview with sir richard bowlby. *Early Child Development and Care*, 180, 25-32. doi:10.1080/03004430903414679
- Norona, J. C., Olmstead, S. B., & Welsh, D. P. (2017). Breaking up in emerging adulthood: A developmental perspective of relationship dissolution. *Emerging Adulthood*, 5, 116-127. doi:10.1177/2167696816658585
- Orrego, V. O. & Rodriguez, J. (2001). Family communication patterns and college adjustment: The effects of communication and conflictual independence on college students, *Journal of Family Communication*, 1, 175-189, doi:10.1207/S15327698JFC0103_02
- Rauer, A. J., Pettit, G. S., Lansford, J. E., Bates, J. E., & Dodge, K. A. (2013). Romantic

- relationship patterns in young adulthood and their developmental antecedents. *Developmental Psychology*, 49, 2159-2171. doi:10.1037/a0031845
- Ravitz, P., Maunder, R., Hunter, J., Sthankiya, B., & Lancee, W. (2010). Adult attachment measures: A 25-year review. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 69, 419-432. doi:10.1016/j.jpsychores.2009.08.006
- Ritchie, L. D., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1990). Family communication patterns: Measuring intrapersonal perceptions of interpersonal relationships. *Communication Research*, 17, 523-544. doi:10.1177/009365090017004007
- Rommetveit, R. (1974). *On message structure: A framework for the study of language and communication*. Oxford, England: John Wiley & Sons.
- Samek, D. R., & Rueter, M. A. (2011). Associations between family communication patterns, sibling closeness, and adoptive status. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 73, 1015-1031. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2011.00865.x
- Saunders, R., Jacobvitz, D., Zaccagnino, M., Beverung, L. M., & Hazen, N. (2011). Pathways to earned-security: The role of alternative support figures. *Attachment & Human Development*, 13, 403-420. doi:10.1080/14616734.2011.584405
- Schrodt, P. (2009). Family strength and satisfaction as functions of family communication environments. *Communication Quarterly*, 57, 171-186. doi:10.1080/01463370902881650
- Schrodt, P., Ledbetter, A. M., & Ohrt, J. K. (2007). Parental confirmation and affection as mediators of family communication patterns and children's mental well-being. *Journal of Family Communication*, 7, 23-46. doi: 10.1080/15267430709336667
- Schrodt, P., Witt, P. L. & Messersmith, A. S. (2008). A meta-analytical review of family communication patterns and their associations with information processing, behavioral, and psychosocial outcomes. *Communication Monographs*, 75, 248-269. doi:10.1080/03637750802256318
- Schulenberg, J. E., Bryant, A. L., & O'Malley, P. M. (2004). Taking hold of some kind of life: How developmental tasks relate to trajectories of well-being during the transition to adulthood. *Development and Psychopathology*, 16, 1119-1140. doi:10.1017/S0954579404040167
- Stayton, D. J., & Ainsworth, M. D. (1973). Individual differences in infant responses to brief, everyday separations as related to other infant and maternal behaviors. *Developmental Psychology*, 9, 226-235. doi:10.1037/h0035089
- Tashiro, T., & Frazier, P. (2003). "I'll never be in a relationship like that again": Personal growth following romantic relationship breakups. *Personal Relationships*, 10, 113-128. doi:10.1111/1475-6811.00039

- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). People are waiting to get married. Median age at first marriage: 1890 to present. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2018/comm/married.html>
- Van Holland De Graaf, J., Hoogenboom, M., De Roos, S., & Bucx, F. (2018). Socio-demographic correlates of fathers' and mothers' parenting behaviors. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 27, 2315-2327. doi:10.1007/s10826-018-1059-7
- Wang, N., Roaché, D. J., & Pusateri, K. B. (2018). Associations between parents' and young adults' face-to-face and technologically mediated communication competence: The role of family communication patterns. *Communication Research*, 1-26. doi:10.1177/0093650217750972
- Warmuth, K. A., & Cummings, E. M. (2015). Examining developmental fit of the adult attachment interview in adolescence. *Developmental Review*, 36, 200-218. doi:10.1016/j.dr.2015.04.002
- Weinfield N. S., Whaley G. J L., & Egeland B. (2004). Continuity, discontinuity, and coherence in attachment from infancy to late adolescence: Sequelae of organization and disorganization, *Attachment & Human Development*, 6, 73-97. doi:10.1080/14616730310001659566
- Whitton, S. W., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., Stanley, S. M., Prado, L. M., Kline, G. H., Peters, M. S., & Markman, H. J. (2007). Depressive symptoms in early marriage: Predictions from relationship confidence and negative marital interaction. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 21, 297-306. doi:10.1037/0893-3200.21.2.297
- Young, J., & Schrod, P. (2016). Family communication patterns, parental modeling, and confirmation in romantic relationships. *Communication Quarterly*, 64, 454-475. doi:10.1080/01463373.2015.1103297