Problem-Solving Abilities and Feelings of Control: A Work in Progress

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ABSTRACT

The current study is interested in examining the perceived feelings of control when in conflict and the relationship to confidence in problem-solving skills (Eğeci & Gençöz, 2006). The following literature review covers recent information regarding relationship satisfaction, which is a result of, but not limited to, attachment styles, confidence in problem-solving skills, and behaviors in conflict.

Eğeci and Gençöz (2006) and Shi (2003) both emphasize the importance of attachment styles of an individual in a relationship and communication that is sought during times of conflict.


Secure adults were found to have greater self-confidence in problem-solving ability, positive communication, and thus, greater relationship satisfaction (Eğeci & Gençöz, 2006).

Shi’s (2003) findings strongly suggest that Avoidant adults participate significantly less in “obliging” behaviors during conflict because they have a fear of rejection, and Anxious adults display an excess amount of “obliging” behaviors.


The study indicates that in families with two or more children, individuals who are more jealous of their siblings display lower self-esteem and, thus, lower relationship satisfaction (Rauer & Vølling, 2007).

LITERATURE REVIEW

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study will consist of a series of surveys taken by 200 undergraduate volunteers from the Department of Communication Studies. As an incentive to participate, they will be offered extra credit for particular communication courses. The goal is to have 50 percent female and 50 percent male participants. The participants must currently be in a romantic relationship, or have been in one recently.

Measures

Attachment Style. The Relationship Questionnaire, used by Rauer and Vølling (2007), is a forced-choice survey. It determines the participant’s attachment style by forcing them to choose a description, written in first-person, of how they approach relationships. For example, one would be determined as having a secure attachment style if they chose this description: “It is easy for me to become emotionally close to others. I am comfortable depending on others and having others depend on me. I don’t worry about being alone or having others not accept me” (Rauer & Vølling, 2007).

Problem-Solving. This survey is based on the Problem Solving Inventory used by Eğeci and Gençöz (2006), but has been changed. It will help determine an individual’s sense of abilities in problem-solving. It will have two categories: confidence in one’s own resolution abilities and determination of problem-solving style. This survey will have twenty items that the individual can rank from one to six points. Higher scores indicate ineffectiveness.

Personal Control. This questionnaire will be adapted for this study. It will contain 10 items rated on a 5-point scale. A score of 1 indicates a high feeling of personal control during conflict, and a score of 5 indicates little or no feeling of personal control during conflict.

The data from these surveys will be analyzed using statistical measures to identify whether relationships between the categories exist.

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