



Big five personality variables and relationship constructs

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Abstract

Associations between the personality variables of the five-factor model and close relationship variables (love styles, relationship satisfaction, and intimacy) were explored. Participants ($N = 196$) from committed relationships were administered the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised, the Love Attitudes Scale-Short Form, the Relationship Assessment Scale, the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships, and a demographic questionnaire. Correlation and regression analyses revealed that neuroticism was negatively associated with and predictive of satisfaction and intimacy. The association between neuroticism and relationship satisfaction was completely mediated by possessive, dependent love for females. Extraversion and agreeableness were positively associated with relationship satisfaction and intimacy, especially for males. Conscientiousness was positively correlated with intimacy for males. Implications of these findings are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Links between personality and relational constructs may seem self-evident. Personality expresses much of who we are as humans, and one forum for that expression is our intimate relationships. Baumeister and Leary (1995) proposed that humans have a fundamental “need to belong” within close relationships. One individual’s “identity” (i.e., personality) connects with another individual’s “identity” in an intimate relationship. It is thus not surprising that some

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relationship scholars (e.g., Bradbury & Fincham, 1988) include personality among factors influencing relationship satisfaction. The current research seeks to extend understanding of the links between personality (assessed by the five-factor model) and romantic relationships (love styles, intimacy and relationship satisfaction).

2. The five-factor model of personality

The five-factor model of personality consists of neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, each in turn consisting of six facets. Neuroticism includes anxiety, depression, hostility, impulsiveness, self-consciousness, and vulnerability. Extraversion is characterized by warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement seeking, and positive emotions. Openness includes openness to fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, and values. The facets of agreeableness include altruism, compliance, modesty, straightforwardness, tender-mindedness, and trust. Conscientiousness includes achievement striving, competence, deliberation, dutifulness, order, and self-discipline (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

The five-factor model is not a theory, but rather adopts the premises of trait theory, in that persons can be characterized by individual differences that are stable over time, consistent across situations, and involve patterns of thought, affect, and behavior (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1984; McCrae & Costa, 1996, 1999). The argument for a strong genetic component to such factors as extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism, long viewed as “temperamental” traits (Eysenck, 1990) is supported by parent, behavioral genetic, cross-cultural, and animal comparative studies (Digman, 1990; McCrae et al., 2000). Additionally, the five factors have proven to be generally stable over long periods (Digman, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1994) and across diverse cultures (McCrae & Costa, 1997). Finally, the five-factor model posits that traits are organized hierarchically from broad constructs (i.e., the five factors) to specific constructs (e.g., facets of each factor) (McCrae & Costa, 1996, 1999).

3. Relationship variables

3.1. Love styles

The love styles or attitudes are types of love that come from Lee's (1973) classification system. The six major love styles include Eros (passionate), Ludus (game-playing), Storge (friendship), Pragma (practical), Mania (possessive, dependent), and Agape (altruistic) love (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1992). The love styles are related to relationship satisfaction and to some extent to relationship continuation (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler, 1988).

3.2. Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction is an important aspect of individuals' overall life satisfaction. It has been studied extensively by relationship researchers and is an important construct for couple therapists. It has been associated with both personality characteristics and other relationship

variables (e.g., intimacy) (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Sabatelli, Dreyer, & Buck, 1983).

3.3. *Intimacy*

“Intimacy is one of the most salient and rewarding aspects of personal relationships” (Prager, 2000, p. 242). Because virtually all people have relationships, psychologists need to have knowledge of intimacy to proceed with appropriate research and therapy. Intimacy is an important construct for several theories, e.g., intimacy is a major developmental step (Ryckman, 1993) within Erikson’s framework of lifespan development.

4. Convergence of personality and relationship variables

Personality variables have been associated with love styles (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987), intimacy (e.g., Prager, 1995), relationship satisfaction (e.g., Davis & Oathout, 1987), and may be more salient predictors of marital outcome than demographic variables (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978). Specifically, the five factors have been associated with a number of relationship-relevant constructs.

4.1. *Neuroticism*

Neuroticism has been associated with several negative relationship variables including: divorce for women (Eysenck, 1980; Newcomb & Bentler, 1981), decreased relationship satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987), marital instability (Cate, Levin, & Richmond, 2002; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987), shorter relationships (Shaver & Brennan, 1992), and negative attribution making (Hessling, 2001).

Neuroticism and its facets have been associated with manic love (Lester & Philbrick, 1988; Middleton, 1993; Woll, 1989), and its facet of impulsivity correlated positively with Mania and negatively with Storge (Woll, 1989). Middleton (1993) found neuroticism to be correlated positively with Ludus and negatively with Storge (both for men). Fehr and Broughton (2001) found a positive correlation between neuroticism and sexual, infatuation, and puppy love and a negative correlation between neuroticism and friendship love, though their measures were different from those used in the current study.

4.2. *Extraversion*

Extraversion has been associated with several positive relationship variables such as satisfaction (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987), marital success (Barry, 1970), and intimacy (Shadish, 1986). However, extraversion has also been associated with negative relationship variables such as lower satisfaction for men (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978; Sabatelli et al., 1983), divorce for men (Eysenck, 1980; Newcomb & Bentler, 1981), and marital instability (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). However, Zaleski and Galkowska (1978) found extraversion unrelated to satisfaction.

A facet of extraversion (excitement-seeking) has been negatively associated with love styles like Pragma and Storge (Lester & Philbrick, 1988; Woll, 1989); however, Fehr and Broughton (2001) found extraversion to be associated with friendship love. Therefore, extraversion has shown mixed results with respect to its associations with love and the love styles.

4.3. Openness to experience

Openness has been negatively related to marital stability and satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), and openness to aesthetics, ideas, values, and general openness have been related to decreased relationship length (Shaver & Brennan, 1992). Yet openness has been associated with the following love styles: positively to Eros and Mania (both for men) and negatively to Pragma (for women) (Middleton, 1993).

4.4. Agreeableness

Agreeableness has been consistently positively related to most relationship variables. It has been associated with relationship satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Kwan, Bond, & Singelis, 1997) and marital stability (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Fehr and Broughton (2001) found that high nurturance/agreeableness was related to friendship love for women; and in love styles research, Middleton (1993) found that agreeableness was positively related to Eros and Agape (both for women) and Storge (for men) and negatively associated with Ludus (for both genders) and Pragma (for women).

4.5. Conscientiousness

Findings for conscientiousness have been mixed. It was related to positive relationship characteristics such as relationship satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kwan et al., 1997), relationship stability (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), and relationship length (Shaver & Brennan, 1992). However, Newcomb and Bentler (1981) found that men's orderliness, a facet, was predictive of divorce. Fehr and Broughton (2001) found that it correlated with friendship love for women. In love styles research, Middleton (1993) found that conscientiousness was related positively to Eros and Agape for women and negatively to Mania for men.

4.6. Current research and hypotheses

Past research has produced inconsistent results. For example, extraversion has been found to have a positive (Bentler & Newcomb, 1978), a negative (Sabatelli et al., 1983), and no association with relationship satisfaction (Zaleski & Galkowska, 1978). The correlation between extraversion and satisfaction is directly tested in the current study.

The current research also sought to be more comprehensive in scope regarding associations between five-factor personality variables and relationship constructs by using both factors and facets; considering love styles, intimacy, and satisfaction; and examining possible mediation effects of love styles between personality factors and satisfaction and intimacy. Mediation is consistent with Bradbury and Fincham's (1988) contextual model proposing that proximal factors such as

love styles may mediate the effects of distal factors such as personality variables on dependent variables such as satisfaction. Unless otherwise noted, hypotheses were based on previous findings. Expected gender differences are noted. Additional significant findings were expected, but because of a lack of clarity in the literature, no specific predictions were made.

- H1:* The associated features of neuroticism (e.g., negative affect, anxiety, and impulsiveness) are undesirable characteristics in romantic relationships. Neuroticism will be negatively correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction and correlated positively with Mania and Ludus (the latter for males only) and negatively with Storge. Impulsiveness, a facet, will correlate positively with Mania.
- H2:* The associated features of extraversion (e.g., positive affect, sociability, and increased self-disclosure) are assumed to be desirable characteristics in romantic relationships. Extraversion will be positively correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction and intimacy and correlated positively with Eros and Agape.
- H3:* Openness will correlate positively with Eros and Mania for males and negatively with Pragma for females.
- H4:* The associated features of agreeableness (e.g., altruism and trust) appear to be desirable characteristics in romantic relationships. Agreeableness will be positively and significantly correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction. It will also correlate positively with Storge (for both genders) and Eros and Agape for females only, and negatively with Ludus and Pragma (the latter for females only).
- H5:* Conscientiousness will be positively correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction; and deliberateness, a facet, will be positively correlated with satisfaction. Conscientiousness will correlate positively with Eros, Storge, and Agape love styles for females and negatively with Mania for males.

5. Method

5.1. Participants

Participants ($N = 196$) were recruited from students enrolled in psychology classes at a large public US university. Participation was limited to those who were currently in a committed relationship of no fewer than six months and who provided complete data. For gender, 46.4% were male and 53.6% female. Some 3.1% were Black/African-American, 84.7% White, non-Hispanic, 8.7% Hispanic, 2.6% Asian, and 1% “other.” For age, 63.8% were 18–19, 32.1% were 20–22, and 4.1% were 23–30. Most participants were single (95.4%). Although sexual orientation was not specified, samples drawn from this participant pool consistently report themselves to be heterosexual.

5.2. Instruments

5.2.1. *NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R)*

The NEO PI-R is a self-report instrument with 240 items measuring five factors and six facets per factor (Costa, McCrae, & Dye, 1991). The factors include neuroticism, extraversion, openness

to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, and the facets were noted in the introduction. Reported alphas ranged from 0.92 (neuroticism) to 0.86 (agreeableness) and facet reliabilities from 0.81 to 0.56 (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Costa et al., 1991). Discriminant and convergent validity of the measure have also been reported.

The NEO PI-R (Form S) was scored manually for each participant. Resulting scores for all variables are T-scores that were normed separately for males and females. (Remaining measures were scored manually and electronically.)

5.2.2. Love Attitudes Scale-Short Form (LAS)

The current measure (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Dicke, 1998) has 24 items (four items for each of the six love styles) scored on a 5-point Likert basis. Alphas for the current study were: Eros (0.71), Ludus (0.75), Storge (0.84), Pragma (0.82), Mania (0.71), and Agape (0.84). Considerable research has established the validity of the LAS, and test–retest correlations from a seven-week period ranged from 0.63 to 0.76 (Hendrick, Hendrick, et al., 1998).

5.2.3. Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

The RAS (Hendrick, 1988) was developed to assess relationship satisfaction. This measure has seven items on a 5-point Likert scale; the alpha for the current study was 0.87. It has been correlated 0.80 with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), and test–retest reliability was 0.85 (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998).

5.2.4. Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR)

The PAIR (Schaefer & Olson, 1981) has 36 items on a 5-point Likert scale and measures emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy. In this study, the PAIR was scored manually for each participant. Alpha coefficients of at least 0.70 are reported for all scales, and convergent and discriminant validity of the PAIR has been demonstrated (Schaefer & Olson, 1981). A demographic questionnaire was also administered.

5.3. Procedure

Participants were tested in groups and received course credit. Each participant was administered the demographic questionnaire, NEO Personality Inventory-Revised, Love Attitudes Scale-Short Form, Relationship Assessment Scale, and Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships. For the PAIR, participants were instructed to describe their relationship “as it is now” in order to assess their current perceived level of intimacy.

6. Results

An alpha level of 0.05 was used in all significance tests. Based on preliminary ANOVAs as well as *t*-tests for significant differences between correlations in independent samples (viewing men and women as different samples; Bruning & Kintz, 1977), a number of significant gender differences were found. Thus many analyses were performed separately for men and women. Analyses were also performed on the combined sample, but the results were comparable to the separate gender

analyses with regard to hypothesis testing. Simultaneous regression was used due to the lack of a priori guidance from the research literature regarding particular ordering of predictor variables. Only significant results will be discussed in detail, due to space constraints. (Intercorrelations among all variables, including facets, as well as complete results for all analyses are available from the first author.)

6.1. Relationship satisfaction

A multiple regression was performed using satisfaction as the dependent variable and the five factors as predictors. For males, the $R^2 = 0.16$, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.11$, and the overall $F = 3.12$ ($p < 0.05$). These predictors accounted for 11% of the variance. However, neuroticism was the only significant predictor (standardized $\beta = -0.32$, $p < 0.05$). For females, the results were not significant. A similar analysis was performed on the combined sample. The $R^2 = 0.10$, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.08$, and the overall $F = 4.29$ ($p < 0.01$). These predictors accounted for 8% of the variance in satisfaction. However, neuroticism was the only significant predictor (standardized $\beta = -0.24$, $p < 0.01$).

6.2. Intimacy

A multiple regression was performed using intimacy as the dependent variable and the five factors as predictors. For males, the $R^2 = 0.32$, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.28$, and the overall $F = 8.07$ ($p < 0.01$). These predictors accounted for 28% of the variance. However, neuroticism was the only significant predictor for males (standardized $\beta = -0.39$, $p < 0.01$). For females, the $R^2 = 0.11$, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.07$, and the overall $F = 2.52$ ($p < 0.05$). These predictors accounted for 7% of the variance. However, none of the factors were significant. A similar analysis was performed on the combined sample. The $R^2 = 0.17$, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.15$, and the overall $F = 7.62$ ($p < 0.01$). These predictors accounted for 15% of the variance in intimacy. Neuroticism (standardized $\beta = -0.22$, $p < 0.01$), extraversion (standardized $\beta = 0.19$, $p < 0.05$), and agreeableness (standardized $\hat{a} = 0.16$, $p < 0.05$) were significant predictors of intimacy.

6.3. Correlations

Correlations for women and men are shown in Table 1 and those for the total sample in Table 2. Relationship satisfaction and intimacy were significantly and positively correlated for females ($r = 0.76$, $p < 0.01$), males ($r = 0.76$, $p < 0.01$), and the combined sample ($r = 0.77$, $p < 0.01$).

H1: Neuroticism was predicted to be negatively correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction. Neuroticism was indeed negatively correlated with satisfaction for both females and males, and was a significant negative predictor of relationship satisfaction for the combined sample and for males, as noted previously. Neuroticism was negatively correlated with intimacy for both genders and was a significant negative predictor of intimacy for males and the combined sample, as discussed earlier. *Neuroticism was expected to correlate positively with Mania and negatively with Storge* for both genders, but was positively correlated with Mania only for females and negatively correlated with Storge only for males. *Neuroticism was expected to correlate positively with Ludus for men only*, and it did. It also correlated positively with Agape for females and negatively with

Table 1

Correlations between personality variables and other variables for women and men

| Variable | Neuroticism | Extraversion | Openness | Agreeableness | Conscientiousness |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Satisfaction | -0.28** (-0.38**) | 0.14 (0.14) | 0.07 (0.05) | 0.13 (0.21*) | 0.09 (0.20) |
| Intimacy | -0.25** (-0.53**) | 0.23* (0.37**) | -0.10 (0.06) | 0.17 (0.29**) | 0.07 (0.26*) |
| Eros | -0.19 (-0.23*) | 0.20* (0.24*) | -0.03 (0.09) | 0.10 (0.21*) | 0.09 (0.16) |
| Ludus | 0.16 (0.40**) | -0.03 (0.05) | 0.15 (-0.23*) | -0.14 (-0.36**) | -0.17 (-0.07) |
| Storge | -0.13 (-0.24*) | 0.16 (0.14) | 0.11 (-0.19) | 0.08 (0.15) | 0.07 (0.26*) |
| Pragma | -0.03 (-0.04) | 0.10 (0.15) | -0.17 (-0.26*) | 0.02 (-0.08) | 0.12 (0.19) |
| Mania | 0.45** (0.20) | -0.04 (0.06) | 0.07 (-0.02) | -0.07 (-0.16) | -0.06 (0.08) |
| Agape | 0.30** (-0.24*) | -0.09 (0.19) | 0.09 (0.17) | 0.12 (0.10) | 0.03 (0.33**) |

Note. Correlations for men are in parentheses. Hypothesized correlations are emphasized in boldface. $N = 105$ women and 91 men. * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 2

Correlations between personality variables and other variables for combined sample

| Variable | Neuroticism | Extraversion | Openness | Agreeableness | Conscientiousness |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------|----------------|-------------------|
| Satisfaction | -0.29** | 0.14* | 0.05 | 0.19** | 0.16* |
| Intimacy | -0.34** | 0.29** | -0.03 | 0.25** | 0.17* |
| Eros | -0.19** | 0.22** | 0.02 | 0.18* | 0.15* |
| Ludus | 0.23** | -0.01 | -0.04 | -0.28** | -0.16* |
| Storge | -0.17* | 0.16* | -0.03 | 0.12 | 0.15* |
| Pragma | -0.02 | 0.12 | -0.21** | 0.00 | 0.17* |
| Mania | 0.34** | 0.00 | 0.03 | -0.12 | -0.01 |
| Agape | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.13 | 0.09 | 0.13 |

Note. Hypothesized correlations are emphasized in boldface. $N = 196$. * $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

Eros and Agape for males. *Impulsiveness, a facet, was predicted to correlate positively with Mania, and this was the case for females only. Thus Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.*

H2: Extraversion was predicted to be positively correlated with and predictive of relationship satisfaction and intimacy. Extraversion was indeed positively correlated with satisfaction for the combined sample, but not for either sex separately. It was not a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction for either sex or the combined sample. It correlated positively with intimacy for both genders and the combined sample and was a significant predictor of intimacy for the combined sample, but did not predict each sex separately, as noted earlier. *Extraversion was expected to correlate positively with Eros and Agape, and it correlated as expected for Eros but not for Agape. Thus Hypothesis 2 was also partially supported.*

H3: Openness was predicted to correlate positively with Eros and Mania for males and negatively with Pragma for females. None of these predictions was supported. However, openness was negatively correlated with Ludus and Pragma for males. Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

H4: Agreeableness was predicted to correlate positively with and be predictive of relationship satisfaction. Agreeableness was significantly and positively correlated with satisfaction for males only. Agreeableness and intimacy were positively correlated for males, and agreeableness was a significant predictor of intimacy for the combined sample, as previously discussed. *Agreeableness was expected to correlate positively with Storge (for both genders), and Eros and Agape (for fe-*

males), and negatively with *Ludus* (for both genders) and *Pragma* (for females). However, the only significant findings were a negative correlation with *Ludus* and a positive correlation with *Eros* for males. Thus Hypothesis 4 was partially supported.

H5: Conscientiousness was expected to be correlated positively with and predictive of relationship satisfaction. However, conscientiousness was not significantly correlated with satisfaction for either sex and was not a predictor, though the correlations between conscientiousness and relationship satisfaction had similar magnitudes to those found by other researchers (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kwan et al., 1997; Shaver & Brennan, 1992). Conscientiousness was positively correlated with intimacy for males; however, it was not a significant predictor of intimacy. *Deliberateness, a facet, was expected to correlate positively with relationship satisfaction.* However, it did not. *Conscientiousness was expected to correlate positively and significantly with Storge, Agape, and Eros for women;* however, these predictions were not supported. *Conscientiousness was predicted to correlate negatively with Mania for men,* but it did not. However, it correlated positively with both *Storge* and *Agape* for men. For the combined sample, conscientiousness was positively associated with *Eros*, *Storge*, and *Pragma* and negatively correlated with *Ludus*. Thus Hypothesis 5 was not supported, though other interesting findings emerged.

6.4. Mediation analyses

Mediation hypotheses were proposed and tested for possible mediation effects of love styles on the association between personality variables and satisfaction and intimacy. However, the results were non-significant and therefore will not be discussed due to space constraints. Exploratory analyses were then conducted among three variables that were significantly correlated for females. Analyses were performed using the procedures and conditions outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). *Mania* and neuroticism were significantly correlated ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.01$), neuroticism was significantly correlated with satisfaction ($r = -0.28$, $p < 0.01$), and *Mania* was significantly correlated with satisfaction ($r = -0.37$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, regressions were performed. Neuroticism was a significant predictor of *Mania* (overall $F = 25.38$, $t = 5.04$, $p < 0.01$) and relationship satisfaction (overall $F = 8.52$, $t = -2.92$, $p < 0.01$). Both *Mania* and neuroticism were entered into a simultaneous regression equation with satisfaction as the dependent variable. *Mania* was a significant predictor of satisfaction ($t = -3.04$, $p < 0.01$), and neuroticism was no longer a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction when *Mania* was controlled ($t = -1.37$, $p > 0.05$), thus indicating a full mediation (Hoyle & Robinson, 2004). Just to be sure, the path from neuroticism (predictor) to relationship satisfaction (dependent variable) was tested with the path from *Mania* (mediator) to satisfaction (with neuroticism controlled) in order to test for a significant difference according to Sobel's (1982) method (as cited in Baron & Kenny, 1986). The results ($z = -3.17$, $p < 0.01$) indicated that *Mania* completely mediated the relationship between neuroticism and relationship satisfaction for women.

7. Discussion

The five personality factors yielded many significant associations with relationship constructs. The findings for neuroticism were partially consistent with previous research, showing expected

negative correlations with relationship satisfaction and intimacy, yet an unexpected positive correlation with Agape for women. Agape in moderation indicates the consideration for a partner that is necessary for the sustenance of a successful, long-term partnered relationship. Agape in the extreme may indicate a neurotic enmeshment with the partner and abnegation of the self. Neuroticism's correlations with the more affective love styles of Eros, Agape, and Mania are consistent with the idea of neuroticism as one of the more affective of the five factors, probably due to the salience of the negative affect component (Pytlik Zillig, Hemenover, & Dienstbier, 2002). Mania's complete mediation of the relationship between neuroticism and satisfaction is a signal to therapists that the possessive, dependent love situations often presented in therapy may indicate an individual's more pervasive neurotic tendencies.

Extraversion's positive relationships with satisfaction, intimacy, and Eros were reasonably consistent with previous research (e.g., Shadish, 1986), but extraversion was not as powerfully positive as might have been expected. Openness to experience showed little association with relationship variables, whereas agreeableness showed positive associations with several relationship variables, for males. A number of these findings are consistent with previous research (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1995) and substantiate agreeableness as positive in relationships. Finally, conscientiousness was positively correlated with several love styles.

Although the findings are interesting, the study has clear limitations. In addition to the homogenous nature of the college student sample (young, unmarried, largely heterosexual), the measures employed were limited to the NEO PI-R and selected relationship measures. Future research could usefully draw other variables from interpersonal psychology, particularly, and might usefully explore aspects of psychopathology, such as personality disorders in concert with relationships. Also, caution is warranted in interpreting significant correlations at an alpha level of greater than 0.01 due to the possibility of family-wise type error.

It seems clear that personality and relational constructs are intertwined in various and intricate ways. Although the current findings confirmed only some findings of previous research, new findings (particularly those involving intimacy) also emerged. The mediation by Mania of the association between neuroticism and satisfaction was also new. Both researchers and practitioners may find this research interesting and useful.

What seems most compelling about this research, however, is less the specific empirical links between personality factors and relational constructs than the very fact that these linkages *do* occur. It is tempting for relationship researchers to focus solely on dyadic phenomena, even though these phenomena are measured largely by the individual partners' beliefs, attitudes, or emotions. Yet each individual partners' personality—the themes which each expresses in their lives—should not be overlooked or underestimated. We have some distance to travel in order to clarify the various linkages between personality and relationships, and the current research takes one step along that road.

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