

Introduction and research objective

Well-being in romantic couples has been associated with greater life satisfaction, mental health, and overall quality of life (Apostolou et al., 2023). Evidence shows that not only individual characteristics influence, but also similarity between romantic couples, especially in how they think about and plan for the future (Luo, 2017).

The CFC measure measures the extent to which individuals take into account the immediate versus future outcomes of their action (Strathman et al., 1994). Recent research suggests that CFC may fluctuate over time (Vásquez-Echeverría et al., 2018).

Aims: a) Explore daily fluctuations in CFC and their associations with happiness and couple satisfaction. b) Examine the relationship between individual CFC, partner similarity, and well-being. c) Analyze whether similarity moderates the link between individual CFC and couple well-being

Design and participants

- Non-experimental descriptive study with a 5-day daily diary design.
- Participants: 60 heterosexual romantic couples from Spain ($N = 120$). Mean age: men = 42.6 (SD = 9.81); women = 40.6 (SD = 10.01).
- Most participants were employed in the service sector.
- The study was completed online and approved by the Ethics Committee of the UCM.

Instruments:

Sociodemographic questionnaire (ad-hoc): age, gender, education, number of children, current job, and their characteristics

CFC Scale – Daily version: 14-item Spanish version with two subscales: CFC-Immediate and CFC-Future (7-point scale) (Álvarez-Nuñez & Vásquez-Echeverría, 2023). Daily similarity was calculated as the absolute difference between partners' daily CFC scores (Furler et al., 2013).

Subjective Happiness Scale: 3 items adapted for daily use (6-point Likert scale) (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999)

Relationship Satisfaction: 1-item Kunin Face Scale (1955) (0 = 😞 ; 6 = 😊)

Results

CFC fluctuation over time:

CFC scores showed both within-person and between-couple variability (ICCs).

Correlational results:

- CFC-Future \rightarrow \uparrow happiness and satisfaction
- CFC-Immediate \rightarrow \downarrow happiness and satisfaction

Moderation (multilevel models):

- **CFC-Immediate similarity** moderated the association: \uparrow similarity + \uparrow individual CFC-Immediate \rightarrow \downarrow happiness (Fig. 1)
- **CFC-Future similarity** moderated the association: \uparrow similarity + \uparrow individual CFC-Future \rightarrow \uparrow couple satisfaction (Fig. 2)

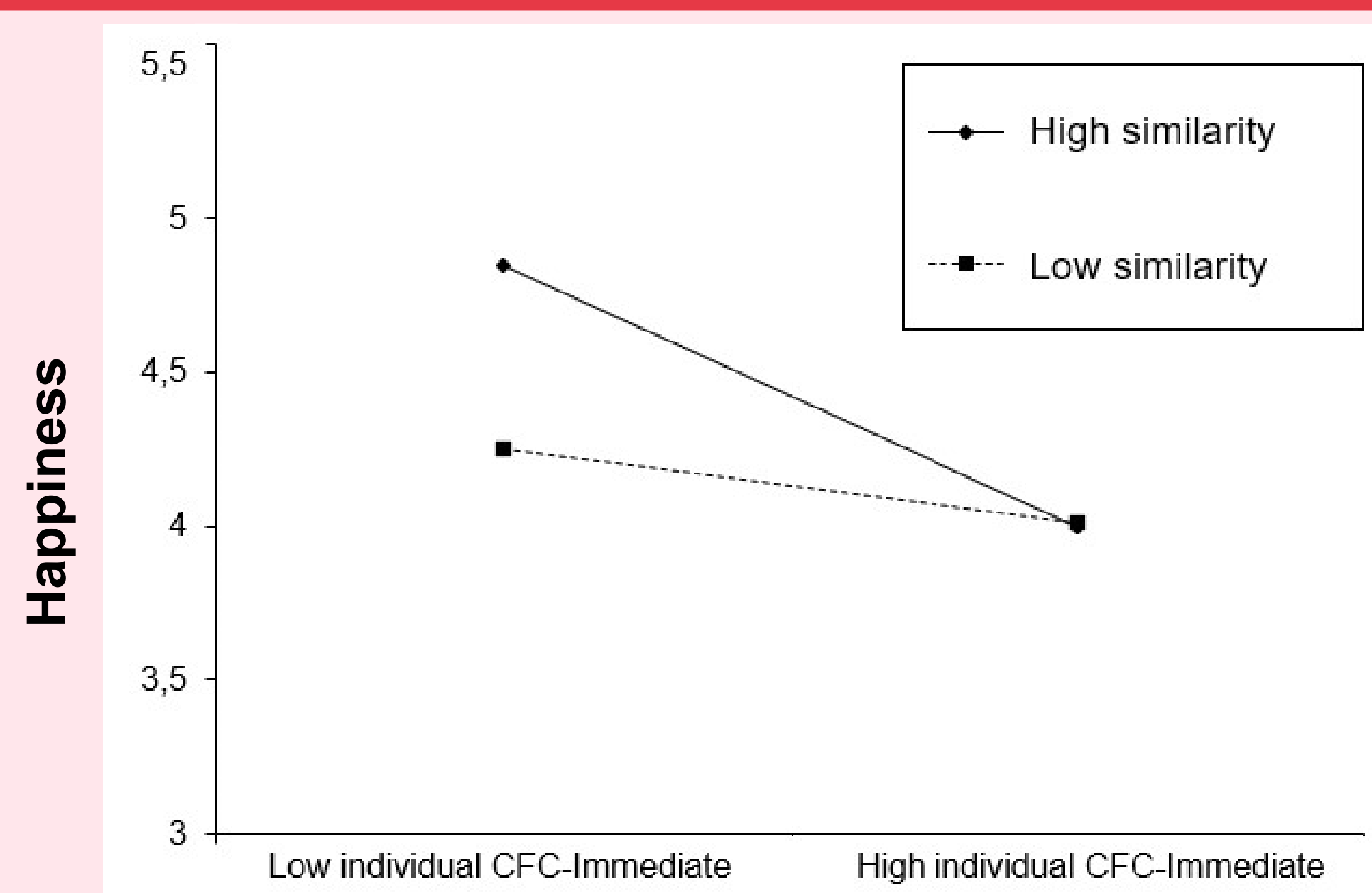


Fig. 1: Similarity in daily CFC-I moderates the link between individual CFC-I and happiness

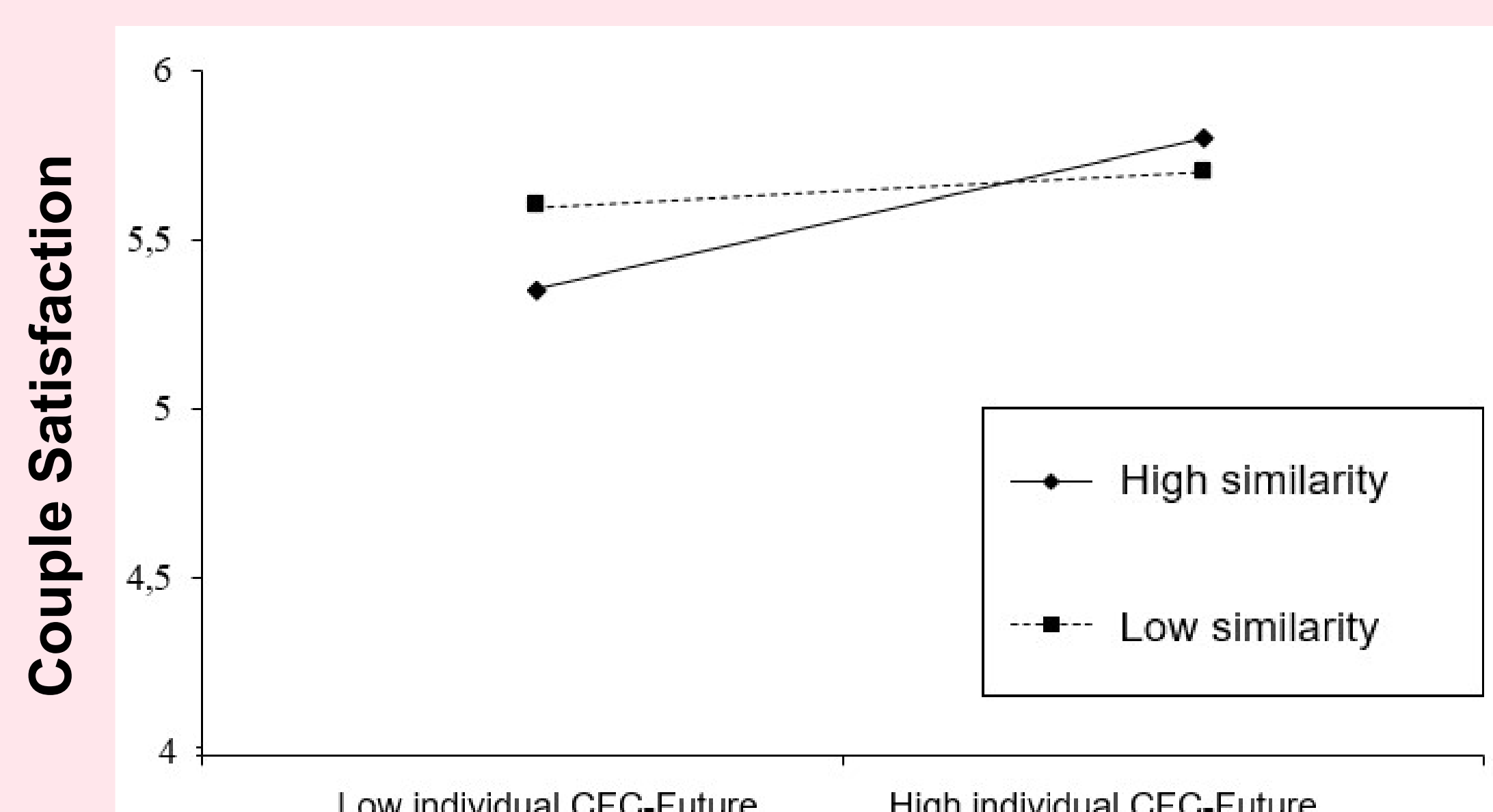


Fig. 2: Similarity in daily CFC-F moderates the link between individual CFC-F and couple satisfaction

Discussion

- CFC fluctuates in short periods, supporting a state-like perspective.
- Individual CFC-Future is associated with greater happiness and relationship satisfaction, whereas CFC-Immediate shows the opposite pattern.
- High similarity in CFC-Future amplifies its positive effect on couples' satisfaction.
- High similarity in CFC-Immediate buffers its negative impact on happiness.

These results suggest that CFC operates not only as a trait but also as a dynamic process with meaningful short-term implications for affective and relational outcomes.

These findings support the integration of temporal and interpersonal variability in the design of adaptive psychological interventions.

Conclusions & Applications

- CFC is malleable and shaped by context or intervention.
- Relationship well-being is associated with individual levels of CFC and dyadic similarity.
- Couple interventions could incorporate CFC-based strategies (targeting both individual levels and partner similarity) to enhance mutual understanding and reduce conflict.

