

Interpersonal Complementarity and Sexual Behaviors within Romantic Relationships



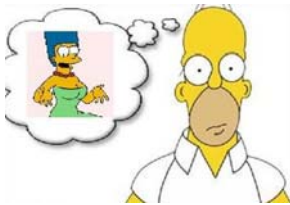
Patrick M. Markey



Charlotte N. Markey



The Complementarity of Interpersonal Traits Among Romantic Ideals and Romantic Partners



What is the personality of your ideal romantic partner?

The Complementarity of Interpersonal Traits Among Romantic Ideals and Romantic Partners



What is the actual personality of your romantic partner?

The Complementarity of Interpersonal Traits Among Romantic Ideals and Romantic Partners



What personality would likely produce the most harmonious and loving relationship for you?

Current Study

What do we want?



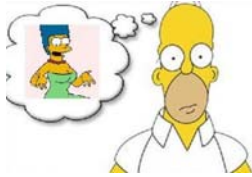
What do we get?



What works?



What do we want?

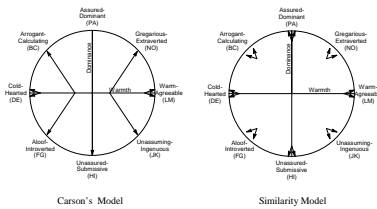


What do we want?

- People tend to be romantically attracted to other who are similar to themselves (e.g., Buss, 1985; Vandeberg, 1972; Botwin, Buss & Shackelford, 1997).
 - Majority of studies examine demographics, interests, and the FFM



Complementarity Models



Participants

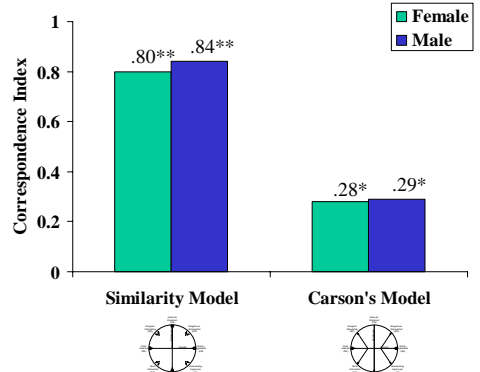
- N = 169 (103 females; 66 males)
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- M age = 19.01 years
- All were seeking romantic partners

Procedure

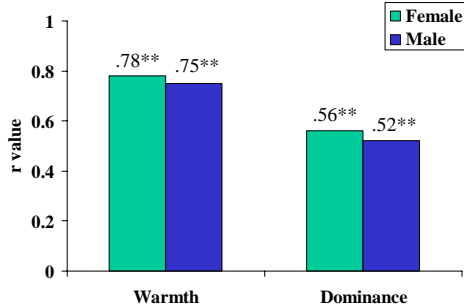
- Self-Rated Personality
 - Interpersonal Adjective Scale (IAS-R)
- Filler Questionnaires
- Personality of Romantic Ideal
 - Interpersonal Adjective Scale (IAS-R)
 - Asked to rate each item on the degree to which it describes their "romantic ideal" (could be either a real or a fictional person).



What do we want?

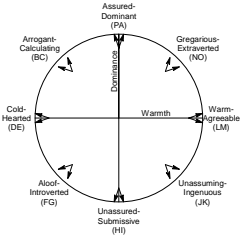


What do we want?



What do we want?

- The personality of your romantic ideal is very similar to your own personality!



What do we get?



Participants

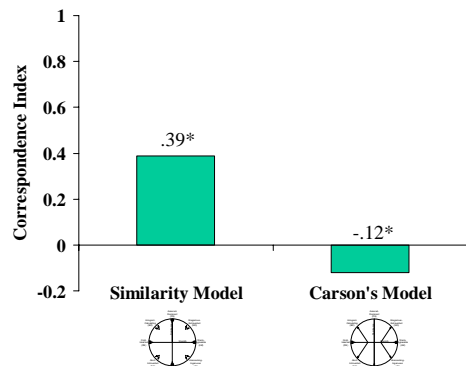
- 106 romantic couples (212 participants)
 - Romantically involved for at least 1 year
- M age = 24.86 years
- 28% married
- 32% cohabitating but not married
- 40% exclusively dating but not cohabitating

Procedure

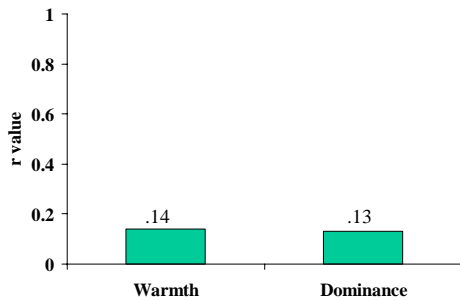
- Members of each couple were placed in separate rooms
- Assessed own personality with the Interpersonal Adjective Scale (IAS-R)



What do we get?

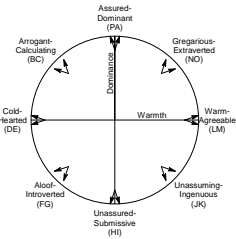


What do we get?



What do we get?

- The actual personality of your romantic partner tends to be somewhat similar to your own personality!



What works?



Participants

- 106 romantic couples (212 participants)
- M age = 24.86 years
- 28% married
- 32% cohabitating but not married
- 40% exclusively dating but not cohabitating

Procedure

- Relationship quality was assessed with the Marital Interaction Scale

Procedure

- Relationship quality was assessed with the Marital Interaction Scale
- Three equal sized groups were created



Low Quality Relationships

Not much love and is conflict ridden



Moderate Quality Relationship

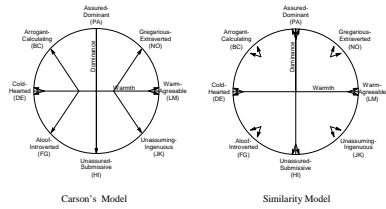
Moderate love and conflict



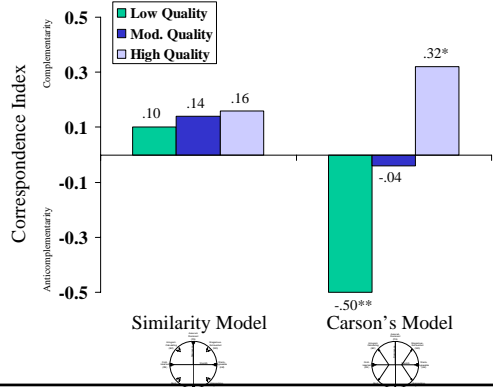
High Quality Relationship

Full of love and harmony

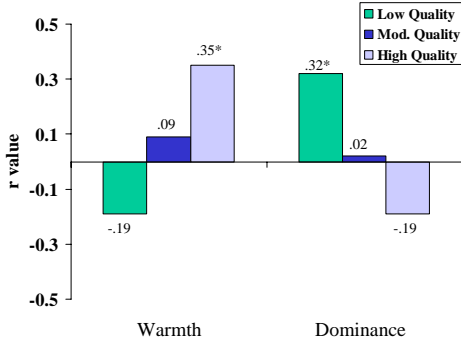
Complementarity Models



What works?

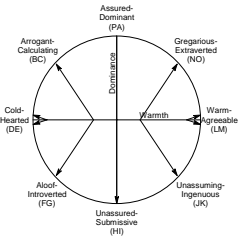


What works?



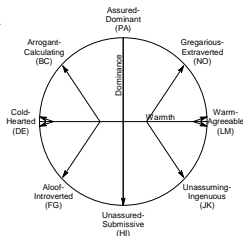
What works?

- Carson's model best predicts the quality of a romantic relationship.

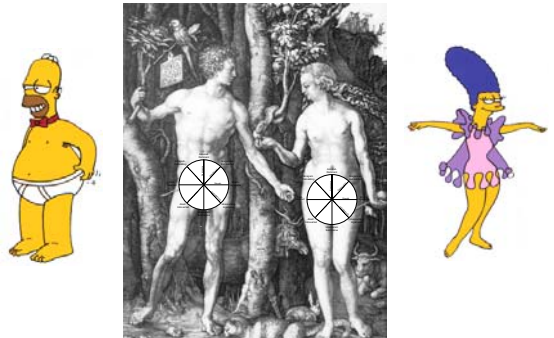


What works?

- Why?
- This type of pairing provides each romantic partner with as sense of self-validation and security by allowing them to behave in a manner consistent with their personality (Carson, 1969; Sullivan, 1953).



The interpersonal nature of sexual behavior in romantic relationships

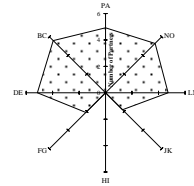


Sex

- Sex is (typically) an interpersonal behavior
 - "Sex is a conversation carried out by other means." Peter Ustinov

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 - "Sex is a conversation carried out by other means." Peter Ustinov
- Past research linking sexual promiscuity to the interpersonal circumplex (Markey & Markey, 2007)



Current Research

- Examine two types of sexual behaviors in the context of romantic relationships

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- Prior sexual promiscuity



Current Research

- Examine two types of sexual behaviors in the context of romantic relationships
- Prior sexual promiscuity



- Sexual Adventure



Current Study

What do we get?

- Do we tend to obtain someone with a similar level of sexual experience and adventure?



What works?

- Do similar levels of sexual experience and adventure relate to harmonious and loving relationships?



Method

- 86 romantic couples (182 participants)
- These are the same couples from the previous study
 - Only couples with complete data were utilized

Sexual Experience

- Sexual Experience prior to the present relationship
- How many different people, **other than with your current partner**, have you engaged in sexual intercourse (i.e., the penetration of the vagina by the penis) ?

Sexual Adventure

Attached is a list of sexual activities in which you may or may not have engaged. Please indicate whether or not you engaged in each activity **prior to your present relationship** (Bentler's Heterosexual Behavioral Inventory)

1. One minute continuous lip kissing with female.
2. Manual manipulation of clothed female breasts.
3. Manual manipulation of nude female breasts.
4. Manual manipulation of clothed female genitals.
5. Oral contact with nude female breasts.
6. Manual manipulation of nude female genitals.
7. Manual manipulation of your clothed genitals by female.
8. Mutual manual manipulation of clothed genitals with female.
9. Manual manipulation of your nude genitals by female.
10. Manual manipulation of nude female genitals to massive female genital secretions
11. Manual manipulation of your nude genitals to ejaculation.
12. Oral contact with your nude genitals by female.
13. Oral contact with nude female genitals.
14. Sexual intercourse (i.e., the penetration of the vagina by the penis)
15. Oral manipulation of nude female genitals.
16. Oral manipulation of your nude genitals by female.
17. Mutual oral-genital manipulation with female.
18. Mutual manual manipulation of nude genitals with female to mutual orgasm.
19. Sexual intercourse, rear entry (i.e., The penetration of the anus by the penis).
20. Oral manipulation of your nude genitals to ejaculation.
21. Mutual oral manipulation of genitals with female to mutual orgasm.

Relationship Quality

- Relationship quality was assessed with the Martial Interaction Scale
- Three equal sized groups were created



Low Quality Relationships

Not much love and is conflict ridden



Moderate Quality Relationship

Moderate love and conflict



High Quality Relationship

Full of love and harmony

Results

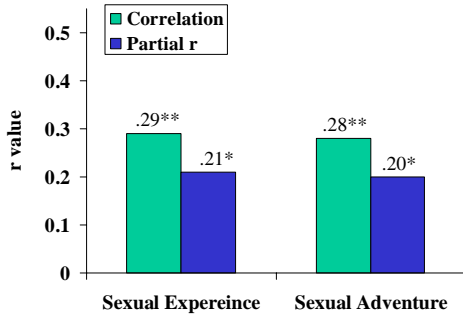
- Mean Differences (Sexual Experience)
 - Male = 6.60
 - Female = 2.80
- Mean Difference (Sexual Adventure)
 - Male = 16.82
 - Female = 14.85
- Correlation between sexual experience and sexual adventure
 - Male = .33**
 - Female = .37**

What do we get?

- Do we tend to obtain someone with a similar level of sexual experience and adventure?



What we get

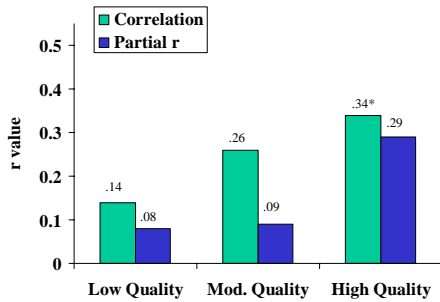


What works?

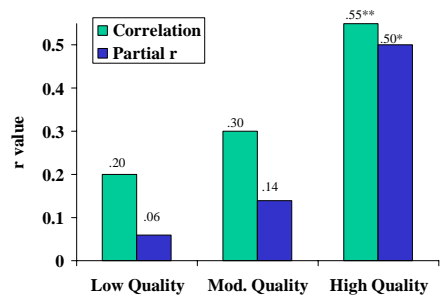
- Do similar levels of sexual experience and adventure relate to harmonious and loving relationships?



What Works: Sexual Experience

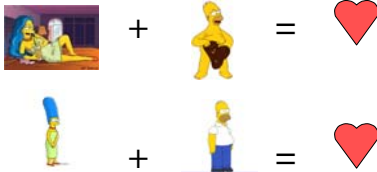


What Works: Sexual Adventure



What Works: Sexual Adventure

- Why?



- This type of pairing provides each romantic partner with a sense of self-validation and security by allowing them to behave in a manner consistent with their own sexual adventure (Carson, 1969; Sullivan, 1953).

Conclusions

- What we desire in a romantic partner might not be the same thing that produces a loving and harmonious relationship years later.



- The love and harmony we experience with our romantic partners might be a reflection of how similar we are with each other in terms of sexual adventure.





Acknowledgments

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