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Romantic Relationships in Young Adults: The Influence of Parents and Friends

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ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUNG ADULTS: THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTS AND FRIENDS

By

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Declaration of Originality

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Abstract

Romantic relationships occur in the context of family and friend relationships and in the context of the greater culture. Studies using a variety of methods have found that young adults are more likely to be interested in a romantic partner, have longer relationships, and have more satisfying and more loving relationships when their parents and friends approve of their romantic relationship (e.g., Parks et al., 1983 Le et al., 2010; Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014). Evolutionary psychology provides motives for parents and friends to form opinions and attempt to influence romantic relationships (Trivers, 1974). Developmentally, emerging and young adults navigate changing relationships with increasing importance on romantic relationships within the context of parent and friend relationships (Arnett, 2000; Erikson, 1963). The primary purpose of this study was to examine the importance that young adults place on the approval and disapproval of their parents and friends with consideration given to other potentially relevant variables (e.g., self-construal, acculturation, and social support). Two-hundred and thirty-eight participants (18-39 years old) responded online to qualitative and quantitative questions regarding their relationships. Analysis with a subsample of participants involved in romantic relationships at the time of the present study (n = 142) reiterated past research such that positive parent and friend opinion of the relationship was associated with more loving relationships. Social support from parents and friends was associated with greater importance given to parent and friend disapproval of a romantic relationship, respectively. Higher interdependent self-construal was also associated with greater importance given to parent disapproval. Acculturation was not associated with the importance placed on parent and friend approval/disapproval. Themes from conflicts with

parents and friends related to romantic relationships were also identified and discussed. Frequency, but not severity, of relevant conflicts with parents was associated with the parent and the participant reports of fewer shared ideal characteristics for a romantic partner. These results have scholarly implications for understanding how parent and friend relationships impact romantic relationships within the context of cultural values. The current study provides initial support for a new measure, the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Recommended next steps include further modification and validation of the PFI. In addition, future research on parent and friend approval/disapproval importance within the context of specific ethnic or cultural groups would likely benefit from including other potentially relevant variables such as religiosity and ethnicity of friends.

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Chapter I - Introduction

Although much has been written about romantic relationships in young adults, the purpose of this study was to further clarify the influence that parent and friend approval and disapproval has on young adults' romantic relationships, including the importance young adults place on the approval and disapproval of romantic relationships from their parents and friends. Additionally, this study included variables that add cultural context in relation to parent and friend approval and disapproval to better situate their influences on romantic relationships. Finally, this study was used to investigate conflicts with parents and friends related to romantic relationships.

Understanding parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships is significant for those who interact with young adults or work with them in clinical settings. An appreciation of this phenomenon with consideration to variables such as interdependent/independent self-construal and acculturation is important given the norms and expectations placed on young adults from different cultural backgrounds (e.g., Buunk et al., 2010). A clear understanding of these variables is useful to promote culturally sensitive understanding in multicultural countries such as Canada.

Objectives

There were six main objectives for the current study. Past studies have linked more positive parent and friend opinions of romantic relationships with more successful, better quality, and longer lasting romantic relationships (e.g., Hill, 2019; Parks et al., 1983; Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014). Self-construal describes culturally grounded ways of understanding and relating to the self and others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Self-construal is typically categorized on two dimensions: independent self-construal, valuing

uniqueness and one's own interests, and interdependent self-construal, valuing "fitting in" and the group's interests. Past research has indicated that parental approval of romantic relationships is given greater importance among people from collectivistic cultures, where people tend to have more interdependent self-construal, in comparison to individualistic cultures, where people tend to have more independent self-construal (Bejanyan et al., 2015; Buunk et al., 2010). However, it remains unclear what relation self-construal has with romantic relationship quality in circumstances of varying parent opinion and friend opinion of the romantic relationship. Thus, the first objective of the present study was to clarify the relation between parent or friend opinions and romantic relationship with consideration to self-construal.

The second objective was to examine how differing levels of independent and interdependent self-construal relate to the *importance* placed on parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. People who have an interdependent self-construal are more likely to be concerned with the wants and desires of others, avoiding conflict, and fitting in with the group (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991). This concern is particularly relevant when those providing approval or disapproval are members of an “in-group,” such as family members or close friends. In contrast, people with a more independent self-construal tend to be more concerned with their own individuality and uniqueness, even if this causes ingroup conflict. As mentioned previously, a study by Buunk et al. (2010) indicates that people from collectivistic cultures, in which people tend to have interdependent self-construal, put greater importance on parental approval of romantic relationships.

The third objective was to clarify how gender differences relate to importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval. To varying degrees across cultures, daughters generally are the target of greater parental monitoring and behavioural control than sons (Madsen, 2008). This may be particularly true when it comes to romantic relationships and related behaviour (e.g., sexual involvement, partying). This appears to sometimes be the case even more so among immigrant families (Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006). Less is known in relation to the influence of friend approval and disapproval on romantic relationships. Women are more likely to disclose relevant sex-related behaviour to close friends compared to men (Lefkowitz et al., 2004) and have greater communion expectations for friendships compared to men (e.g., greater expectation of intimacy and self-disclosure; Hall, 2011). The current study was intended to clarify the relation of gender and willingness to pursue a romantic relationship under various circumstances involving parent and friend approval and disapproval. Additionally, independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal were considered in relation to gender in circumstances of parent and friend approval and disapproval.

The fourth objective was to examine how the level of acculturation to the heritage and mainstream cultures related to the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval. Acculturation is the process of adjustment and adaptation in the presence of another culture which occurs across two dimensions: maintenance of heritage culture (i.e., heritage acculturation) and mainstream acculturation (Berry, 1997). Heritage acculturation involves the maintenance of cultural values, practices, and traditions whereas mainstream acculturation involves adapting to new cultural values, practices, and traditions. In the literature review for this study, the potential relation between

acculturation and the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships has not been clarified. As such, the fourth objective was to clarify the potential relation between acculturation and the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships.

The fifth objective was to examine how social support from parents and friends relates to the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. Social support from parents and friends serves an important function. Social support is associated with better physical and psychological health (e.g., Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009; Uchino, 2009); thus, there is an adaptive reason to maintain sources of social support. Given this, people would, theoretically, be motivated to maintain relationships in which greater social support is received. In terms of the current study, this was expected to take the form of greater influence given to the approval and disapproval of people who provide the participant with greater social support. Past literature provides some support for this hypothesis. For instance, Wright and Sinclair (2012) found that people who were dependent on their parents relied more on their parents' opinions compared to their friends' opinions regarding their romantic relationships.

The sixth objective was to examine whether young adults experience conflict in their friend and parental relationships related to their decisions regarding romantic relationships, and to investigate the nature of these types of conflicts. Yet, conflict with parents and friends related to romantic relationships has only been minimally studied (e.g., Chung, 2001), leaving a gap in the literature. Themes related to these types of conflict will be identified. In addition, differences in the characteristics of an ideal partner

will be addressed in relation to parent-child and friend conflict severity and frequency. There are theoretical reasons to expect differences in opinion on what characteristics people believe would make an ideal mate for themselves, their child, and their friend (e.g., evolutionary psychology theory, Sprecher, 2011). This study was intended to address these differences and identify whether they are associated with more frequent and severe conflict.

The next section includes a literature review of theories and research related to these objectives. After the literature review section, the rationale for conducting this study, the main research questions, and the study hypotheses are presented.

Chapter II - Literature Review

Theoretical Perspectives on Love and Intimate Partner Relationships

Romantic love and intimate partner relationships have been the focus of a broad range of disciplines. Poetry, novels, movies, music, television shows, visual arts, religion, history, technology, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, biology, and psychology have all contributed to our understanding of romantic love and romantic partner relationships. An exceedingly common theme across these vast disciplines is the influence family and friends have on romantic relationships. One famous example comes from Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," in which disapproval from family and friends is a major theme in the play that contributes to the young lovers' tragic demise (1597/2016). Movies, such as "Crazy Rich Asians," also demonstrate the continuing importance of family and friends on romantic relationships (Chu, 2018). In the movie, the main couple temporarily break up following intense disapproval from family members and friends. Songs such as "Rude" performed by Magic! illustrate the important role family and friends have in romantic relationships (Atweh et al., 2014). In the song, a suitor asks a disagreeable father for his daughter's hand in marriage. In terms of technology, developers have integrated features in dating apps to allow for friends and, if desired, family members to provide input on potential dates (e.g., Khalid, 2019). These are just a few of the vast number of illustrations that demonstrate the importance of family and friend influence on romantic relationships across disciplines and in artistic expressions.

The following sections will further explore love and intimate partner relationships from relevant psychological theories. These select theoretical perspectives will be used to provide a background for the current research project, to guide hypotheses, and to aid in

interpretation of results. First, developmental theories will be reviewed to provide a context for the social influences salient to the emerging and young adults who took part in this study. Following this, Sternberg's triangular theory of love will be used to contextualize the conceptualization of love used in this current study. Finally, evolutionary theory will be briefly reviewed to situate potential reasons that parents and friends are invested in romantic relationships that are not their own.

Developmental Theories

Developmental considerations for this study were drawn from Erikson's theory of psychosocial development and from Arnett's developmental stage of emerging adulthood. In his important classic theory of social development, Erik Erikson (e.g., 1963, 1994) proposed that psychosocial development is made up of certain social tasks or "crises" that people generally confront throughout their lives. These eight crises take the form of tasks that need to be accomplished successfully for the person to mature and face the demands of subsequent tasks. These eight tasks have since been associated with approximate age ranges wherein people normally experience the crisis. The eight crises include the following: trust versus mistrust (birth to 1 year), autonomy versus shame and doubt (1-3 years), initiative versus guilt (3-6 years), industry versus inferiority (6-12 years), identity versus identify confusion (12-20 years), intimacy versus isolation (20-40 years), generativity versus stagnation (40-65 years), and integrity versus despair (old age; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009).

Given the age range of participants that took part in the current study (18-39 years old), both identity and intimacy issues are particularly salient. Before undergoing the developmental crisis of intimacy versus isolation, people generally were thought to

undergo the crisis of identity versus identity confusion (Shaffer & Kipp, 2009). This crisis is theorized to take place during late adolescence. This stage involves the struggle to develop an identity that is a synthesis of the identities of childhood and enables a sense of continuity (Marcia, 1966). Identity accomplishment involves having considered various occupations and ideologies and having then committed to a specific occupation and ideology. Originally, it was proposed that the task of identity versus identity confusion needed to be resolved successfully for successful resolution of the subsequent crises. However, this order does not necessarily apply to all people, particularly given that the original research was conducted with men. Specifically, women and girls often establish intimacy before the identity crisis or experience both crises simultaneously (Dyk & Adams, 1990). As is expanded on in Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood (2000), young adults, such as the participants who completed the current study, may not solely be interested, or involved in romantic relationships for the sake of developing an ongoing intimate romantic relationship but also for the sake of understanding their identity, values, and goals in relation to other people.

Following the identity crisis, between the ages of approximately 20 to 39 years old, people are theorized to undergo the developmental crisis of intimacy versus isolation (Erikson, 1963; Shaffer & Kipp, 2009). During the stage of intimacy versus isolation, people generally attempt to form strong relationships that provide a sense of love and companionship. These relationships include close friend, romantic, and marital relationships. When people successfully develop these relationships, they have a sense of fulfillment and are equipped to undergo the next developmental crisis, generativity versus stagnation. People who do not develop close relationships tend to feel lonely and isolated.

This theory emphasizes the importance of intimate relationships as a key feature of life during young adulthood. As such, it may be important to understand how different types of close relationships impact one another. Although this classic theory of development provides an important context, consideration must be given to current theories that expand on older theories to account for cultural shifts and modernization that may alter developmental expectations.

In modern, industrialized societies, there typically appears to be a distinct developmental stage occurring during the early periods of young adulthood. Arnett (2000) proposed the theory of emerging adulthood to account for this. Emerging adulthood is a unique developmental stage that generally occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 years. Emerging adults are characterized by exploration in their work, personal lives, and, of particular interest for the current study, relationships. The exploration of romantic relationships is another method by which identity is explored. Although exploration is characteristic of emerging adulthood, researchers have found that people generally begin to demonstrate greater commitment to identities throughout this stage (Luyckx et al., 2006). Emerging adulthood can be understood as a subcategory of young adulthood as proposed by Erikson or as a new additional stage occurring in relation to societal and cultural shifts (Robinson, 2015).

Arnett reports support for emerging adulthood as a life stage based on three general areas: demographic characteristics, subjective reports, and identity exploration (Arnett, 2000). First, there is a lack of consistency in demographic characteristics of emerging adults. Unlike adolescents and older young adults, emerging adults tend not to be defined by any living situation, romantic relationship status, employment status, or

educational situation. As such, emerging adults are more likely than other older age groups to report a sense of instability (Arnett & Mitra, 2020). Second, subjectively, in contrast to adolescents and older young adults, emerging adults generally report that they are either not adults yet, or that they are adults only in some ways (Arnett, 1994, 2001; Arnett & Mitra, 2020). Third, identity exploration is a common theme among emerging adults. Emerging adults tend to explore their identity through various intimate relationships, educational and employment opportunities, hobbies, and traveling. In addition to reporting a greater focus on identity exploration compared to other age groups, emerging adults also report somewhat more of a self-focus and a greater sense of optimism and possibilities compared to those of other age groups (Arnett & Mitra, 2020).

Arnett's theory emphasizes the importance of exploration of romantic relationships as a feature of life during emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). As such, it is important to understand what influences the development of such relationships. In the present study, the importance of parent and friend approval/disapproval is specifically considered. Given that the participants in the present study are within the ages associated with emerging and young adulthood, consideration should be given to how this developmental stage relates to their approach to parent, friend, and romantic relationships and how this evolves throughout emerging and young adulthood. As such, Shulman and Connolly (2013) suggest that although, unlike most adolescents, emerging adults do have the competence needed for maintaining long-term intimate partner relationships such as handling conflict, they are also focused on other tasks including studies, work, and career aspirations. As such, emerging adults are faced with the additional task of resolving these components; therefore, they often delay forming a long-lasting committed romantic

relationship. This delay was found to differ based on gender as men were more likely than women to delay romantic relationship commitment (e.g., marriage) until after completing their educational aspirations (Shulman et al., 2013). Overall, one of the primary distinguishing factors between emerging and young adulthood according to Arnett (2012) is increased role immersion as role demands grow throughout emerging adulthood into the later portion of young adulthood, often within romantic relationships, careers, or employment. Developmental theories should be considered in the interpretation of the current study. As important as developmental considerations are, these theories do not provide a framework to understand the abstract concept of love. Sternberg's triangular theory of love provides a framework to understand and, importantly, measure love within romantic relationships.

Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love

Several prominent theories have been developed to explain the experience of love (e.g., Hatfield et al., 2008; Rubin, 1970). Relevant to the current study, Sternberg (1986) developed a theory that conceptualized love as being made up of three components. Sternberg proposed that relationships are characterized by the presence or absence, or higher and lower levels of the following: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Intimacy refers to closeness and connectedness within a relationship. Passion refers to physical and sexual desire within a relationship. Finally, commitment refers to the ongoing decision to invest in and maintain a relationship. These components can be considered independently or in combination to understand overall romantic love in the relationship.

A measure derived from Sternberg's triangular love theory was used as an outcome variable in the current study as an indicator of romantic relationship quality

(Triangular Love Scale; Sternberg, 1988). Despite the theory including three distinct components, research indicates that the factors are highly correlated with items loading highly on more than one factor suggesting an overarching factor (e.g., Whitley, 1993). Merino and Privado's (2020) recent research regarding the triarchic structure to explain love conceptualized the components as being monarchical-hierarchical with the three components of love (i.e., passion, intimacy, commitment) being best explained by an overarching second order factor (i.e., overall love). Although Sternberg's theory was originally developed over 30 years ago in an American context, recent research conducted within several different countries around the world provides support for the triangular model of love developed by Sternberg (Sorokowski et al., 2021). Sternberg's triangular theory of love provides an excellent framework to conceptualize and measure the characteristics of love in a romantic relationship. However, this theory is limited in explaining the purpose romantic love serves and why parents and friends have opinions and try to influence other people's romantic relationships. Evolutionary psychology provides some context regarding the purpose of romantic relationships and the reasons why the opinions of parents and friends may matter for romantic relationships.

Evolutionary Psychology and Intimate Partner Relationships

Romantic attraction and relationships follow patterns and serve a purpose that can be explained through the lens of various theoretical orientations, including evolutionary psychology (Buss, 1995). Evolutionary psychology assumes that human behaviour is the result of underlying psychological mechanisms that lead to different behaviours and reactions best suited for the circumstances (Buss, 1995). These underlying psychological mechanisms and behavioural output continue because they serve a function in that they

solve a problem, either currently or in the past. According to evolutionary psychology, the primary purpose underlying behaviour is survival and the survival of relatives and in-group members (Trivers, 1974). This applies to romantic relationships as who is and is not chosen for mating contributes to what traits are and are not favoured and passed on to the next generation (Buss, 2007). Evolutionary psychology theory has been applied to mating strategies including long term mating (e.g., marriage) and alternative mating strategies. Additionally, this theory has been used to explain the reasons different traits tend to be especially attractive to men and women.

As will be outlined extensively below, researchers have established that parents and friends form opinions about romantic relationships which can impact the nature of the romantic relationship (e.g., Sprecher, 2011). Parents and friends may even go beyond simply approving or disapproving of a relationship to actively attempting to influence the relationship, whether that means encouraging the couple to become more committed or to reconsider or end a relationship entirely (e.g., Sprecher & Felmlee, 2000). From an evolutionary psychology perspective, there are reasons for parental and friend opinions and actions regarding other people's romantic relationships. For parents, Trivers (1974) outlined evolutionary reasons for parental preferences and the divergence of parent and child preferences for a child's mate. According to Trivers (1974), parents are expected to encourage matches that increase their child's altruism to family and other in-group members. Parents are also expected to encourage advantageous matches, such as matches that cement an alliance with another family, and to also discourage matches with outcasts. Although adult children may have similar desires to an extent, parents tend to encourage these types of alliances more than their children would prefer. As expected,

research has supported differences in what a person values in a mate versus what parents' value in a mate for their children (e.g., Dubbs & Buunk, 2010a). Results indicate that children are more likely to value indicators of genetic quality (e.g., attractiveness) whereas parents are more likely to value characteristics that indicate the potential mate would be an invested parent and contributor to the family through altruistic acts and the absence of selfish acts.

Less has been proposed as to the interest friends have in the romantic relationship choices of their friends. It is known that friendships confer adaptive benefits in both humans and in nonhuman animals (Seyfarth & Cheney, 2012). Amongst animals, male friendships have been associated with higher competitive ability and greater reproduction whereas strong female friendships have been associated with reduced stress, greater infant survival rates, and longer life expectancies. Like parents, friends would benefit more from their friend choosing a mate who would increase their ability to perform altruistic acts. Lewis and colleagues (2011) suggest that friendships between women partially served the function of assistance and advice for childbearing and childrearing. Women would likely encourage their friends to select mates who would enable this reciprocal caregiving. The primary evolutionary reason given for friendship between men is assistance in hunting and warfare. Given this, it is expected that friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships will be important to both men and women. Given the greater and enduring role of female friendship in child rearing, friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships may have less importance on mate choice among men as compared to women.

Evolutionary psychology provides a theoretical rationale for why parents and friends form opinions regarding romantic partnerships and exert influence. This next section outlines the literature that demonstrates that parents and friends do form opinions regarding these relationships. Additionally, these opinions are important as they are associated with indicators of romantic relationship interest and quality.

Social Network Opinions and Romantic Partner Relationships

Although romantic partner relationships are usually conceptualized to occur between the two people involved in the relationship, these relationships occur within the context of family, friend groups, and culture (Agnew, 2016). Parents typically establish rules and norms around the development of romantic relationships, often related to their cultural backgrounds. They may try to influence the type of person, or even the specific people their children date (e.g., Apostolou, 2013). Friends too can play an important role as a source of advice and support, both solicited and unsolicited.

The following sections include a review of the research on the influence that parents and friends have on romantic relationships based on their approval or disapproval of the romantic relationship. First, studies focused only on parent opinion will be reviewed. Second, studies including only friend opinion will be summarized. Third, studies including both parent and friend influence within the same study will be described. Following this, studies are reviewed that address the influence of parent and friend opinions on romantic relationships, with an additional focus on cultural differences, ethnic differences, or culturally relevant variables. After this, research regarding parent and friend opinions of marginalized romantic relationships that tend to be met with greater disapproval will be reviewed (i.e., relationships with a substantial age

gap between the couple, interracial relationships/relationships with ethnic differences, interreligious relationships, and 2SLGBTQ relationships; Agnew, 2016). Finally, this section concludes with an overview of ways that the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval has been conceptualized and measured.

Parent Approval and Disapproval of Romantic Relationships

In the current study and in past literature, "parents" refers to biological parents, adoptive parents, or other adults who have taken the role of primary guardianship. Although there has been general agreement among researchers that parents influence the romantic relationships of their children, there has been disagreement as to whether parental approval and disapproval is related to better or worse relationship outcomes. The two competing hypotheses have sometimes been referred to as the Romeo and Juliet effect (Driscoll et al., 1972) and the social network effect (e.g., Parks et al., 1983, Sinclair et al., 2014). The Romeo and Juliet effect purports that parental disapproval, like with the Shakespearean lovers, will be associated with indicators of better relationship quality (e.g., commitment, passion; Driscoll et al., 1972). In contrast, the social network effect indicates that parental approval will be associated with better relationship quality whereas disapproval will negatively impact the relationship (e.g., Parks et al., 1983).

The primary support for the Romeo and Juliet effect came from a classic study conducted by Driscoll and colleagues (1972). This study explored the impact that parental interference has on love between intimate partners. In this study, parental interference was assessed by a scale that measured the couple's concern and communication about parental interference. One-hundred and forty dating and married couples participated in this study in the United States. Both cross-sectional and

longitudinal approaches indicated that greater parental interference was associated with greater romantic love within the couple. The researchers suggested that, like the famous ill-fated lovers of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, people become even more committed to their intimate partner in response to parental attempts to discourage the relationship.

In contrast, Sinclair and colleagues (2014) conducted a replication of Driscoll and colleagues (1972) classic Romeo and Juliet effect study. They attempted to replicate the study using the original measures that Driscoll and colleagues used as well as modern, well-validated measures. Three-hundred and ninety-six members of romantic relationships in the United States participated in this study. Sinclair and colleagues found no evidence in support of the Romeo and Juliet effect. In contrast, they found that parental disapproval was related to poorer relationship quality. This finding is consistent with what would be expected for the social network effect. Another study providing support for the social network effect was conducted by Lee and colleagues (2010). Participants were 194 college students involved in romantic relationships at American universities. Results indicated the perception of approval from one's own and one's partner's parents was associated with less relationship distress for the participant.

Parents use a variety of techniques to express their opinions and exert influence over their children's choices surrounding romantic relationships (Apostolou, 2013). Although parents may have greater power to control their adolescent children, they still use strategies to influence adult children. Apostolou (2013) conducted a two-part study to explore the specific techniques parents use to control their adult children's dating behaviour and decisions. Participants included 57 students, faculty, and administrative staff at a university located in Greece. Participants were interviewed to identify

qualitative themes in how they themselves, their parents, or people they know have attempted to influence children's romantic relationships. Techniques used by parents on their children included coercion (e.g., by yelling, by threatening), emphasizing potential matches' good or bad qualities, chaperoning and spying, using hardball techniques (e.g., through physical harm or threats of harm), playing matchmaker, guilt tripping, bribing, preventing from going places where they may meet undesirable matches, social comparison, advice and reasoning, and using silent treatment techniques. In addition to trying to influence their children directly, parents used techniques to influence their children's current or potential romantic partners according to the parent's desires for the relationship (e.g., attempting to convince them to date or commit to their children, attempting to break up a relationship). Techniques to break up relationships included hardball techniques (e.g., through physical harm or threats of harm) and keeping "dirty laundry" on them, whereas techniques to have them initiate, maintain, or commit to a relationship included making the partner feel like part of the family (e.g., feeding them, checking in on how they are doing) and luring them to initiate or continue a relationship with their child (e.g., offering money or property; Apostolou, 2013). At least some of these approaches are reported to be effective in influencing adult children's romantic relationship decisions (Apostolou et al., 2015). Conversely, children also employ various tactics to influence their parents into not imposing a mate choice they find undesirable or to have them accept mate choices they find desirable (e.g., giving them the silent treatment, emphasizing their partner's good qualities; Apostolou, 2015).

Other research examines how young adults navigate romantic relationships in relation to their experiences with their parents. A study by Jamison and Lo (2021)

analyzed qualitative data from 35 American young adults (24-40 years old) discussing their past and current experiences with romantic relationships. The researchers used applied thematic analysis to better understand the ongoing impact of parental figures on young adult's romantic relationships. Themes touched on getting needs met in romantic relationships that were unmet in their relationship with their parents (i.e., seeking support, love, and affirmation). Another theme involved efforts to increase their parent's approval of their romantic relationship (e.g., marrying a live-in boyfriend so as to not "live in sin," having a religious wedding to try to legitimize a lesbian relationship to family). Participants who described a more positive and supportive relationship with their parents sometimes turned to them for advice in navigating their romantic relationships. Overall, participants identified various ways in which their parents have impacted how they approach and navigate romantic relationships.

In summary, parents use a variety of techniques to express their approval or disapproval of their children's relationships. These opinions and the attempt to impact their children's romantic relationships occur with at least some degree of success. Although likely differing in motivation, like parents, friends form opinions regarding the romantic relationships of their friends. The approval and disapproval of friends is similarly associated with romantic relationship outcomes as outlined in the following section.

Friend Approval and Disapproval of Romantic Relationships

In the current study and in past literature, "friends" generally refers to people within the social network with whom the participant has an emotionally intimate relationship. Typically, friends are assumed to be peers; however, participants may also

consider older adults or relatives to be friends. Ultimately, most researchers have allowed participants to use their own judgement when deciding what constitutes a "friend" or a "close friend."

Extant literature regarding the influence of friend approval and disapproval paints a similar picture to that of parental approval and disapproval. That is, literature on friend approval and disapproval further supports the social network effect (i.e., social network approval being associated with better relationship quality) rather than the Romeo and Juliet effect (i.e., social network disapproval being associated with better relationship quality). For example, a study conducted by Sprecher (2011) captured the perceived impact of social network approval from the perspective of friends and acquaintances of the couple. Participants from a university in the United States ($N = 529$) reported their reactions and behaviours related to an actual relationship within their social network whose relationship, typically romantic relationship, they either strongly approved or disapproved of depending on their randomly assigned condition. Participants reported engaging in positive behaviours intended to encourage approved relationships (e.g., communicating liking the partner) and negative behaviours (i.e., persuasive communication and interfering behaviours) for disapproved relationships. Two-thirds of participants reported that they believe their behaviour had a, typically small, influence on the relationship outcome, generally in the intended direction.

A study conducted by Etcheverry and colleagues (2008) included 254 college students from the United States who were in a romantic relationship. In this study, the participant's friends also completed measures. Participants and friends completed measures of perceived approval and actual approval of romantic relationships,

respectively. Interestingly, the results indicated that perception of friend approval, although not always accurate, was a better predictor of relationship commitment than actual friend approval. Additionally, participants generally reported greater perceived approval of their relationships than what their friends reported.

Etcheverry and colleagues (2013) completed a series of three studies regarding the reasons that fuel friend's approval and disapproval of their friends' romantic relationships. In the first study, undergraduate students (N = 1,274) answered questions about a target friend's romantic relationship. The study was rooted in interdependence theory, in which people are theorized to maximise rewards and minimize costs. Participants indicated their perception of their friend's romantic relationship, including their perceived satisfaction, alternatives, investments, commitment, and their approval or disapproval of the relationship. Participants who perceived their friends as being more satisfied in their romantic relationship reported greater approval. Similarly, participants who indicated their friends had poor quality alternatives to the relationship reported greater approval. Perceived investment also predicted greater relationship approval among female participants who were responding in regard to a female friend's relationship. For the second study, forty-eight undergraduate students were prompted to identify a friend who was currently involved in a romantic relationship. They answered several questions prompting them to identify characteristics of ideal romantic relationships. Following this, participants were assigned to either the assimilation or contrast condition. For the assimilation condition, participants made comparisons from the friend's relationship to the ideal relationship, whereas for the contrast condition they made comparisons from the ideal relationship to their friend's relationship. Participants in

the assimilation condition, meant to highlight how their friend's relationship resembles an ideal relationship, reported greater approval of the relationship. This relation was partially mediated by greater perceived relationship satisfaction.

For the third study in the series, 44 undergraduate students were asked to identify a friend currently involved in a romantic relationship (Etcheverry et al., 2013). Participants were assigned to complete either an easy task (i.e., listing three reasons their friend was satisfied in their romantic relationship) or a difficult task (i.e., listing eight reasons their friend was satisfied in their romantic relationship) intended to activate the availability heuristic regarding their friend's relationship. That is to say, the relatively easy task of listing three reasons was intended to activate positive beliefs about satisfaction within their friend's relationship whereas the more difficult task was meant to activate negative beliefs about a lack of satisfaction within their friend's relationship. As expected, participants who had completed the easier task reported that their friend's were more satisfied in their romantic relationship compared to participants who completed the difficult task. Participants in the easy condition also indicated greater approval of the romantic relationship than participants in the difficult condition. This association was partially mediated by perceived relationship satisfaction. Overall, this series of studies by Etcheverry and colleagues indicates that approval of relationships from friends is at least partially fueled by the perception that the person is satisfied with their romantic relationship.

In summary, in line with the social network effect, friend approval and disapproval has been shown to be related to their friend's romantic relationships with approval being associated with better relationship outcomes and disapproval being

associated with more negative relationship outcomes. In the following section, the relation between friend approval and disapproval and romantic relationships is further outlined along with parent approval and disapproval.

Parent and Friend Approval and Disapproval of Romantic Relationships

Thus far, this literature review has described research on the influence of parents and friends on romantic relationships in which parent and friend influence were studied separately. This section reviews literature in which parental and friend influences are measured within the same study.

In the years following Driscoll and colleagues' (1972) classic study, researchers have attempted to further explore the Romeo and Juliet effect and to replicate their results. For example, Parks and colleagues (1983) conducted a study which largely refuted the Romeo and Juliet effect, instead providing support for the social network effect. Participants were 193 unmarried couples from the United States. Higher romantic relationship quality, conceptualized as emotional attachment, the amount of interaction between the couple, and the belief that the romantic relationship was going to continue, were positively associated with perceived support from the participant's social network, perceived support from their partner's social network, the number of people met in their partner's network, and communication with the partner's network. Although most of the evidence was in support of the social network effect, Parks et al. (1983) did find that slight levels of perceived opposition from the parents of the participant's partner was associated with more interaction with the romantic partner and greater expectations for the future, which is in line with the Romeo and Juliet effect. However, the opposite was found to be true when perceived opposition was greater. In other words, at higher levels

of perceived opposition, perceived opposition was associated with poorer relationship quality. Overall, this study primarily provided support for the social network effect.

Similarly, Sinclair and Ellithorpe (2014) investigated the social network effect further through a series of two studies. People currently in romantic relationships (N = 797) participated in a cross-sectional study in the United States. Participants completed a measure of perceived parent and friend opinion and measures of their current love and satisfaction in their intimate partner relationship. During analyses, participants were categorized into four groups according to the patterns of their responses: high approval from both parents and friends, high approval from parents but low approval from friends, low approval from parents but high approval from friends, and low approval from both parents and friends. Love and satisfaction were highest when at least one party approved, despite the other party not approving. In line with the social network effect, love and satisfaction dropped when parents and friends both disapproved of the relationship.

A large-scale meta-analysis of 137 studies found that lack of social network support was a good predictor of romantic relationship dissolution (Le et al., 2010). Interestingly, a lack of social network support was found to be a better predictor of romantic relationship dissolution compared to perhaps more intuitive factors such as current romantic relationship satisfaction. This further emphasizes the importance of approval of romantic relationships by parents and friends.

Although most research regarding parent and friend approval used observational methods, some experimental methods also found support for the social network effect. Wright and Sinclair (2012) used a virtual dating scenario to examine the effects of friend and parent opinions on dating choices. Two-hundred and twenty-eight participants from a

United States university participated in this study (M_{age}=18.59 years old). Researchers compared providing approving and disapproving opinions from friends and parents. They found that giving approval had a greater impact on decisions in comparison to disapproving. Generally, the opinion of friends had greater impact on dating decisions in comparison to parents. However, people who still were dependent on their parents relied more on their parent's opinion (e.g., still living with parents, dependent on them financially). This indicates that social support, or at least specific types of material social support, may be of significance when considering the importance placed on parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships.

Sinclair and colleagues (2015) conducted a series of studies intended to explore whether the Romeo and Juliet effect occurs amongst select people high in trait reactance. Independent reactance is a trait in which the person has a strong desire to make independent choices free from outside influence (Sinclair et al., 2015). The researchers conducted a series of three studies using survey, vignette, and experimental designs. Study 1 had a sample of 858 participants, Study 2 had 340 participants, and Study 3 had 228 participants; all participants were recruited through an American university. As before, they found support primarily for the positive association between relationship quality and parent and friend approval of the relationship with the exception that people high in independent reactance appeared more likely to ignore negative feedback. This means that social network disapproval did not have the same negative impact on romantic relationships among people high in this trait as it had on other people’s romantic relationships. This indicates that, although the social network effect usually best explains the impact on relationships in circumstances of parent and friend disapproval, there may

be little impact related to parent and friend opinions among specific groups of people, such as those who are high in independent reactance.

In another study, 630 Portuguese emerging adults in romantic relationships completed measures of parent and friend approval and romantic relationship commitment, investment, and satisfaction (Rodrigues et al., 2017). Results indicated that greater parent support and friend support of romantic relationships were associated with greater commitment, investment, and satisfaction in the romantic relationship. More specifically, during early emerging adulthood (i.e., ages 18-21 years old) friend support was associated with higher commitment, satisfaction, and investment in the romantic relationship. During middle emerging adulthood (i.e., ages 22-25 years old) parent support was associated with higher commitment, satisfaction, and investment in the romantic relationship. This study suggests developmental shifts in the importance of parent and friend support even within emerging adulthood.

Even young adults who do not have a romantic partner can feel the impact of parent and friend opinions. Sprecher and Felmlee (2021) examined pressure to enter a relationship among single young adults (18-30 years old; $N = 616$) in the United States. Participants reported greater pressure to find a romantic partner from parents/family compared to friends. Women reported greater pressure from parents/family compared to men. Pressure to enter a relationship was associated with greater fear of being single.

Thus far, the research seems to support parent and friend opinions of romantic relationships as mattering at least some of the time. Jenson and colleagues (2021) investigated reasons *why* people might trust or distrust disapproval from social network members. Adults currently involved in romantic relationships participated in this study (*N*

= 173). Participants answered questions regarding their trust in social network member's opinions, perceived relationship expertise, quality of evidence, broader social network approval, exposure of network members to romantic partner, perceived bias (i.e., not having the best interests of the person in mind), and broad social network approval. Trust in social network opinions was positively associated with relationship expertise and higher quality of evidence and negatively associated with perceived bias. Social networks members were viewed as being more biased when the participants were more committed to their romantic partner and the member had less exposure to the romantic partner. Overall, there are a variety of reasons someone may trust or distrust disapproving opinions from social network members.

In summary, parent and friend approval have both been associated with relationship quality, relationship longevity, willingness to explore a romantic relationship, and other relationship factors. Thus far, the research covered in this literature review has taken place in Western cultures and have not included relevant cultural variables. The following section reviews studies in which culturally relevant variables provide context for the impact of parent and friend approval and disapproval on romantic relationships.

Parent and Friend Approval and Disapproval of Romantic Relationships Across Cultural Contexts

There are a few studies on parent and friend influence on romantic relationships and cultural variables that have a particular focus on cultural and ethnic differences and culturally relevant constructs. For example, Yahya and Boag (2014) conducted a qualitative study in Australia exploring parental and social pressure regarding cross-

cultural and interfaith dating. Fifty-five young adult university students (18-34 years old) from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds participated in this study. Participant ethnic backgrounds included Middle Eastern, Indian, South African, Asian, and Caucasian whereas religious backgrounds included Christian, Muslim, and Jewish. All the participants indicated their parents or social circle pressured them to varying degrees to date within their ethnic or faith group. Furthermore, participants indicated that they responded relative to the strength of the pressure. Participants whose parents placed greater pressure on them were more reluctant to date outside their faith or ethnicity. This indicates that parental attempts to influence romantic partner choice are indeed widespread across ethnic backgrounds and are perceived to have an effect.

In line with research completed in Western settings, Hill (2019) found that higher relationship quality was associated with parents, close friends, coworkers, or classmates knowing someone's romantic partner in a diverse sample of participants from around the world (N = 8,839). Hill (2019) also found that feeling that parents, close friends, and coworkers or classmates approved of the romantic partner relationship was associated with higher relationship satisfaction and relationship commitment. This study is notable because it was part of a large-scale study with participants from many countries and culturally diverse regions from around the world including multiple countries representing people from the following regions: North America, Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, West Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Oceania. This indicates that results can be generalized to varying degrees across cultures and ethnic groups.

Research supports social network approval of a romantic relationship as being associated with positive relationship qualities across cultures. As such, researchers have completed cross-cultural studies to understand how parent and friend influence differs in different cultural contexts. Zhang and Kline (2009) conducted a series of two studies to investigate the importance of family and friend approval and disapproval when selecting a dating or marital partner across cultures. Study 1, phase 1 participants included college students from the United States (n = 37) and China (n = 37). Participants qualitatively described whose advice and approval they would seek when deciding who to marry and their expectations for a marital partner. Study 1, phase 2 participants included American (n = 132) and Chinese (n = 110) unmarried college students involved in romantic relationships. Participants completed measures of social network influence, obstacles to marrying their dating partner, marriage intentions, and relationship commitment. There was an interaction of gender and culture such that complying with network wishes was more important for American women than for American men and for Chinese men than for Chinese women. Chinese participants were more likely than American participants to report network disapproval as an obstacle to marrying their current dating partner. Among both samples, family and friend influence was associated with marital intentions and relationship commitment.

Study 2 participants included American (n = 124) and Chinese (n = 176) college students not currently involved in a romantic relationship (Zhang & Kline, 2009). Participants were asked to respond to two scenarios describing parents and close friends disapproving of a dating partner. For parent disapproval, Chinese participants indicated they were more likely to comply with parents wishes to end the relationship, value their

parents' opinion, and try to convince their parents to accept their romantic partner compared to American participants. For friend disapproval, Chinese participants were more likely than American participants to report they would end the relationship due to disapproval; however, American participants were more likely to report their friend's opinions were important, that the disapproval would be stressful, and that the difficulty of managing the disapproval would impact their romantic relationship compared to Chinese participants. This study illustrates both cross-cultural differences and similarities in the influence of approval and disapproval on romantic relationships.

Another study explored differences in social support for relationships and romantic relationship quality between traditionally individualistic (USA) and collectivistic (South Korean) young adults (Jin & Oh, 2010). American (n = 168) and South Korean (n = 110) young adults participated in this study. As expected, social network support was associated with better quality relationships among both the American and South Korean participants. Contrary to what was hypothesized, there were no differences in terms of the positive relationship between perceived support of a romantic relationship from family and friends and relationship quality among American and South Korean participants. This indicates that family and friend support for romantic relationships may be equally important in, at least some, individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In terms of differences, American participants were found to involve their social network more in their romantic relationships and to receive more positive reactions from their social network regarding their romantic relationships as compared to South Korean participants. These results were somewhat unexpected given the importance of in-group members within collectivistic cultures.

In addition to comparative cross-cultural studies, researchers have evaluated the importance of parent approval within the context of the cultural norms of specific non-Western cultures. For example, 75 married individuals from Pakistan participated in a study of marital satisfaction (Arif & Faima, 2015). One-third of participants were involved in arranged marriages, one-third were involved in choice marriages with parental acceptance, and one-third were involved in choice marriages without parental acceptance. Results indicated that relationships with parent approval, whether arranged or choice, had higher marital relationship satisfaction than relationships without parental approval. This result seems to underscore the importance of parent support particularly in a cultural context in which parent input, and even parental arrangement of marriages is a cultural norm.

Self-esteem has been identified as an important variable in relation to family approval of a romantic relationship and relationship evaluation in at least some cultural settings. Self-esteem is related to the value placed on a relationship because people with lower self-esteem are more likely to doubt their partner's feeling for them (e.g., Murray et al., 2001). Not only does low self-esteem relate to the evaluation of the romantic relationship, but self-esteem also relates to perceived familial approval as indicated by a study with Indonesian couples (MacDonald & Jessica, 2006). This suggests that people with low self-esteem are more likely to evaluate their romantic relationships poorly and to perceive their families as being less approving of the relationship or, alternatively, people who have poorer quality relationships with their parents and families develop lower self-esteem. In this study, Indonesian participants with lower self-esteem were more likely to perceive their family as not approving of their romantic relationship and to

place less value on their romantic relationship. Another study found that perceived familial approval mediated the relation between self-esteem and relationship value (i.e., the extent to which the person in the relationship reported valuing the romantic relationship) among Indonesian and Japanese couples, but not among couples from Australia or Canada (MacDonald at al., 2012). This indicates a difference in the importance of familial opinion in collectivistic cultures over individualistic cultures. ‘

In summary, there appear to be differences in the influence family and friend opinion has on romantic relationships across different cultural and ethnic groups. Cultural differences provide the relevant context to understand the importance of parent and friend approval or disapproval of romantic relationships. Similarly, general characteristics of couples have been associated with differences in parent and friend approval or disapproval of romantic relationships. Due to some quality of the couple within the relationship, some relationships are considered marginalized and tend to be met with more widespread disapproval.

Marginalized Relationships: Parent and Friend Approval and Disapproval

Due to one or more characteristics of the relationship, marginalized relationships differ from traditional unions (Agnew, 2016). Marginalized relationships include relationships with a substantial age gap between the couple, interracial relationships/relationships with ethnic differences, interreligious relationships, and 2SLGBTQAI+ relationships. These types of relationships are often subject to lower levels of approval and higher levels of disapproval and, in some cases, discrimination. Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) studied relationship commitment, investment, satisfaction, and perception of alternatives in marginalized (i.e., same-sex, different races, large age

gap) and nonmarginalized relationships. In this study, people who felt there was greater disapproval of their relationship were less committed to their relationship. People in marginalized relationships invested less in their relationships but were more committed to the relationship compared to people in nonmarginalized relationship. This seemed to be best explained by lower perceived alternatives.

Similarly, Lehmiller and Agnew (2007) studied perceived relationship marginalization in relation to relationship stability using a longitudinal design. They conceptualized perceived relationship marginalization as the extent to which people perceived the social network and society as disapproving of their relationship. In this study, perceived marginalization from the social network, but not from society, was associated with relationship dissolution several months later. Mediation analysis indicated that the relation between social network relationship marginalization and relationship dissolution was mediated by relationship commitment. In summary, disapproval from the social network seems to have greater importance than the perception of societal disapproval.

Another study investigated the importance of parental and friend approval/disapproval among heterosexual and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) adults primarily living in Canada and the United States (Blair & Pukall, 2015). They found that LGBTQ participants generally placed greater value on friend opinion as compared to heterosexual participants. Additionally, LGBTQ participants were less likely than heterosexual participants to choose to end a relationship if asked to by their parents. This perhaps indicates that people in marginalized relationships may

depend more on the support of friends, who they can select, as opposed to parents, who they are born with.

Similarly, Holmberg and Blair (2016) found that family members tended to be less supportive of same-sex relationships compared to heterosexual relationships and approval from friends. They hypothesized that this is likely primarily the result of friends being chosen and the difficulty of eliminating even unapproving family members completely from their social network. In this study, researchers measured perceived approval from social network members along with perceived closeness of these members. They found that closer network members were perceived as being more approving than more distant members. Additionally, relationship approval was associated more strongly with relationship, mental, and physical well- being among mixed-sex couples as opposed to same-sex couples. This brief overview of parent and friend approval and disapproval in marginalized relationships underscores the importance of accounting for context and characteristics of the relationship.

A recent study found the perception of approval of interracial/interethnic dating to be associated with involvement in these types of relationships (Miller et al., 2022). This study included 790 college students currently involved in romantic relationships recruited through colleges in the United States. The results indicated that participants were more likely to be involved in interracial/interethnic romantic relationships if they perceived their parents, siblings, and grandparents as approving of these types of relationships. This result once again underscores the importance of social network approval of relationships.

Thus far, the literature relating to parent and friend approval and disapproval has been reviewed with specific emphasis on parent approval/disapproval, friend

approval/disapproval, research including parent and friend approval/disapproval, culturally relevant research, and research on parent/friend approval of marginalized relationships. The next section includes a brief discussion of how parent and friend approval and disapproval is conceptualized and measured including the development of a new questionnaire for the current study.

Conceptualizing and Measuring Parent and Friend Approval and Disapproval

In the research outlined thus far, the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval on romantic relationships has been conceptualized and measured in a variety of ways. For this research area, researchers have used both qualitative (e.g., Apostolou et al., 2015) and quantitative (e.g., Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014) methods. Cross-sectional and longitudinal (e.g., Lehmiller & Agnew, 2007) questionnaire-based research methods and experimental research (e.g., Sinclair et al., 2015) have also been used to better understand the impact of parent and friend approval and disapproval. This impact was conceptualized and measured in various ways including having participants who were currently involved in a romantic relationship rate their perceived opinions of parents and friends along with providing responses to some indicator of romantic relationship quality. Questions used to assess the role of parents and friends varied from a single question for each (e.g., Hill, 2019) to measures meant to assess their opinions (e.g., Social Network Opinion Scale; Sinclair et al., 2014). For the current study, Sinclair's (2014) measure was used in conjunction with other indicators of relationship quality. Additionally, a questionnaire was developed to measure the importance that young adults place on parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships (Thompson, 2022a, 2022b). This preliminary study, outlined in greater detail within the measures section,

presented young adults (both single and those currently involved in a romantic relationship) with a variety of hypothetical scenarios describing different milestones of a romantic relationship. Participants were prompted to indicate how they would act in situations of parent approval, parent disapproval, friend approval, and friend disapproval. Past research tends to conceptualize parent opinion, whether approving or disapproving, as occurring on a continuum regarding parents and friends. However, exploratory factor analysis using the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022b) indicated three factors: parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance. Given this finding, the categories of parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance were used within the hypotheses of the current study.

As has been outlined in this section, parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships gives important context for romantic relationships. Additionally, it is important to consider cultural variables that can impact how individuals view themselves and their relationships. Specifically, self-construal and acculturation are two significant cultural variables that are included in the current study. The following section provides an overview of both self-construal and acculturation including how these variables might relate to parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships.

Cultural Factors: Review of Self-Construal and Acculturation

Thus far, research on the influence parent and friend opinion has been reviewed. These have included some studies that focus on cultural and ethnic differences and

similarities. The current study includes young adult participants from ethnically diverse backgrounds living in Canada. The role that culture plays in the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships was considered through inclusion of important culturally grounded variables of self-construal and acculturation.

Cultural Values and Self-Construal

Self construal is how individuals understand themselves in relation to other people (Cross et al., 2011). Self-construal is typically described on two dimensions: interdependence and independence. For people with a more independent self-construal, they view themselves more in terms of their personal traits. For people with a more interdependent self-construal, they view themselves in terms of their relationships and group memberships. Collectivism versus individualism, cultural values, and independent versus interdependent self-construal are associated, although distinct, constructs (Cross et al, 2011). Collectivism and individualism describe the cultural values in reference to a social group, whereas self-construal refers to an individual. Although collectivism is not necessarily synonymous with interdependent self-construal, and individualism is not synonymous with independent self-construal, people generally integrate the broader cultural values into their personal self-construal (Singelis & Brown, 1995). That is to say people who come from collectivistic cultures usually have relatively stronger interdependent values whereas people who come from individualistic cultures usually have relatively stronger independent values. Interdependent self-construal is generally associated with values of relatedness of individuals, attendance to the interests of the group, and fitting in with others. In contrast, independent self-construal is associated with

values including self-discovery and expression, uniqueness, and pursuit of one's own interests.

Collectivism and interdependent self-construal are generally associated with Eastern values and nations (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). Asian, African, and Central and South American peoples are generally considered collectivistic as well as First Nations people of North America (Beckstein, 2014). People from collectivistic backgrounds are expected to have a more interdependent self-construal (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). In contrast, individualism and independent self-construal are generally associated with Western values and cultures. European, North American, and Australian peoples are generally considered individualistic. People from individualistic backgrounds are expected to have a more independent self-construal. Although these are certainly generalities, there has been research support for these cultural and personal differences (e.g., Triandis, 2018).

Various scales have been developed to measure self-construal such as the measure developed by Singelis (1994) used in the present study. A study conducted by Yamada and Singelis (1999) investigated self-construal patterns. Although self-construal is sometimes conceptualized as a single dimension, this study conceptualized it as occurring on two dimensions, independence and interdependence resulting in four different categorizations based on high or low levels of each dimension. Taras and colleagues (2014) further investigated the dimensionality of self-construal and cultural values through a meta-analysis of existing literature. They found that the dimensionality of self-construal is somewhat dependent on the specific measure being used. Some measures, such as the Singelis measure (1994), had nonsignificant or non-existent

correlations between the independent and interdependent self-construal scales (Taras et al., 2014). However, other measures had correlations between the two scales.

Furthermore, although self-construal is generally conceptualized and measured as occurring on two dimensions (independent and interdependent), past research has found issues with two factor models, finding that subcategories of independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal had a better fitting factor structure and were useful in identifying group differences and associations with psychological constructs (Cross et al., 2011). In addition to exploration of alternative factor structures for existing measures, new measures have also been developed to assess specific aspects of self-construal. Relational self-construal is a subcategory of interdependent self-construal specifically regarding how people define themselves in terms of their close relationships without consideration of group memberships (Cross et al., 2002). Given the relevance of close relationships to the current study (i.e., romantic partners, parents, friends) and the psychometric properties of the measure, both a general measure of self-construal (i.e., Singelis Self-Construal Scale; Singelis, 1994) and the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale (Cross et al., 2000) were included in the current study.

Although self-construal specifically has not been studied in relation to parent and friend influence on romantic relationships, researchers have explored attitudes towards parental control of intimate partner relationships in the context of collectivism and individualism. Buunk and colleagues (2010) conducted a series of four studies across cultures and ethnic groups (i.e., Dutch students, Iraqi students, international students at a Dutch university, Canadian students of diverse ethnic backgrounds) to explore the relation between cultural values (i.e., collectivism versus individualism) and parental

influence in intimate relationships. They hypothesized that parental influence on mate selection is higher in a sample of primarily young adults from collectivist cultures in comparison to a sample of primarily young adults in individualistic cultures. Study 1 involved the development and administration of a measure of parental influence on their child's choice of an intimate partner. The researchers developed eleven questionnaire items that reflected a range of forms of parental influence identified through previous research. Three-hundred and seventy-one Dutch undergraduate students (M_{age} = 20.07) responded to the questionnaire. As expected, participants' responses in individualistic Dutch culture appeared to be indicative of low parental influence in relation to the scale range. Buunk and colleagues' (2010) Study 2 was designed to validate their measure of parental influence on intimate partner choice in a collectivist culture, Iraq (N = 197). As expected, the Iraqi participants indicated greater parental influence in comparison to the Dutch participants. Study 3 was intended to further explore cultural differences in parental influence on intimate partner selection (Buunk et al., 2010). International students (N = 80) at a Dutch university completed the measure considering their culture in general rather than their personal beliefs. As hypothesized, the cultural value of collectivism showed a positive correlation with their measure of parental influence on intimate partner choice in a collectivist culture. This finding supports the hypothesis that cultures that are higher in collectivism are more likely to have a high degree of parental influence in intimate partner choice. Finally, 102 undergraduate students at a Canadian university participated in Buunk and colleague's (2010) Study 4. Participants were primarily from East Asian and European backgrounds. Once again, participants were instructed to respond to the questionnaire based on what they believe is typical in their

culture rather than their personal beliefs. As expected, participants from East Asian ethnic backgrounds reported greater parental influence in comparison to participants from European ethnic backgrounds. This series of studies provides support for differences between collectivistic and individualistic cultures and the importance given to parental influence. However, this series of studies did not investigate the possible importance of friend opinions nor include self-construal.

Collectivism was investigated further in conjunction with acceptance of parental influence on mate choice and romantic relationship quality in a series of two studies (Bejanyan et al., 2015). Strong family ties and acceptance of parent influence on mate choice are two values that are especially salient within collectivistic cultures. Bejanyan and colleagues hypothesized that, among collectivists, greater acceptance of parental influence on mate choice would be associated with lower passion and commitment whereas stronger family ties would be associated with greater passion and commitment. Study 1 included 154 participants at a British university who were categorized as being collectivistic or non-collectivistic based on cultural background. As hypothesized, people from collectivistic backgrounds reported greater acceptance of parental influence on mate choice. Greater acceptance of parental influence on mate choice was associated with lower passion and commitment in their romantic relationships. Study 2 included 246 participants from the United States and from India. Once again, people from collectivistic cultures reported greater acceptance of parental influence on mate choice which was associated with lower passion and commitment in their romantic relationships. However, closer family ties were associated with greater commitment and passion in romantic relationships. Additionally, collectivists reported smaller differences between their

preference and the perceived preferences of their parents for romantic partner characteristics of warmth and trustworthiness. Overall, these studies provide some evidence that, whereas greater acceptance of parental control of mate choice reduces commitment and passion, strong family ties increase commitment and passion. Additionally, this study further supports greater acceptance of parental influence on mate choice in relation to collectivism.

In Ontario, Canada, the province where this study was completed, approximately 30% of people were born in countries outside of Canada with India, China, and the Philippines being the most common birth countries (Statistics Canada, 2022). An additional 23% of people in Ontario were second generation immigrants (i.e., at least one parent was born outside of Canada). Given this diversity, another important variable relevant for the current study was that of acculturation. Acculturation has been defined as "the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members" (Berry, 2005, p. 698). Acculturation is reviewed in greater detail in the following section.

Acculturation

As illustrated through culturally grounded self-construal, the cultural context contributes to how people define themselves. However, in the globalized world of today, people often move from one cultural context to another cultural context. Given the frequent movement of people from one country to another, researchers have studied the process of adjustment to a new cultural setting. This adjustment process is referred to as acculturation (Berry, 1997). Acculturation involves aspects of culture including values, friends, food preferences, media consumption, and many other areas. Research on

acculturation will be reviewed in relation to parent and friend approval of romantic relationships because it is a key cultural variable associated with important outcomes as will be outlined throughout the following paragraphs.

Acculturation is conceptualized as occurring on two continua: maintenance of the heritage culture and adapting to the mainstream culture. Based on levels of these two continua, people can adopt one of the following four acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 2005). Integration involves high maintenance of the heritage culture and high acculturation towards the mainstream culture as well. Assimilation involves low maintenance of the heritage culture and a high degree of acculturation to the mainstream culture. Separation involves a high degree of maintenance of the heritage culture but a low degree of acculturation towards the heritage culture. Finally, marginalization involves a low degree of maintenance of the heritage culture and a low degree of acculturation to mainstream culture. Researchers have found that acculturation is associated with important outcome variables. Several studies have found that integration is associated with the most adaptive outcomes followed by assimilation and separation (Berry, 2005; Berry & Hou, 2017). Marginalization is generally associated with the poorest adaptive outcomes.

During the literature review, no studies were identified that directly examined the possible association between measures of acculturation and parental and friend approval/disapproval; however, there has been some limited research that indicates an association between generation status (i.e., the generation in which people immigrated to a new country) and parental influence. Generation status and acculturation have been correlated in past research (Valentine, 2001) and, although of limited validity, generation

status is sometimes used as a proxy for acculturation (e.g., Cruz et al., 2008). That is, later generation status has been associated with a higher degree of acculturation to the mainstream culture whereas earlier generation status has been associated with greater maintenance of the heritage culture.

Shenhav and colleagues (2017) conducted a study in the United States exploring parental influence on outgroup dating amongst young adults from different ethnic backgrounds (i.e., Asian, Latino, European backgrounds) and generation statuses (i.e., first, second, and third and beyond generation status). Interestingly, in this particular sample, participants across all three ethnic groups and immigration generations were equally likely to be involved in an intercultural relationship. Participants from Asian backgrounds, as opposed to Latinx or European, believed that their attitudes regarding intercultural dating varied most substantially from their parents. Asian, first generation, and second-generation participants were reportedly more likely to have conflict with their parents due to differences in this area as compared to Latinx participants and all participants from third and later immigrant generations. A study conducted by Uskul and colleagues (2011) found that in terms of acculturation, mainstream identity within a Canadian context was associated with more positive views of dating outside of the cultural group.

As referenced earlier, Yahya and Boag (2014) found that young adults from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds felt varying degrees of pressure to date within their own culture and religious backgrounds. Most participants in this study, however, found these attitudes outdated and racist. Participants also indicated that they, unlike past generations, would not have these expectations for their own children. This suggests a

generational shift regarding intention to influence children's romantic partner choice (Yahya & Boag, 2014). Given this generational shift, it is worth exploring possible differences related to parent opinion importance in relation to acculturation. In addition to cultural factors, gender may be of importance regarding parent and friend approval and disapproval.

Gender Differences in Perceptions of Romantic Relationships and Related Behaviours

Parents and friends have different expectations for men and women in areas such as romantic relationships. Across cultures, mothers and fathers tend to supervise and enforce rules regarding daughter's romantic partner behaviour more closely compared to son's (Madsen, 2008). Other gender differences exist, such as the finding that women marry at a younger age than men (United Nations, 2016). Gender roles occur within the context of cultural norms and expectations. Particularly in immigrant families, sons are given greater freedom than daughters to date in general, date outside of their cultural group, and engage in sexual activity (Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006). In contrast, daughters are frequently discouraged or prohibited from dating in general, particularly dating partners outside of their cultural group. Emerging adult daughters regularly report additional monitoring and control from their parents regarding their sexual and romantic activities which is rarely reported by emerging adult sons (Allison, 2016). Similarly, a study on lies regarding sexual behaviour of emerging adults found male and female participants reported being most likely to tell lies about their sexual behaviour to parents compared to other members of their social network (Kellie et al., 2020). Female

participants reported being most likely to tell more lies and bigger lies to their fathers compared to any other person.

Emerging adult women generally report more frequent restrictive sexual messages from their parents whereas men report more frequent positive sexual messages from parents (Morgan et al., 2010). In many cultures, female virginity before marriage is valued and protected in daughters. For example, Le Espiritu (2001) interviewed Filipino Americans regarding expectations for daughters within their culture. Parents and daughters indicated that, in comparison to their Filipino brothers and White American daughters, Filipina daughters were often not allowed to date, spend nights at friends' houses, or stay out late. Interviewees frequently emphasized the purity of their daughters, which was contrasted to the perceived promiscuity of White American women. Parents shamed daughters who engaged in activities deemed as inappropriate for failing to honour their culture. A study of South Asian adolescent immigrant girls in Canada also found that participants reported that they were subjected to greater control over their social and romantic activities compared to their male counterparts and mainstream peers (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000).

A need to protect "female virtue" can lead to disproportionate monitoring of young women over young men. This is supported by research conducted by Allison (2016) which indicates that parental monitoring of emerging adult children's dating and sexual behaviour focused disproportionately on daughters. Intuitively, such disproportionate expectations and monitoring could easily lead to frustration and conflict. As such, Chung (2001) found that Asian-American women were more likely to report

intergenerational conflict with their parents over dating and marriage than their male counterparts.

In terms of friendship, women are more likely to disclose relevant sex-related behaviour to close friends compared to men (Lefkowitz et al., 2004). Similarly, women have greater communion expectations, which include intimacy and self-disclosure, for friendships compared to men (e.g., Hall, 2011). Although some findings suggest gender differences in relation to friendships, others have found minimal differences. For example, a large-scale study found that men and women were equally likely to report having friends who they felt comfortable sharing intimate matters of their life (Gillespie et al., 2015). As such, this study will investigate possible gender differences in parent and friend approval and disapproval importance.

Social Support from Parents and Friends

Social support is the perception and experience of being loved, cared for, and having people who are willing and able to aid in meeting needs (Taylor, 2011). Social support comes in a variety of forms including informational (i.e., providing perspective and information on how to deal with a problem or stressor), instrumental (i.e., giving tangible assistance such as money or other resources), and emotional (i.e., providing the person with warmth and reassurance that they are cared for and valued). Although there can certainly be downsides to social support (e.g., overly intrusive family members, unwanted and unsolicited advice), social support is associated with numerous positive physical and mental health outcomes (e.g., Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009; Taylor, 2011; Uchino, 2009). Research indicates that people generally do not even need to utilize social support for it to be beneficial (Taylor, 2011). The perception of social support being

available is associated with positive outcomes even when the social support is not being given (e.g., feeling there is someone who would lend you money could be helpful even if the person does not borrow money). Social support is beneficial in both nonstressful and stressful times and can serve as a buffer against negative effects during times of particular stress (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic; Grey et al., 2020; Qi et al., 2020).

During young adulthood, parents and friends are two important sources of ongoing social support. Parents provided various types of social support to their adult children including tangible (e.g., money) and nontangible (e.g., listening) forms of support (Fingerman et al., 2009). Parents provide more support in times of difficulty or crisis. Similarly, parents provide less support for older young adult children compared to younger young adult children. Similarly, parents tend to provide less support to adult children who have completed more markers of adulthood (e.g., stable romantic partner relationships or finances; Swartz et al., 2011).

Friends are another important source of social support. For example, Lee and Goldstein (2016) found that social support from friends, but not parents or romantic partners, buffered the association between stress and loneliness among emerging adults. Like with parents, social support from friends shifts with life changes and development throughout young adulthood. Social support from friends ebbs and flows over time, with a study from Galambos et al. (2018) finding that, between the ages of 18-25 years old, perceived friend support decreases for women but increases for men. People who marry or begin living with romantic partners perceive decreases in social support from friends but increased social support from romantic partners. Given the benefits of social support, people who perceive their parents as being socially supportive may have motivation to

avoid risking jeopardizing that support and reason to trust and rely on the person providing the support. Although social support is an important aspect of relationships with parents and friends, conflict also occurs within these relationships.

Parental and Friend Conflict Related to Romantic Relationships

Thus far, this review has primarily focused on existing research regarding the importance of parent and friend approval/disapproval of romantic relationships. As has been outlined, parents and friends can be an important source of social support more generally and can be a more specific source of approval or disapproval in relation to romantic relationships; however, when young adults find themselves in disagreement with their parents or friends in relation to their romantic relationships, the potential arises for conflict. Another purpose of this study is to further understand conflict between parents and adult children and friends related to romantic relationships.

Interpersonal conflict is a common aspect of relationships. Although definitions of interpersonal conflict vary, Barki and Hartwick (2004), found that most definitions include the elements of disagreement, interference, and negative emotions. The three elements of conflict are determined by the cognitions, behaviour, and affect during the conflict. Cognitions typically include disagreement over something important to both parties. The behaviour is the action within the conflict intended to interfere with the other's goal. Finally, conflicts tend to be associated with "negatively" valanced emotions (e.g., anger). Conflicts range in severity and subject.

In general, conflict tends to be more frequent with parents in comparison to friends (e.g., Moilanen & Raffaelli, 2010; Noack & Buhl, 2005). Additionally, conflict with mothers generally peaked during mid-adolescence whereas conflict with fathers

remained steady across age ranges. Although, in some cases, interpersonal conflict has been associated with negative outcomes (e.g., Oldenburg & Kerns, 1997), this does not necessarily occur. For example, Demir and colleagues (2007) found that friendship quality buffered potential negative impacts of friendship conflict on happiness among 280 American college students.

In terms of conflict over romantic relationships, from an evolutionary psychology perspective, parents and friends have different ideals for the characteristics of a quality mate for their child and friend, respectively (e.g., Dubbs & Buunk, 2010a). As covered previously, both parents and friends tend to want partners for their child or friend who will increase altruism to themselves whereas people are more likely to want partners with indicators of good genetic quality for themselves (e.g., Buunk et al., 2008). When a child or friend engages in a relationship that does not benefit the parent or friend, some form of conflict may ensue. As of yet, conflict with parents and friends related to romantic relationships has been largely understudied; therefore, limited published research was identified.

Most of the research conducted thus far relates to parent-child disagreement over romantic relationships and related behaviours. Research has established that parental views tend to differ from their children on such topics as the acceptability of dating outside of their culture group and religion (e.g., Uskul et al., 2011) and the relative importance of traits such as physical attractiveness, personality, and family background (e.g., Apostolou, 2008; Buunk et al., 2008). As outlined previously, Apostolou (2013) investigated various techniques parents use to influence their children's mate choice. These include such conflict-relevant techniques such as coercion (e.g., by yelling, by

threatening), using "hardball" techniques (e.g., physical harm, threatening physical harm), and using silent treatment techniques. In Apostolou's study (2013), these techniques were used with the ultimate goal of finding what the parent deems to be a suitable romantic partner for their child.

Parent-child disagreement over mate preferences may be especially relevant for children of immigrants (e.g., Hynie et al., 2006). Children of immigrants are often attempting to integrate the cultural values of their parents and heritage and the values of the mainstream culture which may lead to differing ideas about dating, sex, and mate preference. For example, a study of 63 adult children and their Chinese immigrant parents living in Canada and the United States found that parents had a greater preference for traditional mate characteristics (i.e., characteristics particularly valued in traditional and collectivistic cultures) (Hynie et al., 2006). In another example, a small-scale qualitative study of second-generation Indian participants living in America and Canada found that conflict often emerges related to dating and romantic relationships (Dugsin, 2001). Conflicts were reported due to participants wanting to date and marry outside of their culture. Even the purpose of marriage and dating tends to differ culturally, potentially leading to conflict.

In addition to exploring relevant parent-child conflict, the current research addresses the understudied topic of friend conflict related to romantic relationships. As mentioned previously, conflict tends to be less common among friends compared to parent-child dyads (e.g., Moilanen & Raffaelli, 2010). Friends may more regularly play a listening and supportive role in which the friend has the opportunity to verbally work through issues when it comes to romantic relationships (Morgan & Korobov, 2012).

However, conflict with friends related to romantic partners may occur for a variety of reasons. For example, Roth and Parker (2001) studied responses of 75 American adolescents regarding their experiences of neglect from their friends due to the friend spending time with romantic partners. Fifty-three percent of the girls and 32% of boys reported feeling neglected by a friend for the friend's romantic partner. These feelings of neglect elicited emotions including anger and jealousy. Friendship jealousy has also been identified as a common occurrence amongst adults who engage in behaviours to maintain or "guard" the friendship when friends begin engaging in new relationships; romantic and otherwise (Krems et al., 2021). This jealousy is especially relevant in situations when they feel their role as a friend is being replaced (e.g., friend spending a lot of time with the new person).

A focus-group qualitative study by Smith and colleagues (2020) about "drama" among emerging adults indicated that romantic relationships are a major factor leading to drama. Drama is generally considered to be negative interactions with friends and peers closely associated with varying degrees of interpersonal conflict and relational aggression. Participants indicated women more often engage in drama, often regarding potential or actual romantic relationships with men. Intrasexual competition could also be a potential source for conflict among friends, in which friends are interested in the same person. Women have been found to engage in indirect aggression regarding intrasexual competition (Vaillancourt, 2013). Rival derogation (i.e., use strategies to make the rival seem like a less desirable mate choice) and competitor manipulation (i.e., using strategies to decrease their rival's interest such as pointing out negative traits in the person of interest) are two strategies intrasexual competition used by men and women that could

lead to conflict (Fisher & Cox, 2011). Although this possibility was not explicitly identified in past research, another reason that friends may be unhappy with and even engage in conflict with their friends is disagreement over how well suited the partner is for the friend (i.e., thinking someone is not "good enough," lacks important traits, or that their friend is not satisfied in their relationship; Etcheverry et al., 2013).

Another possible source of romantic relationship disapproval and conflict with parents and friends is the presence of intimate partner violence within a relationship. Intimate partner violence (IPV) includes various harmful behaviours (e.g., physical, sexual, psychological) and control perpetrated against a current or past intimate partner. IPV has been associated with various indicators of poorer physical and mental health (Miller & McCaw, 2019). Given this, parents and friends may notice and express concern if they notice their child or friend is being mistreated. People who are involved in abusive relationships may feel that, despite the abuse, they love their partners and use denial, rationalization, and minimization of the abuse to justify staying in the relationship (Barnett, 2001; Cravens et al., 2015). McKenzie and colleagues (2022) conducted a qualitative study of young adults' experiences supporting a female friend who has experienced intimate partner violence (IPV). Although IPV was not explicitly described as a source of conflict, participants described the difficult experience of attempting to help their friends recognize the abuse, particularly when their friend expressed positive feelings about the relationship or provided excuses for abuse.

One novel contribution of this study was to examine the nature of parent and friend conflict over romantic relationships in the context of ideal romantic partner

characteristics. Overall, conflict specifically related to romantic relationships is an understudied area that is worthy of further research and clarification.

The Current Research Project: Research Questions and Hypotheses

The current research project was intended to further address the influence parents and friends can have on romantic relationships. The overall goal was to gain a better understanding of how these factors operate in the lives of Canadian young adults. Other relevant constructs addressed include self-construal, acculturation, gender, social support, and interpersonal conflict.

Research Question 1: After controlling for gender and age, do self construal, parent and friend opinion of the relationship, the interaction between parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction between friend opinion and interdependent self-construal predict romantic relationship love in young adults currently in a relationship (overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy)?

Hypothesis 1a: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal, will predict *overall love* within young adults currently in romantic relationships.

Hypothesis 1b: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *passion* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships.

Hypothesis 1c: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *commitment* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships.

Hypothesis 1d: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *intimacy* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships. The following points clarify the directionality and rationale for Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d:

- **More positive parent opinion will be related to greater overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in the romantic relationship**. This hypothesized relation is in line with past research supporting an association with positive parent opinion of a romantic relationship and various indicators of better romantic relationship quality (e.g., Rodrigues et al., 2017; Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014).
- **More positive friend opinion will be related to greater overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in the romantic relationship.** This hypothesized relation is in line with past research supporting an association with positive friend opinion of a romantic relationship and various indicators of better romantic relationship quality (e.g., Sprecher, 2011; Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014).
- **Interdependent self-construal will moderate the relation between parent opinion and greater overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in the**

romantic relationship. Interdependent self-construal is hypothesized to strengthen the positive relation between parent opinion and love in the romantic relationship. People who are higher in interdependent self-construal tend to be more concerned with fitting in with in-group members, group harmony, and conflict avoidance (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). In past research, people from collectivistic cultures reported more accepting attitudes towards parental control of romantic relationships (Buunk et al., 2010). Given the association between cultural values and self-construal (Singelis & Brown, 1995), more positive parent opinion is hypothesized to be more strongly associated with relationship quality in people with a more interdependent self-construal.

- **Interdependent self-construal will moderate the relation between friend opinion and overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in the romantic relationship. Interdependent self-construal is hypothesized to strengthen the positive relation between friend opinion and overall love in the romantic relationship.** As mentioned, people who are higher in interdependent self-construal tend to be more concerned with fitting in with in-group members, group harmony, and conflict avoidance (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). As such, interdependent self-construal is hypothesized to also moderate the relation between friend opinion and love.

Research Question 2: After controlling for the covariate of age, does gender, heritage acculturation, mainstream acculturation, parent social support, interdependent self-construal, independent self-construal, the interaction between interdependent self-construal and gender, and the interaction between independent

self-construal and gender predict importance of parent disapproval on romantic relationship decisions?

Hypothesis 2: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, parent social support, interdependent self-construal, independent self-construal, the interaction between interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *parent disapproval importance*. The following points clarify the directionality and rationale for this hypothesis:

- **There will be a positive relation between parent disapproval importance and gender with women scoring relatively higher than men.** To varying degrees from culture to culture, daughters generally tend to be the target of greater parental monitoring and behavioural control than sons (e.g., Madsen, 2008). This seems to be particularly true when it comes to romantic relationships and related behaviour (e.g., sexual involvement, partying). Research indicates this tendency may occur even more so among immigrant families (e.g., Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006). Overall, adult daughters are expected to be more concerned with the opinions of their parents compared to their male counterparts.
- **Heritage acculturation will be positively related to parent disapproval importance.** No past research was identified to clarify how acculturation relates to parent disapproval importance. Traditional values tend to be important to those young adults who identify with their heritage culture (Berry, 1997). As such, family likely remains an important influence in their lives. This is hypothesized to manifest in the relation between the degree to which they identify with their

heritage culture and the importance they place on parent disapproval of their romantic relationships.

- **Mainstream acculturation will be negatively related to parent disapproval importance.** Whereas heritage acculturation involves the maintenance of traditional values and culture, mainstream acculturation involves taking on the mainstream values and culture, including the development of friendships with people from the mainstream culture (Berry, 1997). Given this, it is expected that people higher in mainstream acculturation will place less importance on parent disapproval of their romantic relationships.
- **Parent social support will be positively related to parent disapproval importance.** Social support from family and friends serves an important function and has been associated with better physical and psychological health (e.g., Uchino, 2009; Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009). Given the important role social support plays, this provides reasons to maintain sources of social support and rely on the opinions of those providing support. In past literature, participants who relied on their parents for material support, relied more on their opinions of potential romantic partners (Wright & Sinclair, 2012). As such, it is expected that participants who receive greater social support from parents will report greater parent disapproval importance.
- **Interdependent self-construal will be positively related to parent disapproval importance.** To reiterate, people who are high in interdependent self-construal tend to be more concerned with fitting in with in-group members, group harmony, and conflict avoidance (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001).

Additionally, in past research, participants from collectivistic cultures reported more accepting attitudes towards parental control of romantic relationships (Buunk et al., 2010; Bejanyan et al., 2015). As such, it is expected that more interdependent participants will report greater parent disapproval importance.

- **Independent self-construal will be negatively related to parent disapproval importance.** People who are high in independent self-construal tend to be more concerned with individuality and uniqueness, even when this means disagreeing with family and friends (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). As such, it is expected that more independent participants will report lower parent disapproval importance.
- **Gender will moderate the relation between interdependent and independent self-construal and parent disapproval importance. The positive association between interdependent self-construal and parent disapproval importance will be stronger for female participants compared to male participants. The negative association between independent self-construal and parent disapproval importance will be weaker for female participants compared to male participants.** As has been outlined, parents tend to be especially concerned with the behaviour and romantic relationships of daughters compared to sons. This may be especially salient in collectivistic cultures. Additionally, the tendency to value the opinions and perspectives of others for those with more interdependent self-construal is expected to be particularly strong for women. As such, the relation between self-construal and parent approval importance is expected to differ as a function of gender; the relation between interdependent

self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be stronger for women compared to men whereas the relation between independent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be weaker for women compared to men.

Research Question 3: After controlling for the covariate of age, does gender, interdependent self-construal, independent self-construal, heritage acculturation, mainstream acculturation, friend social support, the interaction between interdependent self-construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender predict the importance of friend disapproval on romantic relationship decisions?

Hypothesis 3: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, interdependent and independent self-construal, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, friend social support, the interaction between interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *friend disapproval importance*. The following points clarify the directionality and rationale for this hypothesis:

- **There will be a positive relation between friend disapproval importance and gender with women scoring relatively higher than men.** Women are more likely to disclose relevant sex-related behaviour to close friends compared to men (Lefkowitz et al., 2004) and greater communion expectations within friendships compared to men (e.g., greater expectation of intimacy and self-disclosure; Hall, 2011). For these reasons, women are expected to place greater importance on friend disapproval of their romantic relationships compared to men.

- **Mainstream acculturation will positively relate to friend disapproval importance.** Given that mainstream values tend to be important to those young adults higher in mainstream acculturation (Berry, 1997), people who have a strong orientation to the mainstream culture are expected to rely more heavily on the disapproval of their friends.
- **Heritage acculturation will negatively relate to friend disapproval importance.** Given that traditional values tend to be important to those young adults higher in heritage acculturation (Berry, 1997), people who have a strong orientation to the heritage culture are expected to rely less heavily on the disapproval of their friends.
- **Friend social support will positively relate to friend disapproval importance.** As described in Hypothesis 2 regarding parent social support**,** participants who perceive greater social support are expected to place greater importance on friend disapproval of romantic relationships.
- **Interdependent self-construal will positively relate to friend disapproval importance.** As described in Hypothesis 2, friends, like parents, can also be considered in-group members. Therefore, it is expected that participants will be especially concerned with friend disapproval of their romantic relationships.
- **Independent self-construal will negatively relate to friend disapproval importance.** As described in Hypothesis 2, people who are high in independent self-construal tend to be more concerned with individuality and uniqueness, even when this means disagreeing with, or disregarding the perspective of friends (e.g., Triandis, 2001).

- **Gender will moderate the relation between interdependent and independent self-construal and friend disapproval importance. The positive association between interdependent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be stronger for female participants compared to male participants. The negative association between independent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be weaker for female participants compared to male participants.** As with Hypothesis 2, it is expected that interdependent self-construal will be positively associated with friend disapproval importance and independent self-construal will be negatively associated with friend disapproval importance. This relation is expected to differ as a function of gender; the relation between interdependent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be stronger for women compared to men whereas the relation between independent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be weaker for women compared to men.

Research Question 4: After controlling for the covariate of age, does gender, interdependent self-construal, independent self-construal, heritage acculturation, mainstream acculturation, parent social support, friend social support, the interaction between interdependent self-construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender predict the importance of parent and friend approval of romantic relationship decision predicted?

Hypothesis 4: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, interdependent and independent self-construal, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, parent and friend social support, the interaction between

interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *parent and friend approval importance*. The following points clarify the directionality and rationale for this hypothesis:

- **There will be a positive relation between parent and friend approval importance and gender with women scoring relatively higher than men.** As outlined previously, women are expected to place greater importance on the opinions of their parents (Hypothesis 2) and friends (Hypothesis 3) compared to men. As such, parent and friend approval importance is hypothesized to be higher among women compared to men.
- **Parent social support will positively relate to parent and friend approval importance.** As outlined in Hypotheses 2 and 3, social support serves an important role. In past literature, participants who relied on their parents for material support, relied more on their opinions of potential romantic partners (Wright & Sinclair, 2012). As such, it is expected that participants who receive greater social support from parents will report parent and friend approval importance.
- **Friend social support will positively relate to parent and friend approval importance.** In line with the previously outlined importance of social support, it is expected that participants who report greater social support from their friends will report greater importance of parent and friend approval importance.
- **Interdependent self-construal will positively relate to parent and friend approval importance.** As described in Hypotheses 2 and 3, people who are high in interdependent self-construal tend to be more concerned with fitting in with in-

group members, group harmony, and conflict avoidance (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 2001). Additionally, in past research, participants from collectivistic cultures reported more accepting attitudes towards parental control of romantic relationships (Buunk et al., 2010). As such, participants higher in interdependent self-construal are expected to place greater importance on parent and friend approval.

- **Independent self-construal will negatively relate to parent and friend approval importance.** As described in Hypotheses 2 and 3, people who are high in independent self-construal tend to be more concerned with individuality and uniqueness, even when this means disagreeing with, or disregarding the perspective of friends (e.g., Triandis, 2001). As such, participants higher in independent self-construal are expected to place less importance on parent and friend approval.
- **Gender will moderate the relation between interdependent and independent self-construal and parent and friend approval importance. The positive association between interdependent self-construal and friend disapproval importance will be stronger for female participants compared to male participants. The negative association between independent self-construal and parent and friend approval importance will be weaker for female participants compared to male participants.** As with Hypotheses 2 and 3, it is expected that interdependent self-construal will be positively associated with parent and friend approval importance and independent self-construal will be negatively associated with parent and friend approval importance. This relation is

expected to differ as a function of gender; the relation between interdependent self-construal and parent and friend approval importance will be stronger for women compared to men whereas the relation between independent self-construal and parent and friend approval importance will be weaker for women compared to men.

Research Question 5: Do young adults experience conflict with their parents and friends regarding their romantic relationships? If so, what is the nature of this conflict?

Hypothesis 5: Young adults will have experienced conflicts with their parents and friends that vary regarding reason for conflict (i.e., conflict theme), conflict severity, conflict resolution, and perceived validity of the other's perspective in the conflict.

Research Question 5 is addressed through qualitative analysis of participant narrative responses. Although there has been limited research on what causes conflict related to romantic relationships, themes are expected to relate to issues linked with parent and friend approval and disapproval and sources of disagreement regarding mate choice. Based on review of past literature, reasons for conflicts were expected to include partner characteristics such as characteristics of marginalized relationships (i.e., substantial age gap, interracial/ethnic differences, different religions, & 2SLGBTQAI+; Agnew, 2016) and differences of opinion on the relative importance of character traits or concerns regarding character traits (e.g., Apostolou, 2008; Buunk et al., 2008). Additional themes are expected to relate to concerns regarding the partner mistreating the participant (e.g., emotional abuse or other mistreatment; McKenzie et al., 2022), pressure to initiate or move forward with a relationship (e.g., parents trying to set-up or encourage a match

they approve of; Apostolou 2013; Sprecher & Felmlee 2021), concerns that the participant are neglecting other relationships or duties due to the relationship (e.g., friends feeling neglected for a romantic partner; Roth & Parker, 2001), concern that the participant was acting immorally or dangerously (e.g., parents of daughters tend to be especially concerned with their daughter's romantic and sexual behaviours; Allison, 2016), and intrasexual competition (e.g., jealousy and competition among friends; Vaillancourt, 2013).

Research Question 6: Do young adult's characteristics of an ideal mate differ from the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents and close friends? Are differences in ideal characteristics associated with intergenerational and friend conflict?

This research question was intended to identify differences between participants, their parents, and friends in perceived ideal mate characteristics and to identify whether, as expected, parental and/or friend conflicts are associated with differences in perceived ideal mate characteristics.

Hypothesis 6a: Young adults' characteristics of an ideal mate will differ from the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents and close friends.

Hypothesis 6b: Greater differences between parent-participant ideal characteristics will be associated with greater frequency and severity of parent conflict related to romantic relationships.

Hypothesis 6c: Greater differences between friend-participant ideal characteristics will be associated with greater frequency and severity of friend conflict related to romantic relationships.

Chapter III – Method

Design

The current study used a cross-sectional design. The study was a quantitative dominant, mixed methods research design as it included both quantitative and qualitative components (Johnson et al., 2007). All participants were presented a series of online questionnaires (i.e., demographic information, perceived dating appropriateness, parent and friend approval/disapproval importance, self-construal, interpersonal dependency, attitudes towards parent influence on mate choice, relational self-construal, acculturation, social support, ideal characteristics of a romantic partner). In a preliminary study, a new measure was developed to assess parent and friend approval/disapproval importance (Thompson, 2022a & 2022b; Appendix H). This measure was included in the current study for confirmatory factor analysis and used in hypotheses testing. In addition, participants responded to open-ended, qualitative questions clarifying the influence parents and friends have on their romantic relationships and eliciting narratives about conflicts with parents and friends related to romantic relationships. Participants who indicated that they were currently in romantic relationships were presented with two additional questionnaires (i.e., parent and friend opinions of their current romantic relationship, quality of the romantic relationship).

Recruitment

Participants were recruited through the university's psychology participant pool and other sources as described further below. Students registered in the participant pool had the opportunity to sign up for the study through the participant pool website (Appendix A). They were reimbursed for their time completing the study with participant

pool bonus points. People were eligible to participate if they were between the ages of 18-39 years old and living in Canada. Additional participants were recruited from outside of the participant pool. An advertisement was distributed on Facebook and Instagram (Appendix B). Groups and clubs celebrating diverse ethnic heritage on campus were contacted by email and asked to forward study information to their members (Appendix C). All participants recruited from outside of the participant pool were given the option of entering a draw to win one of two $50 amazon.ca gift cards. The draw was completed at the end of data collection, and two participants were sent gift cards.

Participants

Two-hundred and seventy participants were recruited for participation in the current study. This was intended to allow for 12 participants per parameter for confirmatory factor analysis with 20 additional participants to compensate for participants with very incomplete data or who failed validity tests (Suhr, 2006). Additionally, this sample was also intended to include a sufficient number of people for the analyses required for sufficient overall power to test hypotheses using multiple regression based on calculations with G*Power (Faul et al., 2009) including a subsample of participants currently involved in romantic relationships.

As outlined in Figure 1, following data screening, data from 237 participants remained in the study. After data cleaning, there were 224 participants from participant pool recruitment and 13 participants from community recruitment. There were some differences between participant pool and community participants. Community participants includes a greater proportion of young adults (76.9% young adults) compared to the participant pool participants (14.0% young adults). There was also a higher

proportion of participants with graduate or professional degrees in the community (38.5%) compared to the participant pool (0.4%). Additionally, a greater proportion of participants in the community (84.6%) were involved in a romantic relationship compared to participant pool participants (58.5%). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 39 years old. (*M* age = 22.1 years). Most participants (81.9%) were within the 18 to 25 age range associated with emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In terms of gender, 181 identified as female, one of whom indicated they were "leaning towards" a nonbinary gender identity. Fifty-two participants identified as male, two of whom indicated they were trans male. Additionally, two participants identified as nonbinary, and one participant identified as gender-fluid. As outlined further in Table 1, in terms of ethnicity, most participants identified as White (56.3%), followed by Arab (10.1%), Black (8.4%), South Asian (5.9%), and Chinese (5.1%). Further demographic information is included in Table 1.

Table 2 includes some descriptive characteristics of participants' parents. Parental educational attainment can be used as a resource-based indicator of socio-economic status (Diemer et al., 2013). Most participants indicated that their mothers (67.1%) and fathers (59.0%) had completed some form of post-secondary education. They also indicated that their parents were typically employed full-time during their childhood. Participants also provided a rough estimate of their family income. Nearly half of the participants (45.2%) indicated that their yearly family income is $75,000 or greater (Canadian median annual income was $68,400 in 2021; Statistics Canada, 2023).

Of the total participants, one hundred forty-two participants indicated they were currently involved in a romantic relationship. Table 3 outlines some key characteristics of

participants' romantic relationships. Those who indicated current involvement in a romantic relationship chose the following as the best label for their relationship: exclusively dating (56.3%), casually dating (18.3%), married (14.1%), cohabitating (9.9%), and engaged (1.4%). Half of participants indicated their romantic relationship had one or more characteristics of a marginalized relationships (Agnew, 2016). These characteristics included interethnic/interracial relationships (31.0%), interreligious relationships (19.0%), social standing disparity (8.5%), same-sex relationships (6.3%), and substantial age gaps (2.8%).

Figure 1

Flow Chart of Participants

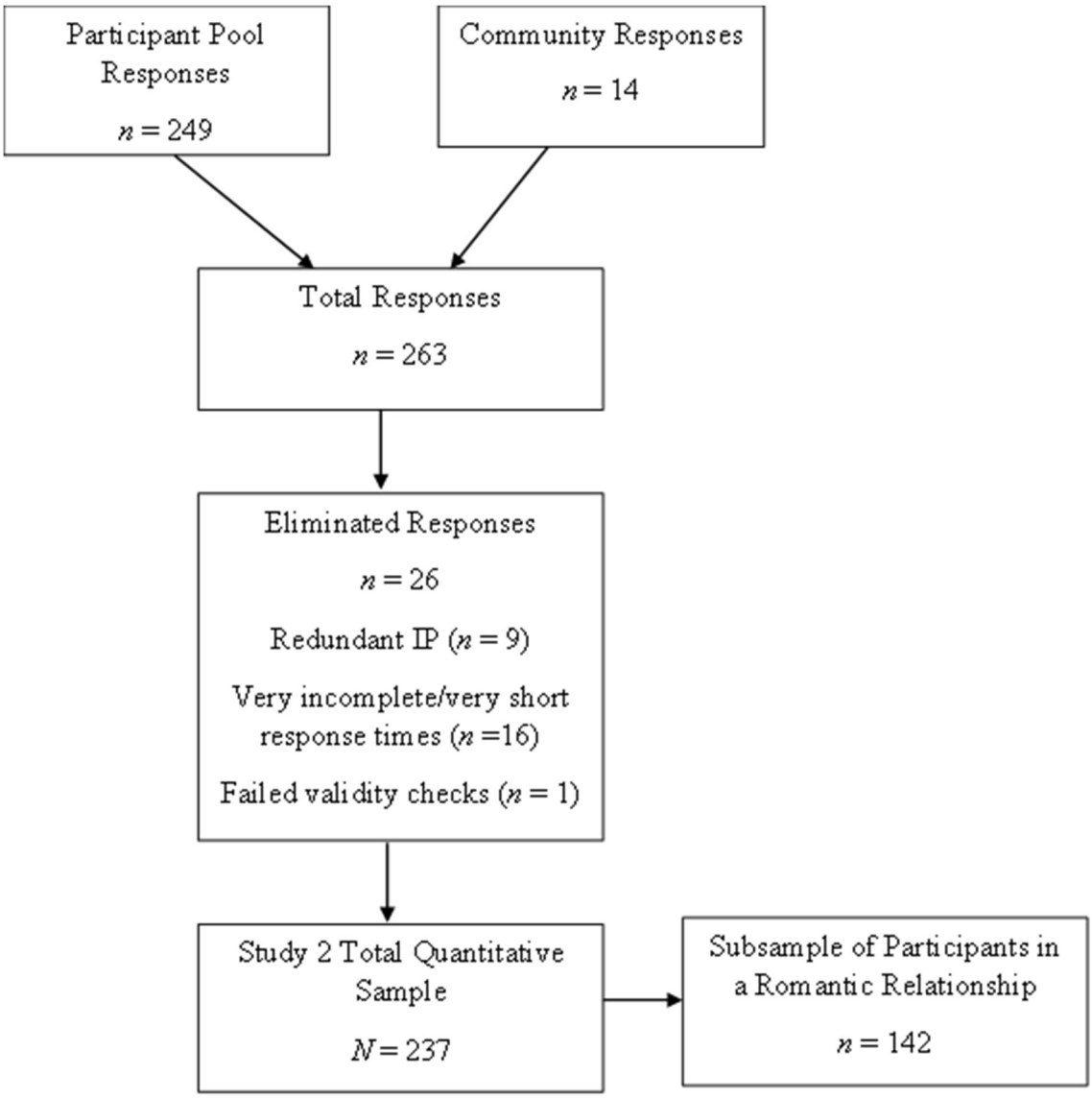


Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N =237)

	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Men	52	22.3%
Women	181	76.1%
Non-binary	2	1.3%
Gender fluid	1	0.4%
Romantic relationship		
In a relationship	141	59.5%
Not in a relationship	96	40.5%
Employment status		
Part-Time	139	58.4%
Full-Time	43	18.1%
Unemployed	56	23.5%
Highest education attained		
Elementary or middle school	1	0.4%
Some high school	1	0.4%
High school diploma	176	74.3%
College diploma	19	8.0%
University degree	34	14.3%
Graduate or professional degree	6	2.5%
Immigrant generation status		
First (*immigrated as an adult*)	11	4.9%
1.5 (*immigrated as a child*)	39	17.4%
Second	59	26.3%
Third and beyond	105	46.9%
First Nations	6	2.6%
International student	4	1.8%
Ethnic identification		
White	134	56.3%
Arab	24	10.1%
Black	20	8.4%
Chinese	12	5%
Filipino	3	1.3%
Latin American	2	.8%
Native/Aboriginal	5	2.1%
South Asian	15	6.1%
Southeast Asian	6	2.5%
Other	15	6.3%

Table 2

Parent Educational Attainment, Employment Status, and Frequency of Contact with Parents

	Mother	Father
Educational attainment		
No schooling or incomplete elementary education	5 (2.1%)	1 (0.4%)
Elementary or middle school	9 (3.8%)	5 (2.1%)
Some high school	8 (3.4%)	12 (5.1%)
High school diploma	53 (22.4%)	44 (18.6%)
College diploma	63 (26.6%)	42 (17.7%)
University degree	63 (26.6)	70 (29.5%)
Graduate or professional degree	33 (13.9%)	28 (11.8%)
Parental employment status during participant's childhood		
Full-time	148 (62.4%)	184 (77.6%)
Part-time	35 (14.8%)	10 (4.2%)
Seasonal employment	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)
Unemployed	46 (19.4%)	2 (0.8%)
Retired	4 (1.7%)	5 (2.1%)
Contact with parents		
Daily	194 (83.3%)	143 (60.3%)
Weekly	28 (12.0%)	44 (18.6%)
Monthly	9 (3.9%)	9 (3.8%)
No contact/parent not living	2 (0.9%)	6 (2.5%)

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Participants Involved in a Romantic Relationship (N =142)

Gender	Number	Percentage
Men	25	17.6%
Women	114	80.3%
Non-binary	2	1.4%
Gender fluid	1	0.7%
Relationship categorization		
Casually dating	26	18.3%
Exclusively dating	80	56.3%
Cohabitating	14	9.9%
Engaged	2	1.4%
Married	20	14.1%
Relationship Marginalization Characteristics		
Ethnic/Racial differences	44	31.0%
Religious differences	27	19.0%
Social standing disparity	12	8.5%
Same sex relationship	9	6.3%
Age gap of 10 years or more	4	2.8%
Marginalized relationship characteristics		
One characteristic	51	35.9%
Two characteristics	15	10.6%
Three characteristics	5	3.5%

Measures

All questionnaires used in the current study were either freely available for research use or were used with the permission of the measure's author as indicated in Appendix D. Measures completed by all participants include a demographic survey (Appendix E), Dating Appropriateness Questions (Appendix F; Thompson, 2020); Singelis Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994); the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (Cross et al., 2000); Vancouver Index of Acculturation (Ryder et al., 2000); Perceived Social Support, Modified (Procidano & Heller, 1983); Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (McClintock et al. 2017); Parental Influence on Mate Choice (Buunk et al., 2010); and Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Appendix G; Thompson, 2022a). Only participants who indicated they were currently in a romantic relationship completed Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1988) and the Social Networks Opinion Scale (Sinclair et al., 2014). Table 4 includes a summary of the measures used in this study, the variables these measures assess, the number of items per measure, the Cronbach's alpha for each scale based on the current sample, and the hypotheses each measure is used to test.

Table 4
Summary of Measures

Scale	Variable	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient	Relevant Hypotheses
Parental Influence on Mate Choice (Buunk et al., 2010)	Attitudes to Parent Influence on Mate Choice	11	.74	Preliminary Analysis
Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six. (McClintock et al., 2017)	Interpersonal Dependency	6	.72	Preliminary Analysis
Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1988)	Overall Love in Romantic Relationship	45	.97	1a
Passion	Passion in Romantic Relationship	15	.93	1b
Commitment	Commitment in Romantic Relationship	15	.95	1c
Intimacy	Intimacy in Romantic Relationship	15	.95	1d
Social Networks Opinion Scale (Sinclair et al., 2014				
Parent opinion	Parent Opinion of a Romantic Relationship	8	.93	1
Friend opinion	Friend Opinion of a Romantic Relationship	8	.89	1
The Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (Cross et al., 2000)	Relational Self-Construal	11	.88	1
Singelis Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994)				
Independent	Independent Self-Construal	12	.72	2-4
Interdependent	Interdependent Self-Construal	12	.75	2-4
Vancouver Index of Acculturation (Ryder et al., 2000)				
Heritage	Heritage Acculturation	10	.88	2-4
Mainstream	Mainstream Acculturation	10	.88	2-4

Table 4
Summary of Measures (continued)

Scale	Variable	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient	Relevant Hypotheses
Perceived Social Support, modified (Procidano & Heller, 1983)				
Parent	Parent Social Support	20	.91	2 & 4
Friend	Friend Social Support	20	.85	3 & 4
Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a)				
Parent disapproval importance	Parent disapproval importance	5	.95	2
Friend disapproval importance	Friend disapproval importance	5	.94	3
Parent and Friend Approval Importance	Parent and friend approval importance	10	.91	4

Demographic Information

Following the consent form, all participants completed a measure of demographic information (Appendix E). This measure includes questions about the participant's gender, age, romantic partner relationship status and characteristics, generational status, ethnicity, education, employment status, annual income, parent income, and parent ethnicity.

Dating Appropriateness Questions (Thompson, 2020)

Given that some participants may have parents and friends who do not think dating is an appropriate method to find a marital partner, questions were included to assess this opinion (Appendix F). Three questions asked them to rate how appropriate they, their parents, and their friends believe dating is as a method to choose a marital partner. Three additional questions asked which method participants believe they, their parents, and their friends would want them to use to select a romantic partner. Additionally, given that not all people see marriage as an end goal of dating or a life decision they intend to eventually make, a final question asked participants if they eventually intended to marry.

Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (*IDI-6; McClintock et al., 2017)*

The Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (IDI-6) is a 6-item abridged version of the original 48 item IDI (Hirschfeld, et al., 1977). The IDI-6 measures dependence on other people (McClintock et al. 2017). Participants respond on a four-point scale from *very characteristic of me*, *quite characteristic of me*, *somewhat characteristic of me*, and *not characteristic of me*. The IDI total and subscales are calculated by summing items. Higher scores indicate greater levels of dependency. In

addition to the total interpersonal dependency score, the IDI-6 has two scales; one measuring functional dependency (e.g., I would rather be a follower than a leader) and the other measuring emotional dependency (e.g., I need to have one person who puts me above all others).

The IDI-6 factor structure was validated through confirmatory factor analysis (McClintock et al. 2017). The IDI-6 displayed appropriate convergent and divergent validity. Additionally, the measure was found to have good test-retest validity and was sensitive to change when the person underwent psychotherapy. In past research, the IDI-6-Total score had a Cronbach's alpha of .70 and, in the current study, had a Cronbach's alpha of .71.

Parental Influence on Mate Choice (PIM; Buunk et al., 2010)

All participants completed the Parental Influence on Mate Choice (PIM; Buunk et al., 2010). The PIM is a 10-item self-report questionnaire intended to measure attitudes towards parental control of romantic relationship mate choice. Participants responded to items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*I disagree completely*) to 5 (*I agree completely*). The PIM is calculated by reverse scoring designated items then calculating an average score. Higher scores indicate more positive attitudes to parental input and control of mate choice. As described previously, the PIM was developed by initially generating 11 items based on past research (Buunk et al., 2010). This scale was validated through administration with different samples. As hypothesized by Buunk and colleagues, people from more collectivistic cultures scored higher on the PIM. Additionally, the scale demonstrated concurrent validity through a correlation with a question about how participants believed they would end up with their marital partner from independent

selection to parental selection. Past research found that Cronbach's alpha ranged from .68 to .88 with a Cronbach's alpha of .74 for the current study.

Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (TLS; Sternberg, 1988)

Participants who were in a romantic partner relationship at the time of study participation completed Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (TLS; Sternberg, 1988) as a measure of their overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy with their romantic partner. In the current study, Sternberg's theory is being used to conceptualize and measure romantic relationship quality. The TLS is a 45-item self-report measure used to assess perceived commitment, passion, and intimacy in a romantic partner relationship. Participants responded to items on a 9-point Likert scale 1 (*not at all*) to 9 (*very*) based on the extent to which they believed the statement reflected their relationship. Scores are calculated by summing items. Higher scores indicate more of the respective domain in the relationship. The TLS has three subscales consisting of 15 items each and an overarching relationship quality scale including all 45 items. Totals are averaged during the scoring process.

Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (TLS; Sternberg, 1988) was developed to measure commitment, passion, and intimacy in romantic partner relationships based on Sternberg's triangular theory of love (Sternberg, 1997; Whitley, 1993). The TLS was found to generally have good psychometric properties. Confirmatory factor analysis indicated that items loaded on their theorized scales (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1989; Whitley, 1993); however, factors were highly correlated with one another. Exploratory factor analysis indicated many items load on multiple factors. Results indicated the presence of an overarching, second-order factor (i.e., overall love). The TLS subscales

demonstrated convergent validity as they were found to be correlated with measures that were anticipated to be related (e.g., positively correlated with survival of the relationship over two months; Whitley, 1993). As expected, scores were higher for people who indicated they were in exclusive relationships over casual relationships. In past research, Cronbach's alphas were .95 for overall love and ranged from .94-96 for passion, .91-.98 for commitment, and .91-.96 for intimacy depending on the sample (Sternberg, 1997; Whitley, 1993). For the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .97 for overall love, .93 for passion, .95 for commitment, and .95 for intimacy.

Social Networks Opinion Scale (SNO; Sinclair et al., 2014)

For the current study, participants who indicated they were in a romantic relationship completed the Social Network Opinion Scale (SNO; Sinclair et al., 2014) twice: once for their parents/guardians and once for their closest friends. The SNO is an eight-item self-report measure used to assess perceived approval and disapproval from members of the participant's social network. The SNO can be completed for parents, friends, partner's parents, and partner's friends. Participants respond to items on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*). Scales are derived by totaling relevant items. Some items are reverse scored. The measure is scored such that higher, positive scores indicate greater social network approval whereas lower, negative scores indicate greater social network disapproval. The scale has questions reflecting social network member approval (e.g., How supportive are YOUR PARENTS of your romantic relationship?) and disapproval (e.g., To what extent do YOUR FRIENDS say negative things about your partner?). The SNO was developed to measure perceived social network approval and disapproval of a romantic relationship. In past research,

Cronbach's alpha for the SNO ranged from .91-.93 for the Parental Opinion scale when combined with items reflecting the Partner's Parents' Opinion and .93-.95 for the Friend Opinion scale when combined with items reflecting the Partner's Friends' Opinion. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .93 for parent opinion and .89 for friend opinion.

Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS; Singelis, 1994)

All participants were asked to complete the Singelis Self-Construal Scales (SSCS). The SSCS is a 24-item self-report measure used to assess the self perception of a person regarding independent and interdependent self-construal. Participants respond to items on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Scores are calculated by summing relevant item responses. Higher scores indicate greater association with the respective self-construal type. The SSCS has two scales measuring self-construal consisting of 12 items each. The scales measure independent self-construal (e.g., I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects) and interdependent self-construal (e.g., Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument).

The SSCS was developed by initially generating 45 items (Singelis, 1994). An ethnically diverse sample of male and female undergraduate students responded to the measure. Principal component factor analysis was carried out on the measure. Factor analysis indicated a two-factor solution was the best fit with factors reflecting independent and interdependent self-construal items. Items that did not load highly on either scale or that loaded highly on both scales were removed. Regarding construct validity, as theorized, Asian Americans were found to be higher in interdependent self-construal whereas Caucasian Americans were higher in independent self-construal. The

measure was also found to have good predictive validity of concepts found to be related in previous research (e.g., situational vs. internal attributions). In past research, Cronbach's alpha was .69 for independent self-construal and .73 for interdependent self-construal. For the current study, Cronbach's alphas were .72 for independent self-construal and .75 for interdependent self-construal.

The Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale (Cross et al., 2000)

All participants were asked to complete the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale (Cross et al., 2000). The RISC is an 11-item self-report measure used to assess the self perception of a person regarding relational-interdependent self-construal. The RISC was included as the scale measures a similar construct to the Singelis Self Construal Scale. The Singelis Self Construal Scale sometimes has been found to have problems regarding psychometric properties (e.g., Paquet & Kline, 2009). Participants respond to items on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Scores are calculated by totalling items. Higher scores indicate greater association with the relational-interdependent self-construal. The RISC items measure relational self-construal (e.g., "when I think of myself, I often think of my close friends or family also") a subcategory of interdependent self-construal (Cross et al., 2011).

The RISC was developed by generating conceptually relevant items and modifying items from conceptually related measures (Cross et al., 2000). Items were narrowed down from 28 to 11 after administration on the first sample based on quality and performance. Principal component analysis indicated that a one-factor solution was the best fit for the data. The RISC demonstrated expected convergent validity such as correlations to other measures of collectivism and interdependence. In past research,

Cronbach's alpha ranged from .85 to .90 for the RISC, depending on the sample. Cronbach's alpha was .88 for the current sample.

Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder et al., 2000)

All participants were asked to complete the Vancouver Acculturation Index (VIA; Ryder et al., 2000). The VIA is a 20-item self-report measure used to assess perceived orientation towards the heritage and mainstream cultures. Participants respond to items on a 9-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*). Scores are calculated by summing relevant items. Higher scores indicate greater acculturation. The VIA, unlike unidimensional measures of acculturation, has two scales consisting of ten items each. The scales measure orientation towards the heritage culture (e.g., I often participate in my heritage cultural traditions) and the mainstream culture (e.g., I often participate in mainstream North American cultural traditions).

The VIA was developed to measure acculturation from a bidimensional perspective (Ryder et al., 2000). A bidimensional approach to VIA means that orientation towards the heritage and the mainstream culture are viewed as independent constructs rather than opposite sides of a spectrum as in unidimensional conceptualizations of acculturation. The VIA was found to have good psychometric properties. Principal component analysis on data from four samples (i.e., two Chinese, one East Asian, one miscellaneous samples) indicated two components. One component included the heritage items whereas the other component included the mainstream items. The VIA subscales also demonstrated convergent validity as they were found to be correlated with indicators that were anticipated to be related (e.g., percentage of time lived in a Western, English-speaking country). Cronbach's alpha for the VIA was .79 for the heritage scale and .75

for the mainstream scale in past research. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .88 for the heritage scale and .88 for the mainstream scale.

Perceived Social Support, Modified (PSS; Procidano & Heller, 1983)

All participants were asked to complete Perceived Social Support (PSS; Procidano & Heller, 1983). Of note, participants in this study completed a modified version of the PSS that assessed mutual social support with *parents* and friends rather than mutual social support with family and friends. The PSS is a 40-item self-report measure used to assess the perception of social support from family and friends. Participants respond to items with *yes*, *no*, or *don't know*. The PSS has two scales measuring perceived social support consisting of 20 items each. Scales are calculated by summing relevant items. Higher scores indicate greater perceived social support (both *no* and *don't know* are scored the same). The Perceived Social Support-Family (PSS-Fa) measures support from families. This subscale was modified with the author's (Dr. Procidano) permission to reflect only support from parents (PSS-Pa) rather than the family (e.g., I rely on my [*parents*] for emotional support). The Perceived Social Support-Friends (PSS-Fr) measures support from friends (e.g., I've recently gotten a good idea about how to do something from a friend). The PSS-Fr was not modified.

The PSS was developed by initially generating 84 items reflective of mutual social support (Procidano & Heller, 1983). These items were administered to undergraduate participants. The results were used to select 35 items that served as a preliminary version of the PSS. This early version of the PSS had good test-retest reliability and internal consistency and was positively correlated with hypothesized constructs. Following this, the questions on the preliminary PSS were duplicated and

worded in such a way to reflect support from family and friends. The 35 items were narrowed down to 20 items measuring family social support and 20 items measuring friend social support. Once again, this measure was found to be correlated with hypothesized constructs. Additionally, factor analysis indicated that the PSS-Fa and PSS-Fr were distinct but related concepts. In past research, Cronbach's alpha for family social support was .90 and for the friend social support was .88. For the current study, Cronbach's alpha was .91 for parent social support and was .85 for friend social support.

Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a)

The Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a & 2022b; Appendix G & Appendix H) is a 20-item self-report measure I developed to measure the importance that young adults place on parent and friend approval and disapproval regarding their romantic relationship decisions. I developed this measure by generating items that outline circumstances of approval and disapproval across romantic relationship milestones (i.e., spending time together casually, going on a single date, starting to date exclusively, continuing a dating relationship, getting married). Scenarios are hypothetical and, as such, participants can respond even if they have not experienced the scenario. Participants respond to a series of statements on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*Extremely unlikely*) to 5 (*Extremely likely*) based on the extent to which the statement reflects the likelihood they would act in this way. Scores were calculated by taking the average for responses for relevant scales. For the current study, participants were also prompted to indicate who they were thinking of for parent and

friends items by indicating their relationship to them (e.g., biological mother, a few closest friends).

The PFI was initially hypothesized to have either two factors (i.e., reflecting parent approval/disapproval importance and friend approval/disapproval importance) or four factors (i.e., reflecting parent approval importance, parent disapproval importance, friend approval importance, and friend disapproval importance). A preliminary study was completed to establish the factor structure of this new measure, test whether the measure was associated with hypothetically relevant constructs, and test for internal consistency (Thompson, 2022b). As outlined in greater detail in Appendix H, after data cleaning, data from 231 male and female young adults (18-39 years old) were included in the analyses. Participants completed the PFI and other measures online.

The exploratory factor analysis completed on the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a & 2022b) is described in greater detail in Appendix H. To summarize, after examining the statistical assumptions, principal factor analysis was used as the extraction method. Various indicators for the number of factors were reviewed, all of which indicated either a four or five factor solution as being most appropriate for the data. Given these indicators and the hypothesized factor structure, two, three, four, and five factor solutions with various oblique rotations were examined. Four and five factor solutions had issues with items cross loading on multiple factors. A three-factor solution with a Promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was clearly interpretable without cross loading issues. The three factors were given labels to reflect their themes. Factor 1, labeled “Parent and Friend Approval Importance,” includes questions about how the participant would respond to

parent or friend approval regarding their romantic relationship. Factor 2, labeled "Parent Disapproval Importance," includes questions about how the participant would respond to parental disapproval in various stages of a romantic relationship. Similarly, Factor 3, labeled "Friend Disapproval Importance," includes questions about how the participant would respond to friend disapproval of their romantic relationship.

A correlation matrix with the three factors of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a & 2022b) and constructs that are theoretically related is included in Appendix H. Of the PFI subscales, only parent disapproval importance and friend disapproval importance were correlated. In terms of correlations with theoretically related constructs, as expected, parent disapproval importance was positively associated with attitudes towards parental input and control of romantic relationship mate choice and interdependent self-construal. Friend disapproval importance was positively associated with greater interpersonal dependency. Parent and friend approval importance was positively associated with attitudes towards parental input and control of mate choice. Parent and friend approval importance was positively associated with interdependent self-construal and negatively associated with independent self-construal. In contrast to the expected direction, parent and friend approval importance was negatively associated with interpersonal dependency. Cronbach's alpha was .88 for parent and friend approval importance, .92 for parent disapproval importance, and .92 for friend disapproval importance.

Additional Measurement Methods

In addition to quantitative questionnaires, the current study also included other, open-ended questions and responses. These included several clarification questions

intended to provide context to the results of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Decisions (PFI: Thompson, 2022a). Participants also rated the top five characteristics for an ideal romantic partner based on their own perspective, their parents' perspective, and their closest friends' perspective (characteristics adapted from Buunk et al., 2008). Additionally, participants were asked to describe people beyond their parents and friends whose opinions of their romantic relationships matter to them. Finally, participants also shared narratives regarding conflicts they had with their parents and with their friends regarding romantic relationships and related behaviours.

Clarification Questions for the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a)

Participants also responded to several, open-ended clarification questions. These questions were intended to provide a better understanding of how parents and friends typically communicate their approval or disapproval of romantic relationships, a specific example in which parents and friends communicated their approval or disapproval of a romantic relationship, and to describe if and how their parents' and friends' approval or disapproval has impacted their romantic relationships. These questions are listed in Table 5. Qualitative questions were developed to clarify findings of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Decisions (PFI: Thompson, 2022a) and elicit illustrative examples. They were developed with input from Kendall Soucie, the university's qualitative statistics consultant (K. Soucie, personal communication, March 5, 2021). In the current study, these qualitative questions were only used here to clarify the results of the PFI and provide illustrative quotes.

Table 5
Clarification Questions for the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Decisions

Parent prompt	Friend prompt
How do your parents typically let you know what they think of your romantic relationships?	How do your friends typically let you know what they think of your romantic relationships?
Tell me about a specific time when your parents communicated either their approval or disapproval of a romantic relationship that you were involved in or considering.	Tell me about a specific time when your friends communicated either their approval or disapproval of a romantic relationship that you were involved in or considering.
Has your parents' approval or disapproval impacted your involvement in a romantic relationship? Please describe what happened.	Has your friends' approval or disapproval impacted your involvement in a romantic relationship? Please describe what happened.

Ideal Characteristics of Romantic Partners (characteristics adapted from Buunk et al., 2008)

All participants were also asked to report the top five characteristics for an ideal romantic partner from their own perspective, from their parents' perspective, and their closest friends' perspective (characteristics adapted from Buunk et al., 2008). They were given the list of characteristics provided in the latter portion of Appendix I from which to choose the characteristics of greatest importance. These characteristics are based on those listed by Buunk and colleagues (2008) and include physical attributes, personal background, and personality characteristics. Characteristics are meant to capture personal characteristics that may be desirable for a potential mate. Ideal characteristics were compared for concordance ratings (i.e., number of characteristics in common for the top five traits). Concordance ratings are used descriptively to illustrate the level of similarity or difference in ideal mate characteristics of the participants, the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents, and the perceived ideal characteristics of their friends.

Calculating Parent-Child and Friend Concordance Ratings. For the purpose of the current study, a method was developed to calculate concordance ratings for participant important traits with perceived parent and friend important traits. Concordance ratings were calculated by comparing which characteristics were selected by the participant as most important to themselves and which were most important to their parents and to their friends. This was calculated on a scale ranging from zero to five based on characteristics selected for the top five most important in common. For example, if a participant selected the characteristics of "sense of humour," "kind," "intelligent," "physically attractive," and "similar attitudes" as being most important to

themselves and selected "kind," "similar attitudes," "friendly," "good education," and "same religious background" as being most important to their parents, the concordance rating would be two as the participant indicated two of these characteristics were most important to both them and their parents (i.e., "kind" and "similar attitudes"). Additionally, these ratings were used in conjunction with conflict severity and frequency (Appendix J, Questions 2 and 5) to test whether there is an association between conflict and perceived ideal characteristics (*Hypotheses 6b and 6c*).

Other People Who Influence Romantic Relationships

Participants were also asked to list any other people whose opinions matter when it comes to their romantic relationships in response to the following prompt:

> Throughout this survey you have been asked to think about how your parents' and friends' approval or disapproval of your romantic relationships might impact these types of relationships. Now please list any other people whose approval or disapproval of your romantic relationships is important. Please label them by their relationship to you (e.g., older sister, brother, uncle, aunt, grandparent, religious leader etc.) not by their name. List any people that come to mind and explain briefly why you have included them.

Given the focus of this current study on parents and friends only, this question was intended to provide some information regarding who else's opinion might be important. This could be useful as a potential starting point for further research. Responses were reviewed with frequencies for relational roles being totaled and reported.

Narrative Questions and Coding: *Parent and Friend Conflict*

Narratives regarding conflicts with parents and friends related to romantic relationships were collected and analyzed. In this section, the development of the prompts themselves is described. Next, the number of codable narratives is outlined. Following this, the general coding procedure and development of the codebook are described. This is followed with a more specific description of the process and rubric for each of the four coded categories (i.e., conflict theme, conflict severity, conflict resolution, and perceived validity). Finally, this section concludes with a description of interrater agreement.

Narrative Prompts. In order to better understand characteristics of conflicts with parents and friends related to romantic relationships (*Research Question 5*), all participants were asked to respond to open-ended questions from the following prompt:

> For the following 2 questions, please write about conflicts you have experienced with your parents (Question A) and your friends (Question B) concerning your romantic relationship choices. Conflicts include minor disagreements or major arguments and fights. They can be in response to your dating behaviours, sexual behaviour, or partner selections, for example. Please write a detailed description that is at least a paragraph or two in length. Your paragraph for each should be in enough detail so that a person who was not present during the event would be able to fully understand it. Include how the conflict started, what happened, and what you were thinking and feeling at that time, and if you think the event is now resolved.

Next, they were presented with the following questions:

> Please think about a conflict with a parent related to your romantic relationship and write 1-2 paragraphs about this conflict in detail below. Include the following information in your description:
>
> - When did this conflict take place, i.e., how old were you?
> - How the conflict started—i.e., what sparked it, precipitated it, etc.?
> - What were you thinking and feeling at the time?
> - Do you consider the conflict resolved now? Why or why not?
> - Looking back now, do you think that your parent's perspective was valid?

Participants were later presented with a nearly identical set of questions with "parent" changed to "friend" (Appendix J, Question 4). Within the same section, participants were prompted to rate how frequently they have had conflicts with their parents and conflict with their friends related to their romantic relationships on a Likert-type item (Appendix J, Questions 2 and 5). Similarly, participants were also asked to rate on a Likert-type item how often they have had conflict with their parents and conflicts with their friends compared to the frequency of conflicts they have had in the past (Appendix J, Questions 3 and 6). Questions ended with an unrelated item asking participants to write about what they were looking forward to during the semester to increase the participant's positive mood after recounting potentially upsetting conflict narratives.

The main questions were intended to capture narratives of conflict with participants and their parents and friends as related to participants' romantic relationships. These questions were developed with input from Kendall Soucie, the university's qualitative statistics consultant (K. Soucie, personal communication, March

14, 2020). As these questions were intended to be presented and responded to in writing, additional clarification was given to prompt for relevant narratives with an appropriate level of detail (Adler et al., 2017). Specific prompts were included to elicit aspects of narratives to be coded later that otherwise might not be shared (e.g., resolution and validity).

Codable Narratives. Of the 237 participant response sets remaining after data cleaning, not all participants provide codable conflict narratives (i.e., 145 codable parent narratives and 111 codable friend narratives). Some left this section blank, others specified that this did not apply to them or they had not experienced any relevant conflicts (e.g., "N/A", "I have not had any relevant conflicts), and other participants appeared to misunderstand the task and shared narratives that did not fit the prompt (e.g., narratives about conflicts with their romantic partners; conflicts with parents that were not related to romantic relationships). Of note, other participants shared narratives that did not include all the requested information (e.g., provided a narrative but did not indicate whether they felt their parents' perspective was valid). As such, the total number of narratives per category varied between coded elements (i.e., parent and friend *conflict theme*, *conflict severity*, *conflict resolution*, and *perceived validity*).

Narrative Coding Procedure: Conflict Themes, Severity, Resolution, and Perceived Validity

A rubric was created as part of a "working manual" for research assistants that was revised throughout the process as issues needed further clarification and as categories needed to be revised and clarified (Syed & Nelson, 2015; coding manual available from author upon request). The narrative coding rubric was developed through an iterative

process (Syed & Nelson, 2015). The initial codes and the coding procedure were created in consultation with Kendall Soucie, (K. Soucie, personal communication, July 28, 2021 & September 17, 2021). Narrative coding categories were established to include conflict themes (i.e., main reason the participant indicated that conflict occurred), the severity of the conflict described, conflict resolution, and the perceived validity of the other person's (or persons') perspective(s) (e.g., Adler et al., 2017).

The two female research assistants completing coding had recently earned their Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degrees in psychology and were applying to graduate school. Coding was completed over several months with meetings being held online via video conferencing software. During the initial meeting, the two research assistants and I discussed their experience with qualitative research, their goals for assisting with the present study, reviewed the rubric, and discussed the methods for completing coding (Grysman & Lodi-Smith, 2019). Each of the categories were discussed and clarified with changes in wording or additional examples added as needed. Following this initial meeting, I assigned fifteen narratives regarding parent conflicts and fifteen narratives regarding friend conflicts. The two research assistants and I completed the coding independently and took note of any problems or comments regarding use of the rubric. At the next meeting, the three of us discussed the rubric and resolved any discrepancies in coding. Changes were made to the coding rubric based on this discussion. I assigned an additional fifteen of each type of narrative (parent conflicts, friend conflicts) to be coded independently. Once again, the two research assistants and I met to resolve coding discrepancies and to discuss and modify the rubric. Fifteen protocols of each narrative type were assigned to be completed by the two research assistants independently. The

two research assistants led the next meeting. I was present to monitor the meeting and provide advice and input as needed. At the end of this meeting, the two research assistants agreed to independently complete coding, meet to resolve discrepancies, and email me to bring up any problems or questions and to request further narratives.

The two research assistants met several additional times to discuss and resolve codes. They emailed me after each meeting to share any questions or concerns regarding coding and to request additional narratives. Once the process was completed for all narratives, the research assistants reviewed all the narratives to assure that they aligned with the final version of the coding manual and rubric. Following coding, we had a final meeting and debriefing session. The following sections describes the procedure of coding for specific elements in more detail including the rubrics used by coders.

Coding Conflict Themes. Coding of the *conflict themes* followed a process in which themes were initially established but were modified and new themes identified upon reading and review of the narratives. These themes were meant to capture the main "why" or primary reason provided for the conflict occurring. The coding of themes was based on an iterative process. Initial codes were developed in collaboration with Kendall Soucie, (K. Soucie, personal communication, September 17, 2021) based on past research and cursory review of narratives. Additional themes were added and existing themes were modified and clarified during the coding process. The approach to coding conflict themes fell within what Braun and Clarke (2021) described as a "codebook" approach in which themes are developed early in the process but refined and new themes added throughout the analytics process (similar to approaches such as template analysis; Brooks et al., 2015). The rubric categories used for coding are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6

Coding Rubric for Conflict Theme

Theme name	Description	Illustrative examples
Partner characteristics	The participant indicates that the conflict was due to the parent taking issue with some personal characteristic of the actual or potential romantic relationship. This could be based on characteristics such as the other person's gender, race, ethnic background, or age. This could also be based on the perception that the other person has undesirable personal attributes (e.g., lazy, irresponsible, rude, unattractive). Also, could include concerns that the partner will not match their child/friend's ambition or future.	• My parents wanted me to break up with my girlfriend because they did like me dating another woman • My friend did not like my boyfriend because she thought he was too much of a player • My mom was really worried about me dating my boyfriend because he was in his twenties and I was still in high school
Concerns over treatment of participant	The participant indicates that their parent or friend had a conflict with the participant about a romantic relationship as they were concerned about how the actual or potential romantic partner treated them. These may include concerns around physical or emotional abuse or other types of mistreatments. They could include a concern that the romantic partner has hurt the person in the past or is making them unhappy.	• My friend told me she was worried about how my boyfriend treated me as he would yell at me when he got upset • My parents did not want me to start dating my ex again because our first relationship ended when he cheated on me and broke my heart
Pressure on the relationship	The participant indicates that the conflict was due to the parent or friend pressuring or trying to influence a relationship. This could be pressure to date a specific person or to move forward in a relationship.	• My friend kept trying to set me up with a friend of hers. She got upset and defensive when I spent some time with her and said I didn't really think we would make a good couple • My parents really loved my girlfriend and thought I should propose to her but I just didn't feel ready for that at the time

Table 6 (continued)

Coding Rubric for Conflict Theme (continued)

Theme name	Description	Illustrative examples
Failure to fulfil other expectations	The participant indicates that the conflict was based on the perception that the person was not properly fulfilling other duties because of the relationship. This could include the duty to spend time with family or friends or other obligations such as school or work, or failing to honour the family.	• My friend was upset because I hadn't been spending as much time with her because I had been hanging out with my boyfriend so much. • My parents were worried that I wasn't spending enough time studying because I was hanging out with my girlfriend so much. • My family was really upset the first time I spent Christmas with my boyfriend's family instead of them.
Safety concern or a concern over behaviour in the relationship	The participant indicates that the conflict was based on their parent or friend's concern that the participant was in some sort of dangerous or inappropriate activity because of the relationship or an action/activity they worry is immoral or inappropriate for their age (e.g., having sex, dating too young).	• My parents were really angry when they found out I had sex with my boyfriend. • My roommate was really worried about me because I didn't text her that I was okay when I stayed out really late on a first date with a guy I had just met.
Jealousy	The participant indicates the argument was motivated by jealousy related to the romantic relationship, the person may be trying to damage the relationship because of their own romantic interests or other reasons.	• My friend told me I should not date this girl I liked because he didn't think we would make a good match. I found out he actually liked her and wanted to ask her out on a date. • My mom tried to convince me to break up with my boyfriend. I think she was just upset that no one had asked her on a date in a long time.
Disapproval or lack of support for unclear or unspecified reasons	The participant indicates their parent or friend did not approve of the relationship without providing any specific reasons for their disapproval.	

Note. Illustrative examples were developed for the coding rubric to provide coders with examples and are not actual conflict narratives from participants.

Coding Conflict Severity. For conflict severity, a wider range of severity codes had initially been proposed (i.e., five levels of increasing severity). However, given the relative brevity of the narratives, a common issue with written narratives completed outside the lab (Adler et al., 2017), these codes were reduced to three levels of severity. Initial conflict severity levels were developed with input from Kendall Soucie (K. Soucie, personal communication, September 17, 2021) with consideration to past research and initial review of narratives. Conflict severity was informed by past research regarding the core elements of interpersonal conflict: disagreement, interference, and negative emotion (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). Research regarding emotional valence and intensity were used to understand the intensity of emotional experiences (Green & Salovey, 1999; Rubin & Talarico, 2009). Of note, even the conflicts categorized here as "severe" may not be considered severe in other contexts as they typically lacked characteristics associated with extreme interpersonal conflict (e.g., lacked physical aggression). The rubric for coding conflict severity is outlined in Table 7 on the following page.

Table 7

Severity of Conflict Coding Rubric

Severity	Description	Illustrative example
Severe	Clear "conflict" between the participant and their parent(s) or friend(s). There must be a clear statement, or a clearly implied indication of disagreement (i.e., participant and the other person did not agree on the issue at hand, did not hold the same viewpoint; Barki & Hartwick, 2004), interference (i.e., the parent or friend is attempting to interfere with what the participant wants or their goals [e.g., to continue the relationship, to receive support, to do what they want]), moderate to severe "negative" affective state (e.g., angry, extremely upset; Green & Salovey, 1999; Rubin & Talarico, 2009). Take into account extreme consequences of seemingly minor conflicts here (e.g., cutting off contact, physical violence, getting kicked out of the house).	• My friend told me she wanted me to break up with my boyfriend or she wouldn't want to spend time with me anymore. I was really angry at the time.
Moderate	Clear "conflict" between the participant and their parent(s) or friend(s). There must be some implied or stated indication of disagreement (i.e., participant and the other person did not agree on the issue at hand, did not hold the same viewpoint; Barki & Hartwick, 2004), interference (i.e., the parent or friend is attempting to interfere with what the participant wants or their goals [e.g., to continue the relationship, to receive support, to do what they want]), minor to moderate "negative" affective state (e.g., annoyed, irritated, upset; Green & Salovey, 1999; Rubin & Talarico, 2009).	• My dad confronted me about staying out late too often with a boy that I really liked. I felt kind of annoyed that he didn't want me to do this, but I saw his point and would text him to make sure he knew when I was going to be home.
Minor	Interpersonal interaction regarding a romantic relationship or related behaviour. No clear indication of a "conflict" in that all elements of conflict do not need to be present (disagreement, interference, and negative emotion; Barki & Hartwick, 2004), more of a mutual dialogue or expression of concern. The participant does not express anger or frustration over this disagreement.	• I started staying out late most nights with my new boyfriend. My mom was worried about it so she asked me to text her what time I would be coming home if I was out with him later than 10:00.

Note. Illustrative examples were developed for the coding rubric to provide coders with examples and are not actual conflict narratives from participants.

Coding Conflict Resolution and Perceived Validity. Two codes were also developed to assess elements of the narratives in terms of how the participant looks back and views the conflict currently. In past research, the narratives people tell have been connected to how they learn lessons, understand their identity, and make meaning of life events (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Events that might be initially negative, such as conflicts, could be redeemed or teach a lesson. As such, resolution and perceived validity were coded to better understand how participants currently viewed the conflict. Of note, participants in this study provided narratives on a specific, prompted event that might have little meaning or importance to them in contrast to narratives typically employed to understand self (e.g., the life story interview prompts narration of key memories such as a high point, low point, and turning point; McAdams, 2007). As such, the elements we coded for the current study were not meant to understand the participant on a grander scale but to understand how they currently understand and relate to a specific conflict in terms of whether they felt the conflict was resolved and whether they now can see the validity of their parents' or friend's perspective.

Resolution was initially going to be to be coded on three levels (i.e., *Resolved*, *Partially Resolved*, and *Unresolved*) but this was reduced to only two codes during the coding process (i.e., *Resolved* and *Unresolved*). Similarly, initially validity was going to include three codes (i.e., *Valid*, *Partially Valid*, and *Not Resolved*) but this was also reduced to only two codes during the coding process (i.e., *Valid and Not Valid*). Both codes were reduced to a binary as participants typically directly responded to these prompts with limited additional detail to code with greater nuance. Table 8 includes the rubric used to code resolution and validity.

Table 8

Coding Rubric for Conflict Resolution and Perceived Validity

Conflict resolution

Code	Description	Illustrative examples
Resolved	Clear comment on resolution of comment suggesting total resolution of the conflict.	• We talked about it and I decided she was right. I ended up breaking up with my boyfriend and now feel the conflict was completely resolved.
Unresolved	Comments suggest or state a lack of resolution of the conflict.	• I don't consider it resolved as I don't think it was fair for him to say that to me. • I am still upset about it and we have never talked about it. • I do not consider it resolved
No comment on resolution	Participant does not provide a comment that directly states or implies resolution or lack of resolution of the conflict.	

Perceived validity

Code	Description	Illustrative examples
Valid	The participant expresses understanding and agreement with the other person's opinion.	• I now totally agree with what he said. I see that my ex-boyfriend was actually very controlling, and my dad was right to be concerned.
Not Valid	The person expresses continued disagreement with the other person's perspective.	• I still think they were totally wrong in what they thought. • They were wrong to think that.
Does not comment on the validity of the other person's perspective in the conflict	There is no comment indicating their current thoughts on the validity of view of the person they had conflict with.	

Interrater Agreement

Coders separately coded the narratives and then came together to discuss and resolve any discrepant codes. Cohen's kappa was calculated to establish interrater agreement between the two coders. There was strong interrater agreement for conflict *severity* between coders for parent conflicts (k = .90) and for friend conflicts (k = .91), c*onflict resolution* between coders for parent conflicts (k = .98) and for friend conflicts (k = .95, and *perceived conflict validity* for parent conflicts (k = .95) and for friend conflicts (k = 1.00). As described previously, the coding rubric for *conflict themes* was modified throughout the process (e.g., collapsing, clarifying, and adding themes). As such, the coders sometimes separately indicated multiple potential codes before meeting to establish a final consensus code. Interrater agreement is described in Table 9 as Cohen's kappa cannot be calculated given the multiple tentative codes indicated for some of the responses.

Table 9

Interrater Agreement for Coding Conflict Themes

	Parent Conflicts (*n* = 143)	Friend Conflicts (*n* = 112)
Interrater disagreement	11 (7.7%)	13 (11.6%)
Multiple codes indicated with interrater agreement [a]	21 (14.7%)	14 (12.5%)
Interrater agreement	111 (77.6%)	85 (75.9%)

[a] This category indicated instances in which one or both of the coders indicated multiple codes for a single narrative and the same code was present for both coders.

Procedure

After receiving ethics clearance, participants were recruited from the participant pool and the community as outlined in the "Recruitment" section (see pages 67-68). Participants were directed to Qualtrics, an online survey program that was used to gather data for the current study, either through a link in the participant pool website or a link in an email for participants recruited through other methods. Participants were presented with a consent form (Appendix K and Appendix L) that included a brief description of the purpose of the study, the participant's role, risks, benefits, and contact information to address questions or concerns. Those who agreed to participate, were presented with the demographic questionnaire (Appendix E) and the Dating Appropriateness Questions (Appendix F; Thompson, 2020) first. Next, the Singelis Self-Construal Scale (Singelis, 1994); the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (Cross et al., 2000); the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (Ryder et al., 2000); the Perceived Social Support: modified (Procidano & Heller, 1983); Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (McClintock, at al., 2017); the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a; Appendix G); the Ideal Characteristics of Romantic Partners (Appendix I; adapted from Buunk et al., 2008); and narrative questions (Appendix J) were presented in randomized blocks. Participants who indicated current involvement in a romantic relationship were also presented with the Social Networks Opinion Scale (Sinclair et al., 2015) and Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (Sternberg, 1988). Lastly, participants were asked to indicate any additional people whose input regarding their romantic relationships was important to them. Following completion of these measures, participants were presented with a final letter of information (Appendix

O and Appendix P). Participants from the university were given credit for their participation as per participant pool policy and participants from the alternative recruitment approaches were reimbursed with entry in a draw for a gift card.

Chapter IV- Results

Data Cleaning

Data were cleaned for duplicate completions of the survey, very incomplete response sets, very short response times, and failing three or four validity checks (Figure 1, see page 70). Nine cases were deleted for being completed with duplicate IP addresses that were associated with the same participant (i.e., people who partially or fully completed the study multiple times). Sixteen cases were deleted for very short completion times and/or very incomplete response sets (Meade & Craig, 2012). Finally, one case was deleted for failing all four validity checks. The remainder of the participant response sets passed at least two of the four validity check questions to assess effort and diligence in responding (Meade & Craig, 2012). Following data cleaning procedures, response sets from 237 participants remained. Some participants who completed the preliminary exploratory factor analyses study also participated in the current study (n = 28). As such, their data were not used for the confirmatory factor analysis but were retained for other analyses (Fokkema & Greiff, 2017).

Following this, patterns of missing data were examined. Little's MCAR's test was not statistically significant (p = .988), indicating that the data were likely missing completely at random (Little, 1988). With the exception of the two questionnaires that were not presented to people who were not currently involved in a romantic relationship, missing data per questionnaire item ranged from 0.0%-4.8% percent missing. According to Schafer and Graham (2002) missing data below 5% is generally not problematic. Visual examination of data did not reveal any significant problems in terms of patterns. Estimation maximization was used to estimate missing data by questionnaire as suggested by Fox-Wasylyshyn and El-Masri (2005).

Preliminary Analyses

Several preliminary analyses were conducted before the main analyses to test the hypotheses. First, participants' responses to dating appropriateness questions are summarised. Next, a confirmatory factor analysis of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a) is reported. Additionally, preliminary analyses include descriptions of correlations between the PFI and related constructs, Cronbach's alpha, a summary of participant's responses regarding the people they considered in responses to the PFI, and a summary of notable responses to clarifying questions with examples.

Responses to the Dating Appropriateness Questions (Thompson, 2020)

In this study, some of the questionnaires include an underlying assumption that dating is an appropriate method to find a marital partner and that young adults are interested in eventually getting married. Given this, responses to the Dating Appropriateness Questions (Thompson, 2020) are summarized here. As outlined in Table 10, most participants indicated that dating is the preferred method to find a marital partner by themselves, their friends, and their parents. Courting was the second preferred method, followed by arranged marriages. In terms of interest in marriage, the majority of participants indicated that they eventually intended to marry (80.3%). A small number of participants (2.6%) indicated they did not intend to ever marry whereas a sizable minority of participants (17.1%) indicated they were currently undecided whether they eventually intend to marry.

Table 10

Summary of Participants Responses for the Preferred Method of Finding a Marital Partner

	Dating	Courting	Arranged marriage	Other	*Total (n)*
Participant	207	16	4	2	*229*
Parents	172	32	18	7	*229*
Friends	217	6	2	3	*228*

Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions

Statistical Assumptions of Confirmatory Factor Analysis. To further assesses the psychometric properties and factor structure of Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a), a confirmatory factor analysis was completed. The statistical assumptions of confirmatory factor analysis include adequate sample size, multivariate normality, and absence of outliers (Brown & Moore, 2012; Yong & Pearce, 2013).

Multiple methods were used to assess for univariate and multivariate normality for PFI item responses (Oppong & Agbedra, 2016). Visual examination of histograms, review of skewness and kurtosis values, and the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality all indicated violation of the assumption of univariate normality. As expected, given the violation to univariate normality, Mardia's test for multivariate normality indicated that several responses displayed significant skewness and kurtosis, violating this assumption.

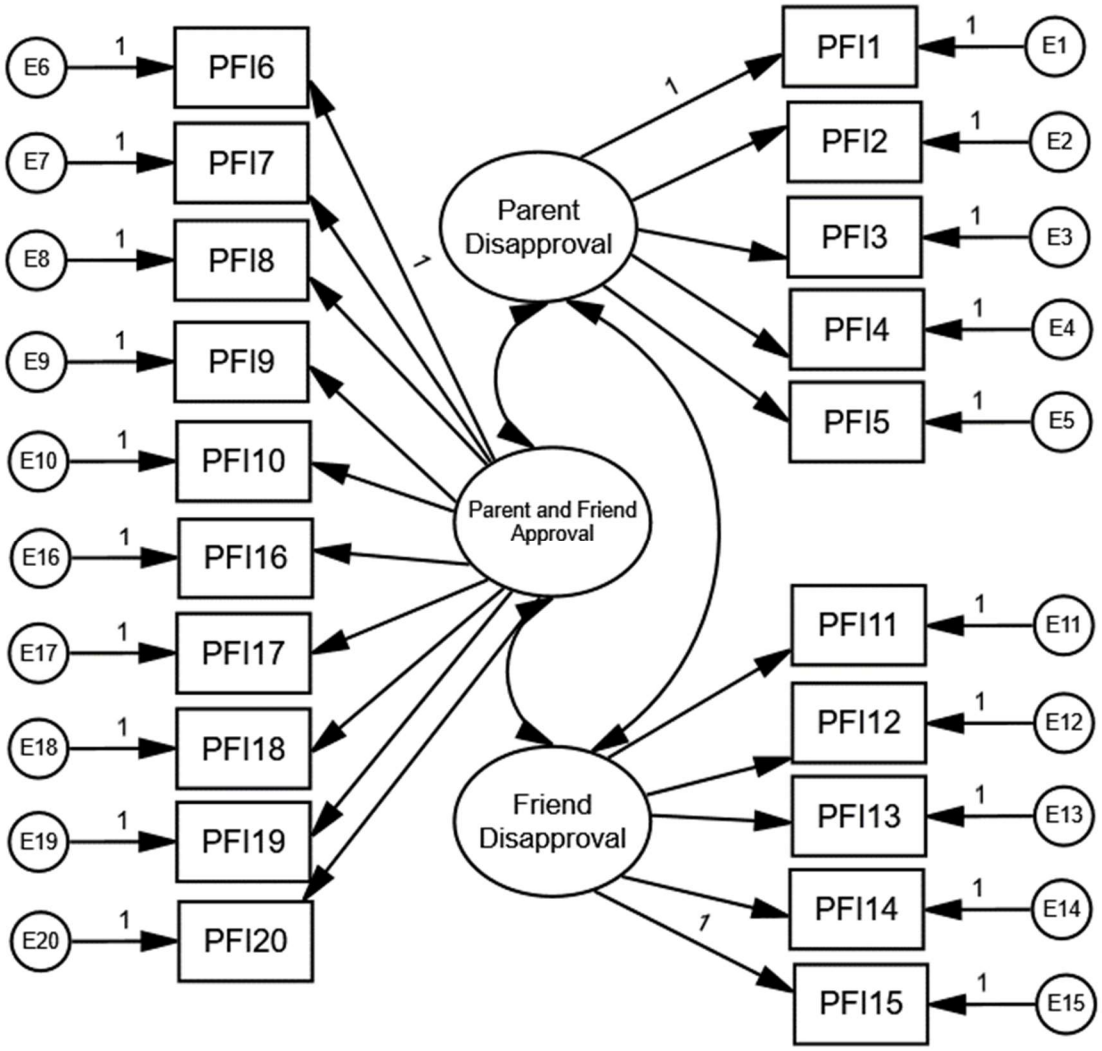
Multivariate outliers were identified using Mahalanobis distance with chi-square distributed with 20 degrees of freedom, the critical value at a 0.001 significance level. Fifteen multivariate outliers were identified in the data. The participants whose data were identified as multivariate outliers did not appear to differ substantially from the larger data set in terms of demographic factors such as age, gender, country of birth, and immigrant generation status. Thus, these data were retained for the analysis.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis. IMB SPSS Amos 28 was used to conduct the confirmatory factor analysis. After eliminating data from participants who completed both the preliminary exploratory factor analysis (EFA) study and the current

confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), data from 202 participants remained. The three-factor model developed during the exploratory factor analysis was used in this analysis. The model is as follows: Factor 1 (Parent and Friend Approval Importance, 10 items), Factor 2 (Parent Disapproval Importance, 5 items), and Factor 3 (Friend Disapproval Importance, 5 items). The path diagram is represented visually in Figure 2. As described further below, the initial model indicated a poor fit; however, modifications to the model resulted in an improved fit.

Figure 2

Path Diagram of the Initial Factor Structure for the PFI



Maximum Likelihood was used as the estimation method. The initial fit indices indicated fit problems. Initial fit indices are reported in Table 11. The Chi-square index indicated possible model misspecification; however, this index tends to be particularly sensitive to sample size and violations of the assumption of normality (Hooper et al., 2008; Malkanthie, 2015). The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI), and the adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI) also indicated poor model fit (Smith & McMillan, 2001).

Table 11

Fit Indices for Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions

Fit index	Fit statistic	Description of fit
Chi-square	χ^2 (167) = 1318.22 $p < .001$	Possible model misspecification
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	.19, 90% [.18, .20]	Poor fit
Comparative fit index (CFI)	.72	Poor fit
Tucker Lewis index (TLI)	.69	Poor fit
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	.45	Poor fit

Modification indices were examined to attempt to improve model fit. The modification indices indicated that, by treating the covariance between error terms on the same factors as a free parameter, the model would be improved. Given the similar wording between items, shared covariance between items due to confusion over items may interfere with model fit. As such, the covariance was added to the model for all error terms on the same factor with a discrepancy change of 20 or more. The modified model is pictured in Figure 3. These changes were linked with improvements in the model fit (Table 12). Although the Chi-square index still indicated possible model misspecification, the CFI indicated acceptable fit (Smith & McMillan, 2001). At .89, the TLI closely approached cut-off value associated with good fit (i.e., .90). Although showing improvement, RMSEA and AGFI still indicated poor fit.

Figure 3

Path Diagram of The Factor Structure for the PFI With Variance of Errors Added

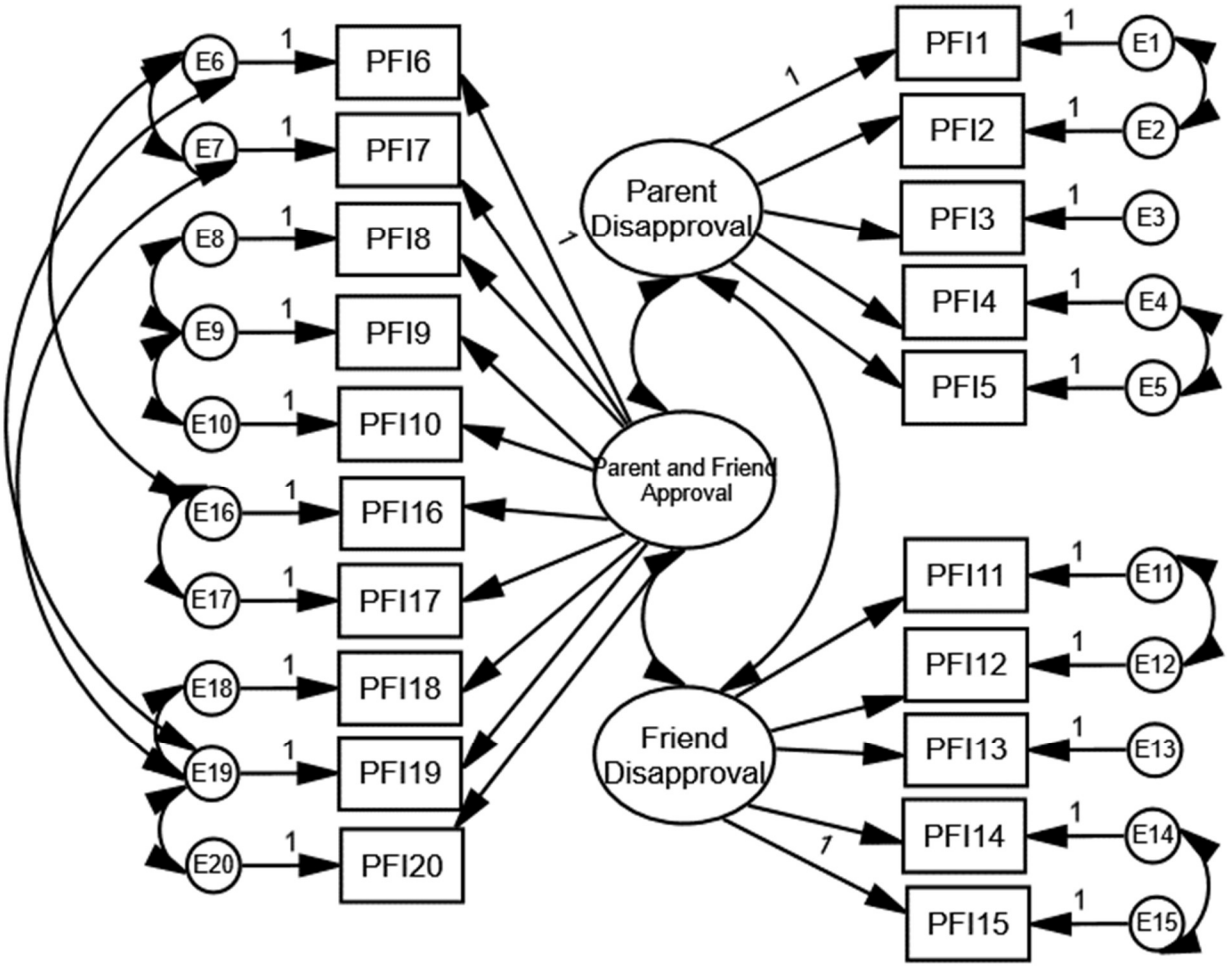


Table 12

Fit Indices for Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions Following Model Modification

Fit index	Fit statistic	Description of fit
Chi-square	χ^2 (154) = 531.92 $p < .001$	Possible model misspecification
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	.11, 90% [.10, .12]	Poor fit
Comparative fit index (CFI)	.91	Acceptable fit
Tucker Lewis index (TLI)	.89	Approaching good fit
Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)	.73	Poor fit

Altogether, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) provided mixed support for the factor structure selected through the exploratory factor analysis (EFA; Thompson, 2022b, Appendix H). Of note, participants did differ from the preliminary study to the current study in terms of demographic characteristics. Analysis of variance showed that participants in the current study (M = 22.20 yrs. old, SD = 4.6) were, on average, older than participants in the EFA study (M = 20.84 yrs. old, SD =3.23), t (436) = -3.47, $p <$ .001. A chi-square test showed the current study also had a higher ratio of male to female participants, χ^2 (2, N = 435) = 18.88, p = < .001 and more first-generation participants and fewer second-generation participants than the EFA study, χ^2 (5, N = 403) = 11.9, p = .049. The two samples did not differ in terms of education or romantic relationship status. Despite these between-sample differences, further exploration of two, four, and five factor solutions with the current sample did not seem to provide a better model fit.

Reliability. Despite model fit issues being evident in the confirmatory factor analysis, the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a) once again showed good reliability when assessed through Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha was .91 for Parent and Friend Approval Importance, .95 for Parent Disapproval Importance, and .94 for Friend Disapproval Importance.

Correlations with Related Constructs. Means, standard deviations, and correlations with theoretically related constructs are listed in Table 13. Of note, parent disapproval importance was positively correlated with more accepting attitudes of parental influence on mate choice and more interdependent self-construal. Parent and friend approval importance was also positively correlated with more accepting attitudes of parental influence on mate choice and more interdependent self-construal.

Table 13

Correlations Between Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions and Theoretically Related Variables (N =228)

	M	*SD*	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Parent disapproval importance	3.80	1.68	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Friend disapproval importance	3.40	1.50	.50**	-	-	-	-	-
3. Parent and Friend Approval Importance	2.06	1.05	-.14*	-.14*	-	-	-	-
4. Interpersonal dependency inventory	12.58	3.65	.01	.04	.23**	-	-	-
5. Parental Influence on Mate Choice	1.48	0.42	.29**	-.03	.31**	.08	-	-
6. Interdependent self-construal	61.87	9.78	.28**	.06	.16*	.14*	.34**	-
7. Independent self-construal	61.21	9.81	.08	.07	-.05	-.20**	-.02	.03

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Target of Ratings. Participants were also prompted to indicate *who* they were thinking of when they responded to the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions scale (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Throughout the current study, participants were allowed to decide who to consider when parents and friends were referenced. For questions referring to *parents*, the majority of participants who provided responses to this prompt (n = 222) indicated they were considering both their biological mother and father (n = 156, 70.3%). Other participants indicated they were considering just their biological mother (n = 49, 22.1%), just their biological father (n = 5, 2.3%), a biological parent or parents along with a step-parent or step-parents (n = 6, 2.7%), adoptive parent or parents (n = 156, 70.3%), biological parents and other adults (n = 2, 0.9%), and another parental figure (n = 1, 0.5%). For questions referring to *friends*, the majority of participants who provided responses to this prompt (n = 224) indicated they were considering their close friend group (n = 164, 73.2%). Other participants indicated they were considering just their closest friend (n = 36, 16.1%), their larger friend group (n = 21, 9.4%), and their larger social or peer group (n = 3, 1.3%).

Open-Ended, Clarification Questions. Responses to clarification questions (see Table 5 on page 90) were reviewed to better understand the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions scale (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Participants were asked to describe how their parents and friends let them know what they think of a relationship. For both parents and friends, participants frequently indicated that they would let them know directly or have a discussion together regarding their romantic partner. The following excerpts were shared by participants illustrating this direct approach: “they just explain their thoughts on them. what they like or dislike about my

romantic relationship," "They will bring it up in conversation and express their opinions," and "My friends are really upfront about what they have thought of the few people i was talking to. They normally feel the same way i do." Others indicated parents and friends shared their opinions specifically when asked. Some indicated that parents and friends used indirect methods such as telling other people their thoughts (e.g., "My father is more reserved but usually shares his opinion with my mother, who will then tell me"). Other participants reported knowing their parents or friends approve of their romantic partner because they make positive comments about the partner or include them in activities (e.g., "They [*sic*] partner is invited to a meal at their house or they would have allowed me to go and visit the partner" and "They say kind things about them."). Although the majority of participants described some way in which their parents and friends communicated their opinion of their romantic relationships, others indicated that their parents and friends do not let them know their thoughts, neither directly nor indirectly.

One notable finding regarding the PFI is that some participants reported keeping romantic relationships secret from their parents. For example, a participant responded with the following "my parents are judgemental but I have never introduced them to a romantic partner for this reason." Another participant described keeping relationships secret until they are more serious or considering marriage:

> I do always have the lingering thought of what my parents will think of my partner let's say if they come from a different background, and they disapprove of that person. Which is why I do not inform my parents until I am sure it is a fight worth fighting for.

Some participants also shared that they felt that their parents would disapprove of any dating type relationship. This was described by an Arab participant who shared the following story of their parent discovering a secret relationship:

> I was in a long-distance relationship 2 years ago that lasted about 8 months. My mom found out about it 2 months in. She came into my room disappointed, telling me I am a disgrace to the family and other horrible things that made feel like I was doing something wrong.

Another participant described hiding most relationships from their parents due to negative experiences:

> It's made me want to hide it from them. I've been in about 8 relationships and they only know about 3 of them. I've always dated people behind their backs and would say that they were just a friend because I was sick and tired of them nitpicking every little thing about the person I was dating.

In terms of the perceived impact of parent and friend approval and disapproval on actual romantic relationships, a portion of participants indicated that they did not believe the approval or disapproval of their parents and friend had any impact on their romantic relationships (e.g.," I dated him anyway and my dad was very wrong about it. His disapproval did not affect my decision at all" and "My friends have not impacted any of my involvements"). A number of participants described that approval of their romantic relationship did not have a strong impact, but made them feel more secure or confident in their perceptions and relationship (e.g., "It has impacted my romantic relationship because it makes me feel reassured and good that my parents approved of my partner"). Another participant described their friend's approval in the following:

> Again, it didn't really impact it but more reassured me that I was in a good relationship because I do value my friends opinions a lot and I take into consideration everything they say so it was nice to hear that they approved of him, as it reassured me that he is a good guy and that him and I are good together.

Similarly, participants also described that disapproval of their romantic relationship did not have a strong impact, but helped them notice red flags or reinforced their own concerns (e.g., "I was more cautious about interacting and didn't get involved in the end"). One participant described their feelings about disapproval from their friends in the following way: "If they disapproved, it wouldn't mean I would immediately break things off, but I would take their opinions into consideration as to why they think what they do about my partner." Some participants described parent and friend disapproval as being the sole reason they have ended or avoided a relationship (e.g., "My mom's disapproval of my first girlfriend [solely for the fact that she was a girl] is what made me break up with her."). However, most participants who acted on disapproval, did so as they agreed with the concerns raised by their parents or friends.

One consideration that was not accounted for within the PFI is parents and friends differing in their opinions and the importance participants placed on these opinions. For example, in qualitative responses to how parents let them know their opinions, some participants indicated differences between parents. For example, one participant shared the following statement: "My mom will give me her opinion 95% of the time and my dad doesn't really give his opinion" and another participant indicated "Mother is supportive; Father is not privy." Another participant recalled their mother and father disagreeing in who would make an appropriate romantic partner:

> I asked my parents how they would feel if I married a man who is ethnically from the same country as us, but from a different state. For example, I am from Gujarat, which is a state in India, and I asked how they would feel if I married someone from the state of Punjab. My mom said she would approve, but my dad said he wouldn't. My dad wants me to marry someone who is Gujarati, but my mom is alright with me marrying someone who is Punjabi.

These suggested some degree of differences between parents. This was also reported regarding some friend groups such as in the following excerpt: “I have one friend who actively gives criticism on my boyfriends. The rest are on standby mode, not really voicing their opinions and they understand it is my relationship.”

Summary of Findings. Further analysis provided mixed support for the properties of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Initial confirmatory factor analysis of the measure indicated poor model fit. Fit was improved through post-hoc additions of covariance between error terms on the same factors, but this practice does have a number of issues (Hermida, 2015). Although this sample size for the study is in line with some of the guidelines and recommendations for absolute sample size and proportional size, the confirmatory factor analysis may have been underpowered, particularly given the non-normal distribution of data and presence of missing data (Kyriazos, 2018). Although the confirmatory factor analysis indicated issues with the factor structure, Cronbach’s alpha indicated good internal consistency for each of the scales (i.e., Parent Disapproval Importance, Friend Disapproval Importance, Parent and Friend Approval Importance).

When responding to the PFI, participants typically indicated considering both biological parents for *parent* items and their close friend group for *friend* items. Review of clarifying questions indicated that participants generally described their parents and friends as sharing their opinion by directly telling them or having a conversation. Indirect methods or a lack of communication were also described. Keeping relationships secret was mentioned as a strategy used by some to avoid parent disapproval. When asked to describe the impact their parents' and friends' approval or disapproval has on their romantic relationships, participants generally reported either a lack of any impact or small, indirect impacts (e.g., approval increasing confidence in the relationship, disapproval having them notice red flags or reinforce concerns). Finally, responses brought attention to a possible limitation of the PFI as some participants reported differences between their parents and within friend groups. In the next sections, statistical analyses and results related to the research questions and hypotheses are outlined.

Research Question 1: Parent and Friend Relationship Opinion and Self-Construal as Predictors of Love in Romantic Relationships

After controlling for gender and age, do self construal, parent and friend opinion of the relationship, the interaction between parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction between friend opinion and interdependent self-construal predict romantic relationship love in young adults (*overall love*, *passion*, *commitment*, and *intimacy*)?

Statistical Assumptions for Multiple Regression Analyses: Hypothesis 1

Research Question 1 was assessed by completing four multiple regression analyses. These analyses included data from a subsample of participants currently

involved in a romantic relationship (n = 141). The statistical assumptions of multiple regression analysis were assessed. These assumptions included a linear relationship between predictor and outcome variables, homoscedasticity of residuals, absence of multicollinearity, absence of significant outliers, high leverage points, or influential observations, and normal distribution of residuals (Tabachnick et al., 2014).

The assumption of linearity between the predictor and outcome variables was assessed by plotting a scatterplot of studentized residuals with the unstandardized predicted values (Laerd Statistics, 2017; Tabachnick et al., 2014). Scatterplots had a generally linear pattern that did not indicate any alternative relationships. The assumption of linearity was further assessed through visual examination of partial regression scatterplots; each of these variables had a linear relationship between the predictors and the outcome variable. The scatterplot of studentized residuals with the unstandardized predicted values was also examined for issues with homoscedasticity. No significant issues with heteroscedasticity (i.e., funnel or fan shape) appeared to be present, although intimacy and commitment outcome residual graphs had some slight fanning which could indicate issues with heteroscedasticity. Multicollinearity was assessed through tolerance values for the predictor variables. None of the tolerance values were lower than .10, indicating an absence of issues with multicollinearity (Daoud, 2017).

The data were further examined to identify multivariate outliers, leverage points, and influential observations (Laerd Statistics, 2017; Tabachnick et al., 2014). Standardized residuals and studentized deleted residuals were used to identify multivariate outliers (±3 standard deviations; Huber, 2011). A few outliers were identified for each analysis (i.e., two outliers for analyses predicting overall love,

intimacy, and commitment; one outlier for analysis predicting passion). Leverage values were also examined with data from one participant meeting the categorization of "risky" for the analysis predicting passion. Cook's distance was used to assess for influential observations (Cook, 1977) with none being identified. Analyses were run with and without the multivariate outliers and leverage values (Leys, et al., 2019). Changes in the statistical significance of predictor variables following removal of outliers are noted in text with results reported in Appendix Q. Finally, the assumption of normality of residuals appeared to be met upon examination of histograms and q-q plots.

Multiple Regression Analyses: Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: Correlations. As shown Table 14, overall love, intimacy, passion, and commitment showed similar patterns of correlations with other variables. Each correlated positively with parent opinion and friend opinion indicating that relationships higher in intimacy, passion, commitment, and overall love were positively associated with greater approval from both parents and friends. Interdependent and independent self-construal were not correlated with the overall love, intimacy, passion, or commitment in a romantic relationship. However, relational self-construal was associated with passion and overall love. Given these correlations, the relevance of close-personal relationships to the current study, and past research regarding the psychometric properties of the Singelis Self-Construal Scale (i.e., measuring independent and interdependent self-construal; Singelis, 1994) and the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal Scale (i.e., measuring relational self-construal, a subcategory of interdependent self-construal; Cross et al., 2000), the post-hoc decision was made to use relational self-construal rather than interdependent self-construal.

Table 14

Correlation Matrix for Gender, Age, Self-Construal, Parent and Friend Opinion of Romantic Relationships and Intimacy, Passion, Commitment, and Overall Love in a Romantic Relationship (N = 138)

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Gender[a]	-									
2. Age	.04	-								
3. Relational self-construal	.07	-.20*	-							
4. Interdependent self-construal	-.06	.00	.25**	-						
5. Independent self-construal	.14	.11	.13	-.07	-					
6. Parent opinion	.15	.17*	-.01	-.04	.15	-				
7. Friend opinion	.13	.06	.08	-.07	.03	.37**	-			
8. Intimacy	.24*	.00	.13	.06	-.02	.38**	.70**	-		
9. Passion	.27**	-.17*	.27**	.10	-.01	.21*	.43**	.55**	-	
10. Commitment	.28*	.10	.13	.07	-.09	.40**	.62**	.82**	.67**	-
11. Overall love	.30**	-.04	.20*	.09	-.05	.36**	.64**	.86**	.87**	.93**

[a] Gender, men = 1, women = 2.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Hypothesis 1: Testing Interactions. Hayes' (2022) PROCESS macro for SPSS was used to test the four interactions predicted for hypothesis 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d. Relational self-construal was entered as a moderator of parent opinion and friend opinion. Covariates were also included in the analysis. None of the interaction terms were statistically significant predictors. For Hypothesis 1a, this included the non-significant interactions of parent opinion and relational self-construal (β =.04, p = .325) and friend opinion and relational self-construal (β =-.05, p = .425) predicting total love. For Hypothesis 1b, this included the interactions of parent opinion and relational self-construal (β =.04, p = .08) and friend opinion and relational self-construal (β =-.04 p = .31) predicting passion. For Hypothesis 1c, this included the interactions of parent opinion and relational self-construal (β =.00, p = .92) and friend opinion and relational self-construal (β =-.02, p = .50) predicting commitment. Finally, for Hypothesis 1d, neither the interaction of parent opinion and relational self-construal (β =.01, p = .68) nor friend opinion and relational self-construal (β =.00, p = .97) predicted intimacy. Given these results, each of the four sub-hypotheses were tested with a simple multiple regression excluding the interaction terms (Hayes, 2022).

Hypothesis 1a: Predicting Overall Love in a Romantic Relationship. Simple multiple regression was used to test if gender, parent opinion, friend opinion, and relational self-construal predicted *overall love in a romantic relationship*. Stepwise entry was used with the possible covariate of gender entered first. As shown in Table 15, the overall regression was statistically significant, R^2 = .48, $F(3, 132) = 31.03$, $p < .001$. Consistent with Hypothesis 1a, gender (β = .20, p = .004), relational self-construal (β = .14, p = .031), and friend opinion (β = .55, p = <.001) significantly predicted total

romantic relationship quality. Women reported greater overall love in romantic relationships compared to men. In contrast to predictions, parent opinion ($\beta = .13$ $p = .070$) did not significantly predict total romantic relationship quality. However, of note, when the two multivariate outliers were deleted and the analysis was rerun, parent opinion also significantly predicted overall love (Appendix Q).

Table 15

*Parent Opinion, Friend Opinion, and Relational Self-Construal as Predictors of Overall Love in Romantic Relationships (*N = *138)*

	Adj. R^2	R^2	*F*	*B*	*SE*	β
Overall love in romantic relationship						
Step 1	.09	.09	14.25**			
Gender				34.51**	9.56	.30
Step 2	.47	.48	31.03**			
Gender				22.99**	6.28	.20
Parent opinion				0.76	0.42	.13
Friend opinion				4.52**	0.57	.55
Relational self-construal				0.54*	0.23	.14
Passion in romantic relationship						
Step 1	.09	.10	7.52**			
Gender				13.20*	4.28	.26
Age				-0.82*	0.34	-.20
Step 2	.27	.30	10.93*			
Gender				9.99*	3.88	.19
Age				-0.79*	0.31	-.19
Parent opinion				0.17	0.22	.06
Friend opinion				1.33**	0.30	.36
Relational self-construal				0.31*	.12	.19
Commitment in romantic relationship [c]						
Step 1	.07	.08	11.05**			
Gender				12.57**	3.78	.28
Step 2	.43	.45	26.41**			
Gender				8.13**	3.01	.18
Parent opinion				0.43*	0.17	.18
Friend opinion				1.66**	0.23	.51
Relational self-construal				0.10	0.10	.07
Intimacy in romantic relationship						
Step 1	.05	.06	8.03**			
Gender				8.11	2.86	.24
Step 2	.51	.52	35.98**			
Gender				4.56*	2.09	.13
Parent opinion				0.23*	0.12	.13
Friend opinion				1.50**	0.16	.62
Relational self-construal				0.07	0.07	.06

Note. Gender, men = 1, women = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Hypothesis 1b: Predicting Passion in Romantic Relationship. Multiple regression was used to test if gender, parent opinion, friend opinion, and relational self-construal significantly predicted *passion* in a romantic relationship. Stepwise entry was used with the possible covariates of age and gender entered first. As shown in Table 15 (see page 132), the overall regression was statistically significant, $R^2 = .30$, $F(4, 134) = 10.93$, $p < .001$. As expected, age (β = -.19, $p = .015$), gender (β = .19, $p = .009$), relational self-construal (β = .19, $p = .014$), and friend opinion (β = .36, $p = < .001$) significantly predicted passion in a romantic relationship. Women reported greater passion in romantic relationships compared to men. Contrary to Hypothesis 1b, parent opinion (B = .06, $p = .730$) did not significantly predict passion in a romantic relationship.

Hypothesis 1c: Predicting Commitment in Romantic Relationship. Multiple regression was used to test if gender, parent opinion, friend opinion, and relational self-construal predicted *commitment* in a romantic relationship. Stepwise entry was used with the covariates of age and gender entered first. As shown in Table 15 (see page 132), the overall regression was statistically significant, $R^2 = .45$, $F(3, 135) = 26.41$, $p < .001$. In line with predictions, gender (β = .18, $p = .013$), parent opinion (β = .18, $p = .004$) and friend opinion (β = .51, $p = <.001$) significantly predicted commitment in a romantic relationship. Women reported greater commitment in romantic relationships compared to men. Relational self-construal (β = .07, $p = .29$) did not significantly predict commitment in a romantic relationship.

Hypothesis 1d: Predicting Intimacy in Romantic Relationship. Multiple regression was used to test if gender, parent opinion, friend opinion, and relational self-construal significantly predicted *intimacy* in a romantic relationship. Stepwise entry was used with possible covariate of gender entered first. As shown in Table 15 (see page 132), the overall regression was statistically significant, $R^2 = .52$, $F(6, 132) = 35.98$, $p < .001$. Gender ($\beta = .13$, $p = .045$), parent opinion ($\beta = .13$, $p = .042$), and friend opinion ($\beta = .62$, $p < .001$) significantly predicted intimacy in a romantic relationship. Women reported greater intimacy in romantic relationships compared to men. Relational self-construal ($\beta = .06$, $p = .29$) did not significantly predict intimacy in a romantic relationship.

Additional Analysis: Comparing Approval for Marginalized and Nonmarginalized Relationships

A large proportion of participants ($n = 71$, 50%) indicated their relationships had one, two, or three characteristics within their current relationship that could lead to increased marginalization (interethnic/interracial relationships, interreligious, social standing disparity, same-sex relationship, substantial age gaps; Agnew, 2016). Given past research that indicates that people involved in a marginalized relationship typically receive greater disapproval and less approval from their parents, an additional statistical analysis was completed to compare parent and friend opinions among people in marginalized and nonmarginalized relationships. A two-way mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) was completed with people in marginalized and nonmarginalized relationships as the between subjects factor and parent opinion and friend opinion as the within subjects factor.

The statistical assumptions of two-way mixed ANOVA include the absence of significant outliers in each cell of the design, normal distribution for every cell of the design, homogeneity of variances, homogeneity of covariances, and sphericity (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Seven outliers were identified within three of the four cell designs. Analysis was completed with outliers included and removed; however, removal of the outliers did not alter further assumptions or the results of the ANOVA. All variables violated the assumption of normality according to the Shapiro-Wilk's test. Visual inspection of histograms and review of skewness values indicated a pattern of negative skew for each of the cells. Kurtosis values also indicated a violation of normality. Although there is a violation of normality, mixed ANOVA is fairly robust to such violations, particularly when the data shows similar patterns of skew (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Levene's test of homogeneity of variance indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated. The assumption of homogeneity of covariances was also violated according to Box's test of equality of covariance matrices ($p = .002$). Results must be interpreted in light of the violation of these assumptions.

Means and standard deviations are provided in Table 16. There was a statistically significant interaction for perceived approval source (i.e., parent vs. friend) and relationship marginalization status (i.e., marginalized vs. nonmarginalized), $F(1, 138) = 8.20$, $p = .005$, partial $\eta 2 = .056$. Additionally, there was a difference in perceived parent opinion between participants involved in marginalized versus nonmarginalized relationships, $F(1, 138) = 18.16$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta 2 = .116$. In contrast, there was no difference in perceived friend opinion between participants involved in marginalized versus nonmarginalized relationships, $F(1, 138) = 3.23$, $p = .075$, partial $\eta 2 = .023$

Table 16

*Means and Standard Deviations for Parent and Friend Opinion Based on Marginalized Relationship Status (*n *=140)*

	Nonmarginalized relationships		Marginalized relationships	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Parent opinion	34.94	5.55	29.71	8.64
Friend opinion	34.11	5.22	32.38	5.59

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 1 and Additional Analysis

The purpose of this section was to investigate romantic relationship quality in relation to self-construal, parent relationship opinion, and friend relationship opinion. Romantic relationship quality was conceptualized using Sternberg's triangular love theory (1986) which allowed for examination of how interdependent self-construal and parent and friend opinion of a romantic relationship relate to various components of romantic relationships (i.e., overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in romantic relationship). Hypotheses were partially supported. As hypothesized, a more positive friend opinion of the romantic relationship was associated with greater passion, commitment, intimacy, and overall love. Also as hypothesized, a more positive parent opinion was associated with greater commitment and intimacy.

In contrast to expectations, the relation between parent and friend opinion with overall love was not moderated by relational self-construal. However, greater relational self-construal was related to higher passion, commitment, and overall love in the romantic relationship. That is to say, participants who endorsed greater relational self-construal tended to also report more loving, passionate, and committed romantic relationships. Gender was associated with greater overall love, passion, commitment, and intimacy in the romantic relationship with women reporting higher levels than men. Additionally, age was negatively associated with passion in a romantic relationship. This means that younger participants generally indicated that their romantic relationships were more passionate than older participants. In summary, this section provides partial support for Hypothesis 1.

As expected, participants involved in marginalized and nonmarginalized relationships reported similar levels of perceived friend opinion. However, participants involved in marginalized relationships reported poorer perceived parent opinion compared to participants involved in nonmarginalized relationships. That is to say, whereas friends are perceived as having similar opinions of marginalized and nonmarginalized relationships, parents are perceived as having less favourable opinions of marginalized relationships compared to nonmarginalized relationships. Of note, these results must be interpreted with some caution as the statistical assumption of homogeneity of variance and homogeneity of covariance were both violated. This appears to be due to greater variance within perceived parent opinion of marginalized relationships There appears to be greater variability for perceived opinions of marginalized relationships compared to the other three categories (i.e., perceived parent opinion of nonmarginalized relationships, perceived friend opinion of marginalized relationships, and perceived friend opinion of nonmarginalized relationships). The following section further explores the importance of parent and friend opinions of romantic relationships using the newly developed measure.

Research Questions 2-4: Predicting the Importance of Parent and Friend Disapproval and Approval

After controlling for the covariate of age, are *parent disapproval importance* (Question 2), *friend disapproval importance* (Question 3), and *parent and friend approval importance* (Question 4) predicted by gender, heritage acculturation, mainstream acculturation, parent social support, interdependent self-construal,

independent self-construal, the interaction between interdependent self-construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender?

Statistical Assumptions for Multiple Regression Analyses: Hypothesis 2-4

Research questions two, three, and four were assessed by completing three multiple regression analyses. The statistical assumptions of multiple regression analysis were assessed for each of the three analyses for each of the three outcome variables (i.e., parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance). These assumptions include a linear relationship between predictor and outcome variables, homoscedasticity of residuals, absence of multicollinearity, absence of significant outliers, high leverage points, or influential observations, and normal distribution of residuals (Tabachnick et al., 2014).

The assumption of linearity between the predictor and outcome variables was assessed by plotting a scatterplot of studentized residuals with the unstandardized predicted values (Laerd Statistics, 2013; Tabachnick et al., 2014). This scatterplot showed a generally linear pattern that did not suggest any alternative relationship type. Additionally, the assumption of linearity was further assessed through visual examination of partial regression scatterplots. Each of these variables showed a generally linear relationship between the predictors and the outcome variable. The scatterplot of studentized residuals with the unstandardized predicted values was also examined for issues with homoscedasticity. No significant issues with heteroscedasticity (i.e., funnel or fan shaped) appeared to be present although the friend disapproval importance residual graphs appeared to have some fanning. Multicollinearity was assessed through tolerance values for the predictor variables. None of the VIF values were lower than .10, indicating

an absence of issues with multicollinearity (Daoud, 2017). The assumption of normality of residuals was examined through histograms and p-p plots and appeared to be met.

The data were further examined to identify significant outliers, leverage points, and influential observations (Laerd Statistics, 2013). Standardized residuals and studentized deleted residuals were used to identify outliers (±3 standard deviations; Huber, 2011). Data from three participants were categorized as outliers for the parent and friend approval importance outcome. Leverage values were also examined with all values falling within the "safe" range. Cook's distance was used to assess for influential observations (Cook, 1977) with none being identified. Multiple regression analysis with parent and friend approval importance as the outcome was completed with and without outliers (Leys et al., 2019). Hypothesis 4 results including outliers are reported in-text whereas results with outliers excluded are reported in Appendix R.

Multiple Regression Analyses: Hypothesis 2, 3, and 4

The correlations between all the variables used to test hypotheses two, three, and four are included in Table 17. Of note, age was only correlated with friend disapproval importance and, as such, is only included as a covariate for Hypothesis 3.

Table 17

Correlations Between Hypotheses 2-4 Variables (N = 238)

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Parent disapproval importance	-									
2. Friend disapproval importance	.50**	-								
3. Parent and Friend Approval Importance	-.14*	-.14*	-							
4. Gender [a]	.03	.15*	-.16*	-						
5. Age	.03	.17*	-.07	.10	-					
6. Heritage acculturation	.11	.12	.09	-.06	-.02	-				
7. Mainstream acculturation	-.03	-.08	-.08	.11	.04	.31*	-			
8. Parent social support	.39**	.00	-.06	.01	.01	.17*	.04	-		
9. Friend social support	.05	.23**	-.08	.06	.10	.05	.08	.16*	-	
10. Interdependent self-construal	.28**	.06	.16*	.07	-.01	.19**	.17*	.27**	.05	-
11. Independent self-construal	.08	.07	-.05	-.08	.14*	.06	.01	.23**	.24**	.03

[a] Gender, men = 1, women = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Hypothesis 2-4: Testing Interactions. Hayes' (2022) PROCESS macro for SPSS was used to test the interactions predicted for Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4. Gender was entered as moderator of interdependent and independent self-construal. None of the interactions were statistically significant. For Hypothesis 2, neither the interactions of interdependent self-construal and gender (β =.01, p = .55) nor independent self-construal and gender (β =-.02, p = .55) predicted parent disapproval importance. For Hypothesis 3, neither the interactions of interdependent self-construal and gender (β = -.01, p = .79) nor independent self-construal and gender (β =-.02, p = .52) predicted friend disapproval importance. Finally, for Hypothesis 4, neither the interactions of interdependent self-construal and gender (β = -.01, p = .95) nor independent self-construal and gender (β =-.02, p = .17) predicted parent and friend approval importance. Given this, each hypothesis was tested with a simple multiple regression without interaction terms (Hayes, 2022).

Hypothesis 2: Predicting the Importance of Parent Disapproval. Linear multiple regression was used to test whether gender, greater interdependent self-construal, lower independent self-construal, greater heritage acculturation, lower mainstream acculturation, greater parent social support predicted *parent disapproval importance*. As shown in Table 18, the overall regression was significant, R^2 = .18, F(6, 219) = 7.60, p < .001. As hypothesized, interdependent self-construal (β = .19, p =.006) and parent social support (β = .32, p < .001) predicted parent disapproval importance. In contrast, gender (β =.06, p = .33), independent self-construal (β =.03, p = .69), heritage acculturation (β =.04, p = .65), and mainstream acculturation (β =-.08, p = .22), did not significantly predict parent disapproval importance. These results provided partial support for Hypothesis 2.

Table 18

Regression Results for Hypothesis 2 (N = 220)

	Adj. R^2	R^2	F	B	SE	β
Parent disapproval importance	.15	.17	7.60*			
Gender				0.24	.26	.06
Interdependent self-construal				0.03**	.01	.19
Independent self-construal				0.04	.01	.02
Heritage acculturation				0.00	0.01	.04
Mainstream acculturation				-0.01	0.01	-.08
Parent social support				0.09**	0.02	.32

[a] Gender, men = 1, women = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Hypothesis 3: Predicting the Importance of Friend Disapproval. Linear multiple regression was used to test whether age, gender, greater interdependent self-construal, lower independent self-construal, lower heritage acculturation, greater mainstream acculturation, and greater friend social support predict *friend disapproval importance.* As shown in Table 19, the overall regression was statistically significant, $R^2 = .12$, $F(7, 216) = 4.14$, $p < .001$. As hypothesized, friend social support ($\beta = .21$, $p = .002$) and gender ($\beta = .15$, $p = .027$), significantly predicted friend disapproval importance. This means that female gender was associated with higher friend disapproval importance over male gender. Age ($\beta = .13$, $p = .051$), interdependent self-construal ($\beta = .02$, $p = .11$), independent self-construal ($\beta = .00$, $p = .83$), heritage acculturation ($\beta = -.11$, $p = .21$), and mainstream acculturation ($\beta = -.01$, $p = .16$) did not predict friend disapproval importance. These results provided partial support for Hypothesis 3.

Table 19

Regression Results for Hypothesis 3 (N = 216)

	Adj. R^2	R^2	F	B	SE	β
Friend disapproval importance	.09	.12	4.14**			
Age				0.05	0.02	.13
Gender [a]				0.54*	0.24	.15
Interdependent self-construal				0.02	0.01	.11
Independent self-construal				0.00	0.01	.21
Heritage acculturation				-0.01	0.01	-.11
Mainstream acculturation				-0.01	0.01	-.09
Friend social support				0.08**	0.03	.21

[a] Gender, men = 1, women = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Hypothesis 4: Predicting the Importance of Parent and Friend Approval.

Simple multiple regression was used to test whether gender, greater interdependent self-construal, lower independent self-construal, heritage acculturation, mainstream acculturation, greater friend social support, and greater parent social support, predicted *parent and friend approval importance*. A simple linear regression was run without the interaction terms (Hayes, 2022). As shown in Table 20, the overall regression was statistically significant, $R^2 = .07$, $F\ (7, 210) = 1.60$, $p = .046$. As hypothesized, higher interdependent self-construal (β = .16, p =.006) predicted parent and friend approval importance. Gender (β =.-.12, p = .07), parent social support (β = -.10, p = .17), friend social support (β = -.41, p = .53), independent self-construal (β =-.05, p = .52), heritage acculturation (β =.10, p = .15), and mainstream acculturation (β =-.11, p = .14) did not significantly predict parent and friend approval importance.

Table 20

Regression Results for Hypothesis 4 (N = 218)

	Adj. R^2	R^2	F	B	SE	β
Parent and Friend Approval Importance	.03	.07	2.09*			
Gender [a]				-0.31	0.17	-.12
Interdependent self-construal				0.02*	0.01	.16
Independent self-construal				-0.01	0.01	-.05
Heritage acculturation				0.07	0.01	.10
Mainstream acculturation				-0.01	0.01	-.11
Parent social support				-0.02	0.01	-.10
Friend social support				-0.02	0.02	-.04

[a] Gender, men = 1, women = 2.

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Summary of Findings for Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4

Initially, the hypotheses guiding these analyses were that gender, independent and interdependent self-construal, acculturation, social support, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender and the interaction between interdependent self-construal and gender would predict parent and friend approval and disapproval importance (i.e., parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance). These hypotheses were only partially supported. As hypothesized, greater interdependent self-construal was associated with parent disapproval importance and parent and friend approval importance, but not with friend disapproval importance. Also as hypothesized, social support from parents was associated with greater parent disapproval importance. Similarly, social support from friends was associated with greater friend disapproval importance. That is to say, participants who perceived more socially supportive relationships with parents and friends reported being more concerned about their disapproval of a romantic relationship. In contrast to the hypotheses, neither heritage nor mainstream acculturation were associated with parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, nor parent and friend approval importance. Finally, the only gender difference found was regarding friend disapproval importance. As hypothesized, female participants reported greater friend disapproval importance as compared to male participants.

Research Question 5: Conflict with Parents and Friends

This section includes descriptions of narratives participants provided about conflicts with their parents and friends related to romantic relationships. This section is intended to address the following questions: Do young adults experience conflict with

their parents and friends regarding their romantic relationships? If so, what is the nature of this conflict? The coding procedure for these narratives is described in the Method section.

Age at Conflict

Participants ($N = 237$) were prompted to share when the conflict took place. Of the codable narratives that included age information, many participants indicated they were in high school or within that corresponding age range (i.e., 13-17 years old) at the time of the conflict (parent conflicts $n = 56$, 39.1%; friend conflicts $n = 34$, 35.1%) A few participants indicated that they were even younger at the time of the conflict (i.e., 12 years or younger or "elementary school"; parent conflicts $n = 4$, 2.8%; friend conflicts $n = 1$, 1.0%). Many other participants indicated they were in their late teens when the conflict occurred (i.e., parent conflicts, $n = 39$, 38.0%; friend conflicts $n = 34$, 35.1%). Others indicated that they were in their twenties at the time of the conflict (i.e., parent conflicts, $n = 44$, 30.7%; friend conflicts $n = 25$, 25.8%). One participant indicated that conflict with their parents occurred during "university," another participant indicated that conflict with their friend occurred in their early 30s, whereas a third participant indicated the conflict with a friend occurred during "college."

Conflict Themes

The following major themes were used to categorize the reasons participants reported for conflicts with their parents and friends. The same rubric and themes were used to code the parent and friend conflict narratives. Conflict themes included *Partner Characteristics*, *Treatment Concerns*, *Pressure on the Relationship*, *Failure to Fulfil*

Other Expectations, *Safety/Behaviour Concerns*, *Jealousy*, and *Disapproval for Unclear or Unstated Reasons*.

Partner Characteristics Theme. Narratives coded as *Partner Characteristics* described conflicts in which the conflict with parents or friends was due to them having a concern or problem with the characteristics of the potential or actual romantic partner. These included more general demographic characteristics associated with marginalized relationships in past literature (Agnew, 2016), such as the person's religion, gender (i.e., same gender relationships), age (i.e., dating an older partner) culture, nationality, or race. A female participant shared their parents' disagreement about dating outside of their religion in this excerpt:

> A romantic relationship conflict I had a year ago with my parents was the person who I was dating did not have the same religious beliefs as my parents which caused some tension and conflicts later on. I felt stuck in the middle and pressured to choose between my family and the person who I was dating. I quickly came that it wasn't going to work out if we couldn't agree on such a heavy topic as this one.

Others expressed that their parents and friends shared disapproval or dislike due to more personal qualities of the person such as perceiving them as being rude, lazy, unambitious, annoying, unattractive, immature, or having a poor personality. For example, a female participant shared the following:

> The conflict was sparked when I told my friends (i.e., roommates) that I wanted to get back together with my ex-boyfriend who was verbally manipulative. I was thinking that they were overreacting and felt upset at the time of the conflict.

Treatment Concerns. Narratives categorized as treatment concerns described conflicts in which participants indicated that they had a conflict with their parent or friend over treatment they received from a potential or actual romantic partner. Participants told stories of their parents and friends being concerned over how the romantic partner treated them in general such as in the following excerpt describing a female participant's conflict with her mother:

> I was 18 years old and the conflict started because I was talking about how my boyfriend at the time was treating me poorly. My mother did not approve of the guy that I was dating. I was thinking that the argument was unfair. I consider the conflict resolved now as my mother and I talked out the issue after it happened. Looking back, I think that my moms perspective was valid.

Another participant shared her experience as a 15-year-old with a boyfriend:

> The first time he had dinner with my family, he told [*sic*] was telling a story. I commented on it and he snapped and told me to shut up and that I interrupted him. I felt shut down, embarrassed, sad, and weak. My mother was so mad afterward and expressed her dislike for him. This made me angry.

Some indicated that these people expressed their concern regarding them getting back together with partners that had treated them poorly in the past. Others indicated that their parents or friends expressed concern due to the partner having multiple romantic interests or being unfaithful to them in an exclusive relationship such as reported in the following narrative regarding a friend conflict:

> I thought I could maintain the relationship after this person was unfaithful towards me. I was around 19 and I was blinded over my strong liking towards this person.

> My friends were very stern on not being with this person and said they would be disappointed. At first, I was sad because I felt like I had no one to talk to without getting an aggressive response back. However, I know my friends were trying to protect me, be honest, and not sugar coat the situation. I am very happy that I listened to them, because I am in a much better place.

Pressure on the Relationship Theme. Participants also reported conflicts related to *Pressure on the Relationship.* These included the parent or friend attempting to influence the participant to date a specific person, reunite with a previous romantic partner, or move ahead with relationship milestones (e.g., making the relationship "official," meeting the parents). For example, a female participant described her parents pressuring her to let them meet her romantic partner: "This conflict started because my parents wanted my boyfriend to come over. I was not ready to have him over yet because we just started talking." Others, such as the friend of the participant who provided the following narrative, placed pressure on the participant to continue a relationship they were planning on ending:

> When I broke up with my ex-boyfriend 5 years later my friend really pushed me to not end things. I believe this was with motive of her boyfriend being his friend but i felt sad that she did not understand how unhappy I was with him and that I wanted to end things.

Another participant shared how her mother pressured her to go on a date in the following excerpt:

> When I was 16 I went on a date with a person I went to school with and who I had mixed feelings about. My biological mother felt as if I had led them on and owed

> them one date. I went on the date with the person, and we went to the movies. At the time I remember feeling awkward because I did not really want to go on the date in the first place.

Failure to Fulfill Other Expectations Theme. Other participants reported conflicts with parents and friends related to perceived *Failure to Fulfil Other Expectations*. Failed expectations with friends included spending too much time with the romantic partner, turning down plans, or not being fully present during time together (e.g., texting partner while spending time with friends). For example, as shown in the following excerpt, a female participant describes tension between wanting to spend time with their friends and their romantic partner.

> the conflict was relating to whether i should hang out with my friends or boyfriend. i had made plans with my boyfriend but i had not seen my friends in a while. i was feeling uncomfortable in the position that i was in. i wanted to see my boyfriend but i also wanted to see my friends. i didn't want to be judged by my friends for always hanging out with my boyfriend rather than them. i ended up hanging out with my friends. i explained the situation to my boyfriend and he was fine with us hanging out another day. looking back, i think my friend's perspective was valid. i wouldn't be happy if my friends made made more time to hangout with their boyfriends rather than me.

Although some participants also reported similar failed expectations in relation to parents, many reported conflicts related to not fulfilling specific duties or expectations, particularly related to educational and career expectations. In the follow excerpt, the participant related her mother’s reaction to finding out she was dating:

> A couple months into our relationship, I had told my mom about it and she expressed discomfort about my relationship. She expressed concerns that I would lose sight and concentration of my educational and career goals. I was very angry with her because I was offended that she assumed I would be "blind-sighted by love" as she liked to describe. I would say that that is what escalated the argument -- me being more offended by the fact that she thought my relationship would make me act carelessly.

This participant expanded on how she felt that her mother's reaction may have related to her mother immigrating from another country in order to give her child a better life. She believed her mother felt fear initially navigating her children beginning to date, particularly outside of her culture. Other narratives fitting this theme also state or imply disagreement related cultural norms as fueling the perception of failure to fulfill expectations. Some narratives also indicated that parents expressed anger or concern that the participant was not honouring their family or risking bringing shame on them by engaging in behaviour or a romantic relationship they viewed as being inappropriate. The following scenario was described by a female participant:

> They would [*sic*] upset because I was always with him and they were scared people who knew me and knew my parents would see me with him and they would tell other people that I was a whore for always being with him. I always felt anger over that because someones opinion shouldn't matter, my parents know who I am.

Safety and Behaviour Concerns Theme. *Safety/Behaviour Concerns* included conflicts over the person engaging in behaviours the parent or friend perceived as being

risky, dangerous, immoral, or inappropriate. Participants reported engaging in conflict with their parents over them engaging in sexual activity with partners. Although some of these narratives center around actual sexual activity, many revolved around limits parents placed to attempt to prevent the possibility (e.g., spending time alone together). For the friend conflict stories, friends more often expressed concern about the participant "moving too fast" or setting themselves up for the possibility of "getting hurt." A few participants, recounted stories in which their parents and friends were concerned due to the abusive behaviour of their partner causing them injury or other harm, such as the narrative provided by the following participant:

> When I was 18-22 years old I was dating and then shortly after married to someone I had met at boarding school. He had turned out to be very physically, emotionally, and verbally abusive. Both my parents and friends found out after an incidence occurred involving my injury. They obviously wanted me to separate myself and I didn't and it caused a shift in our relationships.

Jealousy Theme. Exclusive to friend conflict narratives, participants described themes of *Jealousy*. Participants reported conflicts in which their friends were jealous of their actual or potential romantic partner due to their own interest in that person such as the following narrative:

> my friend got extremely mad at me for wanting to go on a date with a boy she used to have a crush on. we were both 18 at the time and due to her having a crush on this boy before, she told me i was not allowed to go. at the time, i was blown away by the way she was handling the situation and was very upset.

Other narratives included jealousy over the participant having a romantic relationship or having a better relationship than their friends. This type of jealousy was described by a participant in the following excerpt from a narrative:

> Her and I stopped speaking for a bit because I couldnt understand why she was so angry at me all the time. I realize now that she was just jealous because she desperately wanted a husband and child as well.

Some included jealousy over the participant prioritizing the romantic relationship (e.g., "My best friend at the time developed an extreme jealousy towards him because in her eyes, he had stolen a lot of my attention away from her").

Disapproval for Unclear or Unstated Reasons. Finally, some participants shared that the conflict occurred due to *Disapproval for Unclear or Unstated Reasons*. That is to say, they shared that there was a conflict as the parents or friends expressed disapproval of the relationship leading to a conflict. However, the participant did not give possible reasons for this disapproval. The frequency that narratives were coded by each of themes is outlined in Table 21.

Table 21

Major Themes in Conflict Narratives

Theme	Parent Conflicts ($n_{narratives}$ = 135)	Friend Conflicts ($n_{narratives}$ = 105)
Partner Characteristics	39 (28.7%)	17 (16.2%)
Treatment Concerns	20 (14.7%)	29 (27.6%)
Pressure on the Relationship	8 (5.9%)	4 (3.8%)
Failure to Fulfil Other Expectations	17 (12.5%)	21 (20%)
Safety/Behaviour Concerns	38 (27.9%)	7 (6.7%)
Jealousy	0 (0%)	13 (12.4%)
Disapproval for Unclear of Unstated Reasons	14 (10.3%)	14 (13.3%)

Conflict Severity

Narratives were also coded for the severity of the conflict the participants described. Conflicts were categorized as *Minor*, *Moderate*, and *Severe*. *Minor* conflicts were narratives in which some degree of disagreement was stated or implied (Barki & Hartwick, 2004). These typically might not be referred to as "a conflict" in everyday life. These narratives did not have all the elements of a conflict as conceptualized by Barki and Hartwick (2004; i.e., disagreement, interference, and negative emotion). *Minor* conflicts might include an expression of concern for the participant as described in the excerpt from the following participants narrative: "The conflict started when my mom found out I was sleeping with a certain male friend and my lifestyle at the time was very risky and impulsive, she was concerned for me." Other minor conflicts included an expression of disappointment or disapproval that was accepted by the participant without protest, such as described in the following excerpt:

> The conflict started because I cancelled plans before with that same person, they told me I spent too much time with my partner. I was thinking I was disapointed [*sic*] in myself and I should've been aware of how my actions would be harmful.

Conflicts coded as *Moderate* either stated or implied the elements of conflict as outlined by Barki and Hartwick (2004). However, this was distinguished from a *Severe* conflict by the intensity of the three elements (disagreement, interference, and negative emotion) and the absence of severe consequences. Consideration was given to the valance of the emotion in terms of how negative or unpleasant the emotions words were that were used (Green & Salovey, 1999; Rubin & Talarico, 2009). For example, the following narrative provided by a female participant was coded as *Moderate*:

> We spent almost everyday together and would often fight. My mother would yell at me to spend less time with my boyfriend as it was 'unhealthy' how often we saw each other. I did not see our relationship that way and got mad at her. The conflict is now resolved as I have broken up with my ex. Looking back, I completely agree with my mother's view and what she said was valid.

This narrative included a clear disagreement (i.e., mother thought participant should spend less time with her boyfriend), interference (i.e., mother yelling at participant to try to limit this behaviour), and moderately negative emotions (i.e., “mad at her”). Additionally, there were no extreme consequences mentioned that would result in a *Severe* conflict code (e.g., the mother did not kick the participant out of the home or stop talking to her).

Conflicts coded as *Severe* either stated or implied the elements of conflict as outlined by Barki and Hartwick (2004) at a higher intensity level than Moderate conflicts and/or included severe consequences. For example, the following conflict was coded as *Severe*:

> This conflict also has to do with my ex-boyfriend. My friends never liked him and he didn't like them. There was always conflicts and drama caused by them. One time we got into an argument and I was showing and explaining to my friends the fight. They were very angry because they said he was treating me very poorly. They told me I deserved way better and basically that he was a piece of shit. I was very upset by this because in my eyes he could do no wrong. I did not agree with their views and I was upset that they thought so poorly of him.

This narrative included disagreement (i.e., the boyfriend treating the participant poorly and them deserving better), interference (i.e., trying to convince the participant the boyfriend is not good for them), and negative emotion (i.e., anger from the friends at the boyfriend and upset from the participant). Another narrative excerpt illustrated extreme consequences of the conflict:

> My best friend at the time developed an extreme jealousy towards him because in her eyes, he had stolen a lot of my attention away from her. I was extremely saddened by this because I had always relied so much on her as a friend and could not believe she would turn on me the way she did. The conflict was resolved in a way, unfortunately I had to distance myself from her and we are now just acquaintances.

This example implied some degree of disagreement and interference, a significant negative emotion (i.e., extremely saddened), and an extreme consequence of the conflict (i.e., friendship ended with best friend). Table 22 provides an overview of the number and percentages of narratives coded in terms of conflict severity.

Table 22
Conflict Severity in Conflict Narratives

Theme	Parent conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 144)	Friend conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 110)
Severe	40 (27.8%)	38 (34.5%)
Moderate	76 (52.8%)	53 (48.2%)
Minor	28 (19.4%)	19 (17.2%)

Conflict Resolution

Narratives were also coded for the resolution of the conflict the participants described. Conflicts were categorized as *Resolved* or *Unresolved.* The majority of participants indicated that the conflict was resolved (Table 23). For example, the following excerpt was from a participant who indicated that the conflict with her friends was resolved: “It is resolved now and we have very few conflicts about relationships now. We share everything and we appreciate each others perspectives on relationships. It has led to all of us having healthier relationships with others and ourselves.” Other participants indicated that the conflict was resolved as parents or friends came to accept the relationship or partner or the romantic relationship has ended. Some stated that the conflict is resolved without providing any additional information. Others implied that the conflict is resolved, but primarily due to the passage of time or lack of continuation or escalation, (e.g., “I suppose the conflict is resolved because it didn't escalate into anything else”). Some participants indicated that the conflict remains unresolved. For example, the following narrative excerpt indicates an unresolved conflict:

> I feel as though this conflict has not really been resolved. These friends have still not met him after 3 years, and they still to this day try to convince me that I should not be with him simply because "hes to old".

Table 23
Resolution in Conflict Narratives

Theme	Parent Conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 145)	Friend Conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 111)
Resolved	100 (68.9%)	75 (67.6%)
Unresolved	27 (18.6%)	13 (11.7%)
No comment on resolution	18 (12.4%)	23 (20.7%)

Perceived Validity

Narratives were also coded for the current perceived validity of the other person's perspective (i.e., parent or friend) that led to the conflict. Conflicts were categorized as *Valid* or *Not Valid.* Most participants indicated they now saw the validity of their parents' and friends' perspectives. For example, the following excerpt was from a participant who saw the validity in their parents' perspective:

> My parents perspective was extremely valid and just wanted the best for me. they did not want to see me hurt by this boy again and was trying to help even though at the time i did not want to hear the truth.

Others, such as the following excerpt, indicated that they now saw some validity in the other's perspective although maintaining that they still disagree; "I understand where they came from and I definitely think their perspective was valid. That being said, I wish they didn't treat me like that, and that they were more open to learning about other religions."

Other participants did not see the validity of the other person's perspective. For example, a participant commented the following about the validity of their friend's perspective in a narrative recounting a friend making a hurtful sarcastic comment after they got back together with a romantic partner following a brief separation: "Looking back now, her perspective was not valid - it did not make sense. The length of a breakup has nothing to do with anything." Others made comments about the lack of validity of the other person's perspective within the conflict without providing additional details. Table 24 outlines the number and percentage of conflicts according to their perceived validity.

Table 24

Perceived Validity of Parent or Friend Perspective in Conflict Narratives

Theme	Parent conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 143)	Friend conflicts ($n_{narrative}$ = 107)
Valid perspective	82 (58.6%)	68 (63.6%)
Not valid perspective	52 (37.1%)	29 (27.1%)
No comment on perspective validity	6 (4.2%)	10 (9.3%)

Summary of Findings for Research Question 5

Of note, a significant number of people did not share narratives of conflicts with parents and friends (38.8% of participants for parent and 53.6% participants for friend did not provide a codable narrative). Some indicated they did not have any such conflicts, but most left the lack of response open to interpretation. In terms of conflict themes, narratives of conflicts with parents and friends included *Partner Characteristics*, *Treatment Concerns*, *Pressure on the Relationship*, *Failure to Fulfil Other Expectations*, *Safety/Behaviour Concerns*, *Disapproval for Unclear of Unstated Reasons,* and, only in friend conflicts, *Jealousy.* Some differences were identified within themes between conflict narratives with parents and friends. Conflicts also varied in severity. A number of conflicts were relatively minor, such that they would typically not be referred to as conflicts. Others described more severe conflicts. Most participants reported that the conflicts with their parents and friends were now resolved. Similarly, most participants who provided a narrative reported that they now viewed their parents' and friends' perspectives during the conflict as being valid, although some maintained they still disagreed with them and others continued to believe their perspective was invalid. The following section further examines conflicts with parents and friends related to romantic relationships in conjunction with ideal romantic partner characteristics.

Research Question 6: Perceived Differences in Ideal Mate Characteristics and Conflict

Research Question 6: Do young adult's characteristics of an ideal mate differ from the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents and close friends? Are differences in ideal characteristics associated with intergenerational and friend conflict?

Analyses related to Research Question 6 included a few different components. First, the ideal partner characteristics as reported by participants regarding their own preferences, their parents' preferences, and their friends' perspectives are described (*Hypothesis 6a*). Concordance of top characteristics with parents and with friends are also described and compared. Next, the relation between parent-participant concordance, parent conflict severity, and parent conflict frequency was examined through ordinal logistic regression (*Hypothesis 6b*). Finally, attempts to analyze the relation between friend-participant concordance, friend conflict severity, and friend conflict frequency are described (*Hypothesis 6c*).

Concordance Between Perceived Ideal Characteristics of Parent, Friend, and Self: Hypothesis 6a

The purpose of this section was to determine whether young adults' characteristics of an ideal mate differed from the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents and close friends. Participants selected five characteristics from a list of possible romantic partner characteristics (adapted from Buunk et al., 2008) they believed to be most important for them from their own perspective, their parents, and their friends. Characteristics were meant to capture personal characteristics that may be desirable for a potential mate (i.e., physical, background, personal traits). The characteristics and the number of times they were endorsed regarding own preference, perceived parent preference, and perceived friend preference are outlined in Table 25. As outlined in the table, different characteristics were selected at different frequencies for self, parent, and friend. To illustrate, when thinking about their own preferences, participants most often selected "sense of humor," "kind," and "intelligent." When thinking of their parents,

"good family background," "good education," and "intelligent" were selected most often. In regard to their friends, "physically attractive." "sense of humour," and "kind" were selected most frequently.

As described in the method section, concordance ratings were calculated to compare similarity between the most important characteristics selected for self with perceived most important characteristics of parent and perceived most important characteristics of friend. A paired-samples t-test showed that on average, participants had higher concordance with friend characteristics (M = 2.61, SD = 1.26) as compared to parent characteristics (M = 2.18, SD = 1.23), a statistically significant mean difference of -.426, 95% CI [-0.596, -.256], $t(236) = -4.93$, $p < .001$. Thus, participants reported having more similarities with their friends as compared to their parents in their perceptions of desirable traits for a romantic partner.

Table 25

Frequency of Selected Top Five Characteristics by Participants for Self, Their Parents, and Their Friends

	Self (*N* = 238)	Parent (*N* = 238)	Friend (*N* = 238)
Sense of humour	146 (61.9%)	52 (21.8%)	143 (60.1%)
Kind	132 (55.5%)	92 (38.7%)	105 (44.1%)
Intelligent	118 (49.6%)	109 (45.8%)	95 (39.9%)
Good hygiene	105 (44.1%)	42 (17.6%)	65 (27.3%)
Physically attractive	104 (43.7%)	51 (21.4%)	160 (67.2%)
Similar attitudes	89 (37.4%)	49 (20.6%)	73 (30.7%)
Mentally healthy	68 (28.5%)	33 (13.9%)	44 (18.5%)
Respectful and obedient	62 (26.1%)	107 (45.0%)	56 (23.5%)
Friendly	43 (18.1%)	56 (23.5%)	83 (34.9%)
Good family background	43 (18.1%)	123 (51.7%)	26 (10.9%)
Physically healthy	42 (17.6%)	34 (14.3%)	18 (7.6%)
Same religious background	40 (16.8%)	72 (30.3%)	17 (7.1%)
Good education	36 (15.1%)	117 (49.2%)	44 (18.5%)
Likes children	28 (11.8%)	29 (12.2%)	13 (5.5%)
Creative	23 (9.7%)	6 (2.5%)	26 (10.9%)
A desirable height	16 (6.7%)	5 (2.1%)	35 (14.7%)
Physically fit	13 (5.5%)	13 (5.5%)	49 (20.6%)
Wealthy	12 (5.0%)	39 (16.4%)	52 (21.8%)
Same or higher social class	9 (3.8%)	34 (14.3%)	15 (6.3%)
Same ethnic background	6 (2.5%)	45 (18.9%)	7 (2.9%)
An appropriate weight	5 (2.1%)	7 (2.9%)	20 (8.4%)
Has not been divorced	2 (0.8%)	15 (6.3%)	4 (1.7%)
Artistic ability	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	5 (2.1%)

Note. Participants were prompted to choose five characteristics. As such, the percentages listed here are the percentage of participants that selected each trait and will not add up to 100%.

Ideal Romantic Partner Characteristics and Conflict with Parents: Hypothesis 6b

The purpose of this section is to determine whether greater differences between parent-participant ideal characteristics were associated with greater frequency and severity of parent conflict related to romantic relationships.

Statistical Assumptions. The statistical assumptions of ordinal logistic regression were assessed before preceding with the analysis. Ordinal logistic regression requires that the outcome variable is ordinal and the predictor variables can be treated as continuous or categorical (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Finally, proportional odds is an important assumption of ordinal logistic regression. The assumption of proportional odds was met for the analysis, as assessed by a full likelihood ratio test comparing the fit of the proportional odds model to a model with varying location parameters, $\chi 2(12) = 10.40$, $p = .581$.

Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis. After testing assumptions, a cumulative odds ordinal logistic regression with proportional odds was carried out (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Severity of parent conflict derived from narratives (i.e., mild, moderate, and severe) was included as a fixed factor, frequency of parent conflict related to romantic relationships was included as a covariate, and concordance of parent-participant ideal mate characteristics was included as an ordinal outcome variable. Of note, the majority of participants described conflicts with their parents related to romantic relationships as occurring *Very Rarely* ($n = 148$, 65.5%). Although the deviance and goodness-of-fit test indicated that the model was a good fit to the observed data $\chi^2(57) = 55.860$, $p = .650$, overall goodness of fit tests must be interpreted with caution as they lack reliability in situations in which there are a large number of cells with zero frequencies, as in the current analysis. The severity of the narrative conflict with parents did not influence the

prediction of concordance of parent-participant ideal mate characteristics, Wald $\chi^2(2) = .88$, $p = .642$. However, the reported frequency of conflict with parents related to romantic relationships did have an effect on the prediction of concordance of parent-participant ideal mate characteristics. Less frequent conflict was associated with an increase in the odds of having higher concordance of parent-participant ideal mate characteristics, with an odds ratio of .68, 95% CI [.52, .90], Wald $\chi2(1) = 7.44$, $p = .006$. That is to say, participants who reported more frequent conflict with their parents related to romantic relationships, were more likely to report fewer important ideal mate characteristics that were in common with those of their parents.

Ideal Romantic Partner Characteristics and Conflict with Friends: Hypothesis 6c

The purpose of this section is to determine whether greater differences between friend-participant ideal characteristics were associated with greater frequency and severity of friend conflict related to romantic relationships.

Statistical Assumptions. For the second planned ordinal logistic regression analysis, the test of parallel lines could not be completed as convergence could not be attained (Laerd Statistics, 2017). Therefore, in order to assess the assumption of proportional odds, separate binomial logistic regressions were compared on cumulative dichotomous dependent variables. Odds ratios were examined and compared for the five different binomial logistic regressions. These were found to vary substantially indicating a violation of the assumption of proportional odds. Given this assumption violation, two chi-square tests of independence were considered (i.e., conflict frequency and friend-participant concordance were reduced to fewer categories). However, two cells had an expected count of less than five which can indicate that the sample size is too limited for

this analysis (Rana & Singhal, 2015). Given these violations of statistical assumptions, no analysis was completed to assess Hypothesis 6c. Of note, the majority of participants indicated that they *Very Rarely* had conflicts with their friends related to their romantic relationships (n = 160, 70.8%).

Summary of Findings for Hypothesis 6

In terms of selected characteristics of an ideal mate, there appeared to be patterns of what traits participants valued as most the most important traits in a romantic partner from their perspective, their parents' perspective, and their friends' perspective. The frequency of which each trait was indicated were outlined. When comparing parent-participant and friend-participant concordance ratings, participants had more characteristics in common with their friends than with their parents.

In relation to conflict, participants who report less severe and less frequent conflict with parents were hypothesized to have greater parent-participant concordance for important partner traits. This hypothesis was partially supported. Greater reported frequency of conflict was associated with lower parent-participant concordance. In contrast, severity of conflict with parents, as coded from conflict narratives, and parent-participant concordance were not associated. Similarly, participants who reported less severe and less frequent conflict with friends were hypothesized to have greater friend-participant concordance for important partner traits. However, this hypothesis was not assessed given violations to the assumptions needed for statistical tests. Of note, participants across the sample generally indicated that conflicts related to romantic relationships were very rare with both parents and friends, suggesting that such conflicts may be a low frequency occurrence.

This concludes the results section for the six research questions. Following the results of an additional analysis, Table 26 summarizes the results of the six hypotheses.

Additional Analysis: Other People Whose Approval and Disapproval of Romantic Relationships is Important to Participants

Participants also indicated any other people besides their parents and friends whose opinion of their romantic relationships were important to them. Following data cleaning ($N = 231$), 27 participants (11.6%) did not provide any response to this question. An additional 30 participants (13.0%) indicated this question was not applicable with responses that show that it was intentionally left blank (e.g., "N/A," "none"), specifying no one beyond their parents and friends whose opinion was important (e.g., "Mother and father because I value their opinions. My best friend because she has a good perspective on both life and relationships"), or indicating they did not care about the opinions of others regarding their romantic relationships (e.g., "No one's disapproval of my relationships affects my choices […]").

The most common additional people listed were siblings. Eighty-two participants (35.5%) indicated their sister or sisters were important influences, 47 participants indicated their brother or brothers were important influences (20.3%), and 13 participants (5.6%) listed siblings without specifying whether these siblings were brothers or sisters. Grandparents were also frequently listed as additional influences with 31 participants indicating "grandparents" (13.4%), 22 participants (9.5%) indicating their grandma or grandmother, and seven participants (3.0%) indicating their grandpa or grandfather. Further "extended family" members were listed with 30 participants (13.0%) indicating their aunt or aunts, 21 participants indicating their uncle or uncles (9.1%), and 26

participants (11.2%) indicating their cousin or cousins. Other family members listed included sibling-in-laws (n = 3), “extended family” (n = 1), children (n = 1), a great grandparent (n = 1), and a great aunt (n = 1). Other participants listed religious leaders (e.g., “pastor,” “guru”; n = 9), family friends or older mentor type figures (n = 6), educational figures (e.g., teacher or principal; n = 4) boss or co-workers (n = 4), therapist (n = 1), and even their cat (n = 1). Seven participants (3%) indicated their partner’s family members or friends are important influences.

Table 26

Summary of Results

Hypothesis	Support for hypothesis
Hypothesis 1a: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal, will predict *overall love* within young adults currently in romantic relationships.	**Partially supported**: friend opinion was positively associated with overall love. [a] **Additional findings**: relational self-construal and gender were positively associated with overall love . Women reported greater overall love compared to men.
Hypothesis 1b: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *passion* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships.	**Partially supported**: friend opinion was positively associated with passion. **Additional findings**: relational self-construal and gender were positively associated with passion. Women reported greater passion compared to men.
Hypothesis 1c: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *commitment* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships.	**Partially supported**: parent opinion and friend opinion were positively associated with commitment. **Additional findings**: gender was positively associated with commitment. Women reported greater commitment compared to men.
Hypothesis 1d: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age, gender), positive parent opinion, positive friend opinion, interdependent self-construal, the interaction of parent opinion and interdependent self-construal, and the interaction of friend opinion and interdependent self-construal will predict *intimacy* in romantic relationships within young adults currently in romantic relationships.	**Partially supported**: parent opinion and friend opinion were positively associated with intimacy. **Additional findings**: gender was positively associated with intimacy. Women reported greater intimacy compared to men.

[a] When multivariate outliers were removed, parent opinion also predicted overall love in the romantic relationship.

Table 26 (continued)

Summary of Results (continued)

Hypothesis	Support for Hypothesis
Hypothesis 2: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, parent social support, interdependent self-construal, independent self-construal, the interaction between interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *parent disapproval importance*.	**Partially supported**: interdependent self-construal and parent social support were positively associated with parent disapproval importance.
Hypothesis 3: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, interdependent and independent self-construal, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, friend social support, the interaction between interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *friend disapproval importance*.	**Partially supported**: friend social support and gender were positively associated with friend disapproval importance. Women reported greater friend disapproval importance compared to men.
Hypothesis 4: After controlling for possible covariates (e.g., age), gender, interdependent and independent self-construal, acculturation to the heritage and mainstream culture, parent and friend social support, the interaction between interdependent self construal and gender, and the interaction between independent self-construal and gender will predict *parent and friend approval importance*.	**Partially supported:** interdependent self-construal was associated with parent and friend approval importance.
Hypothesis 5 (qualitative): Young adults will have experienced conflicts with their parents and friends that vary regarding reason for conflict (i.e., conflict theme), conflict severity, conflict resolution and perceived validity of the other's perspective in the conflict.	**Supported:** Participants reported conflicts with their parents and friends that varied in theme, severity, resolution, and perceived validity.
Hypothesis 6a: Young adult's characteristics of an ideal mate will differ from the perceived ideal characteristics of their parents and close friends.	**Supported**: Participants selected traits at varying frequencies based on whether selecting for self, parents, or friends. Participants had more similarity to perceived friend important traits over perceived parent important traits.

Table 26 (continued)

Summary of Results (continued)

Hypothesis	Support for Hypothesis
Hypothesis 6b: Greater differences between parent-participant ideal characteristics will be associated with greater frequency and severity of parent conflict related to romantic relationships.	**Partially supported**: greater differences between parent-child ideal characteristics were associated with more frequent parent conflict regarding romantic relationships.
Hypothesis 6c: Greater differences between friend-participant ideal characteristics will be associated with greater frequency and severity of friend conflict related to romantic relationships.	**Hypothesis was not tested due to violations of statistical assumptions.**

Chapter V – Discussion

Summary and Interpretation of Results

This study had six objectives. First, this study was intended to replicate past research regarding the relation between parent and friend opinions and relationship quality with the added component of self-construal as a possible moderator. Second, this study examined how differing levels of independent and interdependent self-construal related to the *importance* placed on parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. The third objective was to clarify whether there are gender differences in parent and friend approval and disapproval importance. The fourth was to examine whether acculturation relates to the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval. The fifth objective was to clarify whether social support from parents and friends relates to parent and friend approval and disapproval importance. Finally, this study was intended to examine whether young adults experience conflict in their friend and parental relationships related to their decisions regarding romantic relationships, and to investigate the nature of these conflicts. The following paragraphs provide an overview of study findings regarding these objectives interpreted within the context of existing research.

The first objective was to clarify the relation between parent and friend opinion and the quality of a romantic relationships in relation to interdependent self-construal. In past research, more positive parent and friend opinion of a romantic relationship was associated with indicators of better-quality romantic relationships whereas lower opinion was associated with indicators of poorer-quality romantic relationships. These relationship quality outcomes have included overall love (e.g., Sinclair & Ellithorpe,

2014), relationship satisfaction (e.g., Hill, 2019), commitment (e.g., Rodrigues, et al., 2017), relationship investment (Rodrigues et al., 2017), relationship continuation (e.g., Le et al., 2010), and choices in experimental methods (i.e., decisions on liking presented dating partners in situation of parent or friend approving opinions or disapproving opinions; Wright & Sinclair, 2012). For the current study, relationship quality was conceptualized and measured through Sternberg's triangular love theory (1986). In line with past research, positive parent opinion of a romantic relationship was associated with greater intimacy and commitment in the romantic relationship. Similarly, positive friend opinion of a romantic relationship was associated with greater passion, intimacy, commitment, and overall love. This provides further research evidence for the social network effect wherein approval from the social networks is associated with indicators of better romantic relationship (Parks et al., 1983; Sinclair et al., 2014). Of note, parent and friend opinion in this study is actually the participant's *perceived* report of parent and friend opinions. In past research, perceived friend opinion was actually a better predictor of romantic relationship commitment than friend opinion reported by friends (Etcheverry et al., 2008). Further research may consider the inclusion of measures of actual parent and friend opinion along with perceived parent and friend opinion.

The association between parent and friend opinion and relationship quality can be explained in a few ways. For one, the approval and support of parents and friends may contribute to people being more confident in their romantic relationship and, therefore, more willing to invest in and commit to their partner. Additionally, parents and friends form opinions of a romantic relationship partially based on how well suited they believe the partner is for their child or friend (Etcheverry et al., 2013). Given this, matches that

are a poor fit or relationships in which the young adult is being mistreated by a romantic partner could be met with disapproval. This was evident in some of the themes from conflict narratives in which participants indicated parents or friends were upset with they way their partner treated them such as the following situation described by a participant: "My parents strongly disapproved my ex-boyfriend because me [*sic*] was mentally/emotionally abusive and manipulative." Similarly, past research found that those who perceived their friend as having higher relationship satisfaction, generally reported greater approval of the relationship (Etcheverry et al., 2013). This idea of approving of relationships in which the participant was happy was summed up nicely in the following participant quote "My dad only cares if I am happy in the relationship and if I am treated well."

Of note, friend opinion was associated with passion, intimacy, commitment, and overall love whereas parent opinion was only associated with intimacy and commitment. Although this does not necessarily mean one source of approval is more important than another, developmentally, young adults may be more concerned about what their friends have to say as compared to their parents. Emerging adults typically report greater social support from their friends compared to their parents (Guan & Fuligni, 2016). Research has also identified differences in the roles of parents and friends, with parents, particularly mothers, serving as sources of emotional support whereas friends serve the role of confidants for unmarried young adults (e.g., Carbery & Buhrmester, 1998). Perhaps friends more consistently serve the role of providing accurate feedback on romantic relationships compared to parents during young adulthood. Additionally, as identified within this study, participants generally reported that their friends' top

characteristics of an ideal partner for them had more in common with their ideal partner characteristics compared to their parents. In line with evolutionary theory, parents may encourage matches that are based on values and priorities that diverge from their children, such as concerns over family background (e.g., Sprecher, 2011). Although friends form some opinions on romantic relationships, their personal investment beyond continued friendship and mutual social support is limited. Thus, friends may be more inclined to have positive opinions when they feel their friend is satisfied (Etcheverry et al., 2013) whereas parents have concerns beyond relationship satisfaction.

The relation between parent and friend opinion and relationship quality conceptualized through Sternberg's (1986) triangular love theory (i.e., overall love, passion, commitment, intimacy) was hypothesized to be moderated by self-construal. Contrary to this hypothesis, relational self-construal did not moderate the relation between parent opinion and romantic relationship quality nor the relation between friend opinion and relationship quality. Although relational self-construal did not serve as a moderator, it did predict greater passion and overall love in the romantic relationship. Past research has found that people who are higher in relational self-construal tend to report their relationships as being closer and more committed (Cross et al., 2000). This may be a matter of perceived closeness or may indicate that a more relational self-construal somehow contributes to higher quality relationships. Finally, gender was included as a possible covariate. In this study, women reported more intimate, passionate, and committed relationships compared to men. This is in line with some past research which found that women provide higher ratings for intimacy (Sternberg, 1997),

commitment, passion, and total relationship quality compared to men (Chojnacki & Walsh, 1990).

The second objective of this study was to clarify how independent and interdependent self-construal relate to the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. As hypothesized, higher interdependent self-construal was positively associated with parent disapproval importance and parent and friend approval importance. This means that people who were higher in interdependent self-construal reported being more likely to avoid or end romantic relationships when they perceived parent disapproval. Similarly, participants higher in interdependent self-construal reported being more likely to consider, initiate, or continue a romantic relationship in which they perceived parent and friend approval. Interdependent self-construal, however, was not associated with friend disapproval importance. These findings are generally in line with past research regarding the related concept of collectivism in which people from collectivistic cultures report greater acceptance of parent influence on romantic partner choice compared to people from more individualistic cultures (Bejanyan et al., 2015; Buunk et al., 2010). As outlined previously, people with a more interdependent self-construal tend to be concerned with maintaining group harmony, fitting in with others, and valuing group identities (Triandis, 2001). As such, the association of interdependent self-construal with parent disapproval importance and parent and friend approval importance may indicate the greater value placed on the opinions of parents and friends or a greater desire to avoid upsetting them or disrupting group dynamics.

In contrast to what was hypothesized, independent self-construal was not associated with parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance. This result is not necessarily surprising given that interdependent self-construal and independent self-construal seem to be two distinct dimensions rather than a binary as sometimes thought (Cross et al., 2011). Given this, the level of independent values endorsed does not necessarily relate to the level of interdependent values endorsed nor the importance the person places on the opinions of others.

The third objective was to examine how gender differences relate to parent and friend approval and disapproval importance. It was hypothesized that women would place greater importance on parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance. Additionally, it was hypothesized that gender would moderate the relation between independent and interdependent self-construal and parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, and parent and friend approval importance with a stronger relation for women compared to men. However, in the current study, young adult women and men indicated similar levels of parent disapproval importance and parent and friend approval importance. Furthermore, gender did not moderate the relation between self-construal and parent and friend disapproval importance. As hypothesized, gender was found to be associated with friend disapproval importance with women reporting greater friend disapproval importance compared to men. A meta-analysis found that women have greater communion expectations for friendships compared to men, which include aspects of friendships such as intimacy and self-disclosure (Hall, 2011). Women are also more likely to disclose relevant sex-related

behaviours to close friends compared to men (Lefkowitz et al., 2004). As such, women may place greater value on their friends' disapproval of a romantic partner compared to men. This could be a function of greater disclosure and discussion of these types of behaviours. In past research, daughters tended to have greater restrictions, monitoring, and negative messaging regarding dating and related behaviours compared to sons (Allison, 2016; Morgan et al., 2010; Suárez-Orozco & Qin, 2006). Although it was hypothesized that daughters would also place greater importance on parent disapproval compared to sons, this was not supported. It may be that daughters utilize different strategies to navigate parent disapproval such as secrecy or lies (e.g., Kellie et al., 2020). Further research could investigate gender differences relating to parent and friend approval and disapproval including how men and women navigate disapproval.

The fourth objective was to examine how mainstream and heritage acculturation relate to the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval. In the current study, mainstream and heritage acculturation were not associated with parent disapproval importance, friend disapproval importance, or parent and friend approval importance. These results indicate that, at least in a primarily college sample of young adults in Canada, acculturation is not associated with importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. Of note, acculturation is a complex construct as the process will vary substantially based on characteristics of the heritage and mainstream culture (Ward & Geeraert, 2016). This study did not account for the characteristics of the culture of origin. As such, many participants may have been considering cultures with similar values and norms when responding to acculturation questions. This potential explanation seems plausible given that the most study participants self-identified as

White with various regions of Europe listed as their heritage culture. Given that the mainstream Canadian culture is rooted in European and Western values, there is likely a high degree of similarity between the cultures (e.g., similar entertainment, jokes, and cultural norms). Despite the lack of findings relating parent and friend approval and disapproval importance to acculturation, acculturation may be a worthwhile concept to explore further in other contexts (e.g., first- and second-generation immigrants in Canada from culturally-distant heritage cultures; Ward & Geeraert, 2016).

The fifth objective was to examine how social support from parents and friends relates to the importance placed on parent and friend approval/disapproval of romantic relationships. As hypothesized, social support from parents was associated with greater importance placed on parent disapproval. Similarly, social support from friends was associated with placing greater importance on friend disapproval. This is in line with past research showing that participants depending on parents for material support, tended to place more value on their parents' opinions of prospective romantic partners (Wright & Sinclair, 2012) than individuals who depend less on their parents for material support. Young adults who have more socially supportive relationships with their parents and friends place greater importance on their disapproval of romantic relationships. This finding could be explained in a couple of different ways. One, young people who have more social support from parents and friends may place greater importance on disapproval to avoid risking the withdrawal or disruption of ongoing social support. Alternatively, individuals with greater social support may view their relationships as being closer, more trusting, or more important than do individuals who have relationships with less social support. As such, someone may place greater trust in the opinions and

advice of the supportive other in these higher quality relationships. Although social support was associated with parent and friend disapproval importance in the current study, this association could potentially be fully or partially mediated by other aspects of the relationship (e.g., relationship closeness, frequency of contact). Further consideration may also be given to how parents and friends that have socially supportive and close relationships with young adults may not share their opinions of a romantic relationship as they trust the person to make their own decisions, including mistakes. Parents and friends may have concerns but leave it to the person alone to come to their own conclusions and learn the lessons that come with making mistakes. This idea was expressed by one participant who indicated their parents would share opinions when asked but they "do not say too much as they believe that it is my decision & I have to learn myself."

The sixth and final objective was to explore whether young adults from different cultural backgrounds experience conflict in their friend and parental relationships related to the quality of their romantic relationships and to describe the characteristics of these conflicts. Many participants did not provide narratives (i.e., approximately a third of participants for parent narratives and half of the participants for friend narratives did not provide a codable narrative), some participants explicitly indicated that they had not had any such conflicts (28% for parent narratives and 29% for friend narratives). In fact, when asked to rate the frequency of conflict related to romantic relationships with their friends and parents, the majority of participants indicated the lowest frequency of conflict. This may be related to the nonclinical nature of the current sample or reflective of low severity of conflicts related to romantic relationships.

Even though a number of participants did not share any narratives, themes were identified in the existing narratives. Conflicts with parents and friends had several similar roots, including conflicts related to the partners' personal traits or characteristics, concerns about how the partner treats the participant, pressure on the relationship to move forward or back, concerns about failing to fulfil other expectations, and concerns about the participant's safety or behaviour. Exclusive to narratives regarding conflicts with friends, some participants described jealousy as leading to a conflict with their friends. Notably, some conflicts within the same categories had differences between parent and friend narratives. For example, even though parent and friend conflicts both included themes of failure to meet other expectations, parent narratives had the nuance of letting parents down or living up to expectations (e.g., parents had concerns that romantic relationships might distract from educational or career goals). Additionally, some participants described parental concern that their behaviour would be dishonouring or shameful to the family. Although participants did not explicitly mention honour-based violence, responses highlight the importance of avoiding shaming their parents. Honour based violence includes acts of abuse and control against women for perceived violations of social or sexual norms (Blum et al., 2016). Honour, including honour-based violence, may be worth exploring further in conjunction with parent and friend approval and disapproval of romantic relationships within cultural groups in which family-based honour and shame are important concepts. This may be considered along with acculturation amongst young adult immigrants in which mainstream cultural values, such as dating and engaging in sexualized behaviours, might contrast with and perhaps threaten maintenance of heritage values.

Of note, most participants indicated that the conflict was now resolved, and they now see the validity of the other person's opinion. As such, although conflict can sometimes be perceived as a negative event and can be unpleasant at the time, many participants have since come to understand the perspective of the other person. Some participants described conflicts related to their parents and friends expressing legitimate concern regarding partners that were mistreating them. In these cases, although the participant typically reported being unhappy or defensive at the time, they have since come to appreciate or at least understand, the other person's concern. As written by one participant "looking back, I see that my parent's perspective was valid and I was just blind to the fact of truth due to my young and naive way of thinking." This quote underscores the value some participants derived even from conflicts.

Conflict severity was considered in relation to the amount of agreement between participants and their parents and family about the most important characteristics for a potential romantic partner. Only frequency of conflict with parents was associated with ideal trait correspondence. That is to say, participants who reported having less frequent conflict with their parents related to their romantic relationships had greater concordance on which characteristics would make a good romantic partner for them. This finding provides some limited support for the idea that conflict with parents is partially fueled by differences in opinion regarding what characteristics make a good partner.

Although this concludes the summary of the results directly related to the established objectives, a few additional results are worth highlighting further. For instance, a significant purpose of the current study was the further development of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson,

2022a). As discussed further in the limitations section, the analyses provided mixed support for the psychometric properties of the PFI. Unexpectedly, items regarding parent and friend approval importance were on the same factor whereas importance of parent disapproval and friend disapproval were on different factors. In past research, approval and disapproval have often been measured as opposing ends of a spectrum of parent and friend opinions (e.g., Sinclair et al., 2015). The current study, however, suggests that approval and disapproval may be distinct from one another and considered differently by those on the receiving end of such opinions. In line with this, a virtual dating study in which parents and friends were said to express approval or disapproval of a potential romantic partner found that approval had a greater impact on decision making compared to disapproval (Wright & Sinclair, 2012). Although this possibility is certainly worth investigating further, the real reason for the distinction between approval and disapproval importance may be the manner used to assess the importance of approval and disapproval in this specific study as assessed further in the limitations section (i.e., the difference between ending a relationship due to parent or friend disapproval versus starting or continuing a relationship due to approval). Further research may be useful in distinguishing whether approval and disapproval are perceived as different constructs or opposite ends of a spectrum through replication and use of alternative methods.

Additionally, in line with past research (Holmberg & Blair, 2016), results from this study indicated that, although marginalized relationships were similar to nonmarginalized relationships in terms of friend opinion, participants reported lower parent opinion for marginalized relationships compared to nonmarginalized relationships. Of note, the parent opinions of marginalized relationships varied more substantially than

parent opinions of nonmarginalized relationships and friend opinions of marginalized and nonmarginalized opinions. This seems to suggest that some parents may approve of marginalized relationships whereas others strongly disapprove. Of note, marginalized relationships included interethnic/interracial relationships, interreligious relationships, relationships with a significant social standing disparity, same-sex relationships, and relationships with substantial age gaps. These different types of marginalized relationships are likely to be met with different levels of disapproval.

Scholarly, Clinical, and Practical Implications

This study replicates past studies that have found a positive association between positive parent and friend opinions regarding a romantic relationship and better relationship quality (e.g., Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014). Additionally, this study fills a gap in existing research regarding the importance of parental and friend approval/disapproval and culturally relevant variables. The current study adds to the literature by considering relational, interdependent, and independent self-construal as relevant variables in relation to parent and friend opinions and approval/disapproval of romantic relationships. This study addresses this gap by demonstrating that interdependent self-construal is associated with the parent disapproval importance and parent and friend approval importance. Additionally, the exploration of conflicts with parents and friends related specifically to romantic relationships is an area of limited past research. The themes identified within the conflicts provide a good starting point for additional research regarding conflicts related to romantic relationships. Overall, this study expanded on existing scholarly research regarding relations between friends, parents, and romantic partners in young adults.

This research has potential clinical and practical implications. Relationships play an important role in health, happiness, and well being. For example, a study conducted by Diener and Seligman (2002) found that good social relationships were a necessary, although not sufficient, criteria for very high happiness. A study conducted by Demir (2010) found that happiness among emerging adults was related to romantic relationship quality. These examples demonstrate that quality relationships are important in the lives of young adults. As such, romantic and other relationships are important topics in therapy. In fact, therapeutic modalities have been developed which focus specifically on relationships (e.g., Barker & Chang, 2013; Wile, 1993). During couples therapy, it may be important to keep in mind the influence that parent and friend approval and disapproval may have on the romantic relationship. Additionally, in an article outlining "hotspots" important for resilience, Masten (2007) included relationships with parents, friends, and romantic partners. This study expands upon our understanding of the complex connections amongst relationships with parents, friends, and romantic partners within young adults.

Understanding the context of relationships is also an important implication of this study. A better understanding of cultural values and self-construal in past research has been useful in that understanding these constructs have helped to inform clinical work (Kuo, 2004). The results of the current study emphasize the importance of understanding interdependent self-construal in a variety of contexts. For example, therapists from Western backgrounds may work towards encouraging greater independence and they may misunderstand interdependence within their clients (Kuo, 2004). Therapists may encourage their clients to practice independence and assertiveness by focusing on what

they want in a romantic relationship rather than consulting with parents or following advice from parents or friends. This study indicates that this type of recommendation may perhaps go against the person's standards for maintaining interpersonal harmony with others. This study serves to reinforce the importance of thoughtfully and respectfully considering cultural and personal values across contexts.

Limitations

One important limitation in the current study is the need for further study of the psychometric properties of the newly developed Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Although exploratory factor analysis provided initial support for a three-factor model of the PFI and Cronbach's alpha indicated good internal consistency, the confirmatory factor analysis indicated some issues with model fit. As such, there is mixed support for the use of the PFI. Some of the test items may have been unclear to participants. Alternatively, participants may have simply felt the scenarios were not relevant to them. Given the modification indices indicating substantial improvement upon treating the covariance between error terms on the same factors as a free parameter, this could indicate that participants were responding based on elements other than the hypothesized underlying construct.

Additionally, this measure quite directly asks participants to consider how parent and friend approval might influence them to make relationship decisions that are not clearly in line with their own desires. Although people might consider a partner suggested by their parents or friends and may even consider being setup on a date with them, they are unlikely to go further than this within the cultural norms of Canada. This could partially explain why disapproval and approval loaded on separate factors rather than the

same factor as opposite ends of a spectrum. Additionally, the grouping of both parent and friend approval importance on a single factor could have occurred as those who endorse willingness to supersede their own desires in selecting romantic relationship partners may represent a rare and unique subset of young adults in Canada rather than the importance of approval to young adults more generally. The problems with the measure being due to the direct link to somewhat drastic behaviours seems to be backed up by participants responses when asked to describe the impact parent and friend approval and disapproval has on them. Most participants who reported an impact indicated that the opinions of their parents and friends, whether approving or disapproving, served to strengthen their own opinions (e.g., feel more confident in their relationship) or consider aspects of their relationship closely (e.g., notice negative character traits or a lack of compatibility in their relationship). Additionally, the influence of parent and friend opinions may not even be something for which people are explicitly aware. Rather, it may occur as the partner integrates themselves into existing social circles and the relationship is subtly encouraged and reinforced by the social network. Furthermore, although the participants are responding to hypothetical situations people who do not have previous romantic relationship experience may have had limited ability to draw upon for their responses. Measure modification and further validation research is recommended for the PFI.

A second limitation of this study relates to the sample characteristics of the participants in the study. First, a convenience sample was recruited with specific efforts to recruit male participants and participants from diverse ethnic backgrounds. This sample still included substantially more women than men and primarily participants who identify as White. Additionally, this sample was largely composed of emerging adults

currently enrolled in university. Given this, applicability of the results to other, more general young adults in Canada is unclear. Furthermore, the number of participants may have been smaller than ideal for the confirmatory factor analysis, limiting interpretation of these results (Kyriazos, 2018). Lastly, although this study includes participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, all participants were living in Canada when they completed the study. A better understanding of the cultural context of parent and friend approval/disapproval and conflicts related to romantic relationships could likely be better accomplished by comparing cultural groups either by recruiting from specific cultural groups within Canada or comparing across different countries.

Finally, this study did not separately account for the perceived opinions and influence of mothers (or mother figures) and fathers (or father figures). Generally, parents were approached in the study as one collective unit; however, differences can certainly exist in both how each parent views their child's romantic relationship and the importance children place on these opinions. Although not directly asked about these differences, a few participants mentioned differences between how parents express their opinions of their romantic relationships and what they disclose to parents. Differences between mothers and fathers in this area are reasonable given differences in the relationships young adults have with their mothers and fathers. For example, adult children's relationships with mothers are perceived as being closer compared to relationships with fathers based on reports from both children and parents (Swartz, 2009). More specifically in relation to parent approval and disapproval, a study in which daughter's reported their parent's perceived preferences for a mate found that participants indicated their mothers would find more partner traits unacceptable compared to their

fathers (Dubbs & Buunk, 2010b). This was reversed for the traits of "physically unfit" and "lacking a sense of humour" which participants indicated would be more unacceptable to fathers over mothers. As such, the grouping of parents may have obscured important differences. As with parents, friends were referred to as a single collective unit. Most participants indicated that they considered multiple friends when completing the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a). Given this, friends likely also vary in their opinions of romantic relationships and in the importance placed on these opinions. Given this limitation, future research may include methods to distinguish between specific social network sources of approval and disapproval.

Next Steps for Future Research

In direct relation to the current study, modification and additional validation to the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a) is recommended for its further use. As outlined in the limitations section, there is a need for further research to better understand the properties of this newly developed measure. In terms of modification, consideration could be given to assessing the importance of parent and friend approval and disapproval in a more subtle manner. As discussed, young adults are unlikely to choose to initiate, continue, or end a relationship based entirely on the opinions of parents or friends. The revised measure could use a response scale that prompts participants to indicate the perceived impact parent and friend approval or disapproval would have at various stages of a romantic relationship (e.g., Likert-type scale with the following response options: *I would feel much better about my relationship*, *I would feel somewhat better about my relationship*, *I would feel the same*

way about my relationship, *I would feel somewhat worse about my relationship*, *I would feel much worse about my relationship*). A measure like this would better account for the way approval and disapproval actually seem to impact relationships. This type of measure could also help clarify whether approval and disapproval are viewed as opposing ends of a spectrum or distinct factors influencing relationships. Furthermore, consideration may be given to developing separate importance measures for parents or friends or creating a measure that is not directly tied to a relational role (i.e., allowing the participant to respond regarding people they feel closest to rather than specifying parents and friends).

Similarly, researchers can continue to utilize other methods to investigate the importance of parents' and friends' opinions in relation to romantic relationships with consideration given to additional variables of importance. For example, as also utilized in this study, measures of parent and friend opinion, as measured by participant report or reports from their actual parents and friends, can be used in conjunction with measures of relationship quality or other relevant variables (e.g., Parks et al., 1983; Sinclair & Ellithorpe, 2014). Similarly, experimental methods in which participants indicate their interest in potential romantic partners with input from their parents and friends could be used further (e.g., Sinclair et al., 2015). Experimental methods would be particularly useful in clarifying why people form particular opinions of others' romantic relationships and why these opinions are associated with relationship quality. In addition, reported attitudes and intentions are not always consistent with actual behaviours. For example, an experimental study found that although both daughters and their parents self-reported that intelligence and ambition were more important than attractiveness, they were more likely

to choose the attractive man as the best match for themselves or for their daughter over the man described as intelligent and ambitious (Fugère et al., 2023). As such, consideration should be given to the use of both established measures and experimental methods in better understanding the importance of parent and friend opinions to romantic relationships.

Regardless of the methods used, researchers must consider the cultural and personal meanings, beliefs, and norms surrounding romantic relationships. In the current study, the majority of participants indicated that they eventually intend to get married. However, the intention to marry is not universal. Some people may wish to explore romantic relationships without eventually marrying. In one survey, nearly half of unmarried adult Canadians indicated they definitely do not intend to ever marry (45.6%; Statistics Canada, 2020). As with the idea of marriage itself, the method to find a marital partner or enter into a romantic relationship is not uniformly agreed upon. In the current study, most participants indicating that dating is the preferred method to find a marital partner from their perspective, their parents' perspective, and their friends' perspective. However, this is not universal with participants also indicating a preference for courting and arranged marriages. Furthermore, clarification could be given to what different terms mean as people's understanding of the meaning of terms like "going on dates," "dating," or "courting" as these may vary as a function of their culture, experiences, knowledge, and personal understanding (e.g., Eaton et al., 2016; Whitfield, 2020).

An additional consideration for research regarding the importance of parent and friend approval/disapproval is the timing of when the approval or disapproval is given. For example, someone may be more willing to avoid initiating or to end a brief, casual

relationship when faced with parent or friend approval in comparison to a long-term, serious romantic relationship. Further consideration may be given to the stage of the romantic relationship. For instance, people may simply leave low investment relationships (Goodfriend & Agnew, 2008) but use other strategies to change the minds of their social network for romantic relationships that they have invested in more extensively (Apostolou, 2015). As such, the stage of the relationship and the timing of approval or disapproval should be further considered.

Another consideration for future research is the characteristics of the parents' romantic relationship (or relationships for parents that are not together) could be further explored in conjunction with the importance placed on parent approval and disapproval. Characteristics of parents' relationships have been associated with characteristics of their adult children's romantic relationships. For example, both parental conflict and parental divorce have been associated with poorer romantic relationship quality in young adult children (Cui & Fincham, 2010). A qualitative study found that participants describe using their parents' relationship or relationships as examples for their own romantic relationships: either imitating positive aspects of the relationship or avoiding their mistakes (Jamison & Lo, 2021). Future research may evaluate aspects of the parents' romantic relationship in relation to the importance young adults place on their parents' approval or disapproval of their own romantic relationships.

Additionally, researchers may consider additional factors that may be of importance. For example, the current study did not have participants indicate their religion or level or religiosity. This could be a potentially important factor in parent influence as some religions emphasize respect and obedience to parents. For example, a

study found that greater religiosity was associated with greater parental control of adolescents among Catholic and Protestant participants (Kim & Wilcox, 2014). The intersection of culture, religion, and evolving norms could help situate parental and other influences on romantic relationships. Similarly, future researchers may consider taking a more in depth look at parent and friend approval and disapproval of a specific cultural group (e.g., exploring these factors in immigrants from South Asia) or by making cross-cultural comparisons (e.g., comparing these influences in a more individualistic country and a more collectivistic country). Rather than a focus on breadth, an in-depth focus for a group in which these issues are particularly salient may be more informative.

The social convoy model (Antonucci & Akiyama, 1987; Antonucci, 1986) could be a potential useful avenue to explore the influence of the social network on romantic relationships. This would allow participants to describe social network members with regard to perceived closeness rather than exclusively based on relationship type. In the current study, participants reported a variety of different people whose approval or disapproval had some importance to their romantic relationships. Participants listed other family members (i.e., siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins) and mentor-like figures (e.g., teachers, religious leaders, and family friends). A more comprehensive approach to understanding those that influence romantic relationships using the social convoy model would increase understanding of the importance of approval and disapproval of romantic relationships. The social convoy model could be an excellent approach to situate various people who influence romantic relationships. Additionally, the social convoy model can be used as a measure of relationship closeness. The social convoy model can also be a useful starting point to assess other characteristics of

members of their social circle such as demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, ethnicity, relationship status), physical proximity, frequency of contact, contact of the member with the romantic partner (e.g., Jenson et al., 2021), perceived opinions for each member, and the importance of approval and disapproval for each member.

Another concept that may be considered in future research regarding the importance of approval and disapproval is that of power. Power has been defined as "asymmetric control over valued resources" (Magee & Smith, 2013, p. 159). In relationships, this can lead to discrepancies with one person having greater power than the other leading to greater social distance. Power can be useful in understanding susceptibility to social influence as those who have low power are more likely to be influenced compared to those with high power. Lower power is associated with less access to resources, fewer alternatives, and lower agency in decision making. Power may be of importance in understanding romantic relationship dynamics in relation to approval and disapproval. People who have low power may find it difficult to go against the approval or disapproval of parents or friends if they lack access to resources to make decisions more freely. Similarly, those with low power may struggle to leave a romantic relationship in the face of disapproval even if there are good reasons for disapproval from their social network (e.g., relationships with intimate partner violence).

The impact of parent and friend approval and disapproval could also be important to understand within the context of intimate partner violence. People often disclose intimate partner violence within their romantic relationship to one or more members of their informal, nonprofessional social support system (Sylaska & Edwards, 2014). Most often, people disclose to a friend or a female family member. Past research indicates that

some informal social network members have helpful reactions (e.g., providing emotional support, tangible support, or useful advice) whereas others have unhelpful reactions (e.g., disbelieving or blaming the victim; Sylaska & Edwards, 2014). In relation to the current research, intimate partner violence was not addressed directly; however, some of the parent and friend conflict narratives centred around their concerns about how the partner treats the participant or is emotionally or physically abusive. In these situations, generally the parent or friend expressed concern about the relationship. However, one narrative suggested their friend wanted them to stay in a poor quality, although not abusive, relationship for their own reasons (i.e., dating best friends). In line with this, a theme identified in social media as was staying in abusive relationships due to family expectations (Cravens, 2015). Understanding how approval and disapproval of a romantic relationship relate to intimate partner violence could be helpful in understanding decisions to disclose abuse, seek help, or leave an abusive relationship.

Finally, the concept of keeping relationships secret may be investigated further in the context of romantic relationship disapproval. The current study did not explicitly ask participants about hiding relationships, but some participants reported using this practice to avoid having to address parental disapproval. Dating without parental knowledge has been identified as a fairly common practice in certain groups (e.g., Asian-American adolescents; Lau et al., 2009). The term “the cultural closet” was used to describe the practice of South Asian Americans keeping secret dating relationships outside or their race, ethnicity, or religion (Khera & Ahluwalia, 2021). This term was coined to parallel the experience of 2SLGBTQAI+ people hiding their identity and relationships. Although keeping relationships secret is one potential strategy to avoid disapproval from family

and friends, the strategy comes with costs and has been associated with lower relationship commitment, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of physical and mental health symptoms (Lehmiller, 2009). The practice of hiding relationships in relation to approval and disapproval could be explored further in future research.

Conclusion

In summary, this study provided further support in line with past research that more positive friend and parent opinions of a romantic relationship is associated with higher quality relationships, conceptualized in this study as more loving relationship through Sternberg's triangular theory (Sternberg, 1986). Additionally, this study found that people who have more socially supportive relationships with their parents and friends placed greater importance on their disapproval of their romantic relationships. Similarly, participants who had higher interdependent self-construal placed greater importance on parent disapproval of their romantic relationship. Finally, themes of conflict narratives with parents and friends related to romantic relationships included *Partner Characteristics*, *Treatment Concerns*, *Pressure on the Relationship*, *Failure to Fulfil Other Expectations*, *Safety/Behaviour Concerns*, *Disapproval for Unclear or Unstated Reasons*, and, for friends only, *Jealousy*.

These results have scholarly implications for understanding how parent and friend opinions impact romantic relationships. More practically, the complexities of relationship dynamics are often an important element of therapy and a better understanding of how these relationships influence one another can be useful in clinical settings. Similarly, understanding interdependent self-construal is worthwhile in supporting those with different culturally grounded values in how people navigate different types of

relationships. Possible next steps for research include modification and validation of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a), further investigation of other relevant contextual factors (e.g., consideration of religion, study of specific cultural groups), and exploration of the role social network opinions play in intimate partner violence.

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Appendix A- Participant Pool Advertisement

Title: Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships
Researchers: Jenna Thompson and Dr. Hakim-Larson
Duration: 90 minutes
Credits: 1.5
Eligibility criteria: To complete this study you must be 18-39 years old.
Study Link: https://uwindsor.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9AAuAvUrUSMKXwa
Description: This study will take no more than 90 minutes of your time, and is worth one and a half bonus points if you are registered in the pool and you are registered in one or more eligible psychology courses. The study will be completed online. You will be asked to answer questions regarding your background information, your relationships with your parents, friends, and romantic partners, and your culture. If you sign up to participate, you can follow the link to the study.

Appendix B - Social Media Recruitment Poster

Appendix C – Email to Clubs

Hello [club or organization name/name of the representative if their name is known],

My name is Jenna Thompson. I am student at the University of Windsor completing my PhD in clinical psychology under the supervision of Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson. I am currently recruiting young adults (ages 18 to 39 years old) to participate in my study titled "Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships". I am particularly interested in representing people from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Participants can enter in a draw to win one of two $50 amazon.ca gift credits.

Anyone who is interested in participating can email me at thomp124@uwindsor.ca. This study will take no more than 90 minutes of your time. The study will be completed online. Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding their background information, their relationships with parents, friends, and romantic partners, and their culture.

Please distribute the attached flyer to members of your group who may be interested in participating.

Best wishes,
Jenna

Appendix D - Permissions Page

Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (McClintock et al. 2017)	Available though psychtests.org to be used for teaching and research purposes without the written permission of the measure's authors or the journals of publication.
The Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale (Cross et al., 2000)	Available though psychtests.org to be used for teaching and research purposes without the written permission of the measure's authors or the journals of publication.
Social Networks Opinion Scale (SNOS; Sinclair et al., 2015)	Available though Open Science Framework (osf.io) to be used for teaching and research purposes without the written permission of the measure's authors or the journals of publication.
Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (TLS; Sternberg, 1988)	Dr. Sternberg's permission was provided via email for research use of the TLS on this dissertation.
Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS; Singelis, 1994)	Available though psychtests.org to be used for teaching and research purposes without the written permission of the measure's authors or the journals of publication.
Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI)	Designed by the author for this study.
Perceived Social Support, modified (PSS; Procidano & Heller, 1983)	Dr. Procidano's permission was provided via email for research use of the PSS with modifications on this dissertation.
Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000**).**	Available though psychtests.org to be used for teaching and research purposes without the written permission of the measure's authors or the journals of publication

Appendix E - Demographic Survey

1. What is your gender? ____

2. What is your date of birth and age?
    a. Month and Year of Birth: _____
    b. Age: _____

3. What of these do you identify with most:
    a. White
    b. South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
    c. Chinese
    d. Black
    e. Filipino
    f. Latin American
    g. Arab
    h. Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, etc.)
    i. West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.)
    j. Korean
    k. Japanese
    l. Native/Aboriginal
    m. Other, please specify… _____

4. What is your country of birth? _____

5. What is your immigration status?
    a. 1st generation (immigrated to Canada as an adult)
    b. 1.5th generation (immigrated to Canada as a child)
    c. 2nd generation (one or both of your parents immigrated to Canada)
    d. 3rd generation or later
    e. International student

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed? _____
    a. No schooling or did not complete elementary school
    b. Elementary school or middle school
    c. Some high school
    d. High school diploma
    e. Some college or university education
    f. College diploma
    g. University degree
    h. Graduate or professional degree

    _____

7. What is your employment status?
    a. Part-time
    b. Full-time

c. Unemployed

8. If employed, what is your occupation?
    a. Clerical
    b. Professional
    c. Owner/manager
    d. Labourer
    e. Self-employed
    f. Customer Service
    g. Food service
    h. Other:

9. What is your family's annual income?
    a. $0-10,000
    b. $10,000-25,000
    c. $25,000-50,000
    d. $50,000-75,000
    e. $75,000-100,000
    f. $100,000 and above
    g. I do not know, or I do not wish to answer

10. Please identify Parent/Primary Guardian 1:
    a. father
    b. mother
    c. other [please indicate])

11. Please identify Parent/Primary Guardian 2:
    a. father
    b. mother
    c. other [please indicate])

12. Was Parent/Primary Guardian 1 employed for the majority of time when you were growing up?
    a. Part-time
    b. Full-time
    c. Unemployed
    d. Seasonal employment

13. If employed, what was Parent/Primary Guardian 1's primary occupation?
    a. Clerical
    b. Professional
    c. Owner/manager
    d. Labourer
    e. Self-employed
    f. Customer Service
    g. Food service

h. Other:

14. Parent/Primary Guardian 1's highest level of education:
    a. No schooling or did not complete elementary school
    b. Elementary school or middle school
    c. Some high school
    d. High school diploma
    e. Some college or university education
    f. College diploma
    g. University degree
    h. Graduate or professional degree

15. Where was Parent/Primary Guardian 1 born?
    (*drop down list of all countries*)

16. What ethnicity does Parent/Primary Guardian 1 identify with most?
    (*fill in the blank*)

17. How frequently are you in contact with Parent/Primary Guardian 1?
    a. Daily
    b. Weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly
    e. No contact or parent/guardian has died

18. Was Parent/Primary Guardian 2 employed for the majority of time when you were growing up?
    a. Part-time
    b. Full-time
    c. Unemployed
    d. Seasonal employment

19. Parent/Primary Guardian 2's highest level of education:
    a. No schooling or did not complete elementary school
    b. Elementary school or middle school
    c. Some high school
    d. High school diploma
    e. Some college or university education
    f. College diploma
    g. University degree
    h. Graduate or professional degree

20. If employed, what was Parent/Primary Guardian 2's primary occupation?
    a. Clerical
    b. Professional
    c. Owner/manager

d. Labourer
e. Self-employed
f. Customer Service
g. Food service
h. Other:

21. Parent/Primary Guardian 2's highest level of education:
    a. No schooling or did not complete elementary school
    b. Elementary school or middle school
    c. Some high school
    d. High school diploma
    e. Some college or university education
    f. College diploma

22. Where was Parent/Primary Guardian 2 born?
    (*drop down list of all countries*)

23. What ethnicity does Parent/Primary Guardian 2 identify with most?
    (*fill in the blank*)

24. How frequently are you in contact with Parent/Primary Guardian 2?
    a. Daily
    b. Weekly
    c. Monthly
    d. Yearly
    e. No contact or parent/guardian has died

25. Are you currently involved in a romantic relationship of some form?

    a. Yes

    b. No

26. Which of these best describes your current romantic relationship (*Will appear only if yes is indicated on the previous question*)

    a. Casually dating

    b. Exclusively dating

    c. Engaged

    d. Cohabiting

e. Married

27. Have you ever been involved in a romantic relationship?

a. Yes

b. No

28. Do any of the following describe your current romantic relationship (select all that apply)?

a. Age gap of more than ten years between partners

b. Racial or ethnic differences

c. Large social standing disparity

d. Same sex relationship

e. Different religions

Appendix F - Dating Appropriateness Questions (Thompson, 2020)

1. In general, do you approve of dating as a method to find a marital partner?
   Strongly Approve 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disapprove

2. In general, do your parents approve of dating as a method to find a marital partner?
   Strongly Approve 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disapprove

3. In general, do your close friends approve of dating as a method to find a marital partner?
   Strongly Approve 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disapprove

For the following questions, you are welcome to utilize your own understanding of "dating", "courting", and "arranged marriage". In terms of explanation for those unfamiliar with these terms, dating usually involves getting to know a person with the possibility of an ongoing or marital relationship. In contrast, the process of courting involves getting to know a person with the explicit intention of developing a marital relationship. Finally, an arranged marriage involves an outside party, often parents, selecting a marital partner with varying degree of input from the person.

4. What is your preferred method for you to find a marital partner?
   Dating Courting Arranged Marriage Other (please describe)

5. What are your parents' preferred method for you to find a marital partner?
   Dating Courting Arranged Marriage Other (please describe)

6. What are your friends' preferred method for you to find a marital partner?
   Dating Courting Arranged Marriage Other (please describe)

7. Do you eventually intend to marry (whether a current partner or another person)?
   Yes No Undecided

Appendix G - Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (Thompson, 2022a)

Please indicate how likely you are to engage in the behaviours described below:

1. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like but whom your parents would disapprove:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

2. Go on a single date with someone who you really like but whom your parents would disapprove:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

3. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

4. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

5. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your parents disapprove:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

6. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about but whom your parents would strongly approve:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

7. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but your parents would strongly approve:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

8. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

9. Continue dating/seeing someone who do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:
   Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

10. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

11. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

12. Go on a single date with someone who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

13. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

14. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like, but whom your friends have expressed disapproval:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

15. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

16. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends would strongly approve:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

17. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

18. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

19. Continue dating/seeing someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

20. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends have expressed strong approval:
    Very Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very Likely

Appendix H –Exploratory factor analysis of the *Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions* measure

The purpose of this study was to use factor analysis to examine the psychometric properties of a newly created measure to assess the importance of the influence of parent and friend approval and disapproval on the quality of romantic relationships. Towards this goal, young adult participants completed the new measure online as well as a series of additional online questionnaires (i.e., demographic information, perceived dating appropriateness, influence of parent and friend approval/disapproval, self-construal, interpersonal dependency, attitudes towards parent influence on mate choice, ideal characteristics of a romantic partner).

Method

Recruitment

Participants for this preliminary were recruited through the university psychology participant pool. Students registered in the participant pool had the opportunity to sign up for the study through the participant pool website. They were reimbursed for their time completing the study with half of a participant pool bonus points. Students were considered eligible to participate if they were unmarried, between the ages of 18-39 years, and were currently living in Canada.

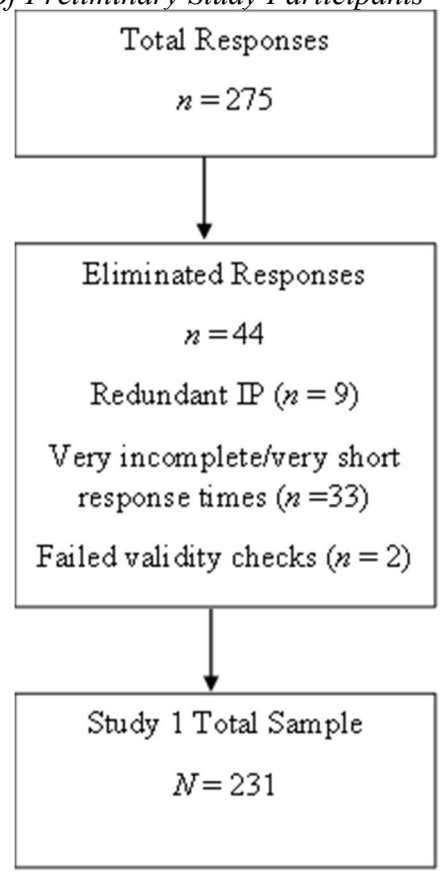
Participants

Two-hundred and fifty male and female participants (18-39 years) were recruited from a university's psychology department participant pool in which they receive course credit for their participation. An estimate of five to twenty participants are needed per parameter (i.e., questionnaire item) in factor analysis (Suhr, 2006). In this case, 12 participants were initially recruited per parameter plus ten additional participants to account for some of those whose data may be deemed invalid due to being highly incomplete or invalid.

As outlined in Figure H1, following data screening, data from 231 participants remained. Of these participants, 211 indicated their gender was female and 20 indicated their gender was male. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 39 years old. However, most participants (92%) were within the 18 to 24 age range. In terms of ethnicity, most participants identified as White (67.5%), followed by Arab (9.1%), South Asian (6.9%), Black (3.0%), Chinese (2.6%), Latin American (2.2%), Southeast Asian (1.7%), Filipino (1.3%), West Asian (1.3%), and other (4.4%). In terms of gender, the majority of participants identified as female or women (91.3%) with a minority of participants identifying as male or men (8.7%).

Figure H1

Flow of Preliminary Study Participants



Measures

Descriptions of measures used in this exploratory factor analysis study are included in the "Method" section of this document under "Measures" (see page 75).

Procedure

After receiving ethics clearance, participants were recruited from the participant pool as outlined in the "Recruitment" section. Participants were directed to Qualtrics, an online survey program that was used to gather data for the current study. Participants were presented with a consent form that included a brief description of the purpose of the study, the participant's role, risks, benefits, and contact information to address questions or concerns. People who agreed to participate, were presented with the demographic questionnaire and the Dating Appropriateness Questions (Thompson, 2020) first. Next, the Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS; Singelis, 1994), the Relational-Interdependent Self-Construal (RISC) Scale (Cross et al., 2000), Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (McClintock, at al., 2017), and the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022) were presented in randomized order. Following completion of these measures, participants were presented with the final letter of information and given credit for their participation as per participant pool policy.

Results

Data Cleaning

Data were cleaned for duplicate completions of the survey, very incomplete response sets, very short response times, and failing three or four validity checks. As shown on the data flow chart, thirty-three of the responses were eliminated due to extremely incomplete data with all or nearly all responses beyond initial demographics missing. Some of these responses reflect people who left the survey and returned at a later time without their progress being saved (eleven responses shared an IP address with another response set) and people only completing the initial portion, perhaps to receive the associated bonus marks. There were also concerns that some participants completed the survey more than once. IP addresses were examined in conjunction with participant identities. Thirteen duplicate IP addresses were identified. Of these pairs, one response was eliminated for each of ten of the pairs. Three pairs were retained due to being associated with different names (i.e., different people completing the study from the same internet source).

Past research has indicated that around 10% of college students participating in survey research for class credit respond carelessly (Kurtz & Parrish; 2001; Meade & Craig, 2012). Given this finding, a portion of the participants in this study were expected to respond invalidly. Therefore, some of the validity procedures recommended by Meade and Craig (2012) were implemented. These procedures included adding two items that should not be endorsed (e.g., I traveled to every single country in the world before I was ten years old) and two items that instruct the participant how to answer (e.g., select "strongly agree" for this item). Data from participants who failed three or four of the validity checks were not used in further statistical analyses. Two participant's data were eliminated for this reason. Altogether, this left data from 231 participants for further analyses.

Following this, patterns of missing data were examined. Little's MCAR's test was statistically significant (Sig. = .049) indicating that data were not missing completely at random (Little, 1988). Missing data per questionnaire item ranged from 0-4.8 percent missing. According to Schafer and Graham (2002) missing data below 5% is generally not problematic. Visual examination of data did not reveal any significant problems. However, the highest amounts of missing data were on the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2020). Expectation maximization was used to estimate missing data by questionnaire as suggested by Fox-Wasylyshyn and El-Masri (2005).

Statistical Assumptions

The statistical assumptions for exploratory factor analysis include adequate sample size, multivariate normality, factorability, absence of outliers, and absence of problems related to multicollinearity (Howard, 2016). In preparation for the exploratory factor analysis of the Parent and Friend Influence on Romantic Relationship Decisions (PFI; Thompson, 2022a), these assumptions were assessed.

Although adequate sample size is an assumption of exploratory factor analysis, various opinions exist as to what constitutes a sufficient sample size. A number of general rules and recommendations have been made for selecting an appropriate sample size (Howard, 2016). Suggestions range substantially. General recommendations have included 200 participants or 10 participants per item being recommended. Given most recommendations, the sample size is appropriate for this statistical analysis.

Multiple methods were used to assess for univariate and multivariate normality for the PFI item responses (Howard, 2016). Histograms were generated and visually examined. Although some response sets appeared to approximate a normal distribution, others appeared to have a significant positive skew. Univariate measures of skewness and kurtosis also indicated that some items approximated a normal distribution whereas others were substantially skewed. Most notably, PFI items 10 and 20 demonstrated substantial positive skew. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of univariate normality indicated violations of this assumption across all item responses. Given these violations to univariate normality, multivariate normality cannot be met. As expected, Mardia's test for multivariate normality completed in IMB SPSS Amos 26 indicated that several responses display significant skewness and kurtosis violating this assumption. As such, violations of the normality assumption should be considered in subsequent analysis and interpretation.

Factorability of data is determined when relationships exist amongst variables. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was completed and was statistically significant, indicating that the data is factorable (Howard, 2016). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .80 indicating an acceptable level of common variance.

Although multicollinearity has been the subject of limited research in the context of exploratory factor analysis, some evidence indicates that multicollinearity can be a problem in structural equation modeling techniques (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Given very high correlations between some PFI items, multicollinearity was assessed. VIF and Tolerance scores were generated and reviewed. Although several items indicated medium levels of multicollinearity no items indicated high levels of multicollinearity.

Multivariate outliers were identified using Mahalanobis distance with chi-square distributed with 20 degrees of freedom, the critical value at a 0.001 significance level.

Fourteen multivariate outliers were identified in the data. The participant's whose data was identified as multivariate outliers did not appear to differ substantially from the larger data set in terms of demographic factors such as age, gender, country of birth, and immigrant generation status. These were included in the exploratory factor analysis.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Version 28. Principal axis factoring was used as an extraction method (Osborne & Banjanovic, 2016). Initially, this extraction method was generated without rotations. Using the general rule of retaining factors with Eigen values of one or more, a factor solution of five factors was suggested (Reio & Shuck, 2015; Costello & Osborne, 2005). Visual examination of scree plots suggested a four or five factor solution (Williams et al., 2010). A raw data parallel analysis suggested a four-factor solution (O'Connor, 2000a, O'Connor, 2000b). Velicer's Minimum Average Partial (MAP) Test suggested a five-factor solution (O'Connor, 2000a, O'Connor, 2000b). Two and three factor solutions were also reviewed given the initial hypothesized factor structure.

Factor structures of two, three, four, and five factors were examined using principal component analysis with various rotations on a correlation matrix. Oblique rotations were used given the expectation that factors would likely be correlated with one another (e.g., Kieffer, 1998). Direct Oblim with delta equal to .02, .04, .06, and .08 rotations and a Promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization were used. Of these rotations, Promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization appeared to be the "cleanest" rotation with the most easily interpretable factors. Although four and five factor solutions were indicated by factor retention methods, these solutions had issues with several items loading highly on multiple factors. In contrast, the three-factor solution provided a "clean" solution free from cross loadings.

The pattern matrix of the three factor Promax rotation of the correlation matrix is reported in Table H1. The solution, although different than initially hypothesized, is interpretable with expected items grouping together. The three factors were labeled as follows: Parent and Friend Approval Importance, Parent Disapproval Importance, and Friend Disapproval Importance. Factor 1, labeled "Parent Disapproval Importance", includes questions about how the participant would respond to parent or friend approval in various stages of a serious romantic relationship. Factor 2, labeled "Parent Disapproval Importance", includes questions about how the participant would respond to parental disapproval in various stages of a romantic relationship. Similarly, Factor 3, labeled "Friend Disapproval Importance", includes questions about how the participant would respond to parental disapproval in various stages of a romantic relationship. Following rotation, the Parent and Friend Approval Importance factor accounted for 27% of the total variance, the Parent Disapproval Importance accounted for 23%, and Friend Disapproval Importance accounted for 9% of the total variance. Parent Disapproval Importance and Friend Disapproval factors correlated at .44. The Parent and Friend Approval Importance and Parent Disapproval Importance factors were correlated at -.08. Finally, the Parent and Friend Approval Importance and Friend Disapproval Importance factors were correlated at -.01.

Table H1
Three Factor Pattern Matrix

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Factor 1: Parent and friend approval importance			
6. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about but whom your parents would strongly approve:	**.56**	-.01	-.06
7. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but your parents would strongly approve:	**.58**	.12	-.11
8. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	**.79**	.20	-.17
9. Continue dating/seeing someone who do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	**.79**	.13	-.15
10. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your parents strongly approve:	**.56**	-.03	-.00
16. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends would strongly approve:	**.63**	-.10	.13
17. Go on a single date with someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	**.63**	-.13	.08
18. Begin regularly dating someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	**.85**	-.09	.13
19. Continue dating/seeing someone who you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends strongly approve:	**.86**	.05	.08
20. Marry someone you do not feel strongly about, but whom your friends have expressed strong approval:	**.53**	-.09	.09
Factor 2: Parent disapproval importance			
1. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like but whom your parents would disapprove:	-.06	**.78**	.09
2. Go on a single date with someone who you really like but your parents would disapprove:	-.08	**.70**	.08
3. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:	.01	**.92**	.05
4. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like but whom your parents disapprove:	.05	**.94**	-.03
5. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your parents disapprove:	.03	**.77**	.01

Table H1 (continued)
Three Factor Pattern Matrix (continued)

	Factor		
	1	2	3
Factor 3: Friend disapproval importance			
11. Spend time casually with a potential romantic partner who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:	-.06	.04	**.80**
12. Go on a single date with someone who you really like, but whom your friends would disapprove:	-.02	.04	**.74**
13. Begin regularly dating someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:	.01	-.01	**.93**
14. Continue dating/seeing someone who you really like, but whom your friends have expressed disapproval:	.05	.08	**.84**
15. Marry someone who you really like, but whom your friends disapprove:	.04	.03	**.78**

Cronbach's Alphas and Correlations with Related Constructs

Next, the PFI scale was calculated by computing the average of the items on each subscale. At this time, the interdependent and independent scales for the Singelis Self-Construal Scale (SSCS; Singelis, 1994), the Interpersonal Dependency Inventory, Six (McClintock et al. 2017), and the Parental Influence on Mate Choice (PIM; Buunk et al., 2010) were calculated. Cronbach's alphas were computed for the items on each scale. All of the scales from the PFI had high Cronbach's alphas. Parent and Friend Approval Importance had a Cronbach's alpha of .88, Parent Disapproval Importance had a Cronbach's alpha of .92, and Friend Disapproval Importance had a Cronbach's alpha of .92.

Cronbach's alpha was also calculated for the Singelis Self-Construal Scale independent (α=.67) and interdependent (α=.64) scales, the Interpersonal Dependency Inventory (α=.70), and the Parental Influence on Mate Choice (α=.74). These Cronbach's alphas would generally be categorized as poor or questionable (Bland & Altman, =1997).suggesting problems with the internal consistency within each measure meaning results should be interpreted with caution due to unreliable measurement of variables.

All scales were computed and bivariate correlations between the PFI and other measures were computed, these are reported in Table H2. There were correlations between PFI scales including Parent Disapproval Importance and Friend Disapproval Importance ($r=.46$, $p<.01$). The correlations between Parent and Friend Approval Importance with Parent Disapproval and with Friend Disapproval were not statistically significant.

Several of the correlations of PFI subscales and theoretically related constructs are statistically significant. Generally, these correlations provide support for the validity of the PFI. As anticipated, Parent and Friend Approval Importance was correlated with interpersonal dependency ($r=.31$, $p<.01$). This means that people who tend to rely more on opinions and support of other people also tend to be more influenced in their behaviour in romantic relationships by the approval of their parents and friends. Additionally, as anticipated, both Parent Disapproval Importance and Parent and Friend Approval Importance were correlated with the measure of attitudes towards parental

control of romantic relationships (r=.34, p<.01 & r=.28, p<.01, respectively). This means that people who believe they would be more likely to be influenced by parent disapproval of their relationship or by parent and friend approval of their relationship, report stronger agreement with parent's having an influence in the romantic relationship choices of their children.

Also, as hypothesized interdependent self-construal was positively correlated with Parent Disapproval Importance (r =.19, p =<.01) and Parent and Friend Approval Importance (r = .24, p =<.01). This indicates that people who have a more interdependent self-construal care more about the approval and disapproval of their parents and friends over their romantic relationships. Finally, as anticipated, Parent and Friend Approval Importance was negatively correlated with independent self-construal (r = -.18, p =<.01). This means that people who were more independent put less importance in the approval parents and friends when considering causal romantic relationships. Although these correlations do provide support for the utility of the PFI, not all measures anticipated to be correlated with the PFI were correlated. In contrast to hypothesized, interpersonal dependency was negatively correlated with Friend Disapproval Importance (r =-.24, p = < .01).

Table H2

Preliminary Study Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between PFI and Theoretically Related Variables

	M	*SD*	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Parent disapproval importance	3.85	1.68	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Friend disapproval importance	3.42	1.49	.46**	-	-	-	-	-
3. Parent and Friend Approval Importance	2.15	.97	-.09	-.01	-	-	-	-
4. Interpersonal dependency inventory	16.97	3.58	-.10	.24**	-.31**	-	-	-
5. Parental Influence on Mate Choice	18.29	5.26	.34**	.10	.28**	-.18*	-	-
6. Interdependent self-construal	63.95	9.66	.19**	.07	.24**	.21**	.19**	-
7. Independent self-construal	60.00	9.93	.11	.02	-.18*	.26**	.09	.01

* $p < .05$
** p <.01

Appendix I - Ideal Romantic Partner Characteristics

1. Read over the following list of characteristics that people might want in a romantic partner. What are the top five characteristics you believe would make an ideal romantic partner for you? Please rank them from most to least important.
   (*participants are presented with the list of characteristics and rate these from one to five in order of importance*)
2. From your perspective, what are the top five characteristics your parents believe would make an ideal romantic partner for you? Please rank them from most to least important.
   (*participants are presented with the list of characteristics and rate these from one to five in order of importance*)

3. From your perspective, what are the top five characteristics your friends believe would make an ideal romantic partner for you? Please rank them from most to least important.
   (*participants are presented with the list of characteristics and rate these from one to five in order of importance*)

Characteristics to Choose From:

1. Physically attractive
2. A desirable height (i.e., shorter or taller depending on preference)
3. Physically fit
4. An appropriate weight
5. Good hygiene
6. Sense of humour
7. Artistic ability
8. Creative
9. Intelligent
10. Good family background

11. Same ethnic background
12. Same religious background
13. Same or higher social class
14. Has not been divorced
15. Wealthy
16. Respectful and obedient
17. Good education
18. Likes children
19. Friendly
20. Kind
21. Similar attitudes
22. Physically healthy
23. Mentally healthy

Appendix J - Narrative Questions

For the following 2 questions, please write about conflicts you have experienced with your parents (Question A) and your friends (Question B) concerning your romantic relationship choices. Conflicts include minor disagreements, or major arguments and fights. They can be in response to your dating behaviours, sexual behaviour, or partner selections, for example. Please write a detailed description that is at least a paragraph or two in length. Your paragraph for each should be in enough detail so that a person who was not present during the event would be able to fully understand it. Include how the conflict started, what happened, and what you were thinking and feeling at that time, and if you think the event is now resolved.

1: Please think about a conflict with a parent related to your romantic relationship and write 1-2 paragraphs about this conflict in detail below. Include the following information in your description:

- When did this conflict take place, i.e., how old were you?
- How the conflict started—i.e., what sparked it, precipitated it, etc.?
- What were you thinking and feeling at the time?
- Do you consider the conflict resolved now? Why or why not?
- Looking back now, do you think that your parent's perspective was valid?

2. How frequently do you have conflict with your parents related to romantic relationships?

Very Frequently 1 2 3 4 5 Very Rarely

3. Have you had more frequent conflict with your parents related to romantic relationships at some point in the past?

More Frequent 1 2 3 About the Same 4 5 Less Frequent

4. Please think about a conflict with a friend related to your romantic relationship and write 1-2 paragraphs about this conflict in detail below. Include the following information in your description:
   - When did this conflict take place, i.e., how old were you?
   - How the conflict started—i.e., what sparked it, precipitated it, etc.?
   - What were you thinking and feeling at the time?
   - Do you consider the conflict resolved now? Why or why not?
   - Looking back now, do you think that your friend's perspective was valid?

5. How frequently do you have conflict with your friend related to romantic relationships?

Very Frequently 1 2 3 4 5 Very Rarely

6. Have you had more frequent conflict with your friends related to romantic relationships at some point in the past?

More Frequent 1 2 3 About the Same 4 5 Less Frequent

7. Please write a brief paragraph about what you are looking forward to most in the coming months.

Appendix K – Consent to Participate from the Participant Pool

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jenna Thompson supervised by Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson from the department of psychology at the University of Windsor. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact the primary investigator, Jenna Thompson, at thomp124@uwindsor.ca, or the faculty supervisor, Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson at hakim@uwindsor.ca or at 519-253-3000 ext. 2241.
You can print this page for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine how different types of relationships influence one another.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete the following. By agreeing to this consent form, you are indicating that you wish to participant in the present study. To agree to participate, click “I agree to participate”. After agreeing to this consent form, you will be directed to a form where you will enter your personal information for compensation, and then to a separate online survey that includes several questionnaires. The questionnaires include your background information, your relationships, and your culture. The survey should take under 90 minutes to complete. We recommend you complete the survey in a quiet, private place free from significant distractions. After completing or exiting this study, you will be directed to a brief summary of the study and directions on how to clear your internet browser history.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

During your participation you will be asked personal questions. Questions ask you to think about your relationships and culture. You may potentially experience some discomfort in response to these questions. A risk associated with this study is the possibility of emotional discomfort in response to the questions. Should at any point you feel too overwhelmed or wish to terminate the study, you may do so by clicking on the ““I wish to exit the survey”” icon. For students at the University of Windsor, if you continue to feel upset, you can also contact the University of Windsor Student Counselling Centre at 519-253-3000 ext. 4616. Outside the University of Windsor you can find a psychologist in Ontario in your area at the following website: https://www.psych.on.ca/Utilities/Find-a-psychologist.aspx. You can also visit https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/looking-for-local-resources-support/ to find crisis support in your area.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no direct benefits to participation in this study.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants will receive 1.5 bonus point for up to 90 minutes of participation towards the psychology participant pool, if registered in the pool and enrolled in one or more eligible courses.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your data will be kept confidential in secure files. Your name and email will be collected to provide the bonus course credit. Your personal identifying information (i.e., name & email) will be kept in a separate secured file. Your data will be kept in a depersonalized format. Depersonalized data will be secured and stored for a minimum of ten years. Instructions will be provided on how to clear your browser history at the end of the final letter of information so that other people who use your computer will not see that you visited the website to complete the study if you wish to do so.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from further participation during the study by clicking on the “Discard responses and exit” button without any negative consequences. Once you submit your data, you will no longer be able to withdraw it since your data will not be directly linked to your identity.
Once all data have been collected, any participant contact information will be permanently and securely deleted. The investigator may withdraw your data from this study if circumstances arise which warrant doing so (e.g., indication of careless or insufficient effort, very incomplete questionnaires).

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

Research findings for this study will be available to participants and will be posted on the University of Windsor REB website at www.uwindsor.ca/reb in March 2022.
In addition, a copy of the principal investigator’s dissertation will be available to the public through both the Psychology graduate secretary’s office and Leddy library. A copy of this thesis will also be available online at http://scholar.uwindsor.ca/etdhub/ in September of 2022.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:
Office of Research Ethics,
University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario,
N9B 3P4;
Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948;
e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca
You may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. Simply, click the “I wish to Exit the Survey” icon on each page.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study ” Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I agree to have my responses quoted in a form that will not be personally identifiable. I will print or save a copy of this form for my own reference.

To acknowledge that you have read this information, and you wish to provide consent to participate in this study, please click “I agree to participate” below.

I agree to participate I do not wish to participate
Name (first and last):
Email:

Appendix L – Consent to Participate from Outside the Participant Pool

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jenna Thompson supervised by Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson from the department of psychology at the University of Windsor. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact the primary investigator, Jenna Thompson, at thomp124@uwindsor.ca, or the faculty supervisor, Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson at hakim@uwindsor.ca or at519-253-3000 ext. 2241.
You can print this page for your records.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to examine how different types of relationships influence one another.

PROCEDURES
If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete the following. By agreeing to this consent form, you are indicating that you wish to participant in the present study. To agree to participate click “I agree to participate”. After agreeing to this consent form, you will be directed to a form where you will enter your personal information for compensation, and then to a separate online survey that includes several questionnaires. The questionnaires include your background information, your relationships, and your culture. The survey should take under 90 minutes to complete. We recommend you complete the survey in a quiet, private place free from significant distractions. After completing or exiting this study, you will be directed to brief summary of the study and directions on how to clear your internet browser history.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
During your participation you will be asked personal questions. Questions ask you to think about your relationships. You may potentially experience some discomfort in response to these questions. A risk associated with this study is the possibility of emotional discomfort in response to the questions. Should at any point you feel too overwhelmed or wish to terminate the study, you may do so by clicking on the “I wish to exit the survey”” icon. For students at the University of Windsor, if you continue to feel upset, you can also contact the University of Windsor Student Counselling Centre at 519-253-3000 ext. 4616. If you do not attend the University of Windsor, you can visit https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/looking-for-local-resources-support/ to find crisis support in your area. Outside the University of Windsor you can find a psychologist in Ontario in your area at the following website: https://www.psych.on.ca/Utilities/Find-a-psychologist.aspx.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
There are no direct benefits to participation in this study.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION
Participants will have the opportunity to be entered in a draw in order to win one of two $50 amazon.ca giftcards.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Your data will be kept confidential in secure files. Your name and email will be collected to provide the bonus course credit. Your personal identifying information (i.e., name & email) will be kept in a separate secured file Your data will be kept in a depersonalized format. Depersonalized data will be secured and stored for a minimum of ten years. Instructions will be provided on how to clear your browser history at the end of the final letter of information so that other people who use your computer will not see that you visited the website to complete the study if you wish to do so.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from further participation during the study by clicking on the ""I wish to exit the survey"" button without any negative consequences. Once you submit your data, you will no longer be able to withdraw it since your data will not be directly linked to your identity. Once all data have been collected, any participant contact information will be permanently and securely deleted. The investigator may withdraw your data from this study if circumstances arise which warrant doing so (e.g., indication of careless or insufficient effort, very incomplete questionnaires).

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SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations.

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Office of Research Ethics,
University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario,
N9B 3P4;
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e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

You may withdraw your consent to participate at any time. Simply, click the "I wish to Exit the Survey" icon on each page.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study " Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships" as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I agree to have my responses quoted in a form that will not be personally identifiable. I will print or save a copy of this form for my own reference.

To acknowledge that you have read this information, and you wish to provide consent to participate in this study, please click "I agree to participate" below.

I agree to participate I do not wish to participate
Name (first and last):
Email:

I wish to be entered in a draw for one of two $50 Amazon.ca giftcards.
I **do not** wish to be entered in the draw.

Appendix M - Validity Check Items

I was born on February 30th.

I visited every single country in the world before I was ten.

Select “5- I agree completely” for this item.

If you are paying attention, please select “neither agree nor disagree” for this item.

Appendix N – Other People Who Influence Romantic Relationships

Throughout this survey you have been asked to think about how your parents' and friends' approval or disapproval of your romantic relationships might impact these types of relationships. Now please list any other people whose approval or disapproval of your romantic relationships is important. Please label them by their relationship to you (e.g., older sister, brother, uncle, aunt, grandparent, religious leader etc.) not by their name. List any people that come to mind and explain briefly why you have included them.

Appendix O – Final Letter of Information for Participants Within the Participant Pool

Letter of Information

Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships

Thank you for participating in this study. Your contribution to our scientific understanding is greatly appreciated!

For future reference, the full title of this study is "Romantic Relationships in Young Adults: The Influence of Parents and Friends". The main objective of this study was to test the relation between parent and friend approval of romantic relationships and romantic relationship quality as well as the influence parent and friend approval/disapproval has on romantic relationships. This study also included potentially related variables including self-construal, acculturation, social support, and gender

Research findings for this study will be available to participants, and will be posted on the University of Windsor REB website at www.uwindsor.ca/reb by December 2021. Additionally, these data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations. The data from this study will be kept for a minimum of ten years.

After all your data is collected your name will be used to assign you one and a half bonus points for the psychology participant pool.

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If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact the primary investigator, Jenna Thompson, at thomp124@uwindsor.ca, or the faculty supervisor, Dr. Julie Hakim-Larson at hakim@uwindsor.ca or at 519-253-3000 ext. 2241.

If you feel upset by the study and attend the University of Windsor, you can contact the University of Windsor Student Counselling Centre at 519-253-3000 ext. 4616. Outside the University of Windsor you can find a psychologist in Ontario in your area at the following website: https://www.psych.on.ca/Utilities/Find-a-psychologist.aspx. Youcan also visit https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/looking-for-local-resources-support/ to find crisis support in your area.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:
Office of Research Ethics, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4
Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948
E-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca.

You can print this page for your records.
Instructions for clearing your browser history are featured below.

Best wishes,

Jenna Thompson

Instructions taken from and modified based on: https://kb.iu.edu/d/ahic

CHROME

1. In the browser bar, enter: chrome://settings/clearBrowserData
2. Select the following: Browsing history, Download history, Cookies and other site and plug-in data, Cached images and files
3. From the "Obliterate the following items from:" drop-down menu, you can choose the period of time for which you want to clear cached information. To clear your entire cache, select "from the beginning of time."

4. Click Clear browsing data.
5. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

FIREFOX

1. From the History menu, select Clear Recent History. If the menu bar is hidden, press Alt to make it visible.
2. From the “Time range to clear:” drop-down menu, select the desired range; to clear your entire cache, select “Everything.”
3. Next to Details, click the down arrow to choose which elements of the history to clear; to clear your entire cache, select all items.
4. Click Clear Now.
5. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

MICROSOFT EDGE

1. In the top right, click the Hub icon (looks like three horizontal lines).
2. Click the History icon, and then select Clear all history.
3. Select Browsing history, then Cookies and saved website data, and then Cached data and files.
4. Click Clear.
5. After the "All Clear!" message appears, exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

INTERNET EXPLORER 9 AND HIGHER

1. Select Tools (via the Gear Icon) > Safety > Delete browsing history… If the menu bar is hidden, press Alt to make it visible.
2. Deselect Preserve Favorites website data, and select: Temporary Internet files or Temporary Internet files and website files; Cookies or Cookies and website data; History
3. Click Delete. You will see a confirmation at the bottom of the window when the process is complete.
4. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

OPERA

1. From the Opera menu, select Settings, and then Delete Private Data....
2. In the dialog box that opens, select the items you want to clear, and then click Delete.
3. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

SAFARI 8

1. From the Safari menu, select Clear History and Website Data....
2. Select the desired time range, and then click Clear History.
3. Go to Safari > Quit Safari or press Command-Q to exit the browser completely.

SAFARI 7 AND BELOW

1. From the Safari menu, select Reset Safari....
2. Select the items you want to reset, and then click Reset. As of Safari 5.1, Remove all website data includes both cookies and cache.
3. Go to Safari > Quit Safari or press Command-Q to exit the browser completely.

Appendix P – Final Letter of Information for Participants Outside of the Participant Pool

University of Windsor

Letter of Information

Friend, Parent, and Romantic Partner Relationships

Thank you for participating in this study. Your contribution to our scientific understanding is greatly appreciated!

For future reference, the full title of this study is "Romantic Relationships in Young Adults: The Influence of Parents and Friends". The main objective of this study was to test the relation between parent and friend approval of romantic relationships and romantic relationship quality as well as the influence parent and friend approval/disapproval has on romantic relationships. This study also included potentially related variables including self-construal, acculturation, social support, and gender

Research findings for this study will be available to participants, and will be posted on the University of Windsor REB website at www.uwindsor.ca/reb by December 2021. Additionally, these data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications, and in presentations. The data from this study will be kept for a minimum of ten years.

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Office of Research Ethics, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4
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E-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca.

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Best wishes,

Jenna Thompson

Instructions taken from and modified based on: https://kb.iu.edu/d/ahic

CHROME

6. In the browser bar, enter: chrome://settings/clearBrowserData
7. Select the following: Browsing history, Download history, Cookies and other site and plug-in data, Cached images and files

8. From the “Obliterate the following items from:” drop-down menu, you can choose the period of time for which you want to clear cached information. To clear your entire cache, select “from the beginning of time.”
9. Click Clear browsing data.
10. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

FIREFOX

6. From the History menu, select Clear Recent History. If the menu bar is hidden, press Alt to make it visible.
7. From the “Time range to clear:” drop-down menu, select the desired range; to clear your entire cache, select “Everything.”
8. Next to Details, click the down arrow to choose which elements of the history to clear; to clear your entire cache, select all items.
9. Click Clear Now.
10. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

MICROSOFT EDGE

6. In the top right, click the Hub icon (looks like three horizontal lines).
7. Click the History icon, and then select Clear all history.
8. Select Browsing history, then Cookies and saved website data, and then Cached data and files.
9. Click Clear.
10. After the "All Clear!" message appears, exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

INTERNET EXPLORER 9 AND HIGHER

5. Select Tools (via the Gear Icon) > Safety > Delete browsing history… If the menu bar is hidden, press Alt to make it visible.
6. Deselect Preserve Favorites website data, and select: Temporary Internet files or Temporary Internet files and website files; Cookies or Cookies and website data; History
7. Click Delete. You will see a confirmation at the bottom of the window when the process is complete.
8. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

OPERA

4. From the Opera menu, select Settings, and then Delete Private Data....
5. In the dialog box that opens, select the items you want to clear, and then click Delete.
6. Exit/quit all browser windows and re-open the browser.

SAFARI 8

4. From the Safari menu, select Clear History and Website Data....
5. Select the desired time range, and then click Clear History.
6. Go to Safari > Quit Safari or press Command-Q to exit the browser completely.

SAFARI 7 AND BELOW

4. From the Safari menu, select Reset Safari....
5. Select the items you want to reset, and then click Reset. As of Safari 5.1, Remove all website data includes both cookies and cache.
6. Go to Safari > Quit Safari or press Command-Q to exit the browser completely.

Appendix Q – Hypothesis 1 Multiple Regressions Results Excluding Outliers

Parent Opinion, Friend Opinion, and Relational Self-Construal as Predictors of Love in Romantic Relationships Excluding Outliers (N = 133)

	Adj. R^2	R^2	F	B	SE	β
Overall Love in Romantic Relationships						
Step 1	.09	.10	14.10**			
Gender				35.31**	9.40	.31
Step 2	.53	.55	38.73			
Gender				22.39**	8.86	.20
Parent Opinion				0.77*	0.38	.13
Friend Opinion				4.94**	0.54	.59
Relational Self-Construal				0.51*	0.22	.14
Passion in Romantic Relationship						
Step 1	.07	.08	9.77**			
Gender				14.27*	4.00	.29
Age				-0.86*	0.32	-.22
Step 2	.27	.30	10.48**			
Gender				10.96**	3.70	.22
Age				-0.77*	0.30	-.20
Parent Opinion				0.26	0.21	.10
Friend Opinion				1.08**	0.33	.29
Relational Self-Construal				0.31*	.12	.20
Commitment in Romantic Relationship						
Step 1	.08	.09	12.72**			
Gender				12.57**	3.78	.28
Step 2	.52	.53	36.54**			
Gender				8.04**	2.69	.18
Parent Opinion				0.43**	0.15	.19
Friend Opinion				1.82**	0.21	.57
Relational Self-Construal				0.09	0.09	.06
Intimacy in Romantic Relationship						
Step 1	.06	.06	8.89**			
Gender				8.34**	2.80	.25
Step 2	.56	.57	43.26**			
Gender				4.47*	1.94	.13
Parent Opinion				0.19*	0.11	.11
Friend Opinion				1.60**	0.15	.66
Relational Self-Construal				0.08	.06	.08

Appendix R – Hypothesis 4 Multiple Regressions Results Excluding Outliers

Regression Results for Hypothesis 4 with Outliers Removed (n = 214)

	Adj. R^2	R^2	F	B	SE	β
Parent and Friend Approval Importance	.05	.08	2.64*			
Gender				-.36*	.15	-.16
Interdependent Self-Construal				.02*	.01	.17
Independent Self-Construal				-.01	.01	-.05
Heritage Acculturation				.01	.00	.08
Mainstream Acculturation				-.01	.01	-.13
Parent Social Support				-.02	.01	-.13
Friend Social Support				-.01	.02	-.01

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