

All things have a beginning: Examining how relationships are initiated

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Technology

- Social Media Sites: Afifi & Lucas (2008) coined the term of “preinteraction” in which is often a precursor to the going out stage of a romantic relationship.
- Text messaging: Cupples & Thompson (2010) stated that text messaging is becoming more commonplace.

Communicator Style

- Communicator styles are; “the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood.”

Research Question and Hypothesis

- RQ: How is an individual’s communicator style related to their method of romantic relationship initiation?
- H: Those with an extroverted communicator styles are more likely to initiate relationships face-to-face than those with an introverted communicator style.

Methods

- 108 question survey given to 123 students
- Participants had to be over the age of 18 and had to have been in a romantic relationship before or currently in one.

Measures

- Communicator style the Communicator Style Measure (Norton, 1978) was used. The reliabilities of these sub-scales ranged from Cronbach’s $\alpha=.61$ to $.85$.
- Personality type, the “Big-Five” from the International Personality Item Pool was used. The reliabilities of these sub-scales ranged from Cronbach’s $\alpha=.66$ to $.92$.

Results

- H: there was no significant relationship between extroversion and the method of relationship initiation ($\Lambda=.91, \chi^2(2(N=123))=3.16, P>.05$).
- RQ: only a significant relationship between friendliness and method ($\Lambda=.93, \chi^2(2(N=123))=8.33, P<.05$). More specifically the most friendly individuals use face to face ($M=15.45, SD=2.21$), then social media ($M=14.25, SD=2.54$), and the least friendly use text messaging ($M=13.88, SD=-2.61$). The other styles did not have significant results.

Discussion

- Individuals’ extroversion does not dissipate in online, or text messaging sessions.
- Supports Shaver & Mikulincer’s (2006) research of those with the friendly communicator style create a more positive and overall nice atmosphere for communication to take place.
- Thus, the most friendly individuals would find the face-to-face communication setting the most comfortable, and on down the line with the differentiating levels of friendliness.

Limitations

- Small campus, with a mostly female participant pool
- Use of surveys
- Lack of self-proclaiming homosexuals

