

Research Project

Processes in Romantic Relationships and Their Impact on Relationship and Personal Outcomes

Third-party funded project

Project title Processes in Romantic Relationships and Their Impact on Relationship and Personal Outcomes

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A myriad of studies has investigated the association between personality and relationship outcomes, such as relationship stability, satisfaction, and quality. However, the importance of processes interposed between personality and relationship outcomes has been largely neglected. Our study intends to address this shortcoming by integrating both distal factors, such as core and surface characteristics, and proximal factors, such as cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes, in a longitudinal design with couples in emerging and young adulthood. Proximal processes are understood as mediating variables between personality and relationship outcomes, unfolding their impact over time. Moreover, we aim to uncover how relationship processes entail both partners' personality development, for instance by increasing stability in core characteristics or promoting change in surface characteristics. We propose two complementary research lines for our research questions. First, we will conduct a longitudinal online diary-study over two years. At four measurement points, an initial sample of 675 couples, differing with respect to relationship duration (short, medium, long), will participate in two-week diary studies. At each measurement point, subjects will complete questionnaires regarding personality, relationship processes, and outcome variables. Second, we will investigate selected parts of our research questions using archival data (Swiss Household Panel, German Socio-Economic Panel, and Panel Analysis of Intimate Relationships and Family Dynamics Data Set), benefitting from different samples, study designs, and longer survey periods. Our research plan has several theoretical, methodological, and practical implications. First, the study aims to illuminate the why behind the association between personality and relationship outcomes by shedding light on the interposed relationship processes. As we examine emotional, behavioral, and cognitive relationship processes simultaneously, we are able to determine the differential significance of feeling, behaving, and thinking for relationship outcomes. Second, considering the impact of relationship processes for both partners' personality development, this project deepens the understanding of co-development in personality within romantic relationships. Third, from a methodological perspective, we are able to apply a dyadic approaches, including the actor-partner interdependence model and multi-level modeling. Fourth, repeated process-measures and the large sample size allow us to adopt more elaborate statistical models, measuring change within multiple-group settings. Fifth, the new evidence of our project will contribute to basic knowledge in personality, developmental, and relationship psychology. A more thorough understanding of the association between personality, relationship processes, and outcomes is also beneficial for clinical psychology and couple interventions. Finally, elu-

cidating the underlying processes of successful relationship functioning has the potential to generate a broader impact on couples and families.

Keywords Relationship processes; Relationship outcomes; Personality; Emerging and young adulthood; Personality development; Relationship satisfaction

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Add publication

Published results

4600879, Bühler, Janina Larissa; Weidmann, Rebekka; Wünsche, Jenna; Burriss, Robert Philip, Grob, Alexander;, Daily Responsiveness, Expectations, and Self-disclosure: How the Average Levels and Within-person Variability of Three Relationship Components Mediate Personality–Relationship Transactions in Romantic Couples, European Journal of Personality, Publication: JournalArticle (Originalarbeit in einer wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift)

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