TITLE:

**Relationship Churning, Physical Violence, and Verbal Abuse in Young Adult Relationships**

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**Abstract**

Young adults' romantic relationships are often unstable, commonly including breakup-reconcile patterns. From the developmental perspective of emerging adulthood exploration, such relationship "churning" is expected; however, minor conflicts are more common in churning relationships. Using TARS data (n = 792), we test whether relationship churning is associated with more serious conflict: physical violence and verbal abuse. Those who are stably broken up (breakup only – no reconciliation) are similar to those who are stably together in their conflict experiences. In contrast, churners (i.e., those involved in on-off relationships) are twice as likely as those who are stably together or stably broken up to report physical violence and half again as likely to report the presence of verbal abuse in their relationships; this association between churning and conflict holds net of a host of demographic, personal, and relationship characteristics. These findings have implications for better understanding unhealthy relationship behaviors.

KEYWORDS:

romantic relationships, physical violence, verbal abuse, relationship instability, young adults

**Relationship Churning, Physical Violence, and Verbal Abuse**

Young adults' romantic relationships are quite fluid and often unstable, with more than four in ten young adults experiencing both a breakup and reconciliation in their present or most recent relationship (Dailey, Pfiester, Jin, Beck, & Clark, 2009; Halpern-Meekin, Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2010). From the developmental perspective of emerging adulthood, this kind of "churning" in dating and cohabiting relationships would be expected, as these years are meant to be spent exploring one's identity and intimate relationships (Arnett, 2000, 2007a, 2007b).

In this paper we ask whether relationship churning is associated with forms of conflict that are more serious than arguing, including physical violence and verbal abuse. We examine this potential association because there are indications that minor conflicts, like arguing, are more common in relationships characterized by this churning pattern (Dailey et al., 2009; Dailey, Rossetto, Pfiester, & Surra, 2009; Halpern-Meekin et al., 2010). However, it remains unclear whether more serious forms of conflict, namely physical and verbal abuse, are also related to the churning pattern, since individuals could potentially consider these to be "deal-breakers" that could lead them to permanently end the relationship.

## Background

### *Emerging Adulthood*

The period of emerging adulthood, extending from the late teens to the mid-to-late twenties, has been defined as a time of exploration, with young people relatively free of both the rules of childhood and the responsibilities of adulthood. It is during this time in life when romantic relationships begin to take center stage, as young adults figure out what they want in a long-term partner and who will fill this role (Arnett, 2000; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Meeus,

Branje, van der Valk, & de Wied, 2007). As part of this process, young people develop the relationship skills that will allow them to successfully take on such long-term commitments (Arnett, 2007a, 2007b). However, the norm is not for young people to settle quickly into such committed relationships (Settersen, Furstenberg, & Rumbaut, 2005); rather, the period of emerging adulthood is characterized as a time of instability and exploration, particularly when it comes to intimate relationships (Arnett, 2005). From the perspective of the emerging adulthood literature, relationship instability is appropriate.

*Relationship Churning*

Recently researchers have begun to identify and explore various forms of instability in young adult relationships beyond breaking up. Dailey and colleagues (Dailey et al., 2009a, 2009b; Dailey, Hampel, & Roberts, 2010; Dailey, Jin, Pfiester, & Beck, 2011; Dailey, Middleton, & Green, forthcoming) have found that among college students, compared with stable relationships, on/off relationships were characterized by longer durations, but less satisfaction, commitment, and passion. One factor underlying the lower quality and unstable nature of these relationships was the presence of conflict (such as problems with communication), and the lower likelihood of engaging in relationship maintenance behaviors, like being cooperative, patient, and polite during discussions. Using a broader sample of young adults, Halpern-Meekin et al. (2010) showed that churning relationships were more likely to be characterized by minor conflicts (such as arguing) and lower commitment, but also by positive features of the union, such as intimate self-disclosure among partners, perhaps suggesting why couples might separate and reunite. Based on the association between churning and negative relationship qualities, we hypothesize that relationship churning may be associated with more major and potentially harmful forms of conflict, such as physical violence and verbal abuse. In

the present study we are most likely tapping common couple violence and not domestic terrorism (Johnson and Ferrara, 2000).

*Conflict*

Problematic forms of conflict, such as intimate partner violence, are relatively frequent among young adults (Brown & Bulanda, 2008), with estimates ranging from one quarter to more than half of men and women reporting aggressive behavior towards their partners, with mutual violence being most common (Bookwala, Frieze, Smith, & Ryan, 1992; Giordano, Soto, Manning, & Longmore, 2010; Whitaker, Haileyesus, Swahn, & Saltzman, 2007). Relationship structure, and perhaps age, also matters as violence among cohabiting couples exceeds that of both married and dating couples (Brown & Bulanda, 2008; Magdol, Moffitt, Caspi, & Silva, 1998; but see Frias & Angel, 2005).

Family conflict theory, which has been supported in longitudinal studies (Whitaker et al., 2007; Holtzworth-Monroe & Stuart, 1994), argues that a process of escalation leads from verbal abuse to physical violence. Those with weaker social skills, particularly intimate relationship skills, are at greater risk of conflict escalating to the point of violence, especially during times of stress. Thus, such problematic conflict typically is part of a package of troubled relationship behaviors, arising from a process of escalation. For example, those who report intimate partner violence are more likely to describe relationships marked by jealousy and verbal conflict (Giordano et al., 2010). A couple with poor conflict management skills may see small issues turn into big fights, which in turn can escalate to verbal and physical lashing out.

*Churning & Conflict*

As is the case with relationship conflict, the instability of churning relationships could arise from a process of escalation and poor relationship skills, as opposed to developmentally

appropriate relationship exploration. Previous research on married couples indicated that partners' abilities to cope with relationship problems were predictive of their later divorce risk (Rogge & Bradbury, 1999). Couples with stronger communication skills are better able to negotiate stressful life events, even emerging feeling closer to one another, rather than seeing their unions erode under pressure (Freedman, Low, Markman, & Stanley, 2002; Markman, Halford, & Cordova, 1997). Couples may break up during a fight or times of stress, with partners lacking the skills to work through their problems or using exit as a bargaining chip to get what they want, yet reunite because breaking up was not actually their desired outcome.

However, there are a range of other factors that may mediate the association between churning and conflict. Parental education and childhood family structure are associated with later relationship violence experiences (Foshee, Bauman, & Linder, 1999; Halpern, Oslak, Young, Martin, & Kupper, 2001; Heyman & Slep 2002; Simons, Lin, & Gordon, 1998), and age, gender, and race are also associated with the risks of exposure to intimate partner violence (Brown & Bulanda, 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Negative parent-child interactions and violence in the home as a child are predictive of later couple violence and conflict management skills (Kim, Conger, Lorenz, & Elder, 2001; Linder & Collins, 2005), as is aggressive behavior in childhood (Loeber & Hay, 1997). Self-esteem can mediate people's experiences and perceptions of their intimate relationships (Longmore & DeMaris, 1997) and is related to engagement in aggressive behaviors (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996), while sense of control is key to one's ability to handle stressors, such as relationship problems (Conger & Conger, 2002; Mirowsky & Ross, 2003). Finally, relationships marked by churning and conflict are distinctive in both their positive and negative characteristics, such as commitment, communication, and intimate self-disclosure (Dailey et al., 2009a, 2010; Giordano et al., 2010; Halpern-Meekin et al., 2010).

Given indications in previous research that relationship churning and conflict may be related, and that both may result from processes of escalation and an inability to regulate conflict, we ask: (1) what is the frequency of physical conflict and verbal abuse among those who are stably together, stably broken up, and churners, and (2) is the association between conflict and churning robust to the inclusion of controls for demographic, background, and relationship characteristics? Answering these two questions gives us insight into the nature of on/off relationships, the relational context of intimate partner violence and verbal abuse, and the characteristics of romantic relationships in emerging adulthood.

## Data & Method

The Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS) is a stratified, random sample of 1,321 students registered for the $7^{th}$, $9^{th}$, and $11^{th}$ grades in Lucas County, Ohio, a metropolitan area largely consisting of the city of Toledo. Incorporating over-samples of black and Hispanic youths, the initial sample was devised by the National Opinion Research Center and was drawn from the enrollment records of 62 schools from seven school districts. Respondents completed interview questionnaires at home using laptop computers, and school attendance was not a requirement for inclusion in the sample; in addition, parents completed questionnaires about their respondent children at Wave 1. The retention rate from Wave 1 to Wave 4 of the TARS sample is 82.8%. The attrition was due largely to our inability to locate the respondents as well as two respondents who passed away since the initial interview. Only nine respondents refused to participate in the survey. Attrition analyses indicate that participation at Wave 4 is not related to most characteristics assessed at Wave 1. However, the follow-up sample is slightly more likely to be female and slightly younger with an average age at Wave 1 of 15.2 for those who participated at Wave 4 compared to an average age of 15.3 for the full Wave 1 sample. Census

data indicate that this sample shares similar socio-demographic characteristics with the Toledo metropolitan area in terms of education, median family income, marital status, and racial distribution; in addition, the Toledo metropolitan area is similar to the nation as a whole in terms of socio-demographic composition along the lines of race, education, median family income, and marital status (Center for Family and Demographic Research, 2011).

In the present study, we rely on the data from Wave 4 respondents who were interviewed in 2006 when they were 17-24 years old. These data are well suited for these analyses because the respondents were recently interviewed and the TARS is one of the few data sources which includes information on reconciliations. Our data are cross-sectional; as such, our goal is to explore the association between relationship churning and conflict, not to make causal statements about the relationship between the two.

The analytic sample is comprised of those who are currently or have recently (within the last two years) been in a dating or cohabiting relationship (n = 792) for a total of 594 daters and 198 cohabitors. That is, we exclude those who have not dated anyone in the past two years (or not dated anyone seriously). Respondents report on their current or most recent focal relationship. We choose to include both those reporting on current and previous relationships because prior research has shown that the boundaries defining the end of a relationship are quite fluid (Dailey et al., 2009a; Halpern-Meekin et al., 2010).

*Measures*

We focus on two primary variables of interest, relationship churning and conflict. For those reporting on a current relationship, we code respondents as having experienced *churning* (that is, a disruption followed by a reunion) if they report ever having broken up with this partner. For those who are reporting on a previous relationship, we code respondents as having

experienced churning if they report having broken up with their ex more than once. Respondents are coded as *stably together* if they are currently in a relationship and have never broken up with this partner. Respondents are coded as *stably broken up* if they are reporting on a previous relationship and only broke up with this partner once.

We consider two types of conflict behaviors in the present study, physical violence and verbal abuse; both represent conflict behaviors that have escalated to problematic levels. Our conflict measures examine physical violence and verbal abuse as characteristics of relationships, as opposed to focusing on which partner acts as perpetrator and victim. The standard we use for identifying the presence of conflict for each measure is if the respondent reports these behaviors having ever occurred (regardless of who was victim/perpetrator); only those who report that none of the verbal abuse and none of the physical violence behaviors have occurred in their relationship receive a 0 on the respective conflict measures (1 = any physical violence/verbal abuse, 0 = none). To capture *verbal abuse* respondents are asked two questions: first, "During this relationship, how many times has [boy/girlfriend]: ridiculed or criticized your values or beliefs; put down your physical appearance; and put you down in front of other people." Second, "During this relationship, how many times have you: ridiculed or criticized [boy/girlfriend's] values or beliefs; put down his/her physical appearance; and put him/her down in front of other people" (alpha = 0.84). Our measures of *physical violence* also ask the respondent to report both on being a victim and being a perpetrator; we expect that this largely captures common couple violence, as opposed to intimate terrorism (Johnson & Ferraro 2000). First, "During this relationship, how many time times has [boy/girlfriend]: thrown something at you; pushed, shoved, or grabbed you; slapped you in the face or the head with an open hand; and hit you." The second set of questions asks "During this relationship, how many times have you: thrown

something at [boy/girlfriend]; pushed, shoved, or grabbed him/her; slapped him/her in the face or the head with an open hand; and hit him/her" (alpha = 0.89).

The individual indicators include gender (*male* = 1), respondent's *age*, and race/ethnicity (*White*, *Black*, *Hispanic*, and *other/mixed* race). The family structure the respondent lived in as a teenager at Wave 1 is based on a four-category measure (*two-parent*, *single-parent*, *stepparent*, or an *alternative arrangement* with no parents). Because many young adults have not completed their educations or launched their careers, we use the respondent's parent's level of education as a proxy for family socioeconomic status (parents are classified as having *less than a high school degree*, *a high school degree*, *some college*, or *a college degree*); this was measured by parental self-reports at Wave 1 when respondents were 12-19 years old.

We make use of the parent survey, collected at Wave 1, to control for previous experiences with conflict. The *conflict history scale – parent* includes two measures, with the parent reporting how often in the previous month she threatened to physically hurt her child and how often she pushed, grabbed, slapped, or hit her child; answer options ranged from never to every day (correlation = 0.54). The *conflict history scale – child* includes two measures, with the parent reporting how often in the previous month her child threatened to physically hurt her and how often her child pushed, grabbed, slapped or hit her; answer options ranged from never to every day (correlation = 0.58). Higher scores on both conflict history scales indicate more frequent conflict. In addition, since we theorize that an inability to manage conflict may underlie both the experiences of conflict and relationship churning, we include a measure of *adolescent temper* as reported by the parent at Wave 1, indicating how easily the child lost his or her temper, with higher scores indicating a more volatile temper.

We use the respondent's report of the length of the intimate relationship to capture *duration*; responses range from 1-8, from less than a week to a year or more. A relationship status measure indicates whether the respondent is in a *cohabiting* or *dating* relationship. We include two social psychological measures, self-esteem and sense of control. The measure of *self-esteem* is a scale of six items (alpha = 0.75): "I am able to do things as well as other people;" I feel that I have a number of good qualities;" "I feel I do not have much to be proud of" (reverse coded); "At times I think I am no good at all" (reverse coded); "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others;" and "I take a positive attitude toward myself." *Sense of control* is constructed following Mirowsky and Ross' (1990) formulation; this is not a simple scale, therefore no alpha value is available (see Mirowsky & Ross, 1990, for further information). Respondents rate their agreement (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to the following items: "I can do just about anything I really set my mind to;" "I have little control over the bad things that happen to me;" "My misfortunes are the result of mistakes I have made;" "I am responsible for my failures;" "The really good things that happen to me are mostly luck;" "There's no sense in planning a lot – if something good is going to happen it will;" "Most of my problems are due to bad breaks;" and "I am responsible for my own success." A higher score indicates a stronger sense of personal control.

We examine both negative and positive aspects of the relationship. A scale of two items captures receiving *validation* from a partner: partner makes me feel attractive and partner makes me feel good about myself (correlation = .68); a higher score indicates receiving more validation. *Intimate self-disclosure* is measured by how often (never to very often) respondents report talking about the following topics with their partners: something really bad that happened; home life and family; private thoughts and feelings; and the future (alpha = .91); a higher score

indicates more frequent disclosure. *Love* is a measure of how strongly respondents report loving their partners on a five-point scale, with higher scores indicating stronger feelings of love. *Commitment* is measured by how strongly on a five-point scale respondents agree that they "may not want to be with [partner] a few years from now" for those currently in a relationship or that they "didn't want to be with [partner] long term" for those reporting on an ended relationship; we code the variable so that a higher score indicates stronger commitment. *Communication skills* is a self-reported measure, indicating how strongly respondents agree that they and their partner have or had "the communication skills a couple needs to make a relationship work." *Mistrust of partner* is measured by how strongly respondents agree that there are times when their partners cannot be trusted. We measure *need asymmetry* based on the strength of agreement with the statement "I need [my partner] more than she/he needs me." *Asymmetry in doing for partner* is measured by the strength of agreement that "I do more for [my partner] than she/he does for me." *Relationship alternatives* captures the respondents' beliefs that they could find another partner who is as good as the focal partner.

*Method*

We first provide the descriptive characteristics of the sample for the key and individual variables and then describe the extent to which the two types of conflict are experienced among those who are stably together, stably broken up, and churners. We next use logistic regression to predict physical violence and verbal abuse experience. Model 1 predicts conflict experiences by relationship type (stably together, stably broken up, and churners); Model 2 adds the demographic and background controls; and Model 3 adds the relationship characteristic controls. We do not assume a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables because the cross-sectional nature of our data means the measures of relationship status and

relationship characteristics are potentially endogenous to the relationship's churning and conflict status. Therefore, the analyses allow us to test our hypothesis that churning and conflict are associated, net of demographic, social psychological, and relationship quality characteristics.

## Results

Table 1 displays the descriptive characteristics of the sample. Approximately forty percent of respondents report physical violence and just over half report verbal abuse, with nearly one-third reporting both types of conflict (not shown). The most common relationship status is churning, with 44.16% having experienced churning in their present or most recent relationship, followed by 40.97% who are stably together, and 14.87% who are stably broken up.

Respondents are right in the middle of the emerging adulthood period, with an average age of 20.3. The sample is evenly divided between men and women, and just less than two-thirds are White, one-quarter are Black, with the rest either Hispanic or of another race. Just less than half were living with both parents while in their teens (at Wave 1), with a quarter living in single parent families, a fifth in stepparent families, and the remainder living in an alternative family structure without their parents present (such as foster care or living with relatives). Just under one third of the respondents' parents graduated from high school only, another third have some college education, less than a quarter received a college degree or more, and just over one-tenth did not graduate from high school. The average for both conflict history scales is having experienced or threatened violence about once a month. In rating how easily their children lost their tempers in adolescence, the average of parents' ratings is between disagree and neither agree nor disagree; that is, parents report their children did not easily lose their tempers, on average.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 2 shows how common experiences with conflict are for each relationship status group. Approximately one-quarter of those who are stably together and stably broken up report physical conflict experience, while over half of churners do so. Verbal abuse is more common than physical conflict across relationship groups, and is more frequent among churners than those who are stably together or broken up (64% versus 42-45%). While fewer than one in five respondents who are stably together or stably broken up report experiencing both types of conflict, nearly half of churners do so. The similarities in conflict experiences between those who are stably together and those who are stably broken up is notable, as is the far more common conflict experience among churners.

[Table 2 about here]

Table 3 presents the results of the logistic regressions predicting physical and verbal abuse experiences. In Model 1, predicting physical violence, churners are significantly more likely to report physical violence compared to those who are stably together. In Model 2, including demographic and background controls, the significantly greater odds of physical conflict experience for churners remain. In addition, we see that male respondents, those raised in stepparent households, those whose parents did not graduate high school, those whose parents threatened or engaged in more violence towards them, and those with worse tempers in adolescence are more likely to report physical conflict experience. In Model 3, including relationship characteristic controls, the size of the odds ratio for churners is smaller, but remains significant and substantively large. Men, those whose parents did not graduate high school, and those with worse adolescent tempers remain more likely to report physical conflict. Longer relationship duration, greater asymmetry in doing things for one's partner, and partner mistrust

are associated with an increased likelihood of physical conflict experience, while those with higher self-esteem and sense of control are less likely to report physical conflict.

[Table 3 about here]

In predicting verbal abuse in Model 1, churners are significantly more likely to report this type of conflict compared to those who are stably together. This association remains in Model 2, net of the demographic and background controls. In addition, being older, male, and having a worse temper in adolescence are associated with an increased likelihood of verbal abuse experience. In Model 3, the association between churning and verbal abuse remains marginally significant, but is mediated somewhat with the addition of relationship characteristic controls. Being male, longer relationship duration, believing in the availability of relationship alternatives, and partner mistrust are associated with an increased likelihood of verbal abuse experience, while self-esteem and commitment are associated with a lower likelihood of this kind of conflict.

**Conclusion**

In the present sample, approximately 4 in 10 unmarried young adults experienced relationship churning, 4 in 10 experienced physical violence, and 5 in 10 experienced verbal abuse in their present or most recent relationship; this likely underestimates the cumulative experience of these events across each respondent's romantic relationships during this life stage, meaning these experiences of relationship instability and conflict are quite common. Notably, these experiences are likely to occur in conjunction with one another; relationships marked by churning are more likely than others to include physical violence and verbal abuse, net of a host of demographic, personal, and relationship characteristics.

Churners are twice as likely as those who are stably together or stably broken up to report physical violence occurring in their relationships, and half again as likely to report the presence

of verbal abuse in their relationships. Importantly, we find that the people who are experiencing the most conflict are not those who are choosing to permanently exit their relationships. Those who are stably broken up are remarkably similar to those who are stably together in their conflict experiences; churners are far more likely to report these conflict experiences than those who broke up (and stayed that way).

From the emerging adulthood perspective the instability of relationship churning would be expected (Arnett, 2000, 2007a, 2007b), but the fact that churning is likely to go hand-in-hand with conflict should raise a red flag about such instability being a developmental norm. Although instability may be expected and common in young adult relationships, such churning behavior could actually be an indicator of distress rather than age-appropriate relationship development. The dynamics of a relationship marked by both churning and conflict seem to be more volatile and explosive, which has implications for both practitioners and researchers interested in understanding and supporting healthy relationships and their development in young adulthood.

Widespread experiences with physical conflict and verbal abuse are inherently problematic, but there is also an array of reasons to be concerned about the churning pattern we have focused on in the current investigation. Past studies found that arguing was more common in relationships marked by churning (Dailey et al. 2009a; Dailey et al., 2009b; Halpern-Meekin et al., 2010). The present findings show that the differences in conflict between churning and stable relationships may be far more problematic than simply a greater likelihood of arguing; churning is strongly associated with an increased likelihood of physical violence and verbal abuse experiences, and there are reasons to believe that this bundle of relationship behaviors may be indicative of an inability to properly manage conflict and prevent escalation.

Future research should attempt to replicate these results with a nationally representative sample, as opposed to the regional sample used in the present project. A longitudinal data set with shorter time periods between waves – enabling the collection of multiple observations of these relatively short-lived romances -- would enable testing of the causal relationship between churning and conflict. Further, additional research should examine whether the association between churning and conflict is unique to this particular period in the life course, or is also found in adolescence, middle adulthood, and older adulthood. The association between having a relationship marked by churning and conflict in young adulthood and later union outcomes should also be explored, as there are indications that early experiences of conflict and churning are predictive of such experiences in the future (Halpern et al., 2001; Henton, Cate, Koval, Lloyd, & Christopher, 1983; O'Leary & Slep, 2003; Wineberg, 1999).

Rather than being developmentally appropriate, instability in emerging adulthood may be predictive of problematic romantic relationships in both the short and long term. The present findings contribute to our understanding of romantic relationships in emerging adulthood, the association between relationship instability and intimate partner violence, and the nature of relationship instability itself; results underline the importance of distinguishing those who are stably broken up from churners, as their relationship experiences, at least in terms of physical violence and verbal abuse, are distinctive.

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Table 1. *Descriptive Characteristics, n=792*

| | |
|---|---|
| Physical conflict | 39.84% |
| Verbal abuse | 52.51% |
| Stably together | 40.97% |
| Stably broken up | 14.87% |
| Churning | 44.16% |
| Age | 20.300 (0.061) |
| Male | 50.34% |
| Female | 49.66% |
| Race | |
| White | 65.43% |
| Black | 25.55% |
| Hispanic | 3.41% |
| Other race | 5.47% |
| Family structure | |
| Two parent | 49.53% |
| Single parent | 26.26% |
| Stepparent | 18.06% |
| Other living arrangement | 5.06% |
| Parental education | |
| Less than high school degree | 11.38% |
| High school degree | 30.98% |
| Some college | 32.90% |
| College or more | 23.26% |
| Conflict history scale – parent | 2.477 (0.062) |
| Conflict history scale – child | 2.188 (0.048) |
| Adolescent temper | 2.816 (0.054) |

Note: Data is weighted to reflect population of Toledo.

Table 2. *Conflict Experience by Relationship Types.*

| | Physical conflict | Verbal abuse | Both physical & verbal conflict |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stably together | 26.85% | 42.48% | 19.75% |
| Stably broken up | 26.55% | 45.13% | 18.58% |
| Churning | 57.18% | 64.23% | 48.17% |

*essions Predicting Physical Conflict and Verbal Abuse, n=792*

| Physical conflict | | | Verbal abuse | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| odel 1<br>R.<br>[illegible] | Model 2<br>O.R.<br>SE | Model 3<br>O.R.<br>SE | Model 1<br>O.R.<br>SE | Model 2<br>O.R.<br>SE | Model 3<br>O.R.<br>SE |
| 0.98 | 0.93 | 0.76 | 1.12 | 1.13 | 0.77 |
| (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.245 | (0.26) | (0.21) |
| 3.64*** | 3.27*** | 1.99*** | 2.45*** | 2.46*** | 1.42† |
| (0.60) | (0.56) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.41) | (0.27) |
| | 1.02 | 0.98 | | 1.08† | 1.05 |
| | (0.05) | (0.05) | | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| | 1.31† | 1.57* | | 1.48** | 1.63** |
| | (0.21) | (0.29) | | (0.22) | (0.28) |
| | 1.35 | 1.32 | | 0.85 | 0.72 |
| | (0.28) | (0.30) | | (0.17) | (0.16) |
| | 1.66 | 1.74 | | 1.17 | 1.23 |
| | (0.56) | (0.64) | | (0.38) | (0.43) |
| | 1.58 | 1.72 | | 1.11 | 1.14 |
| | (0.53) | (0.62) | | (0.37) | (0.40) |
| | 0.97 | 0.82 | | 0.94 | 0.80 |
| | (0.20) | (0.18) | | (0.18) | (0.16) |
| | 1.63* | 1.44 | | 1.38 | 1.26 |
| | (0.35) | (0.33) | | (0.29) | (0.28) |
| | 1.12 | 1.08 | | 0.82 | 0.82 |
| | (0.42) | (0.43) | | (0.30) | (0.32) |
| | 1.84* | 1.81* | | 1.40 | 1.38 |
| | (0.48) | (0.52) | | (0.36) | (0.39) |
| | 1.01 | 0.96 | | 1.05 | 1.01 |
| | (0.19) | (0.20) | | (0.19) | (0.20) |
| | 0.94 | 1.08 | | 1.01 | 1.15 |
| | (0.21) | (0.26) | | (0.21) | (0.26) |
| | 1.23† | 1.21 | | 0.93 | 0.87 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Conflict history | | 0.96 | 0.90 | | 1.28 | 1.31 |
| scale – child | | (0.22) | (0.22) | | (0.34) | (0.37) |
| Adolescent | | 1.18* | 1.13† | | 1.13† | 1.09 |
| temper | | (0.08) | (0.08) | | (0.07) | (0.07) |
| Cohabitation | | | 1.39 | | | 1.38 |
| | | | (0.30) | | | (0.28) |
| Relationship | | | 1.19* | | | 1.15* |
| duration | | | (0.08) | | | (0.07) |
| Self-esteem | | | 0.95† | | | 0.92** |
| | | | (0.03) | | | (0.03) |
| Sense of control | | | 0.62* | | | 1.06 |
| | | | (0.14) | | | (0.23) |
| Intimate self- | | | 1.01 | | | 1.01 |
| disclosure | | | (0.03) | | | (0.23) |
| Love | | | 1.11 | | | 1.08 |
| | | | (0.13) | | | (0.12) |
| Validation | | | 1.02 | | | 0.96 |
| | | | (0.06) | | | (0.06) |
| Commitment | | | 0.92 | | | 0.79** |
| | | | (0.08) | | | (0.07) |
| Asymmetry – | | | 1.14 | | | 1.03 |
| need | | | (0.11) | | | (0.10) |
| Asymmetry – do | | | 1.18† | | | 1.09 |
| for partner | | | (0.11) | | | (0.10) |
| Relationship | | | 1.12 | | | 1.18* |
| alternatives | | | (0.10) | | | (0.10) |
| Communication | | | 0.90 | | | 0.98 |
| skills | | | (0.10) | | | (0.10) |
| Mistrust of | | | 1.41*** | | | 1.45*** |
| partner | | | (0.12) | | | (0.12) |
| Pseudo R- | 0.07 | 0.11 | 0.20 | 0.03 | 0.06 | 0.14 |
| squared | | | | | | |

Note: reference categories: stably together, female, White, two-parent family, parent – high school degree, dating
†p<.10. *$p$ < .05. **$p$ < .01. ***$p$ < .001