SELF DISCLOSURE & INTERPERSONAL NEED COMPATIBILITY

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REVIEW We will analyze the relation of heterosexual dyadic compatibility to self disclosure in the period of first acquaintance. Positive correlation between liking another person and self disclosure has both intuitive appeal and research support (Cozby 1973; Jourard & Lansman 1960). However, the construct, liking is multifaceted. When people first become acquainted, several factors may be considered dimensions of liking which largely determine the extent of later attraction (Murstein 1972; Centers 1975).

Physical appearance is first, followed by the interactants' basic values and attitudes. These factors sometimes become salient in the first few minutes of interaction. A third factor is liking, composed of 1) affection, 2) inclusion, and 3) control (Schutz 1960). These interpersonal needs and the potential of others to gratify them are important in determining attraction (Murstein 1972).

. If need compatibility implies mutually high levels of potential resources for gratification, then underlying compatibility need structures should facilitate self disclosure. Murstein disagrees, stating that need compatibility is not recognized until much later, until relatively high levels of intimacy are achieved. Though physical attraction and attitudes are most salient to later attraction, need resources are also influential. Needs and resources are recognized early in the acquaintance process, and they affect initial interperson attraction.

. Manifest self disclosure in dyadic interaction is a product of a complex interplay of many factors besides compatibility. Affiliative conflict theory asserts a mutually developed equilibrium of intimacy, which controls self disclosure (Argyle 1968). This preferred balance point is a function of tacit norms for intimacy via many verbal and non-verbal maneuvers, including eye contact, proximity, smiling, and intimacy of subject. When this equilibrium is disrupted, as by excessive proximity, actors try to restore it by reducing eye contact or by changing position. However, research shows that self disclosure in early acquaintance lacks depth.

. Other factors promote self disclosure, since it encourages a similar response by the partner (Jourard 1964). This is called the "dyadic effect" where the recipient of self disclosure signals that the situation is not threatening, and that openness is appropriate. Many studies demonstrate the reciprocity of self disclosure (Ehrlich & Graeven 1071; Kohan 1975; Sermat & Smyth 1973; Worthy 1969). These studies do not measure the dyadic effect, as defined by Jourard. Instead of using micro analysis to show whether a self disclosing statement immediately generates a similar response, these studies used macro analysis, with aggregates and means of total self disclosure, by time periods.

. We have four questions:

1) What is the self disclosure pattern in the newly acquainted heterosexual dyad?

2) Are there differences between compatible and incompatible dyads relating to self disclosure? If so, what need areas are involved?

3) Is reciprocity of self disclosure higher within compatible, as compared to incompatible dyads?

4) Is the direct question or expressed self disclosure more effective to elicit self disclosure from the partner? Jourard (1964) argued that self disclosure begets self disclosure, but Sermat & Smyth (1973) report that questions more consistently elicit self disclosure.

CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECTS

. According to Schutz (1966 17-20) the three interpersonal needs of inclusion, affection, and control

exhaust the area of interpersonal behavior required to understand and predict interpersonal phenomena. He defined three needs to establish and mainain a satisfactory relation with people, as follows: 1) inclusion with respect to interaction and association; 2) affection with respect to love and affection; 3) control with respect to control and power.

. Schutz' FIRO-B questionaire measures individual orientations to interpersonal situations, and permits prediction of behavior. It contains 6 scales of 9 items each. The score for each scale describes what behavior toward others is typical, and what will be expected in response to each of the 3 interpersonal needs.

. Scores for expressed inclusion, wanted inclusion, expressed control, wanted control, expressed affection, and wanted affection, permit calculation of compatibility indexes between two persons whose scores are known. Schutz (1960) has identified several types of dyadic compatibility indexes which are relevant to reciprocal compatibility. I am indebted to S. Close for definitions of reciprocal compatibility and similarity compatibility.

1) Reciprocal compatibility incorporates A's description of how he likes to be treated by others, relative to B's description of how he likes to act toward others. If B exhibits the behavior that A desires, they have reciprocal compatibility.

2) Similarity compatibility incorporates similarity of behavior of individuals A and B to the behaviors which they want. If the expressed behaviors of A and B are equal in magnitude, and their wanted behaviors are also equal, they have similarity compatibility.

PROCEDURE Data were obtained from videotaped interactions of opposite sex dyads. An original pool of 450 males and females in undergraduate sociology and psychology courses was reduced to 72 subjects comprising 36 heterosexual dyads.

. The laboratory interaction consisted of a 15-minute record of unstructured interaction between a male and a female student. They were first introduced and put at ease by the experimenter before instructions were given. They were told: "Get to know each other, as you normally do when first meeting a person." They were also told that after they had visited for a while, and found out something about the other's personality and character, they would be asked separately to fill out questionnaires on their impressions of the other. They were told that interactions would be videotaped, but they were not told the duration of the session.

. All 36 interactions were videotaped with 2 cameras with zoom lenses behaind one-way mirrors, using a split screen, for simultaneous recording of each actor's head and torso.

. Subjects were single, white, aged 17 to 25, and initally unacquainted. Subject participation was also based on dyadic composite scores on the FIRO-B scale. The potential experimental dyads were generated as follows: 1) Reciprocity and similarity compatibility scores were computer calculated for all possible dyadic male-female pairings for each of the FIRO-B domains, and grand means were determined for similarity and reciprocity scores for each domain.

. The following constraints were used: For Compatible, similarity and reciprocity scores could not exceed 2.0; For Incompatible, similarity and reciprocity scores must be at least 10.0; intermediate levels were limited to the interval 4.0 - 8.0, inclusive. Incompatible and compatible dyads were generated for each of the FIRO-B domains.

. Each dyad was either highly compatible or highly incompatible on both similar and reciprocal dimensions for one of the three need areas while compatibility

TABLE 1: SELF DISCLOSURE BY COMPATIBILITY, FIRO-B, AND TIME
(Split plot analysis of variance)

Source	df	ms	F	p_f
Compatibility	1	36.13	0.66	.57
FIRO-B	2	201.80	3.74	.034
Compatibility x FIRO-B	2	48.42	0.89	.57
Dyad (Compatibility x FIRO-B)	30	53.90		
Time	1	357.30	10.38	.003
Compatibility x Time	1	93.38	2.70	.10
FIRO-B x Time	2	38.90	1.13	.33
Compatibility x FIRO-B x Time	2	96.70	2.80	.074
Time X Dyad (Compatibility x FIRO-B)	30	34.39		

TABLE 2 DUNN'S TEST, DIFFERENCE OF MEANS FOR EARLY SELF DISCLOSURE
(Split plot analysis of variance)

Category		CA	CC	CI	IA	IC
Compatible Affection	CA					
Compatible Control	CC	13.2*				
Compatible Inclusion	CI	6.4*	6.8*			
Incompatible Affection	IA	8.0*	5.2*	1.6		
Incompatible Control	IC	7.6*	5.6*	1.2	.4	
Incompatible Inclusion	II	6.6*	6.6*	.2	1.4	1.0
(Critical Difference, $CD_{.01}$ = 4.6)						

TABLE 3: ALL SELF DISCLOSURE

Category		CA	CC	CI	IA	IC
Compatible Affection	CA					
Compatible Control	CC	7.8*				
Compatible Inclusion	CI	2.0*	5.8*			
Incompatible Affection	IA	1.8*	6.0*	.2		
Incompatible Control	IC	4.0*	3.8*	1.1	2.3	
Incompatible Inclusion	II	.3*	8.0*	2.3	2.0	4.3
(Critical Difference, $CD_{.01}$ = 4.6)						

TABLE 4: RECIPROCITY OF SELF DISCLOSURE

Category		CA	CC	CI	IA	IC	Mean
Compatible Affection	CA						6.6
Compatible Control	CC	2.0*					4.6
Compatible Inclusion	CI	1.1	1.1				5.5
Incompatible Affection	IA	2.5*	.5	1.4			4.1
Incompatible Control	IC	3.0*	1.0	1.9*	.5		3.6
Incompatible Inclusion	II	1.6	.4	.5	.9	1.4	5.0
(Critical Difference, $CD_{.05}$ = 1.8)							

scores for the other two need areas were close to the grand mean. This gives a 2x3 factorial design with 6 dyads per cell. From each 15-minute recorded interaction an early period of the 3rd, 4th, & 5th minutes, and a late period of the 12th, 13th, & 14th minutes. This provided repeated measures over time, in a split-plot factorial design (Kirk 1968).

ANALYSIS Reciprocity of self disclosure was measured with a sequence probability table (Allen & Guy 1974). Sequence probability is the likelihood that a particular kind of utterance will be followed by every alternative kind of utterance. This includes the probability that an utterance will be followed by one of the same kind, from the same actor, or, on a separate table, by the partner. Reciprocity is defined as a mixing pattern, where self disclosure at the same level of intimacy is contiguously exhanged. The sequence probability table provides the proportion of all types of assertions and questions which were followed by a specific kind of utterance. From this table, a dynamic analysis of the stream of conversation is possible. Such analysis fosters understanding of the basic function of self disclosure, as statements, and as responses to questions.

. Both amount and intimacy levels of disclosure were measured, but there was insufficient variance to analyze the effect of intimacy levels. Table 1 reveals a lack of significance for the main effects of compatibility [$F(1,30)=0.7$; $p=.57$]. Using Dunn's test for differences between means (Kirk 1968), Table 2 shows that compatible affection dyads disclosed significantly more during the early phase of interaction. Though there was a significant overall F-ratio for time, only the compatible affection dyads dropped significantly over time [$t(30)=-3.92$; $p=.001$]. For the total interaction, combining Periods 1 and 2, compatible affection dyads dropped in their second period output to the point of becoming more similar to the other dyads.

. In all, reciprocity of disclosure occured at higher rates with compatible dyads [$F(1,30)=2.54$; $p=0.11$], and compatible affection dyads reciprocated the most, as shown in Table 4. Compatible inclusion was significantly higher only in relation to its opposite, incompatible inclusion.

. Subjects asked 455 questions in the 6 minute sampling time for the 36 dyads. 1) Only 6 addressed highly intimate self disclosure; 2) 294 asked for non-intimate disclosure; and 3) 155 questions did not relate to self disclosure.

. Analysis of self disclosure assertions versus questions eliciting self disclosure revealed that questions were far more efficient. Asking questions for self disclosure at a given level of intimacy evoked self disclosure 89% of the time, while self disclosure assertions evoked self disclosure only 36% of the time ($p=.05$, signs test, Bruning & Kintz 1968). An F test for dependent means showed no significant difference in self disclosure by sex [$F(1,30)=1.75$; $p=.29$].

DISCUSSION The initial phase of acquaintance of heterosexual dyadic strangers usually has an equal amount of self disclosure at a rather low level of intimacy. Reciprocity of disclosure does occur, and more so in dyads compatible in the domain of affection. To get personal information from another, a direct question will secure the data more effectively than to seek response to one's own disclosure. The experimental dyads did not reach intimate levels of disclosure, corroborating other research findings, that early acquaintance phase interaction contains more breadth than depth (Altman & Haythorn 1965).

. The overall compatibility-incompatibility differences were not significant. Perhaps it was unreasonable to assume that all three dimensions of compatibility would promote self disclosure. The data suggest that dyads compatible in control may be more reluctant to make disclosures.

. The early loading of self-disclosure, and the high level of reciprocity in the compatible affection dyads suggests that need for warmth, closeness and intimacy is most salient to initial dyadic encounters and later self dis-

closure. This finding amplifies Schutz' theory that while inclusion and control needs are important in groups, affection needs are a dyadic issue. Affection needs surface more rapidly, and are most readily gratified in the dyadic encounter. The significantly higher levels of disclosure in the affection group suggests further that need compatibility is recognized early, and operates to influence initial impressions and disclosure output.

. Compatible affection dyads in the second time period dropped significantly in disclosure, becoming equal to the other groups in total disclosure. We can interpret this in terms of Argyle's affiliative conflict theory (Argyle 1968). Dyad members who disclose much of themselves at the middle level of intimacy could choose: 1) going to higher levels of intimacy, or 2) halting self disclosure output on reaching a sufficient exchange of personal information, controlled by tacit mutual norms. These norms apparently forbade giving highly intimate personal data to a stranger in the context of an experiment. A reduction of disclosure was required to remain within comfortable limits.

CONCLUSION The validity of these experimental findings depends on the validity of the FIRO-B parameters of inclusion, control, and affection. The latter are based on a paper and pencil test intsrument which has shown fairly high consistency with other instruments of this kind. But the experimental data were derived from rather more extensive sequences of well-recorded overt social behavior. The overt social behavior was more varied, both in categorical types and in intensity, than the FIRO-B classifying tests, to establish interpersonal needs. The two types of data are not fully compatible, and the social behavior recorded on videotape may be taken as a more veridical data source than the more passive responses to the FIRO-B instrument. This necessarily tempers confidence in the findings.

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