



Research Report

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Relationship Characteristics and
Conflict Reported in an Online
Weekly Survey: Preliminary Results

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Preliminary Results**

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ABSTRACT

The current paper examines the role of young women's relationship characteristics on experiences of conflict within relationships. We use new longitudinal data from a weekly mixed-mode (online or phone) journal-based survey spanning two and half years. We investigate the effects of time-varying relationship characteristics that capture the intensity, instability, and asymmetry within and across relationships on conflict among a sample of almost 1000 18-21 year old women. The results are preliminary but suggest that the characteristics of young women's relationships influence the likelihood of experiencing conflict net of important individual-level correlates and that the effects of relationship characteristics differ depending on the type of conflict examined (fought or argued only versus experienced verbal and/or physical conflict). Intensity of relationships increases the risk of both types of conflict while instability and asymmetry within relationships increases the risk of experiencing verbal or physical conflict only. In the final paper to be presented at the ASA conference, analyses will be expanded to include additional measures of asymmetry and cumulative measures of young women's relationship experiences as well as measures of change within relationships. We will also explore data from semi-structured interviews to better understand the findings from the quantitative component of the study.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Violence between intimate partners is a significant health problem and an important social issue, particularly among adolescents and young adults. Approximately one-third of young people report some type of dating violence victimization, although estimates vary widely due to differences in operational definitions of dating violence and sample selection (Foshee, 1996; Halpern et al., 2001; Henton et al., 1983; Malik, Sorenson, & Aneshensel, 1997; O’Keeffe, Brockopp, & Chew, 1986; Spriggs, Halpern, Herring, & Schoenbach, 2009). A growing body of literature demonstrates both short and long term consequences of intimate partner violence among young people. These include higher rates of psychological distress as well as higher rates of adverse reproductive health outcomes such as unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) (DiClemente et al., 2001; Gallaty & Zimmer-Gembeck, 2008; Kreiter et al., 1999; Roberts, Klein, & Fisher, 2003; Silverman, Raj, Mucci, & Hathaway, 2001; Slashinski, Coker, & Davis, 2003; Spriggs et al., 2009; Wingood et al., 2001).

A number of sociodemographic factors have been associated with dating violence victimization. Gender is one important factor yet results are often inconsistent. Some researchers have found that females report higher levels of dating violence (Champion et al., 2008; Halpern, Spriggs, Martin, & Kupper, 2009), while others have found equal rates of dating violence among males and females (Henton et al., 1983; O’Keeffe et al., 1986). Still others have found that males report *physical* victimization levels similar to or higher than females (Foshee, 1996; Malik et al., 1997) and that females report *sexual* victimization levels higher than those reported by males (Kreiter et al., 1999; Malik et al., 1997). Research has also found that the correlates of dating violence differ by gender (Kreiter et al., 1999; Malik et al., 1997). While we recognize the importance of studying dating violence among both women and men, our sample includes women only. We believe that a closer examination of women’s relationship experiences is a necessary step towards better understanding conflict within relationships.

Other important sociodemographic factors include age, race/ethnicity, and family background. Although the mechanisms through which these individual-level factors operate are not well understood, differentials have been found. Dating violence frequently begins during adolescence (Henton et al., 1983). Among high school samples, the prevalence of partner violence has been found to increase with age, which may be a function of the accumulation of dating experiences that occurs with age (Jezl et al., 1996; Kreiter et al., 1999; Silverman et al., 2001).

While findings regarding racial/ethnic differences in risk of dating violence have varied, a few studies have found differential prevalence rates by race/ethnicity (Brown & Bulanda, 2008; Frias & Angel, 2005; Halpern et al., 2001; Malik et al., 1997). Family background has also been posited as a potential risk factor. Researchers have found that parental divorce and the presence of a stepparent is positively associated with dating violence (Malik et al., 1997) as is living with a single parent (Foshee et al., 2008). Parental education has also been shown to be negatively associated with dating violence (Foshee et al., 2008).

In addition to investigating these important individual-level correlates of dating violence, we expand on past research by also examining how relationships themselves are related to dating violence, particularly the intensity, instability, and asymmetry within relationships. The formation of romantic relationships provides a critical interpersonal context for development and is a central feature of social development during adolescence and young adulthood (Furman, Brown, & Feiring 1999; Giordano et al., 2001; Graber, Brooks-Gunn, & Petersen 1996). Because adolescence and young adulthood are key developmental periods, relationship experiences early in the life course can shape subsequent experiences occurring in adulthood. Findings that suggest a high frequency of coercive and aggressive behaviors beginning at adolescence and young adulthood, such as dating violence, highlight the importance of viewing young people's relationships as a significant period in which risk factors for experiencing violence may translate into patterns of violence in adult relationships.

To advance our understanding of the processes leading to conflict within relationships during the transition to adulthood, we investigate the role of young women's relationship characteristics. A unique feature of our study is the ability to capture dynamic relationship experiences over time. We posit that individuals' own characteristics as well as the characteristics of their relationships influence the occurrence of conflict with partners. We investigate the effects of time-varying relationship characteristics that capture the intensity, instability, and asymmetry within and across relationships as well as the contributions of individuals' sociodemographic characteristics, family background, and prior sexual, contraceptive, and pregnancy experiences. We hypothesize that having fought or argued with a partner is more common within more intense relationships but that specific acts of verbal and/or physical conflict are more likely during periods of instability and within asymmetric relationships. We further posit that these effects will be reduced upon controlling for individual characteristics due to selection into different types of relationships but will have independent effects.

DATA AND METHODS

Study Design

The “Relationship Dynamics and Social Life (RDSL)” study is based on a sample of 1,003 young women, ages 18-19, residing in a Michigan county. Their names and contact information were obtained from public records. The first interviews were conducted in March 2008, and the study is still in the field.

A 60-minute face-to-face baseline survey interview was conducted to assess important aspects of family background; demographic information; key attitudes, values, and beliefs; current and past friendship and romantic relationships; education; and career trajectories. At the conclusion of this baseline interview, all respondents were invited to participate in a weekly journal-based study – a mixed mode (online and phone) survey. Each week respondents choose to complete the journal either by logging into the study’s secure website, or by calling a toll free number and completing the journal with a live interviewer. The journal period for each respondent is approximately 2.5 years; during that time each respondent can potentially complete up to 183 journals. (They are invited to complete each new journal 5 – 10 days after the prior journal.) Respondents are paid \$1 per weekly journal with \$5 bonuses for on-time completion of five weekly journals in a row. Automated reminder email and/or text messages are sent to respondents weekly. If a respondent is late, study staff first attempt to contact her by phone, and later by email and letter in attempt to regain her participation. Respondents who become 60 or more days late are offered an increased incentive for completing the next journal. Small gifts (e.g., pen, chapstick, compact, pencil) are also given to respondents to reward continued participation.

We have completed the baseline data collection, resulting in 1003 baseline interviews and thus far 30,124 weekly journals (this portion of the study is still in the field). Our incentive scheme, coupled with the cooperative nature of this age group and their interest in the subject matter, has resulted in extremely high cooperation rates. We have an 83% response rate and a 94% cooperation rate for the baseline interviews. Over 99% of respondents who completed a baseline interview enrolled in the weekly journal portion of the study (N=992). Furthermore, weekly journal participation rates are approximately 62% (the proportion of respondents who have completed a journal in the past 30 days).

Variable Description and Measurement

In every weekly journal (j), respondents are asked whether they are still in the relationship they talked about at the last weekly journal ($j-1$), where j stands for the journal number. If they are, they are asked questions about events that occurred in that relationship since the last weekly journal. If they are no longer in the same relationship, they are asked to identify their partner, provide the characteristics of the partner if they have not talked about that partner before (e.g., age, race, ethnicity, education), and then answer questions about events that occurred in that relationship since the last weekly journal. We use this weekly information to create time-varying conflict and relationship characteristics at j and $j-1$, respectively.

Conflict

For the analyses presented here, we use information collected weekly in the journal to create time-varying measures of conflict in the “focal” relationship discussed. Respondents are first asked, “Did you and [Partner Name] fight or have any arguments” during the period since the last journal interview. Respondents who answer yes are then asked about three specific types of conflict: 1) whether the partner swore at the respondent, called her names or insulted her, 2) whether the partner threatened her with violence, and/or 3) whether the partner pushed, hit, or threw something at her that could hurt. The final mutually exclusive measure includes the following categories: 1) none (i.e., did not fight or argue with the partner), 2) fought or argued only (i.e., none of the specific acts occurred), and 3) experienced any of the specific acts of verbal or physical conflict (swear, threaten with violence, or push/hit/throw).

Relationship Characteristics

The relationship characteristics of interest for the analysis presented here capture the intensity and instability within relationships: relationship type, time spent together, exclusivity, communication, sexual activity, and concurrency. We also investigate various forms of asymmetry. For the results presented here we focus on unequal decision-making between partners but will expand this construct to include asymmetries in the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondent and her partner (e.g., age, racial/ethnic, and educational differences between partners).

Relationship type is based on several questions and includes the following categories: 1) not in a relationship in the previous weekly journal (but back with an old partner at j), 2) not in a

relationship in the previous weekly journal (and with a new partner at j), 3) married, 4) engaged, 5) cohabiting, and 6) dating. Dating relationships are the reference in the regression models. Time spent together is based on a question that asks whether the respondent spent a lot of time with her partner and is coded 1 if yes and 0 otherwise. Exclusivity is based on a question that asks whether the respondent and her partner agreed to only have a special romantic relationship with each other, and no one else and is also coded 1 if yes and 0 otherwise. Communication is based on a question that asks whether the respondent talked to her partner about birth control and is coded 1 if yes and 0 otherwise. We also examine a dichotomous indicator for whether the respondent and her partner had sexual intercourse. Concurrency is based on two questions, the first asks whether the respondent had sex with anyone other than the partner and the second asks whether the respondent thinks her partner had sex with anyone other than her. A relationship is considered to have been concurrent if the respondent answered yes to either of these two questions (1/0). Unequal decision-making is based on a question that asks who decides what to do or where to go when the respondent and her partner go out. Relationships in which the respondent or the partner (but not both) make decisions are considered to have had unequal decision-making (1/0).

In the final paper to be presented at the ASA conference, analyses will also be expanded to include cumulative measures of young women's relationship experiences (e.g., proportion of weeks a respondent spent a lot of time with a partner) as well as measures of change within relationships (e.g., respondent spent more time with a partner in the current week than in the previous week).

Baseline Controls

Sociodemographic characteristics. Several sociodemographic characteristics measured at the baseline interview are included as controls in the current analysis. Age is coded in years and ranges from 18 to 20 years; the reference category is 18 years old. Race is included as a dichotomous indicator for African American versus non-African American. School enrollment is created using information about the type of school the respondent is enrolled in and highest grade completed and includes the following categories: 1) not enrolled and did not graduate high school, 2) not enrolled and did graduate high school, 3) high school, 4) two year college/vocational/technical/other, and 5) four year college. Four year college is the reference

category. A respondent is coded as receiving public assistance if she identified receiving at least one of the following: 1) WIC, 2) FIP, 3) cash welfare, or 4) food stamps. Importance of religion is included as a continuous measure ranging from not important (1) to more important than anything else (4). A dichotomous measure indicating whether the respondent is currently living with a romantic partner is also included (1/0). Mother's age at first birth is included as a dichotomous measure indicating that the respondent's mother had her first child when she was younger than 20. Family structure is based on information about who the respondent lived with while growing up and includes the following three categories: 1) both biological parents or biological parent and step-parent, 2) single biological parent only, and 3) other situations. Two-parent family (biological or biological and step) is the reference category. Mother's education is coded as a dichotomous indicator for less than high school or otherwise. Low parental income is operationalized as \$14,999 or less; a dummy for don't know or refused is also included.

Sexual, contraceptive, and pregnancy experiences. Sexual, contraceptive, and pregnancy experiences as of the baseline interview are also included as controls. Indicators for early sexual debut (less than or equal to 14) and average sexual debut (15 or 16 years old) are included as dummy variables in the regression models. Lifetime number of sexual partners is continuous. Respondents who have ever had sex without using birth control are coded 1 and 0 otherwise. Prior pregnancy experience is included as a three category variable: 1) no prior pregnancies, 2) one prior pregnancy, and 3) two or more prior pregnancies. The category for no prior pregnancies is the reference.

Analytic Strategy

We use multinomial logistic regression to estimate models of whether the respondent experienced conflict in her relationship in a given week. The analytic sample includes all weeks in which the respondent was in a relationship and therefore was at risk of experiencing conflict within her relationship (N=17,805). We present additive effects on the log-odds of experiencing conflict in a particular week. Models account for the clustering of observations (journals) within individuals.

The relationship characteristics in our models are measured one week prior to the week in which we examine conflict. In other words, relationship characteristics are lagged by one week. We adopt this strategy to guard against reciprocal causation. For instance, conflict in a given

week may lead to spending less time together that week. Of course, a couple's expectations about conflict may be important predictors of characteristics of their relationship, and thus the reciprocal causation problem is not completely solved by the use of the time lag.

One difficulty resulting from the time-lagged independent variables is that some respondents were not in a relationship during the prior week. In other words, their relationship is in its first week (or the respondent has reconnected with a prior partner after a break). Thus, characteristics of their relationship the prior week cannot be used to predict conflict in the current week. Our models of relationship type include indicator variables for these situations.

RESULTS

The first panel of Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the young women's relationship experiences reported within the weekly journal portion of the study. Conflict was reported in over one-quarter of journals. Specifically, respondents reported having fought or argued with a partner in 17% of journals and reported experiencing specific acts of verbal or physical conflict with a partner (swear, threatened with violence, and/or push/hit/throw) in 9% of journals. 7% were not in a relationship the prior week – 42% of whom were back with an old partner in the current week and 58% of whom were with a new partner in the current week. Respondents reported being married in 4% of previous journals, engaged in 12% of previous journals, cohabiting in 14% of previous journals, and dating in 63% of previous journals. Respondents reported spending a lot of time with a partner in over two-thirds of previous journals and reported being exclusive with a partner in over half of previous journals. Communication about birth control with a partner was reported in about one-third of previous journals. Respondents had sex with a partner in over half of previous journals and reported that either she or her partner had sex with someone else in 4% of previous journals. Respondents reported unequal decision-making in 7% of previous journals, that is, she or her partner but not both, made decisions about where to go and what to do.

The second panel of Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the young women as of the baseline interview. Most respondents were 18 or 19 years old at baseline and about 35% are African American. About 13% of respondents were enrolled in high school at baseline, over half were enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college, and about one-third were not enrolled in school. Over one-quarter of respondents reported receiving public assistance at the time of the baseline

interview. The average religious importance was 2.69 (equivalent to somewhat important to very important). About 16% were living with their romantic partner at baseline. About 37% of respondents' biological mother's had a first child prior to age 20. Half of respondents had lived with two parents (both biological or biological/step) while growing up, about 40% had lived with one parent, and about 8% had lived in another family situation. Less than 10% of respondents' mothers received less than a high school degree. Almost 14% of respondents' parents had an annual income of less than \$15,000. About 18% of respondents first had sex at age 14 or younger and about 37% first had sex between the ages of 15 and 16. The average number of lifetime sexual partners was four. Over half of the sexually experienced respondents reported ever having had sex without using birth control. Almost one-quarter of respondents reported at least one prior pregnancy.

Table 2 presents the results of the multinomial logistic regressions of conflict on relationship characteristics without baseline controls. Column A shows the results for having fought or argued with a partner and column B shows the results for experiencing specific acts of verbal and/or physical conflict (swear, threaten with violence, push/hit/throw), each relative to the reference category, none. Models 1 through 7 include each relationship characteristic only and Model 8 includes all relationship characteristics. Relationship type was significantly associated with experiencing conflict. Compared to dating relationships, respondents who were newly back together with a prior partner were more likely to fight and were more likely to experience verbal or physical conflict. On the other hand, respondents who were in a new relationship with a *new* partner were less likely to fight or to experience verbal or physical conflict. While respondents who were in a cohabiting relationship were no more likely to fight with a partner than those who were in a dating relationship, they were significantly more likely to experience verbal and/or physical conflict. Spending a lot of time with a partner and having had sex with a partner were each significantly positively associated with both types of conflict. Communication about birth control was significantly associated with a greater likelihood of fighting, but not of experiencing verbal and/or physical conflict. Concurrency – either partner had sex with someone else – was significantly related to increased probability of verbal and/or physical conflict. Unequal decision-making was also significantly positively associated with experiencing verbal and/or physical conflict.

For the most part, these significant results remain after including all relationship characteristics in the same model (Model 8), with a few notable exceptions. While being back with an old partner was still associated with a greater odds of experiencing both types of conflict, being with a new partner was no longer significantly associated with a lower odds of either type of conflict. Upon accounting for the other relationship characteristics, married and engaged respondents were significantly more likely to fight with a partner but no more likely to experience verbal and/or physical conflict. Compared to respondents who were in dating relationships, cohabitators had higher odds of experiencing both types of conflict. Spending time together and communication about birth control were no longer significantly positively associated with either type of conflict net of the other relationship characteristics, whereas exclusivity became significantly positively associated with both types of conflict.

Table 3 presents the results of the multinomial regression models of conflict on relationship characteristics including baseline controls. The results show that net of important baseline sociodemographic and behavioral factors, each relationship characteristic was still significantly associated with conflict (Models 1-7); there were a few notable differences. For instance, net of baseline controls, respondents who were in a new relationship with a prior partner had no higher odds of fighting, but still had higher odds of verbal and/or physical conflict. Being married or engaged became significantly associated with a lower odds of verbal and/or physical conflict and cohabiting was no longer significantly associated with higher odds of verbal and/or physical conflict. Spending a lot of time together and communicating about birth control were only significantly positively associated with fighting with a partner, while concurrency and unequal decision-making were only significantly positively associated with experiencing verbal and/or physical conflict.

Exclusivity and sex, however, were each significantly positively associated with both fighting and experiencing verbal and/or physical conflict. Several of these relationship characteristics continued to be significantly associated with conflict net of each other and net of baseline controls, and cohabiting relationships became significantly more likely to experience both types of conflict (Model 8).

DISCUSSION

The current study examines the role of young women's relationship characteristics on experiences of conflict within relationships. A unique feature of this study is the ability to capture dynamic relationship experiences over time. Using new longitudinal data from a weekly mixed-mode (online or phone) journal-based survey, we investigate the effects of time-varying relationship characteristics that capture the intensity, instability, and asymmetry within and across relationships. The results are preliminary as we are still in the midst of data collection, but suggest that the characteristics of young women's relationships influence the likelihood of experiencing conflict and that the effects of these characteristics differ depending on the type of conflict examined (fought or argued only versus experienced verbal and/or physical conflict). Intensity of relationships increases the risk of both types of conflict while instability and asymmetry within relationships increases the risk of experiencing verbal and/or physical conflict only. In the final paper to be presented at the ASA conference, analyses will be expanded to include additional measures of asymmetry and cumulative measures of young women's relationship experiences as well as measures of change within relationships. We will also explore data from semi-structured interviews to better understand the findings from the quantitative component of the study.

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Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Measures Used in the Analyses

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
<i>Conflict</i>					
None	17,805	0.74		0	1
Fought or argued	17,805	0.17		0	1
Swear, threaten with violence, and/or push/hit/throw	17,805	0.09		0	1
<i>Relationship Characteristics</i>					
Intensity and Instability					
Relationship type					
New relationship (with prior partner)	17,805	0.03		0	1
New relationship	17,805	0.04		0	1
Married	17,805	0.04		0	1
Engaged	17,805	0.12		0	1
Cohabiting	17,805	0.14		0	1
Dating	17,805	0.63		0	1
Spent a lot of time together					
Exclusive	17,805	0.55		0	1
Talked about birth control	17,805	0.32		0	1
Had sex	17,805	0.52		0	1
Concurrency	17,805	0.04		0	1
Asymmetry					
Unequal decision-making	17,805	0.07		0	1
<i>Baseline Control Measures</i>					
Sociodemographic Characteristics					
Age					
18 years old	845	0.41		0	1
19 years old	845	0.50		0	1
20 years old	845	0.09		0	1
African American	845	0.35		0	1
School enrollment and type					
Not enrolled and did not graduate	845	0.08		0	1
Not enrolled and did graduate	845	0.23		0	1
High school	845	0.13		0	1
2 year college/vocational/technical/other	845	0.29		0	1
4 year college	845	0.27		0	1
Receiving public assistance	845	0.27		0	1
Religious importance	845	2.69	0.92	1	4
Living with romantic partner	845	0.16		0	1
Biological mother less than 20 years old at first birth	845	0.37		0	1
Family Structure					
Biological parents	845	0.46		0	1
Biological and step parent	845	0.07		0	1
One biological parent only	845	0.39		0	1
Other	845	0.08		0	1
Mother's education less than high school graduate	845	0.08		0	1
Parental income					
\$14,999 or less	845	0.14		0	1
\$15,000 or greater	845	0.66		0	1
Don't know/Refused	845	0.20		0	1

Sexual, Contraceptive, and Pregnancy Experiences

Age at first sex					
14 years or less	845	0.18		0	1
15-16 years	845	0.37		0	1
17 years or greater/never had sex	845	0.45		0	1
Lifetime number of sexual partners	845	3.54	4.62	0	57
Ever had sex without birth control	845	0.51		0	1
Prior pregnancies					
0 prior pregnancies	845	0.77		0	1
1 prior pregnancy	845	0.15		0	1
2 or more prior pregnancies	845	0.08		0	1

Table 2. Multinomial Logistic Regression Results of Conflict, Effects of Relationship Characteristics (N=845 individuals, 17,805 observations)

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	
Relationship Characteristics																	
Intensity and Instability																	
Relationship type (ref: Dating)																	
New relationship (with prior partner)	0.24 *	0.41 **														0.86 ***	1.27 ***
	(0.14)	(0.17)														(0.17)	(0.22)
New relationship	-0.74 ***	-0.86 ***														-0.12	0.01
	(0.15)	(0.23)														(0.17)	(0.27)
Married	0.19	-0.44														0.52 *	-0.15
	(0.30)	(0.36)														(0.29)	(0.36)
Engaged	0.08	0.06														0.40 **	0.34
	(0.16)	(0.24)														(0.16)	(0.24)
Cohabiting	0.09	0.85 ***														0.34 ***	1.02 ***
	(0.13)	(0.20)														(0.13)	(0.19)
Spent a lot of time together			0.20 **	0.21 **												0.06	-0.11
			(0.08)	(0.11)												(0.09)	(0.12)
Exclusive					0.15	-0.19										0.47 ***	0.41 ***
					(0.10)	(0.15)										(0.10)	(0.12)
Talked about birth control							0.19 **	0.04								0.1	-0.09
							(0.08)	(0.13)								(0.08)	(0.13)
Had sex									0.31 ***	0.90 ***						0.25 ***	0.86 ***
									(0.09)	(0.13)						(0.09)	(0.14)
Concurrency											-0.11	0.98 ***				0.1	1.10 ***
											(0.14)	(0.16)				(0.14)	(0.17)
Asymmetry																	
Unequal decision-making													0.07	0.64 ***	0.14	0.58 ***	
													(0.14)	(0.16)	(0.14)	(0.17)	
Constant	-1.52 ***	-2.21 ***	-1.63 ***	-2.20 ***	-1.57 ***	-1.94 ***	-1.55 ***	-2.06 ***	-1.66 ***	-2.62 ***	-1.48 ***	-2.11 ***	-1.49 ***	-2.11 ***	-2.13 ***	-3.08 ***	
	(0.07)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.13)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.06)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.16)	
X ²	74.86		17.1		16.37		17.32		65.04		64.56		33.82		276.54		
Log-likelihood	-13066.47		-13176.36		-13175.73		-13180.91		-13051.63		-13141.49		-13162.47		-12839.5		

Coefficients are effects on log-odds. Standard errors in parentheses. All model X² values are statistically significant at the .001 level. Models 2-7 include a dummy for no relationship at j-1.

A=Fought or argued B=Swear, threaten, and/or push/hit/throw (ref: None)

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001 (one-tailed tests).

Table 3. Multinomial Logistic Regression Results of Conflict, Effects of Relationship Characteristics Net of Controls (N=845 individuals, 17,805 observations)

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Relationship Characteristics																
Intensity and Instability																
Relationship type (ref: Dating)																
New relationship (with prior partner)	0.23 (0.14)	0.34 ** (0.17)													0.86 *** (0.17)	1.19 *** (0.21)
New relationship	-0.74 *** (0.15)	-0.89 *** (0.24)													-0.11 (0.17)	-0.04 (0.26)
Married	-0.03 (0.28)	-1.06 *** (0.41)													0.31 (0.27)	-0.56 (0.39)
Engaged	0.04 (0.16)	-0.54 ** (0.25)													0.38 ** (0.17)	-0.09 (0.24)
Cohabiting	0.09 (0.14)	0.36 (0.23)													0.35 ** (0.14)	0.71 *** (0.21)
Spent a lot of time together			0.18 ** (0.08)	-0.05 (0.12)											0.04 (0.08)	-0.19 (0.12)
Exclusive					0.25 ** (0.10)	0.31 ** (0.15)									0.48 *** (0.09)	0.51 *** (0.12)
Talked about birth control							0.19 ** (0.08)	0.02 (0.13)							0.1 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.13)
Had sex									0.35 *** (0.08)	0.65 *** (0.12)					0.30 *** (0.08)	0.70 *** (0.13)
Concurrency											-0.11 (0.14)	0.99 *** (0.16)			0.09 (0.14)	1.03 *** (0.15)
Asymmetry																
Unequal decision-making													0.11 (0.13)	0.62 *** (0.16)	0.18 (0.13)	0.58 *** (0.17)
Baseline Control Measures																
Sociodemographic Characteristics																
Age (ref: 18 years old)																
19 years old	-0.12 (0.11)	0.09 (0.19)	-0.12 (0.11)	0.06 (0.19)	-0.09 (0.11)	0.09 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.06 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.07 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.07 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.07 (0.19)	-0.11 (0.11)	0.12 (0.18)
20 years old	0.15 (0.24)	-0.09 (0.32)	0.15 (0.23)	-0.05 (0.32)	0.17 (0.23)	-0.03 (0.32)	0.17 (0.23)	-0.05 (0.32)	0.18 (0.23)	0.02 (0.31)	0.15 (0.23)	-0.03 (0.32)	0.16 (0.23)	-0.02 (0.32)	0.18 (0.23)	0.02 (0.30)
African American	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.19 (0.27)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.12 (0.27)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.14 (0.26)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.11 (0.27)	-0.08 (0.12)	-0.08 (0.26)	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.27)	-0.10 (0.12)	-0.17 (0.27)	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.28 (0.27)
School enrollment and type (ref: 4 year college)																
Not enrolled and did not graduate	0.31 (0.31)	0.58 * (0.35)	0.29 (0.31)	0.48 (0.37)	0.32 (0.31)	0.50 (0.37)	0.32 (0.31)	0.48 (0.38)	0.30 (0.31)	0.46 (0.37)	0.31 (0.31)	0.45 (0.37)	0.31 (0.31)	0.50 (0.37)	0.32 (0.31)	0.55 (0.35)
Not enrolled and did graduate	0.27 (0.17)	0.58 ** (0.27)	0.24 (0.17)	0.53 * (0.27)	0.27 (0.17)	0.54 ** (0.27)	0.26 (0.17)	0.52 * (0.27)	0.22 (0.17)	0.46 * (0.27)	0.26 (0.17)	0.50 * (0.27)	0.26 (0.17)	0.50 * (0.27)	0.22 (0.17)	0.48 * (0.27)
High school	0.06 (0.17)	0.58 * (0.30)	0.05 (0.17)	0.52 * (0.30)	0.07 (0.17)	0.55 * (0.30)	0.06 (0.17)	0.52 * (0.30)	0.05 (0.17)	0.50 * (0.30)	0.06 (0.17)	0.48 (0.30)	0.06 (0.17)	0.50 * (0.30)	0.04 (0.17)	0.52 * (0.29)
2 year college/vocational/technical/other	0.04 (0.13)	0.30 (0.25)	0.03 (0.13)	0.27 (0.26)	0.05 (0.13)	0.29 (0.25)	0.05 (0.13)	0.27 (0.26)	0.03 (0.13)	0.25 (0.25)	0.04 (0.13)	0.26 (0.26)	0.04 (0.13)	0.27 (0.25)	0.04 (0.13)	0.27 (0.25)
Receiving public assistance	0.08 (0.16)	0.09 (0.23)	0.08 (0.16)	0.06 (0.24)	0.08 (0.16)	0.07 (0.24)	0.07 (0.16)	0.06 (0.24)	0.10 (0.16)	0.08 (0.23)	0.08 (0.16)	0.05 (0.23)	0.08 (0.16)	0.04 (0.24)	0.10 (0.16)	0.10 (0.22)
Religious importance	0.18 *** (0.06)	0.17 (0.10)	0.18 *** (0.06)	0.12 (0.10)	0.19 *** (0.06)	0.13 (0.10)	0.18 *** (0.06)	0.12 (0.10)	0.21 *** (0.06)	0.16 (0.10)	0.18 *** (0.06)	0.13 (0.10)	0.19 *** (0.06)	0.13 (0.10)	0.20 *** (0.06)	0.21 ** (0.10)
Living with romantic partner	0.02 (0.15)	0.50 * (0.29)	0.03 (0.14)	0.53 ** (0.27)	0.17 (0.15)	0.65 ** (0.27)	0.07 (0.14)	0.52 ** (0.26)	0.01 (0.14)	0.45 * (0.25)	0.06 (0.14)	0.57 ** (0.25)	0.06 (0.14)	0.52 ** (0.26)	0.04 (0.15)	0.50 * (0.27)
Biological mother < 20 years old at first birth	-0.25 ** (0.12)	0.11 (0.19)	-0.26 ** (0.12)	0.14 (0.20)	-0.25 ** (0.12)	0.14 (0.20)	-0.25 ** (0.12)	0.13 (0.20)	-0.26 ** (0.12)	0.14 (0.20)	-0.25 ** (0.12)	0.14 (0.20)	-0.25 ** (0.12)	0.14 (0.20)	-0.27 ** (0.12)	0.12 (0.19)

Family Structure (ref: Two bio or bio/step)																
One biological parent only	0.05	-0.23	0.05	-0.24	0.06	-0.24	0.05	-0.24	0.05	-0.23	0.05	-0.26	0.05	-0.23	0.06	-0.23
	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.19)
Other	-0.29	-0.08	-0.28	-0.14	-0.29	-0.15	-0.28	-0.14	-0.3	-0.15	-0.29	-0.14	-0.29	-0.15	-0.31	-0.13
	(0.22)	(0.28)	(0.22)	(0.29)	(0.23)	(0.29)	(0.22)	(0.29)	(0.22)	(0.29)	(0.22)	(0.29)	(0.22)	(0.29)	(0.23)	(0.28)
Mother's education < high school graduate																
	-0.06	-0.49	-0.05	-0.45	-0.06	-0.45	-0.04	-0.45	-0.05	-0.45	-0.05	-0.45	-0.05	-0.43	-0.06	-0.48
	(0.20)	(0.32)	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.19)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.20)	(0.30)	(0.19)	(0.30)
Parental income (ref: \$15,000 or greater)																
\$14,999 or less	0.03	0.06	0.02	-0.05	0.02	-0.05	0.02	-0.05	0.01	-0.09	0.03	-0.06	0.02	-0.08	0.00	-0.04
	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.19)	(0.28)	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.29)	(0.19)	(0.27)
Don't know/Refused	-0.09	-0.63 ***	-0.08	-0.60 ***	-0.11	-0.62 ***	-0.08	-0.59 ***	-0.09	-0.59 ***	-0.09	-0.60 ***	-0.09	-0.61 ***	-0.10	-0.69 ***
	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.12)	(0.21)
Sex, Contraception, and Pregnancy																
Age at first sex (ref: 17 years or greater)																
14 years or less	0.04	0.61 **	0.04	0.62 **	0.08	0.65 **	0.04	0.62 **	0.00	0.51 *	0.05	0.60 **	0.05	0.63 **	0.00	0.52 **
	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.26)
15-16 years	-0.13	0.46 **	-0.13	0.47 **	-0.12	0.48 **	-0.13	0.47 **	-0.17	0.38 *	-0.12	0.47 **	-0.12	0.49 **	-0.17	0.39 **
	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.21)	(0.13)	(0.19)
Lifetime number of sexual partners																
	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Ever had sex without birth control																
	0.31 **	0.52 **	0.31 **	0.47 **	0.34 **	0.50 **	0.31 **	0.47 **	0.28 **	0.43 **	0.32 **	0.47 **	0.31 **	0.47 **	0.29 **	0.47 **
	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.23)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.14)	(0.22)	(0.13)	(0.22)
Prior pregnancies (ref: None)																
1 prior pregnancy	-0.36 **	-0.21	-0.35 **	-0.18	-0.33 **	-0.15	-0.35 **	-0.18	-0.35 **	-0.16	-0.35 **	-0.20	-0.35 **	-0.20	-0.34 **	-0.22
	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.16)	(0.25)
2 or more prior pregnancies	-0.26	-0.39	-0.26	-0.44	-0.27	-0.44	-0.26	-0.44	-0.25	-0.41	-0.25	-0.43	-0.25	-0.41	-0.27	-0.37
	(0.23)	(0.33)	(0.23)	(0.35)	(0.23)	(0.34)	(0.23)	(0.35)	(0.23)	(0.34)	(0.23)	(0.33)	(0.23)	(0.34)	(0.23)	(0.30)
Constant																
	-2.03 ***	-3.35 ***	-2.14 ***	-3.20 ***	-2.24 ***	-3.49 ***	-2.10 ***	-3.23 ***	-2.22 ***	-3.64 ***	-2.02 ***	-3.27 ***	-2.04 ***	-3.29 ***	-2.68 ***	-4.16 ***
	(0.19)	(0.33)	(0.19)	(0.31)	(0.21)	(0.34)	(0.19)	(0.32)	(0.19)	(0.31)	(0.19)	(0.32)	(0.19)	(0.32)	(0.21)	(0.33)
X ²																
	197.41		142.39		147.71		137.85		171.69		198.17		156.75		401.31	
Log-likelihood	-12707.1		-12796.3		-12781.8		-12795.1		-12727.9		-12758.5		-12780.1		-12526.5	

Coefficients are effects on log-odds. Standard errors in parentheses. All model X² values are statistically significant at the .001 level. Models 2-7 include a dummy for no relationship at j-1.

A=Fought or argued B=Swear, threaten, and/or push/hit/throw (ref: None)

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001 (one-tailed tests).



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