

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

ATTITUDINAL INCONGRUENCE TOWARDS GENDER  
ROLES, UNEQUAL DIVISION OF LABOR, RELATIONSHIP  
PROBLEMS, AND COMMUNICATION QUALITY AS  
PREDICTORS OF COUPLES' RELATIONSHIP  
SATISFACTION IN LEBANON

by  
CHLOÉ JOSEPH MECHLEB

A thesis  
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
to the Department of Psychology  
of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
at the American University of Beirut

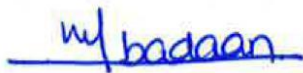
Beirut, Lebanon  
August 2023

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

ATTITUDINAL INCONGRUENCE TOWARDS GENDER  
ROLES, UNEQUAL DIVISION OF LABOR, RELATIONSHIP  
PROBLEMS, AND COMMUNICATION QUALITY AS  
PREDICTORS OF COUPLES' RELATIONSHIP  
SATISFACTION IN LEBANON

by  
CHLOÉ JOSEPH MECHLEB

Approved by:



Signature

---

Dr. Vivienne Badaan, Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychology

Advisor



Signature

---

Dr. Mona Ayoub, Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychology

Member of Committee



Signature

---

Dr. Sabine Saade, Assistant Professor  
Department of Psychology

Member of Committee

Date of thesis defense: August 22, 2023

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THESIS RELEASE FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle

I authorize the American University of Beirut, to: (a) reproduce hard or electronic copies of my thesis; (b) include such copies in the archives and digital repositories of the University; and (c) make freely available such copies to third parties for research or educational purposes:

- As of the date of submission
- One year from the date of submission of my thesis.
- Two years from the date of submission of my thesis.
- Three years from the date of submission of my thesis.



September 4, 2023

---

Signature

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the first place, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Vivienne Badaan, whose genuine mentorship and unwavering support not only enriched my thesis journey but also rendered my entire graduate experience exceptionally fulfilling. Dr. V's flexibility, empathy, and authentic nature fostered a nurturing environment that allowed me to grow both academically and personally. Dr. V's belief in my capabilities and encouragement empowered me to confront and conquer each and every challenge along the way. Working with such a remarkable, inspiring, and knowledgeable academic and researcher has been an invaluable experience that I will forever cherish. I would also like to extend my profound appreciation to my committee members, Dr. Mona Ayoub and Dr. Sabine Saade, for their insightful and constructive feedback, which has greatly enhanced this research endeavor.

To my family, I owe a debt of gratitude that cannot be adequately expressed. To my mother, Rima, your unconditional love, selfless support, and sacrifices have shaped the person I am today. To my siblings, Sandra, Mike, and Elio, you are life's treasures, and I feel blessed to be surrounded by your warm hearts. Your pride and belief in me have been instrumental in every phase of my life over the past quarter-century. To my dear aunt Samar, I am beyond grateful for you. You have always pushed me to shoot for the stars. To my life partner, Alain, I am delighted to share life's journeys with you, especially the challenging and rewarding ones like this. Thank you for helping me grow with your generous spirit and effortless support. Wishing for many more valuable experiences to come ...

# ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Chloé Joseph Mechleb

for

Master of Arts

Major: Psychology

Title: Attitudinal Incongruence Towards Gender Roles, Unequal Division of Labor, Relationship Problems, and Communication Quality as Predictors of Couples' Relationship Satisfaction in Lebanon

Romanic relationships in Lebanon are embedded in patriarchal social structures that manifest themselves in various relational dimensions (Alami, 2021; Allouche, 2019; Joseph, 1993; Oghia, 2012; Tlaiss, 2022). The present study explored predictors of relationship satisfaction in heterosexual couples residing in Lebanon, including gendered dynamics such as gender role attitude incongruence, division of labor inequality, as well as relationship problems and communication quality. It was hypothesized that incongruent gender role attitudes, unequal division of labor, and relationship problems will negatively predict relationship satisfaction, but that positive communication quality will turn out to be a positive predictor. In addition, positive communication quality was expected to buffer the influence of negative predictors on relationship satisfaction. The sample included 103 couples who have been together for at least six months. Participants filled out an online survey measuring the variables of interest along with various sociodemographic characteristics.

Contrary to expectations, attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles and inequality in the division of labor did not correlate with relationship satisfaction. As a result, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted with relationship satisfaction as outcome, and couples' average age and education as well as relationship problems and communication quality as predictors. Furthermore, the mediation effect of communication quality on the negative association between relationship problems and relationship satisfaction was examined. Relationship problems were found to be a negative predictor of relationship satisfaction, while positive communication quality emerged as a positive predictor. Additionally, positive communication partially mediated the relationship between problems and satisfaction, buffering against the negative impact of relationship problems on relationship satisfaction. Accordingly, implications of these findings, considerations for the limitations, and suggestions for future research, are discussed.

*Keywords:* relationship satisfaction, gender roles attitudes, division of labor, relationship problems, communication quality, attitudinal incongruence, inequality, couples

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	1
ABSTRACT .....	2
ILLUSTRATIONS .....	6
TABLES .....	7
ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN LEBANON .....	8
RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION.....	11
ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER ROLES .....	19
DIVISION OF LABOR IN RELATIONSHIPS .....	28
RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS .....	34
COMMUNICATION QUALITY .....	37
THE CURRENT STUDY .....	42
METHODS .....	47
A. Participants.....	47
B. Measures .....	47
1. Relationship Satisfaction .....	48
2. Attitudes Towards Gender Roles .....	48
3. Division of Labor.....	49
4. Communication Quality.....	50
5. Relationship Problems .....	50
6. Social Desirability.....	51

7. Demographics Questionnaire.....	51
C. Procedure.....	51
D. Data Analysis Strategy.....	54
E. Pilot Study.....	56
<b>RESULTS .....</b>	<b>57</b>
A. Preliminary Analyses.....	57
1. Missing Value Analysis.....	57
2. Normality.....	58
3. Univariate and Multivariate Outliers.....	60
B. Psychometric Properties.....	61
1. Statistical Assumptions.....	62
C. Reliability Analysis.....	63
D. Sample Descriptives.....	65
E. Scale Descriptives.....	68
1. For Individuals.....	68
2. For Couples.....	70
F. Correlations between Variables.....	71
1. For Individuals.....	71
2. For Couples.....	75
G. Independent Samples t-Test.....	78
H. Regression Analysis.....	78
1. Statistical Assumptions.....	79
2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results.....	80
3. Mediation Analysis.....	83

DISCUSSION.....	85
A. Summary of Results.....	85
1. Results of Correlations.....	86
2. Results of Independent Samples t-Test.....	87
3. Results of the Regression Analysis.....	88
4. Results of the Mediation Analysis .....	94
B. Implications.....	95
1. The Lebanese Context and the Role of Culture .....	95
2. Counseling Practice .....	98
C. Limitations and Future Research .....	99
CONCLUSION .....	102
APPENDIX I.....	103
APPENDIX II.....	149
APPENDIX III .....	152
REFERENCES .....	154



## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Figure

1. Mediation Model.....	84
2. Histogram with Normal Curve for Relationship Satisfaction.....	152
3. P-P Plot for Relationship Satisfaction .....	152
4. Scatterplot for Relationship Satisfaction .....	153

## TABLES

### Table

1. Scales' Z-Skewness and Z-Kurtosis for Individuals.....	59
2. Scales' Z-Skewness and Z-Kurtosis for Couples .....	60
3. Reliability Analysis of the Scales and Subscales.....	65
4. Sample Descriptives .....	67
5. Scale Descriptives for Individuals .....	70
6. Scale Descriptives for Couples .....	71
7. Bivariate Pearson Correlations for Individuals.....	74
8. Bivariate Pearson Correlations for Couples.....	77
9. Model Summary .....	81
10. Regression Coefficients .....	82
11. Factor Matrix for Relationship Assessment Scale .....	149
12. Pattern Matrix for Arab Adolescents' Gender Roles Attitude Scale .....	149
13. Pattern Matrix for Self- Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship Scale.....	150

## CHAPTER I

### ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS IN LEBANON

Given the complex nature of interpersonal relationships, extensive attempts have been made to untangle the factors involved in relationships formation and maintenance. For a relationship to emerge, interconnected thoughts, feelings and behaviors have to exist between two individuals (Clark & Reis, 1988). The distinctiveness of agents involved in such connection dictates the types of relationship that arises; interpersonal relationships can relate to how family members, peers, acquaintances, or even partners interact and deal with one another (Crouter & Booth, 2006).

Even though distinct, these close relationships are intertwined and present throughout the course of life. Furthermore, they are coupled with developmental factors that modulate the type of relationship that is most influential within a life stage. As such, a sense of continuity exists in individuals' relationships over different life periods, especially that the predominant relationship in one stage impacts the type of relationship that gains more significance in another life stage (Fincham & Cui, 2010).

The type of interpersonal interaction that is of interest to the present study is the one involved in romantic relationships. The current research aims to explore the dynamics that characterize intimate relationships, particularly gendered dimensions that could predict relationship satisfaction in heterosexual couples who are in long-term relationships. It aims to examine whether couples' attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles, division of labor between them, relationship problems, and communication quality predict their relationship satisfaction. In the cases of attitudinal incongruence and unequal divisions of labor, the influence of partners' communication

quality will be taken into account in an attempt to investigate whether this potentially moderating variable exerts any buffering effects on relationship satisfaction.

Additionally, the mediating role of communication quality on the association between relationship problems and relationship satisfaction will be explored, in an attempt to disentangle whether good quality communication buffers the influence of relationship problems on satisfaction. Finally, the differential impact of partners' attitudes towards gender roles on relationship satisfaction will be considered where unequal divisions of labor are observed.

The aims of this research will be examined in the context of Lebanon. In appearance, the Lebanese context may project a sense of liberalism, but in reality, it upholds the patriarchy (Alami, 2021). Patriarchy is marked by the privileging of males and seniors along with the utilization of family ties and moral standards to justify and establish a system of gender-based control (Joseph, 1993). Lebanon's patriarchal system is built on laws aimed at exerting control over women, limiting their ability to fully realize their potential (Alami, 2021). Such structures that perpetuate the patriarchy are prevalent across the Arab region (Joseph, 1993).

Despite the patriarchal structures that hinder women's full empowerment, women's education has gained social legitimation in the Arab world over the years, whereby the pursuit of academic achievement has been more encouraged and less frowned upon. As a result, a rise in women's enrolment in academic programs has been observed (James-Hawkins et al., 2016). Despite the increase in normativity of women's education, the world's lowest rate of female economic participation has been reported in the Arab world with a 26% rate compared to the global average of 56% (Liss et al., 2019). In Lebanon, the rate of women in the labor force started to increase in the year

2005 and reached its highest value in the year 2019 with a rate of 24.5% (World Bank, 2021).

The patriarchal system in Lebanon tends to shift gender role attitudes towards traditionalism (Allouche, 2019). Even though working women challenge traditional gender roles, they would still be expected to perform their housewife and caregiving roles (James-Hawkins et al., 2016). In the following section we will discuss relationship satisfaction and the gendered factors that might contribute to it in terms of attitudes towards gender roles and division of labor along with relationship problems and communication quality between partners.

The majority of empirical research on romantic relationships reviewed in the following section originates from the Global North, representing a predominantly Westernized perspective on relationships. This underscores the crucial need to examine the underpinnings of romantic relationships across cultures, especially in the Arab region. Even though scarce, research carried out in the Arab region will be presented when available. It is noteworthy that the literature on heterosexual romantic relationships has a well-established history in the West, displaying relatively limited variability in interrelational dynamics and surrounding societal norms, justifying the inclusion of older references. In contrast, research conducted in the Arab region is of more recent origin, reflecting an emerging focus on relationships within the context of evolving norms, gender roles, and cultural expectations. The literature will be followed with the hypotheses as well as the methods, results, and discussion sections.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Romantic relationships differ from other types of relationships in that they are marked by heightened social and communicative encounters, increased emotionality, and exclusivity concerns (Crouter & Booth, 2006). In such relationships, partners are concerned with supporting the self and the other through mutual care. For a relationship to initiate, individuals engage in a series of processes that usually culminate in commitment (Clark & Beck, 2010).

When individuals experience attraction towards a potential mate, they engage in strategic self-presentation to enhance their desirability (Clark & Beck, 2010). Even though they aim for mutual attraction and responsiveness, individuals allocate efforts to protect themselves against possible rejection. Self-protection does not solely revolve around the fear of unreciprocated attraction, but also around the avoidance of interpersonal interactions that expose one's vulnerabilities, such as disclosure of negative information or support seeking (Clark & Beck, 2010).

Adding to that, relationship initiation relies on the evaluation of a potential partner after a reciprocal interest is perceived (Clark & Beck, 2010). In this process, individuals assess the person's relative ability to serve as a communal partner through observing their behaviors and modes of interaction. If potential partners are judged as a good fit, individuals gradually relinquish evaluative endeavors and seek to commit to the relationship. In fact, for a healthy relationship to occur, the previously mentioned processes need to subside after commitments are made. In particular, individuals need to embrace their authentic selves within a relationship rather than maintain strategic

self-presentation. Furthermore, healthy relationships eliminate the need for self-protection as well as partner evaluation as they are characterized by trust, acceptance, and validation (Clark & Beck, 2010).

One of the central approaches to studying relationships is through the assessment of relationship quality, a multidimensional construct comprising diverse components that collectively contribute to the overall quality of the relationship (Fletcher et al., 2000). One of the constituents manifests itself in the satisfaction component. Relationship satisfaction is an evaluative measure of the events and positive attributes that are characteristics of the relational rapport; it refers to how content and fulfilled individuals feel within their relationship (Hendrick, 1988). The standards against which individuals assess their relationship rely on societal norms and relative expectations of the partners involved. In fact, partners can show similar levels of satisfaction even when their understanding of the concept differs (Hinde, 2014).

In order to assess the level of satisfaction, one has to take into account the discrepancy between individuals' ideal partners and their current situations (Hinde, 2014). In other terms, the evaluation of relationship quality does not depend on the idiosyncratic characteristics of individuals, but on one's perception of partners' qualities. Given the heterogeneity of individual characteristics, it is logical to assume the involvement of several factors into the evaluation of relationship satisfaction (Hinde, 2014). When assessing the quality of a relationship, individuals mainly consider the relational qualities to which they attribute high significance. The need to gain support is a major driving force that leads people to seek intimate bonds in the first place; therefore, the weight associated with the partner's ability to provide support and

validation is highly considered when evaluating the quality of the relationship of interest (Hinde, 2014).

It is crucial to highlight that the standards used for evaluating relationships can experience fluctuations. In their study, Logan and Cobb (2012) examined the link between both capitalization and support perceptions and relationship satisfaction of individuals in romantic relationships over the course of a year. Capitalization is described as the act of responding to positive events by sharing or celebrating good news with others, leading to additional benefits derived from the positive experience. Results demonstrated that the correlation between capitalization perceptions and relationship satisfaction weakened over time; however, support perceptions became more strongly associated with relationship satisfaction (Logan & Cobb, 2012). These findings strongly underscore the paramount importance of partners offering consistent and unwavering support as the key ingredient for fostering long-term relationship satisfaction, thus emphasizing its significance in maintaining and enhancing romantic relationships.

Moreover, meeting the criteria by which partners evaluate their relationship satisfaction can be more challenging during certain life stages compared to others (Meyer et al., 2016). This underscores the idea that relationship satisfaction does not follow a stable trajectory. In a cross-sectional research study conducted by Meyer et al. (2016), individuals with various relationship length with a minimum of two years were recruited. Results indicated that individuals in romantic partnerships without children reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction, greater affectional expression, and increased couple cohesion compared to those with two or three children. Among



individuals in romantic partnerships with children, those with a child between the ages of 8 and 12 reported the highest level of relationship satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2016).

Even though less attuned to distinct life phases, Belal and Gaheen (2016) discovered a negative correlation between marriage duration and relationship satisfaction among Egyptian women. However, when investigating the same variables in Jordanian women from the same Arab region, Smadi (2017) found no significant variation in marital satisfaction among different marriage duration groups (i.e., 1-10 years, 11-20 years, and over 21 years). The contrast between these two Arab countries underscores the significance of local cultural dynamics that may be contributing to differential impacts on couples' satisfaction with their relationships.

As previously discussed, relationship satisfaction depends on relative expectations rather than universally predetermined standards (Hinde, 2014). The differential attribution of specific relational components to overall satisfaction is especially pronounced between women and men in heterosexual relationships. Overall, women and men scored similarly on measures of relationship satisfaction, even when men scored higher on individual relational dimensions (Ubando, 2016).

Nevertheless, femininity and masculinity, which are independently constructed, have a differential impact on relationship satisfaction (Bradbury et al., 1995; Hinde, 2014). In interpersonal interactions, feminine traits, particularly emotional expressivity, exhibited by both women and men were found to be associated with higher relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, men's degree of ambivalence towards their emotional expressiveness moderated their partner's evaluation of relationship quality, whereby men's comfort with emotional expressiveness resulted in higher levels of overall relationship satisfaction as assessed by both mates (Hinde, 2014).

The accentuated effect of femininity rather than masculinity on relationship satisfaction can be explained by the relational outcomes resulting from the endorsement of femininity. In fact, Bradbury et al. (1995) investigated the association between relationship satisfaction and masculinity and femininity, measured by asking participants to indicate the extent to which series of masculine and feminine personality attributes describe them. When assessed among married couples at two time points with one year apart, femininity traits characterized by interpersonal sensitivity (i.e., the ability to accurately evaluate individuals' capabilities, states, and characteristics from nonverbal cues), predicted greater relationship satisfaction. In contrast, when women adopted desirable masculine features such as agency and assertiveness, they tended to evaluate their relationship satisfaction more poorly (Bradbury et al., 1995).

The assessment of relationship quality can be explained by several models (Cahn, 1992; Hinde, 2014; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). To begin with, the evaluation of relationship satisfaction can occur through the relative appraisal of the rewards and costs associated with the relationship at hand (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). Individuals could also rely on a contextual model in which proximal factors stemming from the immediate environment, such as transient thoughts and emotions, interact with distal factors, such as individuals' traits and attitudes, to dictate partners' satisfaction with the relationship (Hinde, 2014).

A third model of satisfaction derives from a problem-solving approach. Conflict is an inevitable aspect of romantic relationships that can interfere with relational assessments. Interpersonal interactions often witness differences in perspectives; however, when disagreements are exacerbated, divergent approaches become

problematic given that they tend to be perceived as negative experiences, which are often coupled with detrimental repercussions on partners' well-being (Cahn, 1992).

Despite the destructive consequences of conflicts, experiencing relational disagreements has also been regarded as a constructive opportunity for growth. In fact, the damaging effects of conflicts were not tied to the mere occurrences of such disagreements, but to the conflict management strategies employed when dealing with such situations (Gordon & Chen, 2016). Conflict styles that partners adopt differ along two dimensions: concern for one's own interest, which denotes the necessity of resolving the issue by prioritizing one's own well-being, and concern for others, which places value on ensuring that the other person has a satisfactory outcome from the disagreement (Cann et al., 2008).

Gender differences in the evaluation of romantic relationships exist, where women are generally more likely than men to report relational issues (Vangelisti & Daly, 1997). Vangelisti and Daly (1997) explored this gender difference by examining relational standards, which are the beliefs men and women hold about the qualities that should be present in intimate relationships. Their study was based on the difference between the extent to which participants held the relational standards (such as respect and adaptability) versus the degree to which their relationship fulfilled these principles. Results demonstrated that both women and men held similar standards and allocated matching importance to relational qualities, but differed in the extent to which their standards were met. In fact, women underwent socialization processes that enhanced their communality, which allowed them to be attuned to their partner's needs (Vangelisti & Daly, 1997).

In order to investigate potential buffers against the negative effects of conflict on relationship satisfaction, Gordon and Chen (2016) examined the impact of perceived understanding. Perceived understanding is concerned with how much partners feel heard by their significant other after disclosure. Several experimental designs were established to test the effect of perceived understating on relationship satisfaction. In one of the sub-studies, participants were allocated into three groups. Individuals in the first condition were asked to recall and write about a time of conflict with their partner in which they felt understood. Individuals in the second condition were given the same instruction with the only difference of including an instance when they did not feel understood. In the control group, participants were instructed to share a neutral event in which they ran errands with their partner. All participants were then asked to rate their post-event relationship satisfaction. Results showed that the detrimental outcomes of conflict on relationship satisfaction were only present when individuals did not feel understood by their mate (Gordon & Chen, 2016).

Following these findings, Gordon and Chen (2016) conducted follow-up studies to uncover possible underlying mechanisms. In the first stage, a qualitative approach helped identify three recurrent themes on why participants reported being more satisfied post-conflict when feeling understood (i.e., conveying relationship strength, highlighting partner's commitment and care, and leading to reduced future conflicts). In the second stage, participants were asked to identify a specific source of conflict, and then instructed to imagine engaging in a heated argument with their partner about that particular conflict. However, half of them were directed to imagine feeling understood by their partner, while the rest were guided to envision the contrary. Subsequently, all individuals were required to answer close-ended items evaluating the degree to which

they attribute their post-conflict satisfaction to the possible mechanisms derived from the first phase (Gordon & Chen, 2016).

The authors demonstrated that the buffering effect of perceived understanding did not solely occur in a direct manner, but also indirectly through the information it conveyed about relationship quality. Participants who envisioned a confrontation in which they felt understood indicated that the conflict conveyed positive signals about their relationship, suggesting it would enhance and reinforce their bond. Furthermore, it signaled a higher level of commitment and care from their partner and led to a greater likelihood of successful resolution (Gordon & Chen, 2016).

Several studies have investigated the effect of potential buffers on the maintenance of relationship quality when conflicts arise. Yet, it is equally crucial to thoroughly examine the factors contributing to the emergence of conflicts in the first place. Doing so will enable couples to gain valuable insights into their relationship dynamics and identify patterns of conflict, with the ultimate goal of equipping them with the necessary tools for effective problem resolution. A possible variable that might be relevant in such investigation would be the degree of congruence in partners' attitudes towards the roles that they are expected to serve in a relationship, which fall under the umbrella of gender roles.

## CHAPTER III

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS GENDER ROLES

Gender roles are the social behaviors that people are expected to perform based on their gender (Gilbert & Malone, 1995). Starting at an early age, individuals undergo extensive socialization that leads to the formation of mental representations illustrating women and men's dispositions and the behavioral expectations that result from them. When observing social performances, individuals associate gendered behaviors with the capacities that each group possesses. As a result, women and men are believed to carry the essential traits that help them serve their gender roles, making them seem inevitable (Gilbert & Malone, 1995).

In attempts to explain the underlying mechanisms that shape gender schemas, Eagly and Wood (2012) proposed their social role theory. The theory endorses a biosocial approach that attributes the formation of gender roles to an interplay between biological and social factors. Women's reproductive capacities and men's physical strength facilitate the association of these genders to roles that match their biological dispositions. Biological factors interact with the surrounding environment, often characterized by social patriarchy that ascribes more status to men than women. As a result, men engage in occupational roles that yield more income and are given greater authority over decision-making and resource management processes. Consequently, men are expected to provide for the family, whereas women are believed to be responsible for childcare (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

The differentiation between abilities that seem innate leads to task specialization that manifests itself in various life domains, given that gender roles get internalized as

part of gender identity. The division of labor does not only differentiate between men and women's capacities, but also helps establish beliefs about gender roles. In their turn, gender role beliefs affect individuals' behaviors through an interaction between several factors such as hormonal, social, and self-regulation processes (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Based on the greater involvement of women in domestic roles and men in employment roles, gendered task specialization results in the distinction between communal and agentic traits that are characteristic of women and men, respectively (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). On one hand, communality refers to the traits that convey warmth in interpersonal relations such as being empathetic, caring, selfless, and emotionally expressive. On the other hand, agency relates to traits that are goal-oriented such as being assertive, dominant, independent, and rational (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Nevertheless, the distinction in attributes is not as inevitable as it seems; findings have supported the suggestion of socially constructed rather than innate gendered traits (Baez et al., 2017; Yarnell et al., 2018). In their study, Baez et al. (2017) investigated an aspect of communion, which is empathy, in a large population of women and men. Empathy was examined experimentally using animated scenarios conveying three different types of social situations (i.e., accidental harm, intentional harm, and neutral situations) intending to elicit automatic empathic responses to others' pain. Findings supported the similarity in empathetic processing for both genders as there were no significant differences in the accuracy of intention identification, empathic concern, and degree of discomfort. However, when the cognitive and affective components of empathy were measured through self-report questionnaires, a gender difference emerged with women demonstrating higher levels of overall empathy compared to men (Baez et al., 2017).

Even though women and men experience the same levels of empathy, women are more likely than men to report it. The emergence of differential results on the same variable suggests the involvement of additional factors in the expression of empathy. A possible explanation revolves around individuals' concern in their self-representation in social contexts. Women judged the endorsement of empathetic traits as more advantageous than men since they align with the gender roles associated with their gender identity. Similarly, men tended to refrain from expressing their empathetic concerns given that they did not match their respective gender roles (Baez et al., 2017).

Unlike empathy, self-compassion was found to be higher in self-identified men than in women in two separate samples: the first comprised undergraduate college students enrolled in a public university in the southwestern US, and the second was based on a community sample recruited from a US adult population using an online survey research recruitment method. It is important to note that masculine gender roles orientation better predicted self-compassion than the mere identification with the relevant gender group, highlighting the influential impact of socialization on solidifying the connections between gender roles and attributes associated with it. These findings are consistent with research demonstrating higher self-criticism and rumination in women than in men (Yarnell et al., 2018).

Correspondingly, Lengua and Stormshak (2000) have examined gender roles among a sample of undergraduate students and found masculinity to be associated with more positive coping characterized by a solution-focused approach rather than a problem avoidance that is associated with femininity. Additionally, masculinity, as measured by the extent to which masculine and feminine adjectives described participants, was significantly related to lower levels of depression (Lengua &



Stormshak, 2000). Consequently, it is plausible to investigate a mediation effect of active problem solving strategies on the negative association between masculinity and depression.

Comparable with men's avoidance of the adoption of feminine traits, Amanatullah and Morris (2010) explored gender differences using computerized negotiations in attempts to reflect contextual influences on women's behaviors. Findings demonstrated that women withheld assertive behaviors due to the high social costs associated with deviance from traditional gender roles and the identification with masculine traits. Nevertheless, women tended to show assertiveness when negotiating on behalf of others, given that they did not evaluate such behaviors as threatening to the congruity between one's gender identity and the roles related to it. Furthermore, in contexts of advocacy for others, women did not anticipate the backlash they experience when negotiating for oneself (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010).

When examined within relational contexts, gender role dynamics take several forms that range on a continuum. On one end fall couples who practice traditional gender roles characterized by total compliance to the view of men as breadwinners and women as caregivers. On the other end fall unconventional couples who endorse reversed gender roles, whereby women are more involved in decision-making and men in supportive and caretaking duties. In the middle of the continuum lie egalitarian partners who share an equal division of responsibilities which somewhat challenges traditional gender roles (Scanzoni et al., 1989).

The various manifestations of gender roles in relationships illustrate distinct behavioral dynamics; however, they do not account for each partner's attitude towards gender roles. Gender role attitudes refer to individuals' view of the ideal involvement of

men and women in social roles. Individuals judge either traditional or egalitarian gender roles as the exemplary model within social contexts which, in turn, affects the behavioral roles they ascribe to and serve themselves (Hu et al., 2021).

Hu et al. (2021) looked into gender role attitudes and family interference with work among married couples in China. Their findings demonstrated that men who endorsed traditional gender roles spent less time and allocated less effort for family duties; however, they held greater expectations for their partner's engagement in the household. Likewise, traditional women tended to invest more effort in the household rather than in occupational roles (Hu et al., 2021).

Sabattini and Leaper (2004) have investigated the link between the type of household in which young adults attending a public university in northern California were brought up and the parenting styles their parents adopted using retrospective reports. Their findings revealed that, in egalitarian households, mothers were more likely to hold permissive parenting styles (i.e., high affiliation with low control) while fathers had more authoritative parenting (i.e., high on both control and affiliation). When it comes to traditional households, these were characterized by authoritarian mothers (i.e., high control with low affiliation) and disengaged fathers (i.e., low on both control and affiliation) (Sabattini & Leaper, 2004).

With respect to children's gender attitudes, these were not related to the type of households nor to parenting styles (Sabattini & Leaper, 2004). A possible explanation relies on the fact that individuals' attitudes towards gender roles do not always align with the type of gender role relationship they are in (Sells & Ganong, 2016). In a study among families in the US, those with financial constraints, unable to hire external assistance, frequently established egalitarian setups despite the parents expressing

traditional gender beliefs. On the other hand, numerous affluent couples who held egalitarian beliefs, in reality, upheld traditional arrangements, with the wife retaining responsibility for hiring and overseeing outside help for household chores and childcare (Deutsch, 1999).

Attitudes towards gender roles affected not only partners' behaviors, but also their subjective self-evaluations (Apparala et al., 2003; Kleinplatz et al., 1992). In fact, an egalitarian approach to gender roles was found to be linked to various dimensions of well-being (Apparala et al., 2003). In particular, women's well-being was linked to their gender role satisfaction, regardless of the type of culture they belonged to. In both egalitarian and traditional contexts, women who showed more contentment with the gender roles they perform, were more socially adjusted and possessed higher self-esteem (Kleinplatz et al., 1992).

However, it is crucial to point out that in egalitarian cultures such as Norway, women's satisfaction with gender roles was positively correlated with egalitarian gender role attitudes, whereas no association was found between the two constructs in cultures endorsing traditional roles such as Iraq (Soltanpanah et al., 2017). In other terms, the more women appraised equality in gender roles between partners, the more they felt satisfied with the gender roles they performed themselves when they were surrounded by matching societal values.

Besides self-evaluations, gender role attitudes affect relationship assessment. In their study, Sells and Ganong (2016) relied on vignettes with hypothetical couples to propose that emerging adults judged couples with egalitarian gender roles as more satisfied than those with traditional or unconventional ones, which can be explained by the type of intimacy and mutuality facilitated by egalitarian views.

Similar to intrapersonal dissimilarity between one's attitudes and social contexts, interpersonal incongruence takes place when mates do not hold corresponding attitudes towards gender roles. Hu et al. (2021) investigated attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles and found out that it amplified women's role overload (individuals' beliefs of their inability to meet all expectations within a domain) and increased their family interference with work.

Based on the previously discussed detrimental consequences of dissimilarity in gender role attitudes between partners, the potential effects of similarity are worth examining. Similarities can be demonstrated across a wide range of constructs such as values, expressiveness, personality traits, and attitudes. In all areas where it was investigated, similarity showed overall positive outcomes (Anderson et al., 2003; Boer et al., 2011; Furr & Wood, 2013). When it comes to relationship satisfaction, partners who showed similar qualities evaluated their relationships more positively (Wood & Furr, 2015).

In terms of attitudes, Brandén and Bernhardt (2020) examined partners' attitudinal similarity in multiple domains among Swedish couples. The results of the study led them to suggest a significant effect of attitudinal congruence towards the importance of having children on relationship satisfaction. Likewise, the necessity of allocating time for leisure was found to be associated with enhanced evaluation of relationship quality. Most importantly, the strongest effect of attitudinal similarity was attributed to occupational success, whereby compatible views on the need to achieve financial stability positively predicted relationship satisfaction (Brandén & Bernhardt, 2020).

Through socialization, individuals acquire values that influence behaviors and set the standards against which people perceive the world (Schwartz, 1994). In romantic relationships, Chinese married couples were more likely than randomly matched others to have similar relationship-oriented values (Chi et al., 2020). On the one hand, women expressed higher satisfaction whenever they perceived increased relationship-oriented similarity with their partners. On the other hand, men who accorded high significance to relationship values were more likely to express relational satisfaction. A possible explanation for the aforementioned observation is the fact that men are not expected to be relationship-oriented; therefore, whenever they challenged this stereotype, men promoted the quality of their relationships through their enhanced emotional investment (Chi et al., 2020).

Along these lines, Burn and Ward (2005) investigated the link between relationship satisfaction and traditional masculine norms and found a negative association, particularly for women. Men who conformed to gendered roles were perceived by women as less emotionally invested, competitive, and even disrespectful. In such cases, intimacy was reduced, which further undermined overall relationship quality, given that romantic relationships necessitate affective involvement (Burn and Ward, 2005).

Not only is similarity in work and family attitudes related to relationship satisfaction, but also similarity in political attitudes. As a matter of fact, Leikas et al. (2018) found that among Finnish heterosexual couples, individuals who held conservative views were more likely to mate with a politically similar other, whereas liberal individuals were less likely to have partners who shared their political perspectives. In turn, conservative political views were found to be related to traditional

gender role attitudes (Larsen & Long, 1988). In cases where partners held congruent political attitudes, they reported higher relationship satisfaction. A potential explanation lies in the process through which shared political views promote mutual understanding, which, in turn, has a positive impact on conflict resolution (Leikas et al., 2018).

Findings on the positive impact of shared attitudes point out the need to examine additional constructs that can serve as potential buffers against dyadic discord. A promising variable that stems from the divergence of attitudes towards gender roles is the diversity in individuals' perspectives on the division of labor between women and men in a heterosexual relationship. The existence of multiple views on couples' duties urges the need to explore their potentially distinct associations with relationship quality.

## CHAPTER IV

### DIVISION OF LABOR IN RELATIONSHIPS

The type of gender role attitudes adopted within a romantic relationship is tightly linked to the division of labor between women and men. Based on task specialization, the division of labor that best serves couples in terms of relationship quality is the one that assigns each partner to differentiated duties. Traditional roles prescribe a framework that attributes market labor to men and household duties to women (Becker, 1981). However, maximum utility can no longer be achieved through specialized (traditional) division of labor given the gradual, yet substantial involvement of women in the work force (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2007).

Nevertheless, women continue to engage in more domestic tasks than men, even with their increased participation in the market labor (Coltrane, 2000). Furthermore, even when men took up part of the house work, women remained the partners who were mainly responsible for these duties (Barnett & Baruch, 1987). As a matter of fact, women held more positive stances and higher responsibility towards household chores than men. A possible interpretation is that, through task specialization enforced by traditional gender roles, domestic work was generally thought to be women's duty, which has led both women and men to internalize such an association, especially with the numerous opportunities for their reinforcement in daily life (Poortman & van der Lippe, 2009).

Partners, especially men, engaged in household labor based on their own attitudes rather than their mate's expectations, especially when performing less favorable tasks such as cleaning and cooking (Poortman & van der Lippe, 2009). Based on the

gendered power difference (the condition in which men hold superior advantage over women, solely based on their gender), women's chances of acting in accordance with their attitudes, in terms of avoiding undesirable household labor, are restricted (Cast, 2003). Furthermore, partners' differential strategies might result from their perception of their partner's attitudes towards family duties. In other terms, women might assume that their partner attaches little importance to child care; therefore, they accept greater responsibility in the given domain to compensate for their mate's non-involvement (Poortman & van der Lippe, 2009).

Women's internalized attitudes towards household labor might contribute to the unequal division of labor between partners in a relationship. In order to judge fairness in the breakdown of tasks, couples tend to distinguish between paid and unpaid household work (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988). Nevertheless, the perception of inequity is not as easily discernable as it is thought to be, but highly dependent on other factors such as women's labor force participation, gender-income inequality, and surrounding societal norms (Braun et al., 2008).

Braun et al. (2008) conducted a study using international data derived from responses provided by married or cohabiting women from 25 distinct countries. Results indicated that women who were highly immersed in labor outside home tended to be more attuned to existing inequity. Similarly, women who held non-traditional gender role beliefs were more likely to identify an unequal division of labor. Another crucial factor that moderated women's perception of uneven divisions was gender wage gap, especially in countries characterized by low overall inequality in gender-income, as those have more egalitarian comparison standards. Generally, women were more likely



to judge unfair circumstances as just when an increased inequality levels existed in the larger social context surrounding their relationship (Braun et al., 2008).

When perceived, an unequal division of labor can influence the quality of the relationship in terms of partners' satisfaction. Even though women were more accepting of housework, they were less favoring of an unfair division of labor that often undermined relationship satisfaction (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988). Women were more concerned with their involvement in household chores as compared to men, rather than the increased number of hours they allocated to family duties per se. Conversely, men preferred equality in time spent on house chores, but were less satisfied with their relationship when they spent a substantial number of hours on family duties (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988).

Correspondingly, Blom et al. (2017) have investigated the equity in the number of hours partners spend as well as the specialization of the tasks they participate in, being it employment or household chores among a large sample of heterosexual couples from the UK. Based on the results of their study, they concluded that egalitarian men were less satisfied with their relationships when these were characterized by high task specialization and hour-based inequity. However, unequal number of labor hours did not affect women's satisfaction with their relationship, which further supported the idea that women base their judgment of relationship satisfaction on the quality rather than the quantity of their partner's involvement. Quantity of involvement refers to the number of hours allocated for household and childcare tasks by focusing on the frequency, duration, or quantity of tasks performed by each partner. In contrast, quality of involvement points out the effectiveness, competence, and level of engagement

exhibited by partners by focusing on the attitudes, skills, and attention given to the tasks (Blom et al., 2017).

When it comes to income, a partner with higher earning is more likely to be positively recognized by others and more involved in household decisions (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2018; Halleröd, 2005). In addition, traditional attitudes towards gender roles expect men to earn more than women, whereas egalitarian views challenge the model that ascribes breadwinning duties solely for men (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2018). As a result, income share might be linked to different relational outcomes based on the type of gender roles that the couple endorses.

In fact, Hajdu and Hajdu (2018) explored intra-couple income distribution and subjective well-being using a nationally representative data from Hungary. The study's context is particularly significant due to the existing tension between cultural beliefs and the structural dimensions of gender equality in Hungary. The country is marked by a relatively high prevalence of traditional gender roles compared to other European nations, while simultaneously demonstrating a relatively small gap between men and women in education and labor force participation. Results indicated that both women and men expressed lower levels of life satisfaction with the increase of women's contribution to overall couple income in contexts characterized by traditional gender ideologies (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2018).

Similarity in partners' beliefs about ideal division of labor is essential to relationship maintenance (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006; Keizer & Komter, 2015; Lye & Biblarz, 1993). For instance, incongruence in the socio-economic domain negatively predicted life satisfaction. Likewise, dissimilarity in attitudes between partners was strongly related to poorer evaluations of relationship satisfaction (Keizer & Komter,

2015). Furthermore, couples who had dissimilar views on gendered division of household labor were more likely to exhibit relationship dissolution (Hohmann-Marriott, 2006). In contrast, men's agreement with their partner's engagement in the market labor increased their relationship satisfaction (Lye & Biblarz, 1993).

Variables such as education can affect individuals' views on adequate division of labor. In their investigation, Scott et al. (2014) found that South Sudanese women with no educational background were more likely than their educated counterparts to accept gender inequitable treatments in the household as well as in the community in general. Nevertheless, there was a general discrepancy between individuals' approval of unjust practices towards women, whereby they disagreed with those pertaining to the general community (such as early marriage and education inequity for girls) and accepted the ones involved in domestic duties (such as feeding and bathing).

In the Lebanese context, Habib et al. (2006) found women to be more engaged than men in domestic labor such as household chores, caregiving, financial and home management. However, women's involvement in domestic duties declined with the increase in the hours they spent on duties related to the labor market. When it comes to men, the results of the study suggested that employed rather than unemployed men were more likely to assist their partners in family duties given that these roles might further threaten the unstable masculinity status of non-earner men who fail to identify with typical breadwinning roles (Habib et al., 2006).

In situations where couples experienced non-traditional gender roles in which women became the breadwinners, their relationship satisfaction diminished from when they were in egalitarian or traditional divisions (Blom & Hewitt, 2019). Men's satisfaction with the relationship decreased when women earned higher incomes, as

men tended to assume more household duties in such situations, yet found it difficult to achieve time balance (Chen & Hu, 2021). Moreover, individuals with traditional attitudes might question men's adequate performance of their designated roles when women engage in duties that surpass conventional ones (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2018). In relational contexts, questioning one's role might create instability or even conflict, an outcome that warrants further investigation given its substantial effect on relationship satisfaction.

## CHAPTER V

### RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

Human relationships have no stable trajectories as individuals are consistently growing and evolving (Meyer et al., 2016). The changes and stress that partners experience on an individual level tend to reflexively translate into the relational level. In instances when stressed partners collide, emotionally charged conflicts arise and threaten their relationship quality (Storaasli & Markman, 1990). When examining relationship problems, gendered factors should be taken into account. In fact, Hammond and Overall (2013) used self-reports of heterosexual couples to examine the association between relationship problems and each of relationship satisfaction and evaluation over a period of three weeks while considering the extent to which they endorse benevolent sexism. Their findings have demonstrated that women who strongly endorsed benevolent sexism experienced a greater negative impact from conflicts compared to men. This effect was heightened the longer women had been involved in their relationship and the more they had invested in it (Hammond & Overall, 2013).

In relational contexts, the term “conflict”, with its negative connotations, strongly implies detrimental outcomes that significantly impact relationship satisfaction. However, Cramer (2000) has shown that relationship satisfaction was more strongly associated with negative conflict styles, such as showing irritation or avoiding discussions, as well as unresolved conflicts, as opposed to the mere presence of conflict. Furthermore, the negative relation between conflict and relationship satisfaction was not determined by the frequency of opinion differences but rather by how these differences are managed and the degree to which they are successfully resolved (Cramer, 2000).

Taking it a step further, Overall (2020) investigated the effect of negative-direct behaviors on relationship problems and satisfaction by tracking the average and variability of the targeted behaviors. The findings proposed that partners' criticism and hostility predicted greater conflicts and less relationship satisfaction when the negative-direct behaviors were stable across a period of time. Conversely, the same behaviors were less harmful when behavior variability was observed due to varying situational demands. In other words, persistent and stable negative-direct behaviors that fail to recognize crucial contexts, events, and situational needs tend to convey an overall and continuous hostility that worsens relationship issues. On the other hand, adapting to evolving situational demands produces protective variability in negative-direct behaviors as it conveys less rigidity and enhanced responsiveness that aid in conflict resolution (Overall, 2020).

Direct-negative behaviors were not only associated with less pronounced deterioration in relationship satisfaction when behaviors varied according to situational factors, but also positively predicted more constant satisfaction in couples with severe problems (McNulty & Russell, 2010). Despite the fact that both minor and major conflicts were negatively associated with relationship satisfaction, direct-negative behaviors had a distinctive interplay with each conflict type (Cramer, 2002). As counterintuitive as it may sound, direct-negative behaviors involving blame, command, and rejection were linked to reduced satisfaction when observed in relationships dealing with relatively minor problems on average, while those same behaviors were associated with more stable change in satisfaction when observed in relationships facing more serious issues. In other words, direct-negative behaviors tended to exacerbate minor problems but attenuate severe problems (McNulty & Russell, 2010).

It is worth mentioning that these patterns of results did not emerge for indirect-negative behaviors involving avoidance, insinuation, and presumption. It is argued that addressing problems directly provides concrete information about what needs to be adjusted and instigates change whereas indirect negative behaviors result in ambiguous information about the issue that the couple is facing, hence impeding problem resolution (McNulty & Russell, 2010).

When conflicts arise, couples attempt to engage in various strategies to reconcile. In their study, Johnson et al. (2023) investigated the effect of positive problem-solving strategies such as concentrating on the issue, being open to discussing problems, finding middle ground, showing loyalty, directly expressing needs and opinions, and proposing constructive solutions. Their findings revealed that positive problem-solving mediated the positive association between perspective taking and relationship satisfaction. In an attempt to understand the viewpoint of the partner, individuals engage in positive problems-solving strategies which positively influence relationship satisfaction. Additionally, as previously discussed, perceived understanding mediated conflict resolution given that partners felt more understood (Gordon & Chen, 2016). Taken together, the processes through which perspective taking and perceived understanding exert their protective influence on relationship satisfaction could be moderated by extraneous factors such as effective communication between partners.

## CHAPTER VI

### COMMUNICATION QUALITY

Communication is a relational construct entailing patterns of connections that initiate, shape, and maintain bonds (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). In fact, communication has long been viewed as means for relationship maintenance. Even with the existence of other tools (e.g., commitment, healthy interdependence), communication remains the medium through which other constructs exert their influence on relational maintenance (Stafford, 2019). Maintenance refers to the efforts that partners allocate in order to preserve the identity of their relationship as well as their levels of satisfaction in their daily relating (Baxter & Dindia, 1990).

When tested among dyads, partners exhibited higher motivation to engage in maintenance behaviors when they perceived the relationship to be equitable rather than inequitable (Stafford & Canary, 2006). Maintenance behaviors are divided into strategic and routine actions: the former involve intentional behaviors that aim to sustain relationships, whereas the latter include behaviors with no predetermined goals that ensure relational maintenance through the improvement of overall relationship quality (Dainton & Stafford, 1993).

In their daily interactions, individuals need to integrate diverse stimuli in an immediate manner before deciding their subsequent responses. The process through which individuals determine adequate moves requires selectivity given the substantial variety of signals in communication encounters (Bavelas & Coates, 1992). When interpreting messages and implementing communication tactics, individuals employ extensive mental shortcuts that aim to produce the most effective outcomes with least



cognitive efforts (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). Despite their practicality, mental shortcuts restrict flexibility and objectivity of cognitive processing which hinders conflict resolution when disagreements escalate (Sillars et al., 2000).

Subsequently, everyday mundane interconnections that seem insignificant are essential in establishing and monitoring the quality of a relationship (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). Interdependent patterns of interaction between partners, rather than the content of shared messages, construct their relationship identity and communication system. In fact, no message, even explicit knowledge, fully encompasses the content it intends to relay. In order to reach a mutual understanding, individuals have to possess shared inference tools, especially in relationship contexts, to allow them to surpass literal meanings. As a matter of fact, partners' history plays a pivotal role in the understating of implicit and complicated communication content (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006).

Communication skills are deemed effective when they help maintain a good relational quality, which can occur through various communication behaviors such as conveying assurance and positivity (Stafford, 2019). Furthermore, the manner through which individuals handle opposing ideologies sheds light into the nature of their communication system. In situations where partners experience unsatisfactory states, they can employ constructive or destructive communicative outlets to share their thoughts and connect with their mates (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006).

A partner can engage in criticism, defensiveness, or even unemotional attitudes in attempts to seek attention and affection (Stafford, 2019). In such cases, the significant other either overlooks or decides to ignore the issue, especially when they are dissatisfied with the relationship, or chooses to put effort into acknowledging,

understanding, and acting on the matter, particularly when they are satisfied with their relationship. In general, satisfied couples tend to have a positive pattern of communication distinguished by positivity, affection, and consideration (Stafford, 2019). Furthermore, Christensen and Shenk (1991) have found that non-distressed couples were more likely to relate to one another through open discussions and positive emotional expressivity than couples seeking marital therapy and those going through divorce. Moreover, partners who shared similar views in the degree of desired closeness were more likely to report mutual constructive communication (Christensen & Shenk, 1991).

Despite the universal complexity of communication systems, a gender dissimilarity exists in the communication styles women and men adopt when experiencing dissatisfaction. In their study, Benin and Agostinelli (1988) investigated the effect of partners' division of labor on their satisfaction on a sample of dual-employed couples. Their findings revealed that men who were dissatisfied with the division of labor within their intimate relationship reported higher rates of arguments and were more likely to voice out their concerns to their partners (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988).

Additionally, when men shared their thoughts with their mates, they were more likely to receive attention especially that women tend to be highly attuned to verbal and nonverbal behaviors. In contrast, men described fewer instances of conflict when their mates were dissatisfied given that women's discontent with the division of labor is less likely to be properly addressed. This is particularly relevant as women are more inclined towards non-verbal means of expression and men are less likely to perceive non-verbal communicative cues (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988).

Communication quality impacts relationship satisfaction through the outcomes that result from specific patterns of interconnections (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Yoo et al., 2013). In their study, Yoo et al. (2013) recruited married couples to examine the interplay between partners' communication quality, intimacy, and overall relationship satisfaction. Results showed that individuals who perceived their partner's communication styles as positive experienced increased levels of intimacy. This, in turn, had a positive impact on enhancing their overall relationship satisfaction. (Yoo et al., 2013).

When partners express differences, they can either actively face or passively avoid the conflicting situation. Couples who used withdrawal as a strategy to resolve conflicts reported a decline in their evaluation of relationship quality over time as they lacked a sense of relational efficacy (Smith et al., 2008). Furthermore, communication is constrained by the structure it creates: During conflicts, partners who failed to engage in effective communication behaviors experienced exacerbated tension or even witnessed the emergence of novel conflicts as partners tended to impose their preexisting conclusions on current situations even when they were dissimilar in nature (Harary & Batell, 1981).

For instance, when partners receive ambiguous messages, especially those that deviate from their own perspectives, they tend to decipher them in altered manners when in conflict (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006). Particularly, individuals who felt dissatisfied with their relationships ascribed negative intent even when the sender reported none. This can be explained through motivated misunderstanding, which refers to an internal urge to preserve incorrect perceptions of others even when countered by contradictory evidence (Sillars & Vangelisti, 2006).

Accordingly, couples find themselves in conflicting communication that prevents them from reaching mutual agreement given that the content of their conflict undergoes alterations throughout the transmission process. The stated dynamic gives rise to communication problems that manifest themselves in difficulty listening to the other person, inflexibility in one's judgments as well as expressions of anger which can all diminish overall relationship satisfaction (Eğeci & Gençöz, 2006).

## CHAPTER VII

### THE CURRENT STUDY

The reviewed literature offers an understanding of multiple mechanisms involved in gender role attitudes, division of labor, relationship problems, communication quality, and relationship satisfaction separately; however, no study to date has investigated the dynamics that could underlie the interplay between these constructs combined. The present study aims to explore the interactions between partners' beliefs regarding gender roles, their division of tasks, relationship problems, communication quality and their evaluation of relationship quality, a novel contribution to the scientific literature on relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, the moderating impact of dyadic communication on the association between the outcome and predictors will be explored in an attempt to reveal any buffering interaction effects, where positive communication strategies could potentially dampen the negative relation between attitude incongruence and unequal division of labor with relationship satisfaction. In a similar manner, the mediating influence of positive communication quality on relationship satisfaction in times of conflict will be explored.

In addition, the current study aims to fill the gap in research concerning romantic relationships within the Arab region, with a specific emphasis on Lebanon. With the significant increase of 22.5% in divorce rates (from the past years to 2017) as well as the gradual and consistent decline in birth rate in Lebanon (with a birth rate of 16.479 in 2023 and a 1.31% decline from 2022), it is of paramount importance to investigate predictors of relationship satisfaction as means to limit relationship deterioration and promote relationship maintenance (*Lebanon birth rate 1950-2023*,

n.d.; Obeid et al., 2021). The study's primary asset lies in its contextualized approach to examining romantic relationships, which is especially vital in the context of Lebanon, given its diverse and intricate societal landscape. The Lebanese culture is characterized by a patriarchal order that intervenes with relational dynamics (Alami, 2021). This is especially relevant given that it introduces a power factor into the account, whereby men's privilege in the society manifests itself in the relational context and undermines equality between partners (Allouche, 2019).

Nevertheless, younger generations are showing less tolerance of conservative views that consider romantic relationships as tools that serve the patriarchal social structure (Oghia, 2012). Even with the attitudinal shift, partners still need to constantly reframe their relational values since they are continuously exposed to contradicting realities (Allouche, 2019). In fact, individuals reported the endorsement of a mixture of Lebanese attitudes (such as familial collectivity and traditionalism) along with more westernized ones (such as relational individuation and freedom of expression) that are being relayed through mass media outlets (Oghia, 2012).

In spite of the changing social norms in the Arab World, especially the normalization of women's education, a conflict still emerges. Working women are still expected to be the primarily performers of child caring and household duties, not to mention the relatively low participation of women in the workforce in the first place (James-Hawkins et al., 2016). Besides conflicting norms, the diversity characterizing the Lebanese culture introduces nuances in individuals' perception of social roles. For instance, Abouchedid and Nasser (2007) have investigated the impact of religiosity on attitudes towards gender roles in a sample of college students in Lebanon. Participants who belong to different sects reported different perspectives on the issue of equality

between women and men. In particular, highly religious Muslim men reported the lowest rating on the ability dimension for women. In other words, Muslim men were more prone than their Christian counterparts to devaluing women's capabilities by judging their job performance as less effective than that of men. In contrast, less religious Christian women reported the highest ability ratings (Abouchedid & Nasser, 2007).

Accordingly, individuals' attitudes towards gender roles along with their manifestation in intimate relationships in the Lebanese context are worth investigating. Besides the distinct nature of attitudes that partners can hold towards gender roles, the degree of congruence between their beliefs might play a pivotal role in their relationship satisfaction. This is especially relevant as previous findings suggested a positive association between couples' high evaluation of their relationship quality and their attitudinal similarity in different domains such as values, career success, and family choices (Brandén & Bernhardt, 2020; Chi et al., 2020).

In cases of dissimilarity, couples' relationship satisfaction becomes at risk. When attitudes towards gender roles diverge, women get assigned more roles inside and outside the house, which further interferes with their occupational performance (Hu et al., 2021). As a result, women might be exposed to increased stress levels which have been extensively associated with compromised relationship satisfaction (Randall & Bodenmann, 2017). Similarly, stress between partners can create relationship problems, in turn, leading to decreased relationship satisfaction (Storaasli & Markman, 1990). Nevertheless, potential buffers such as positive communication, which has long been considered as a tool for relationship maintenance, might compensate for reductions in relationship satisfaction when facing attitudinal incongruence or relationship problems

especially that it was previously correlated with increased relationship satisfaction (Yoo et al., 2013).

Through similar mechanisms, effective communication can limit the negative effects of unequal divisions of labor on couples' relationship satisfaction (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988). In the perception of unfair partitioning of tasks within relationships, several factors come into play. One of the relevant components resides in individuals' beliefs about gender roles, especially that women who endorse non-traditional attitudes towards gender roles were found to be more attuned to unequal divisions of labor in relational contexts (Braun et al., 2008). Likewise, when egalitarian men perceived inequity in the hours spent on household chores, they reported less satisfaction (Blom et al., 2017).

In the present research, which is a correlational survey study among heterosexual couples in long-term relationships in Lebanon, we hypothesize that:

*H1*: Relationship problems will negatively predict relationship satisfaction.

*H2*: Positive communication quality will positively predict relationship satisfaction.

*H3 (exploratory)*: Positive communication quality will mediate the negative association between relationship problems and relationship satisfaction.

*H4*: Attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles will negatively predict relationship satisfaction.

*H5*: Positive communication will moderate (dampen) the relationship between attitudinal incongruence and relationship satisfaction.

*H6*: Unequal division of labor will negatively predict relationship satisfaction.

*H7*: Positive communication will moderate (dampen) the relationship between unequal division of labor and relationship satisfaction.



*H8*: Unequal division of labors will negatively predict relationship satisfaction of egalitarian couples, but not traditional ones.

## CHAPTER VIII

### METHODS

#### **A. Participants**

The study included heterosexual couples who have been in a romantic relationship for at least six months, drawing from prior research (Gordon & Chen, 2016). Similarly, based on the sample size adopted in previous dyadic research, the present study aimed to recruit a total of 100 couples (e.g., Quinn et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2008). In total, the present sample included 103 couples with partners who are residents in Lebanon. Participants were all above 18 years of age with an age range between 20 and 65 years ( $M = 29.67$ ,  $SD = 7.70$ ). They were recruited through convenience sampling and snowball sampling. For convenience sampling, English and Arabic invitations to participate in the study were posted on various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Additionally, recruitment occurred through snowball sampling given that the researcher sent the participation invitation to their network of acquaintances who were asked to share it with couples that fit the inclusion criteria from their immediate environment. Further sample descriptives will be discussed in the results section.

#### **B. Measures**

For the purpose of the present study, measures were answered on a five-point Likert scales unless otherwise indicated. The reliabilities displayed in the section below rely on previous research. All reliabilities and psychometric properties of the adopted measures based on the data gathered from the sample of the current study will be

presented in the results section. English and Arabic versions of the following scales (Appendix I) were available and administered based on participants' preference. The majority of respondents (65.05%) completed the survey in English, with the remaining participants (34.95%) opting for Arabic.

### ***1. Relationship Satisfaction***

Couples' satisfaction with their relationship was measured through the administration of the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) (Hendrick, 1988). It is a unifactorial scale that consists of seven items with a Cronbach's  $\alpha = .86$  (Hendrick, 1988). The scale includes questions with varying responses such as "How good is your relationship compared to most?" with answers ranging from *poor* (1) to *excellent* (5) as well as reverse-coded questions such as "How many problems are there in your relationship?" answered with *Very Few* (1) to *Very Many* (5). After reversing the coding of two items, scores were calculated by summing the responses, with higher outcomes indicating greater relationship satisfaction.

### ***2. Attitudes Towards Gender Roles***

This variable was assessed through the use of the Arab Adolescents Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS) (Al-Ghanim & Badahdah, 2016). This questionnaire comprises 12 items (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .78$ ) that are answered on a scale from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5). The items are equally divided over the following two subscales: The Egalitarian Gender Roles and Traditional Gender Roles subscales. The former subscale includes six items (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .75$ ) containing statements such as "Men should participate in household chores.". The latter subscale includes six items

(Cronbach's  $\alpha = .77$ ) and features statements such as "A woman's place is the home.". The scores were computed through reverse coding of the Traditional Gender Roles items followed by the averaging of the 12 items with higher scores implying greater endorsement of egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles.

### **3. *Division of Labor***

The equality in the division of labor was evaluated based on the quality and quantity of partners' involvement in household tasks and childcare. In section A, married or cohabitating couples were asked to specify which partner is mostly involved in childcare, financial decisions, and housework duties such as grocery shopping, cooking, cleaning, and washing/ironing. Participants needed to choose one of the following answers: (A) mostly self, (B) mostly partner, (C) shared, (D) paid help, and (F) other (Specify, if possible) (*Domesticlabour\_w2*, n.d.). Additionally, each participant was required to indicate the time spent on housework and childcare per week with six possible categories: (A) no hours, (B) less than 5 hours, (C) 5–14 hours, (D) 15–29 hours, (E) 30–59 hours, and (F) 60 hours or more (Frank & Hou, 2015). Finally, participants needed to select the number of days on which they receive external help in terms of housework and child care with answers ranging from (A) 0 days to (H) 7 days per week. Unmarried couples or partners who are not cohabitating were asked to skip section A and fill out section B in which they needed to answer the same questions while assuming the amount of time and their potential involvement in the presented tasks.

#### **4. *Communication Quality***

Partners' perception of their communication quality was evaluated through the Self-Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR) scale (Iglesias-García et al., 2019). The scale includes eight items (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .75$ ) answered on a scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree* (1) to *Strongly Agree* (5). The questionnaire assesses two opposing facets of communication: four items measuring positive/assertive communication (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .79$ ), e.g., "I usually express my opinion and my desires to my partner." and four items measuring negative/aggressive communication (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .73$ ), e.g., "When we argue I usually shout at my partner.". Responses on the items assessing negative communication were reverse scored and then averaged with the rest in order to produce the overall scores, with greater ones indicating more positive perception of communication quality.

#### **5. *Relationship Problems***

The sources of relationship problems were assessed through the use of the first fifteen items of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .96$  (Spanier, 1976). These items measure the extent of agreement or disagreement between partners on different issues such as friends, sex relations, household tasks, career decisions, and religious matters. All items were answered on a six-point Likert scale ranging from *Always Agree* (1) to *Always Disagree* (7) with higher scores indicating greater disagreement on the assessed areas.

## **6. Social Desirability**

Participants' social desirability was evaluated through the adoption of the short-form of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) (Hart et al., 2015). The scale consists of four items (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .97$ ) answered on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from *Not True* (1) to *Very True* (7). The questionnaire measures two aspects of social desirability, namely self-deceptive enhancement with two items, "I have not always been honest with myself." (reverse-scored), and "I always know why I like things.",  $r = .98$ , and impression management with two items, "I sometimes tell lies if I have to." (reverse-scored) and "I never cover up my mistakes.",  $r = .80$ .

## **7. Demographics Questionnaire**

To take into account the characteristics of our sample, participants filled out a demographics questionnaire in which they were requested to indicate their age (in years), nationality, religious affiliation, highest educational level, relationship status, relationship length (in years and months), marriage and cohabitation duration (in years and months), the impact of Covid-related stress, the presence of children (number and age of children), monogamy/non-monogamy, openness to discuss relationship problems, occupational status and the best description of their subjective household income.

## **C. Procedure**

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the participation invitation flyer was posted on social media platforms and sent out to the researcher's

acquaintances. The flyer included the purpose of the study, the inclusion criteria, the expected duration, the necessity of completing the survey via video conferencing, and the researcher's email address and phone number for interested candidates. Individuals who were eligible to participate and showed interest in the study communicated the participation invitation to their partners.

Couples who decided to take part in the study and reached out to the researcher were asked to share their email addresses and agree on a time that suits them given that they needed to fill out the survey while being monitored via an unrecorded zoom meeting. This step was deemed crucial to ensure that partners were completing their surveys privately, and as means to limit data contamination by partners talking to one another or filling out the survey together. On the specified date and time, both partners received an email with a link for the zoom meeting as well as links for both English and Arabic versions of the informed consent. Detailed instructions were provided in the email in which participants were requested to join the meeting from different devices while having their sound and camera on.

Once partners joined the meeting, the motive for using a video conferencing technique was clarified and participants were further reassured about the confidentiality of their responses. Moreover, the researcher explained the tracking codes that the couples were required to create and demanded from the couples to mute themselves while formulating the code. These codes had to include three English letters followed by four digits of their choice. Couples were advised to avoid consecutive combinations and select arbitrary letters and numbers. Participants were also guided to take the survey in the language that they preferred. Before they started filling out the survey, participants were given the chance to share their concerns and ask for clarifications.

The survey began with an informed consent that clarified the duration, general purpose, procedures, anonymity of participants, confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw their participation at any time point. Participants had to agree to the informed consent in order to proceed with the rest of the survey. Subsequently, each couple had to formulate a single code to facilitate the tracking of dyadic responses. Afterwards, partners filled out the RAS, the AAGRAS, and the SCCR, that were administered in a randomized order to limit potential order effect. Thereafter, questions on the couple's division of labor, the DAS, the BIDR, and the demographics questionnaire were featured, respectively. At last, participants reached the end page where they were thanked for their time and willingness to participate in the study. When both partners completed the survey, the researcher thanked them verbally, answered any inquires, and finally ended the meeting. The survey took no longer than 20 minutes per participant.

Data was also collected in-person with the researcher's social network as well as couples in coffee shops, restaurants, and public places. Participating couples were given the same instructions as those who were monitored. However, due to logistical challenges, only approximately 60% of the total number of recruited couples completed the survey after participating in monitored (15%) and live (45%) procedures. As a result, we had to resort to online data collection to recruit the rest of participants. To ensure that the instructions were appropriately followed via online recruitment, the inclusion criteria as well as procedural instructions were introduced before the English and Arabic survey links in a WhatsApp message. Instructions guided participants to complete the survey separately as well as form and enter an adequate code while emphasizing the anonymity of the responses. Invitation messages were sent to the



researcher's acquaintances who did not show willingness to undergo monitored procedures adopted in the first phase of data collection. Additionally, they were shared with WhatsApp groups and forwarded by participants to other eligible couples. The entire data collection started in October 2022 and continued until March 2023.

#### **D. Data Analysis Strategy**

To begin with, bivariate Pearson correlations for individuals as well as couples were examined in order to explore the associations between the different variables of the study, using SPSS 26. For the purpose of dyadic data analysis, partners' scores on the different variables were computed following different strategies. As means to test for couples' relationship satisfaction, partners' scores on the RAS were averaged with higher averages indicating greater overall relationship satisfaction among the couple. Similarly, couples' gender role attitudes were derived by averaging partners' values on the AAGRAS with higher score indicating more egalitarian attitudes. When it comes to incongruence in gender role attitudes, scores were represented by the absolute value of the difference between partners' scores on the AAGRAS. Outcomes closer to zero indicated increased attitudinal congruence towards gender roles among the pair, whereas higher values implied greater discrepancy in partners' attitudes.

For couples' division of labor, each participant's estimations of hours spent on housework and childcare was averaged by taking the midpoint of the chosen categories with 65 hours being the midpoint of the unbounded upper category. Subsequently, the average number of hours men allocate to both household and child care duties were subtracted from the average number of hours women spend on the same tasks. The

resulting difference was divided by the total number of hours performed by both partners which was computed by summing up the previously calculated averages. The absolute value of the scores ranged from 0 to 1, whereby higher outcomes indicated increased inequality in the division of labor between men and women. Additionally, communication quality for the pair was calculated through the averaging of the mates' scores on the SCCR, with greater scores indicating higher average positive communication among the couple. Furthermore, partners' relationship problems score was calculated by averaging their scores on the DAS, with higher scores implying greater disagreements on different life issues. In regards to average age of couples, partners' ages were averaged. In a similar manner, partners' levels of education were averaged with higher values conveying higher educational attainments.

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted in order to examine whether there were any notable distinctions between males and females concerning the variables under investigation. As for the main analyses, these revolved around regression models. A two-step hierarchical multiple regression was supposed to include couples' relationship satisfaction as the outcome variable with age, education, and relationship length as predictors in the first step, and attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles, inequality in division of labor, communication quality, and relationship problems as predictors in the second step. Likewise, the second multiple regression model was planned to incorporate the same variables except for the incongruence in gender role attitudes that was expected to be replaced with couples' average attitudes towards gender roles. Follow-up analyses including moderation and mediation analyses were also planned to test for the influence of communication quality on the association between relationship satisfaction and the rest of the constructs.

### **E. Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted where two couples filled out the survey. As expected, the time it took for the participants to complete the survey was around 15-20 minutes. Minimal changes were introduced after piloting. Based on participants' feedback, the sentence structure in the Arabic version of the division of labor questionnaire was unified for a set of questions to make it clearer for participants. In order to avoid confusion, the numbering (1-5) was removed from the instructions preceding the scales given that the anchors themselves were not numbered.

## CHAPTER IX

### RESULTS

All the data obtained in this study was entered and analyzed using SPSS version 26. In the current section, the preliminary analyses are presented, including missing value analysis, normality, and univariate and multivariate outliers. Subsequently, psychometric properties of three scales are introduced [i.e., Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), Arab Adolescents' Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS), and Self-Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR)]. In the parts that follow, the results of different analyses are shown, including reliability analyses, sample descriptives, scale descriptives, correlations, independent samples t-tests, and regression analyses.

#### **A. Preliminary Analyses**

##### ***1. Missing Value Analysis***

Missing value analysis for individuals' data showed that there were no items in the used scales with missing values greater than 5%, except for item 12 on the AAGRAS and the items on the scales assessing division of labor, relationship problems, and social desirability (Field, 2018). Similarly, items belonging to the demographics questionnaire showed missing values greater than 5% such as age, income, and monogamy, which can be explained by the sensitivity of such questions to participants.

Little's MCAR test was not significant,  $p > .05$ , which demonstrates that the pattern of missing values was completely at random. Since the percentage of missing

values was not high for the majority of scales and the pattern was shown to be at random, the missing values were not replaced.

## **2. Normality**

Normality of the scales for individual and dyadic data was examined using the Shapiro-Wilk test, histograms, and  $z$ -kurtosis and  $z$ -skewness scores. The test indicated that only the social desirability scale was normally distributed for individuals ( $W = .99$ ,  $df = 144$ ,  $p = .13$ ). Likewise, couples' scores on communication quality ( $W = .99$ ,  $df = 83$ ,  $p = .87$ ) and gender role attitudes ( $W = .98$ ,  $df = 83$ ,  $p = .36$ ) were found to be normally distributed.

As for the rest of the scales, the Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the data were not normality distributed. However, visual inspection of histograms presenting individuals' data suggested a roughly normal distribution for each of the scales except for data pertaining to relationship problems and division of labor. These were slightly positively skewed, with most scores clustering around smaller values, showing low relationship disagreements and low involvement in household and childcare tasks as reported by individuals. In contrast, the histogram presenting the distribution of the relationship satisfaction scores belonging to individuals showed negative skewness, indicating more concentration of data on values presenting higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

When it comes to dyadic data, a similar pattern of distribution of the relationship satisfaction scores was found with more clustering of values around higher values, implying that couples tended to have high relationship satisfaction scores. Moreover,

scales assessing inequality in division of labor and attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles showed positive skewness, indicating low inequality in division of tasks as well as low incongruence in attitudes towards gender roles among couples.

Additional metrics that help look more into the normality of data are  $z$ -skewness and  $z$ -kurtosis scores. These were calculated for all of the scales by dividing the skewness and kurtosis values by their standard error. Resulting scores that are greater than 1.96 are considered significant at  $p < .05$  (Field, 2018). It is important to note that significant  $z$ -skewness and  $z$ -kurtosis scores signify departure from normality. The values of interest can be found in Table 1 for individuals and in Table 2 for dyadic data for all relevant scales.

**Table 1.** Scales' Z-Skewness and Z-Kurtosis for Individuals

Scale	$z$ -skewness	$z$ -kurtosis
Relationship Satisfaction	-7.64*	7.57*
Attitudes Towards Gender Roles	-3.52*	.94
Division of Labor	2.54*	-.90
Communication Quality	-1.20	-1.27
Relationship Problems	1.90	-1.44
Social Desirability	-.30	-1.50

Note. \* $p < .05$

**Table 2.** Scales' Z-Skewness and Z-Kurtosis for Couples

Scale	z-skewness	z-kurtosis
Relationship Satisfaction	-4.43*	3.64*
Incongruence in Gender Role Attitudes	5.49*	4.99*
Couple's Gender Roles Attitudes	-1.21	- .53
Inequality in Division of Labor	3.47*	- .20
Communication Quality	- .49	- .30
Relationship Problems	.29	-1.94
Social Desirability	.61	-1.06

Note. \* $p < .05$

### 3. Univariate and Multivariate Outliers

Univariate outliers were examined using z-scores and boxplots. One univariate outlier was found for the relationship satisfaction scale (i.e., case number 136) and one for the attitudes towards gender roles scale (i.e., case number 28) for individuals. As for the combined scores for couples, four outliers were detected for the same gender roles attitude scale assessing the degree of congruence in partners scores (i.e., case numbers 14, 50, 81 and 87). Additionally, scores on the scale assessing equality in division of labor resulted in five outliers (i.e., case numbers 1, 45, 85, 92, and 97). Yet, couples' scores on scales assessing relationship satisfaction, communication quality, and relationship problems showed no univariate outliers. Likewise, there were no univariate outliers for the communication quality, relationship problems, division of labor, and social desirability scales for individuals.

Multivariate outliers were identified using the Mahalanobis distance in SPSS applying the rule of probability less than .001 (Field, 2018). For the first investigation including couples' combined scores on the RAS, AAGRAS, SCCR, and division of labor scales, only one case (case number 14) was found to be a multivariate outlier. This multivariate outlier, which also turned out to be an outlier on the AAGRAS earlier, was not found when the AAGRAS was not introduced to the computation. Similarly, a second analysis resulted in no multivariate outliers. This analysis was conducted with the same variables as the first one except that it incorporated couples' gender role attitudes, rather than their attitudinal congruence, which were calculated by averaging couples' scores on the AAGRAS. All these cases, whether identified as univariate or multivariate outliers, were kept in the analysis, since the sample size used in the study is large ( $N = 206$ ), distributions were approximately normal, and there were less than 5% outliers on specific variables.

## **B. Psychometric Properties**

This subsection displays the factor analyses of the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), the Arab Adolescents' Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS), and the Self- Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR) scale. The aforementioned scales were selected for this analysis to confirm the presence of pre-specified factor structures based on prior research (Al-Ghanim & Badahdah, 2016; Hendrick, 1988; Iglesias-García et al., 2019). The factor and pattern matrices are presented in Appendix II.



## *1. Statistical Assumptions*

Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant for the RAS, AAGRAS, and the SCCR [ $X^2(66) = 346.396, p < .001$ ;  $X^2(28) = 255.400, p < .001$ ;  $X^2(21) = 294.016, p < .001$  respectively]. Furthermore, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin values for the RAS and AAGRAS were above .70 (KMO = .768; KMO = .751 respectively). As for the SCCR, the KMO value is still acceptable (KMO = .686) even though it is closer than the rest of scales to the cutoff that is equivalent to .5 (Field, 2018). This provides evidence that the dataset is factorable. The determinant was greater than .00001 for all scales and no correlations between the items of each scale were above .80; therefore, there were no multicollinearity or singularity problems. Measures of sampling adequacy (MSA) found on the anti-image correlation matrices were well above .50, except for the first item on the AAGRAS ("Men and women are more alike than different.") (Field, 2018).

### a. Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

A factor analysis with Maximum-Likelihood extraction was conducted on the seven RAS items. A one-factor solution was forced given that the scale is purportedly one-dimensional (Hendrick, 1988). All seven items loaded well on the only factor constituting this scale. The factor explained 31.96% of the variance in the observed variable.

### b. Arab Adolescents' Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS)

A factor analysis with Maximum-Likelihood extraction and Direct Oblimin rotation was conducted on the 12 AAGRAS items. A two-factor solution was force entered based on

the fixed number of dimensions suggested by previous research (Al-Ghanim & Badahdah, 2016). The two factors are egalitarian gender roles (6 items, explained 15.88 % of variance) and traditional gender roles (6 items, explained 12.02% of variance). The two factors combined explained a total of 27.90 % of the variance. The items “All fields of study are suitable for women”, “Men and women are more alike than different.”, “For women, marriage is more important than education”, and “A woman should choose her spouse without family’s interference” loaded poorly on both factors with factor loading coefficients below .40. As for the items “Men should participate in household chores” and “Women should participate in parliamentary elections” that are originally constituents of the egalitarian gender roles subscale, they loaded well on the traditional gender roles factor instead. When it comes to the rest of the items, they all loaded well on their relevant factors.

c. Self- Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR)

A factor analysis with Maximum-Likelihood extraction and Direct Oblimin rotation was conducted on the 8 Communication Quality scale items, with two factors specified for extraction. These two factors explained a total of 37.37% of the variance. The two factors are positive/assertive communication (4 items, explained 21.79 % of variance) and negative/aggressive communication (4 items, explained 15.58% of variance).

**C. Reliability Analysis**

To assess internal consistency, reliability analysis was conducted for the scales, taking into account individuals’ rather couples’ scores (Check Table 3 for more details).

The RAS showed poor reliability, with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .52$ . When item 3 ("How good is your relationship compared to most?") was removed, the reliability increased to Cronbach's  $\alpha = .69$ . Additionally, the item does not conceptually fit the targeted dimension as it assesses how individuals compare their relationship to other couples whereas the rest of the items require individuals to evaluate their established relationships without external references. Consequently, the aforementioned item was omitted from the scale in order to improve its internal consistency.

When it comes to the AAGRAS, traditional gender roles factor had an acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .65. However, the egalitarian gender roles factor with its original items showed poor reliability, with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .47. Given that the focus is on the general score on this scale rather than its subscales and that the reliability of the scale is high (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .71$ ), no items were removed. The overall score on this scale reflected the degree to which individuals held egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles given that items targeting traditional gender roles were reverse coded.

The scale assessing the division of labor between partners showed good internal consistency with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .61$ . As for SCCR, both positive and negative communication factors had an acceptable reliability, with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .71 and .61, respectively. The overall score on this scale that assessed positive communication showed good internal consistency with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .62$ .

Concerning the reliability of the relationship problems scales, it was found to be high with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .86$ . The reliability of the social desirability scale, along with its subscales including self-deceptive enhancement and impression management, was low

(Cronbach's  $\alpha = .36$ ,  $r = .18^*$ ,  $r = .04$ , respectively). Given that this scale was not consistently measuring the intended construct, it was excluded from the analysis.

**Table 3.** *Reliability Analysis of the Scales and Subscales*

Scale/Subscale	Cronbach's $\alpha$
Relationship Satisfaction	.69
Attitudes Towards Gender Roles	.71
Traditional Gender Roles	.65
Egalitarian Gender Roles	.47
Division of Labor	.61
Communication Quality	.62
Positive/Assertive Communication	.71
Negative/Aggressive Communication	.61
Relationship Problems	.86
Social Desirability	.36
Self-Deceptive Enhancement (2 items)	$r = .18^*$
Impression Management (2 items)	$r = .04$

*Note.*  $*p < .05$

#### **D. Sample Descriptives**

The study included 103 heterosexual couples who have been in a romantic relationship for at least six months. Even though Lebanese residents were targeted through the recruitment strategy, one participant was Palestinian, another Syrian, and another French with the rest being Lebanese (92.7%). Christians comprised a higher

percentage (i.e., 65.5% Maronite, 10.2% Catholic, 5.8% Greek Orthodox, 1% Armenian Orthodox, and 0.5% Protestant). As for Muslims, they constituted around 8.2% of participants, distributed among Sunnis (3.9%), Shiites (1.9%), and Druzes (2.4%). An additional 1% was attributed to participants who reported being agnostic. Furthermore, most of the participants had university (50%) and graduate studies (30.1%) as their highest educational level. The rest of participants had reached technical school (6.3%), high school (4.9%), intermediate (1.5%), and elementary or below (0.5%). Recruited participants were mostly employed in the private sector (68.4%) with a few working in the public sector (12.6%). While 33.5% of the participants reported a good household income that they can save from, 32% reported that their income covers their needs with no chance of saving from it.

Individuals were either in long-term relationships (34.5%), engaged (34%), or married (24.3%) with an average relationship length of 6.5 years ( $SD = 6.56$ ). Out of the recruited couples, 15.5% had one to four children while 70.9% did not. Children's age ranged from 1 month to 36 years. When it comes to their relationship structure, 81.6% of participants had monogamous relationships while 4.9% reported having a polygamous relationship. Most individuals reported being moderately open to discuss their relationship problems (20.9%) or open to a great extent (46.1%). The sample descriptives are displayed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Sample Descriptives**

		N	%
Nationality	Lebanese	191	92.7
	Palestinian	1	0.5
	Syrian	1	0.5
	French	1	0.5
Religious Affiliation	Maronite	135	65.5
	Greek Orthodox	12	5.8
	Catholic	21	10.2
	Protestant	1	0.5
	Armenian Orthodox	2	1.0
	Sunni	8	3.9
	Shia	4	1.9
	Druze	5	2.4
	Agnostic	2	1
Highest Educational Level	Elementary or below	1	0.5
	Intermediate	3	1.5
	High School	10	4.9
	Technical School	13	6.3
	University	103	50.0
	Graduate Studies	62	30.1
Occupational Status	Private Sector	141	68.4
	Public Sector	26	12.6
	Housewife	6	2.9
	Unemployed	8	3.9
	Retired	2	1.0

Household Income	Our household income covers our needs well, and we can save from it.	69	33.5
	Our household income covers our needs, but we cannot save from it.	66	32.0
	Our household income does not cover our needs, and we face difficulties meeting those needs.	3	1.5
	I refuse to answer.	6	2.9
	I don't know.	6	2.9
Relationship Status	Long-Term Relationship	71	34.5
	Engaged	70	34.0
	Married	50	24.3
Children	Yes	32	15.5
	No	146	70.9
Monogamy	Yes	168	81.6
	No	10	4.9
Openness	Not Open at All	8	3.9
	Slightly Open	24	11.7
	Somewhat Open	18	8.7
	Moderately Open	43	20.9
	Open to a Great Extent	95	46.1

## E. Scale Descriptives

### 1. For Individuals

The aggregate means, range, and standard deviations (SDs) of the scales calculated for individual participants are shown in Table 2.

The mean for the overall scores on the relationship satisfaction scale ( $M = 26.72$ ,  $SD = 3.21$ ) was close to the upper limit of the range, showing that on average, participants showed great satisfaction in their relationship. Likewise, the mean for the scale measuring attitudes towards gender roles ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = .47$ ) was well above the midpoint, revealing that on average participants were more likely to endorse egalitarian

gender roles than traditional ones. Similarly, the mean for communication quality scale was above the midpoint ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .52$ ), indicating that participants tended to possess more positive perceptions of the communication quality in their relationship.

Regarding the number of hours participants spend (or envision spending) on housework and childcare, the mean was below the midpoint ( $M = 24.10$ ,  $SD = 15.62$ ) which shows limited involvement of partners in such tasks or great variation in the division of labor among individuals. When breaking down the aforementioned result by gender, women showed greater engagement in such tasks ( $M = 27.81$ ) than men ( $M = 19.70$ ). Concerning the extent of external assistance received, participants reported an average of 1.65 days per week for receiving help with housework, and an average of 2.22 days per week for receiving paid or unpaid assistance with childcare.

Partners' involvement in housework duties, childcare, and financial decision-making was also assessed in a qualitative manner. Both men and women displayed a common pattern of shared responsibilities in grocery shopping, cleaning, childcare, and financial decisions, although women consistently reported higher percentages of perceived involvement of both individuals in these roles. In terms of cooking, shared roles were reported at similar percentages for men and women (38.8%). However, women often identified themselves as the primary individuals responsible for cooking (39.8%). Concerning washing and ironing tasks, men exhibited comparable percentages for "shared" and "mostly partner" options (34.7%), while women's responses predominantly centered around "Self", with 40.8% as the mode. As for the mean of relationship problems scale, it was below the midpoint ( $M = 1.79$ ,  $SD = .52$ ), implying that participants reported less disagreement in the assessed sources of relationship problems (Check Table 5 for more details).



**Table 5.** *Scale Descriptives for Individuals*

Scale	Mean	SD	Range
Relationship Satisfaction	26.72	3.21	11.00-30.00
Attitudes Towards Gender Roles	4.18	0.45	2.58-5.00
Division of Labor	24.10	15.62	0.00-65.00
Communication Quality	4.06	0.52	2.50-5.00
Relationship Problems	1.79	0.52	1.00-3.27

## **2. For Couples**

The aggregate means, range, and standard deviations (SDs) of the scales calculated for each couple are shown in Table 6.

The mean for the relationship satisfaction scale ( $M = 26.70$ ,  $SD = 2.75$ ) was above the midpoint, showing that on average, couples showed great satisfaction in their relationship. In the same manner, the mean for couples' combined attitudes towards gender roles was slightly above the midpoint ( $M = 4.05$ ,  $SD = .32$ ), indicating that couples tended to hold more egalitarian than traditional attitudes towards gender roles. Couples showed fair perception of communication quality in their relationship given that the mean of this scale fell around the midpoint ( $M = 4.06$ ,  $SD = .52$ ).

The mean for incongruence in attitudes towards gender roles ( $M = .44$ ,  $SD = .38$ ) was well below the midpoint of 1.00, revealing that, on average, couples showed congruence in the attitudes they hold towards gender roles. Likewise, the mean for the scores showing the inequality in couples' division of labor ( $M = .33$ ,  $SD = .28$ ) was

below the midpoint of .50, indicating that there is greater equality than inequality in how the tasks are divided over partners. However, it is noteworthy that a significant mean difference was found between married and unmarried couples on the degree of inequality in task division ( $t(84) = -2.81, p = .006$ ), with married couples ( $M = .45$ ) experiencing more inequality than unmarried ones ( $M = .27$ ). Regarding the mean for couples' scores on the scale assessing relationship problems was below the midpoint ( $M = 1.78, SD = .46$ ), demonstrating low disagreement in the assessed sources of relationship problems.

**Table 6.** *Scale Descriptives for Couples*

Scale	Mean	SD	Range
Relationship Satisfaction	26.70	2.75	15.50-30.00
Incongruence in Gender Role Attitudes	0.44	0.38	0.00-2.00
Inequality in Division of Labor	0.33	0.28	0.00-1.00
Communication Quality	4.06	0.42	3.00-5.00
Relationship Problems	1.78	0.46	1.00-2.74
Attitudes Towards Gender Roles	4.18	0.35	3.29-4.96

## F. Correlations between Variables

### 1. For Individuals

Table 7 displays the bivariate correlations (Pearson's  $r$ ) between the variables for individual participants.

To begin with, relationship satisfaction was found to be negatively correlated with relationship problems ( $r = -0.48, p < .001$ ) and positively correlated with communication quality ( $r = .43, p < .001$ ). Hence, the less individuals reported relationship problems, the more they felt satisfied about their relationship. Moreover, individuals were more likely to report higher relationship satisfaction when they experienced positive communication in their relationships. Likewise, individuals who showed greater communication quality were more likely to hold egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles given that both variables were positively correlated ( $r = .15, p = .033$ ). In a similar manner, communication quality was negatively correlated with relationship problems ( $r = -0.47, p < .001$ ), indicating that the more positive their perception of communication quality is, the less relationship problems they reported.

In terms of demographics, age was found to be negatively correlated with communication quality ( $r = -.15, p = .046$ ). Thus, the younger the individuals were, the more likely they were to report positive perception of the quality of their communication with their partners. For gender that was coded as 0 for women and 1 for men, two negative correlations were found with each of gender role attitudes ( $r = -.34, p < .001$ ) and division of labor ( $r = -.27, p < .001$ ). This indicates that women were more likely to hold egalitarian gender roles and take on more tasks related to childcare and housework than men. In terms of age, men were more likely to be older than women ( $r = .19, p < .01$ ). In relation to education, it was found to be positively correlated with gender roles attitudes ( $r = .24, p < .001$ ) and negatively correlated with each of age ( $r = -.40, p < .001$ ) and gender ( $r = -.17, p = .017$ ). These results indicate that the higher the level of education, the more likely were individuals to hold egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles. In addition, the older the participants were, the higher the education level

they had attained. Furthermore, women were more likely to have reached higher levels of education than men.

Moreover, a positive correlation was found between participants' attitudes towards gender roles and their willingness to discuss relationship problems ( $r = .21, p = .004$ ). This suggests that individuals with more egalitarian beliefs were more likely to be open to discussing issues within their relationships. Individuals who indicated a higher likelihood of perceiving a negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their relationships were also more prone to experiencing reduced levels of relationship satisfaction ( $r = -.18, p = .016$ ) and poorer communication quality ( $r = -.17, p = .022$ ). Conversely, a positive correlation emerged between the perceived negative influence of the COVID-19 pandemic and relationship problems ( $r = .24, p = .002$ ). This suggests that those who reported more instances of disagreements tended to experience a stronger impact from the constraints imposed by the pandemic. Moreover, age exhibited a negative association with COVID-19 related stress, with older individuals indicating a lesser negative influence of the pandemic on their relationships ( $r = -.18, p = .025$ ).

**Table 7.** *Bivariate Pearson Correlations for Individuals*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Relationship Satisfaction	1									
2. Gender Roles Attitude <sup>1</sup>	.02	1								
3. Division of Labor <sup>2</sup>	-.01	.08	1							
4. Communication Quality	.43***	.15*	.07	1						
5. Relationship Problems	-.48***	.03	.12	-.47***	1					
6. Age	-.07	-.08	-.16	-.15*	.06	1				
7. Gender	.08	-.34***	-.27***	.02	-.04	.19**	1			
8. Education	.02	.24***	.12	.14	.00	-.40***	-.17*	1		
9. Openness	.07	.21**	.01	.13	-.08	-.12	-.10	-.03	1	
10. COVID-19 Stress	-.18*	.09	-.09	-.17*	.24**	.18*	-.06	-.06	-.02	1

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

<sup>1</sup> Lower scores represent traditional attitudes towards gender roles whereas higher scores show more egalitarian attitudes.

<sup>2</sup> No significant correlations were found between relationship satisfaction and each of the housework and childcare items when tested separately.

## 2. *For Couples*

Table 8 displays the bivariate Pearson correlations between the variables belonging to couples.

Firstly, couples' relationship satisfaction was found to be negatively correlated with relationship problems ( $r = -.53, p < .001$ ) and positively correlated with communication quality ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ). The cited results imply that couples with higher levels of relationship satisfaction were less likely to experience relationship problems and more likely to have positive perceptions of their communication quality. The attitudes that couples have towards gender roles were negatively correlated with the attitudinal incongruence they experienced ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ). In other words, couples who held more egalitarian gender roles were less likely to show incongruence in their attitudes towards gender roles. Another negative correlation was found between communication quality and inequality in division of labor ( $r = -.35, p < .001$ ), indicating that the more active/assertive the communication between partners was, the less they experienced inequality in the division of tasks related to childcare and housework. Correspondingly, communication quality was found to be negatively correlated with relationship problems ( $r = -.52, p < .001$ ), showing that couples who perceive the quality of their communication to be positive were less likely to report disagreement on different sources of conflict.

Concerning couples' demographic variables, such as their average age and educational level, significant correlations were found between these variables as well as with other factors. A negative correlation was found between age and education level ( $r = -.46, p < .001$ ), showing that the older the couples were, the lower their educational level was. Noteworthy is that age was positively correlated with inequality in division

of labor between partners ( $r = .40, p < .001$ ), indicating that the younger they were, the less they experienced inequality in how they divide household and childcare tasks between them. Another positive correlation was found between couples' average educational level and their gender role attitudes ( $r = .26, p = .011$ ), implying that partners with higher educational levels were more likely to endorse egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles.

Regarding the duration of the relationship, couples with lengthier partnerships were more prone to reporting increased inequalities in the distribution of chores ( $r = .31, p = .004$ ), as well as being relatively older ( $r = .84, p < .001$ ). Furthermore, a negative correlation surfaced between the average educational attainment and the duration of the relationship ( $r = -.29, p = .004$ ), implying that couples with higher educational levels tended to have shorter relationship lengths. As for the number of children, couples with more children were more likely to be older ( $r = .60, p = .009$ ) and with longer partnership durations ( $r = .70, p = .001$ ). No statistically significant correlations were observed between the number of children couples have and the remaining variables, including their relationship satisfaction, communication quality, and relationship problems.

**Table 8.** *Bivariate Pearson Correlations for Couples*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Relationship Satisfaction	1									
2. Incongruence in Gender Roles Attitude	-.06	1								
3. Couple's Gender Roles Attitudes <sup>1</sup>	.10	-.29**	1							
4. Inequality in division of Labor	-.08	.01	.04	1						
5. Communication Quality	.53***	-.07	.17	-.35***	1					
6. Relationship Problems	-.53***	.14	.09	.17	-.52***	1				
7. Age	-.12	-.06	-.01	.40***	-.17	.06	1			
8. Education	.07	-.11	.26*	-.21	.16	.00	-.46***	1		
9. Relationship Length	-.04	-.08	.07	.31**	-.10	.07	.84***	-.29**	1	
10. Number of Children	.05	-.14	.29	.21	.32	-.14	.60**	-.25	.70***	1

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

<sup>1</sup> Lower scores represent traditional attitudes towards gender roles whereas higher scores show more egalitarian attitudes.



### **G. Independent Samples t-Test**

To test for any significant differences between men and women on the variables of interest, we ran a series of independent samples *t*-tests in individuals' data to compare their means on levels of relationship satisfaction, hours spent on household and childcare, gender role attitudes, communication quality, and relationship problems. There was a significant difference between the means of gender roles attitudes of men and women,  $t(190) = 4.97, p < .001$ , with women showing more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles ( $M = 4.322$ ) than men ( $M = 4.014$ ). In the same way, the means of the hours spent on housework and childcare by men and women were significantly different,  $t(146) = 3.37, p = .001$ , with women reporting more hours spent on these tasks ( $M = 27.808$ ) than men ( $M = 19.704$ ). As for the rest of the *t*-tests, no significant mean differences were found between men and women on each of relationship satisfaction, communication quality, and relationship problems.

### **H. Regression Analysis**

This study aimed to explore the predictors of relationship satisfaction among Lebanese couples. Given that the outcome variable (relationship satisfaction) in the dyadic data correlated solely with communication quality and relationship problems, two predictors, namely incongruence in attitudes towards gender roles and inequality in division of labor, were excluded from the regression model. Consequently, the predictors entered into the model were communication quality and relationship satisfaction, as well as demographic variables such as age, education, and relationship length.

The selection of control variables was guided by demographic dimensions closely linked to both relationship satisfaction and the primary predictors. To account for potential age-related patterns among younger generations, couples' average age was controlled for, aligning with previous research indicating generational shifts (Oghia, 2012). Similarly, the influence of educational attainment on diverse perceptions of inequality between partners has been established, justifying its inclusion as a control variable (Scott et al., 2014). Moreover, the contrasting patterns of interplay between relationship duration and satisfaction within the Arab region accentuates the importance of incorporating relationship length as a control variable (Belal & Gaheen, 2016; Smadi, 2017). Additionally, the inclusion of relationship length serves to effectively address potential adaptation effects experienced among partners (Snyder, 1964).

As a result, a two-step hierarchical multiple regression was conducted using the “enter” method, with relationship satisfaction as the outcome variable. Demographic variables that were treated as continuous, namely age, education, and relationship length (in years), were force entered in the first step. In the second step, the main predictors were added, namely communication quality and relationship problems.

### ***1. Statistical Assumptions***

To test the ratio of cases to predictors, the formula dictating that the number of participants should be greater than  $N > 50 + 8 * \text{number of predictors}$  was followed (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Following this rule, a minimum of 90 couples was needed, taking into consideration the five predictors present in the regression analysis.

Since in the present study 103 couples were recruited, the statistical assumption of ratio of cases to predictors was met.

The histogram, p-p plot, and scatterplot for relationship satisfaction are shown in figures 2, 3, and 4, respectively, in Appendix III. Based on the analysis of these figures, relationship satisfaction showed a distribution that is close to normality (figure 2). As for linearity, a slight deviation was found in the p-p plot for relationship satisfaction (figure 3). Concerning the homogeneity of residual variances, the visual inspection of figure 4 shows that residuals were randomly scattered with no pattern in the data; therefore, the homoscedasticity assumption was met. In addition to that, the assumption of independence of errors was also met, since the value of Durbin-Watson was around 2 (specifically 2.09), showing no autocorrelation between the residuals and the outcome variable.

To identify possible issues with singularity and multicollinearity among the variables, correlations, VIF values, and Tolerance values were all examined. To begin with, the correlations between the variables did not exceed .80. Additionally, the VIF values did not exceed 10, and the Tolerance values were all above .20. These analyses show there were no singularity or multicollinearity problems in our data.

## ***2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results***

In the initial stage of the model, when the demographic information was forced entered as predictors in the regression equation, it was observed that the average age, education level of couples, and their relationship length were not significant predictors

of relationship satisfaction. The variance in the dependent variable explained by this model was negligible ( $R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(3, 86) = 1.51$ ,  $p = .217$ ).

Communication quality and relationship problems were entered into the model next. After these variables were added, the variance explained was  $R^2 = .43$ ,  $F(2, 84) = 27.57$ ,  $p < .001$ . These two variables explained 43% of the variance in partners' relationship satisfaction. As for the adjusted  $R^2$  (i.e., adjusted R square represents a less biased measure of association when comparing variance of outcome variable and population error variance), it explained 39% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. This 4% decrease in explained variance shows that the model can be generalized to the population. The degree of variance accounted for by both predictors aligns effectively with similar models evaluating factors influencing relationship satisfaction, while considering the number of predictors integrated within each model (Burn & Ward, 2005; Mead, 2005; Rochlen et al., 2008; Wright, 2018). The model summary, including  $R$ ,  $R^2$ , adjusted  $R^2$ , standard error of the estimate ( $SE$ ), and  $R^2$  change can be found in Table 9.

**Table 9.** *Model Summary*

Model	$R$	$R^2$	Adjusted $R^2$	$SE$	$R^2$ Change
1	.22	.05	.02	2.67	.05
2	.65	.43	.39	2.10	.38

Table 10 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients ( $B$ ), the standard error of  $B$  ( $SE$ ), and the standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ).

**Table 10.** *Regression Coefficients*

	Unstandardized		Standardized	$t$
	Coefficients		Coefficients	
	$B$	$SE$	$\beta$	
(constant)	24.65	4.08		6.04***
Average Age	-.12	.06	-.33	-1.97
Average Education	-.06	.31	-.02	-.20
Relationship Length	.12	.06	.33	2.09*
Communication Quality	2.20	.63	.35	3.50***
Relationship Problems	-2.08	.57	-.36	-3.68***

*Note.* \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$

Regression coefficients demonstrated that couples' average age and education were not significant predictors of their relationship satisfaction. However, couples' relationship length was a significant positive predictor of relationship satisfaction with a medium-to-large effect size ( $B = .12$ ,  $\beta = .33$ ,  $p = .04$ ). The longer couples were together, the more likely they were to show high levels of relationship satisfaction. Additionally, communication quality played a role in predicting couples' levels of

relationship satisfaction with a medium-to-large effect size ( $B = 2.20$ ,  $\beta = .35$ ,  $p = .001$ ). Couples who demonstrated positive communication quality were more likely to report higher levels of contentment in their romantic relationship. As for the relationship problems variable, it negatively predicted relationship satisfaction with a medium-to-large effect size ( $B = -2.08$ ,  $\beta = -.36$ ,  $p < .001$ ), whereby more disagreements between partners predicted less satisfaction with their current relationship.

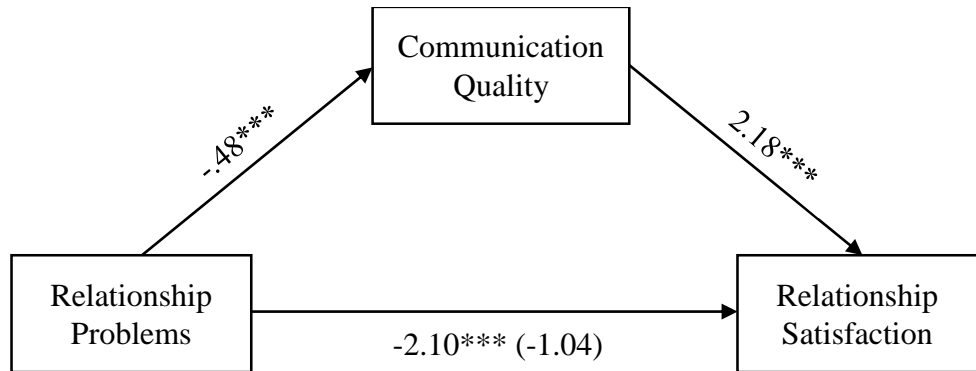
In regard to the second multiple regression model that was proposed, couples' average attitudes towards gender roles, that differentiated this model from the first one, did not correlate with relationship satisfaction. Given that the additional predictor did not show a significant correlation with the outcome variable, the model was not explored.

### **3. *Mediation Analysis***

Following the results of the multiple regression analysis, a mediation analysis was conducted using the Hayes PROCESS in SPSS (Hayes, 2013). The analysis assessed the mediating role of communication quality on the association between relationship problems and relationship satisfaction. The results revealed a significant direct effect of relationship problems on relationship satisfaction in the presence of the mediator ( $\beta = -2.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Furthermore, the indirect effect of relationship problems on relationship satisfaction was found significant given that the 95% confidence interval did not cross 0 (Indirect Effect = -1.04, 95% CI [-1.89, -0.40]). Hence, communication quality partially mediated the association between relationship problems and

relationship satisfaction. Figure 1 represents the mediation model with the coefficients of each direct effect and indirect effects.

**Figure 1.** *Mediation Model*



*Note.* Indirect effect in parentheses.  $*p < .05$ ;  $**p < .01$ ;  $***p < .001$

# CHAPTER X

## DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the predictors of relationship satisfaction in heterosexual couples residing in Lebanon. Given that two of the suggested predictors, namely attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles and inequality in division of labor, did not show any correlation with relationship satisfaction, their predictive power was not investigated. Alternatively, the variables that were found to be significantly correlated with the outcome variable were explored. The analysis included relationship problems and communication quality and was followed by a mediation analysis that examines the process through which these predictors explain variance in relationship satisfaction.

In this section, the results of the study are first summarized and interpreted. Subsequently, research implications as well as limitations and future directions are discussed.

### **A. Summary of Results**

The study sample consisted of 103 heterosexual couples in long-term relationships living in the Lebanese society. Participants, aged between 20 and 65 years, completed an online questionnaire, either in English or in Arabic. In this part of the discussion, a summary of the results obtained in this study is presented.



## ***1. Results of Correlations***

The significant correlations demonstrated in the present study for both individuals and couples support previous research studies suggesting relationship deterioration in the presence of relationship problems, in contrast to relationship maintenance when experiencing positive communication quality (Gordon & Chen, 2016; Stafford, 2019). On an individual and dyadic level, findings imply that higher levels of relationship satisfaction are reported when lower disagreements are encountered and enhanced communication quality is perceived. The literature on romantic relationships forefronts the concept of perceived understanding as potential protective factor that can mitigate the adverse impact of conflict on relationship satisfaction after disclosure (Gordon & Chen, 2016). The negative correlation proposing decreased rates of relationship problems between partners when they experience active/assertive communication quality can be explained in light of the buffering effect of perceived understanding and positive communication. It is possible that when partners feel heard after communicating their relationship concerns, they do not perceive their dissimilar views as conflict but rather as opportunities for solidifying their bonds. This, in turn, limits reports of relationship problems and improve their evaluation of relationship quality. Positive communication quality between partners can further facilitate the expression of needs without potential backlash (Harary & Batell, 1981). When mates effectively communicate their willingness to engage in different housekeeping and childcare tasks, they experience less inequality in their division of labor which was found to be true through the negative association between the two variables in this study (i.e., couples' positive communication quality and inequality in their division of labor).

Individuals in long-term relationships reporting more positive communication quality were more likely to hold egalitarian attitudes, a finding that reinforces previous evidence showcasing a connection between egalitarian gender role attitudes and positive interaction patterns among couples (Walker-O'Neal & Futris, 2011). For couples, those with stronger egalitarian attitudes were more likely to display less attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles. A plausible explanation suggests that those with more egalitarian attitudes are less tolerant of traditional gender roles and more stringent about mating with egalitarian partners, as such, showing less incongruence in their attitudes.

As for demographic variables, women had higher educational levels and stronger egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than men. Furthermore, higher education levels were positively correlated with egalitarian attitudes. Even when a partial correlation that controls for educational level was explored, the negative correlation between gender and gender role attitudes persisted, implying that women are more likely than men to report egalitarian gender roles above and beyond their educational levels. Moreover, the fact that a recent study conducted by Düval (2023) demonstrated no gender differences between women and men in the German context, the established correlation can plausibly be attributed to the impact of cultural factors rather than educational level on individuals' attitudes.

## ***2. Results of Independent Samples t-Test***

Gender differences in the various variables of the present study were examined. The first significant result further supports the correlation showing greater egalitarian

attitudes among women which is in line with results of previous research conducted in the Lebanese context as it shows significant gender differences on this variable with higher average egalitarian gender role attitudes among women as compared to men (Abouchedid, 2007).

The second significant gender difference was found for the division of labor with women reporting more engagement in house chores and childcare tasks. Similar patterns have been observed previously in the literature, especially in the Lebanese context and despite the increasing participation of women in the market labor (Coltrane, 2000; Habib et al., 2006).

### **3. *Results of the Regression Analysis***

In order to identify predictors of relationship satisfaction of couples within the Lebanese context, a regression analysis was conducted with the factors that correlated with the outcome variable, namely relationship problems and communication quality. Demographics, namely couples' average age and education were also controlled for in this analysis.

Neither couples' average age nor education predicted relationship satisfaction after the addition of relationship problems and communication quality. However, relationship length turned out to be a positive predictor of relationship satisfaction after adding the main variables, a finding contrasting negative correlation between relationship duration and satisfaction in Egypt and absence of connection between the both constructs in Jordan (Belal & Gaheen, 2016; Smadi, 2017). As for the main

variables (i.e., relationship problems and communication quality), these were found to be significant predictors of couples' sense of content in their relationship.

To begin with, *H1* was met since relationship problems negatively predicted relationship satisfaction. This finding confirms the results of previous studies showing negative correlations between relationship satisfaction and conflicts over major and minor issues (Cramer, 2002). In attempts to explain this observation, negative attributions of undesired partner behavior was previously examined during conflicts and was found to moderate the relation between physiological responding during conflict and relationship satisfaction whereby couples who tended to make more negative attributions to undesired partner behavior, in general, showed a stronger correlation between increased heart rate reactivity during disagreements and low overall assessments of relationship satisfaction (Adamo et al., 2020). Furthermore, Gordon and Chen (2016) have demonstrated that the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction was only present when partners felt that their romantic partners lack understanding or fail to comprehend their thoughts, emotions, and perspectives which can logically be attained through communication.

Furthermore, our second hypothesis *H2* was supported; positive communication quality positively predicted relationship quality. This finding consolidates established knowledge on the beneficial effect of active/assertive interaction patterns between partners on their relationship maintenance (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Stafford, 2019; Yoo et al., 2013). The mechanism through which communication exerts its influence on relationship satisfaction conceptually relies on the high and explicit level of disclosure. Individuals who openly express their thoughts and emotions to their partners, display affection, exhibit openness, cooperation, and effective communication with their

significant others safeguard the satisfaction component in their romantic relationships (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Iglesias-García et al., 2019). It is not the mere process of sharing one's conceptual understanding of surrounding events as well as emotional states with one's partner that instigate a sense of satisfaction, but the feeling of being seen, heard, and validated. In fact, perceived understating buffered the detrimental effect of conflict and strengthened perception of relationship quality, substantiating findings from previous literature (Gordon & Chen, 2016).

The hypotheses *H4*, *H5*, *H6*, *H7*, and *H8* were all founded on the expected predictive power of each of attitudinal incongruence in regards to gender role attitudes and inequality in division of labor. These hypotheses were not supported as findings did not support a connection between the constructs of interest and relationship satisfaction. The fact that a significant gender difference was found for gender roles attitudes and division of labor confirms the existence of attitudinal incongruence and inequality in tasks partition. However, these differences did not predict relationship satisfaction. These unexpected findings warrant further unpacking and explanation.

Initially, the limited sample size might be hindering the exploration of latent correlations between incongruent attitudes, inequalities in labor division, and relationship quality, thereby restricting comprehensive insights. Furthermore, the fact that the majority of couples are unmarried (68.5%) could be impeding the detection of a potential link between variations in gender role attitudes and disparities in task allocation, along with their impact on relationship satisfaction. To elaborate, the presumptions made about partners' roles and task sharing might not accurately encompass the real dynamics experienced by married individuals. This interpretation is further supported by the significant mean difference observed in the degree of

inequality in the division of labor between married and unmarried couples in the present sample.

Additionally, the mechanism through which relationship quality is evaluated should be explored. As a matter of fact, the evaluation of relationship quality is contingent upon individuals' perception of their partners' qualities, rather than being influenced by idiosyncratic characteristics inherent to individuals themselves such as personality traits or attachment styles. These perceptions hinge on expectations individuals hold for their partners, which in turn, are based on societal norms (Hinde, 2014). Notably, partners can experience comparable levels of satisfaction, even if they have differing interpretations of what constitutes a fulfilling relationship (Hinde, 2014). The norms against which individuals assess their relationship quality in a patriarchal system characterized by traditional gender roles normalizes any attitudinal discrepancy and/or inequality experienced between partners, resulting in no negative repercussions on relationship satisfaction (James-Hawkins et al., 2016).

An alternative explanation revolves around the fact that a significant gender difference in attitudes towards gender roles was found whereby women showed stronger egalitarian attitudes than men. Nevertheless, the present study found a negative correlation between egalitarian attitudes and attitudinal incongruence suggesting that the more egalitarian individuals were, the less likely they were to form a long-term committed romantic relationship with individuals holding extremely divergent attitudes. As such, it could be that egalitarian women were more likely to choose partners with more similar rather than different attitudes leading them to experience gender role satisfaction given the space they are given within their relationships to perform the gender roles they consider fulfilling. Taken with the previously proposed findings

suggesting that women with non-traditional gender roles experience enhanced self-esteem and improved well-being, it can be proposed that gender role attitudes exert their influence on individuals' identities rather than their relationships (Apparala et al., 2003; Kleinplatz et al., 1992). As such, altitudinal incongruence did not affect relationship satisfaction; alternatively, it could be affecting various dimensions of individuals' well-being which warrants further investigation in future research.

To expand on the association between egalitarian attitudes and women's well-being, it is worth mentioning that earlier investigations have attributed the positive influence of women's identification with egalitarian gender roles to the enhanced competency felt when identifying oneself with "masculine" traits that are accorded higher social value (Kleinplatz et al., 1992). This explanation was further substantiated by evidence suggesting that women in Lebanon felt pressure to avoid rather than conform to feminine behaviors perceived as "weak", more by fathers and male friends than by mothers and self (Mattar, 2023).

With regard to the absence of association between inequality in division of labor and relationship satisfaction, a tenable justification is centered around the built-in inequality in partners' felt obligation concerning household and childcare tasks. Women exhibited more favorable attitudes and greater accountability when it came to household tasks compared to men. While women tended to be more accepting of household chores, they were less inclined to support an unfair division of labor that frequently compromised overall relationship satisfaction, only when they perceived such inequality (Benin & Agostinelli, 1988). However, in the Lebanese context characterized by a patriarchal system, traditional gender roles could have enforced unequal division of labor, resulting in domestic work being predominantly perceived as women's

responsibility. Consequently, both women and men have internalized this association, particularly due to the frequent reinforcement of such norms in everyday life to the extent that inequality is no longer perceived (Poortman & van der Lippe, 2009).

Consequently, it is possible that as women fail to detect unfair tasks partitions, their relationship quality is not jeopardized, resulting in no impact on relationship quality.

Furthermore, the perception of inequality could be hampered by the idea that women evaluate their relationship satisfaction based on the quality, rather than the quantity, of their partner's engagement (Blom et al., 2017). As a result, even when men's engagement in household and childcare responsibilities is minimal, the quality of their involvement is considered acceptable since it is evaluated in comparison to prevailing traditional gender norms. In other words, women could be judging situations of inequality as fair considering the high prevalence of unfair circumstances in the Lebanese society supporting prior research showing that women have demonstrated a higher tendency to perceive unjust situations as fair when greater levels of inequality were present within the broader social context influencing their relationship (Braun et al., 2008). This interpretation could be supported by the observed difference in perception of shared roles whereby women reported higher percentages of shared involvement in childcare and some household duties than men. In light of the suggested explanation, future research should explore whether the manipulation of inequality perception could result in lower levels of relationship satisfaction.



#### **4. Results of the Mediation Analysis**

As a follow-up analysis, the mediating role of communication quality in the association between relationship problems and relationship satisfaction was examined. Findings confirmed *H3* as they suggested a partial mediation whereby the impact of relationship problems on relationship satisfaction is influenced, at least in part, by the quality of communication between partners. The established dynamic proposes that communication quality has the power to mitigate the negative impact of relationship problems on overall relationship satisfaction.

To explain these results in light of the existing literature, perceived understanding reached through positive communication quality reemerges as a potential buffer through which communication exerts its positive influence on the negative association between relationship problems and satisfaction (Gordon & Chen, 2016). Perceived understanding operates indirectly as well by conveying information about the quality of the relationship; when individuals felt understood, it led them to perceive that conflicts actually strengthened their relationship, thus reducing the decline in relationship satisfaction after conflicts (Gordon & Chen, 2016). The proposed interpretation is further reinforced by a preceding study in which participants who were asked to imagine believing that disagreement is not destructive while imagining having a serious disagreement with their significant other reported greater levels of relationship satisfaction than those who were asked to believe that disagreement is destructive (Cramer, 2004).

When referring back to the presented models through which individuals assess their relationship quality, the resulting mediation supports the model based on a problem-solving approach (Cahn, 1992). When in conflict, partners actively

communicate their relationship concerns to find a common ground and resolve the issue at hand in order to preserve the quality of their relationship. From a conflict management perspective, a resolved problem is considered constructive; hence, relationship satisfaction is conserved. This, in turn, is supported by the fact that conflicts are viewed as constructive when positive behaviors such as effective problem-solving strategies are employed (Goeke-Morey et al., 2003).

## **B. Implications**

### ***1. The Lebanese Context and the Role of Culture***

To contextualize the results of the present study, it is crucial to take into consideration the Lebanese society in which it was conducted. Given that the existent literature on relationship satisfaction extensively relies on studies carried out in Western societies, the deviances from the proposed hypotheses can be attributed to cultural factors. Previous studies based on westernized samples have shown that similarities between partners across different constructs such as values, personality traits, and attitudes, are positively associated with relationship satisfaction (Furr & Wood, 2013). In a similar manner, perceived unfairness in division of labor negatively influenced couples' relationship satisfaction (Blom et al., 2017). These observations were not reproduced in the Lebanese context which warrants further justifications.

Starting off with the importance of perception in the identification of dissimilarities and inequalities. A plausible explanation of the absence of connection between existing attitudinal incongruence and division of labor inequalities with relationship satisfaction rests on the suggestion that gender roles are deeply embedded

within individuals that they are not perceived as problematic nor translated into relationship dissatisfaction. When traditional gender roles are the existent cultural norm, attitudinal dissimilarities and inequality in the division of labor (which is expected and enforced) can no longer exert any detrimental impact on relationship satisfaction given the traditional standards against which individuals evaluate their romantic relationships.

The presented interpretation is consolidated by research conducted with men entrepreneurs in Lebanon in attempts to assess construals of success using semi-structured interviews. The findings demonstrated that men were seeking to conform to gendered expectations to get identified as successful business owners. These gendered dimensions such as being strong and determined, conform to traditional gender roles. Additionally, participants' purpose behind having well-established businesses was making money as they considered themselves the only or main breadwinners regardless of the wives' work status, unlike their western counterparts who seek self-fulfillment and personal growth in their businesses endeavors. Furthermore, women were attributed childcare roles with no experienced guilt from men's part when they were not actively involved in similar tasks. Taken together, these results shed light on the traditional and patriarchal system still deeply rooted in our cultural context, especially among high-status couples where the power dynamic is clearly highlighted (Tlaiss, 2022).

Even Lebanese women who pointedly defy traditional gender roles by embarking on entrepreneurial endeavors use different mechanisms to fit into an unwelcoming milieu. One of the strategies women entrepreneurs use is characterized by compliance; instead of fighting unfair gendered norms, women choose to conform as they view it as optimal for their career advancement. In other words, when women

undertake business ventures, they tend to safeguard themselves from societal rejections by pursuing socially appropriate careers that reinforce their gendered roles over that of entrepreneurs by having feminine-typed businesses such as nurseries and aesthetic centers (Tlaiss & Kauser, 2019). As counterintuitive as it may sound, combatting traditional gender roles in the Lebanese society might reinforce its internalization.

The described dynamics pinpoint the primacy of heterosexual relationship in the Lebanese culture, which can further posit pressure on couples to constantly maintain a positive relationship quality to be accepted within their environment, leading to preserved relationship satisfaction. As a matter of fact, family centrality, described as importance ascribed to the family roles, moderated the negative relation between family to work conflict and job and family satisfaction even in Western cultures with diminished family orientations. Specifically, when individuals placed higher values on their family roles, the family demands affecting their work less strongly compromised their satisfaction (Bagger & Li, 2012). Consequently, it is plausible to assume that this observation might be reproduced and further intensified in the Lebanese context characterized by high prevalence of family-centered perspectives which should be examined in future research (Tlaiss, 2022).

Besides, factors like religious affiliation could be playing a role in the observed patterns of the present study. Based on the fact that the sample was predominantly composed of Christian couples, it is plausible to raise concern regarding the effect of this bias on the outcomes. It can be put forward that a sample with Muslim couples might show different patterns. Essentially, Christian women and men as well as Muslim women expressed greater support for egalitarian gender roles in job distribution

compared to Muslim men in the Lebanese context (Abouchedid, 2007). With reference to the mentioned findings, Christian partners show similar attitudes towards gender roles concerning labor whereas Muslim partners experience a discrepancy, hence a greater attitudinal incongruence. In accordance with the suggested interaction, a potential distinctive impact of the accentuated attitudinal incongruence on relationship satisfaction among Muslim couples is worth investigating in future research studies.

Another demographic variable that interacts with gendered outcomes within a patriarchal system is age. According to Oghia (2012), younger Lebanese generations are displaying decreasing acceptance of conservative perspectives that perceive romantic relationships solely as instruments supporting the patriarchal social framework. The present study indirectly supports this finding given that younger couples experienced less inequality in how they divide household and childcare tasks.

## ***2. Counseling Practice***

When viewed from a counseling perspective, the results of the present study advance promising contributions to the existing literature and evidence-based directions to practitioners. Our findings imply that relationship problems and communication quality, rather than dissimilar attitudes towards gender roles and inequality in division of labor, influence relationship satisfaction of couples in the Lebanese society. This information is useful in instances when couples presented to the clinic express disagreements regarding the allocation of household and childcare tasks or problems based on their divergent attitudes towards gender roles. In such cases, therapists should aim to equip them with the efficient tools that can foster positive communication quality

between them, enabling them to walk through their disagreements. The literature supports this practice given that the beneficial effect of communication has been recurrently recorded (Eğeci & Gençöz, 2006; Ouseph & Bance, 2022; Stafford, 2019).

### **C. Limitations and Future Research**

The findings from this study filled the research gap in the existing literature and shed light on the complex interrelationships between relational constructs within the Lebanese context. Despite the novel discoveries revealed, some limitations should be addressed. Firstly, the cross-sectional survey design adopted prevents the establishment of definitive conclusions about the cause-and-effect association between variables. Moreover, a quantitative approach was used even though it limits the chances of gaining further insights into couples' dynamics since they can only convey their expectations by rating pre-determined statements from scales predominantly designed for research conducted in the Western context. It would be highly advantageous for future research to incorporate qualitative methods, as they can enable a more comprehensive understanding of couples' viewpoints, and a more nuanced and culturally-sensitive understanding of the gendered dynamics between them.

Additionally, couples were all heterosexual with most of them being Christians with university or graduate degrees as their highest educational level, hence threatening the generalizability of the findings from this sample to the wider Lebanese population. Moreover, the recruitment of participants relied on convenience and snowball sampling methods. However, these approaches overlook couples without internet access and might not accurately reflect the characteristics and dynamics of Lebanese couples at

large. It is crucial that future research recruits a more representative sample of couples in the Lebanese society.

Another limitation is the administration of unmonitored online surveys without an attention check. While online surveys offer numerous benefits such as time and cost efficacy, they are prone to inaccurate responses. This is particularly concerning as there was no attention check employed during the survey. Furthermore, the use of online surveys restricted the collection of additional information that could provide insights into participants' characteristics. For instance, cues like body language and communication quality, which could reveal actual dynamics between partners, remained unknown (Andrade, 2020). In addition, the use of unmonitored online surveys in the dyadic nature of this study introduces risks of data contamination given that partners usually tend to fill it out while being physically together. To address these limitations, future studies should implement attention checks and seek methods such as in-person interviews to overcome the drawbacks associated with online surveys.

Additional limitations pertain to the measures adopted in the present study. Scales, except for the AAGRAS, were translated by the researchers including two Arabic-English bilingual translators. Nevertheless, it is possible that the low Cronbach's alphas for some measures could have been improved with more accurate translation. In future research, it is important to utilize translation and back-translation methods to ensure that the translated items accurately convey the intended meaning within the specific cultural context. Moreover, validation studies on the translated measures should be conducted to ensure that they effectively capture the constructs they intend to assess (Brislin, 1970).

Finally, the inherent nature of self-report measures introduces a potential response bias, further exacerbated by the lack of control for social desirability among participants, particularly after the scale measuring socially desirable responding was omitted due to poor reliability. This represents a significant weakness that should be acknowledged and addressed in future research. To mitigate social desirability bias, forthcoming studies should incorporate a robust measure targeting social desirability bias (Meisters et al., 2020).



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore the predictors of relationship satisfaction in heterosexual couples living in Lebanon. While some expected predictors, such as attitudinal incongruence towards gender roles and inequality in the division of labor, did not correlate with relationship satisfaction, the study revealed significant associations between relationship satisfaction and relationship problems as well as positive communication quality. These findings support previous research on relationship deterioration and maintenance in the presence of conflicts and positive communication, respectively.

The study's significance lies in contributing to the limited research on romantic relationships within the Arab region, particularly in Lebanon. In light of the unique cultural context and the influence of gender roles and societal norms surrounding romantic relationships, further research is needed to explore the impact of alternative variables on relationship satisfaction such as religious affiliation, family centrality, and inequality perception. Additionally, future studies should investigate whether interventions targeting communication quality can enhance relationship satisfaction among couples facing conflicts in Lebanon. Overall, this research opens up new avenues for understanding romantic relationships in the Arab region and underscores the importance of considering cultural context when examining relational dynamics.

## APPENDIX I



### **Consent to Participate in an Online Research Study**

This notice is for an AUB-IRB Approved Research Study for Dr. Vivienne Badaan at AUB.

**\*It is not an Official Message from AUB\***

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled "Predictors of Relationship Satisfaction among Lebanese Couples" conducted by Dr. Vivienne Badaan, principal investigator, and Chloé Mechleb, student investigator, in the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Sciences at the American University of Beirut. The conduct of this study will adhere to the IRB approved protocol.

*The IRB approved method for approaching subjects is advertising via electronic flyers on social media platforms. The purpose of the study is to investigate factors associated with relationship satisfaction of couples in the Lebanese society.*

### PROCEDURES

This message invites you to:

1. Read the consent document and consider whether you want to be involved in the study. And to note:

- *Participation is completely voluntary.*
- *Completing the questionnaire will take around 20 minutes.*
- *As a couple, you will each complete the survey at the same time in the presence of the student investigator, through an unrecorded Zoom meeting to ensure that each of you is responding privately, and that you are not communicating with one another or influencing each other's answers.*
- *Prior to completing the survey, you will be asked to privately generate a matching random code together. This code will be used to link the couple's data to each other, but there will be no way for us to know which couple the data belong to, or to link the codes to individual participants. As such, all the responses you provide will be completely private, anonymous, and confidential.*
- *Only the data you provide in the questionnaire will be collected and analyzed. The research team will not have access to your name or contact details.*
- *The results of the survey will be published in the student investigator's master's thesis, in academic research articles and journal publications*

*available in printed form and electronically from AUB Libraries, and will be presented in local and international research conferences.*

- **To participate in this study, you need to be above the age of 18 years, a Lebanese resident, and in a relationship for over 6 months.**

#### POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

**You will not receive payment for participation in this study.**

**The results of the study will inform the academic community about factors associated with relationship satisfaction of heterosexual couples in the Lebanese society.**

#### POTENTIAL RISKS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR SOCIETY

**The risks of the study are minimal. However, it is important to note that some questions may trigger emotional disturbance. If you experience any distress on an individual and/or relational level, please reach out to the below organizations who can provide you with support:**

- **Embrace Helpline: Call 1564**
- **Idraac: 00961 1 583 583, [idraac@idraac.org](mailto:idraac@idraac.org), Hotline: 00961 3 730 475**
- **Be Brave Beirut: [Bebravelebanon@gmail.com](mailto:Bebravelebanon@gmail.com), Register for emotional support on <https://linktr.ee/BeBraveBeirut>**

**If you experience any distress around your well-being, or related to your safety at home, please reach out to the below organizations who can provide you with support:**

- **KAFA (Enough Violence and Exploitation) Hotline: 00961 3 018 019**
- **Himaya: 00961 1 395 315/6/7/8/9, [info@himaya.org](mailto:info@himaya.org), Hotline: 00961 3 414 964**

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

**You and your partner will be asked to generate a matching code before started the survey, just so we can analyze your data as a unit. There is no way for us to link the codes to individual responses, and we will not be collecting any identifying information about the individual participants. The collected data will remain *confidential and anonymous*. Records will be monitored and may be audited by the IRB while assuring confidentiality.**

#### PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

**If you voluntarily consent to take part in this study, you can change your mind and withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.**

**Refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled.**

**If one partner refuses to consent, the couple will be excluded from the study.**

**Some questions in this survey investigate intimate relationships between men and women. You are free not to answer these questions or any other questions.**

#### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY

**If you have any questions about the study, contact the research lead, Dr. Vivienne Badaan at [vivienne.badaan@aub.edu.lb](mailto:vivienne.badaan@aub.edu.lb), or 00961-1-350000, ext. 4366 or the student investigator, Chloé Mechleb at [cjm13@mail.aub.edu](mailto:cjm13@mail.aub.edu), or 00961-70-404854.**

#### ACCESS TO THE SURVEY

**If after reading the consent document and having your questions answered, you voluntarily agree to take part in the study; you can access the survey by clicking on the answer choice "I consent to participate in this study".**

#### CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS

If you have concerns about the study or questions about your rights as a participant, you can contact the AUB IRB Office: PO BOX: 11-0236 F15 Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2020 Lebanon 00961-1-350000 or 1 374374, ext. 5445 [irb@aub.edu.lb](mailto:irb@aub.edu.lb)

## Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Please answer the following questions with the choice that best represents your relationship with your partner.

1. How well does your partner meet your needs?

Not at All	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	To a Great Extent
1	2	3	4	5

2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Unsure	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4	5

3. How good is your relationship compared to most?

Much Better	Somewhat Better	The Same	Somewhat Worse	Much Worse
1	2	3	4	5

4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

Not at All	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	To a Great Extent
------------	----------	----------	------------	-------------------

1                                      2                                      3                                      4                                      5

6. How much do you love your partner?

Not at all      Slightly                      Moderately                      Very much                      Extremely

1                                      2                                      3                                      4                                      5

7. How many problems are there in your relationship?

Very Few      Few                      Average                      Many                      Very Many

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Arab Adolescents Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS)**

Please indicate the degree to which you agree/disagree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Agree / Strongly Agree

1                                      2                                      3                                      4                                      5

1. Men and women are more alike than different.
2. Women are weak.
3. Women have the right to travel abroad alone.
4. A woman should choose her spouse without family's interference.
5. A husband should have the main say-so in all family matters.
6. A husband has the right to discipline his wife if she makes a mistake.

7. Men should participate in household chores.
8. All fields of study are suitable for women.
9. For women, marriage is more important than education.
10. A woman's place is the home.
11. Women should participate in parliamentary elections.
12. If a man and a woman are running for the same office, I would vote for the man.

### **Division of Labor Questionnaire**

#### **SECTION A**

**If you are neither married nor cohabitating, please skip section A and move to section B.**

Here are some household jobs. Please indicate who is mostly involved in the following tasks.

1. Who mostly does the grocery shopping?
  - A. Mostly self
  - B. Mostly partner
  - C. Shared
  - D. Domestic worker
  - E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who mostly does the cooking?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who mostly does the cleaning?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Who mostly does the washing/ironing?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner



- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who is mostly responsible for childcare?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your household, who has the final say in big financial decisions?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the amount of time spent in each of the following cases:

7. About how many hours do you spend on housework in an average week, such as time spent cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry?

- A. no hours
- B. less than 5 hours
- C. 5–14 hours
- D. 15–29 hours
- E. 30–59 hours
- F. 60 hours or more

8. About how many hours do you spend on childcare in an average week?

- A. no hours
- B. less than 5 hours
- C. 5–14 hours
- D. 15–29 hours
- E. 30–59 hours
- F. 60 hours or more

9. On how many days per week do you receive external help in housework?

- A. 0 days
- B. 1 day
- C. 2 days

D. 3 days

E. 4 days

F. 5 days

G. 6 days

H. 7 days

10. On how many days per week do you receive childcare help from paid and unpaid others (housekeepers/daycare/parents/parents-in-law/siblings/etc.)?

A. 0 days

B. 1 day

C. 2 days

D. 3 days

E. 4 days

F. 5 days

G. 6 days

H. 7 days

## **SECTION B**

**If you are married or cohabitating, please skip this section as you have previously answered the following questions in section A.**

Here are some household jobs. Please indicate who would mostly be involved in the following tasks, if you were to live with your partner.

1. Who would mostly do the grocery shopping?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Who would mostly do the cooking?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Who would mostly do the cleaning?

- A. Mostly self

- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Who would mostly do the washing/ironing?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who would mostly be responsible for childcare?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Domestic worker
- E. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your household, who would have the final say in big financial decisions?

- A. Mostly self
- B. Mostly partner
- C. Shared
- D. Other

Specify, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the amount of time that would be spent in each of the following cases, if you were to live with your partner.

7. About how many hours would you spend on housework in an average week, such as time spent cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry?

- A. no hours
- B. less than 5 hours
- C. 5–14 hours
- D. 15–29 hours
- E. 30–59 hours
- F. 60 hours or more

8. About how many hours would you spend on childcare in an average week?

- A. no hours

- B. less than 5 hours
- C. 5–14 hours
- D. 15–29 hours
- E. 30–59 hours
- F. 60 hours or more

9. On how many days per week would you receive external help in housework?

- A. 0 days
- B. 1 day
- C. 2 days
- D. 3 days
- E. 4 days
- F. 5 days
- G. 6 days
- H. 7 days

10. On how many days per week would you receive childcare help from paid and unpaid others (housekeepers/daycare/parents/parents-in-law/siblings/etc.)?

- A. 0 days
- B. 1 day
- C. 2 days

- D. 3 days
- E. 4 days
- F. 5 days
- G. 6 days
- H. 7 days

### **Self-Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR)**

Please indicate the degree to which you agree/disagree with the following statements.

Strongly Disagree / Disagree / Neither Agree nor Disagree / Agree / Strongly Agree

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

1. When something bothers me about my partner I tell them, respecting their point of view.
2. When I have a problem with my partner I talk it through with them.
3. I usually express my opinion and my desires to my partner.
4. When we argue I usually shout at my partner.
5. I have gone so far as to insult my partner during an argument.
6. I usually communicate to my partner the negative things I see in them, before the positive things.
7. I have little patience with my partner.



8. I feel like I can talk to my partner about anything.

**Dyadic Assessment Scale (DAS)**

Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

Always Agree 1	Frequently Agree 2	Occasionally Agree 3	Occasionally Disagree 4	Frequently Disagree 5	Always Disagree 6
----------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------

1. Handling family finances
2. Matters of recreation
3. Religious matters
4. Demonstrations of affection
5. Friends
6. Sex relations
7. Conventionality
8. Philosophy of life
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important
11. Amount of time spent together
12. Making major decisions
13. Household tasks
14. Leisure time interests and activities
15. Career decisions

### **Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR)**

Please indicate the degree to which the following statements represent you.

Very Untrue of me / Untrue of me / Somewhat Untrue of me / Neutral / Somewhat True of me / True of me / Very True of me

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

1. I have not always been honest with myself.
2. I always know why I like things.
3. I sometimes tell lies if I have to.
4. I never cover up my mistakes.

### **Demographics Questionnaire**

Please answer the following questions.

**What is your gender?**

Woman

Man

Prefer not to say

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your age in years?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your nationality?**

Lebanese

Palestinian

Syrian

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your religious affiliation?**

Maronite

Sunni

Greek Orthodox

Shia

Catholic

Druze

Protestant

Alawite

Armenian Orthodox

Other Christian

Armenian Catholic

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your highest educational level?**

Elementary or below

Intermediate

High School

Technical School

University

Graduate Studies

**What is your relationship status?**

Long-term relationship

Engaged

Married

Relationship length: \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) \_\_\_\_\_ month(s)

If you are married or cohabitating, indicate how long you have been living together for:

\_\_\_\_\_ year(s) \_\_\_\_\_ month(s)

How much did the COVID-19 pandemic negatively influence your relationship?

Not at All	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	To a Great
Extent				
1	2	3	4	5

**Do you have children?**

Yes

No

If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have a child that is less than 1-year-old, please indicate their age in months:

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have a child/children that is/are older than 1-year-old, please indicate their age in years:

Child 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 6: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 7: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 8: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 9: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 10: \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you in a monogamous relationship (being in a relationship with only one partner at a time)?**

Yes

No

Prefer not to answer

**How open are you to discuss your relationship problems?**

Not Open at All /Slightly Open /Somewhat Open /Moderately Open /Open to a Great Extent

1

2

3

4

5

**Which of the following best describes your occupational status?**

I work in the private sector

I work in the public sector

I don't work, I am a housewife

I don't work, I am unemployed

I don't work, I am retired

I am a student

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Which of the below best describes your household income?**

Our household income covers our needs well, and we can save from it

Our household income covers our needs, but we cannot save from it

Our household income does not cover our needs, and we face difficulties meeting those needs

I refuse to answer

I don't know

## الموافقة على المشاركة في دراسة بحثية عبر الإنترنت

هذا الإشعار خاص بدراسة بحثية معتمدة من مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية للدكتورة فيفيان بضعان في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت .

**\* هذه ليست رسالة رسمية من الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت \***

أنت مدعو/مدعوة للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية بعنوان "العوامل المتعلقة بالرضا العلائقي بين الأزواج اللبنانيين" التي تجريها الدكتورة فيفيان بضعان، الباحثة الرئيسية، وكلوي مشلب، طالبة الباحثة، في قسم علم النفس في كلية الآداب والعلوم في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت. إن إجراء هذه الدراسة يلتزم البروتوكول المعتمد في مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت.

الطريقة المعتمدة من مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية للتواصل مع المشاركات هي الإعلان عبر النشرات الإلكترونية على منصات التواصل الاجتماعي.

الغرض من الدراسة هو التحقيق في العوامل المرتبطة بالرضا في العلاقات العاطفية بين الأزواج في المجتمع اللبناني .  
إجراءات الدراسة:

1. اقرئي/اقرئي وثيقة الموافقة وفكر/فكري فيما إذا كنت تريد/تريدين المشاركة في الدراسة.  
والملاحظة:

- إن المشاركة في هذه الدراسة طوعية تمامًا.
- سيستغرق إكمال الاستبيان حوالي 20 دقيقة.
- كشركاء ، سوف يكمل كل منكما الاستبيان في نفس الوقت بحضور طالبة الباحثة، من خلال اجتماع Zoom غير مسجل للتأكد من أن كل واحد منكم يسجيب بشكل خاص، وأنكما لا تتواصلان مع بعضكما البعض أو تؤثران على إجابات بعضكما البعض.
- قبل إكمال الاستبيان، سيطلب من ك ومن شريكك/شريكتك إنشاء رمز عشوائي متطابق. سيتم استخدام هذا الرمز لربط بيانات الشريكين ببعضها البعض، ولكن لن تكون هناك طريقة لنا لمعرفة الشريكين اللذين تنتمي إليهم، أو لربط الرموز بالمشاركين الفرديين. على هذا النحو، ستكون جميع الردود التي تقدمها خاصة تمامًا ومجهولة المصدر وسرية.
- سيتم جمع وتحليل البيانات التي تقدمها في الاستبيان فقط. لن يتمكن فريق البحث من الوصول إلى اسمك أو تفاصيل الاتصال بك.



- سيتم نشر نتائج الاستطلاع في أطروحة الماجستير التابعة للطالبة الباحثة، في مقالات بحثية أكاديمية متاحة في شكل مطبوع أو إلكتروني عبر مكتبات الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت و من خلال عروضات أكاديمية في مؤتمرات علمية محلية و عالمية.
- للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة يجب أن يكون عمرك يجاوز ال 18 عام، مقيم في لبنان و على علاقة لاكثر من 6 أشهر.

الفوائد المحتملة للمشاركة و / أو المجتمع  
 لن تتلقي أي دفعة مالية مقابل المشاركة في هذه الدراسة. ستعمل نتائج الدراسة على إعلام المجتمع الأكاديمي عن العوامل المتعلقة بالرضا العلائقي في العلاقات المتباينة الجنس في المجتمع اللبناني.

المخاطر المحتملة على المشاركات و / أو المجتمع  
 مخاطر هذه الدراسة ضئيلة. لكن من المهم التنويه الى أن بعض الأسئلة المطروحة قد تسبب بانزعاج نفسي و عاطفي. إذا واجهت أي انزعاج على المستوى الشخصي و/ أو على مستوى علاقتك، يمكنك التواصل مع المنظمات التالية التي قد تؤمن لك الدعم و المساعدة:

- منظمة Embrace خط المساعدة: اتصل/ اتصلي على 1564
- منظمة Idraac: 00961 1 583 583 , [idraac@idraac.org](mailto:idraac@idraac.org), الخط الساخن: 00961 3 730 475
- منظمة Be Brave Beirut: [Bebravelebanon@gmail.com](mailto:Bebravelebanon@gmail.com), سجل / سجلي على <https://linktr.ee/BeBraveBeirut>

في حال اختبرت/اختبرتي اي انزعاج نفسي أو لديك أي قلق حول سلامتك في منزلك، يمكنك التواصل مع المنظمات التالية التي قد تؤمن لك الدعم و المساعدة:

- منظمة كفى (عنف و استغلال): الخط الساخن 00961 3 018 019
- منظمة حماية: 00961 1 395 315/6/7/8/9 , [info@himaya.org](mailto:info@himaya.org), الخط الساخن: 00961 3 414 964

السرية  
 سيطلب منك أنت وشريكك/شريكتك إنشاء رمز مطابق قبل بدء الاستبيان، فقط حتى تتمكن من تحليل بياناتكم كوحدة واحدة. لا توجد طريقة لنا لربط الرموز بالردود الفردية، ولن نقوم بجمع أي معلومات تعريفية عن التي يتم جمعها سرية و مجهولة المصدر. ستتم مراقبة السجلات و قد يتم المشاركين الفرديين. ستبقى البيانات التدقيق بها من قبل مجلس المراجعة المؤسسية مع ضمان السرية.

المشاركة في الانسحاب من الدراسة  
 إذا وافقت طواعية على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ، فيمكنك تغيير رأيك و الانسحاب في أي وقت دون أي عواقب.

لن يؤدي رفض المشاركة أو الانسحاب من الدراسة الى أي عقوبة أو الى فقدان المزايا التي يحق للمشارك / للمشاركة الحصول عليها بخلاف ذلك.

إذا رفض أحد الشريكين الموافقة، سيتم استبعاد الثنائي من الدراسة.

بعض الأسئلة في هذا الاستبيان تتمحور حول العلاقات الحميمة بين الرجال و النساء. لديك كامل الحرية أن لا تجاوب / تجاوبي على هذه الأسئلة أو أي أسئلة أخرى.

#### أسئلة حول الدراسة

إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة حول الدراسة ، فاتصلي بالباحثة الأساسية، الدكتورة فيفيان بضعان على [vivienne.badaan@aub.edu.lb](mailto:vivienne.badaan@aub.edu.lb) أو ،00961-1-350000, داخلي 4366 أو الطالبة الباحثة، كلوي مثلب على [cjm13@mail.aub.edu](mailto:cjm13@mail.aub.edu) أو 00961-70-404854

#### الوصول إلى الاستبيان

إذا كنت توافق / توافقين طواعية على المشاركة في الدراسة بعد قراءة وثيقة الموافقة والإجابة على أسئلتك؛ يمكنك الوصول إلى الاستطلاع بالنقر على "أوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة".

#### مخاوف أو أسئلة حول حقوقك

إذا كانت لديك مخاوف بشأن الدراسة أو أسئلة حول حقوقك كمشارك / كمشاركة، يمكنك الاتصال بمجلس المراجعة المؤسسية في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت على:

صندوق البريد: 11-0236 F15

رياض الصلح، بيروت 2020 1107

لبنان

00961-1-350000 أو 1 374374 ، داخلي 5445

[irb@aub.edu.lb](mailto:irb@aub.edu.lb)

## Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

يُرجى الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية بالخيار الذي يمثل علاقتك مع شريك/شريكة حياتك

إلى أي درجة يلبي/تلبي شريكك/شريكتك احتياجاتك؟

على الاطلاق	بعض الشيء	قليلا	نوعا ما	الى اقصى حد
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

بشكل عام ، ما مدى رضاك عن علاقتك؟

غير راض/راضية أبداً	غير راض/راضية	غير متأكد/متأكدة	راض/راضية	راض/راضية جداً
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

ما مدى جودة علاقتك مقارنة بمعظم العلاقات العاطفية؟

أفضل بكثير	أفضل إلى حد ما	نفس الشيء	أسوأ إلى حد ما	أسوأ بكثير
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

كم مرة تتمنى/تتمنين ألا تكون/تكوني قد دخلت في هذه العلاقة؟

أبداً	نادراً	أحياناً	غالباً	دائماً
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

إلى أي مدى تتطابق علاقتك مع توقعاتك؟

على الاطلاق	بعض الشيء	قليلا	نوعا ما	الى اقصى حد
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

كم تحب/تحيين شريكة/ شريك حياتك؟

على الإطلاق	بعض الشيء	نوعاً ما	جداً	إلى أقصى حد
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

كم عدد المشاكل الموجودة في علاقتك؟

قليل جداً	القليل	معتدل	الكثير	الكثير جداً
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

### Arab Adolescents Gender Roles Attitude Scale (AAGRAS)

يرجى تحديد مدى موافقتك / عدم موافقتك على العبارات التالية.

لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	لا أوافق ولا أرفض	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

لا يوجد فرق بين المرأة والرجل.

المرأة مخلوق ضعيف.

من حق المرأة أن تسافر خارج البلد لوحدها.

من حق المرأة إختيار شريك الحياة بدون تدخل الآخرين.

الكلمة الأولى والأخيرة يجب أن تكون للزوج في المنزل.

يحق للزوج تأديب زوجته إذا أخطأت.

يجب أن يشارك الرجل في الأعمال المنزلية.

كل التخصصات العلمية مناسبة للمرأة.

الزواج أهم من إكمال المرأة تعليمها.

المرأة مكانها المنزل.

يجب أن تشارك المرأة في الانتخابات البرلمانية.

إذا ترشح رجل وامرأة لمنصب سياسي سوف اصوت لرجل.

## Division of Labor Questionnaire

القسم "أ"

إذا لم تكن/تكوني متزوجًا/متزوجةً ولا في حالة مساكنة ، فيرجى تخطي القسم "أ" والانتقال إلى القسم "ب" في

الصفحة التالية .

سوف تجد/تجدين هنا بعض الوظائف المنزلية. يرجى تحديد من يشارك في الغالب في المهام التالية.

من في الغالب يقوم بالتسوق من البقالة؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

**من في الغالب يقوم بالطهي؟**

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

**من في الغالب يقوم بالتنظيف؟**

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من في الغالب يقوم بالغسيل / الكي؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من هو المسؤول في الغالب عن رعاية الأطفال؟ (إذا لم يكن لديك أطفال، فتخيل / فتخيلي من سيكون المسؤول في

الغالب إذا أنجبتم أطفال معاً في المستقبل)

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من الذي له الكلمة الأخيرة في القرارات المالية الكبيرة في المنزل؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

يرجى تحديد مقدار الوقت الذي يتم قضاؤه في كل من الحالات التالية:

كم عدد الساعات التي تقضيها / تقضيها في الأعمال المنزلية في الأسبوع، مثل الوقت الذي تقضيه / تقضيه في

الطهي والتنظيف والغسيل؟

لا ساعات

أقل من 5 ساعات

5-14 ساعة

15-29 ساعة

30-59 ساعة



60 ساعة أو أكثر

كم عدد الساعات التي تقضيها / تقضيها في رعاية الأطفال في الأسبوع العادي؟ (إذا لم يكن لديك أطفال ، فتخيل /فتخيلي كيف ستكون إجابتك إذا أنجبتم أطفال معاً في المستقبل.)

لا ساعات

أقل من 5 ساعات

5-14 ساعة

15-29 ساعة

30-59 ساعة

60 ساعة أو أكثر

في كم يوماً في الأسبوع تتلقى / تتلقين مساعدة خارجية في الأعمال المنزلية؟

لا أيام

يوم واحد

يومان

ثلاثة أيام

أربعة أيام

خمسة أيام

سنة أيام

سبعة أيام

في كم يوماً في الأسبوع تتلقى / تتلقين فيها مساعدة في رعاية الأطفال من أشخاص آخرين مدفوعين وغير مدفوعين الأجر (مدبرات المنزل / الرعاية النهارية / الوالدان / الحموان / الأشقاء / إلخ)؟ (إذا لم يكن لديك أطفال ، فتخيل /فتخيلي كيف ستكون إجابتك إذا أنجبتم أطفال معاً في المستقبل.)

لا أيام

يوم واحد

يومان

ثلاثة أيام

أربعة أيام

خمسة أيام

سنة أيام

سبعة أيام

القسم "ب"

إذا كنت متزوجًا/متزوجةً أو في حالة مساكنة، فيرجى تخطي هذا القسم حيث سبق و أجبت على الأسئلة التالية في

القسم

”أ”

سوف تجد/تجدين هنا بعض الوظائف المنزلية. يرجى تحديد من على الأغلب سيقوم في هذه المهام، يوم

تتشارك/تتشاركين العيش مع شريكة/شريك حياتك

من في الغالب سيقوم بالتسوق من البقالة؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من في الغالب سيقوم بالطهي؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

**من في الغالب سيقوم بالتنظيف؟**

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

**من في الغالب سيقوم بالغسيل / الكي؟**

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من سيكون المسؤول في الغالب عن رعاية الأطفال؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

عاملة منزلية

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

من سيكون له الكلمة الأخيرة في القرارات المالية الكبيرة في المنزل؟

انا في الغالب

شريكي / شريكتي في الغالب

انا وشريكي / شريكتي بشكل مشترك

آخر

حدد ، إن أمكن: \_\_\_\_\_

يرجى تحديد مقدار الوقت الذي سوف يتم على الألب قضاؤه في كل من الحالات التالية، يوم تعيش / تنجب الأطفال مع شريكة / شريك حياتك:

كم عدد الساعات التي سوف تقضيها / تقضيها على الألب في الأعمال المنزلية في الأسبوع، مثل الوقت الذي سوف تقضيه / ستقضيه في الطهي والتنظيف والغسيل؟

لا ساعات

أقل من 5 ساعات

5-14 ساعة

15-29 ساعة

30-59 ساعة

60 ساعة أو أكثر

كم عدد الساعات التي سوف تقضيها / تقضيها على الألب في رعاية الأطفال في الأسبوع العادي؟

لا ساعات

أقل من 5 ساعات

5-14 ساعة

15-29 ساعة

30-59 ساعة

60 ساعة أو أكثر

في كم يومًا في الأسبوع سوف تتلقى / تتلقين مساعدة خارجية في الأعمال المنزلية؟

لا أيام

يوم واحد

يومان

ثلاثة أيام

أربعة أيام

خمسة أيام

سنة أيام

سبعة أيام

في كم يومًا في الأسبوع سوف تتلقى / تتلقين فيها مساعدة في رعاية الأطفال من أشخاص آخرين مدفوعين

وغير مدفوعي الأجر (مدبرات المنزل / الرعاية النهارية / الوالدان / الحموان / الأشقاء / إلخ)؟

لا أيام

يوم واحد

يومان

ثلاثة أيام

أربعة أيام

خمسة أيام

ستة أيام

سبعة أيام

### Self-Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship (SCCR)

يرجى تحديد مدى موافقتك / عدم موافقتك على العبارات التالية

أوافق بشدة      أوافق      لا أوافق ولا أرفض      لا أوافق      لا أوافق بشدة

٥                      ٤                      ٣                      ٢                      ١

عندما يزعجني شيء ما بشأن شريكي/شريكتي، فأنا أخبره/أخبرها مع احترام وجهة نظره/نظرها .

عندما أواجه مشكلة مع شريكي/شريكتي، أتحدث معه/معها عنها.

أعبر عادةً عن رأيي ورغباتي لشريكي/لشريكتي.

عندما نتجادل، أصرخ عادةً في وجه شريكي/شريكتي.

وصلت إلى أن أهين شريكي/شريكتي أثناء جدال.

غالباً ما أعبر إلى شريكي/شريكتي عن الأشياء السلبية التي أراها فيه/فيها، قبل الأشياء الإيجابية.

لدي القليل من الصبر مع شريكي/شريكتي.

أشعر أنني أستطيع التحدث إلى شريكي/شريكتي عن أي شيء.



## Dyadic Assessment Scale (DAS)

يرجى الإشارة إلى مدى الاتفاق أو الخلاف بينك وبين شريكك/شريكتك لكل عنصر في القائمة التالية.

نتوافق دائماً / نتوافق في الكثير من الأحيان / نتوافق أحيانا / لا نتوافق أحيانا / لا نتوافق في الكثير من الأحيان / لا نتوافق أبداً

٦ ٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١

إدارة أموال الأسرة

المسائل الترفيهية

الأمر الدينية

طرق التعبير عن العاطفة

الإصدقاء

العلاقات الجنسية

التقاليد

فلسفة الحياة

طرق التعامل مع الوالدين أو الحمويين الأهداف والأشياء الأساسية

مقدار الوقت الذي تمضونه سوياً

اتخاذ القرارات الكبرى

المهام المنزلية

الاهتمامات وأنشطة أوقات الفراغ

القرارات المهنية

### Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR)

يرجى الإشارة إلى الدرجة التي تمتلك بها العبارات التالية

لا يمثلني أبداً	لا يمثلني	لا يمثلني إلى حد ما	محايد	يمثلني إلى حد ما	يمثلني	يمثلني جداً
١	٢	٣	٤	٥	٦	٧

لم أكن دائماً صادقاً/صادقة مع نفسي.

أنا دائماً أعرف لماذا أحب الأشياء.

أحياناً أكذب إذا اضطررت.

أنا لا أخفي أخطائي.

### Demographics Questionnaire

الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية

ما هو جنسك؟

[ ] امرأة

[ ] رجل

[ ] أفضل عدم القول

[ ] غير ذلك (يرجى التحديد): \_\_\_\_\_

ما هو عمرك بالسنوات؟ \_\_\_\_\_

ما هي جنسيتك؟

[ ] لبناني/لبنانية

[ ] فلسطيني/فلسطينية

[ ] سوري/سورية

[ ] غير ذلك (يرجى التحديد): \_\_\_\_\_

إلى أي طائفة تنتمي/تتبعين؟

[ ] الموارنة [ ] السنة

[ ] الروم الأرثوذكس [ ] الشيعة

[ ] الكاثوليك [ ] الدروز

[ ] البروتستانت [ ] العلويين

[ ] الأرمن الأرثوذكس [ ] الأرمن الكاثوليك

[ ] مسيحي آخر [ ] غير ذلك (يرجى التحديد): \_\_\_\_\_

ما هو أعلى مستوى تعليمي لديك؟

[ ] ابتدائي أو أقل

[ ] متوسط

[ ] ثانوي

[ ] تقني

[ ] جامعي

[ ] دراسات عليا

**حدد/حددي وضعك الإجتماعي:**

[ ] أنا في علاقة طويلة الأمد

[ ] مخطوب/مخطوبة

[ ] متزوج/متزوجة

**حدد/حددي طول العلاقة:**

سنة (سنوات) \_\_\_\_ شهر (أشهر) \_\_\_\_

إذا كنت متزوجاً/متزوجةً أو في حالة مساكنة، حدد/حددي المدة التي قضيتها في العيش مع شريكك/شريكتك:

سنة (سنوات) \_\_\_\_ شهر (أشهر) \_\_\_\_

إلى أي مدى أثر وباء كورونا سلباً على علاقتك؟

على الاطلاق	بعض الشيء	قليلا	نوعا ما	الى اقصى حد
١	٢	٣	٤	٥

هل لديك أطفال؟

[ ] نعم

[ ] كلا

إذا كانت الإجابة نعم ، فكم عددهم؟ \_\_\_\_\_

إذا كان لديك طفل يقل عمره عن عام واحد ، فيرجى تحديد العمر بالأشهر: \_\_\_\_\_

إذا كان عمر طفلك/ أطفالك يفوق السنة، فيرجى تحديده بالسنوات:

الطفل الأول: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل الثاني: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل الثالث: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل الرابع: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل الخامس: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل السادس: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل السابع: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل الثامن: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل التاسع: \_\_\_\_\_

الطفل العاشر: \_\_\_\_\_

هل أنت في علاقة أحادية (في علاقة مع شريك/شريكة واحد فقط)؟

[ ] نعم

[ ] كلا

[ ] أفضل عدم الإجابة

ما مدى انفتاحك على مناقشة مشاكل علاقتك؟

غير منفتح /منفتحة على الاطلاق // منفتح /منفتحة بعض الشيء // منفتح /منفتحة قليلا // منفتح / منفتحة نوعا ما  
//منفتح /منفتحة الى اقصى حد

٥ ٤ ٣ ٢ ١

أي مما يلي يصف حالتك المهنية على أفضل نحو؟

[ ] أعمل في القطاع الخاص

[ ] أعمل في القطاع العام

[ ] أنا لا أعمل, أنا ربة منزل

[ ] أنا لا أعمل، أنا عاطل/ة عن العمل

[ ] أنا لا أعمل، أنا متقاعدة

[ ] أنا طالب/ة

[ ] غير ذلك (يرجى التحديد)

أي مما يلي يصف دخل أسرتك بشكل أفضل؟

[ ] دخل أسرتنا يغطي احتياجاتنا جيداً، ويمكننا الادخار منه

[ ] دخل أسرتنا يغطي احتياجاتنا، لكن لا يمكننا الادخار منه

[ ] دخل أسرتنا لا يغطي احتياجاتنا، ونواجه صعوبات في تلبية هذه الاحتياجات

[ ] أرفض الإجابة

[ ] أنا لا اعرف

## APPENDIX II

**Table 11.** *Factor Matrix for Relationship Assessment Scale*

*Factor Matrix*

	Factor
	1
In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?	.727
How good is your relationship compared to most?	-.633
How many problems are there in your relationship?	-.566
To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?	.526
How much do you love your partner?	.504
How well does your partner meet your needs?	.498
How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?	-.456

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

a. 1 factors extracted. 4 iterations required.

**Table 12.** *Pattern Matrix for Arab Adolescents' Gender Roles Attitude Scale*

*Pattern Matrix*

	Factor	
	1	2
Women have the right to travel abroad alone.	.868	-.387
All fields of study are suitable for women.	.253	-.237
Men and women are more alike than different.	-.240	-.157



A husband has the right to discipline his wife if she makes a mistake.	-.002	.728
A husband should have the main say-so in all family matters.	-.040	.629
Women are weak.	.028	.509
A woman's place is the home.	.060	.486
Men should participate in household chores.	.147	-.469
Women should participate in parliamentary elections.	.263	-.379
If a man and a woman are running for the same office, I would vote for the man.	-.060	.325
For women, marriage is more important than education.	.019	.274
A woman should choose her spouse without family's interference.	-.057	-.160

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 15 iterations.

**Table 13.** *Pattern Matrix for Self- Perceived Communication in the Couple Relationship Scale*

*Pattern Matrix*

	Factor	
	1	2

When something bothers me about my partner I tell them, respecting their point of view.	.768	-.027
I usually express my opinion and my desires to my partner.	.715	.048
When I have a problem with my partner I talk it through with them.	.550	.003
I feel like I can talk to my partner about anything.	.468	-.025
When we argue I usually shout at my partner.	.107	.825
I have gone so far as to insult my partner during an argument.	.010	.672
I have little patience with my partner.	-.014	.418
I usually communicate to my partner the negative things I see in them, before the positive things.	-.042	.272

---

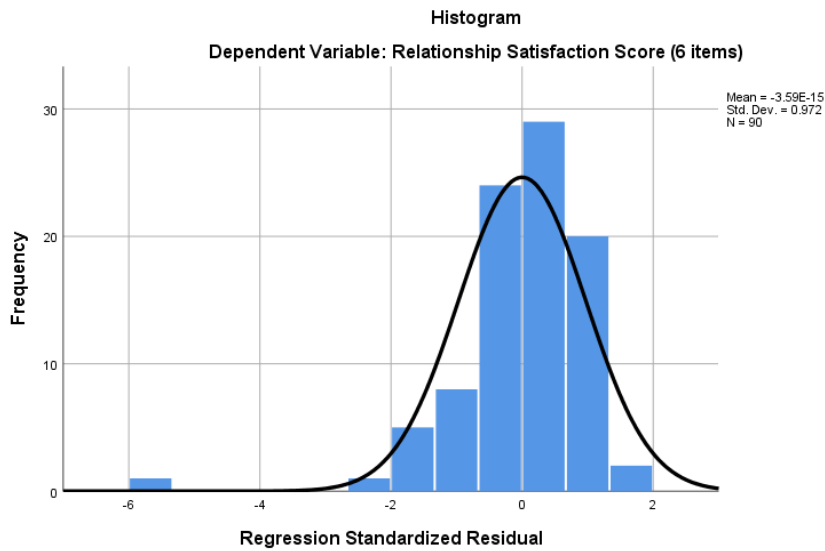
Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

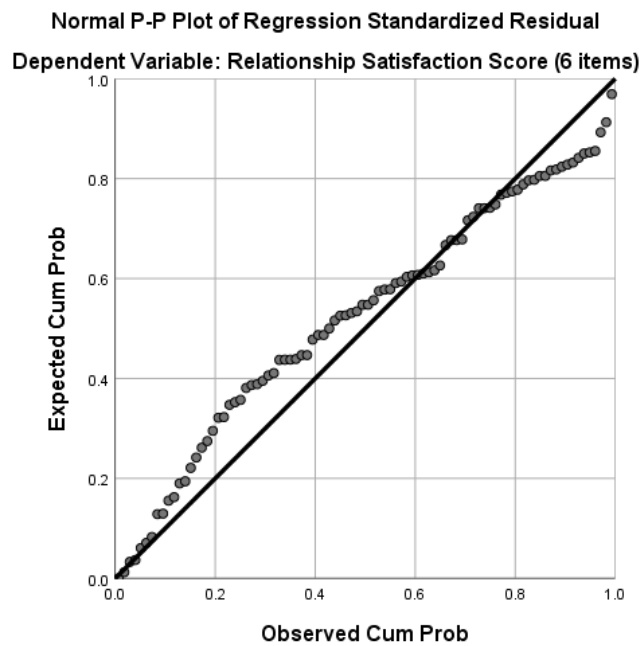
a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

## APPENDIX III

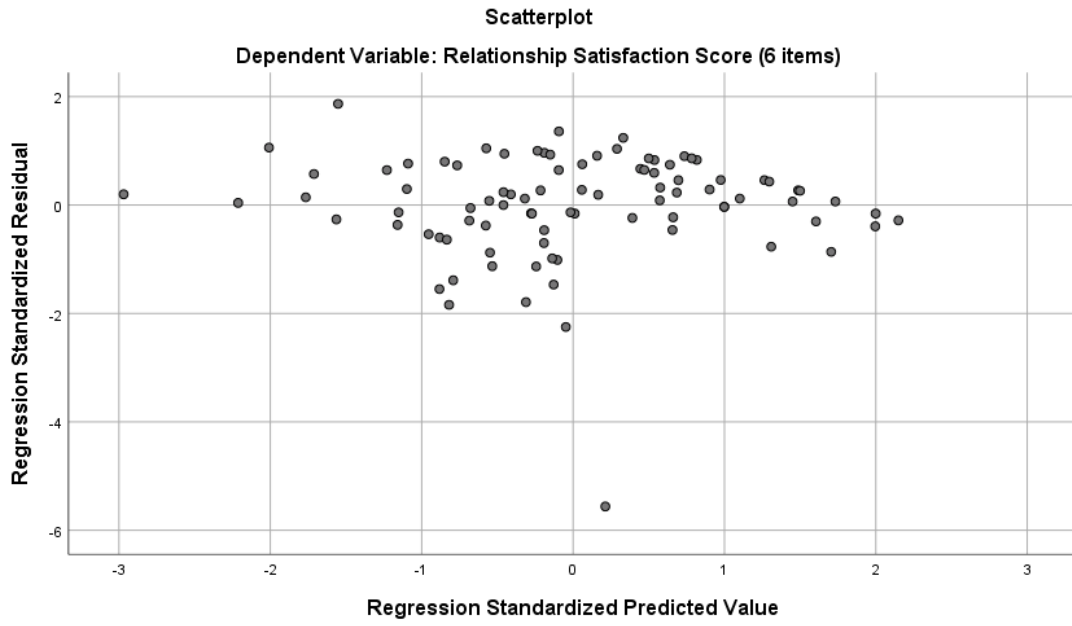
**Figure 2.** Histogram with Normal Curve for Relationship Satisfaction



**Figure 3.** P-P Plot for Relationship Satisfaction



**Figure 4.** Scatterplot for Relationship Satisfaction



## REFERENCES

- Abouchedid, K. E. (2007). Correlates of religious affiliation, religiosity and gender role attitudes among Lebanese Christian and Muslim College students. *Equal Opportunities International*, 26(3), 193–208.  
<https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150710735480>
- Abouchedid, K., & Nasser, R. (2007). Effects of gender and religiosity among Christians and Muslims on “gendered” role attitudes towards ability and equality: The case of Lebanon. *Electronic Journal of Sociology*, 7, 1-18.  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.476.7624&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Adamo, C., Leo, K., Hogan, J. N., Crenshaw, A. O., Baucom, K. J. W., & Baucom, B. R. W. (2021). Negative partner attributions moderate the association between heart rate reactivity during relationship conflict and relationship satisfaction. *Family Process*, 60(3), 823-835. <https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12609>
- Alami, M. (2021). *Liberal facade hides lebanon's patriarchy*. Inter Press Service News Agency - North America.
- Al-Ghanim, K. A., & Badahdah, A. M. (2016). Gender roles in the Arab world: Development and psychometric properties of the Arab Adolescents Gender Roles Attitude Scale. *Sex Roles*, 77(3–4), 169–177.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0722-y>

- Allouche, S. (2019). Love, Lebanese style. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 15(2), 157–178. <https://doi.org/10.1215/15525864-7490953>
- Amanatullah, E. T., & Morris, M. W. (2010). Negotiating gender roles: Gender differences in assertive negotiating are mediated by women's fear of backlash and attenuated when negotiating on behalf of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(2), 256–267. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017094>
- Anderson, C., Keltner, D., & John, O. P. (2003). Emotional convergence between people over time. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(5), 1054–1068. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.5.1054>
- Andrade, C. (2020). The limitations of online surveys. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 42(6), 575-576. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0253717620957496>
- Apparala, M. L., Reifman, A., & Munsch, J. (2003). Cross-national comparison of attitudes toward fathers' and mothers' participation in household tasks and childcare. *Sex Roles*, 48(5/6), 189–203. <https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1022865002992>
- Baez, S., Flichtentrei, D., Prats, M., Mastandueno, R., García, A. M., Cetkovich, M., & Ibáñez, A. (2017). Men, women...who cares? A population-based study on sex differences and gender roles in empathy and moral cognition. *PLOS ONE*, 12(6). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0179336>
- Bagger, J., & Li, A. (2012b). Being important matters: The impact of work and family centralities on the family-to-work conflict–satisfaction relationship. *Human Relations*, 65(4), 473–500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726711430557>

- Barnett, R. C., & Baruch, G. K. (1987). Determinants of fathers' participation in family work. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 49(1), 29.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/352667>
- Bavelas, J. B., & Coates, L. (1992). How do we account for the mindfulness of face-to-face dialogue? *Communication Monographs*, 59(3), 301–305.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759209376271>
- Baxter, L. A., & Dindia, K. (1990). Marital partners' perceptions of marital maintenance strategies. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 7(2), 187–208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407590072003>
- Becker, G. S. (1981) *A treatise on the family*. Harvard University Press.
- Belal, G. E. S., & Gaheen, A. (2016). Factors affecting marital satisfaction among primigravida women in Tanta city, Egypt. *J Nurs Health Sci.*, 5(6), 8-71.
- Benin, M. H., & Agostinelli, J. (1988). Husbands' and wives' satisfaction with the division of labor. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 50(2), 349.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/352002>
- Blom, N., & Hewitt, B. (2019). Becoming a female-breadwinner household in Australia: Changes in relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82(4), 1340–1357. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12653>
- Blom, N., Kraaykamp, G. L. M., & Verbakel, C. M. C. (2017). Couples' division of employment and household chores and relationship satisfaction: A test of the specialization and equity hypotheses. *European Sociological Review*, 33, 195-208. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcw057>
- Boer, D., Fischer, R., Strack, M., Bond, M. H., Lo, E., & Lam, J. (2011). How shared preferences in music create bonds between people. *Personality and Social*

*Psychology Bulletin*, 37(9), 1159–1171.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211407521>

Bradbury, T. N., Campbell, S. M., & Fincham, F. D. (1995). Longitudinal and behavioral analysis of masculinity and femininity in marriage. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(2), 328–341.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.2.328>

Brandén, M., & Bernhardt, E. (2020). Does similarity in work-family related attitudes improve relationship quality? Evidence from Sweden. *Journal of Family Studies*, 1–19.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2020.1759445>

Braun, M., Lewin-Epstein, N., Stier, H., & Baumgärtner, M. K. (2008). Perceived equity in the gendered division of household labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70(5), 1145–1156.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2008.00556.x>

Brislin, R. W. (1970). Back-translation for cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology*, 1(3), 185–216.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/135910457000100301>

Burn, S. M., & Ward, A. Z. (2005). Men's conformity to traditional masculinity and relationship satisfaction. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 6(4), 254–263.

<https://doi.org/10.1037/1524-9220.6.4.254>

Cahn, D. D. (1992). *Conflict in intimate relationships*. Guilford Press.

Cann, A., Norman, M. A., Welbourne, J. L., & Calhoun, L. G. (2008). Attachment styles, conflict styles and humour styles: Interrelationships and associations with relationship satisfaction. *European Journal of Personality*, 22(2), 131–146.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/per.666>



- Cast, A. D. (2003). Power and the ability to define the situation. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 66(3), 185. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1519821>
- Chen, Y., & Hu, D. (2021). Gender norms and marriage satisfaction: Evidence from China. *China Economic Review*, 68, 101627. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chieco.2021.101627>
- Chi, P., Wu, Q., Cao, H., Zhou, N., & Lin, X. (2020). Relationship-oriented values and marital and life satisfaction among Chinese couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 37(8–9), 2578–2596. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407520928588>
- Christensen, A., & Shenk, J. L. (1991). Communication, conflict, and psychological distance in nondistressed, clinic, and divorcing couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 59(3), 458–463. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006x.59.3.458>
- Clark, M. S., & Reis, H. T. (1988). Interpersonal processes in close relationships. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 39(1), 609–672. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.39.020188.003141>
- Clark, M., & Beck, L. (2010). Initiating and evaluating close relationships: A task central to emerging adults. In F. Fincham & M. Cui (Eds.), *Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood* (pp. 190-212). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511761935.011>
- Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 1208–1233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x>

- Cramer, D. (2000b). Relationship satisfaction and conflict style in romantic relationships. *The Journal of Psychology*, *134*(3), 337–341.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980009600873>
- Cramer, D. (2002). Relationship satisfaction and conflict over minor and major issues in romantic relationships. *The Journal of Psychology*, *136*(1), 75–81.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980209604140>
- Cramer, D. (2004). Effect of the destructive disagreement belief on relationship satisfaction with a romantic partner or closest friend. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, *77*(1), 121–133.  
<https://doi.org/10.1348/147608304322874290>
- Crouter, A. C., & Booth, A. (2006). *Romance and sex in adolescence and emerging adulthood: Risks and opportunities*. Psychology Press.
- Dainton, M., & Stafford, L. (1993). Routine maintenance behaviors: A comparison of relationship type, partner similarity and sex differences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *10*(2), 255–271.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/026540759301000206>
- Deutsch, F. M. (1999). *Halving it all: How equally shared parenting works*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674272040>
- Domesticlabour\_w2*. (n.d.). Understanding Society.  
[https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/2/questionnaire-module/domesticlabour\\_w2](https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/documentation/mainstage/dataset-documentation/wave/2/questionnaire-module/domesticlabour_w2)
- Düval, S. (2023). Do men and women really have different gender role attitudes? Experimental insight on gender-specific attitudes toward paid and unpaid work

in Germany. *Social Science Research*, 112, 102804.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2022.102804>

Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1984). Gender stereotypes stem from the distribution of women and men into social roles. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46(4), 735–754. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.46.4.735>

Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (2012). Social role theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins, *Handbook of theories of social psychology: Volume 2* (pp. 458-476). SAGE. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446249222.n49>

Eğeci, S., & Gençöz, T. (2006). Factors associated with relationship satisfaction: Importance of communication skills. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 28(3), 383–391. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10591-006-9010-2>

Field, A. P. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics (5th ed.)*. SAGE Publications.

Fincham, F. D., & Cui, M. (2010). Emerging adulthood and romantic relationships: An introduction. *Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood* (pp. 3-12). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511761935.002>

Fletcher, G. J. O., Simpson, J. A., & Thomas, G. (2000). The measurement of perceived relationship quality components: A confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26(3), 340-354. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167200265007>

Frank, K., & Hou, F. (2015). Source-country gender roles and the division of labor within immigrant families. *Journal of marriage and family*, 77(2), 557–574. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12171>

- Furr, R. M., & Wood, D. (2013). On the similarity between exchangeable profiles: A psychometric model, analytic strategy, and empirical illustration. *Journal of Research in Personality, 47*(3), 233–247.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2013.01.009>
- Gilbert, D. T., & Malone, P. S. (1995). The correspondence bias. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*(1), 21–38. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.1.21>
- Goeke-Morey, M. C., Cummings, E. M., Harold, G. T., & Shelton, K. H. (2003). Categories and continua of destructive and constructive marital conflict tactics from the perspective of U.S. and Welsh children. *Journal of Family Psychology, 17*(3), 327–338. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.17.3.327>
- Gordon, A. M., & Chen, S. (2016). Do you get where I'm coming from? Perceived understanding buffers against the negative impact of conflict on relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 110*(2), 239–260.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000039>
- Habib, R. R., Nuwayhid, I. A., & Yeretjian, J. S. (2006). Paid work and domestic labor in disadvantaged communities on the outskirts of Beirut, Lebanon. *Sex Roles, 55*(5–6), 321–329. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-006-9086-z>
- Hajdu, G., & Hajdu, T. (2018). Intra-couple income distribution and subjective well-being: The moderating effect of gender norms. *European Sociological Review, 34*(2), 138–156. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcy006>
- Halleröd, B. (2005). Sharing of housework and money among Swedish couples: Do they behave rationally? *European Sociological Review, 21*(3), 273–288.  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jci017>

- Hammond, M. D., & Overall, N. C. (2013). When relationships do not live up to benevolent ideals: Women's benevolent sexism and sensitivity to relationship problems. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(3), 212–223.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1939>
- Harary, F., & Batell, M. F. (1981). Communication conflict. *Human Relations*, 34(8), 633–641. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872678103400801>
- Hart, C. M., Ritchie, T. D., Hepper, E. G., & Gebauer, J. E. (2015). The balanced inventory of desirable responding short form (BIDR-16). *SAGE Open*, 5(4), 215824401562111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244015621113>
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. The Guilford Press.
- Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 50(1), 93. <https://doi.org/10.2307/352430>
- Hinde, R. A. (2014) *Relationships: A dialectical perspective*. Psychology Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315784830>
- Hohmann-Marriott, B. E. (2006). Shared beliefs and the union stability of married and cohabiting couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(4), 1015–1028.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2006.00310.x>
- Hu, Y., Li, J., Ye, M., & Wang, H. (2021). The relationship between couples' gender-role attitudes congruence and wives' family interference with work. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, Volume 14, 49–59.  
<https://doi.org/10.2147/prbm.s286119>

- Iglesias-García, M.-T., Urbano-Contreras, A., & Martínez-González, R.-A. (2019). Self-perceived communication in couple relationships scale. *PsycTESTS Dataset*, 35(2), 314–322. <https://doi.org/10.1037/t73382-000>
- James-Hawkins, L., Qutteina, Y., & Yount, K. M. (2016). The patriarchal bargain in a context of rapid changes to normative gender roles: Young Arab women's role conflict in Qatar. *Sex Roles*, 77(3-4), 155-168. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0708-9>
- Johnson, S., Gordon, C., Myers, B., & Kantor, R. (2023). "we can work it out": Positive problem solving as a mediator between perspective-taking and relationship satisfaction among college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 71(3), 914-920. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2021.1909044>
- Joseph, S. (1993). Connectivity and patriarchy among urban working-class Arab families in Lebanon. *Ethos*, 21(4), 452–484. <https://doi.org/10.1525/eth.1993.21.4.02a00040>
- Keizer, R., & Komter, A. (2015). Are “equals” happier than “less equals”? A couple analysis of similarity and well-being. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77(4), 954–967. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12194>
- Kleinplatz, P., McCarrey, M., & Kateb, C. (1992). The impact of gender-role identity on women's self-esteem, lifestyle satisfaction and conflict. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences Du Comportement*, 24(3), 333–347. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0078725>
- Larsen, K. S., & Long, E. (1988). Attitudes toward sex-roles: Traditional or egalitarian? *Sex Roles*, 19(1–2), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00292459>

*Lebanon birth rate 1950-2023*. MacroTrends. (n.d).

<https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/LBN/lebanon/birth-rate>

Leikas, S., Ilmarinen, V. J., Verkasalo, M., Vartiainen, H. L., & Lönnqvist, J. E. (2018).

Relationship satisfaction and similarity of personality traits, personal values, and attitudes. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *123*, 191–198.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2017.11.024>

Lengua, L. J., & Stormshak, E. A. (2000). Gender, gender roles, and personality:

Gender differences in the prediction of coping and psychological symptoms. *Sex Roles*, *43*(11), 787-820. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011096604861>

Liss, M., Richmond, K., & Erchull, M. J. (2019). Chapter 10: Work. In *Psychology of women and gender* (pp. 403-446). W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Logan, J. M., & Cobb, R. J. (2012). Trajectories of relationship satisfaction:

Independent contributions of capitalization and support perceptions. *Personal Relationships*, *20*(2), 277–293. [https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.2012.01408.x)

[6811.2012.01408.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.2012.01408.x)

Lye, D. N., & Biblarz, T. J. (1993). The effects of attitudes toward family life and

gender roles on marital satisfaction. *Journal of Family Issues*, *14*(2), 157–188.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/019251393014002002>

Mattar, D. (2023). *Pressure to conform to feminine standards and internalized*

*benevolent sexism among women in Lebanon* (Unpublished master's thesis).

American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

McNulty, J. K., & Russell, V. M. (2010). When “negative” behaviors are positive: A

contextual analysis of the long-term effects of problem-solving behaviors on

changes in relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(4), 587–604. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017479>

Mead, N. L. (2005) *Personality predictors of relationship satisfaction among engaged and married couples: An analysis of actor and partner effects*. All Theses and Dissertations, Paper, 552.

Meisters, J., Hoffmann, A., & Musch, J. (2020). Controlling social desirability bias: An experimental investigation of the extended crosswise model. *PloS One*, 15(12), e0243384–e0243384. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0243384>

Meyer, D., Robinson, B., Cohn, A., Gildenblatt, L., & Barkley, S. (2016). The possible trajectory of relationship satisfaction across the longevity of a romantic partnership. *The Family Journal*, 24(4), 344–350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480716670141>

Obeid, S., Al Karaki, G., Haddad, C., Sacre, H., Soufia, M., Hallit, R., Salameh, P., & Hallit, S. (2021). Association between parental divorce and mental health outcomes among Lebanese adolescents: Results of a national study. *BMC Pediatrics*, 21(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12887-021-02926-3>

Oghia, M. J. (2012). *What's love got to do with it? An exploratory study of relationship formation and romantic love among American University of Beirut students* [Master's thesis, American University of Beirut]. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1318856300?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true>



- Ouseph, S., & Bance, L. O. (2022). Impact of marital stress and communication quality on marital satisfaction: Basis for proposed couple relationships enhancement program. *Indian Journal of Positive Psychology, 13*(4), 333-339.
- Overall, N. C. (2020). Behavioral variability reduces the harmful longitudinal effects of partners' negative-direct behavior on relationship problems. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 119*(5), 1057–1085.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000231>
- Poortman, A. R., & van der Lippe, T. (2009). Attitudes toward housework and child care and the gendered division of labor. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(3), 526–541. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2009.00617.x>
- Quinn, C., Haber, M. J., & Pan, Y. (2009). Use of the concordance correlation coefficient when examining agreement in dyadic research. *Nursing Research, 58*(5), 368-373. <https://doi.org/10.1097/NNR.0b013e3181b4b93d>
- Randall, A. K., & Bodenmann, G. (2017). Stress and its associations with relationship satisfaction. *Current Opinion in Psychology, 13*, 96–106.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2016.05.010>
- Rochlen, A. B., McKelley, R. A., Suizzo, M., & Scaringi, V. (2008). Predictors of relationship satisfaction, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction among stay-at-home fathers. *Psychological Services, 9*(1), 17-28.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/1524-9220.9.1.17>
- Rusbult, C. E., & Buunk, B. P. (1993). Commitment processes in close relationships: An interdependence analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*(2), 175–204. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026540759301000202>

- Sabattini, L., & Leaper, C. (2004). The relation between Mothers' and fathers' parenting styles and their division of Labor in the home: Young adults' retrospective reports. *Sex Roles, 50*(3/4), 217–225.  
<https://doi.org/10.1023/b:sers.0000015553.82390.f7>
- Scanzoni, J., Polonko, K., Teachman, J., & Thompson, L. (1989). *The sexual bond: Rethinking families and close relationships*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Schwartz, S. H. (1994). Are there universal aspects in the structure and contents of human values? *Journal of Social Issues, 50*(4), 19–45.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1994.tb01196.x>
- Scott, J., Hacker, M., Averbach, S., Modest, A. M., Cornish, S., Spencer, D., Murphy, M., & Parmar, P. (2014). Influences of sex, age and education on attitudes towards gender inequitable norms and practices in South Sudan. *Global Public Health, 9*(7), 773–786. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17441692.2014.928347>
- Sells, T. G. C., & Ganong, L. (2016). Emerging adults' expectations and preferences for gender role arrangements in long-term heterosexual relationships. *Sex Roles, 76*(3–4), 125–137. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-016-0658-2>
- Sillars, A. L., & Vangelisti, A. L. (2006). Communication: Basic properties and their relevance to relationship research. In A. L. Vangelisti & D. Perlman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of personal relationships* (pp. 331–351). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511606632.019>
- Sillars, A., Roberts, L. J., Leonard, K. E., & Dun, T. (2000). Cognition during marital conflict: The relationship of thought and talk. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 17*(4–5), 479–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407500174002>

- Smadi, E. Y. (2017). Levels of marital satisfaction and its relation to some variables on a sample of women in Amman City / Jordan. *Asian Social Science*, 13(12), 103. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v13n12p103>
- Smith, L., Heaven, P. C., & Ciarrochi, J. (2008). Trait emotional intelligence, conflict communication patterns, and relationship satisfaction. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 44(6), 1314–1325. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2007.11.024>
- Snyder, E. C. (1964). Attitudes: A study of homogamy and marital selectivity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 26(3), 332-336. <https://doi.org/10.2307/349465>
- Soltanpanah, J., Parks-Stamm, E. J., Martiny, S. E., & Rudmin, F. W. (2017). A cross-cultural examination of the relationship between egalitarian gender role attitudes and life satisfaction. *Sex Roles*, 79(1–2), 50–58. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-017-0859-3>
- Spanier, G. B. (1976). Measuring Dyadic Adjustment: New Scales for Assessing the Quality of Marriage and Similar Dyads. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 38(1), 15. <https://doi.org/10.2307/350547>
- Stafford, L. (2019). Communication and relationship maintenance. In B. Ogolsky & J. Monk (Eds.), *Relationship maintenance: Theory, process, and context* (pp. 109-133). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108304320.007>
- Stafford, L., & Canary, D. J. (2006). Equity and interdependence as predictors of relational maintenance strategies. *Journal of Family Communication*, 6(4), 227–254. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327698jfc0604\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327698jfc0604_1)

- Stevenson, B., & Wolfers, J. (2007). Marriage and divorce: Changes and their driving forces. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 21(2), 27–52.  
<https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.21.2.27>
- Storaasli, R. D., & Markman, H. J. (1990). Relationship problems in the early stages of marriage: A longitudinal investigation. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 4(1), 80–98. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0893-3200.4.1.80>
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics (5th ed.)*. Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.
- Tlaiss, H. (2022). Entrepreneurship, gender and success in Lebanon. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijoem-01-2021-0145>
- Tlaiss, H. A., & Kauser, S. (2019). Entrepreneurial leadership, patriarchy, gender, and identity in the arab world: Lebanon in Focus. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(2), 517–537. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12397>
- Ubando, M. (2016). Gender differences in intimacy, emotional expressivity, and relationship satisfaction. *Pepperdine Journal of Communication Research*, 4(1), 13. <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1040&context=pjcr>
- Vangelisti, A. L., & Daly, J. A. (1997). Gender differences in standards for romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships*, 4(3), 203–219.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6811.1997.tb00140.x>
- Walker-O’Neal, C., & Futris, T. (2011). Cohabiting couples’ gender role attitudes, communication and relationship well-being. *Family Science Review*, 16(1).  
<https://doi.org/10.26536/fsr.2011.16.01.04>

- Wood, D., & Furr, R. M. (2015). The correlates of similarity estimates are often misleadingly positive. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(2), 79–99.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868315581119>
- World Bank. (2021, June 15). *Labor force, female (% of total labor force) - Lebanon*.  
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.FE.ZS?locations=LB>
- Wright, A. L. (2018). *Partner Gender as a Predictor of Relationship Satisfaction, Sexual Satisfaction, Relationship Commitment, and Attachment Identity among Women*. Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College.  
[https://doi.org/10.31390/gradschool\\_dissertations.4728](https://doi.org/10.31390/gradschool_dissertations.4728)
- Yarnell, L. M., Neff, K. D., Davidson, O. A., & Mullarkey, M. (2018). Gender differences in self-compassion: Examining the role of gender role orientation. *Mindfulness*, 10(6), 1136–1152. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-018-1066-1>
- Yoo, H., Bartle-Haring, S., Day, R. D., & Gangamma, R. (2013). Couple communication, emotional and sexual intimacy, and relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 40(4), 275–293.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623x.2012.751072>