Individual Well-Being and Relationship Maintenance at Odds: The Unexpected Perils of Maintaining a Relationship With an Aggressive Partner

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Abstract
Partner aggression negatively affects well-being in ways that the people experiencing aggression may not expect. Individuals (n = 171) who reported aggression by their current partner completed a longitudinal study. At the start of the study, participants rated their current happiness and how happy they expected to feel if their relationship were to end. The data revealed a partner aggression–unhappiness link and evidence of misforecasting future happiness: Committed individuals overestimated their unhappiness after a breakup because they expected worse things from a breakup than actually materialized, and people who experienced high partner aggression overestimated their unhappiness because they became more happy without the partner than they had expected. Forecasting unhappiness after a breakup predicted staying in an aggressive relationship. In aggressive relationships, bias occurs not only in forecasting future happiness but also in misreading how badly one feels now.

Keywords
partner aggression, relationship maintenance, happiness, affective forecasting

Romantic involvements entered by choice typically have desirable qualities. When desirable relationships become undesirable, however, people who chose to be together may question their involvement. Despite having some doubts, individuals often persist in relationships that are dissatisfying or even hurtful (Arriaga, 2002; Rusbul & Martz, 1995), underscoring how positive affect in a relationship (i.e., satisfaction) can be distinct from the motivation to continue a relationship (i.e., commitment). The current research examined being in a dating relationship with an aggressive partner, which creates an unwanted component to a romantic involvement.

Partner aggression is associated with negative relational and personal consequences (Follingstad, 2009). It often occurs before adulthood (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004) and is common in dating relationships (Foshee et al., 2009), particularly verbal and psychological aggression (e.g., yelling, insulting, and belittling) and noninjurious physical acts (e.g., slapping). Even nonphysical forms of partner aggression can be personally harmful and correlate with symptoms of psychological trauma and lower well-being, beyond the effect of physical aggression (Arias & Pape, 1999; Follingstad, 2009). Given the negative effects of aggression, individuals who have an aggressive partner may question maintaining their dating relationship.

If dating relationships can be dissolved easily, and aggression in dating relationships has negative consequences, why do people stay in an aggressive dating relationship? The research reported in this article suggests that despite issues raised by aggression, one thing that motivates individuals to stay is the belief that they will be less happy out of the relationship than in it. Longitudinal methods were used to examine reports of happiness, both current happiness and happiness expected to occur if one’s relationship were to end. Previous research has examined happiness expected to occur if a relationship ends using an affective forecasting framework (Eastwick, Finkel, Krishnamurti, & Loewenstein, 2008). What is novel in the current research is demonstrating how such expectations of future unhappiness may function to maintain a relationship that is personally harmful. This research thus examined potential perils of relationship maintenance in the context of an aggressive relationship.

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Relationship Maintenance Processes

Past research often has assumed that relationship maintenance processes provide personal benefits to each partner as they strengthen a relationship; yet, this may not always be the case (McNulty, 2010). What is rarely studied is how commitment processes and relationship maintenance combine in aggressive relationships. In the context of partner aggression, expecting to feel unhappy if a relationship ends may function as a relationship maintenance mechanism that is likely to be fueled by commitment and predict staying with a partner.

Rusbult’s model of commitment processes (Rusbult, Coolsen, Kirchner, & Clarke, 2006) combines interdependence theory and investment model concepts to predict when and how relationships are maintained. Relationships are maintained when they are highly satisfying, provide a better option than alternatives, and yield benefits that are lost if the relationship ends (Rusbult, 1983). These conditions make a person reliant or “dependent” on a partner for a better situation than is obtainable outside of the relationship (Kelley, 1979), which causes a person to feel committed (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). Commitment sustains relationships even when the conditions that created high commitment have eroded: Committed individuals are motivated to maintain their relationship even when partners act destructively (causing low satisfaction) or there are attractive alternatives (see Rusbult et al., 2006).

The current research combines this interdependence model of commitment processes with research on affective forecasting. Just as commitment and dependence motivate a myriad of relationship maintenance processes, they may motivate the belief that being without the partner will cause lower personal happiness. Forecasting lower happiness if the relationship ends thus may function to maintain a relationship. Past research has shown that people who report being in love overestimate how much their happiness will decline without the partner, largely because they overestimate the impact of a breakup (rather than underestimate their recovery; Eastwick et al., 2008). It stands to reason that highly committed individuals may expect a larger drop in happiness following a breakup than actually occurs.

Maintaining a Relationship With an Aggressive Partner

Existing research demonstrates how commitment can override the negative aspects of partner aggression. Rusbult and Martz (1995) used an interdependence theory framework in their study of abused women in shelters; women were more likely to return to an abusive partner if they were married or dependent on their partner for their livelihood (e.g., unemployed, lacked transportation, and had no money). Dating relationships, however, typically are not characterized by financial dependence or legal ties. Daters reconcile being committed to an aggressive partner by minimizing the severity of their partner’s aggressive acts (Arriaga, 2002). Minimizing aggression may reduce doubts about staying with an aggressive partner (Arriaga & Capezza, 2011).

The current research tested whether targets of aggression felt happier following a breakup than they had anticipated, as would be predicted by affective forecasting research (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005). Existing accounts, however, explain this by suggesting that people cope with negative events by restoring their happiness faster than they had anticipated. The current research combines relationship maintenance and aggression literatures to suggest a different explanation for affective forecasting in an aggressive relationship: Partner aggression lowers happiness such that when the relationship ends, what was expected to be a negative event turns out to be less negative than anticipated.

In sum, individuals may expect to feel unhappy if their relationship ends because something in their relationship caused them to feel committed. What is less intuitive is expecting to feel unhappy without a partner, when the partner’s aggression may be contributing to current unhappiness. The benefits of staying in a relationship come at the price of incurring harmful behavior by the partner.

Current Research

We had several aims in the current longitudinal study. One was to examine happiness as a function of partner aggression. We anticipated that experiencing more partner aggression would be associated with lower happiness and lower relationship satisfaction while in the relationship (Hypothesis 1a), and higher happiness once the relationship ends (Hypothesis 1b). We did not expect an association of more partner aggression with lower commitment or ending a relationship, given inconsistencies in previous research (Arriaga, 2002; Hanley & O’Neil, 1997; Rusbult & Martz, 1995); people may not feel ready to leave a partner even when aggression occurs, as described above.

A second aim was to compare initial expectations of happiness if the relationship ends, against actual happiness after it ends. Consistent with affective forecasting research (Eastwick et al., 2008), we predicted that individuals initially would expect to feel less happiness than they actually feel once their relationship ends (Hypothesis 2). We further hypothesized that commitment would moderate the gap between expected and actual happiness after a breakup (Hypothesis 2a), largely because higher commitment should be associated with expecting lower happiness if the relationship ends. This prediction follows from Rusbult’s model of commitment processes (Rusbult et al., 2006) and past research showing that love predicts underestimating happiness following a breakup (Eastwick et al., 2008). We also hypothesized that amount of partner aggression at the start of the study would moderate the gap between expected and actual happiness (Hypothesis 2b), largely because more partner aggression should predict feeling happier than anticipated once the relationship ends (see Hypothesis 1b, above).

A third aim was to examine the implications of expecting unhappiness if the relationships ends, implications that become meaningful in the context of aggressive relationships. We
anticipated that expecting less happiness if the relationship ends would function to maintain a relationship and thus predict staying with a partner (Hypothesis 3).

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of $n = 171$ university students (82% female) who were paid ($5/survey) or received course credit for participating in a longitudinal study. These individuals met the inclusion criteria of being in a dating relationship and reporting at least one act of verbal, psychological, or physical aggression by their current partner.¹

Over one-fourth of the participants ($n = 46$) were in relationships that ended during the study period. Participants were 19 years old on average, dating exclusively (94%), and primarily White/European (84%); 7% Asian/Asian American, 2% African American, 2% Hispanic/Latino, 5% Other). The average relationship duration was 23 months ($SD = 18$).

Procedure

Participants completed online surveys (managed by PsychData.com) once every 2 weeks. Most completed 6 waves/times (T1 to T6) but a subset ($n = 20$) completed 13 times. At Time 1 (T1), participants attended an on-campus lab session in groups of 30 or less; they were seated approximately 6 feet apart to maintain privacy, provided written consent, and completed a 30-min computerized survey. During debriefing, the experimenter talked with participants to assess their affective state; none were visibly upset. At T2 through T13, participants were e-mailed links to complete a brief survey (<15 min) on their own.

Measures

All measures used 7-point scales ($1 = not at all, 4 = somewhat, 7 = extremely$) unless otherwise noted. Items tapping each variable were averaged where higher numbers indicate higher levels of that variable.

T1 measures. Actual current happiness was measured with a single item that is widely used to measure happiness (In general, how happy would you say you are these days? Gilbert, Pinel, Wilson, Blumberg, & Wheatley, 1998). Expected happiness if the relationship were to end was measured with 3 items (How happy would you feel right after it ended? . . . one to two weeks after it ended?, . . . one to two months after it ended? $\alpha = .76$).

Additional items measured the state of the relationship. T1 relationship commitment was measured using a single item (How committed are you to your relationship?), as was relationship satisfaction (How satisfied are you with your relationship?). The validity of each single-item measure was tested with a subset of participants ($n = 62$) who completed 6 additional items tapping commitment and 4 additional items tapping relationship satisfaction from an established scale (Rusbult et al., 1998). The single items used in the current research demonstrated high convergence with each multiple-item measure (commitment, $r(62) = .87, p < .001$; satisfaction, $r(62) = .99, p < .001$).

Partner aggression was measured with 12 items modeled after the Conflict Tactics scale (Straus & Gelles, 1990). Each item referred to a specific act of aggression, and participants were instructed to indicate how many times their current partner had ever done the particular aggressive act to them (e.g., insulted or swore at you, pushed or shoved you; $0 = never, 1 = once, 2 = 2–3 times, 3 = 4–6 times, 4 = 7 or more times$). Items were summed to reflect amount of partner aggression ($\alpha = .72$), and scores were logtransformed to adjust for positive skewness.

Participants completed a parallel version of the partner aggression scale to tap their own aggression toward their partner (i.e., the participant as perpetrator). Items were summed to reflect the number of times they had ever engaged in specific aggressive acts against their current partner ($\alpha = .78$); scores were logtransformed to adjust for skewness. Own aggression was measured to include as a covariate in the analyses.

Additional questions tapped basic demographic and relationship characteristics (e.g., duration and exclusivity). Other variables measured were beyond the scope of this research.

Post-T1 measures. Subsequent online surveys were administered every 2 weeks to measure current happiness and whether the relationship ended since the last measurement occasion (2 weeks prior). For participants whose relationship ended, three additional questions probed who most wanted the relationship to end (e.g., In the end, who made the final decision to end your romantic relationship?). These questions were used to categorize participants into one of the three groups of eventual relationship status: stayed with partner ($n = 125, 74\%$), was left by partner ($n = 19, 11\%$), or ended relationship ($n = 26, 15\%$); one participant did not indicate who ended the relationship. Actual post-breakup happiness was the average of current happiness reported at 2 times to approximate the time frame covered by the expected happiness items: the time the breakup was reported (i.e., within 2 weeks of the breakup) and the following time (i.e., 2 weeks after that).² A subset of participants ($n = 77$) also completed the measure of partner aggression every time after T1.

Results

All analyses controlled for own aggression, which was positively correlated with partner aggression, $r(171) = .50, p < .001$. All continuous variables were centered. Participant sex and relationship duration did not exhibit main or interactive effects on the dependent variables and therefore were dropped from the analyses. Table 1 provides descriptive information on the main variables.

The low to moderate level of aggression sampled is typical for college dating relationships. At T1, the majority (70%) reported verbal/psychological partner aggression only. Nearly one-third

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(30%) reported two or fewer verbal/psychological aggression acts and no physical acts by the partner, and 11% reported three or more physical aggression acts.

**Happiness Before Versus After an Aggressive Relationship Ends (Hypothesis 1)**

Hypothesis 1a suggested that experiencing more partner aggression would be associated with lower happiness and satisfaction while the relationship is intact. The results of multiple regression models with two T1 predictors (amount of partner aggression and own aggression) are displayed in Table 2. As hypothesized, T1 partner aggression was associated with lower current happiness and lower relationship satisfaction, controlling for own aggression. Individuals were worse off personally and in weaker relationships as a function of their partner’s aggression. No hypotheses were advanced regarding commitment, given the mixed findings in past research; as seen in Table 2, commitment was negatively associated with partner aggression but the full model was not significant. Ancillary analyses revealed a positive correlation between satisfaction and commitment, \( r(171) = .50, p < .001 \).

Hypothesis 1b—having experienced more partner aggression by T1 would predict relatively higher happiness after the relationship ends—was tested in the subset of participants whose relationship ended during the study time frame (\( n = 46; 58\% \) left their partner; 42% were left by the partner). The model test was a repeated measures analysis, with happiness at T1 and after the relationship ended as outcomes, time as the repeated measures factor, and three between-subjects factors: T1 partner aggression, controlling for T1 own aggression, and time at which the breakup occurred (i.e., the temporal lag between T1 and time of breakup).

As predicted, T1 partner aggression predicted change over time in happiness (Time \( \times \) Partner Aggression Interaction), \( F(1, 42) = 13.25, p < .001 \). Follow-up regression models (T1 current happiness and post-breakup happiness) with the same between-subjects variables revealed the hypothesized pattern depicted in Figure 1: More partner aggression was associated with lower T1 happiness, \( b = -.46, t(42) = -2.93, p = .006 \), and higher post-breakup happiness, \( b = .32, t(42) = 2.12, p = .040 \). For individuals who experienced more aggression, simply having the relationship end coincided with an increase in happiness.

**Misforecasting Happiness After a Relationship Ends (Hypothesis 2)**

Hypothesis 2 suggested that participants expect lower happiness than they actually feel after their relationship ends,
especially if they (a) are highly committed or (b) have experienced relatively more partner aggression. Expected happiness (T1) was compared with actual happiness after breaking up using the repeated measures approach and sample of ended relationships from the previous analysis. Time was the repeated measures factor comparing expected versus actual happiness, and there were several between-subjects variables: T1 partner aggression and T1 commitment, controlling for T1 own aggression, T1 happiness, and time at which the breakup occurred. The time main effect was significant: Participants expected lower happiness following a breakup than actually occurred (expected happiness: $M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.21$; actual post-breakup happiness: $M = 4.43$, $SD = 1.31$), $F(1, 40) = 15.02$, $p < .001$ (see Note 2). This finding replicates the affective forecasting bias reported in previous research (Eastwick et al., 2008; Gilbert et al., 1998).

Hypotheses 2a and 2b regarding moderating effects of misforecasting happiness received partial support: T1 Commitment $\times$ Time Interaction, $F(1, 40) = 10.24$, $p = .003$, and T1 Partner Aggression $\times$ Time Interaction, $F(1, 40) = 3.24$, $p = .080$. Follow-up regression models on expected happiness and actual post-breakup happiness with the same between-subjects variables revealed the patterns depicted in Figure 2A and B. Misforecasting happiness was more pronounced for (a) those who were highly committed (Figure 2A), because higher commitment was associated with expecting less happiness ($\beta = -.49$, $p = .001$) but not with actual post-breakup happiness ($\beta = .10$, $p = .496$); and (b) those who experienced more partner aggression (Figure 2B), because more partner aggression was associated with higher actual happiness once out of the relationship ($\beta = .34$, $p = .050$) but not with expected post-breakup happiness ($\beta = -.01$). In short, highly committed individuals overestimated their unhappiness if their relationship ends because they expected worse things than actually materialized, whereas targets of partner aggression overestimated their unhappiness because they became better off without their partner than they had expected.

### Staying in an Aggressive Relationship (Hypothesis 3)

Individuals who experienced more partner aggression were less happy while in their relationship, and those whose relationships ended were happier than they had expected to be. Does expecting unhappiness serve a relationship maintenance function even in aggressive relationships? Hypothesis 3 suggested that expecting low happiness would predict staying with the partner through the course of the study.

A logistic regression model using the full sample ($n = 171$) predicted breakup status (participant ended the relationship, partner ended the relationship, and participant stayed with partner) from T1 variables: expected happiness if the relationship ends, controlling for commitment, happiness, amount of partner aggression, and amount of own aggression. Expecting less happiness if the relationship ends was associated with greater odds of staying in the relationship, $estimate = - .57$, $p = .004$, as predicted. No other variables were significant, except for T1 happiness, $estimate = .37$, $p = .041$; being happier at T1 predicted staying with their partner.

Additional analyses explored possible limits of the association between expecting low happiness and staying with the partner. Do expectations of unhappiness predict continuing an aggressive relationship equally for individuals who experience relatively more partner aggression, as compared with individuals who experience less partner aggression?

Specifically, adding the interaction between T1 expected happiness and T1 partner aggression yielded a significant finding, $estimate = .71$, $p = .007$. Decomposing this interaction revealed that the association between expecting low happiness and staying with a partner was stronger for those who had experienced relatively less partner aggression ($-1 SD$), $t(169) = -4.93$, $p < .001$, than more aggression ($+1 SD$), $t(169) = -1.73$, $p = .085$. Although tentative, this finding suggests limits to tolerating aggression; when the partner becomes too aggressive, concerns about future happiness become less related to staying with a partner.

Additional analyses explored partner aggression reported after T1, until the end of the study ($n = 77$). Most individuals...
(71%) reported post-T1 aggression. We explored whether this varied for those whose relationships ended versus continued. It may be that individuals stayed because their partner stopped being aggressive. For each individual in this subsample, post-T1 aggression reports were summed and divided by the number of times reported, to adjust for stayers having more reports and therefore more opportunities for aggression to occur. This indicator of post-T1 aggression did not significantly predict staying (relative to being left or leaving), logistic regression estimate $\hat{\beta} = -0.12, p = 0.374$. Although exploratory, this analysis suggests that the people who stayed in their relationship had partners who were as likely as others to continue being aggressive.

Discussion

Individuals in aggressive relationships were happier after their relationship ended than they had expected to be. Misforecasting one’s happiness without a partner takes on new meaning in the context of aggressive relationships. Supporting Hypothesis 1, partner aggression predicted negative personal and relational outcomes (less happiness and lower satisfaction) that dissipated once the aggressive relationship ended. Despite being worse off while in the relationship and better off once out of it, individuals had expected to feel less happy than they actually felt, replicating previous forecasting research (Eastwick et al., 2008). Supporting Hypothesis 2, (a) commitment predicted how happy people expected to be, more than it predicted their actual happiness and (b) aggression predicted actual happiness, more than it predicted how happy people expected to be. In sum, expecting doom without a partner functions to maintain a relationship, even when life without an aggressive partner turns out to be better than expected.

Why did participants underestimate their happiness after being free of their aggressive partner? One explanation may be focalism (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005), whereby people judging their future happiness focused solely on the breakup event without taking into account factors that mitigate that event, such as not having to endure aggressive behavior. This interpretation fits with the idea that the negative effects of partner aggression often go unnoticed. When dating aggression does not result in physical injuries, people downplay its severity (Capezza & Arriaga, 2008); people who see aggression as “no big deal” may fail to appreciate the absence of aggression when imagining life without the partner.

Figure 2. A, Underestimating post-breakup happiness as a function of Time 1 commitment. B, Underestimating post-breakup happiness as a function of Time 1 partner aggression.
Another explanation of overestimating future unhappiness after an undesired event is that people recover and cope better than they had anticipated (Wilson & Gilbert, 2005). Targets of partner aggression, however, may not be underestimating how well they will cope following a relationship breakup (Gilbert et al., 1998); rather, they may be misjudging how badly they feel now while in an aggressive relationship.

Expecting to feel unhappy after a breakup predicted staying with the partner, supporting Hypothesis 3. Partners can change, and it is conceivable that some individuals remained with their partner because the partner stopped being aggressive. However, on average, people who stayed in their relationship continued to experience levels of partner aggression throughout the study and levels that were no different than in relationships that ended (controlling for when the relationship ended).

Exploratory analyses revealed that the link between forecasting unhappiness without the partner and staying in the relationship was stronger for those who reported lower levels of partner aggression (relative to those reporting more aggression). This suggests that people can overlook their partner’s aggressive behavior up to a point, but beyond that point, any amount of future unhappiness without the partner does not override persistent aggression. High levels of aggression register as being negative and thus may dilute one’s dependence on a partner; lower levels of aggression do not register as being as harmful, despite evidence that even low aggression is associated with lower well-being (Arias & Pape, 1999). This unexpected finding remains to be examined further.

Together, these findings suggest two countervailing processes at work in aggressive relationships. One is a common and robust relationship maintenance process (Rusbult et al., 2006): Once in a relationship, people do a lot to maintain it, because they desire the partner, because they desire a relationship, or out of mere habit.

The countervailing process, however, is one of self-preservation. Individuals who experience sustained aggression and violence from a partner eventually do leave their partner (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Individuals in this sample experienced relatively common aggression that may not register as affecting one’s well-being (cf. Fugate, Landis, Riordan, Naureckas, & Engel, 2005). Yet even this sample tapping common aggression revealed efforts to self-protect. Although expecting to feel unhappy was associated with staying in the relationship, this was less true of individuals with more aggressive partners; they may have been ready to leave even if they expected to experience low levels of happiness. Thus, there comes a point at which tolerating aggression activates self-preservation. This may occur during a defining interaction that prompts the relationship to end; or it may occur as a gradual, nagging sense that all is not well, and as explicit reports of happiness become disconnected from the nagging unhappiness that lies beyond awareness (McConnell, Dunn, Austin, & Rawn, 2011). The challenge in future research is to model each participant’s tipping point—that is, each person’s transition from feeling compelled to maintain the relationship to feeling compelled to protect oneself if the partner continues to be aggressive (as was suggested by ancillary analyses of aggression after T1).

The current findings have been interpreted as suggesting that people who expect to feel unhappy if their relationship ends may maintain their relationship even when, paradoxically, the partner is aggressive and a source of current unhappiness. However, this may be true more for certain individuals and in certain circumstances. Individuals who feel particularly vulnerable to how others treat them—individuals who are low in self-esteem, high in rejection sensitivity, or high in anxious attachment (cf. Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006)—may be particularly fearful of ending their relationship and thus susceptible to anticipating more unhappiness without an aggressive partner than is warranted. Such individual differences not only may moderate the findings but also may cause, both, commitment and forecasting errors. Including these variables in future research will begin to address these possible effects.

In sum, the current research contributes to our understanding of the factors that keep individuals in a relationship with a partner who is aggressive. The common aggression that characterized our dating sample—mostly nonphysical aggression—often is assumed to be innocuous. Yet, it was negatively correlated with happiness while in the relationship, and positively correlated with later happiness once the relationship ended. The links to personal well-being are not always obvious. The current research suggests that individuals do not anticipate being happier once their relationship ends, and they even anticipate being worse off without the partner. These beliefs, in turn, may cause people to stay with an aggressive partner. Thus, aggression creates a context in which the very thoughts that maintain a relationship may jeopardize personal happiness.

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Notes

1. These \( n = 171 \) individuals (of \( n = 261 \)) reported at Time 1 (T1) that their current partner had engaged in at least one aggressive act; the measure is described below. We limited the analysis to those who reported any partner aggression because including those who reported no aggression (i.e., count of 0 for all items) created a floor effect on the aggression scale that could not be eliminated through transforming the aggression variable. Alternatively, simply comparing those who report any aggression versus no aggression...
elminates meaningful variation in aggression (e.g., grouping together individuals who report one instance of verbal aggression with those who report a pattern of repeated emotional control and physical aggression). We can provide more information on this inclusion decision upon request.

2. When we repeated analyses using an alternative version of the expected happiness variable based on 2 items (How happy would you feel one to two weeks after it ended? ... one to two months after it ended?), all significant findings reported below remained significant.

3. Descriptively, those who were left by the partner reported more post-T1 aggression (i.e., sum across all post-T1 reports divided by number of reports; \( M = 2.53, SD = 2.25 \)) than either stayers (\( M = 1.11, SD = 1.64 \)) or leavers (\( M = 1.12, SD = 2.20 \)). The contrast of those who were left versus others (stayers and leavers) was not significant (full model, \( F(2, 73) = 2.01, p = .141 \); contrast effect, \( F(1, 73) = 3.71, p = .058 \)) and based on small samples but is suggestive.

4. Further evidence of a self-preservation process comes from analysis of the association between T1 partner aggression and breakup status. The test of Hypothesis 3 revealed that more T1 partner aggression did not predict leaving when the model included other variables (T1 expected happiness, T1 commitment, controlling for T1 happiness, and T1 own aggression), estimate = .45, \( p = .202 \). However, the association of T1 partner aggression with leaving was significant when tested as the only predictor, estimate = .62, \( p = .029 \), and when controlling for own aggression, estimate = .80, \( p = .014 \). The absence of a robust association may suggest that some people stay in aggressive dating relationships but eventually these relationships end.

References


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