MY SPOUSE IS AMAZING LIKE ME: THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN HOMOGAMY FOR

NARCISSISM AND RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

by

Kerry Anne Marsh

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

This study's purpose was to better understand how narcissistic admiration and rivalry relate to relationship satisfaction and to investigate the satisfaction found in homogamous versus heterogamous narcissistic relationships. The study explored relationship satisfaction of married participants ($N = 764$), as moderated by their partner's perceived level and subtype of narcissism. It also examined direct correlations between participant narcissistic admiration and rivalry and relationship satisfaction, as well as correlations between participant and perceived partner narcissism scores. An exploratory study about how relationship length moderates the association between narcissism and relationship satisfaction was also conducted. This quantitative study featured a cross-sectional online survey disseminated via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Data analysis employed Pearson's correlations and regression analysis using Hayes's (2017) PROCESS macro. Overall findings indicated that narcissistic individuals often assort together and find greater satisfaction in homogamous pairings than in heterogamous ones. Admiration narcissism was positively associated with relationship satisfaction regardless of the partner's level or subtype of narcissism. Rivalry narcissism was positively linked with relationship satisfaction if the partner was also high in rivalry. The only pairing negatively associated with satisfaction was a high rivalry participant with a low narcissism partner. Unsatisfying heterogamous pairings, therefore, may partially explain the dysfunction noted in narcissistic relationships. Length of relationship did not moderate the association between narcissism and relationship satisfaction. Future research should test both members of couples to see if results are replicated and continue efforts to understand the trajectory of narcissistic relationships.

Keywords: narcissism, narcissistic admiration, narcissistic rivalry, NARQ, contextual reinforcement model, relationship satisfaction, mate selection

Acknowledgments

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List of Abbreviations

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; DSM-V)

Mechanical Turk (MTurk)

Narcissistic admiration and rivalry concept (NARC)

Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ)

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Narcissism is an enduring personality style whose prevalence is on the rise in the United States (Twenge & Foster, 2008; Twenge et al., 2008). This confident and dynamic personality is adaptive in many ways (Sedikides et al., 2004; Trull & McCrae, 2002), but its maladaptive qualities are seen primarily interpersonally (Back et al., 2010; Campbell & Foster, 2002). In the short term, a romantic relationship with a narcissistic partner is exciting and fulfilling (Campbell & Campbell, 2009), but in the long term, relationship satisfaction plummets (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Peterson & DeHart, 2014). More studies are needed, however, to establish the relationship trajectory of narcissistic individuals and the level of satisfaction these couples experience over time. A relatively recent multidimensional model of narcissism, the narcissistic admiration and rivalry concept (NARC; Back et al., 2013), allows researchers to more closely examine narcissism and relational functioning (Leckelt et al., 2015). While research regarding this conceptual framework remains in its infancy, preliminary studies have revealed that if a narcissistic individual is high in admiration but not rivalry qualities, there is hope for long-term relationship satisfaction (Wurst et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018).

Relationship satisfaction not only depends on an individual's narcissism subtype or on relationship length but also on the chosen partner's level and subtype of narcissism. Mate selection theory shows much support for assortative mating, or homogamy (Blackwell & Lichter, 2004; Lewis, 2016). This means that individuals choose to marry someone similar to themselves in many ways. Narcissistic individuals, likewise, often choose to date and potentially marry narcissistic partners (Campbell et al., 2003; Grosz et al., 2015). This has not been firmly established, however, since most studies have involved college-aged dating couples. The research literature also lacks clarity regarding the level of relationship satisfaction found in

homogamous relationships with narcissistic individuals as compared to heterogamous relationships between high-narcissism and low-narcissism individuals.

Professional counselors need to understand the common trajectory of relationships with narcissistic partners so they can recognize the source of the relational difficulty and intervene appropriately. The general public also needs education about narcissistic relationships so that if someone elects to be in a long-term relationship with a narcissistic individual, they will have made an informed choice and can accept their partner for who they are as well as who they are not.

Researchers and clinicians must grasp whether and how aspects of narcissism bring relational distress. They need to know if the type of partner chosen (i.e., another narcissistic individual or someone low in narcissism) increases or decreases these individuals' relationship satisfaction. It is important to understand if an individual's narcissism subtype impacts the relationship satisfaction they and their partners experience. By better understanding narcissism and relationship satisfaction, more effective interventions can be employed in relationship counseling.

Background of the Problem

Narcissism has been recognized as a personality style since the late 1800s, when Paul Nacke coined the term in 1899 based on clinical observation (Freud, 1914/1957). From the very beginning, narcissistic pathology was observed to manifest in a relational context. For example, Nacke observed that narcissistic individuals treated their own bodies like people would normally treat an object of sexual desire. This autoeroticism was also noted by psychoanalytic great Sigmund Freud (1914/1957), who observed that narcissistic individuals look for in others what

they themselves are. This is an early hint at homogamy for narcissism, in that the narcissistic individual highly values himself and therefore wants to choose someone similar to himself.

Though Freud (1914/1957) conceptualized narcissism as more developmental than pathological, he noted that narcissistic individuals sometimes developed a problem progressing past self-love to object-love, or love of others. Psychoanalytic theorist Kernberg (1974) affirmed this, noting that narcissism involves a breakdown in normal self and object relations, which prevents these individuals from forming and maintaining deep relationships. In the absence of close relationships with women, Kernberg observed that narcissistic males are inclined to objectify females. Social evolutionary theorist Millon (1981) reaffirmed the relational difficulty posed by narcissism. He characterized narcissistic individuals as overvaluing themselves, focusing on self rather than others, and expecting others to cater to their esteem needs.

Despite the relational difficulty associated with narcissism, the narcissistic male experiences considerable relational success, at least in the short term, often due to being attractive (Dufner et al., 2013; Rohmann et al., 2011) and perhaps wealthy and successful (Dufner et al., 2013; Morf et al., 2011). These are traits that women have historically highly valued (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Kenrick et al., 1993). Because they are popular with the opposite sex, narcissistic individuals tend to be very choosy about their long-term partners (Asendorpf et al., 2011). They often choose other narcissistic individuals (Keller et al., 2014; Ye et al., 2016) who are replete with positive, image-based qualities such as attractiveness, intelligence, and professional success (Atari & Chegeni, 2017; Seidman, 2016). In so doing, they frequently sacrifice relational qualities like kindness and caring, which have been shown to promote relationship satisfaction long term (Bryan et al., 2011; Schaffhuser et al., 2014). The relational outcomes of these homogamous pairings are largely unknown.

Though narcissism negatively impacts individuals interpersonally, some researchers have suggested that narcissistic self-enhancement works rather well intrapersonally in meeting the individual's esteem needs. Through self-enhancement, narcissistic individuals maintain their sense of grandiosity, keep their vulnerabilities at bay, achieve goals, and obtain a measure of psychological well-being while doing so (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). They are emotionally resilient (Myers et al., 2013), well adjusted, and sociable, if a bit egotistical. They lack obvious pathology, said Trull and McCrae (2002). Their psychological health may be attributed to their tendency to have high self-esteem (Giacomin & Jordan, 2016; Sedikides et al., 2004), but Miller and colleagues (2007) noted that narcissism corresponds significantly with distress or suffering for narcissistic individuals' significant others. Again, it is in the area of interpersonal relationships where narcissism seems to create few rewards and exacts high costs.

Campbell and Campbell's (2009) contextual reinforcement model depicts a circular pattern of narcissistic relationships. This model postulates that relational outcomes for narcissistic individuals are dependent upon whether the relationship is in a short-term or long-term context. In the short term, the relationship may be highly satisfying, as narcissistic individuals can be charming, attractive, and socially adept (Back et al., 2010; Wurst et al., 2017). Over time, the narcissistic individual's lack of warmth and caring (Wurst et al., 2017), negative communication patterns (Peterson & DeHart, 2014), and lack of commitment (Myers et al., 2013) erode the partner's relationship satisfaction. When this happens, the narcissistic partner may reinvest in the significant other again but fail to sustain the relationship long term until the partner eventually exits the system (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). Other researchers have found similar patterns (Carlson et al., 2011; Rauthmann, 2012), in that narcissistic people can initially be popular due to being seen as assertive, but then as situations require greater intimacy, the

narcissistic person loses popularity due to being seen as antagonistic (Küfner et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015).

Researchers Back and colleagues (2013) shed further light on the contextual reinforcement model by creating a new conceptualization of grandiose narcissism, the NARC. The NARC depicts narcissism as consisting of a bright side, called admiration, and a dark side, called rivalry. Both of these manifestations involve bolstering the grandiose self. The high-admiration individual bolsters their grandiosity by self-enhancing to achieve others' admiration. The high-rivalry individual bolsters their grandiosity by derogating others. These traits often co-occur within the same individual (Grove et al., 2019; Sauls et al., 2019; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). It is plausible that early in a relationship, the admiration traits bring popularity and relationship satisfaction. Then, as the relationship extends over time, the individual's rivalry traits may present, which then create relational disharmony and possibly dissolution.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the association between narcissism's two facets, admiration and rivalry, and relationship satisfaction in both short-term and long-term contexts. This study also determines whether or not the narcissistic participants choose narcissistic partners and the level of satisfaction found in these various pairings. This research extends the literature on narcissism and relationship satisfaction, both in terms of homogamy and heterogamy for narcissism and the resulting relationship satisfaction. Additionally, this research adds to the body of literature on the trajectory of relationships with narcissistic partners in both short- and long-term contexts.

Research Questions

In light of the need for further understanding regarding the trajectory of relationship satisfaction involving narcissistic partners and the lack of research concerning homogamy and heterogamy for narcissism and relationship satisfaction, this research study addresses the following questions:

RQ1: How does the level of the two facets of narcissism, admiration and rivalry, in both the participant and the partner, relate to relationship satisfaction?

RQ2: What level of narcissism (i.e., homogamy or heterogamy) exists among participants and their partners?

RQ3: How does homogamy or heterogamy for narcissism correlate with relationship satisfaction in both short-term and long-term contexts?

RQ4: Does narcissistic admiration potentiate relationship satisfaction for those individuals and their partners?

Assumptions and Limitations

Assumptions

Two assumptions undergirded this research study. The first assumption was that the participants would answer the survey questions honestly rather than using social desirability bias. Since the anonymity of participants was protected, the results of the study cannot show the individual in a negative light. Therefore, there was a reasonable expectation that they would answer truthfully.

The second assumption was that the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013) adequately measures the two facets of narcissism that it purports to

measure. It has shown adequate validity and reliability (Back et al., 2013; Grove et al., 2019), and this study further tests its utility.

Limitations

Many threats to the study's internal validity were avoided due to its cross-sectional design involving the one-time taking of a survey, whereas an experimental study could be contaminated in various ways. The fact that the survey represented a cross-section of participants rather than participants from a narrow geographic region or age range and included a large sample size enhanced its external validity or generalizability. Nevertheless, the study had several limitations, which are discussed below.

The first limitation is that the survey utilized self-report measures. Self-report instruments are commonly used in social psychology research, but they have their limitations in that the individual may not be truthful or may answer in socially desirable ways. A narcissistic individual's tendency to self-enhance could positively bias the answers they provided. Despite this risk, many researchers have used well-validated self-report instruments to measure narcissism, and their findings have enhanced understanding of this personality style.

The study's second limitation is that it asked participants to rate both themselves and their partners on the narcissism scale, rather than including both the participant and their partner in the study. However, there have been other studies that have included questions to describe both oneself and one's partner (see Schaffhuser et al., 2014, for example). Studies that have utilized partner and personal ratings of personality traits have yielded very similar results from both partners, indicating that participants tend to be self-aware and truthful in how they characterize themselves and their partners (McCrae et al., 2008). For that reason, the study can be considered valid despite that limitation. The results are preliminary and may be replicated or

refuted in subsequent studies. This limitation is also offset by the large number of participants that revealed clear trends and differences.

A final limitation is the possibility of either assumed similarity or contrast effects. Assumed similarity is the tendency to assume others resemble the self, and if present, it could inflate estimates of homogamy or assortative mating (Kenny, 1988). Contrast effects are a similar problem, in which partners tend to exaggerate perceived differences (McCrae et al., 2008). These problems can be managed by careful interpretation of results. If couples appear very similar in some aspects, the partners may not be as similar as they appear; the same logic may be applied to differences. Problems of assumed similarity or contrast effects are also mitigated by the fact that other studies have shown much similarity between how participants and spouses rate themselves and their partners. As a result, the methodology is likely to be sound despite the limitations.

Definition of Terms

1. *Admiration narcissism:* "The tendency to approach social admiration by means of self-promotion (assertive self-enhancement)" (Back et al., 2013, p. 1015). This is one of two main strategies the narcissistic person uses to maintain a grandiose sense of self. It is part of the conceptual framework of this study, the NARC (Back et al., 2013), and was measured using the NARQ (Back et al., 2013).

2. *Heterogamy:* Choosing a spouse different than oneself in one or more domains (Schwartz, 2013).

3. *Homogamy:* Choosing a spouse similar to oneself in one or more domains. This is also known as assortative mating (McCrae et al., 2008).

4. *Narcissism*: A personality style in which the individual has "a grandiose sense of self, a strong sense of entitlement and superiority, a lack of empathy, and a need for social admiration, as well as tendencies to show dominant, charming, bragging, impulsive, and aggressive behaviors" (Back et al., 2013, p. 1014). This is categorized as normal grandiose narcissism, such as is found in the general population, and does not refer to the more pathological form of narcissism known as vulnerable narcissism or to narcissistic personality disorder, a diagnosable mental health condition.

5. *Rivalry narcissism:* "The tendency to prevent social failure by means of self-defense (antagonistic self-protection)" (Back et al., 2013, p. 1015). This is one of two main strategies the narcissistic person uses to maintain a grandiose sense of self. It is part of the conceptual framework of this study, the NARC (Back et al., 2013) and was measured using the NARQ (Back et al., 2013).

Significance of the Study

This study is a valuable addition to the counseling and social and personality psychology literature for several reasons. First, it contributes to research literature surrounding a new conceptualization of narcissism, the NARC (Back et al., 2013), adding to its validity and usefulness. Through this study, researchers and clinicians gain a greater understanding of how narcissism impacts relationship satisfaction through measuring its two facets, narcissistic admiration and rivalry. Understanding how narcissism affects relationship satisfaction was identified as an important need by Sauls and colleagues (2019), who stated that few studies have examined narcissistic admiration and rivalry regarding romantic relationship outcomes.

A second important outcome of this study was an increased understanding of whether the more positive aspect of narcissism, admiration, offered the possibility of relationship satisfaction

and with which type of partner (a homogamous or heterogamous one). This facet of narcissism has been the bright spot thus far in a bleak landscape of interpersonal outcomes associated with narcissism. Armed with a clearer understanding of admiration's link to relationship satisfaction, clinicians can be better prepared as they engage in premarital, marital, or relationship counseling with clients in narcissistic relationships.

Another reason this study is significant is that although some research has explored whether narcissistic individuals tend to choose homogamous or heterogamous partners, there has been very little examination of the success or satisfaction found in these pairings. Once known, that information would enrich relationship counseling with narcissistic clients.

Fourthly, this study is significant because few studies have examined a wide range of participant ages and lengths of narcissistic relationships. Most have involved dating or newlywed relationships. In contrast, this study involved a survey with a large sample size that included a wide range of participant ages and lengths of relationships. This research design offered the possibly of more clear understanding of the trajectory of narcissistic relationships, something that researchers have long been recommending (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001; Sauls et al., 2019).

Finally, this study is significant because it has further tested the validity of Campbell and Campbell's (2009) contextual reinforcement model of narcissistic relationships. Their model is the only one that conceptualizes these relationships as cyclical. It points out the short-term gain and long-term pain that may be present. By examining the level of satisfaction found in short- and long-term relationships with narcissistic individuals, this study contributed to literature on the contextual reinforcement model. More study must be devoted to the narcissistic relationship trajectory so that mental health clinicians can understand it and help clients successfully navigate these relationships.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is based on two main theoretical models, the contextual reinforcement model (Campbell & Campbell, 2009) and the NARC (Back et al., 2013). The contextual reinforcement model, proposed by Campbell and Campbell (2009), depicts narcissistic relationships as cyclical. In emerging relationships, both partners experience satisfaction, as the narcissistic individual can be exciting and entertaining. In enduring relationships, however, the narcissitic person's partner becomes dissatisfied due to the narcissistic person's lack of warmth, caring, and supportiveness. The couple may be quite dissatisfied at this point, until the narcissistic individual again showers the partner with attention like they did in the beginning. Then the relationship reenters the emerging zone, and the cycle begins again.

The second theoretical model, the NARC (Back et al., 2013), is a new conceptualization of grandiose narcissism, which includes a bright side, called admiration, and a dark side, called rivalry. The goal of the narcissistic individual is to maintain the grandiose self. The high-admiration individual does so through assertive self-enhancement in order to garner admiration and feel special. The high-rivalry individual does so through antagonistic self-protection to fend off real and perceived threats to the grandiose self.

Previous research has shown some promise for high-admiration individuals in the interpersonal realm (Wurst et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018), an area of notorious difficulty for narcissistic people (Miller et al., 2007). Rivalry, on the other hand, is associated with many negative interpersonal outcomes (Vrabel et al., 2020; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). The contextual reinforcement model and the NARC may be linked, in that admiration traits may be seen early in a relationship, which may provide satisfaction, but rivalry traits may show up later on, when the need for conflict resolution, selflessness, and forgiveness become important

(Leunissen et al., 2017). At that point, relationship satisfaction suffers, and the relationship itself is threatened.

Through the lens of these two models, relationships in which at least one partner is narcissistic were examined to see how the two facets of narcissism, admiration and rivalry, affect relationship satisfaction over time. Including length of relationship as a covariate allowed the study to examine whether or not relationships with narcissistic individuals are cyclical, as the contextual reinforcement model suggests. Short-term satisfaction may be due to admiration traits, whereas long-term difficulty may correspond to rivalry traits, closely linking the NARC and the contextual reinforcement model in understanding narcissistic relationships.

Another important theory that undergirded this study was mate selection theory, specifically homogamy/heterogamy and evolutionary theory. There is much research support for homogamy in many aspects of mate selection, including personality traits, although the effect size for personality traits is small (Buss, 1985; McCrae et al., 2008). Some studies have revealed a tendency toward homogamy for narcissism (Grosz et al., 2015; Ye et al., 2016), but heterogamy for narcissism has also been found, although less frequently (C.V. Smith et al., 2014; Lavner et al., 2016). What research has not highlighted is whether or not homogamy or heterogamy for narcissism results in relationship satisfaction. This study addresses that gap and assesses satisfaction levels found in homogamous versus heterogamous narcissistic relationships.

Evolutionary theory is an important backdrop as well, simply because it explains the mating behaviors of males and females, which allows one to hypothesize that narcissistic individuals would be a popular choice for short-term mates. Other research has also substantiated that idea (Schröder-Abé et al., 2016; Wurst et al., 2017). As a result of this short-term success, this researcher hypothesized that many narcissistic individuals would comprise the pool of

participants who find themselves in longer-term relationships. At that point, the NARC and contextual reinforcement models helped to clarify relationship satisfaction over time for couples in which one or both partners were narcissistic.

Organization of the Remaining Chapters

Chapter Two consists of the literature review that serves as a backdrop and provides important direction to this study. First, the literature review provides an overview of narcissism and how it has been conceptualized through the years by various theorists. In that section, a case is made for the conceptual framework, the NARC, and corresponding assessment tool, the NARQ, which are used in the study. Secondly, the literature review gives an overview of mate selection theory. This includes homogamy/heterogamy and evolutionary theory, among other theories, as well as a discussion of personality traits most desired in a partner. This section then uses mate selection theory to conceptualize the reason an individual may choose a narcissistic partner as well as the type of mate the narcissistic individual is likely to choose. The third section of the literature review examines how the narcissistic individual functions in both short-term and long-term relational contexts. In this section, the contextual reinforcement model (Campbell & Campbell, 2009) is introduced and explained, and reasons behind narcissistic individuals' short-term relational gain but long-term relational pain is outlined. The fourth and final section of the literature review highlights how various personality traits, including Big Five personality traits, narcissism, and narcissistic admiration and rivalry, tend to correlate with relationship satisfaction. Finally, the study's research questions and hypotheses are introduced.

Chapter Three outlines the methods used to appropriately answer the study's research questions and hypotheses. The research design included an online survey through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The convenience sample was recruited through MTurk, and each

participant received $1.25 for taking the survey. In addition to filling out an informed consent

and answering basic demographic information including how long they had been married, the

participants rated their own and their spouse's level of narcissistic admiration and rivalry through

the 18-question NARQ assessment. They also answered a one-question assessment of

relationship satisfaction. The research study received Institutional Review Board approval

through Liberty University, then the survey was posted on MTurk. The study's seven hypotheses

were then tested using Pearson's correlations and ordinary least squares regression through

Hayes's PROCESS method, and the data were analyzed.

Chapter Four presents the results of each of the seven hypotheses and two exploratory

studies. Pearson's correlations were used to test Hypotheses 1-3, and Hayes's PROCESS

method was used to test the moderation models. Results are displayed in tables, models, and

figures.

Chapter Five discusses the findings presented in Chapter Four. It is organized into five

sections. The first section discusses the association between admiration narcissism and

relationship satisfaction. The second section highlights the association between rivalry

narcissism and relationship satisfaction. The third section focuses on the association between

narcissism homogamy and relationship satisfaction. The association between length of

relationship and relationship satisfaction comprises the fourth section. Finally, recommendations

for future research are offered.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The process of mate selection and a person's choice of mate is of great importance. Researchers have studied mate selection, looking for patterns in who marries whom, ways in which couples are similar or dissimilar, and the level of satisfaction experienced in these relationships. The presence of personality pathology like narcissism uniquely impacts relationship satisfaction for narcissistic individuals and their romantic partners over time. The more human beings understand the qualities associated with relationship success, the more they can strive to embody those qualities, and the more wisdom can guide their search for a life partner.

The following literature review will cover four main areas. The first section is devoted to understanding and measuring narcissism, and it will outline the theoretical framework that guides this study. The second section surveys the mate selection literature and how it intersects with narcissism and mate choice. The third section examines narcissism in short- and long-term relational contexts. The fourth and final section highlights the contemporary understanding of narcissism and relationship satisfaction. This literature review provides a valuable backdrop to the current study of homogamy for narcissism and its association with relationship satisfaction in short- and long-term contexts.

Understanding and Measuring Narcissism

The term "narcissism" comes from the Roman mythological epic *Metamorphoses*, written by Ovid (ca. 8 B.C.E./2004). In the story of Narcissus and Echo, Echo is a beautiful mountain nymph who falls in love with the handsome Narcissus. Narcissus, however, rejects Echo's love and, reclining by a spring, catches sight of his own reflection. He is captivated by his own beauty and falls in love with his own reflection. This original conceptualization of

narcissism is captured in a clinical sense in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The DSM-5 conceptualization includes personality traits such as arrogance, a sense of being unique and special, and image-based perfectionism. The relational component of narcissism is seen among the DSM-5 criteria as well, including a desire for admiration, a tendency to exploit others, a sense of entitlement, and a lack of empathy.

These traits are also found in subclinical narcissism, which is the type most widely studied in the social psychological literature. To understand subclinical narcissism, it is important to explore how the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) describes it (Raskin & Terry, 1988) because it is by far the most commonly used measurement tool for subclinical narcissism. The original 54-item scale includes four factors, which measure the following aspects of subclinical narcissism: leadership/authority, superiority/arrogance, self-absorption/self-admiration, and entitlement/exploitation. The current version of the NPI is a 40-item scale with seven subscales: authority, exhibitionism, superiority, entitlement, exploitativeness, self-sufficiency, and vanity.

The NPI measures a largely extraverted, emotionally resilient iteration of narcissism (Myers et al., 2013; Sedikides et al., 2004). NPI narcissism shows high extraversion, low agreeableness, and low neuroticism (Trull & McCrae, 2002), as well as positive self-esteem (Miller & Campbell, 2008). For this reason, NPI narcissists are known as disagreeable extraverts (Paulhus & Williams, 2002) but lack obvious pathology (Trull & McCrae, 2002). The only negative aspects the NPI measures are having a tendency toward feeling entitled and exploiting others (Myers et al., 2013) and being antagonistic (Miller & Campbell, 2008). Of the four NPI subscales, therefore, only the entitlement/exploitation factor is linked with maladaptive traits,

whereas the other three measure fairly adaptive narcissistic characteristics (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003). As a result, the NPI fails to capture some of the relational difficulty experienced with narcissistic partners.

Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde: The Two Faces of Narcissism

While the NPI largely measures the more self-centered, self-confident personality that readily comes to mind when one thinks of narcissism, theorists for the past 50 years have frequently construed narcissism as consisting of two contrasting types coexisting within the same individual. Psychoanalytic theorists Kernberg (1974) and Kohut (1977), for example, described two different manifestations of clinical narcissism. The first was a more extraverted, grandiose type they called overt narcissism, and the second was a more introverted, neurotic form they called covert narcissism.

Paul Wink (1991) also found that narcissism consisted of two factors, which he called grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. He discovered these two types by performing a principal-components analysis of six scales that measured narcissism. Grandiose narcissism refers to aspects of narcissism that have to do with grandiosity, aggression, and dominance, whereas vulnerable narcissism concerns a more insecure form of grandiosity, which masks core fears of incompetence, inadequacy, and negative emotions (Miller et al., 2011). These two divergent factors share several characteristics common to narcissism: conceit, disregard for others, and self-indulgence (Wink, 1991).

There are several problems with conceptualizing narcissism as grandiose and vulnerable. The first has to do with measuring these traits. While traits of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism are evident among several scales that measure narcissism (e.g., the NPI, the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale; Hendin & Cheek, 1997; and the Pathological Narcissism

Inventory; Pincus et al., 2009), there is no one scale consistently used to measure these two types. Instead, the scale that is commonly used to measure narcissism, the NPI, measures primarily grandiose narcissism (Miller & Campbell, 2008). Only one subscale of the NPI, Entitlement/Exploitation, seems to measure some vulnerable traits (Dufner et al., 2013).

Besides the measurement problem, some researchers call into question whether or not vulnerable narcissism actually is narcissism (Wink, 1991), as it shares more traits with borderline personality disorder than with narcissistic personality disorder (Back et al., 2013; Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Grove et al., 2019; Miller et al., 2011). Wink (1991) speculated that vulnerable narcissism, rather than actually being narcissism, may instead be a more general indicator of maladjustment because of how it correlates with unhappiness, anxiety, and depression. Miller and colleagues' (2011) study of the nomological networks of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism found that traits of vulnerable narcissism overlapped significantly with 8 of the 10 personality disorders, meaning it may not be a distinct form of narcissism at all. Instead, it may represent the personal maladjustment and relational dysfunction generally found among personality disorders. In contrast, grandiose narcissism only overlapped with other Cluster B personality disorders (e.g., histrionic, antisocial, and narcissistic; Miller & Campbell, 2008; Miller et al., 2011). As a result, grandiose narcissism appears to have more discriminant validity than vulnerable narcissism.

The third problem with grandiose and vulnerable narcissism is that they are so distinct from one another. Wink (1991) found the two factors were unrelated to each other. Miller and colleagues (2011) found that the nomological networks (e.g., basic personality traits, interpersonal behavior, and psychopathology) of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism were not significantly related. Grandiose narcissistic individuals tend to have high extraversion and low

neuroticism, whereas vulnerable narcissistic individuals have low extraversion and high neuroticism (Miller et al., 2011). Grandiose narcissistic individuals have high self-esteem and are independent, while vulnerable narcissistic individuals have low self-esteem and are interdependent (Rohmann et al., 2012). There is currently an assumption that narcissistic individuals vacillate between the two narcissistic states depending on what the situation calls for, but this idea has not been sufficiently studied to determine its veracity (Miller et al., 2011).

The NARC (Back et al., 2013) also separates narcissism into two facets, but it cleans up some of the problems posed by the concept of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. First, it has a measurement tool, the NARQ, that measures both facets of narcissism (admiration and rivalry). This allows both aspects to be studied at the same time and more clearly understood. The NARC also partially addresses the question of whether or not vulnerable narcissism is really narcissism. Questions on the NARQ addressing narcissistic admiration and rivalry were intended by the authors to measure two distinct facets of grandiose narcissism. Instead, it is possible that the admiration questions indeed measure grandiose narcissism, but rivalry instead overlaps substantially with vulnerable narcissism (Grove et al., 2019; Miller et al., 2011). Perhaps the NARC is essentially confirming the existence of vulnerable narcissism, in that narcissistic rivalry and vulnerable narcissism may be the same thing. The NARC may be a confirmation of what other authors for the past 50 years have also postulated, that narcissism consists of two highly divergent facets that often coexist within the same individual. More studies are needed to clarify differences between vulnerable narcissism, rivalry narcissism, and borderline personality disorder. In this way, the second important facet of narcissism, rivalry, will be understood in its intrapersonal and interpersonal motivations and outcomes.

       In the novella *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886), Dr. Jekyll is a character who appears amiable but battles to suppress the evil within him, which comes out in the form of cruel, remorseless Mr. Hyde. In a way, this character conceptualizes the two very distinct faces of narcissism. As a means of explaining these differences, the NARC posits that the primary motivation of the narcissistic individual is to maintain not just a positive but a grandiose sense of self, which goes beyond the boundaries of reality. Other theorists agree, such as Karen Horney (1939), who conceived of narcissism as "self-inflation," and Morf and colleagues (2011), who stated that "self-enhancement is the trademark of narcissism" (p. 399). Because the narcissistic individual's self-esteem is not reality based, it is both grandiose and vulnerable, which explains why these individuals continuously seek validation from others (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). These theorists postulate that narcissistic individuals are sensitive to self-esteem activating events, such that they look for opportunities to self-promote and also feel compelled to vigorously fend off threats to their grandiosity when needed. The two facets of narcissism conceptualized by the NARC, admiration and rivalry, affirm this understanding of the need to promote and defend a grandiose yet vulnerable sense of self. This is accomplished in two different ways. The first is through assertive self-enhancement, called admiration. The narcissistic individual takes opportunities to enhance the grandiose self, impressing others through charm, humor, intelligence, and bravado. The second is through antagonistic self-protection, called rivalry. If threats to the narcissistic individual occur, he then protects his vulnerable ego by lashing out, being competitive, and bringing the other person down in some way. Admiration has been called the "bright side" of narcissism (Dr. Jekyll), while rivalry embodies the "dark side" (Mr. Hyde; Back et al., 2013).

This section has given an overview of narcissism: how it has been conceptualized both clinically and subclinically, how it has frequently been described as consisting of two very different facets, and the central motivation of the narcissistic individual. The second section of the literature review gives an overview of mate selection theory and how it intersects with narcissism and mate selection. The reader will gain greater understanding of the qualities that draw couples together and whether these qualities create satisfying unions for both partners. Then we can surmise the qualities narcissistic individuals have that others desire in a partner, the qualities narcissistic persons desire in others, and whether or not the resulting relationships create satisfaction for both partners.

<div align="center">**Narcissism and Mate Selection Theory**</div>

Mate Selection Theory

Several theories have emerged to explain assortative mating, defined as "the nonrandom matching of individuals into relationships" (Schwartz, 2013, p. 452). The way people assort into couples is important sociologically because it organizes people into families and determines the characteristics of populations (Schwartz, 2013). In positive assortment, also called homogamy, people marry someone similar to themselves. Negative assortment, called heterogamy, occurs when people marry someone different from themselves (McCrae et al., 2008). The conceptual framework behind most studies of assortative mating has been that of the marriage market. The idea behind the marriage market is that individuals bring various personal assets to the table and compete for desired mates (Schwartz, 2013). The following overview regarding mate selection brings enlightenment about how and why people assort as they do.

Homogamy

The literature shows considerable support for homogamy in partner selection, meaning individuals tend to choose mates similar to themselves. One large-scale study ($N = 10,874$; Blackwell & Lichter, 2004) showed homogamy with respect to race, religion, and education. This finding was replicated in a recent study of mate preferences among users of dating websites (Lewis, 2016). That study additionally showed a tendency toward homogamy for income level. Lewis's (2016) research clarifies why homogamy is so prevalent among couples—from early relational stages, couples segregate according to similarity. People's dating profiles signaled a strong preference for similarity before they would even consider a potential partner (Lewis, 2016). Homogamy in race and religion then continues to strengthen as couples make deeper commitments to one another (Blackwell & Lichter, 2004).

In addition to demographic similarities among couples (e.g., race, religion, education, income level), homogamy has also been noted for values, activities, and level of attractiveness (Hill et al., 1976; Lewis, 2016). Some preference toward homogamy has been found for personality traits as well (Buss, 1985), but generally with modest effect sizes. Larger effect sizes for personality similarity are found when breaking the Big Five personality traits into smaller categories. The largest effect size for similarity in traits between spouses in one study was for values such as similarity in religious and political beliefs (McCrae et al., 2008). This similarity appears to be less related to personality than it is to demographics once again. The personality trait of agreeableness showed significant positive assortment among the subcategory of straightforwardness (McCrae et al., 2008). Of the neuroticism facets, the strongest assortment was found for depression. Of extraversion facets, the strongest assortment was for positive

emotions. Of the conscientiousness traits, the strongest assortment was for competence (McCrae et al., 2008).

Interestingly, not only has positive assortment been found for general personality traits, but it has also been found for personality pathology (Keller et al., 2014; M.S. Smith et al., 2020). M.S. Smith and colleagues (2020) found that when individuals feel their partners are more like them, they are more satisfied and are less likely to perpetrate psychological abuse on them. When both partners share personality pathology, there is understanding of how each other thinks, feels, and behaves. As a result, each member of the couple might feel more supported and understood, which could contribute to relationship satisfaction. Husbands, in particular, are more satisfied when there is a perceived similarity between them and their spouse (M.S. Smith et al., 2020). Konrath and colleagues (2006) also found support for the notion that narcissistic individuals' tendency to aggress against a source of ego threat was completely mitigated if there was a perceived commonality or similarity between themselves and the source of the threat.

Heterogamy

Despite a widespread belief that "opposites attract," the literature shows scant support for this notion. One exception to this is among cohabitating couples, which do tend to be more heterogamous with regard to age, race, and previous marital status, according to Guartney-Gibbs (1986). This author speculated that cohabitation could serve to winnow out matches less likely to be successful prior to marriage. There is evidence that heterogamy in race, religion, and education level leads to more marital dissolutions (Schwartz, 2013). Additionally, discrepancies in age, education, attractiveness, intelligence, and level of involvement in the relationship are factors shown to contribute to dating relationships ending (Hill et al., 1976). A look at social exchange theory provides further insight into the concept of heterogamy in mate selection.

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory conceptualizes mate selection according to the marriage market. The idea is that partners bring a mixed bag of positives and negatives to the marriage market and hope to obtain the highest quality mate they can based on what they have to offer. A common belief is that beautiful women marry powerful and financially successful men—a beauty-status exchange. While research seems to bear out that women do seek men who are at least as educated as they are and males who are wealthy and socially dominant (Buss & Schmidt, 1993; Kenrick et al., 1993), it appears that matching takes place more frequently than beauty-status exchanges. What this means is that those who are physically attractive (both men and women) often are also well-educated and have status and that they tend to pair with one another (McClintock, 2014). McClintock (2014) found a high occurrence of matching on certain desirable traits such as attractiveness, education, and occupational status. None of her data showed any negative correlations, which would occur if exchange were happening. This held true for interracial and age-discrepant couples as well. Perhaps beauty-status exchange occurs more frequently among much older, very wealthy men who often marry younger, more attractive women. That would make sense in light of the increased heterogamy found in later marriages (Lichter, 1990).

Other evidence contradicting social exchange theory is that women increasingly desire more physical attractiveness in their romantic partners, especially as women gain more financial independence (Moore et al., 2005) or more power in the home or workplace (Moore & Cassidy, 2007; Moore et al., 2005). Gustavsson and colleagues' (2006) study of personal advertisements showed no difference between genders in expressed desire for a good-looking partner. Males and females also equally advertised physical attractiveness, which could mean men are responding to

a perceived shift in women's desires for good looks (Gustavsson et al., 2006). Individuals' self-appraisals were generally in line with the criteria they required of partners. This supports both social exchange theory and homogamy (Gustavssson et al., 2006). In other words, if individuals know they have good looks as an asset to offer, they advertise it but also require a partner with commensurate good looks. Therefore, what seems to occur more often than beauty-status exchange is that beautiful, well-educated, and culturally powerful individuals tend to marry others with this same cluster of assets (McClintock, 2014).

Competition

The competition hypothesis predicts that people prefer partners who exceed themselves in some characteristics, such as attractiveness or wealth (Schwartz, 2013). A study of an online dating service showed that women preferred men with higher education and income levels than their own, and men also desired women with higher income (Lewis, 2016). Women who scored themselves highly in aspects related to status and dominance also desired these traits in their partners (Kenrick et al., 1993). It seems women seek to "marry up" in regard to education, income, and status. Men universally desire attractiveness in their female partners (Lippa, 2007). While the desire for more wealth and beauty may be there, cultural differences among people from differing social classes might ultimately preclude compatibility (McClintock, 2014). Instead, like tends to pair with like despite competitive desires to obtain partners better than oneself. When examining gender differences in mate selection, evolutionary theory positions itself to explain these differences.

Evolutionary Theory/Sexual Selection Theory

Evolutionary theory posits that human mating is goal directed and strategic, aimed at problem solving (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Men's mate selection preferences have to do with the

problem of reproductive success. This is why, according to this theory, men tend to desire more sexual partners; young, attractive women; and more short-term relationships (Tsoukas & March, 2018). A greater number of sexual partners means the possibility of more offspring. Beauty and youth in women signal fertility. Men have less stringent requirements for short-term partners than women do (Kenrick et al., 1993), again allowing them access to more partners and opportunistic sexual encounters in order to ensure reproductive success (Buss & Schmidt, 1993). However, men's standards are similar to women's standards at higher levels of investment (Kenrick et al., 1993; Tsoukas & March, 2018).

Evolutionary theory offers an explanation of female differences in mate selection as well. Women value a potential long-term mate's apparent capacity to accrue resources and his willingness to share these resources with her and her offspring. Signs that a man may be willing to make this long-term investment in her and her offspring are "ambition, industry, status, and generosity" (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 226). Women may have more stringent standards for short-term mates because they are evaluating them as potential long-term partners or because they desire to extract immediate resources from them (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2009). In support of the evolutionary theory, a study of Swedish dating profiles found that men advertised resources more often than women, women requested resources more often than men, and men sought younger partners in every age category (Gustavsson et al., 2006).

According to evolutionary theory, women have more reason for caution in mate selection. In part, this is because their window of marriageability is shorter than men's due to having a shorter season of fertility and to men's desire for youth and beauty in a partner (Hill et al., 1976). A second reason women are more cautious in mate selection is that women generally have a much greater personal investment in any resulting offspring than the male partner does (Kenrick

et al., 1993). Even a short-term sexual encounter could result in a child. As a result, women are choosy about even short-term partners, who may contribute genetic material to their offspring (Kenrick et al., 1993). One study of love theory showed that the love facet of passion or sexual desire in women was the result of careful deliberation (Engel et al., 2002). Thus, while men are inclined to become sexually involved with women quite quickly (Buss & Schmitt, 1993), women will do so only after carefully thinking it through and only if the partner meets her stringent standards for attractiveness (Bryan et al., 2011; Kenrick et al., 1993), high self-esteem (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2009), and social potency (Bryan et al., 2011; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Kenrick et al., 1993). A woman's choice to become sexually involved with a partner could hugely impact her own well-being and that of any potential offspring.

Mate selection theory reveals much about how people assort into couples. There is a great deal of support for the prevalence of homogamy or choosing a partner similar to oneself in many ways. Evolutionary theory reveals male and female differences in mate selection. Mate selection theory also highlights personality traits that both genders prefer. The following section addresses these preferences.

Mate Selection and Desired Personality Traits

People desire certain characteristics in a mate. They tend to want attractiveness, emotional stability (low neuroticism), dependable character (conscientiousness), a pleasing disposition (agreeableness), and mutual attraction/love (Kenrick et al., 1993; Stone et al., 2012). Low neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are conceptualized as components of a mature personality (Hogan & Roberts, 2004).

A huge multinational study of over 200,000 participants identified the traits (out of a possible 23) first, second, and third in importance for a romantic partner. The most important

traits that emerged were: "intelligence, humor, honesty, kindness, overall good looks, face attractiveness, values, communication skills, and dependability" (Lippa, 2007, p. 193). Men rated good looks and facial attractiveness among their top three desired traits much more than women did, and women rated honesty, humor, kindness, and dependability more highly than men did (Lippa, 2007).

People's nation and culture of origin impact the traits they desire in a romantic partner. Traits related to agreeableness and likeability were desired more by individualist cultures, whereas characteristics related to competence, responsibility, and social respectability were desired more in traditional, collectivist cultures. Traits related to likeability were more frequently chosen by men than by women in collectivist societies, indicating these might be luxuries for women in these cultures (Lippa, 2007). Similarly, more economic development and more gender equality in a country were strongly correlated with both genders preferring "niceness" in a mate and men more strongly valuing intelligence in a woman (Lippa, 2007). Thus, it seems that preferences for intelligence and niceness are powerfully shaped by national and cultural forces, whereas preferences for attractiveness are more likely attributable to biology (Lippa, 2007).

Social dominance is as a significantly desired trait by women, whereas men do not seek social dominance in a female partner (Bryan et al., 2011). Social dominance in her partner, while contributing to initial partner choice, did not contribute to future relationship satisfaction for women, however. Instead, agreeableness was the only trait linked to future relationship satisfaction. For men, both agreeableness and attractiveness were important to future relationship satisfaction. Agreeableness was the only factor relevant to breakups (Bryan et al., 2011). Bryan et al. (2011) demonstrated the importance of agreeableness in a romantic partner, especially in a long-term relationship.

Mate selection theory and research bring an understanding of how people may choose romantic partners and the potential reasons behind these choices. It is clear that homogamy is significant for partner choice, impacting such areas as race, religion, education, level of attractiveness, and even personality characteristics. Certain personality characteristics, such as emotional steadiness (low neuroticism), conscientiousness, and agreeableness are desired characteristics in a mate and contribute to relational success. From evolutionary theory, understanding is gained as to male and female differences in mate selection criteria and practice. Narcissistic individuals and the mates they choose can best be understood within this larger framework of mate selection theory.

Mate Selection Theory and Narcissism

Narcissistic individuals are attracted to highly positive partners (characterized by agentic qualities like status, attractiveness, and passion) rather than highly communal partners (characterized by warmth and loyalty; Atari & Chegeni, 2017; Seidman, 2016). Narcissistic individuals tend to possess these agentic qualities themselves (Campbell, 1999). This means they are often attracted to partners who are similar to themselves. Various studies have suggested there is homogamy for narcissism in partner choice (Campbell et al., 2002; Grosz et al., 2015; Keller et al., 2014; Ye et al., 2016). Keller and colleagues' study (2014) confirmed earlier findings regarding positive assortative mating, in which people choose partners similar to themselves, even in matters of psychopathology. This repeated finding surprised many researchers. The prevailing view of narcissism was that these individuals abused innocent codependents, but the preponderance of research to this point suggests they may instead be abusing other similarly narcissistic individuals (Keller et al., 2014; Lavner et al., 2016).

Not all research points to homogamy for narcissism, however. A slight trend toward heterogamy for narcissism was noted in one study (C.V. Smith et al., 2014). Lavner and colleagues (2016) also did not replicate previous findings on homogamy for narcissism. Since their study involved newlyweds rather than dating couples as in most studies, their findings may mean there is a difference between the type of individual a narcissistic person wants to date versus the type they would marry. Similarly, in a vignette and couples' study (Grosz et al., 2015), participants did not choose individuals high in narcissistic admiration or in rivalry for a long-term relationship, even if the informants had high admiration or rivalry themselves. It appears, then, that narcissistic individuals tend to be attracted to other narcissistic people and to date them, but they may choose marriage partners different from themselves.

Mate selection theory and research elucidate those personality characteristics most desired in potential mates. Of the Big Five personality traits, the most commonly desired ones are dependable character (conscientiousness), a pleasing disposition (agreeableness), and emotional stability (low neuroticism; Stone et al., 2012). Narcissism is generally correlated with high extraversion, low agreeableness, and low neuroticism (Miller & Campbell, 2008; Trull & McCrae, 2002). There is a strong positive correlation between extraversion and narcissism in both self- and other-ratings (Lee et al., 2013; Miller & Campbell, 2008; Miller et al., 2011). Extraversion subscales of gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, and excitement seeking are all correlated with narcissism (Miller et al., 2011). Narcissism did not significantly correlate with conscientiousness, except where it positively correlated with subscales of achievement striving, self-esteem, and entitlement and negatively correlated with deliberation (Miller et al., 2011). A significant finding for Miller and Campbell (2008) was that narcissistic individuals' self-reports correlated with conscientiousness subscales of competence, achievement striving, and self-

discipline, but other-reports did not corroborate this association. The authors concluded that narcissistic individuals may be inclined to self-enhance around conscientiousness traits like competence. Paulhus and Williams's (2002) findings further suggest that narcissistic individuals tend to self-enhance on intelligence and knowledge claims. A negative correlation was found between narcissism and agreeableness, including significant negative correlations between narcissism and trust, straightforwardness, compliance, modesty, and tendermindedness (Miller et al., 2011). Narcissism is not consistently related to openness (Miller & Campbell, 2008), though a positive link is sometimes noted (Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

In examining the Big Five personality traits and narcissism, it is evident that narcissistic individuals tend to have low neuroticism or emotional stability, which would be attractive to a potential partner. On the other hand, they also tend to have low agreeableness, which is associated with partner dissatisfaction and the dissolution of relationships. The mixed findings regarding conscientiousness suggest a nonsignificant relationship between narcissism and conscientiousness. Again, this is a negative point for the narcissistic individual, who may lack the dependability and dutifulness that contribute to long-term relationship satisfaction.

While personality traits indicate that narcissistic individuals bring a mixed bag of positives and negatives to the marriage market, some gender-specific research in evolutionary theory suggests narcissistic individuals would have success in short-term relational contexts. First, evolutionary theory suggests that males with high self-esteem would find more success in short-term mating contexts than males with lower self-esteem (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2009). This is because females welcome the confident guy but rebuff his shier counterpart (Asendorpf et al., 2011; Wurst et al., 2017). Because narcissism and self-esteem tend to have a small to moderate correlation (Miller et al., 2011; Ye et al., 2016) or even a strong correlation (Giacomin & Jordan,

2016; Rohmann et al., 2012; Sedikides et al., 2004), females would be likely to welcome a narcissistic partner for a short-term relationship. A second reason a narcissistic individual might be successful in a short-term mating situation is their tendency toward physical attractiveness (Back et al., 2010; Dufner et al., 2013; Rohmann et al., 2011). This important quality is desired by both males and females (Gustavsson et al., 2006; Kenrick et al., 1993). Females desire this trait in a short-term partner, according to evolutionary theory, because of the positive genetics that would contribute to any resulting offspring (Bryan et al., 2011). A third reason narcissistic individuals would shine in short-term relational contexts is that they tend to be high in agency or social dominance. This trait can cause females to be initially open to a male (Bryan et al., 2011; Dufner et al., 2013). In evolutionary theory, this trait is linked to the possibility of securing resources for the female and her offspring, so she prefers a male with agency or socially dominant traits (Kenrick et al., 1993). Though the female may be able to quickly detect the male narcissist's tendency to be arrogant (Rauthmann, 2012) and antagonistic (Leckelt et al., 2015; Schröder-Abé et al., 2016), she may give him a chance due to his high self-esteem, attractiveness, and social dominance/agency.

Despite the initial appeal of the narcissistic individual, problems for the narcissistic person tend to manifest in social and romantic contexts (Miller et al., 2007). Central to understanding narcissistic individuals in a relational context is being aware of the cyclical nature of their relationships. They tend to easily attract short-term partners, but their long-term relationships are fraught with difficulty. This dynamic will be explored in the section below.

Narcissism in Short-Term and Long-Term Relational Contexts

Contextual Reinforcement Model

Campbell and Campbell (2009) created a relational model of narcissism called the contextual reinforcement model. This model captures the costs and benefits of narcissism to self and others in both emerging and enduring contexts. Narcissistic individuals can shine in emerging relationships because relationships with them early on are exciting and satisfying. Upon entering the enduring zone, the significant downsides of narcissism create tremendous costs for their partners, causing many partners to exit the relationship. Thus, the contextual reinforcement model highlights the cyclical nature of relationships with narcissistic individuals, in that they cycle from emerging to enduring back to emerging until the partner eventually exits the system.

Narcissism and Short-Term Relationships

Other literature affirms Campbell and Campbell's (2009) portrayal of the effects of narcissism in short- and long-term contexts. In the short term, people are drawn to narcissistic individuals because of their charm (Campbell et al., 2002), social skills (Wurst et al., 2017), extraversion (Asendorpf et al., 2011; Rohmann et al., 2012) and even their sex appeal (Asendorpf et al., 2011; Dufner et al., 2013). They are popular in short-term relationships such as one-night stands or sexual affairs (Grosz et al., 2015; Jonason, Koenig, & Tost, 2010). Interestingly, research demonstrates that it was the most maladaptive scale of the NPI (exploitativeness/entitlement) that predicted narcissistic individuals' initial popularity, and this was mediated by their image-based qualities such as dressing on trend, having an up-to-date hairstyle, carrying themselves with confidence, and communicating in a casual and humorous way (Back et al., 2010).

Narcissism and Long-Term Relationships

As is often the case, the emerging zone (a short-term relationship) eventually morphs into the enduring zone, which is a longer-term relationship (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). Long-term relationships are characterized by intimacy and selflessness (Jonason & Kavanaugh, 2010). Here, the narcissistic individual experiences some positives, though they are much fewer than early in the relationship (Campbell & Campbell, 2009). However, the benefits for the partner become virtually nonexistent as the negatives pile up (e.g., low emotional intimacy, infidelity, vices such as compulsive spending or gambling, aggression, and overconfident decision making, among others). Though narcissistic individuals like to believe their partner's commitment to them remains strong after a conflict, the reality is that the narcissistic tendency to denigrate partners during conflict and reduce commitment to them afterward can result in their partners eventually rejecting them (Peterson & DeHart, 2014). Indeed, there is a tendency for partners of narcissistic individuals to be lured away from them and into other relationships (Jonason, Li, & Buss, 2010). Campbell and Campbell (2009) agree, noting a pattern of breaking up and getting back together until the partner finally leaves for good.

Another contributing factor to narcissistic individuals' difficulty in long-term relationships is their unwillingness to tolerate negative relational events. When relational conflict occurs, rather than engaging in relationship reparation, narcissistic individuals tend to reduce their commitment to their partners (Wurst et al., 2017), notice and flirt with alternative partners (Campbell & Foster, 2002), and engage in sexual infidelity (Schröder-Abé et al., 2016). This is perhaps because relational disturbance threatens their sense of grandiosity (Myers et al., 2013). If narcissistic individuals' partners are chosen to enhance the narcissistic person rather than to

create an intimate relationship, it makes sense that if their partners are displeased and there is conflict, the partners are falling short of their self-enhancing purpose.

Another factor that contributes to narcissistic individuals' long-term relational difficulty is their self-centered approach to relationships. They view relationships in a *having* sort of way, like a means of procuring goods and services. More mature lovers view relationships in a *being* way, that is, enjoying the individual and the relationship for what they are and having genuine love and interest in the other (Jonason & Kavanaugh, 2010; Le, 2005). Mature love is selfless, considerate, and appreciative. Immature lovers are selfish and try to get their own needs met for as low a price tag as possible in terms of commitment and responsibility (Le, 2005). Narcissistic individuals play games with their partners, alternating between affection and aloofness, which keeps partners at an emotional distance. This keeps relationships in the emerging zone and creates distress in the partner (Campbell et al., 2002; Jonason & Kavanaugh, 2010; Vedes et al., 2016). Ultimately, this selfish, game-playing approach to relationships threatens and destabilizes the relationships rather than maintaining them (Rohmann et al., 2012).

Reasons Behind the Cyclical Nature of Narcissistic Relationships

Back and colleagues (2010) identified why relationships with narcissistic individuals are cyclical. Narcissistic people seek admiration, which they immediately receive from new acquaintances. However, they are not looking for emotional intimacy (Campbell et al., 2002 Goodboy & Booth-Butterfield, 2009) but instead see relationships as an ego enhancement (Back et al., 2010; Myers et al., 2013). In time, their partners discover that they lack communal qualities like warmth and caring (Wurst et al., 2017), and they withdraw their admiration. Narcissistic individuals then continue to seek out new acquaintances, whom they are easily able to impress so that they can continue to receive the desired admiration. This is key to narcissistic

individuals' interpersonal vicious cycle (Back et al., 2010). Because they are initially so popular, they are continually drawn toward new relationships rather than investing in the intimacy and cooperation required by longer-term relationships. It is the "narcissistic paradox": not caring about others but still having a strong need for interpersonal affirmation and admiration (Emmons, 1984, p. 299).

This section has clarified the cyclical nature of relationships with narcissistic individuals. These relationships can be satisfying in the short term but then struggle in long-term contexts. The next section will consider personality factors that contribute to relationship satisfaction and how the narcissistic personality generally correlates with relationship satisfaction.

Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship Satisfaction and Personality

In the mate selection literature, the most desired personality traits for mates were identified as emotional stability (low neuroticism), a pleasing disposition (agreeableness), and a dependable character (conscientiousness; Kenrick et al., 1993; Stone et al., 2012). The relationship satisfaction literature largely affirms the importance of these traits in mate selection, but the biggest contributor to relationship satisfaction among the personality traits appears to be conscientiousness (Engel et al., 2002; Nemechek & Olson, 1999; Schaffhuser et al., 2014). In fact, conscientiousness predicted all three elements of love (e.g., intimacy, passion, and commitment, as described by Sternberg, 1986) in males (Engel et al., 2002). Both partners having similar levels of conscientiousness (Nemechek & Olson, 1999) and involvement in the relationship (Hill et al., 1976) predicted the greatest level of relationship satisfaction (Nemechek & Olson, 1999). Engel and colleagues (2002) also found that males high in social idealism, meaning they are interested in justice and fairness, are more likely to experience all three facets

of love. Thus, males who tend to be good citizens in general tend to be good contributors to their romantic relationships as well.

When both members of a couple invest equally in the relationship, the couple tends to experience a high level of intimacy (Hill et al., 1976). Intimacy may be defined this way:

> Desiring to promote the welfare of the loved one, sharing oneself and one's possessions with the loved one, receiving and giving emotional support with the loved one, intimate communication with the loved one, and valuing the loved one in one's life. (Sternberg, 1986, pp. 120–121)

Indeed, a conscientious person makes a commitment and then follows through on that commitment. Though conscientiousness does not seem sexy, it actually contributes to passion in both males and females (Engel et al., 2002).

Agreeableness, or a pleasing disposition, has sometimes been shown to be important to relationship satisfaction (Schaffhuser et al., 2014) and sometimes has not appeared significantly related to it (Engel et al., 2002). It is linked with satisfying long-term friendship (Selfhout et al., 2010), and women indicated that partner agreeableness was important for their future relationship satisfaction (Bryan et al., 2011). Friendship is enhanced when the friends share similar levels of agreeableness (Selfhout et al., 2010). Too much agreeableness in the form of overly nurturing behavior, however, negatively affects relationship satisfaction (Stroud et al., 2010). On the other hand, negative emotionality that reflects low agreeableness (e.g., aggression and manipulation) is positively correlated with relationship dissatisfaction (Stroud et al., 2010). Putting it all together, while agreeableness is a highly desired trait in a mate, it appears that a balanced level of agreeableness (avoiding extremely high or low agreeableness) is what contributes to a satisfactory relationship.

Emotional stability, or low neuroticism, appears to contribute to relationship success (Schaffhuser et al., 2014). Higher levels of negative emotionality, including stress reaction, alienation, aggression, and manipulation, were correlated with higher levels of marital dissatisfaction (Stroud et al., 2010). People with higher negative emotionality also tended to be less satisfied in their relationships and perpetrated more psychological abuse. Partner negative emotionality also provokes relationship dissatisfaction and correlates with more physical aggression and psychological abuse (M. S. Smith et al., 2020). However, as the years of marriage increase, dissatisfaction created by negative emotionality appears to decrease (Stroud et al., 2010).

The personality construct of social dominance has also been studied in the mate selection and relationship satisfaction literature. Females tend to prefer males who are socially dominant (Bryan et al., 2011; Dufner et al., 2013; Kenrick et al., 1993). This could be explained by evolutionary theory, in that females may see traits such as "ambition, industry, status, and generosity" as indicators that a male will be a good provider for her and her offspring (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 226). Similarly, a male who is socially dominant quite likely could have social status, which has long been viewed by women as desirable (Kenrick et al., 1993). Even in nations in which women have high earning power, women still view male ability to supply resources as an important and desirable quality (Gustavsson et al., 2006). Males, however, do not see social dominance as a positive trait in a female partner (Bryan et al., 2011).

While social status is important to females in the mate selection process, its presence can be more negative in the long term. After the relationship is established, the male must show kindness and agreeableness to contribute to his partner's long-term relationship satisfaction (Bryan et al., 2011). If social potency is defined as seeking power in the relationship, it is

correlated with marital dissatisfaction (Stroud et al., 2010). If social potency translates into seeking autonomy and focusing on achievement to the detriment of the relationship, relational disharmony ensues (Wang, 2016). On the other hand, the male desire for power and competence was correlated with all three love variables (commitment, passion, and intimacy; Engel et al., 2002). This suggests that social dominance in a male does not automatically translate into relationship dissatisfaction for his partner. Such a male must balance his own striving for independence and achievement with investment in his relationship, and relational harmony can be the result (Wang, 2016).

Relationship Satisfaction and Narcissism

Studies regarding narcissism and relationship satisfaction have delivered mixed results. As previously noted, narcissism appears largely detrimental to long-term relationship satisfaction. One study revealed that narcissism was negatively related to self and partner relationship satisfaction through perception discrepancy for both positive and negative life events (Ye et al., 2016). This means that, in the same positive experience, narcissistic individuals rate their partner's happiness higher than theirs, and in negative shared life events, they rate their own unhappiness higher than that of their partners. This perception discrepancy strongly negatively mediated the link between narcissism and relationship satisfaction (Ye et al., 2016). Narcissistic individuals tend to underestimate how much unhappiness their negativity creates for their partner.

Research reveals some positive outcomes regarding narcissism and relationship satisfaction in some studies. Notably, Sedikides and colleagues (2004) found that narcissistic individuals reported high couple well-being. They concluded that this was due entirely to the narcissistic individuals having high self-esteem. Perhaps if they had known of the two-

dimensional conceptualization of narcissism, which did not emerge until after their study, their findings regarding relationship satisfaction would have been different. Perhaps the two sides of narcissism (admiration and rivalry) canceled one another out in that study, so narcissism did not appear to significantly impact relationship satisfaction beyond what was attributable to self-esteem.

Research has identified gender effects for narcissism and relationship satisfaction, but the results have been mixed as well. If both partners have high narcissism, this was found to be deleterious to the relationship (Grosz et al., 2015). On the other hand, perceived similarity between partners might attenuate the narcissistic tendency toward aggression (Konrath et al., 2006). Narcissism in the male partner brought about more decline in relationship satisfaction in one study (Ye et al., 2016). However, another study showed narcissism in the female partner contributed more heavily to relationship dissatisfaction (Lamkin et al., 2017). Higher levels of hostility were observed in couples communicating during a neutral task if the female partner was high in narcissism. Men reported higher levels of anger when female partners were higher in narcissism as well (Lamkin et al., 2017). There was a similar finding in a longitudinal study of newlywed couples in which wives' total narcissism and exploitativeness/entitlement predicted lower relationship satisfaction and greater relational problems over time (Lavner et al., 2016). The authors speculate this may be due to narcissism being more common among males, which makes it normative, that is, high narcissism among females may be more off-putting. Another explanation could be that female narcissism violates traditional male/female roles, so it may cause men to feel disrespected and thus react more strongly to it than females would. It could also negatively impact relationship satisfaction because traditionally the female in the

relationship is thought of as nurturing. If she is narcissistic, she is not sweet and tender, so perhaps neither partner supports and nurtures the other.

Popularity studies about narcissism underscore what was stated earlier regarding popularity in new relationships that declines over time. Küfner and colleagues (2013) examined two distinct pathways regarding narcissistic popularity. They found that narcissism and popularity were unrelated in two studies due to two opposing pathways in operation. In superficial interactions involving self-introduction and presentation, narcissistic individuals were seen as assertive, in that they were humorous, dominant, confident, and entertaining. This was positively related to popularity. However, in situations in which there was more potential for controversy or intimacy, highly narcissistic participants tended to show more arrogant and combative behavior, which resulted in lower popularity.

In a similar longitudinal study, admiration traits brought initial popularity to narcissistic individuals, who were viewed as assertive, expressive, and dominant. However, as the weeks passed and participants interacted in increasingly intimate scenarios, the narcissistic participants lost popularity through displaying rivalry traits and were seen as arrogant, aggressive, and untrustworthy. While admiration, or being seen as assertive, had an initial positive impact, its ability to sustain popularity for the narcissistic individual diminished over time (Leckelt et al., 2015).

Rivalry and Relationship Satisfaction

Rivalry constitutes the "dark side" of narcissism. It is the antagonistic element of narcissism that tends to be arrogant and aggressive (Leckelt et al., 2015) and self-enhances through derogating others (Wurst et al., 2017). Narcissistic rivalry is associated with many negative interpersonal outcomes. High rivalry is associated with negative affect that includes

anxiety and shame, difficulty with affect regulation, rumination, and lower overall well-being (Grove et al., 2019). High-rivalry individuals tend to view both themselves and their partners as having poor mate value (Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). A person's perceptions of their partner's good opinion of them are linked with relationship satisfaction. As a result, the partners of high-rivalry individuals experience lower relationship satisfaction due to the low value the high-rivalry partner places on them (Schaffhuser et al., 2014). High-rivalry partners are disinclined toward relationship maintenance behaviors such as apology due to having low empathy and guilt (Leunissen et al., 2017). Those high in rivalry experience less relationship satisfaction, are less committed to their partners, and are more likely to respond negatively to partner transgressions than those low in rivalry (Wurst et al., 2017). Relationships with high-rivalry partners tend to be high conflict (Grove et al., 2019), characterized by selfishness, vengefulness, unforgiveness, distrust (Kwiatkowska et al., 2018), and aggression. Studies indicate that more rivalry traits emerge as others get to know narcissistic individuals beyond the superficial level in increasingly intimate situations, and the initial popularity the individual had attained is lost (Carlson et al., 2011; Küfner et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015). Indeed, narcissistic rivalry has a negative association with romantic relationship functioning (Vrabel et al., 2020).

Admiration and Relationship Satisfaction

An individual with high admiration traits is going to still experience some relational difficulty due to its link with interpersonal conflict and outward expression of anger (Grove et al., 2019), manipulative influence strategies (Sauls et al., 2019), and a tendency to be socially domineering (Grove et al., 2019). However, it appears that much of the relational dysfunction of narcissism is due to rivalry traits.

Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that prominent admiration traits buffer a relationship against some of the more negative impacts of narcissism. For example, individuals high in admiration tend to view their partners favorably, which contributes to their own and their partners' relational satisfaction (Wurst et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). High-admiration individuals valuing their partner and their relationship leads to more relationship maintenance behavior such as apology (Leunissen et al., 2017). This tendency to be willing to apologize was found to be due to the individual having high empathy and guilt (Leunissen et al., 2017). That was an interesting finding, as narcissistic individuals typically lack empathy (Jonason & Kavanaugh, 2010) and guilt (Poless et al., 2018; Schröder-Abé & Fatfouta, 2019). Nevertheless, sometimes there is a positive association between narcissism and guilt, including in one study of extradyadic involvement in which narcissistic individuals experienced guilt after having an affair. Narcissistic individuals were concerned about causing harm to their partner, which implies a measure of empathy (Crass & Terranova, 2018). Being willing to apologize, having empathy and guilt, viewing the partner favorably, and valuing the relationship are prosocial/communal elements that may exist in a high-admiration narcissistic individual. Therefore, if a narcissistic person were high in admiration but not in rivalry, having a successful long-term relationship seems much more possible.

Though having high admiration is one potential explanation for relationship satisfaction, other reasons have been noted as well. Another reason narcissistic individuals might report relationship satisfaction is that their tendency to self-enhance includes an element of self-delusion (Rauthmann, 2012). Their self-enhancement causes them to resist the idea that their partners could be dissatisfied with them (Foster & Campbell, 2005). For example, they deny the presence of interpersonal problems despite others' negative views of them (e.g., domineering,

aggressive, and exploitative; Dickinson & Pincus, 2003). Even though they use negative communication with their romantic partners during conflict and downgrade their commitment to them afterward, they believe their partners' commitment to them is stronger than ever (Peterson & DeHart, 2014). Through self-enhancement, they protect themselves from identifying relationship threat and maintain power in their relationship (Peterson & DeHart, 2014). In the short term, this may be a protective factor for their relationships, in that after a conflict, they go on as if nothing happened, and perhaps the partner plays along as well.

A final reason narcissistic individuals might report relationship satisfaction is their low need for emotional intimacy. Relationships characterized by extrinsic qualities are satisfying to narcissistic individuals (Seidman, 2016). This may be because self-enhancement is a main motive for narcisstic people to enter romantic relationships (Campbell, 1999). They view themselves highly; therefore, they believe they can obtain a high-status partner. When they do obtain said "trophy" partner, it affirms their narcissism and feeds their self-esteem. As a result, they are satisfied with this positive partner who reflects well on them (Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). If given the choice between a positive (e.g., physically attractive, intelligent, successful) yet uncaring partner and a less positive but caring partner, the narcissistic individual will absolutely choose the beautiful, successful, distant partner and sacrifice warmth and kindness (Campbell, 1999; Seidman, 2016). Since the narcissistic individual values extrinsic goals such as impressing others, positive traits are more important than intrinsic qualities related to connection (Seidman, 2016). Narcissistic individuals experience more satisfaction with a caring partner, but only if this is not at the expense of positive traits (Campbell, 1999; Seidman, 2016). Since their need for emotional intimacy is low, they can presumably be satisfied in a less intimate relationship, provided their partner admires them (Campbell, 1999; Campbell et al., 2003).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The literature reveals that narcissism and relationship satisfaction typically have a negative correlation. The multidimensional NARC allows researchers to determine which dimensions of narcissism are linked with relationship satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Some preliminary studies have shown a positive correlation between narcissistic admiration and relationship satisfaction, but narcissistic rivalry is associated with relationship dissatisfaction. The length of relationship is a significant factor in satisfaction in relationships involving a narcissistic individual, such that shorter relationships are more satisfying, but the partnerships tend to deteriorate over time. Mate selection for narcissism has revealed a tendency toward homogamy, but most studies involve young adults in dating relationships.

Research Questions

RQ1: How does the level of the two facets of narcissism, narcissistic admiration and rivalry, in both the participant and the partner ratings, relate to relationship satisfaction?

RQ2: What is the rate of narcissism (i.e., homogamy) among participants and their partner ratings?

RQ3: How does homogamy or heterogamy for narcissism impact relationship satisfaction?

RQ4: relationships in which at least one of the partners is narcissistic become less satisfying over time?

Hypotheses

H$_1$: Narcissistic admiration will be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

**H$_2$:** Narcissistic rivalry will be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

H₃: Participant narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores will significantly positively correlate with the perceived narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores of their respective partners.

H₄: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of the participants' own scores for admiration on relationship satisfaction. As partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, so will the effect of participant admiration on relationship satisfaction, which will support the contention that homogamy for admiration increases relationship satisfaction.

H₅: Partner narcissistic rivalry will moderate the effect of the participant's own scores for narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the negative effect of participant's own narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will become stronger, supporting the assertion that having a partner high in narcissistic rivalry negatively affects satisfaction.

H₆: Partner narcissistic rivalry will attenuate the effect of the participant's narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the positive effect of participant's narcissistic admiration scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken to the point that the relationship will become negative.

H₇: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of participant narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, the negative effect of participant narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken, but the relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction will remain negative.

Figure 1

Research Study
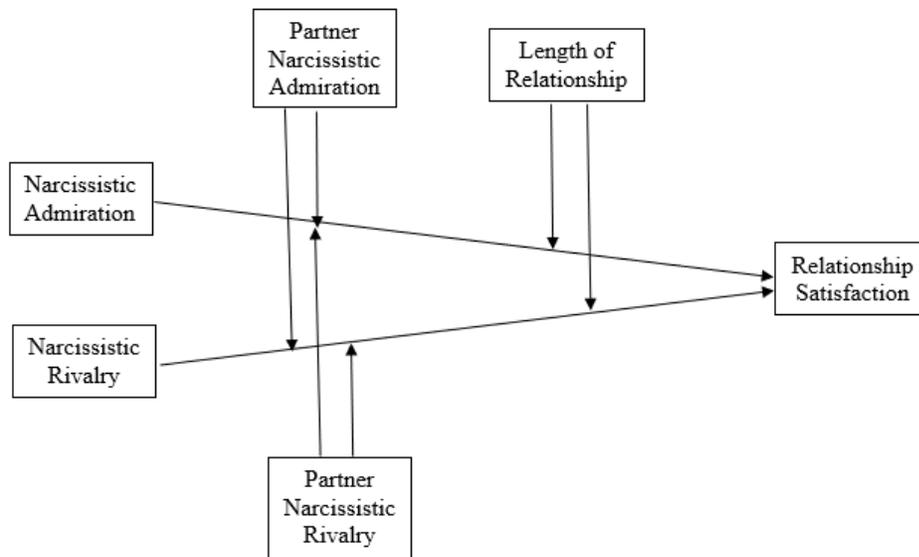
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

This project's data were collected using a survey. Using a survey made it possible to efficiently receive information from a large number of people, which helped bring clarity to the research questions. The survey showed whether or not the tendency toward assortative mating included narcissism. It also showed the level of satisfaction reported in relationships of various lengths. It highlighted reported satisfaction levels among various mate pairings: whether each partner was high in admiration, high in rivalry, or low in narcissism. Because of the large number of participants ($N = 764$), it was possible to see correlations and detect differences in satisfaction levels between various pairings and relationship lengths. This provided valuable information about the trajectory of narcissistic relationships.

Research Design

This quantitative study had a one-group design and used a cross-sectional online survey. The survey was disseminated through Amazon MTurk in October of 2020.

Selection of Participants

The sampling frame included 764 participants recruited through Amazon MTurk. These participants were online workers who use MTurk to accomplish various on-demand jobs posted by employers. The sample was obtained using a nonprobability sampling method called convenience sampling. This means that participants who obtain work through MTurk chose to complete the survey, and each was paid $1.25. This heterogeneous sample was remotely located and not confined to one specific area of the country nor to a narrow age span. This improved the generalizability of the survey results. However, generalizability could be negatively affected by the extent to which the sample may not adequately represent the general population.

The participants met the following inclusion criteria: (a) married to a partner for at least three months, (b) either heterosexual or homosexual, and (c) sexually active. Dating couples were excluded since most prior research on narcissistic relationships has been among dating couples.

The number of participants ($N = 764$) provided the necessary statistical power to establish significance versus nonsignificance. A large sample size is necessary since the sample was heterogeneous and the relationship between variables was not expected to be strong. This sample size was large enough to detect any existing statistically significant relationship between the independent variables (narcissistic admiration and rivalry) and the dependent variable (relationship satisfaction). In so doing, Type II error was avoided. However, this is not such a large participant pool as to have been likely to detect a significant correlation when one did not exist (thus avoiding Type I error).

Instrumentation

Data for the study were collected through two self-report instruments that were completed by the participants of the online survey. Each instrument is summarized below.

Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire

This study used the NARQ to measure the level of the two facets of narcissism, admiration and rivalry, in the participant and/or their spouse. The NARQ consists of 18 statements, nine that correspond to admiration traits and nine to rivalry traits. The Admiration and Rivalry scales each consist of three subscales containing three items apiece. The Admiration subscales are: grandiosity, uniqueness, and charmingness. The Rivalry subscales are: devaluation, supremacy, and aggressiveness. Each statement is answered on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (do not agree at all) to 6 (agree completely). An example of an Admiration

statement is, "Most of the time I am able to draw people's attention to myself in conversations." An example of a Rivalry statement is, "I enjoy it when another person is inferior to me." The participant rated the statements first for themselves and then on behalf of their spouse. Higher scores indicated higher levels of narcissistic admiration or rivalry.

The NARQ shows reliability in terms of internal consistency and stability ($r = .79$; Back et al., 2013), and satisfactory consistency of self-other ratings ($\alpha = .80$, $r = .44$; Back et al., 2013). It outperformed the standard assessment measure for narcissism, the NPI, in all categories when predicting outcomes. Narcissistic admiration and rivalry correlate significantly with each other ($r = .35$; Back et al., 2013; Grove et al., 2019) as well as with other measures of narcissism and pathological narcissism (Back et al., 2013). Thus, the NARQ shows criterion validity. The NARQ is appropriate for this study because of its ability to clarify some reasons narcissism negatively affects relational functioning. The two facets of narcissism, admiration and rivalry, allow the possibility of distinguishing two distinct pathways of relational outcomes, and through the research design, the impact of these two pathways in both short- and long-term relational contexts.

One-Item Scale About Relationship Satisfaction

Because the participants only responded for themselves and did not estimate the level of relationship satisfaction experienced by their partners, relationship satisfaction was measured via a one-item scale. The question was: "How satisfied are you with your relationship in general?" It used an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = not at all and 10 = completely satisfied. Previous research has shown that relationship satisfaction levels can be validly obtained through one-question assessments (Doss et al., 2009; Hagemeyer & Neyer, 2011). It is a sufficient and pure

measure of marital satisfaction not confounded by the introduction of concepts related to commitment or communication, for example.

Research Procedures

The study focused on identifying narcissism and relationship satisfaction among the participants in an online survey. Prior to constructing and posting the survey on MTurk, the researcher received approval from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University. The participants filled out an informed consent before beginning the survey. The beginning of the survey consisted of pertinent demographic information, including how long the participant had been married to their partner, among other basic questions. The survey included two assessments. The first was the NARQ, an 18-item assessment that measures the level of narcissistic admiration or rivalry of the participant and the participant's spouse. The participant responded on a 6-point Likert scale that ranged from "do not agree at all" to "agree completely." Then the participant answered the one-question assessment of relationship satisfaction. An 11-point Likert scale from "not at all satisfied" to "completely satisfied" was used. The survey included other sections as well, since the survey data informed various studies outside the scope of this research. When the appropriate number of participants had been reached, the data were analyzed.

Data Processing and Analysis

This research study included seven hypotheses, which are reiterated below along with the statistical methods used to test each one.

H_1: Narcissistic admiration will be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

H_2: Participant narcissistic rivalry will be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

H₃: Participant narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores will significantly positively correlate with the perceived narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores of their respective partners.

Each of these hypotheses was tested in a similar way. Both the x and y variables were treated as continuous variables in Hypotheses 1–3, so Pearson's correlations were used to test for significance.

H₄: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of the participant's own scores for admiration on relationship satisfaction. As partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, so will the effect of participant admiration on relationship satisfaction, which will support the contention that homogamy for admiration increases relationship satisfaction.

H₅: Partner narcissistic rivalry will moderate the effect of the participant's own scores for narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the negative effect of participant's own narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will become stronger, supporting the assertion that having a partner high in narcissistic rivalry negatively affects satisfaction.

H₆: Partner narcissistic rivalry will attenuate the effect of the participant's narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the positive effect of participant narcissistic admiration scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken to the point that the relationship will become negative.

H₇: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of participant narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, the negative effect of participant narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken, but the relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction will remain negative.

When research questions ask under which circumstances x exerts an effect on y, moderation analysis is an appropriate strategy (Hayes, 2018). Therefore, Hypotheses 4-7 employed moderation analyses. In this case, ordinary least squares regression was used. Every combination of relationship was entered, including one moderator in each computation (level of narcissistic admiration or rivalry), and then how each associates with the y variable (relationship satisfaction). A hierarchical regression method was employed, since x's (participant narcissistic admiration or rivalry) effect on y (relationship satisfaction) is conditional on w (spouse narcissistic admiration or rivalry; Hayes, 2018). Using this method, relationship satisfaction (y) was regressed on narcissistic admiration or rivalry of the participant (x), narcissistic admiration or rivalry of the spouse (w), and the product of narcissistic admiration or rivalry of the participant and narcissistic admiration or rivalry of the spouse (xw). The pick-a-point approach to probing significant effects was undertaken in order to assess the effect of participant admiration and rivalry at differing values (16th, 50th, 84th) of the moderators (e.g., partner admiration and rivalry). Lastly, the study extended the previous models by exploring length of relationship as a second moderator of the relationship between participants' scores on each subtype of narcissism and their scores on relationship satisfaction.

This chapter outlined the methods used to collect and analyze data in order to responsibly test the research hypotheses. Data were collected via an online survey. The convenience sample ($N = 764$) was obtained through MTurk. The instruments used to measure the variables were the NARQ and a one-item scale assessing relationship satisfaction. The data were analyzed with Pearson's correlations and regression using Hayes's (2017) PROCESS macro (Version 3.5). Chapter Four will present the results of data collection and analysis for each hypothesis.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The purpose of this study was threefold. First, this research sought to determine if and how much narcissistic admiration and rivalry correlate with relationship satisfaction. The second purpose was to investigate whether narcissistic individuals were likely to report being with narcissistic partners (indicating narcissistic homogamy) and the level of satisfaction found in these various pairings. As stated, the present study was interested in assessing the differential effects of two narcissism subtypes, narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry, and how the differing partner pairings (e.g., admiration-admiration, admiration-rivalry, rivalry-rivalry, rivalry-admiration) were associated with participants' satisfaction scores; as such, a simple moderation model was conducted for each possible pairing of these subtypes to assess the effect of each possible combination on relationship satisfaction. Lastly, the study extended the previous models by exploring length of relationship as a second moderator of the relationship between participants' scores on each subtype of narcissism and their scores on relationship satisfaction. In addition to assessing how homogamy and heterogamy, in terms of narcissism subtype, influence relationship satisfaction, doing so allowed for an examination of whether or not length of the relationship moderated the effect. For reference, in each model in which a significant moderation effect was found, the pick-a-point approach to probing significant effects was conducted in order to assess the effect of participant admiration and rivalry at differing values (16th, 50th, 84th) of the moderators (e.g., partner admiration and rivalry). This chapter will reiterate the hypotheses that guided the study and present the findings that were obtained for each hypothesis along with appropriate graphs and charts to clarify results.

Hypotheses 1-3 Results

H$_1$: Participant narcissistic admiration will be positively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1 was supported. As narcissistic admiration increases, so does relationship satisfaction.

H$_2$: Participant narcissistic rivalry will be negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Instead, narcissistic rivalry was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

H$_3$: Participant narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores will significantly positively correlate with the self-reported narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores of their respective partners.

Hypothesis 3 was supported. All narcissism types were positively associated with one another.

Pearson's Correlation Results

Pearson's correlations, including means and standard deviations, for all the variables included in each of the moderation models were calculated to address Hypotheses 1–3 (see Table 1). Consistent with expectations (H$_1$), participant narcissistic admiration was significantly positively correlated with relationship satisfaction ($r = .320, p < .001$). However, contrary to expectations (H$_2$), participant narcissistic rivalry was found to also be significantly positively correlated with relationship satisfaction ($r = .139, p < .001$). Further, participant narcissistic admiration scores were significantly positively correlated with their partner's perceived admiration ($r = .848, p < .001$) and rivalry ($r = .730, p < .001$). Similarly, participant narcissistic

rivalry scores were significantly positively correlated with their partner's narcissistic rivalry ($r =$ .934, $p < .001$) and admiration ($r = .678$, $p < .001$) scores. Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Additionally, as expected and consistent with narcissism research, there was a significant negative relationship between relationship length and each narcissism subtype (see Table 1).

Table 1

Pearson's r*, Means, and Standard Deviations*

	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Participant admiration	1					
(2) Participant rivalry	.756**	1				
(3) Partner admiration	.848**	.678**	1			
(4) Partner rivalry	.730**	.934**	.694**	1		
(5) Length	-.144**	-.149**	-.165**	-.139**	1	
(6) Relationship satisfaction	.320**	.139**	.302**	.109**	.065	1
Mean	4.012	3.552	4.092	3.591	11.261	9.240
SD	1.116	1.387	1.062	1.392	9.475	1.682

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level, two-tailed.
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level, two-tailed.

Hypothesis 4 Results

H4: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of the participant's own scores for admiration on relationship satisfaction. As partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, so will the effect of participant admiration on relationship satisfaction, which will support the contention that homogamy for admiration increases relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4 was supported. See Figures 2 and 3 and Table 2 to understand these results.

Moderation Analysis of Hypothesis 4

In order to test Hypotheses 4–7, Hayes's (2017) PROCESS Macro (Version 3.5) was used to produce regression coefficients, p values, and confidence intervals (10,000 bias-corrected bootstrap samples) for each of the necessary regressions. Hypothesis 4 states that partner narcissistic admiration will positively moderate the effect of the participant's self-reported

assessment of their own narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction. This means that the effect of the participants' admiration scores on relationship satisfaction will vary significantly as a function of their partner's admiration scores, suggesting evidence of a significant interaction effect. As expected, findings showed that the participant's self-reported narcissistic admiration had a significant positive direct effect on relationship satisfaction ($b = .591$, $SE = .107$, 95% CI [.380, .801]), suggesting that higher scores on narcissistic admiration were associated with increased relationship satisfaction. Further, consistent with Hypothesis 4, findings showed that the effect of the participant's self-reported narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction varied significantly, positively, as a function of their partner's admiration scores ($b = .151$, $SE = .042$, 95% CI [.069, .232]), providing support for a significant moderation effect. Specifically, a test of the effect of the participants' admiration scores at values of the moderator showed that the effect increases at higher levels of partner admiration (see Figure 2). That is, the effect on relationship satisfaction was strongest for participants who reported being high in admiration and being with a partner who was also high in admiration (see Figure 3).

Table 2

Results for Admiration Homogamy Moderation Model

					95% CI	
Source	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Relationship Satisfaction: $R = .398$, $R^2 = .159$, $MSE = 2.396$, $F(5, 758) = 28.616$, $p < .001$						
Participant Admiration	.591	.107	5.517	<.001	.380	.801
Partner Admiration	.336	.103	3.252	<.05	.133	.538
Participant X Partner	.151	.042	3.621	<.001	.069	.232
Length	.016	.006	2.674	<.05	.004	.028
Participant Rivalry	-.303	.062	-5.044	<.001	-.425	-.181

Figure 2

Admiration Homogamy Moderation Model
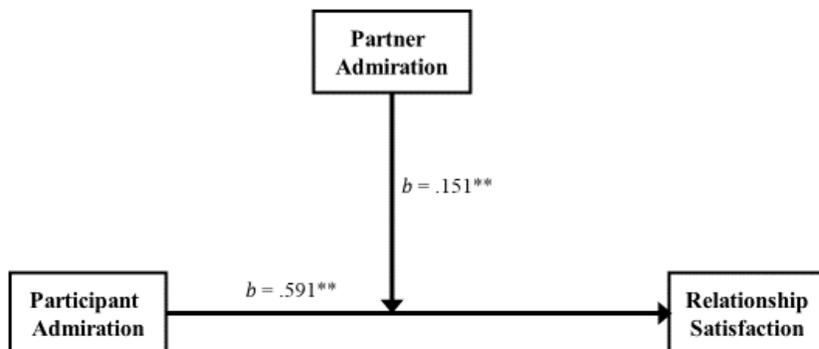
Figure 3

Interaction Effects of Partner Admiration on the Association Between Participant Admiration and Relationship Satisfaction
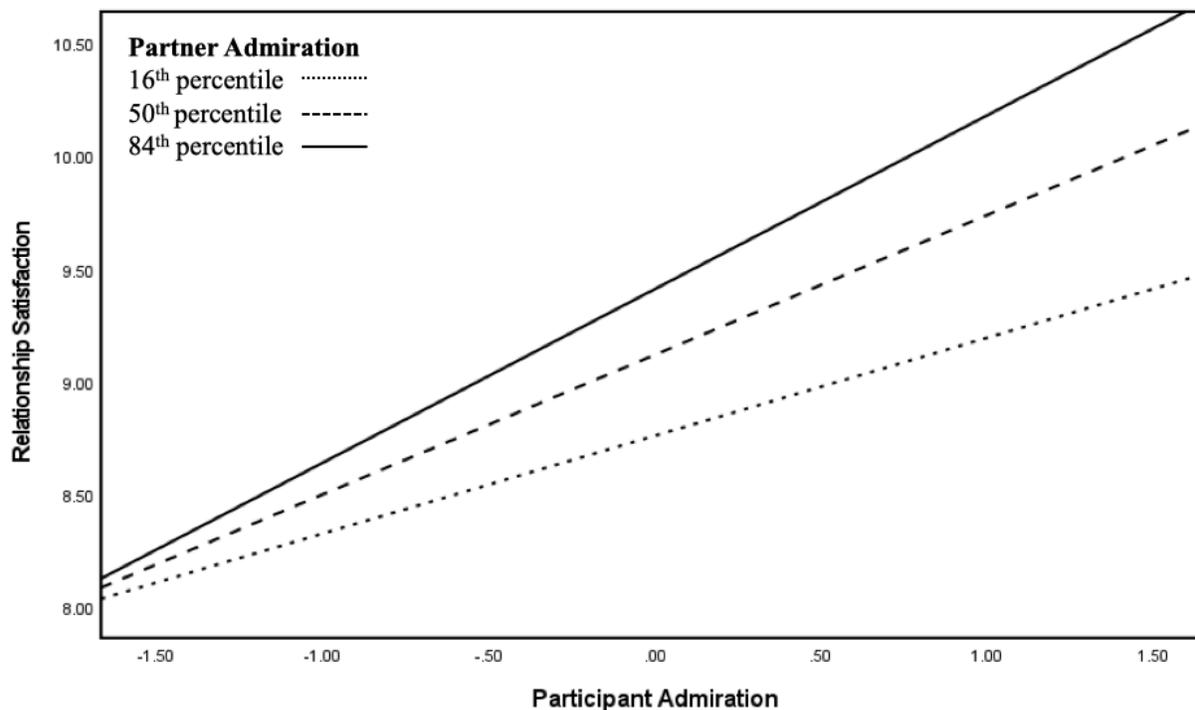
Note. Figure 3 shows that as level of partner admiration increases from low (16th) to medium (50th) to high (84th), the association between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction strengthens. The figure shows relationship satisfaction ranging from 8-10.5, but the full assessment spans 1-11.

Hypothesis 5 Results

H$_5$: Partner narcissistic rivalry will moderate the effect of the participant's own scores for narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the negative effect of participant's own narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will become stronger, supporting the assertion that having a partner high in narcissistic rivalry negatively affects satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5 was not supported. Instead, the reverse was found. Higher homogamy in rivalry was associated with increased relationship satisfaction rather than decreased satisfaction.

Moderation Analysis of Hypothesis 5

Findings showed that the participant's self-reported narcissistic rivalry, on its own, did not have a significant effect on relationship satisfaction ($b = .046$, $SE = .117$, 95% CI [-.183, .275]; see Table 3). However, findings showed that the effect of the participant's self-reported narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction varied significantly as a function of their partner's rivalry scores ($b = .204$, $SE = .033$, CI [.139, .268]; see Table 3 and Figure 4), providing support for a significant moderation effect. Specifically, a test of the effects of the participants' rivalry scores at values of partner rivalry showed that when partner rivalry scores were low (16th percentile), participant rivalry scores were negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. In contrast, when partner rivalry scores were high (84th percentile), participant rivalry scores were positively associated with relationship satisfaction (see Figure 5). In contrast to expectations (H$_5$), findings suggested that as partner rivalry scores increased, the effect of the participant's rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction increased in a positive direction. This indicates that when romantic partners are both high in rivalry (i.e., homogamous for rivalry), participants' own scores on narcissistic rivalry had a significant positive effect on satisfaction levels (see Figure 5).

Table 3

Results for Rivalry Homogamy Moderation Model

					95% CI	
Source	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Relationship Satisfaction: $R = .433$, $R^2 = .188$, $MSE = 2.314$, $F(5, 758) = 35.003$, $p < .001$						
Participant rivalry	.046	.117	0.392	.695	-.183	.275
Partner rivalry	-.183	.114	-1.613	.107	-.406	.040
Participant X partner	.204	.033	6.196	<.001	.139	.268
Length	.012	.006	2.054	<.050	.001	.024
Participant admiration	.689	.078	8.891	<.001	.537	.841

Figure 4
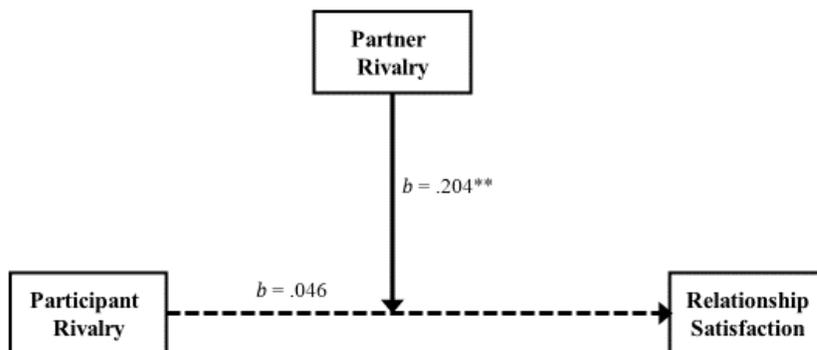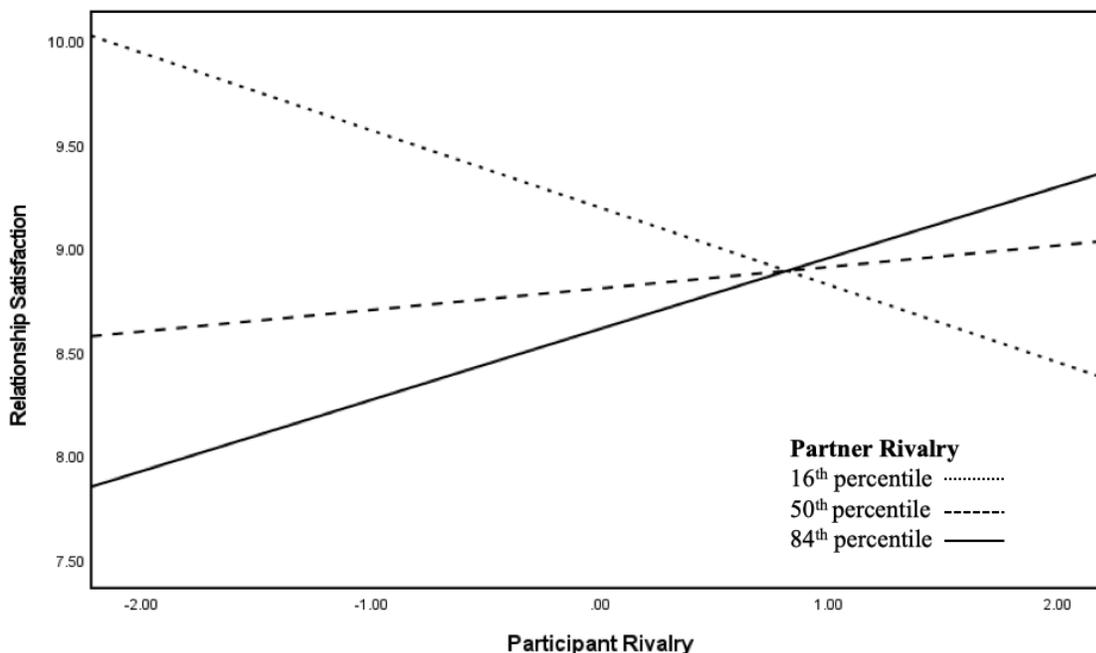
Rivalry Homogamy Moderation Model

Figure 5

Interaction Effects of Partner Rivalry on the Association Between Participant Rivalry and Relationship Satisfaction

Note. Figure 5 shows that if partner rivalry is low (16th percentile), the association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction is negative. If partner rivalry is high (84th percentile), the association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction is positive. If partner rivalry scores are moderate (50th percentile), the relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction is not significant. Homogamy for rivalry, therefore, is associated with relationship satisfaction. The figure shows relationship satisfaction ranging from 7.5-10, but the full assessment spans 1-11.

Hypothesis 6 Results

H_6: Partner narcissistic rivalry will attenuate the effect of the participant's narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic rivalry scores increase, the positive effect of participant's narcissistic admiration scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken to the point that the relationship will become negative.

Hypothesis 6 was not supported. Instead, the reverse was found. Findings showed that participant admiration was significantly positively associated with relationship satisfaction at all levels of partner rivalry. Specifically, higher partner rivalry paired with higher participant

admiration was associated with increased relationship satisfaction rather than decreased satisfaction.

Moderation Analysis of Hypothesis 6

Findings showed that participant narcissistic admiration, on its own, had a significant positive effect on relationship satisfaction (b = .956, SE = .082, 95% CI = [.795, 1.117]). Further, findings suggested that the effect of the participant's narcissistic admiration on relationship satisfaction varied significantly positively as a function of their partner's rivalry scores (b = .205, SE = .037, 95% CI [.133, .277]; see Table 4 and Figure 6), providing support for a significant moderation effect. Specifically, a test of the effect of participant admiration scores at values of partner rivalry showed that as partner rivalry scores increase, the effect increases (see Figure 7). Such a finding suggests that, irrespective of subtype, higher narcissism homogamy may impact relationship satisfaction.

Table 4

Regression Analysis of Participant Admiration and the Interaction Between Participant Admiration and Partner Rivalry on Relationship Satisfaction

					95% CI	
Source	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Relationship satisfaction: R = .424, R^2 = .180, MSE = 2.335, $F(5, 758)$ = 33.286, $p < .001$						
Participant admiration	.956	.082	11.669	<.001	0.795	1.117
Partner rivalry	-.265	.112	-2.361	.018	-0.486	-0.045
Participant x partner	.205	.037	5.574	<.001	0.133	0.277
Length	.013	.006	2.143	.032	0.001	0.025
Participant rivalry	-.106	.119	-0.891	.373	-0.340	0.128

Figure 6

Participant Admiration x Partner Rivalry Moderation Model
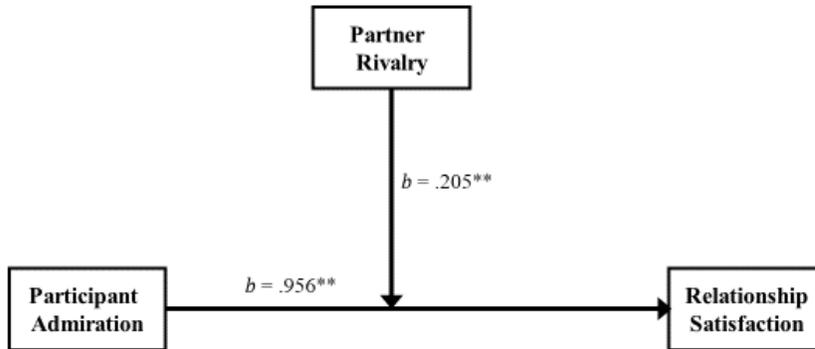
Figure 7

Interaction Effects of Partner Rivalry on the Association Between Participant Admiration and Relationship Satisfaction
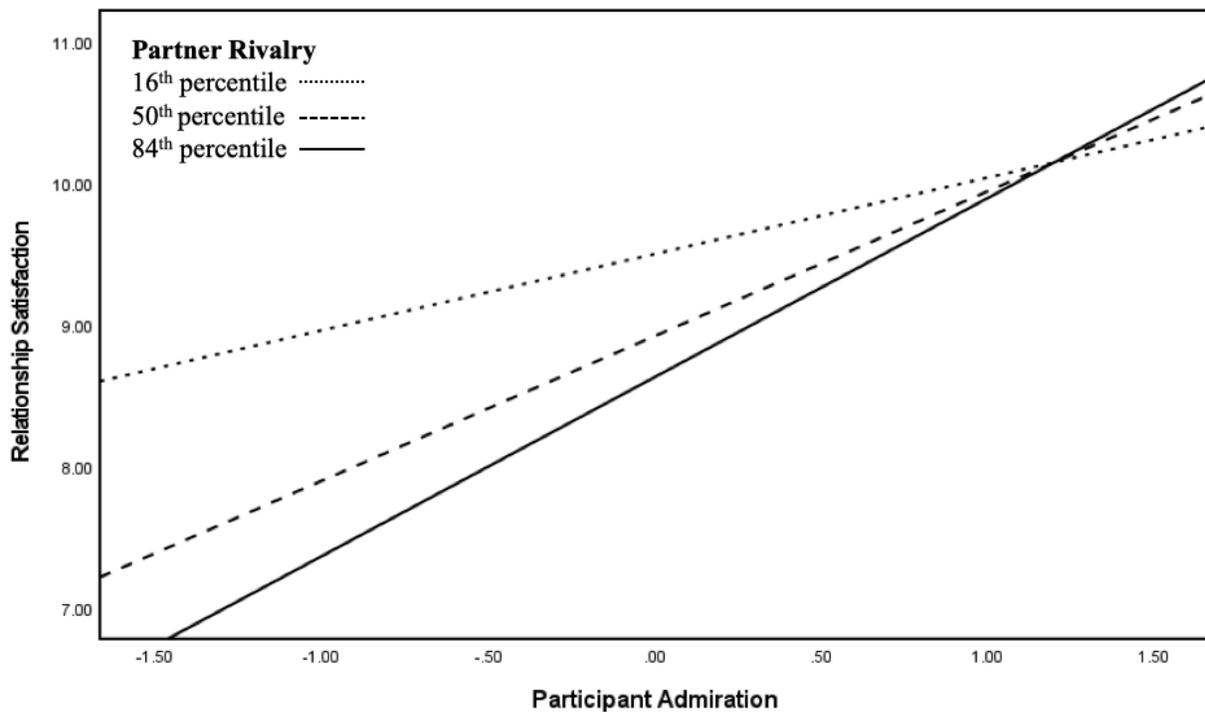
Note. Figure 7 shows that as levels of partner rivalry increase, so does satisfaction. The figure shows relationship satisfaction ranging from 7-11, but the full assessment spans 1-11.

Hypothesis 7 Results

H₇: Partner narcissistic admiration will moderate the effect of participant narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction. Specifically, it is expected that as partner narcissistic admiration scores increase, the negative effect of participant narcissistic rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction will weaken, but the relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction will remain negative.

Hypothesis 7 was supported. As partner narcissistic admiration scores increased, the negative association between participant narcissistic rivalry and relationship satisfaction weakened but remained negative.

Moderation Analysis of Hypothesis 7

Findings showed that the participant narcissistic rivalry, on its own, had a significant negative effect on relationship satisfaction ($b = -.361$, $SE = .063$, 95% CI [-.484. -.239]). That is, participant narcissistic rivalry was associated with decreased satisfaction, suggesting that as participant rivalry increases, relationship satisfaction decreases. Further, findings showed that the effect of the participant's narcissistic rivalry on relationship satisfaction varied significantly positively as a function of their partner's admiration scores ($b = .214$, $SE = .038$, 95% CI [.140, .288]; see Table 5 and Figure 8), providing support for a significant moderation effect. Specifically, a test of the effects of participants' rivalry scores at values of partner admiration showed that as partner admiration scores increased, the negative effect of participant rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction weakened but remained negative (see Figure 9). That is, though the effect remained negative, the negative effect of participant rivalry on relationship satisfaction decreased as partner scores on admiration increased, indicating that for those high in

narcissistic rivalry, having a partner high in admiration attenuates the relationship between

narcissistic rivalry and relationship satisfaction.

Table 5

Regression Analysis of Participant Rivalry and the Interaction Between Participant Rivalry and Partner Admiration on Relationship Satisfaction

					95% CI	
Source	*b*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	*LL*	*UL*
Relationship Satisfaction: $R = .423$, $R^2 = .179$, $MSE = 2.338$, $F(5, 758) = 2.338$, $p < .001$						
Participant rivalry	-.361	.063	-5.776	<.001	-.484	-.239
Partner admiration	.450	.105	4.273	<.001	.243	.657
Participant x partner	.214	.038	5.662	<.001	.140	.288
Length	.013	.006	2.206	.028	.001	.025
Participant admiration	.573	.106	5.418	<.001	.365	.780

Figure 8

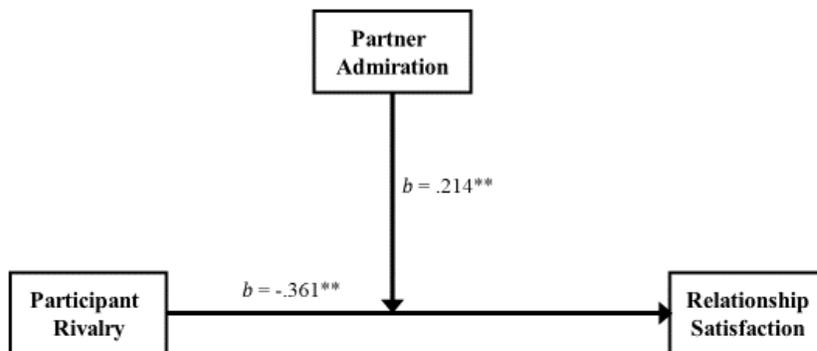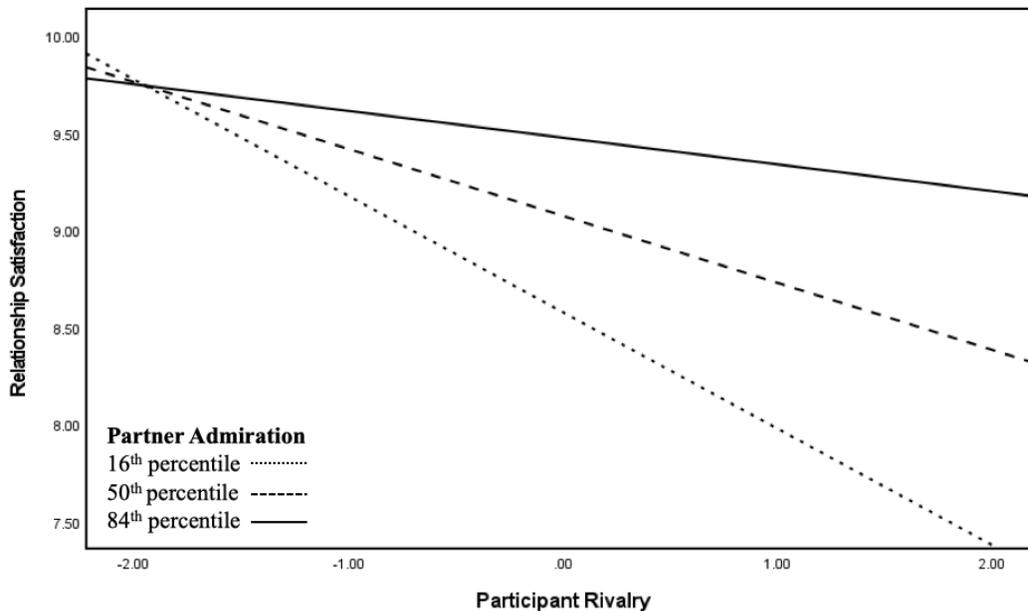*Participant Rivalry x Partner Admiration Moderation Model*

Figure 9

Interaction Effects of Partner Admiration on the Association Between Participant Rivalry and Relationship Satisfaction

Note. Figure 9 shows that as partner admiration increased, the negative effect of participant rivalry on relationship satisfaction weakened but remained negative. This figure shows relationship satisfaction ranging from 7.5-10, but the full assessment spans 1-11.

Exploratory Analysis Results

The present study also explored whether the length of relationship moderated the effect of participant narcissism (admiration and rivalry) on relationship satisfaction outcomes. After the previous four models were tested, which differed based on the possible pairing between participant and partner scores on the two narcissism subtypes, two additional models were tested. In these models, in addition to partner narcissism, length of relationship was included as a second moderator of the relationship between participant narcissism (admiration or rivalry) and relationship satisfaction. First, a model was tested in which both partner admiration scores and relationship length moderated the effect of participant admiration scores on relationship

satisfaction. Second, another model was tested in which both partner rivalry scores and relationship length moderated the effect of participant rivalry scores on relationship satisfaction.

In the first model, findings again indicated that participant admiration, partner admiration, and the interaction of participant and partner admiration all transmitted a significant positive effect on relationship satisfaction. Though length of relationship was found, on its own, to have a small significant positive effect on relationship satisfaction ($b = .015$, $SE = .006$, 95% CI [.003, .027]; see Figure 10), findings did not support that length significantly moderated the effect of participant admiration on relationship satisfaction.

Figure 10

Admiration Homogamy x Length of Relationship Moderation Model
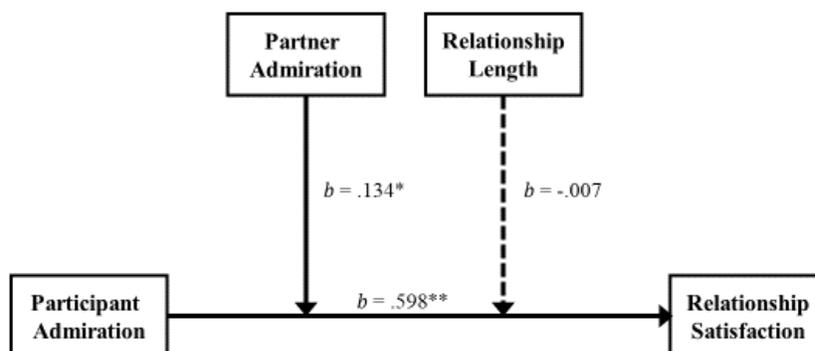
In the second model, findings indicated that participant rivalry and partner rivalry, on their own, did not have a significant effect on satisfaction. However, the interaction of participant and partner rivalry (i.e., rivalry homogamy), was significant ($b = .204$, $SE = .033$, 95% CI [.139, .269]), providing evidence of moderation. As was the case with the previous model, length of relationship was found, on its own, to have a significant positive effect on satisfaction levels ($b = .012$, $SE = .006$, 95% CI [.000, .024]; see Figure 11); however, findings did not support that length significantly moderated the effect of participant rivalry on

relationship satisfaction. Taken together, findings did not support that length moderated the effect of either participant narcissism subtype on relationship satisfaction.

Figure 11

Rivalry Homogamy x Length of Relationship Moderation Model
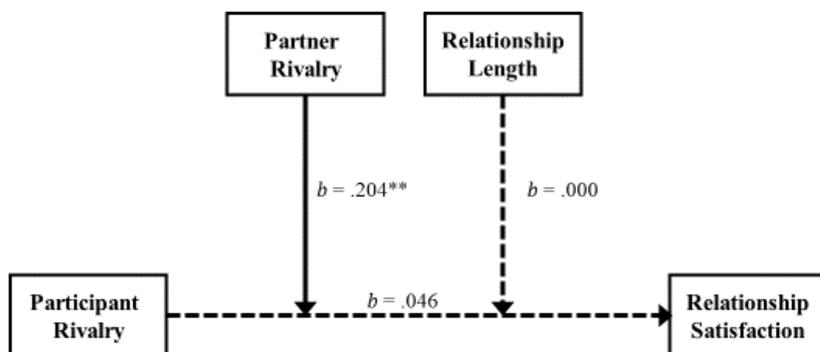
Summary

Seven hypotheses related to the association between participant narcissistic admiration and rivalry scores, perceived partner narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry scores, and relationship satisfaction were analyzed. Hypotheses 1–3 were tested with Pearson's correlations. These results showed that participant admiration and rivalry scores were both positively correlated with relationship satisfaction. Additionally, findings suggested that participants' narcissism subtype scores were positively associated with their reports of their partners' scores on each narcissism subtype, providing evidence for partner selection based on narcissistic homogamy. In order to analyze Hypotheses 4-7, Hayes's (2017) PROCESS macro was used. The first moderation analysis showed that as partner admiration increased, so did the association between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction. Interestingly, in the second model, findings showed that high participant and partner rivalry (e.g., rivalry homogamy) was also found to be positively associated with relationship satisfaction; however, at low (16th percentile) partner rivalry, a

negative effect was found on the association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction. As stated, two additional moderation models were tested representing mixed pairs (participant admiration-partner rivalry, participant rivalry-partner admiration). In the model in which partner rivalry was tested as a moderator of the relationship between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction, findings indicated support for a significant positive interaction in which the effect increased at higher levels of partner rivalry. A test of the effect of participant admiration on relationship satisfaction at values of partner rivalry indicated that the effect increased positively at higher levels of partner rivalry. In the model in which partner admiration was tested as a moderator of the relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction, findings indicated support for a significant negative interaction in which the effect decreased at higher levels of partner admiration. Exploratory analysis of the moderation effect of length of relationship on the association between narcissism and relationship satisfaction suggested no significant relationship.

The chapter that follows will examine the support or nonsupport of each hypothesis as well as the implications of the exploratory analysis. The similarities and differences between these results and those found in the extant literature will be discussed. The results will be interpreted in light of limitations and potential threats to validity. Finally, the implications of the research results will be discussed and recommendations given regarding future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Narcissism is a personality style whose prevalence is on the rise in the United States (Twenge & Foster, 2008; Twenge et al., 2008). As such, it is a quality that is often found among romantic partners, and its effect seems to be largely negative (Miller et al., 2007; Ye et al., 2016). There is marital infidelity (Atkins et al., 2005), lack of commitment (Myers et al., 2013), little emotional intimacy (Goodboy & Booth-Butterfield, 2009), negative communication styles (Horon et al., 2015), and lack of relationship maintenance behaviors (Leunissen et al., 2017), to name a few of the problems noted. Because most research studies involving narcissistic relationships are conducted among young adult dating couples, the trajectory of relationships with narcissistic partners is largely unknown. Even so, there is some evidence for short-term satisfaction but long-term difficulty in these relationships (Back et al., 2010; Campbell & Campbell, 2009). Amid the bleak outcomes found in most research on narcissistic relationships, there has appeared a bright spot by means of the NARC (Back et al., 2013). This relatively new conceptualization of narcissism describes it as consisting of two facets, called admiration and rivalry. An individual high in admiration narcissism maintains grandiose self-views by actively self-enhancing in order to impress others. Someone high in rivalry narcissism maintains grandiose self-views by actively protecting the ego through derogating others. The NARC has facilitated some research suggesting that an individual high in admiration but low in rivalry traits might be able to have a successful long-term relationship (Wurst et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018).

Previous studies of narcissistic relationships have most often found a prevalence of homogamy for narcissism, meaning narcissistic individuals select mates who are similarly narcissistic (Campbell et al., 2002; Grosz et al., 2015). That has not been uniformly found,

however, and a couple of studies involving longer-term couples have indicated heterogamy for narcissism in partner choice (Lavner et al., 2016; C. V. Smith et al., 2014). What is largely untested is the success of homogamous versus heterogamous relationships with narcissistic partners. The few studies that have touched on this area have shown that homogamous relationships may be more contentious (Keller et al., 2014), and partners must be homogamous on positive image-based traits for the narcissistic individual to feel relationally satisfied (Campbell, 1999; Seidman, 2016). Though these studies hint at relationship satisfaction outcomes, none were located that have specifically examined which type of relational pairing with a narcissistic individual (homogamous or heterogamous) is associated with the most relationship satisfaction.

This quantitative research study addressed research questions about homogamy for narcissism and its impact on relationship satisfaction over time using a one-group design by means of a cross-sectional online survey. Survey data were collected using a convenience sample ($N = 764$) recruited through MTurk. The participants rated their own and their spouse's perceived level of narcissistic admiration and rivalry through the 18-question NARQ assessment. They also answered a one-question measure of relationship satisfaction on an 11-point Likert scale.

The study's seven hypotheses were tested using Pearson's correlations and regression analysis via Hayes's (2017) PROCESS method. In general, findings supported homogamy for narcissism, in that all combinations of narcissism subtypes were correlated with one another. Further, findings generally suggested that homogamy for narcissism produced greater levels of relationship satisfaction than heterogamy for narcissism. This was also true of homogamy for low-narcissism subtypes. Admiration narcissism was strongly associated with relationship

satisfaction, and participants high in admiration expressed satisfaction with partners perceived to have any level of narcissism (low, medium, or high) and any narcissism subtype. Still, the higher the participant's level of admiration, the more homogamy for narcissism (with a partner also high in either admiration or rivalry) was satisfying. Heterogamy with rivalry narcissism was found to be deleterious to relationship satisfaction. Surprisingly, homogamy for rivalry was positively associated with relationship satisfaction, yet high-rivalry participants needed a homogamous partner similarly high in narcissism (either in admiration or rivalry) in order to report a tolerable level of relationship satisfaction. The exploratory analysis suggested a negative correlation between narcissism and relationship length, suggesting either that higher narcissism is associated with shorter relationship length or that longer relationships are associated with lower narcissism. However, the moderation analyses found no significant relationship between narcissism (either subtype), length of relationship, and relationship satisfaction; this is another unexpected finding. These results will be discussed in greater detail below.

Conclusions

Association Between Admiration and Relationship Satisfaction

When the individual high in narcissistic admiration was asked about relationship satisfaction, that individual was very likely to report relationship satisfaction. This was true every time it was tested in this study. Hypothesis 1 tested the direct relationship between the participant's narcissistic admiration and relationship satisfaction, predicting a positive relationship. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 4 tested a homogamy model of narcissistic admiration, with perceived partner admiration serving as a moderator between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction. Hypothesis 4 predicted that the moderator, partner admiration, would increase the positive relationship between participant admiration and

relationship satisfaction. This hypothesis was also supported. Hypothesis 6 tested the effect of partner rivalry on the relationship between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction. Contrary to predictions, as partner rivalry increased, the positive relationship between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction increased. However, at lower levels of participant admiration, greater satisfaction was found with low-rivalry partners. It appears from these findings that participants with high-admiration narcissism were very likely to report relationship satisfaction regardless of the level or subtype of narcissism they perceived in their partners. Even so, homogamy for narcissism, regardless of partner narcissistic subtype, appeared to provide the most satisfaction to the high-admiration narcissism subtype.

Conversely, when a participant reported lower levels of admiration, they reported more satisfaction with partners low in rivalry but were satisfied with partners with any level of admiration (high, medium, or low). This suggests that heterogamy for rivalry is less relationally satisfying, especially at lower levels of narcissism (either subtype).

These current findings support those of Wurst et al. (2017), who found narcissistic admiration to be linked with short-term positive relational outcomes, and Zeigler-Hill and Trombly (2018), who found narcissistic admiration was linked to positive relational outcomes through the attribution of high mate value to romantic partners. Leunissen and colleagues (2017) found that while narcissism is generally associated with having low empathy and guilt, when they measured narcissism in its two facets, individuals high in admiration had high empathy and guilt and a tendency to apologize for relational transgressions. The authors thought apology might be motivated by self-enhancement, in that such relationship maintenance behaviors are socially approved. They also speculated that because individuals high in admiration valued their relational partners, and their relational partners contributed to their grandiose self-image and

public image, they were motivated to engage in relationship maintenance behaviors. The present study does not show why narcissistic admiration is associated with relationship satisfaction (e.g., whether it is due to emotional factors such as high empathy and guilt, relational factors such as relationship maintenance behaviors, or motivational factors such as desire for social approval). It shows a strong association that it is made stronger through partner homogamy for narcissism.

The present study adds to the findings above regarding the connection between narcissistic admiration and relationship satisfaction. It does so by suggesting that participants high in narcissistic admiration endorsed the idea that they were very relationally satisfied regardless of the partner's level or subtype of perceived narcissism. This may be because high-admiration individuals tend to ascribe high mate value to both themselves and their partners (Leunissen et al., 2017; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). It may also be due to narcissistic admiration's tendency toward assertive self-enhancement to promote grandiose self-views (Back et al., 2013). The fact that lower-admiration individuals reported lower relationship satisfaction in this present study could indicate increased self-enhancement among higher-admiration participants, resulting in these individuals reporting increased levels of relationship satisfaction. Looking through that lens, purported relationship satisfaction may or may not be reality-based and may or may not be corroborated by the spouse. A third explanation could be the narcissistic individual's ability to attract the opposite sex, which is especially true of the admiration subtype (Wurst et al., 2017). Though they tend to overestimate their own attractiveness, they often attend to their outward appearance in a way others find attractive (Back et al., 2010). This attractiveness factor was found in speed dating studies (Back et al., 2010; Schröder-Abé et al., 2016) and man-on-the-street studies (Dufner et al., 2013). As a result, many narcissistic individuals successfully enter short-term relationships that may become longer-term ones (Campbell & Campbell, 2009;

Wurst et al., 2017). Because they have so much interest from the opposite sex, they can afford to be choosy among many options (Asendorpf et al., 2011; Schröder-Abé et al., 2016). Therefore, they might well attract the type of highly positive partner they desire (Seidman, 2016) and one who admires them (Campbell, 1999). If that is the case, it is easy to understand why they may be relationally satisfied.

Future studies should include the spouse in the analysis to determine whether the spouse corroborates the relationship satisfaction the partner describes and the level and type of narcissism the partner identifies in themselves and the spouse. That will help determine whether or not the robust findings for admiration narcissism and relationship satisfaction are reality-based or represent grandiosity and social posturing. Future studies should also include measures of positive qualities in the participant and the partner and how these influence relationship satisfaction for these couples.

Association Between Rivalry and Relationship Satisfaction

This present study predicted that rivalry and relationship satisfaction would always have a negative relationship, regardless of subtype and level of the partner's narcissism. This seemed to be the likely outcome due to all the previous negative findings regarding rivalry and interpersonal relationships (Grove et al., 2019; Kwiatkowska et al., 2018; Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018). However, this study had puzzling mixed results for the rivalry subtype. Hypothesis 2 tested the direct relationship between the participant's narcissistic rivalry and relationship satisfaction, predicting it would be negative. Contrary to expectations, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Instead, the reverse was found: narcissistic rivalry was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction.

The fifth hypothesis tested homogamy for rivalry and its effect on relationship satisfaction. In the regression analysis, when the narcissistic admiration of the participant was controlled for, participant rivalry alone was not significantly related to relationship satisfaction (unlike in the Pearson's correlation, when it was positively related). However, when moderated by the partner's rivalry scores, there was a significant interaction effect. With high levels of partner rivalry, there was a positive relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction. Low levels of partner rivalry, though, created a negative association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction. In contrast to participant admiration, which was always significantly related to relationship satisfaction, the connection between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction was not established until partner rivalry scores moderated the effect. One could conclude that a similar level of narcissistic rivalry (i.e., homogamy) in the partner was necessary for the high-rivalry participant to report relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7 tested partner admiration's moderating effect on the association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction. When the participant's admiration was controlled for, participant rivalry by itself had a negative association with relationship satisfaction, which did not happen in the initial Pearson's correlation or the rivalry homogamy model. As partner admiration scores increased, the negative relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction weakened but remained negative. This time, the results were expected since the expected general pattern was a negative association between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction and a positive relationship between participant admiration and relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that partner admiration would attenuate the negative relationship between participant rivalry and relationship satisfaction but would not overcome the negative association, which was what the findings showed. The high-rivalry

individual reported a tolerable level of satisfaction with a high-admiration individual but not with someone with a medium or low level of admiration. The findings also showed that the greatest relationship satisfaction levels were found at the lowest levels of participant rivalry regardless of the partner's level of admiration (low, medium, or high). This shows the relational negativity associated with rivalry narcissism.

These results could mean that the high-rivalry individual coupled with a high-admiration individual was relationally dissatisfied due to being paired with someone less similar. The high-rivalry participant could feel inferior to their self-enhancing, more charming counterpart, creating a sense of dissatisfaction. This is plausible, as the rivalry subtype tends to have lower overall well-being and struggles with negative affect (Grove et al., 2019). Those high in rivalry narcissism also tend to be aggressive and competitive (Grove et al., 2019), and they may find that as they compete with their more socially adept partner, they consistently come out on the losing end. However, the high-rivalry participant is generally happier with a partner high in admiration narcissism than they are with a low narcissism partner. Again, homogamy seems to bring the most satisfaction, especially to the high-rivalry participant.

As other authors have asserted (Sauls et al., 2019; Wurst et al., 2017), this study has found rivalry narcissism to be the likely culprit in the relational difficulty experienced by narcissistic individuals. Higher satisfaction was consistently associated with homogamy for low rivalry. Even so, the results for rivalry were not entirely negative. If high-rivalry individuals have a partner high in narcissistic admiration, there is some hope for relationship satisfaction, since high-admiration participants reported satisfying relationships with high-rivalry partners. High-rivalry participants did not return the compliment to their high-admiration partners, and expressed even greater dissatisfaction with partners with low or medium levels of admiration and

rivalry. This may be due to their tendency to assign low mate value to their partners (Zeigler-Hill & Trombly, 2018) and to be critical of them (Grove et al., 2019). Still, they appear to be more satisfied with high-admiration partners than with partners low in narcissism.

Despite some negative findings for narcissistic rivalry, this study suggested that positive relationship satisfaction might be found among couples perceived to be homogamous for rivalry, with some satisfaction among couples with mixed narcissism subtypes as well, especially at higher levels of narcissism. The only relationships found to be definitively unsatisfying in this study were heterogamous ones in which one member of the couple was high in rivalry and the other low in narcissism (admiration or rivalry). The only relationship involving rivalry narcissism that appeared tolerably satisfying in this study was between two similarly antagonistic, hostile, and competitive individuals.

The recommendations made for future studies regarding admiration narcissism might also be made for rivalry narcissism. If the spouse were questioned, it could be ascertained whether or not the association between high-rivalry homogamy and relationship satisfaction was replicated. Studying the effects of positive partner qualities on relationship satisfaction with rivalry narcissism would also be informative. Perhaps the partner is cold and unkind, but if the rivalry individual does not highly value kindness and warmth, they might be satisfied with a partner with many other positive qualities.

Association Between Narcissism Homogamy and Relationship Satisfaction

Hypothesis 3 predicted that participant narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores would be significantly positively correlated with their perceived partner narcissism (admiration or rivalry) scores. Hypothesis 3 was supported. All narcissism types were positively associated with one another.

Many previous studies have also found prevalence for narcissism homogamy Grosz et al., 2015; Keller et al., 2014; Ye et al., 2016), which was the main reason it was predicted to be replicated again. Though other authors have suggested that narcissistic individuals do not have a precise type (Lavner et al., 2016; C. V. Smith et al., 2014), the findings of the present study indicate a strong preference toward marrying other similarly narcissistic individuals or at least perceiving that one's partner has similar narcissistic traits.

Other studies that indicated homogamy for narcissism found significant correlations, as this present study did, but suggested weaker relationships. In the study by Ye and colleagues (2016), the self-reported narcissism of husbands and wives, as measured by the NPI, was also significantly correlated, $r(206) = .26$. However, this present study's correlations were much stronger, with rs ranging from .67 to .93 among the various combinations of subtypes. The study by Keller et al. (2014) showed moderately significant correlations between husbands' and wives' total narcissism scores, as measured by the NPI, $r(188) = .36$. Grosz et al. (2015), who used the NARQ, found strong correlations between preference for partners similar to oneself in both admiration and particularly rivalry traits. These correlations went above and beyond the small assortative findings typical among personality measures (Buss, 1985).

Several reasons may explain the strong association found for homogamy for narcissism among couples in this present study. First, Grosz and colleagues (2015) speculated that their strong finding for homogamy may have been due to higher assortment that is generally found among "dark" personality traits (C. V. Smith et al., 2014), including narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Secondly, Grosz et al.'s (2015) homogamy findings, and those of this present study, may also reflect the tendency for those with personality disorders to assort with others characterized by similar pathology (Keller et al., 2014; M. S. Smith et al.,

2020). A third consideration might be that, due to only one member of the couple being questioned, the results could reflect similarity effects, in which the participant overestimates how similar they and their partners are. However, other studies have indicated similarity in both spouses' scores about themselves and their partners (McCrae et al., 2008; Schaffhuser et al., 2014). A fourth reason for such strong homogamy findings may be how the survey was set up, with participants rating first their own and then immediately their partner's narcissism levels. Perhaps if these surveys had more space between them, the participants might record lower similarity between themselves and their spouses. Future studies should include the spouse to determine if such robust findings for homogamy are replicated. Future studies are also needed to address why NPI narcissism shows smaller assortment effects than the NARQ up to this point.

This study's homogamy findings for narcissism went further than just suggesting narcissistic individuals prefer to assort with others who are similarly narcissistic. They also indicate that narcissistic individuals find these homogamous pairings more satisfying than those with heterogamous partners lower in narcissism. Various reasons may explain these results. One reason may be that partners with similar pathology understand how the other thinks, feels, and behaves, making the couple feel more supported and understood, like M. S. Smith et al. (2020) suggested. A second reason homogamy may be more satisfying is that the narcissistic individual might be less likely to perpetrate psychological abuse on a narcissistic partner (M. S. Smith et al., 2020), despite the association between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism and psychological abuse (Ponti et al., 2020). Thirdly, satisfaction with homogamy may be due to neither partner looking for emotional intimacy (Seidman, 2016). Instead, both desire a partner with positive, image-based qualities (Campbell, 1999), and they may revel in one another's good looks, great personality, and professional success. Their partner projects the positive image they desire, and

this pleases them. Further, the partner is not disappointed by the lack of emotional intimacy but may be quite independent (Konrath et al., 2006; Rohmann et al., 2012) and easily relationally contented. In contrast, a heterogamous partner may be disappointed by the lack of emotional intimacy and may communicate that disapproval to the admiration-seeking narcissistic spouse, which would contribute to the couple's relational dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, there is reason to believe homogamous relationships between narcissistic individuals may not be relationally satisfying, despite this present study's findings. First, narcissism is significantly negatively linked to self- and partner-reported relationship satisfaction (Ye et al., 2016). The level of homogamy in these relationships was not clear, however, and if it were, maybe the satisfaction outcomes would have been different.

Second, narcissistic homogamy might not be satisfying because narcissism may be considered undesirable in a mate. This was evident in Grosz et al.'s (2015) study, which showed no one preferred a partner high in narcissistic admiration or rivalry long term, even if the informant had high admiration or rivalry. The authors suggested this result may be due to narcissistic individuals being forced to choose one another because people on the marriage market with more desirable traits refuse to pair with them long term. This argument seems flimsy in light of the initial popularity of narcissistic individuals. Their positive traits are seen as desirable initially, so short-term relationships could extend longer term.

A third reason homogamy for narcissism could be unsatisfying is that narcissistic individuals' low agreeableness tends to lead to negative communication styles and higher conflict (Horan et al., 2015; Peterson & DeHart, 2014; Stroud et al., 2010). Further, one study found that narcissistic males are more peaceful when paired with a heterogamous partner (Lamkin et al., 2017). Conversely, some evidence suggests they aggress less against someone

perceived to be similar to themselves (Konrath et al., 2006). Yet, higher levels of conflict do not translate to them reporting low relationship satisfaction (Horon et al., 2015). These high-conflict individuals, instead, may like a good fight and then quickly get over it. This could be true particularly for narcissistic admiration, as these individuals report being willing to apologize and quick to forgive (Back et al., 2013; Leunissen et al., 2017). In contrast, a more conflict-avoidant partner may find frequent conflict very upsetting, negatively impacting their relationship satisfaction.

Association Between Length of Relationship and Satisfaction

The present study found a small negative correlation between both narcissism subtypes and length of relationship. This was expected due to indications that narcissism may initially positively impact relationship satisfaction but that the effect may lessen over time (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Küfner et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015). However, there was no significant moderation effect of the relationship's length on the association between narcissism (admiration or rivalry) and relationship satisfaction. Though this topic has been directly researched very little, and in the present study, it was exploratory, there is evidence in previous research to suggest that relationships with narcissistic individuals have a strong beginning followed by relational difficulty later.

This present study has provided scant support for Campbell and Campbell's (2009) contextual reinforcement model. This model is based upon much previous narcissism research that led the researchers to reasonably conclude that there is a cyclical nature to relationships with high-narcissism individuals. This model asserts that narcissistic individuals cycle from the emerging zone that is exciting and gratifying, to the enduring zone that is relationally costly, back to the emerging zone, to the enduring zone, until the partner eventually exits the system. In

this model, it seems the couple can never get comfortable and can never get to the point of mature love, but instead continuously cycle between the excitement of new love and the boredom and frustration that settle in over time.

Overall, the results show that narcissistic individuals find greater satisfaction with other narcissistic individuals. Perhaps this preference for homogamy was a big part of the finding that relationship length was not a significant factor. First, homogamy might bring satisfaction that is more stable over time rather than cyclical. As mentioned earlier, relational instability and dissatisfaction may primarily be found with a high-rivalry individual paired with a low-narcissism partner. These could be the cyclical relationships that Campbell and Campbell (2009) referenced in the contextual reinforcement model.

A second explanation may be that since admiration and rivalry traits are highly correlated within the narcissistic individual (Grove et al., 2019), the relationship truly is cyclical, as the contextual reinforcement model suggests. In this scenario, admiration traits draw the partner to the narcissistic individual, and they marry. Rivalry traits reveal themselves later on and create dissatisfaction. Then admiration traits resurface, renewing the excitement and vitality of the relationship. This cycle seems plausible in light of research showing that early on, others are impressed with narcissistic individuals because of their assertive self-enhancement (admiration traits), but they later dislike them because of the antagonism and hostility (rivalry traits) that become evident over time (Küfner et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2015). Longitudinal studies are needed to understand the fluctuations of admiration and rivalry traits within the same individual and couple over time and how they interact with relationship satisfaction.

A third potential explanation for this present study's results is that people who partner with others high in negative emotionality learn to cope with this effectively over time, so that

eventually, the couple reaches an equilibrium that each partner finds satisfying (Stroud et al., 2010). In other words, things that used to anger, frustrate, or hurt the couple no longer do over time because they gain understanding and positive coping strategies.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future study needs to address issues that relate to relationship satisfaction over time, regardless of the partners' personality characteristics. For example, sexual satisfaction in marital relationships is associated with relationship satisfaction (Sprecher & Cate, 2004). There is some evidence to suggest that narcissistic individuals may be sexually skilled, which contributes to the relationship satisfaction of the couple (McNulty & Widman, 2013). Researchers could study sexual satisfaction and other factors contributing to relationship satisfaction and then create mediation or moderation models to see how these dynamics manifest in narcissistic individuals' relationships.

Future study should also address the amount of closeness/separateness (e.g., agency and communion) desired by each member of the couple. Rivalry is associated with low communion, while admiration is related to higher levels of agency (Grove et al., 2019). In studying this further, one may surmise whether partners who are both low in communion may find satisfaction with their independent partner rather than being with someone they would find too clingy. It also would be interesting to note whether partners both high in agency and presumably admiration find satisfaction as they pursue professional and personal goals together and separately. Maybe this would be a very dynamic relationship/power couple who would be proud of their collective "brand." It is also possible that high-admiration individuals may have moderate levels of communion, which could represent a reason for the association between admiration and relationship satisfaction.

Another interesting point to pursue in the future is that perhaps the partner lower in narcissism increases in narcissism over time, which may contribute to a more successful relationship than would otherwise be found with a narcissistic individual. Perhaps the opposite would be found. The partner with greater narcissism might mellow out over time with a lower narcissism partner, contributing to greater relational satisfaction. These points could be studied, as there is some evidence of greater narcissism in youth that declines over time as the individual matures (Brummelman et al., 2016).

When considering the higher level of narcissism homogamy in this study as compared to the smaller assortment effect found for other personality traits, there may be a clear explanation found in early conceptualizations of narcissism, when Paul Nacke and Sigmund Freud noted its autoerotic tendencies (Freud, 1914/1957). Individuals lower in narcissism may look for someone similar to themselves in some aspects and different in others, as expressed in the Jerry Maguire (Crowe, 1996) movie quote, "You complete me." On the other hand, individuals high in narcissism may be looking for the male or female version of themselves, in effect saying, "You reflect me." This is so similar to the original story of Narcissus. The wood nymph, Echo, was in love with Narcissus, but he was not in love with her. Instead, he fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. This study's findings might ultimately reaffirm that story, as the narcissistic individual falls in love with their own reflection found in the image of their very similar partner.

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APPENDIX A: Letter of Permission to Use the NARQ

Dear Kerry,
Thanks for your note! Of course you can use the NARQ scales. Attached please find a brief documentation of items and scoring keys.
Best
Mitja
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Prof. Dr. Mitja Back

Editor European Journal of Personality

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http://www.uni-muenster.de/PsyIFP/AEBack/

email:
phone:
fax:
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Am 21.09.2020 um 22:25 schrieb Marsh, Kerry Anne:
Dear Dr. Back:

Greetings! I hope this email finds you well and enjoying this September day!

I am a PhD student at Liberty University in the Counselor Education and Supervision department, and I am writing to ask permission to use the NARQ scale in my dissertation project. I am studying narcissism and relationship satisfaction over time. Your two-faceted conceptualization of narcissism as narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry provides a useful means of studying narcissism and relationship dynamics in more detail.

Please let me know what I need to do to use and score the scale. Thank you so much for your consideration and for the great work you are doing in the area of narcissism research.

Best Regards,

Kerry Marsh
Liberty University
Lynchburg, Virginia

APPENDIX B: NARQ (Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire)

Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ)
Back, M. D., Küfner, A. C. P., Dufner, M., Gerlach, T. M., Rauthmann, J. F., & Denissen, J. J. A. (2013). Narcissistic admiration and rivalry: Disentangling the bright and dark sides of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 105,* 1013–1037.

Scale may be accessed at http://www.persoc.net/Toolbox/NARQ

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