Distinguishing Shyness from Fearful Avoidant Attachment: The Investment Model in Dating Relationships

by

Jessica Scholz

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of

The University of Manitoba

in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Psychology

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Running Head: SHYNESS AND ATTACHMENT IN DATING RELATIONSHIPS

Distinguishing Shyness from Fearful Avoidant Attachment: The Investment Model in Dating Relationships

BY

Jessica Scholz

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

Of

Master of Arts

Abstract

Shyness is an aspect of social avoidance, where one desires social contact, but avoids social situations because of the anxiety that accompanies that contact. In terms of one's attachment style, a person high in both anxiety and avoidance is referred to as having a fearfully avoidant style. These individuals experience discomfort with intimacy and tend to avoid close relationships. Previous research has emphasized the similarity of shyness and fearful avoidant attachment. My study examined an apparent contradiction: attachment styles high in avoidance appear to be related to lower relationship investment; however, shy people appear to be highly invested in seeking acceptance. This contradiction was examined using Rusbult's (1983) Investment Model, which states that dependence on one's relationship is greater when one wants to be in the relationship (i.e., they are highly satisfied) and perceives their alternatives to the relationship are poor. Investment size (the importance of the relationship-attached resources), and commitment level (intent to remain in the relationship) are also important to one's dependence. Two-hundred and forty-eight introductory psychology students in ongoing dating relationships were recruited. Specifically, shy people were expected to be committed but less satisfied than non-shy people. However, my results indicated only that shy people perceived fewer alternatives to their relationship. Individuals who are fearfully avoidant were expected, and found, to report both low commitment and satisfaction. Shyness was also found to explain an amount of variance in perception of alternatives that was not explained by attachment styles. The differences between shy people and fearfully attached people are evidence that these are more distinct constructs than previously thought. Limitations and future research directions are discussed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge a few individuals who made the completion of this thesis possible. First, I would like to acknowledge and thank my advisor, Dr. Marian Morry, for the countless hours that she spent helping me through this process. The complete dedication that she offers to every single one of her students is extraordinary.

Second, I would like to thank my advisory committee members, Dr. Katherine Starzyk, and Dr. Daniel Albas. The guidance that they offered and the positivity to which they approached my ideas was very much appreciated.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents, Jim and Sandy Scholz, for their unwavering support and for their dedication to my education. Their confidence in my abilities to achieve whatever I aspire to is the reason I was able to make it through this process.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Distinguishing Shyness from Fearful Avoidant Attachment: The Investment Model in Dating Relationships

Shyness is an aspect of social avoidance, in which one desires social contact, but avoids social situations with strangers because of the anxiety and awkwardness that accompanies that contact. When shy people do encounter such a situation, they are unable to act in an expected or "socially appropriate" manner, which in turn discourages others from wanting to interact with them (Duggan & Brennan, 1994; Mounts, Valentiner, Anderson, & Boswell, 2006). Shyness has been linked to many things in the literature, including depression (Bruch & Belkin, 2001), negative adjustment (Mounts et al., 2006), and worry (Cowden, 2005).

Shyness has been shown to influence relationship-relevant behaviours and cognitions. For example, shy people have more negative self-thoughts than non-shy people during one-on-one interactions, especially if the person with whom they are interacting is of the other sex (Hill, 1989; Ickes, Robertson, Tooke, & Teng, 1986). In addition, among college students, shy students were found to date less than non-shy students, to act in ways that inhibit relationship growth, and to have problems establishing and maintaining close, satisfying relationships (Leary & Buckley, 2000).

Attachment styles are also known to influence a variety of behaviours and cognitions related to relationships such as attraction to certain types of people and satisfaction or commitment to the relationship (Baldwin, Fehr, Keedian, Seidel, & Thomson, 1993; Baldwin, Keelan, Fehr, Enns, & Koh-Rangarajoo, 1996). Attachment styles are working models about the self and others that are developed by individuals in their interactions. There are two dimensions involved; anxiety and avoidance (Collins &

Feeney, 2004). Anxiety is the distress associated with one's sense of self-worth and beliefs of acceptance or rejection. Avoidance can be described as the degree one approaches or avoids intimacy and interdependence. The level of each dimension is an indication of that persons' attachment style. An individual high in both anxiety and avoidance has a *fearful avoidant* attachment style (Collins & Feeney, 2004). The relation of shyness to attachment styles, specifically the fearful style, is an important area to explore.

Duggan and Brennan (1994) examined shyness and attachment by exploring the two aspects of social avoidance, namely, shyness and low sociability. They found that the shyness aspect of social avoidance was positively correlated with the fearful avoidant attachment style, suggesting that fearful avoidant people avoid relationships *due to* shyness. However, their study only touched on this relation, examining only correlations, which left many questions about the relationship between shyness and attachment styles unanswered. Although my study also looks at correlations, I examine the variables in more depth.

The purpose of my study was to provide a review of the literature of both shyness and attachment in adult relationships, and to further examine and clarify the role of shyness and attachment style in specific dating relationship variables. The variables of particular interest included satisfaction, perceived availability of alternatives, commitment level, and investment size.

Shyness

Shyness is defined as a reaction of tension and awkwardness in social interactions with strangers or casual acquaintances. People who are shy tend to feel uncomfortable

interacting with people other than those they are familiar with, and are unable to behave in a way typically expected in social situations. Shy people are highly sensitive to scrutiny and strongly fear social evaluation (whether positive or negative). The basic underlying conflict of shyness is the desire to approach others, but the inability to do so, because they are afraid. This has been found in past research through self-report scales, as well as actual interactions and ones' responses to those interactions (Duggan & Brennan, 1994; Garcia, Stinson, Ickes, Bissonnette, & Briggs, 1991; Jackson, Towson, & Narduzzi, 1997; Jones, Briggs, & Smith, 1986).

The etiology of shyness is complicated, as psychologists are not in agreement as to why some people are shy and some are not. There are some psychologists who believe that shyness is a trait (Amico, Bruch, Haase, & Sturmer, 2004). However, there are also those who believe that shyness is a learned reaction to social events throughout life, especially during childhood (Zimbardo, 1977). There are also those who describe shyness as a "condition", a more mild form of social anxiety or social phobia (Scott, 2006). Prevalence estimates of shyness have been shown to range from 20% to 50% (Chavira, Stein, & Malcarne, 2002; Heiser, Turner, & Beidel, 2003).

There are three components to shyness: cognitive, affective, and behavioural. The cognitive component includes thoughts and attributions. This component explains negative self-evaluations, as shy people tend to appraise situations in a biased manner, attributing social difficulties to negative aspects about themselves. The affective component involves bodily reactions (i.e., anxiety) to the stress brought on by novel social interactions. The final component, behavioural, refers to the finding that shy people may behave in an inhibited, reserved way around new people. It should be noted

that not all shy people experience all three of these components (Crozier, 2005).

Shyness is one aspect of social avoidance, the other being low sociability. Sociability is the preference for being with others over being alone. Therefore, someone low in sociability will not feel as strong of a tendency to seek out social interaction. Ultimately, both a shy individual and an individual low in sociability will avoid social interaction, but the underlying motive for this avoidance differs significantly (Duggan & Brennan, 1994).

People who are shy appear to perceive and interpret their own social abilities negatively. They report having more negative self-related thoughts during their interactions than someone who is not shy, and these thoughts increase if the person they are interacting with is of the opposite sex (Hill, 1989; Ickes et al., 1986). Garcia and colleagues (1991) demonstrated the impact of shyness in mixed-sex interactions. The purpose of their study was to explore how shyness and physical attractiveness impacted thoughts, feelings, and behaviours during first-time interactions with opposite-sex strangers. They expected to confirm that shyness would inhibit behaviour in these interactions, and that shy people would experience the cognitive effects of shyness such as negative self-focused thoughts. They had two stages to their data collection. In the first stage, interactions were taped in naturalistic settings so interactions would be as normal and natural as possible. In the second stage, participants who had been observed viewed the tape of their interaction, and listed their thoughts and feelings that they had experienced during their interaction (for more details regarding the procedure, see Garcia et al., 1991). Consistent with their hypotheses, as well as earlier literature, they found that self-reported shyness was related to the behaviour, thoughts, and perceptions of the

interaction. When focusing on specifics, they found gender differences in cross-sex interactions in how shyness impacted the interactions within the experiment. Female shyness scores were found to only be related to a couple of specific behavioural measures (i.e., direct and mutual gazes). Male shyness scores were found to be related to a much wider variety of measures, including both verbal and nonverbal behaviours, as well as the thoughts and feelings experienced (Garcia et al., 1991).

Due to the increased focus on negative evaluations among shy people, I expected that cross-sex interactions would be extremely difficult, and would therefore impact who a shy person would have as a dating partner. Shyness comes into play during interactions with strangers or casual acquaintances. Someone who is shy would have a difficult time obtaining, or even attempting to obtain, attention from a potential partner, unless they already know that person at a different level. That is, shy people may be more likely to look for a partner among their current group of friends.

I also expected that many other variables in a relationship involving someone who is shy (e.g., satisfaction, perceived availability of alternatives) may differ from that of a relationship between two non-shy individuals. Shy people fear evaluation or scrutiny in new social interactions (Jackson et al., 1997) and therefore may depend on their relationship to a greater extent than non-shy people. If they do not want to find themselves having to look for a new partner among strangers, they may stay with their current partner even though they are not satisfied in their relationship. They may also find that the availability of alternatives is low due to their shyness, thus increasing their dependence on their current relationship. Finally, because they do desire social contact, they may find that their relationship is an important source of social resources, in that

they may find a social network through their partner.

Attachment Styles

Shyness impacts how people relate to others. Another construct that has an impact on these relations is one's attachment style. Attachment styles are working models that individuals develop about themselves and about others. According to theories of attachment, these working models are developed in infancy and are shaped by experiences with caregivers. These models impact expectations about attachment figures in future experiences, as they are carried into adult relationships (Collins & Feeney, 2004; Egeci, & Gencoz, 2006). However, attachment styles are not invariable; individuals report different attachment orientations in different relationships based on their interpersonal expectations (Baldwin et al., 1993; Baldwin et al., 1996).

Most recent research defines attachment styles based on two dimensions; anxiety and avoidance. Anxiety is the distress associated with one's sense of self-worth and beliefs of acceptance or rejection. Avoidance is described as the degree one approaches or avoids intimacy and interdependence (Collins & Feeney, 2004). A person who is low in anxiety and avoidance is said to have a *secure* attachment style. Someone with high anxiety and high avoidance is referred to as having a *fearful avoidant* attachment style. Fearful avoidant people experience discomfort with intimacy and tend to avoid close relationships. Someone who has low anxiety and is high in avoidance is a *dismissive avoidant* (i.e., is confident in their self but not in an attachment figure). Lastly, someone who is highly anxious and low in avoidance is referred to as having a *preoccupied* attachment style. These people depend on others for their self-confidence and are always concerned about being rejected (Collins & Feeney, 2004).

Attachment styles have been found to influence a variety of behaviours and cognitions related to relationships such as attraction to certain types of people and satisfaction or commitment to the relationship. Because attachment styles develop out of interactions with others, individuals report different attachment orientations in different relationships based on their interpersonal expectations in these relationships (Baldwin et al., 1993; Baldwin et al., 1996). For example, based on their attachment styles, individuals have different expectations for how their partners will react in situations involving trust and closeness (Baldwin et al., 1993).

One fairly consistent finding is that people tend to rate their partner as more similar to themselves than they actually are (Morry, 2003, 2007). One of the qualities they perceive similarity in is how their partner is attached to them. Research has shown that people in dating relationships tend to project their own attachment style onto their partner. For example, Ruvolo and Fabin (1999) asked students to respond to questions assessing their own and their perceptions of their partner's attachment style. Both partners completed the survey allowing the researchers to examine actual versus perceived similarity. Ruvolo and Fabin found that while controlling for the partner's actual attachment style, participants perceived their partner as more similar to themselves than the partners actually were.

Attachment styles can be examined when looking at specific factors in a romantic relationship, such as one's commitment to their relationship and the satisfaction that they feel. For example, Simpson (1990) found that being securely attached was associated with feelings of commitment and satisfaction, whereas being insecurely attached (i.e., fearful avoidant, dismissive, or preoccupied) was associated with more frequent negative

emotions regarding the relationship in question. Other studies looking at attachment styles in relation to these factors have found similar results (Banse, 2004; Pistole, Clark, & Tubbs, 1995).

The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between shyness and attachment styles. As noted earlier, Duggan and Brennan (1994) examined the correlational relationship of these variables. In their study, the goal was to distinguish shyness from low sociability in relation to the socially avoidant attachment styles (i.e., fearful and dismissing types). They found that shyness plays a role in the social avoidance of people who are fearfully attached, whereas social avoidance in dismissive people appears to stem from low sociability. Specifically, they found that shyness was negatively correlated with the secure attachment style, and positively correlated with fearful and preoccupied attachment styles. However, the study ended here, leaving open many avenues to explore within intimate relationships. Specifically, the level of relationship satisfaction reported, perceived availability of alternatives, commitment level, and investment size may all be influenced by the individual's shyness level and attachment style. These variables are part of the Investment Model which will be reviewed next.

Investment Model

Rusbult's (1983) Investment Model is an expansion of Interdependence Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Both theories state that dependence on one's relationship is greater when one wants to be in the relationship (i.e., they are highly satisfied), and when one perceives their alternatives to the relationship are poor. The Investment Model adds that *investment size* (the importance of the relationship-attached resources) is also

important. Rusbult's model also suggests that when dependence increases, so does *commitment level* (intent to remain in the relationship and feelings of attachment).

The Investment Model has been examined across a variety of ages and relationship types. Research has shown that results are similar for males and females, as well as for different age groups, sexual orientation, ethnicity, exclusivity of the relationship, and duration of the relationship (Kurdek, 2007; Le & Agnew, 2003). The literature has consistently shown that satisfaction with, perceived alternatives to, and degree of investment in ones relationship each significantly correlate with one's degree of commitment to the partner and the relationship (Le & Agnew, 2003).

The Investment Model has been linked to attachment styles. Pistole and colleagues (1995) recruited participants who were either married or dating, and had them answer questionnaires including Rusbult's (1983) Investment Model scale and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) attachment style scale. Results indicated that secure people experienced higher levels of satisfaction, reported fewer costs, and were more committed to their relationships than people with any of the other attachment styles. They also found that high avoidance tends to be related to lower relationship investment, while high anxiety is related to feelings of greater cost. These results have been found regardless of whether the relationship in question is a dating relationship or a marriage (Pistole et al., 1995; Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998).

As of yet, the Investment Model has not been looked at in relation to shyness. It is of particular interest in my study to examine both shyness and attachment style as predictors of the Investment Model factors. Although shyness has not been examined directly in terms of the Investment Model, there is some research that examines

satisfaction in relation to shyness. Specifically, shy people have been found to be less satisfied with their relationships. It is suggested that shy people feel their relationships do not meet their needs (Jones & Carpenter, 1986). My study examined the relation between shyness and attachment styles more closely, and explored whether these variables uniquely contribute to the level of satisfaction reported, the perceived availability of alternatives, the commitment level, and the investment size in one's dating relationship. By including both measures, this study contributes to the literature by examining an apparent contradiction: that attachment styles high in avoidance (fearful avoidant and dismissive avoidant) appear to be related to lower relationship investment (Pistole et al., 1995), but this may not be so for shy people, as they appear to be highly invested in seeking acceptance (Duggan & Brennan, 1994).

There are three overarching hypotheses in terms of the Investment Model factors. First, shy people will differ from secure people in terms of satisfaction. Second, shy people will differ from fearful avoidant people in terms of commitment. Third, secure people will differ from fearful avoidant people in terms of satisfaction and commitment. Specifically, I made the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, will be more likely to find their dating partner through a friend.

Hypothesis 2: Shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, will be more likely to report lower satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3: Shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, will be more likely to report lower alternatives.

Hypothesis 4: Shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, will be more likely

to report higher investments.

Hypothesis 5: Shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, will be more likely to report higher commitment.

Hypothesis 6: Secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, will be more likely to report higher satisfaction.

Hypothesis 7: Secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, will be more likely to report lower alternatives.

Hypothesis 8: Secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, will be more likely to report higher investments.

Hypothesis 9: Secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, will be more likely to report higher commitment.

Hypothesis 10: Secure individuals will report higher satisfaction and commitment than fearful avoidant individuals.

Hypothesis 11: Individuals with higher levels of shyness are more likely to report a fearful avoidant attachment style than individuals with lower levels of shyness.

Hypothesis 12: Shy individuals will report lower satisfaction than secure individuals.

Hypothesis 13: Although shyness and fearful avoidant attachment are correlated, hypothesis 5 (having high commitment) will not be supported for individuals with a fearful avoidant attachment style. That is, comparing fearful avoidant attachment styles to the other three attachment styles would not replicate the pattern that appears when comparing shy individuals to non-shy individuals. This would provide evidence that shyness and fearful avoidant attachment are distinct constructs.

To summarize, my research contributes to the literature by replicating previous work by Duggan and Brennan (1994) and extending that work using the Investment Model and by asking how they met their dating partner. My research also tests the similarities and differences between shyness and attachment styles. More specifically, I expected that shyness would be different from fearful avoidant attachment with respect to commitment to their partner (shy people would report high commitment while people with a fearfully avoidant attachment style would not). Although shy people are highly committed to their partner, they would differ from secure individuals because they would not report high satisfaction levels.

Method

Participants

The current research took place at the University of Manitoba, with 248 (145 males, 103 females) Introductory Psychology students in ongoing heterosexual dating relationships as the subject pool. The participants' ages ranged from 17 years to 44 years, with a mean age of 20.29 years ($SD = 3.30$). Participants were asked to state how long they have known their dating partner ($M = 33.88$, $SD = 30.74$), and how long they have been dating ($M = 19.91$, $SD = 17.97$). The majority of participants (57.3%) identified as European/Caucasian, with the others identifying as Asian (19%), North American Aboriginal (4%), East Indian (3.6%), "other" (9.2%), or "more than one" (6.9%). Participants were also asked to approximate the combined annual income of their parents in order to get an idea of their social economic status. The majority of participants (62%) indicated an annual income almost evenly spread out between $40,000 and $120,000. Others indicated an income of less than $40,000 (13.8%), more than $120,000 (19.4%),

or they did not report their parents' income (4.8%). Participants were given course credit for their participation in this study.

Measures

Demographic Information Form. Participants answered questions about their gender, age, ethnicity, and relationship length and status (including how they met their partner; see Appendix). The 12 categories of how they met their partner were combined into 4 groups for analyses. These groups became: 1) Friends first (which consisted only of the "friends first" category; 2) Through a friend (consisting of "through another friend", "set up by a friend", and "through a work colleague"); 3) Places (consisting of "at school", "at a social gathering", "at church", "at work", and "at a bar"); and 4) Websites (consisting of "online dating website" and "social networking website"). The category "blind date" was not included as it was not chosen by participants.

Attachment Style. Originally developed by Brennan, Clark, and Shaver (1998), the attachment style scale is a 36-item self-report measure using a 7-point Likert response to statements that provide scores for the two dimensions (anxiety and avoidance) as well as the four styles. For the avoidance dimension, scores ranged from 1 to 4.94, with a mean of 2.56 (SD = .93), where a higher score indicates higher avoidance. Cronbach's alpha for the avoidance dimension has been shown to be .94. For the anxiety dimension, scores ranged from 1.11 to 6.5, with a mean of 3.36 (SD = 1.06), where a higher score indicates higher anxiety. Cronbach's alpha for the anxiety dimension has been shown to be .91. In total, 10 items were reverse scored, nine from the avoidance dimension questions, and one from the anxiety dimension questions. In this study, all four categories were examined, as I was interested in the differences across styles, and the fearful avoidant

style in particular (Brennan et al, 1998).

The Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale. The measure of shyness used was the Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness Scale (RCBS; Cheek & Briggs, 1990), a revised version of the original 9-item scale developed by Cheek and Buss (1981). The RCBS is a 13-item self-report measure of shyness, using a 5-point Likert scale. The participants respond to questions on a scale of 1 (very uncharacteristic or untrue, strongly disagree) to 5 (very characteristic or true, strongly agree). The responses are summed, and a higher score indicates a higher level of shyness. Scores on the shyness measure ranged from 13 to 57, with a mean of 32.56 ($SD = 8.42$). Four items on this scale were reverse scored. Cronbach's alpha has been shown to be around .86 (Crozier, 2005). For this study, Cronbach's alpha was .84.

Investment Model Scale. Originally developed by Rusbult (1989), the Investment Model Scale consists of four sections. The first measures the participants' satisfaction level. The first five statements under the satisfaction section are facet items. Facet items are included in the scale because they have been shown to help keep alpha levels higher than if they are not included. However, they are not used in analysis. In the satisfaction section, the facet items are "My partner fulfills my needs for (intimacy/ companionship/ sexual/ security/ emotional involvement)". The participant responds on a Likert scale from 1 (don't agree at all) to 4 (agree completely). The remaining statements are global items, which are the ones used to obtain the score. The participant responds on a Likert scale from 0 (do not agree at all) to 8 (agree completely). The scores of the items are summed, and then divided by the number of items, with a higher score indicating higher satisfaction. Scores on the satisfaction measure ranged from 0.80 to 8.00, with a mean of

6.32 (*SD* = 1.45). Cronbach's alpha has been shown to range from .92 to .95 for the satisfaction measure (Rusbult et al., 1998), and in this study was .94.

The second section assesses the participants' perceived quality of alternatives. Again, the first five statements are facet items to be answered on a Likert scale from 1 to 4 (as above) and consist of "My needs for (intimacy/ companionship/ sex/ security/ emotional involvement) could be fulfilled in alternative relationships". The remaining statements are the global items, which are again responded to on a Likert scale from 0 to 8 (as above). Again, the scores on each item are summed and divided by the number of items. A higher score on this scale indicates higher quality of alternatives. Scores on the alternatives scale ranged from 0.00 to 7.40, with a mean of 4.12 (*SD* = 1.7). Cronbach's alpha has been shown to range from .82 to .88 for the quality of alternatives measure (Rusbult et al., 1998), and in this study was .84.

The third section measures the investment size of the participant in their relationship. Again, the first five items are facet items, answered on a Likert scale from 1 to 4 (as above). The remaining statements are again global items, answered on a Likert scale from 0 to 8 (as above). The scores on each item are summed and divided by the number of items, with a higher score on this scale indicating higher investment in the relationship. Scores on the investment scale ranged from 1.00 to 8.00, with a mean of 5.25 (*SD* = 1.53). Cronbach's alpha has been shown to range from .82 to .84 for the investment size measure (Rusbult et al., 1998), and in this study was .79.

Finally, the fourth section assesses their commitment level. This section has seven items, answered on a Likert scale from 0 to 8 (as above). As with the previous scales, the scores on each item are summed and divided by the number of items. A higher score on

the items in this section indicate higher commitment to the relationship. Scores on the commitment scale ranged from 0.86 to 8.00, with a mean of 6.06 (SD = 1.64). Two items require reverse scoring. Cronbach's alpha has been shown to range from .91 to .95 for the commitment level measure (Rusbult et al., 1998), and in this study was .89.

Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Originally developed by Rosenberg (1965) this scale assesses trait self esteem. Participants respond to 10 statements on a four-point scale. Circling "strongly agree" is a score of 3 for that statement, down to "strongly disagree", which indicates a score of 0. Half of the questions require reverse scoring. A higher score on the scale indicates higher self-esteem. Scores on this scale ranged from 6 to 30, with a mean of 21.39 (SD = 4.65). This scale was included in the present study to distinguish shyness from low self-esteem (see Table 1). Cronbach's alpha in this study was .84.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (Short-Version). The measure of anxiety was taken from the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale Short-Version (DASS21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The DASS21 is a 21-item measure of depression, anxiety, and stress. Each of depression, anxiety and stress make up seven questions in the scale, and the scores for each of these three scales can be used as individual measures for these constructs (multiply scores by two). In my study, I looked at the anxiety score from this scale. Participants responded to seven statements on a scale from 0 ("did not apply to me at all") to 3 ("applied to me very much, or most of the time") as to how often the statement applied to them over the past week. A higher score on the scale indicates higher anxiety. Scores on this scale ranged from 0 to 40 with a mean of 8.19 (SD = 7.46). This scale was included in the present study to distinguish shyness from state anxiety (see

Table 1). Cronbach's alpha in this study was .75.

Procedure

Participants were administered questionnaires in small groups. Prior to participating in the study, informed consent was obtained in writing. Each group was informed that this is a study examining experiences in dating relationships and that they would be completing a number of questionnaires that would ask questions about themselves, their partner, and their relationship. Participants were made aware that they had the right to stop participating at any time without loss of their experimental credits and that they were allowed to leave if they wish to do so.

Participants completed a self-report questionnaire package, including measures of their own attachment style (Brennan et al., 1998) and shyness (Cheek & Buss, 1981). They also completed the Investment Model Scale (Rusbult, 1989), as well as a demographic information form and Rosenberg's (1965) trait self-esteem measure. The questionnaires were randomly ordered within the questionnaire package to control for possible order effects.

Following the session, each student was given a debriefing sheet that explained in more detail the specific hypotheses of the study. Contact information was also provided to all participants, and they were told where the final results of the study would be available to them.

Results

Dating Partners

The purpose of this study was to examine the roles of shyness and attachment styles in relationship-relevant variables as presented in the Investment Model. To test the

first hypothesis that shy individuals relative to non-shy individuals are more likely to find their dating partner through a friend a chi-square test was conducted. A median split on shyness created two groups: shy and non-shy individuals. The categorical variables became (a) shy and non-shy status and (b) the 4 categories of how they met their current dating partner. However, the hypothesis was not supported by the chi-square analysis, $\chi^2 = .80, p = \text{ns}$. To look further at how they met their dating partner, I re-ran the analysis using attachment styles instead of shyness. The chi-square analysis was significant, $\chi^2 = 19.25, p < .05$ (see Table 1). The majority of participants reported that the most important reason they met their partner was due to a "place" such as at school, at work, or at a bar. This is probably because, being students, they spend a lot of time in social environments, and are likely to think of these social events as important to the initiation of the relationship. As for whether they were friends first, or if they met through a friend, dismissive individuals were the most likely to indicate that they met their partner through a friend, and the fearful individuals were the most likely to indicate that they were friends with their dating partner first.

When looking at the number of dating partners the participants had before their current relationship, results showed a slight difference between shy and non-shy individuals, although this is not significant (F [1, 242] = 1.62, p = ns). The mean number of previous relationships for shy individuals was 3.06 (SD = 2.35), while non-shy individuals reported a mean of 3.49 (SD = 2.23). So, although shy individuals are no more likely than non-shy individuals to find their dating partner in their friends, shy individuals report having had slightly fewer dating partners in general than non-shy individuals. I also looked at whether there was a difference in the number of previous

dating partners in relation to attachment styles. There was no significant difference, F (3, 242) = .55, p = ns. I compared each attachment style, and none of the pairwise comparisons were significant. However, those with a dismissive attachment style reported the most previous relationships (M = 3.57, SD = 2.25) and those with a preoccupied attachment style reported the fewest previous relationships (M = 2.98, SD = 1.89). These results make sense because dismissive individuals would be likely to leave a relationship if their alternatives were high, whereas preoccupied individuals are more likely to try to remain in their relationship.

Dating Length

Another factor that may be important, although not included in the predictions, is how long the individual has been in the dating relationship with their partner. Shyness was not found to be a factor, but there was a difference in attachment style. The ANOVA indicated a significant difference in the length of the relationship for the different attachment style, F (3, 241) = 5.86, $p < .01$. T-tests comparing the different groups showed a significant difference between secure (M = 23.48, SD = 20.02) and fearful (M = 11.72, SD = 11.26) groups, with secure individuals reporting significantly longer relationships than fearful individuals, t (160) = 3.98, $p < .001$. The only other significant difference was between fearful (M = 11.72, SD = 11.26) and preoccupied (M = 21.96, SD = 16.83) groups, with fearful individuals reporting significantly shorter relationships than preoccupied individuals, t (111) = 3.75, $p < .001$. These results indicate that fearful individuals are reporting the shortest relationships of the four attachment styles.

Potential Covariates

Before doing any further analyses, I looked at the correlations between shyness,

self-esteem, and anxiety. All of the correlations were significant (see Table 2). However, the strongest correlation with shyness was self-esteem ($r = -.46, p < .001$), and therefore self-esteem was included as a covariate in the correlational analyses between shyness and the Investment Model variables.

Shy Compared to Non-shy Individuals

Hypotheses 2 through 5 were tested by conducting partial correlations between shyness and the Investment Model variables. Hypothesis 2 was that shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, would be more likely to report lower satisfaction. This hypothesis was not supported, $r = -.06, p =$ ns. Hypothesis 3 was that shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, would be more likely to report lower alternatives to their relationship. This hypothesis was marginally supported, $r = -.13, p < .06$. Hypothesis 4, that shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, would be more likely to report higher investments, was not supported, $r = -.01, p =$ ns. Hypothesis 5 was that shy individuals, relative to non-shy individuals, would be more likely to report higher commitment. This hypothesis was not supported, $r = -.01, p =$ ns. To summarize, the only difference between shy and non-shy individuals on the Investment Model variables was in terms of their perception of alternatives to their relationship. Shy individuals report fewer alternatives than non-shy individuals.

Secure Compared to Insecure Individuals

Hypotheses 6 through 9, designed to examine the relationship between attachment style and Investment Model variables, were tested using one-way MANOVAs. The three insecure attachment styles (i.e., fearful, preoccupied, and dismissive) were collapsed into an insecure group to test these hypotheses. The dependent variables were the Investment

Model variables, namely, satisfaction, alternatives, investment, and commitment. The MANOVA was significant $F(4, 235) = 13.94, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .19$ (see Table 3, rows 2 and 3, for means and standard deviations). Each hypothesis was then tested with the univariate F's. Hypothesis 6 was that secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, would be more likely to report higher satisfaction. This hypothesis was also supported, $F(1, 238) = 46.63, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .16$. Hypothesis 7 was that secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, would be more likely to report lower alternatives. This hypothesis was supported, $F(1, 238) = 7.09, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$. Hypothesis 8, that secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, would be more likely to report higher relationship investment was not supported, $F(1, 238) = 2.46, p =$ ns, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. Hypothesis 9 was that secure individuals, relative to insecure individuals, would be more likely to report higher commitment. This hypothesis was supported, $F(1, 238) = 38.41, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .14$. To summarize, secure individuals significantly differed from insecure individuals by reporting higher relationship satisfaction, lower perceptions of alternatives, and higher commitment to their relationship. Secure and insecure individuals did not differ in terms of their relationship investment, however, this changed when I examined the four attachment styles specifically (shown in the next section). A common significant finding between shy individuals and secure individuals is that they both reported lower alternatives to their current relationship than non-shy and insecure individuals, respectively.

Comparisons Among the Four Attachment Styles

To further probe the significant attachment styles results, planned comparisons were conducted to test the differences between the secure style and the three insecure

attachment styles (see Table 3, rows 3 through 6). Differences in satisfaction were found between the secure and all three insecure styles (i.e., fearful, preoccupied, and dismissive), and between the preoccupied and fearful styles and preoccupied and dismissive styles. Perceptions of alternatives significantly differed among secure and fearful styles and secure and dismissive styles, as well as between preoccupied and fearful styles and preoccupied and dismissive styles. Investment differed significantly among secure and fearful styles and secure and dismissive styles, as well as between fearful and preoccupied styles and fearful and dismissive styles. Investment was also significantly different between preoccupied and dismissive styles. Differences in commitment level were found between secure and fearful styles, secure and dismissive styles, fearful and preoccupied styles, and preoccupied and dismissive styles. These planned comparisons provided support for Hypothesis 10, that secure individuals would report higher satisfaction and commitment than fearful avoidant individuals. To summarize, in addition to secure individuals differing from those who are insecure, satisfaction level was found to be significantly different between insecure styles, with fearfully attached individuals and dismissive individuals reporting less satisfaction in their relationship than preoccupied individuals. Secure individuals and preoccupied individuals reported perceiving fewer alternatives to their current relationship than dismissive and fearful individuals. Both secure and preoccupied individuals reported significantly more investment and more commitment than those who were dismissive or fearfully attached.

I repeated the analyses with anxiety as a covariate, and self-esteem as a covariate. In both cases, none of the results changed and therefore anxiety and self-esteem do not

influence the relationship between attachment styles and the Investment Model variables.

Attachment Styles and Shyness Compared

Regressions were performed to analyze the amount of variance accounted for by attachment style and shyness on the Investment Model variables (see Table 4). Anxiety and avoidance scores were first entered (Block 1), followed by their interaction (Block 2), and then the shyness score (Block 3). Shyness was entered last as it was predicted that shyness would account for a significant amount of variability not explained by attachment style. The regression on satisfaction showed significant contributions of avoidance and anxiety, but insignificant contributions of the interaction of avoidance and anxiety, and of shyness. Regressing on perception of alternatives showed a significant contribution of avoidance, but not of anxiety. The interaction of anxiety and avoidance was significant, as was shyness. The regression for investment showed significant contributions of avoidance, anxiety, and their interaction, but not of shyness. Regressing on commitment found a significant contribution of avoidance, but not anxiety. The interaction of anxiety and avoidance was significant, but shyness was not. To summarize, investment in and satisfaction with one's relationship appear to be influenced by one's amount of anxiety and avoidance. The degree to which one is committed to their relationship appears to depend mostly on their avoidance level. Shyness was found to be significant only in relation to the amount of alternatives that one perceives.

To explore the interactions of avoidance and anxiety on alternatives, investment, and commitment, I split the file by anxiety based on a median split (low, high) and ran the regressions again. For those both low and high in anxiety, high avoidance indicated greater perceptions of alternatives ($\beta = .33, p < .001, R^2 = .11$ and $\beta = .26, p < .01, R^2 =$

.07, respectively). Those high in anxiety showed fewer perceived alternatives if their avoidance was low, than those low in anxiety and avoidance, and they showed greater perceived alternatives if their avoidance was high, than those low in anxiety and high in avoidance (see Figure 1). For those high in anxiety, high avoidance indicated lower investment ($\beta = -.31, p < .01, R^2 = .09$), and for those low in anxiety, high avoidance indicated even lower investment ($\beta = -.46, p < .001, R^2 = .21$). Those high in anxiety and avoidance reported substantially more investment in their relationship than those low in anxiety but high in avoidance (see Figure 2). For those high in anxiety, high avoidance indicated lower commitment ($\beta = -.53, p < .001, R^2 = .28$). However, those low in anxiety and high avoidance indicated even lower commitment ($\beta = -.69, p < .001, R^2 = .49$; see Figure 3).

I re-ran the regressions with self-esteem as a covariate and found that although self-esteem has a marginally significant role in one's perceptions of alternatives ($\beta = .14$, $p = .06$), this does not influence the relationship of shyness to alternatives ($\beta = -.21, p < .01$). Self-esteem did not influence any other relation between shyness and the Investment Model variables. I also re-ran the regressions with anxiety as a covariate and found that anxiety was a significant variable for investment ($\beta = .14, p < .05$), but did not influence any relation between shyness and the Investment Model variables.

Hypothesis 11, that individuals with higher levels of shyness are more likely to report a fearful avoidant attachment style than individuals with lower levels of shyness, was examined using a chi-square test. Using a median split of shyness (shy or not shy) along with the four types of attachment, the frequencies for each combination were examined. It was found that most of the non-shy individuals also identified as having a

secure attachment style, whereas the majority of shy individuals were evenly distributed among secure, fearful, and preoccupied attachment styles (χ^2 [3] = 33.21, $p < .001$; see Table 5). This supports my hypothesis, as three times as many shy individuals reported a fearful avoidant attachment style as non-shy individuals. Only 10.74% of non-shy individuals reported being fearfully attached, while 35.96% of shy individuals did.

Hypothesis 12 was that shy individuals would report lower satisfaction than secure individuals. Support is found for this hypothesis when comparing the mean scores on satisfaction for shy individuals and for securely attached individuals. The mean for shy individuals on the satisfaction measure was 6.06 (SD = 1.54), while the mean for securely attached individuals on the satisfaction measure was 6.96 (SD = 1.04). This is a difference of .90 of a point on a 9-point scale. These groups overlap (some secure individuals are shy), so it is not possible to determine if this difference is significant.

Hypothesis 13 was that, although shyness and fearful avoidant attachment are correlated, individuals with a fearful avoidant attachment style would report having low commitment, whereas shy people would have high commitment. That is, comparing fearful avoidant attachment styles to the other three attachment styles would not replicate this pattern that appears when comparing shy individuals to non-shy individuals. It was found that there is no significant difference between the shy (M = 5.77, SD = 1.60) and non-shy (M = 6.37, SD = 1.63) groups when it comes to commitment. As reported in Table 3, when comparing fearfully avoidant individuals' commitment scores to the other attachment styles, fearful (M = 4.88, SD = 1.18) individuals reported lower levels of commitment than either secure (M = 6.74, SD = 1.37) or preoccupied (M = 6.38, SD = 1.57) individuals. This difference in pattern provides evidence that shyness and fearful

avoidant attachment are distinct constructs. The difference between the mean score for shy individuals and the mean score for fearful individuals on the commitment measure is .89 on a 9-point scale. These two groups overlap (some fearful individuals are shy), so it is not possible to determine if this difference is significant.

Discussion

Individuals differ in their levels of shyness and in their attachment styles. Past research suggested that individuals with a fearful avoidant attachment style avoided relationships *due to* shyness (Duggan & Brennan, 1994). However, there appears to be a contradiction in that attachment styles high in avoidance (fearful avoidant and dismissive avoidant) appear to be related to lower relationship investment (Pistole et al., 1995), while shy people appear to be highly invested in seeking acceptance (Duggan & Brennan, 1994). The purpose of my study was to examine the roles of shyness and attachment styles in relationship-relevant variables as presented in the Investment Model. Specifically, these variables are: perceived availability of alternatives to one's dating relationship, commitment to and satisfaction with one's dating partner, and investment in one's dating relationship. In general I found that shy individuals report being as committed to their partner as non-shy individuals whereas fearful avoidant individuals report significantly less commitment than non-shy individuals. In addition, shy individuals differ from secure individuals in that shy individuals report lower satisfaction in their current dating relationship.

Dating Relationships

In comparing shy to non-shy individuals, it was expected that shy individuals would be more likely to have met their dating partner through a friendship. However,

there was no significant difference found in this respect, most likely because in general, most relationships are based on a social network. This means that most relationships, especially among university students, are likely to be related to friendships, regardless of whether the individual is shy or not shy. There was, however, another difference that appeared when comparing shy and non-shy individuals. Shy individuals report having had slightly fewer (although not significant) dating partners in general than non-shy individuals. These results are logical, considering previous research findings that shy students tend to date less than non-shy students, act in ways that inhibit relationship growth, and have problems establishing and maintaining close, satisfying relationships (Leary & Buckley, 2000).

In comparing secure to insecure individuals, dismissive individuals were the most likely to indicate that they met their partner through a friend, and the fearful individuals were the most likely to indicate that they were friends with their dating partner first. When looking at the number of dating partners the participants had before their current relationship, those with a dismissive attachment style reported the most previous relationships and those with a preoccupied attachment style reported the fewest previous relationships. These results make sense because dismissive individuals would be likely to leave a relationship if their alternatives were high (such as another potential dating partner), whereas preoccupied individuals are more likely to try to remain in their relationship.

Shyness and the Investment Model

In terms of the Investment Model variables, shy and non-shy individuals were expected to differ in a number of ways. Shy individuals were predicted to report lower

satisfaction, fewer alternatives, and higher investment and commitment than non-shy individuals. However, the only significant finding was that shy individuals did report fewer perceived alternatives to their current dating relationship than non-shy individuals. This is important to note because perceiving fewer alternatives to a current situation means that they are less likely to leave a relationship. This ultimately results in an uneven distribution of power in the relationship, as one individual may be more dependent on the relationship than the other. This can be explained by Waller's (1938) Principle of Least Interest, which states that the partner with the least amount of interest in remaining in the relationship has the most power (Waller, 1938). The non-significant findings for the other Investment Model variables (i.e., satisfaction, investment and commitment) are likely explained by the sample used in the study. University students are, on average, quite young and, therefore, have not been with their partner for a very long time. These newer relationships may not be at the point yet where satisfaction, commitment, and investment are playing a large enough role to show differences between shy and non-shy groups. That is, they are still in the "honeymoon stage" of their relationship. Another reason for these null results may be that university students have a large social network at hand and therefore feel they have many resources available to them outside of the relationship.

Attachment Styles and the Investment Model

I also examined the Investment Model variables in terms of attachment styles. Secure individuals were predicted to report lower alternatives, higher satisfaction, higher commitment, and higher investment in their current dating relationship than insecure individuals. All of my predictions were supported. The main difference in terms of perceptions of alternatives was found between secure and dismissive individuals and

secure and fearful individuals. Although it seems strange that securely attached individuals would perceive fewer alternatives to their relationship, it is because of their commitment to their partner that they tend to ignore or devalue their alternatives. By devaluing potentially attractive alternatives, they are protecting their relationship. This devaluation is particularly prominent when someone who is committed to their relationship is presented with a threat (Lydon, Fitzsimons, & Naidoo, 2003). In my study, it appears that the questions in the scale were enough of a threat to invoke this behaviour (for example, "my sexual needs could be fulfilled in an alternative relationship" may be a statement that leaves the participant feeling like they need to defend their current relationship).

In terms of satisfaction, secure individuals are significantly more satisfied in their relationship than preoccupied individuals, fearful individuals, and dismissive individuals. These results are important because when someone is satisfied with their relationship, it means that they want to be in it. Those individuals with insecure attachment styles are reporting that they are less happy in their relationship, which can only be detrimental to their relationship with their partner. However, how happy one is in their relationship does not predict whether they will remain in that relationship. Commitment is ones' intent to remain in the relationship, and the feelings of attachment to their partner and the relationship. Securely attached individuals are more committed to their partner than fearfully attached individuals and dismissive individuals. These differences are logical because fearful and dismissive attachment styles are in part defined by high avoidance. These two aspects, satisfaction and commitment, can in part predict whether someone will stay in a relationship. Securely attached individuals report high satisfaction and

commitment, and therefore are likely to stay in their relationship. Preoccupied individuals are less satisfied, but they are committed. Because of their commitment, they are likely to stay in the relationship, despite the fact that they are unhappy. Both fearful and dismissive individuals report being unhappy and uncommitted to the relationship, and are, therefore, especially likely to leave if a better alternative is presented. These patterns of the tendency to stay in the relationship were shown in my study, with secure individuals reporting the longest relationships, and fearful individuals reporting the shortest.

In terms of investment, secure and preoccupied individuals are significantly more invested in their relationship than fearful and dismissive individuals. Investment is defined as the importance of relationship-attached resources. The differences between the attachment styles are logical because fearful and dismissive attachment styles include high avoidance. Highly avoidant individuals are not likely to place a high amount of importance on the resources related to their relationship because they do not want to get too close to their partner.

Shyness and Attachment Styles Compared

The main purpose of this study was to explore the unique contributions of shyness and attachment styles in relation to the Investment Model variables. The attachment styles in my hierarchical regressions are examined in terms of the anxiety dimension and the avoidance dimension. Shyness is also included as a dimension, and an influence of shyness apart from the anxiety and avoidance dimensions indicates shyness and fearful attachment are not isomorphic.

When looking at these contributions, satisfaction level appears to be influenced

mostly by how anxious and avoidant one is. That is, higher anxiety and avoidance are related to lower satisfaction. The other Investment Model variables show slightly more complicated contributions. Anxiety does not seem to play a role in how invested one is in their relationship if they are low in avoidance. However, if they are high in avoidance, investment is greater for individuals who are high in anxiety than for those who are low in anxiety. When looking at how committed one is to their relationship, avoidance seems to play the most important role. Individuals who are low in avoidance also report higher commitment, and those high in avoidance reporting lower commitment.

The one Investment Model variable that was influenced by both attachment style and shyness was the amount of alternatives one perceives to their relationship. Those who report fewer alternatives also appear to be low in avoidance, with anxiety level not playing much of a role. Those who report the highest amount of alternatives also tend to be high in avoidance and low in anxiety. Shyness also plays a role, accounting for a significant amount of variance not explained by attachment style. This significant amount of variance shows a difference in shyness and fearful attachment. Fearfully avoidant individuals are reporting higher levels of alternatives, while shy individuals are reporting few alternatives.

The prediction that individuals with higher levels of shyness would be more likely to report a fearful avoidant attachment style than individuals with lower levels of shyness was found, as most non-shy individuals reported a secure attachment style. Shy individuals, on the other hand, are evenly spread among the fearfully attached, securely attached, and preoccupied styles. It is, therefore, more likely that a shy individual would report being fearfully attached than would a non-shy individual.

Although there does not appear to be a significant difference in satisfaction between shy and non-shy individuals, it was still expected that shy individuals and secure individuals would be different in their satisfaction level. I found that securely attached individuals reported higher satisfaction than shy individuals. This is important to note, because shy individuals are reporting that they are less happy with their current relationship, and yet they are still remaining in it. This can most likely be explained by their low perceptions of alternatives. Both secure and shy individuals report low alternatives, but their satisfaction level may help to explain the different reasoning behind their perceptions.

Although shyness and fearful avoidant attachment have been shown to be quite similar, comparing patterns of commitment show a difference between the two. Commitment level did not differ depending on shyness level, but it did for attachment style. The fact that one construct provides differences in commitment while the other does not is evidence that shyness and fearful avoidant attachment are more distinct as constructs than has been previously thought.

Limitations

In this study I only look at one person's view of their relationship. I did not examine their relationship as a whole, that is, I did not ask their partner to fill out a questionnaire as well. This may be considered a limitation in that I am not able to perceive the person within their relationship; rather, I only examined their perceptions. Obtaining the partner's data would allow us to look at how accurate someone is in their perceptions of their relationship. It would also allow us to look at what type of partner a shy individual is more likely to have. For example, whether or not they tend to date other

shy individuals, or what type of attachment style their partner has.

Another limitation to be noted is of the sample used in this study. All participants were university students and, therefore, were relatively young compared to most adult relationships. The results may differ in an older population. We would most likely start seeing a difference in amount of investment one has in their relationship, as shared resources become more important, and the involvement of children impacts investment in the relationship. Also in relation to the sample is that the lengths of the relationships examined were quite variable and this variability might warrant closer examination. Looking at an older population would also allow us to see the consequences of an individual being shy on a relationship, most likely leading to an imbalance of power, with the shy person having less power. As for fearful individuals, I would expect that, if an attractive enough alternative presented, they would be much more likely to leave the relationship, as they are less satisfied and less committed to the relationship.

A final limitation to note is that my research is correlational and, therefore, I cannot determine the direction of causation. It is possible that one's attachment style or whether or not one is shy could cause commitment, satisfaction, investment, or perceptions of alternatives; however, it is also possible that one's investment, commitment, satisfaction and perceptions of alternatives could cause them to report being shy or to have a specific type of attachment style.

Future Research

Of potential interest for future research in this area is the perceived attachment style of the partner. Previous research has shown that people project their own attachment style onto their partner (Tucker & Anders, 1999). However, shyness has not been

factored in as a potential variable and this may add to the research. As previously stated, shy people are more likely to act in ways that inhibit relationship growth, and tend to have problems establishing and maintaining close, satisfying relationships (Leary & Buckley, 2000). This suggests that someone who is shy and has a fearful avoidant style may perceive their partner as having a dismissive style. Therefore shyness as a factor could impact how one perceives their partner.

Another avenue to explore within this realm is to examine more closely the reasoning behind the Investment Model results. For example, both shy and secure individuals have been shown to perceive fewer alternatives to their current relationship. However, it is expected that the reasoning behind this is different for the two different groups. Previous research has shown that secure individuals tend to devalue attractive alternatives to their current relationship (Lydon, Fitzsimons, & Naidoo, 2003). Shy people, on the other hand, may just be aware of the fact that their shyness will obstruct their ability to obtain a new relationship. Other factors in this model could also be explored more closely.

Conclusion

The purpose of my thesis was to help clarify the roles of shyness and attachment styles in the Investment Model variables: satisfaction, perceived availability of alternatives, commitment, and investment. Previous research suggested that fearful avoidant individuals avoided relationships *due to* shyness. I felt that this statement oversimplified the relationship between the two. Not all shy individuals have a fearful avoidant attachment style, and not all fearfully attached individuals are shy. By examining shyness and attachment styles in terms of the Investment Model, I provided

evidence that shyness and fearful avoidant attachment, although correlated, are different. Shy individuals show low perceptions of alternatives, while fearful individuals do not. Fearful individuals show low satisfaction and low commitment, while shy individuals do not appear to differ from non-shy individuals on these aspects.

Although some differences were found within my sample, I expect that the relationships among shyness, attachment style, satisfaction, commitment, investment, and alternatives will be quite different among a population with older, more mature relationships. Exploring these relationships among a more mature population would be especially important to the practical applications of the results, such as within couples counselling.

References

Amico, K. R., Bruch, M. A., Haase, R. F., & Sturmer, P. J. (2004). Trait shyness, actual-ought self-discrepancy and discomfort in social interaction. *Personality and Individual Differences, 36,* 1597-1610.

Baldwin, M.W., Fehr, B., Keedian, E., Seidel, M., & Thomson, D.W. (1993). An exploration of the relational schema underlying attachment styles: Self-report and lexical decision approaches. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 19*, 746-754.

Baldwin, M.W., Keelan, J. P. R., Fehr, B., Enns, V., & Koh-Rangarajoo, E. (1996). Social-cognitive conceptualization of attachment working models: Availability and accessibility effects. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71*, 94-109.

Banse, R. (2004). Adult attachment and marital satisfaction: Evidence for dyadic configuration effects. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 21,* 273-282.

Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61*, 226-244.

Bruch, M. A., & Belkin, D. K. (2001). Attributional style in shyness and depression: Shared and specific maladaptive patterns. *Cognitive Therapy and Research, 25,* 247–259.

Chavira, D. A., Stein, M. B., & Malcarne, V. L., (2002). Scrutinizing the relationship between shyness and social phobia. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders, 16,* 585-598.

Cheek, J. M., & Briggs, S. R. (1990). Shyness as a personality trait. In W. R. Crozier,

(Ed), *Shyness and embarrassment: Perspectives from social psychology* (pp. 315-337). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cheek, J. M., & Buss, A. H. (1981). Shyness and sociability. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 41,* 330-339.

Collins, L., & Feeney, B.C. (2004). Working models of attachment shape perceptions of social support: Evidence from experimental and observational studies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 87,* 363-383.

Cowden, C. R. (2005). Worry and its relationship to shyness. *North American Journal of Psychology, 7,* 59-70.

Crozier, W. R. (2005). Measuring shyness: Analysis of the Revised Cheek and Buss Shyness scale. *Personality and Individual Differences, 38,* 1947-1956.

Duggan, E. S., & Brennan, K. A. (1994). Social avoidance and its relation to Bartholomew's adult attachment typology. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 11,* 147-153.

Egeci, I. S., & Gencoz, T. (2006). Factors associated with relationship satisfaction: Importance of communication skills. *Contemporary Family Therapy, 28,* 383-391.

Garcia, S., Stinson, L., Ickes, W., Bissonnette, V., & Briggs, S. R. (1991). Shyness and physical attractiveness in mixed-sex dyads. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 61,* 35-49.

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52,* 511-524.

Heiser, N. A., Turner, S. M., & Beidel, D. C. (2003). Shyness: Relationship to social phobia and other psychiatric disorders. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 41,* 209-221.

Hill, G. J. (1989). An unwillingness to act: Behavioral appropriateness, situational constraint, and self-efficacy in shyness. *Journal of Personality, 57,* 871-890.

Ickes, W., Robertson, E., Tooke, W., & Teng, G. (1986). Naturalistic social cognition: Methodology, assessment, and validation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51,* 66-82.

Jackson, T., Towson, S., & Narduzzi, K. (1997). Predictors of shyness: A test of variables associated with self-presentational models. *Social Behavior and Personality, 25,* 149-154.

Jones, W. H., Briggs, S. R., & Smith, T. G. (1986). Shyness: Conceptualization and measurement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51,* 629-639.

Jones, W. H. & Carpenter, B. N. (1986). Shyness, social behaviour, and relationships. In W. H. Jones, J. M. Cheek, & S. R. Briggs (Eds), *Shyness, Perspectives on research and treatment* (pp. 227-249). New York: Plenum Press.

Kelley, H. H., & Thibaut, J. W. (1978*). Interpersonal relations: A theory of interdependence.* New York: Wiley.

Kurdek, L. A. (2007). Avoidance motivation and relationship commitment in heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian partners. *Personal Relationships, 14,* 291-306.

Le, B. & Agnew, C. R. (2003). Commitment and its theorized determinants: A meta-analysis of the Investment Model. *Personal Relationships, 10,* 37-57.

Leary, M. R., & Buckley, K. E. (2000). Shyness and the pursuit of social acceptance. In W. R. Crozier (Ed), *Shyness: Development, consolidation & change* (pp. 139-153) New York: Routledge.

Lovibond, S.H. & Lovibond, P.F. (1995). *Manual for the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales.* (2nd. Ed.) Sydney: Psychology Foundation.

Lydon, J. E., Fitzsimons, G. M., & Naidoo, L. (2003). Devaluation versus enhancement of attractive alternatives: A critical test using the calibration paradigm. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29,* 349-359.

Morry, M. M. (2003). Perceived locus of control and satisfaction in same-sex friendships. *Personal Relationships, 10,* 495-509.

Morry, M. M. (2007). The attraction-similarity hypothesis among cross-sex friends: Relationship satisfaction, perceived similarities, and self-serving perceptions. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 24,* 117-138.

Mounts, N. S., Valentiner, D. P., Anderson, K. L., & Boswell, M. K. (2006). Shyness, sociability, and parental support for the college transition: Relation to adolescents' adjustment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 35,* 71-80.

Pistole, M. C., Clark, E. M., & Tubbs, A. L. (1995). Love relationships: Attachment style and the investment model. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 17,* 199-209.

Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45,* 101-117.

Rusbult, C. E., Martz, J. M., & Agnew, C. R. (1998). The investment model scale: Measuring commitment level, satisfaction level, quality of alternatives, and

investment size. *Personal Relationships, 5,* 357-391.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ruvolo, A. P., & Fabin L. A. (1999). Two of a kind: Perceptions of own and partner's attachment characteristics. *Personal Relationships, 6,* 57-79.

Scott, S. (2006). The medicalisation of shyness: From social misfits to social fitness. *Sociology of Health and Illness, 28,* 133-153.

Simpson, J. A. (1990). Influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59,* 971-980.

Tucker, J. S. & Anders, S. L. (1999). Attachment style, interpersonal perception accuracy, and relationship satisfaction in dating couples. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 25,* 403-412.

Waller, W. (1938). *The family: A dynamic interpretation.* New York: Gordon.

Zimbardo, P. G. (1977). *Shyness: What it is, what to do about it.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Table 1.

Chi Square Test of Attachment Styles and How They Met Their Partner

	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissive	Total
Friends First	24 (24%)	17 (35%)	7 (13%)	2 (9%)	50 (22%)
Through Friend	22 (22%)	8 (17%)	15 (28%)	12 (52%)	57 (25%)
Places	49 (49%)	21 (44%)	31 (57%)	9 (39%)	110 (49%)
Websites	4 (4%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	7 (3%)
Total	99	48	54	23	224

Note. $\chi^2(9) = 19.25, p < .05$

Table 2.

Correlations between Shyness, Self-Esteem, Anxiety, and Attachment Avoidance and Anxiety.

	Shyness	Self Esteem	Anxiety	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety
Shyness	--	-.46***	.38***	.34**	.35**
Self Esteem	--	--	-.39***	-.38**	-.43**
Anxiety	--	--	--	.28**	.32**
Attachment Avoidance	--	--	--	--	.27**
Attachment Anxiety	--	--	--	--	--

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3.

Means and Standard Deviations by Attachment Style.

	Satisfaction	Alternatives	Investment	Commitment
Insecure	5.77 (1.52)	4.39 (1.49)	5.11 (1.48)	5.51 (1.63)
Secure	6.96 (1.04)$_{a}$	3.81 (1.87)$_{a}$	5.42 (1.56)$_{a}$	6.74 (1.37)$_{a}$
Fearful	5.37 (1.09)$_{bd}$	4.55 (1.24)$_{bd}$	4.91 (1.23)$_{b}$	4.88 (1.18)$_{bd}$
Preoccupied	6.26 (1.62)$_{c}$	4.05 (1.58)$_{ac}$	5.77 (1.27)$_{ac}$	6.38 (1.57)$_{ac}$
Dismissive	5.43 (1.76)$_{d}$	4.90 (1.63)$_{d}$	3.83 (1.60)$_{d}$	4.68 (1.64)$_{d}$

Note. Satisfaction, alternatives and commitment means significantly differ between insecure and secure styles at $p < .01$. In each column, for the four categories, different subscripts indicate a significant difference at $p < .05$. Numbers in brackets are standard deviations.

Table 4.

Regression Analyses predicting Investment Model Variables.

	Block 1		Block 2		Block 3		
	R^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	Total R^2
Satisfaction	.35***		.00		.00		.35***
Avoidance		-.52***		-.53***		-.53***	
Anxiety		-.18**		-.16**		-.17**	
Avoidance x Anxiety				.06		.06	
Shyness						.03	
Alternatives	.08***		.02*		.03**		.14***
Avoidance		.29***		.32***		.37***	
Anxiety		-.03		-.06		-.01	
Avoidance x Anxiety				-.14*		-.14*	
Shyness						-.20**	
Investment	.17***		.03**		.00		.21***
Avoidance		-.40***		-.44***		-.44***	
Anxiety		.25***		.30***		.30***	
Avoidance x Anxiety				.19**		.19**	
Shyness						.00	

Commitment	.37***	.02**	.00	.39***
Avoidance	-.61***	-.64***	-.65***	
Anxiety	.01	.04	.03	
Avoidance x Anxiety		.14**	.14**	
Shyness			.05	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.

Chi Square Test of Attachment Style and Shyness.

	Secure	Fearful	Preoccupied	Dismissive	Total
Non Shy	75 (61.98%)	13 (10.74%)	25 (20.66%)	8 (6.61%)	121
Shy	34 (29.82%)	41 (35.96%)	35 (30.70%)	4 (3.51%)	114
Total	109 (46.38%)	54 (22.98%)	60 (25.53%)	12 (5.11%)	235

Note. $\chi^2(3) = 33.21, p < .001$

Figure 1.

Regression Analysis predicting Alternatives by Anxiety and Avoidance.

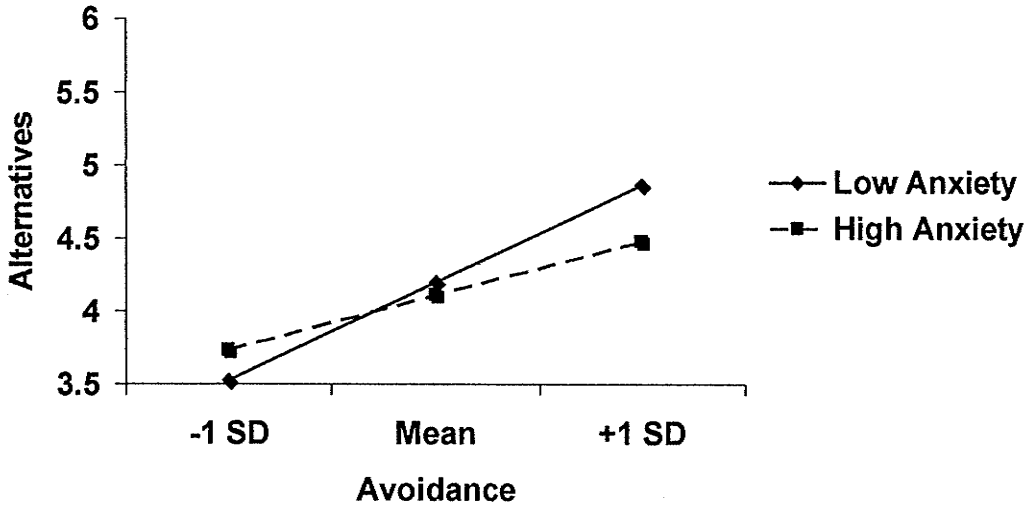


Figure 2.

Regression Analysis predicting Investment by Anxiety and Avoidance.

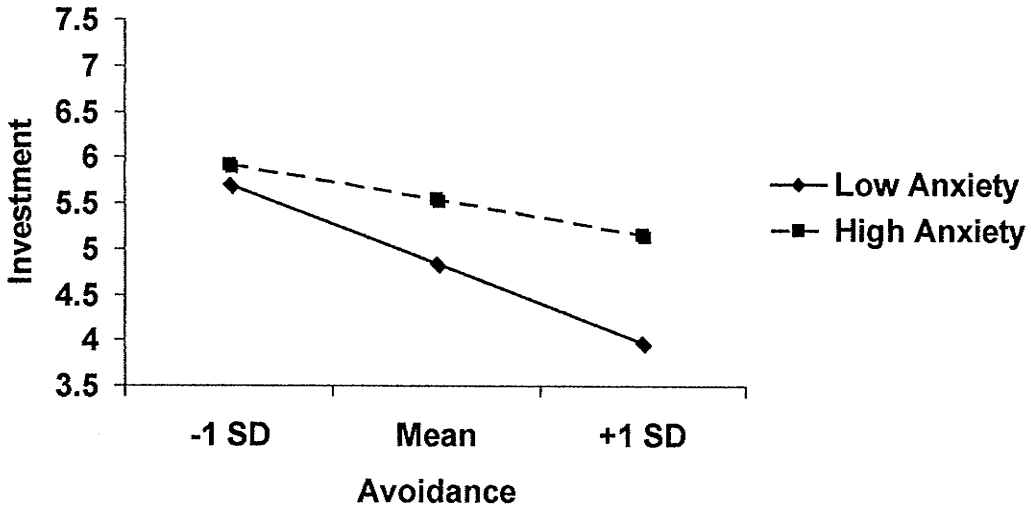
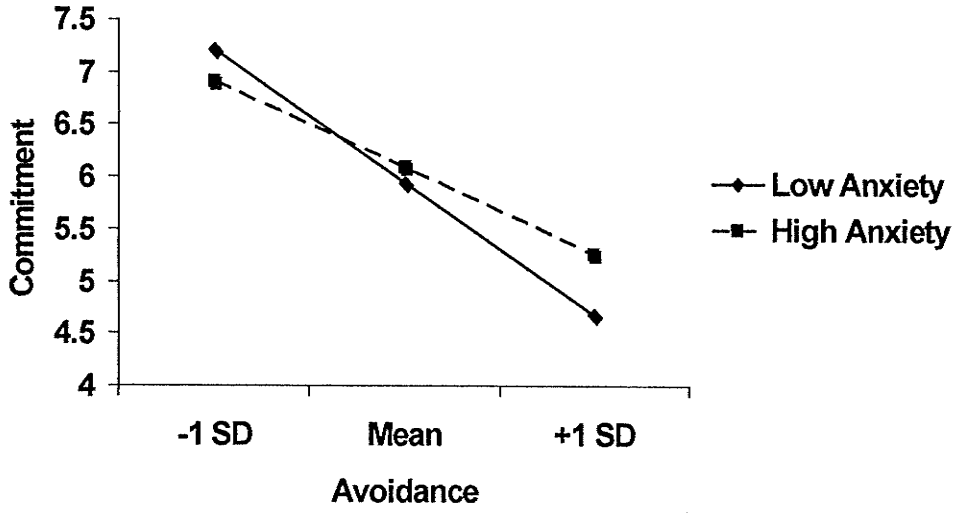


Figure 3.

Regression Analysis predicting Commitment by Anxiety and Avoidance.



Appendix A

Demographic Information Form

Please provide the following background information about **yourself**:

Age: _____

Gender: _____

What country were you born in? _____

If you were not born in Canada, how long have you lived here? _____

What is your first language? _____

What ethnic background do you identify with most?

____ European/Caucasian
____ North American Aboriginal
____ East Indian
____ Asian
____ Polynesian
____ Other
____ Middle Eastern
____ African
____ Central American
____ South American
____ Australian
____ More than one of those listed

Please provide the following background information about your **dating partner**:

Age: _____

Gender: _____

What country was he/she born in? _____

If he/she was not born in Canada, how long has he/she lived here? _____

What is his/her first language? _____

What ethnic background does he/she identify with most?

____ European/Caucasian
____ North American Aboriginal
____ East Indian
____ Asian
____ Polynesian
____ Other
____ Middle Eastern
____ African
____ Central American
____ South American
____ Australian
____ More than one of those listed

How long have you **known** your dating partner? _____ months

How long have you and your partner been **dating**? _____ months

How did you first meet your current dating partner? If more than one of the following applies, **indicate the order of importance** (number them with "1" being most important).

___Friends first
___Through another friend
___Set up by a friend
___At school
___At a social gathering
___At church
___At work
___Through a work colleague
___At a bar
___Online dating website (e.g., lavalife)
___Social networking website (e.g., facebook)
___Blind date
___Other (please specify):_____
_____
_____

Now, please check ONLY the MOST important **ONE** that applies to how you met your partner:

___Friends first
___Through another friend
___Set up by a friend
___At school
___At a social gathering
___At church
___At work
___Through a work colleague
___At a bar
___Online dating website (e.g., lavalife)
___Social networking website (e.g., facebook)
___Blind date
___Other (please specify):_____
_____
_____

Think of your PAST dating relationships. For each of your past dating relationships choose only the **most important reason** as to how you met each person (check beside an option as many times as necessary to indicate each relationship if you met more than one previous partner that same way).

For example, if you met KM at school and GB and RL through friends, you would put 2 checks beside "through another friend" and 1 check beside "at school".

___Friends first
___Through another friend
___Set up by a friend
___At school
___At a social gathering
___At church
___At work
___Through a work colleague
___At a bar
___Online dating website (e.g., lavalife)
___Social networking website (e.g., facebook)
___Blind date
___Other (please specify):_____
_____
_____

Appendix B

INFORMED CONSENT

Research Project: "Examining Experiences in Dating Relationships"

Researcher: Jessica Scholz, M.A. Student
Dr. Marian Morry, Associate Professor
(Supervisor; Department of Psychology, P508 Duff Roblin, 474-7840)

This consent form is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this consent form carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

I agree to participate in the experiment that is being conducted by Jessica Scholz under the supervision of Dr. Marian Morry and has been approved by the Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. I have been told that the purpose of this study is to examine experiences in dating relationships. I understand that the experimental session will last approximately 50 minutes and that I will receive 2 experimental credits toward my Introductory Psychology research participation requirement.

I also understand that all information obtained will be kept confidential. I have been informed that my name and student number will **NOT** be associated in any way with my responses. Finally, I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I can refuse to answer any question or withdraw my consent at any time without penalty or loss of my experimental credit.

I can receive the results of this study in late July 2008 outside room P259 Duff Roblin, or by email if I provide my email address on this consent form. Any questions I have about this study can be directed to Jessica Scholz at umschol3@cc.umanitoba.ca or to Dr. Morry at 474-7840 or in room P508 Duff Roblin. Any complaints I have may be reported to the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122 or margaret_bowman@umanitoba.ca. I understand a copy of this consent form with these room and phone numbers will be given to me at the end of the study today. As per the American Psychological Association, the questionnaires will be shredded in 2015 at the latest. Only Jessica Scholz, Dr. Morry, and Dr. Morry's research assistants will have access to this data.

My signature on this form indicates that I have understood to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive my legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions I prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. My continued participation should be as informed as my initial consent, so I should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout my participation.

I, _____, have read the above information and hereby consent to participate in this study.

Signature: _____ Student Number: _____

Date: _____ Witness (Researcher): _____

I would like to receive a summary of the results at this email address: _____