

Study of the Relationship between Communication Stance and Sense of Security among College Students in Romantic Relationship

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Abstract: In today's environment of openness to relationships, it is common for college students to fall in love. The effects of communication and sense of security in romantic relationships are increasingly significant. This paper aims to explore the intrinsic connection between communication styles and sense of security among college students in romantic relationships. In this work, 387 college students in romantic relationship were selected as research subjects through questionnaire survey, and the Sense of Security Questionnaire (SQ) and Satir Coping Stance Scale (SCS) were used as research tools. In this paper, the result shows that: (1) there was a gender difference in security; (2) there was a difference in the security between only and non-only child; (3) there was no significant in the security between grades and in the communication stance between genders ($P > 0.01$); (4) congruent communication had a positive predictive effect on security, and the result of non-congruent communication were not significant. The conclusion as follows: Firstly, girls' security is significantly lower than boys' security. Second, non-only children's security is significantly lower than only children. At last, congruent communication can increase individual's level of security. These findings enrich the theoretical framework of the relationship between communication and security, and it also provides ideas on how to build a stable relationship for college students love.

Keywords: Security; Satir Communication Stances; College Student; Romantic Relationship.

1. Introduction

In today's open relationship environment, college students fall in love commonly, and the percentage of romantic relationship is gradually increasing among college student group[1]. Romantic relationship is a typical intimate relationship, which has a profound impact on students, couple who in a good relationship can gain sense of security and belonging. However, university students, as a young community that has not yet entered the society, may cause quarrels or even physical conflicts when they face some difficult problems. These possible result in negative effects on physical and mental health[2].

Security is one of the most important factors in romantic relationships in addition to stabilizing traits such as attachment type[3]. The concept of security was first originated by Freud, he believed that the sense of security is due to the individual's lack of caring resulting in inner anxiety. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, he defined security as the confidence that one is free from the bondage of anxiety and fear, especially the psychological state that one's present and future needs will be met 错误!未找到引用源。 . Individuals with a strong sense of security are usually better able to handle and maintain intimate relationships, which plays an indispensable role between couples[4].

Communication is one of the main factors affecting an individual's sense of security. The communication, refers to the transmission of information in various forms, and the state of information between two parties or groups to achieve interoperability. There is a mention in the Virginia Satir modern[6], effective communication can express their ideas and demands correctly.

Nowadays, college students' romantic relationships are being emphasized, security and effective communication play

an important role in college students' love. But there are fewer studies on the link between communication type and security, and the related theoretical and empirical studies are relatively insufficient. Based on this, the study aims to explore the relationship between communication type and sense of security under different gender, age, and other factors.

2. Literature Review

Most of the main research subjects on security at home and abroad are adolescents, and there are more influencing factors to study the role of security, and there are fewer studies related to the security of adults. In a study on the relationship between sense of security and happiness, college students were taken as a study group, and the result of the study concluded that sense of security was positively corrected with happiness[7]. In addition to this, in the previous study, the level of the security is closely related to interpersonal relationship, especially the influence of parent-child relationship accounts for most of them[8].

Satir's theory of communication suggests that the form of interaction between individuals that conveys information and responds to it is communication[9]. Communication is one of the key factors affecting an individual's relationship with others, and Satir categorize communication into congruent communication, that is consistent in verbal and emotional expression, and non-congruent communication that hides one's true feeling, which includes: placating communication, blaming, Ultraresponsible, Distracting Communication. These types of communication tends to cause misunderstanding between couple, and is likely to destroy the relationship. In romantic relationship, research of communication is also relatively rich, mainly focusing on communication patterns and ability, among which communication-related scales include Communication

Patterns Questionnaire(CPQ)[10], Marital Communication Inventory(MCI)[11] etc.

With the increasing prominence of relationship problems among college students, it has become particularly important to instruct college couples on how to maintain a stable and intimate relationship, and to provide them with certain methods and suggestions. According to Satir's theory, consistent type of communication can promote the development of the relationship, and can improve the individual's sense of well-being and belonging, thus increasing the satisfaction of this relationship. And in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, when this belonging and love are satisfied, the individual can get a sense of security from it. Relationships during the college student period are an important stage in life, due to many reasons such as immature mental development and lack of communication skills, which may lead to couples concealing their inner feelings or not expressing their thoughts during conversations, thus affecting the individual's sense of security.

Synthesizing the above theories and ideas, this research will focus on the relationship between sense of security and communication stance. The following hypotheses will be made in this study: (i) there are demographic differences in the sense of security such as gender and age; (ii) there are gender differences in the type of communication; and (iii) communication can influence the level of security.

3. Method and Result

3.1. Research Method

3.1.1. Research Objective

The target of this study is the group of college students who are in love, and the questionnaire survey method was used to distribute questionnaires and collect data through online questionnaires. A total of 405 pieces of data were collected, excluding invalid questionnaires such as those with too short a response time, and finally 387 pieces of data were collected,

with an effective recovery rate of 95.6%. Among them, there were 150 male students (38.8%), and 237 female students (61.2%).

3.1.2. Research Tools

1) Security Questionnaire (SQ)

In this study, the level of security was measured using the Security Questionnaire compiled by national scholars An Lijuan and Cong Zhong, which consists of 16 questions divided into two dimensions: interpersonal security and certainty of control, and is scored on a five-point scale, with 1 being very much in line with it and 5 being very much out of line with it, with higher scores indicating a higher sense of security. The reliability of The reliability of the scale was good, with a Cronbach α coefficient of 0.796[12].

2) Satir Coping Scale (SCS)

This study used the revised Chinese version of Satir Coping Scale, which was revised by Zhou Ming of Southwest University, with total of 29 questions, divided into four dimensions: Distracting Communication, blaming, placating communication and Ultraresponsible, and rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 to 5. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale is 0.926, which has good reliability and validity[13].

3.1.3. Statistical Processing

SPSS 26.0 was used for statistical analysis, and the statistical methods were descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, chi-square test, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

3.2. Finding

3.2.1. Descriptive Statistics

There were 219(56.6%) only children and 168(43.4%); 206(53.2%) in the lower grades (first-year to third-year) and 181(46.8%) in the upper grades(fourth-year and above), as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample(N=387)

Variable name	Categorization	Number	Percentage (%)
genders	male	150	38.8
	female	237	61.2
ages	First-year	33	8.5
	Second-year	76	19.6
	Third-year	97	25.1
	Fourth-year	91	23.5
	Graduate students and above	90	23.3
	Only or non-only children	Yes	219
No		168	43.4
Romantic relationship history	one	144	37.2
	two	165	42.6
	three	62	16.0
	More than three times	16	4.1

3.2.2. Descriptive Statistics of Communication Types

Of the communication stances,275(71.1%) belonged to the congruent communication, while the non-congruent included

11(2.8%) blaming, 14(3.6%) distracting, 22(5.7%) Placating Communication, and 65(16.8%)Ultraresponsible, for a total of 28.9%.

Table 2. Statistical characteristics of communication stances(N=387)

Communication stances	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Congruent communication	275	71.1
Blaming	11	2.8
distracting	14	3.6
Placating communication	22	5.7
Ultraresponsible	65	16.8

3.2.3. Comparison of the Security Status of Male and Female University Students

The total security scores of college students of different genders were compared and independent samples t-test was done. The results show that there is a difference in the level of security between male and female college students ($t = 3.191 < 0.01$) and that female college students feel less secure than male college students under romantic relationships. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of college students' sense of security by gender(N=387)

	Genders	N	M	SD	t	P
Security	Male	150	63.560	12.104	3.191	0.002
	Female	237	59.291	13.879		

3.2.4. Comparison of Differences in Communication Stance between Male and Female College Students

The communication stances of male and female university students were counted and chi-square test was done. The results indicated that there was no gender difference in communication types ($p=0.140 > 0.01$). The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of differences in communication stances among college students of different genders

Genders	Congruent communication		Non-congruent communication		x ²	P
	N	%	N	%		
Male	113	75.3	37	24.7	2.176	0.140
Female	162	68.4	75	31.6		
Total	275	71.1	112	28.9		

3.2.5. Different Comparison of Security in the Situation of Being a Only Child

The total score of sense of security of only and non-only college students was counted and independent samples t-test was done. The results show a significant difference in the

sense of security in the case of only and non-only students ($t = 6.937 < 0.001$), where the total score of the sense of security of the college students belonging to the only child is higher than that of the college students who are not only children. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of differences in feelings of security among unique and non-unique children

	Only children or not	N	M	SD	t	P
Security	Yes	219	64.995	10.523	6.937	<0.001
	No	168	55.667	14.795		

3.2.6. Comparison of Differences in Feelings of Security under Different Ages

First-year students, second-year students, and third-year students were categorized as lower grades, and fourth-year students with graduate students and above were categorized

as higher grades, and the total security scores of lower and higher grades were counted and subjected to an independent samples t-test, which showed that the difference in security under different ages was not statistically significant ($P=0.395 > 0.01$). The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Comparison of differences in sense of security across Grade levels

	Grades	N	M	SD	t	P
Security	Lower grades	206	60.402	14.095	-0.852	0.395
	Upper grades	181	61.564	12.498		

3.2.7. Correlation Analysis between Security and Communication Stances

To do a correlation analysis of communication stances and sense of security of college students, first of all, based on Satir communication theory, the communication stances is divided into congruent communication and non-congruent communication, and then analyzed with the total score of the sense of security, because the data is not normally distributed, so we use Spearman correlation analysis method to analyze

the data.

The results showed a significant positive correlation between congruent communication and total security score ($r=0.530$, $P<0.01$), see Table 7. non-congruent communication was significantly positively correlated with total security score ($r=0.249$, $P<0.01$), see Table 8.

Table 7. Correlation analysis between congruent communication and sense of security(N=275)

	Security	Congruent communication
Congruent communication	0.530**	1
Security	1	0.530**
Spearman correlation: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001.		

Table 8. Correlation analysis between non-congruent communication and sense of security(N=112)

	Security	Non-congruent communication
Non-congruent communication	0.249**	1
Security	1	0.249**
Spearman correlation: *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001.		

3.2.8. Regression Analysis of Security and Communication Stances

Regression analysis was conducted with communication stances as the independent variable and sense of security as the dependent variable. The results showed a significant performance between congruent communication and sense of

security ($\beta = 0.539$, $P < 0.001$), indicating that congruent communication can significantly and positively predict sense of security; non-congruent communication and sense of security were not significant ($\beta = 0.226$, $P = 0.16 > 0.01$), and the results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Regression of congruent vs. non-congruent communication on security

	Beta	t	P	R	R ²
Congruent communication and security	0.539	10.561	<0.001	0.539	0.290
Non-congruent communication and security	0.226	2.438	0.16	0.226	0.051

4. Conclusion

There is a significant gender difference in the sense of security, and girls' sense of security is significantly lower than boys' sense of security, the result that is consistent with previous studies. Although today's society advocates gender equality, girls still suffer from greater prejudice in society, which makes them sensitive and suspicious of people and events, and thus greatly reduces individual's sense of security.

Only children's sense of security is significantly higher than that of non-only children, and the results of the present study are contrary to previous work. The lower sense of security of non-only children may be due to the fact that parental love and care will be spread equally among the children, and the care of non-only children will be relatively less compared to that of only children.

From the results of the study, congruent communication is significantly and positively related to security, and the regression analysis is significant, which indicates that when individuals belong to congruent communication, this communication can increase the security of individuals. And this result is consistent with the hypothesis of this study. As previous studies, better communication is the basis for enhancing relationship quality and can promote positive interactions between couple. In such a communication atmosphere, individuals can feel valued, realize that their needs are met, and so on, which makes them feel in control of the intimate relationship and thus secure in the relationship. However, the relationship between non-congruent communication and security is not consistent with theoretical research. The reason for this may be that the sample size was too small, with only 28.9% of college students falling into the non-congruent communication category. Secondly, this study is only limited to the effect of communication stances on the sense of security, the individual's personality, the other party's lack of positive response and other factors may affect the level

of security.

Based on the results, the following conclusions were drawn: there is a gender difference in the sense of security, with boys having a higher sense of security. There is a difference in security in the case of only children, with non-only children having a lower level of security. Communication can influence the individual's sense of security, as evidenced by the fact that consistent type of communication can increase the level of individual's sense of security.

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