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NEGOTIATING FACE AND CONFLICT IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS: A CROSS- CULTURAL COMPARISON OF UGANDA AND ETHIOPIA

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NEGOTIATING FACE AND CONFLICT IN ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS:

A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON OF UGANDA AND ETHIOPIA

BY

COURTNEY VAIL FLETCHER

B.A. Interpersonal Communication, Canisius College, 2002
M.A. Communication Theory and Research, West Virginia University, 2005

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
Communication**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

July, 2009

DEDICATION

I hereby dedicate this project to the participants of this study residing in Uganda and Ethiopia. Thank you for allowing me into your homes and personal lives. I will carry your stories with me forever, and I am grateful to each of you for help in completing this project. Thank you for allowing me to use your shared lived experiences in my research, classes, and to better understand my relationship with/in/to the world. I will never be the same as a result of the time that I spent with each one of you...and the time I spent with your families, community members, and traveling within the borders of your countries. It was truly a beautiful experience for me!

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Dr. John G. Oeztel: *Have you learned the lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you? Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced themselves against you, and disputed passage with you?* ~ Walt Whitman

Dr. Janice Schuetz, Dr. Pamela Lutgen-Sandvik, and Professor Scott Hughes: *Great hearts steadily send forth the secret forces that incessantly draw great events.* ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Dr. Karen Foss: *Nothing will work unless you do.* ~ Maya Angelou

Mom: *Where thou art, that is home.* ~ Emily Dickinson

Dad: *Experience has shown, and a true philosophy will always show, that a vast, perhaps the larger portion of the truth arises from the seemingly irrelevant.*
~ Edgar Allen Poe

Ryan and Mary: *We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.* ~ T.S. Eliot

Uncle Paul: *Forgive me my nonsense, as I also forgive the nonsense of those that think they talk sense.* ~ Robert Frost

Aunt Ellen: *I took a deep breath and listened to the old bray of my heart. I am. I am. I am.* ~ Sylvia Plath

Rachelle: *Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul - and sings the tunes without the words - and never stops at all.* ~ Emily Dickinson

Katie: *Friendship is a single soul dwellings in two bodies.* ~ Aristotle

Carrie: *A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before her I may think aloud.*
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Marguerite: *I'm not confused. I'm just well mixed.* ~ Robert Frost

Marianne: *I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul rememb'ring my good friend.* ~ William Shakespeare

Rachel: *My best friend is the one who brings out the best in me.* ~ Henry Ford

RBD & Foxtrot: *Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about.*
~ Rumi

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ABSTRACT

Using Face Negotiation Theory (FNT) and its associated assumptions to guide the study, the current project addressed the lack of African centered communication research by conducting a mixed-method study in Uganda and Ethiopia regarding how culture and family socialization patterns impact romantic partners in conflict. Specifically, this study examined how culture and family communication patterns influence face concerns, conflict style choices, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic relationships. The role of religion and communalism in African culture was also a primary focus of the study, with qualitative results yielding several interesting and new ideas about the important role of these constructs in Uganda and Ethiopia.

Quantitative data was collected via surveys in Uganda and Ethiopia to test nine hypotheses and answer two research questions. Results indicated the following: (a) the more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they report using an avoiding and dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners, (b) the more individuals report an

other-oriented face concern, the more they report using an avoiding and collaborating conflict style when in conflict, (c) the more individuals in report a self-oriented face concern, the more they report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict, (d) the more individuals in report using a conversation-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they report using a collaborating conflict style when in conflict, and (e) individuals in from a conversation-oriented family report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals from a conformity- oriented family.

Qualitative data was used to answer an additional four research questions that were aimed at providing a clearer understanding of the relationship among family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. In addition, the qualitative data was used to examine the role of communalism and religion in romantic conflict in Uganda and Ethiopia. The results indicated that individuals from Uganda and Ethiopia prefer an (1) *indirect* and (2) *confrontation/explicit* conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partner; individuals view (1) *family*, (2) *community/tribal*, (3) *third parties*, and (4) *patriarchy* as their primary sources for their conflict behavior; religion is viewed as a (1) *teacher/guide*, (2) *comfort/reassurance*, and (3) *conflict resolution/forgiveness*; while participants view the relationship between conflict styles and relational outcomes as being related to (1) *third party help*, (2) *apologizing and forgiving*, and (3) *avoiding*.

Overall, this study was important because it extended FNT in a noteworthy direction by including the role of family communication patterns, communalism, and relational outcomes in the face negotiation and conflict process. Additionally, this project expanded the communication literature to include an African based perspective.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Definitions of Key Terms	4
Rationale	9
Purpose of Study	14
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	16
Ugandan and Ethiopian Context	16
Romantic Conflict.....	19
Face Negotiation Theory (FNT)	21
Relationships of Variables in FNT	31
Hypotheses/Research Questions	38
CHAPTER 3: METHODS	42
Overview of Methods	42
Etic and Emic Aspects of Face and Conflict in Romantic Conflict.....	43
Justification of Methods.....	44
Establishing Equivalency.....	45
Part I: Survey	49
Part II: Interviews	57
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	66
Phase 1: Quantitative Results.....	66
Primary Analysis.....	82

Phase 2: Qualitative Results.....	96
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	145
Findings: Phase 1 (Quantitative Data)	146
Findings: Phase 2 (Qualitative Data)	160
Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Results	168
Theoretical Implications	173
Limitations, Future Directions, and Conclusions	178
APPENDICES.....	184
Appendix A. Survey.....	185
Appendix B. Scoring for Instrument.....	193
Appendix C. Interview Protocol Questions	194
REFERENCES.....	195

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The Independent and Dependent Variables.....	15
Figure 2. Original Relationships Explored in FNT.....	32
Figure 3. New Contributions to FNT in this Study (dotted shapes)	32
Figure 4. Avoiding P-P Plot and Scatterplot.....	79
Figure 5. Dominating P-P Plot and Scatterplot.....	80
Figure 6. Collaborating P-P Plot and Scatterplot.....	81
Figure 7. Relationship Satisfaction P-P Plot and Scatterplot.....	82

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Number of Ugandan and Ethiopian Participants	49
Table 2. Number of Ugandans and Ethiopians Participants by Sex	50
Table 3. Interview Participant Descriptives	58
Table 4. Factor Loadings for Family Socialization	68
Table 5. Family Socialization: Cronbach's Alpha	69
Table 6. Factor Loadings for Face Concern.....	70
Table 7. Face Concern: Cronbach's Alpha	71
Table 8. Factor Loadings for Conflict Styles.....	72
Table 9. Conflict Styles: Cronbach's Alpha	74
Table 10. Factor Loadings for Relationship Satisfaction.....	75
Table 11. Relationship Satisfaction: Cronbach's Alpha	75
Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations: Uganda and Sex	76
Table 13. Means and Standard Deviations: Ethiopia and Sex	77
Table 14. Means and Standard Deviations: Uganda and Ethiopia Combined.....	77
Table 15. Correlations.....	78
Table 16. Dependent Variable: Avoiding	84
Table 17. Dependent Variable: Dominating	86
Table 18. Dependent Variable: Collaborating	88
Table 19. Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction	91

Chapter 1: Introduction

Conflict in romantic relationships is inevitable. In fact, conflict is a normative feature of a stable romantic relationship, with episodes of conflict occurring approximately twice a week (Lloyd, 1987). As partners gain mutual knowledge, interact more frequently, and share greater interdependence over time, they are more likely to engage in conflict (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). Given the regularity of conflict and the normative functions that conflict plays, it is important that scholars continue to investigate the role of conflict in a variety of settings and contexts. One understudied context includes individuals in African cultures. Therefore, the current study intends to examine romantic conflict in an African context by investigating individuals' experiences with romantic conflict in Uganda and Ethiopia.

African cultures have largely been ignored in terms of communication research. The bulk of cross-cultural and intercultural communication research has focused on investigating Western nations, specifically U.S. American and European, and Asian cultures--primarily Japanese and Chinese (Ting-Toomey, Gao, Trubisky, Yang, Kim, Lin, & Nishida, 1991; Morisaki & Gudykunst, 1994). The lack of research that focuses specifically on African cultures, in terms of the role of communication, is disheartening. Oyeshile (2004), a Nigerian philosopher, suggests that Africa, in general, is interested in moving away from its image as the "dark continent." Since the end of colonial rule, many African nations experienced corruption, religious strife, economic hardship, displacement, war, and health tragedies (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Malaria). To address these plagues, Oyeshile argues further that many African nations have the ability to return to communal values displaced during the years of colonization. Individuals in African

cultures, in general, are misunderstood, or perhaps portrayed falsely, from a communication perspective, specifically in terms of the role of communalism as it relates to the dimensions of cultural variability (Moemeka, 1998).

In an effort to narrow initial inquiry regarding conflict in Africa, Uganda and Ethiopia, were chosen as an initial starting place for exploration in this study. In addition, these specific nations were chosen because of the comparative ease with which data could be collected, both from afar (i.e., via international contacts) and on the ground (i.e., English is common language and it is safe to travel within). In addition, the study's focus was tapered further by the decision to study conflict from a romantic perspective, something that has rarely been done in African cultures.

To better understand romantic relationships and conflict in Ugandan and Ethiopian cultures, it is important to consider how conflict arises. Conflict often involves different face-losing and face-saving behaviors (Ting-Toomey, 2007). Face refers to an individual's sense of a desired social self-image in a relational situation (Ting-Toomey, 2005). Loss of face occurs when an individual is treated in such a way that his/her identity claims are being directly or indirectly ignored or threatened. Face-loss can occur either on the individual level and/or the group identity level. Repeated face-loss and face-threat often lead to escalating conflict spirals or an impasse in the conflict negotiation process (Ting-Toomey, 2007). Based on this understanding of face and its role in conflict in a variety of settings, this study adopts face negotiation theory (FNT) as its theoretical framework, which is one of the more popular theories for studying culturally-based conflict.

FNT (Ting-Toomey, 1985) has been tested in a variety of cross-cultural settings in an effort to discern communication patterns within and among cultures (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Masumoto, Yokochi, Pan, Takai, & Wilcox, 2001). According to Tong-Toomey (2007), conflict face-negotiation theory assumes that: (a) individuals in all cultures strive to maintain and negotiate face in all communication situations; (b) the concept of face is especially problematic in “emotionally-threatening or identity vulnerable situations when the situated identities of the communicators are called into question” (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 73); (c) the cultural value spectrums of individualism-collectivism (Triandis, 1995, 2002) and small/large power distance (Hofstede, 2001) shape facework concerns and styles; (d) individualism and collectivism patterns shape individuals’ preferences for self-oriented facework versus other-oriented facework; (e) small and large power distance value patterns shape members’ preferences for horizontal-based facework versus vertical-based facework; (f) the value dimensions, in conjunction with individual, relational, and situational factors influence the use of particular facework behaviors in particular cultural scenes; and (g) intercultural facework competence refers to the optimal integration of knowledge, mindfulness, and communication skills in managing vulnerable identity-based conflict situations appropriately, effectively, and adaptively.

By using FNT and its associated assumptions to guide the study, the current project helps to address the lack of African-centered communication research by conducting a two-part study in Uganda and Ethiopia about how culture and family socialization patterns impact romantic partners in conflict, specifically as it relates to their patterns of use of face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and

forgiveness. More specifically, this study examines how culture and family communication interaction patterns influence specific face concerns, conflict style choices, overall relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic relationships. This investigation gives researchers a better understanding of the role of cultural and familial socialization in romantic relationships in African contexts.

Definitions of Key Terms

There are several key terms used in this study. They include: (a) *romantic/interpersonal conflict* (context), (b) *culture and cultural dimensions of Individualism, Collectivism, and Communalism* (IV), (c) *family socialization* (IV), (d) *face* (DV), (e) *conflict styles* (DV), (f) *relationship satisfaction* (DV), and (g) *forgiveness* (DV).

Romantic/Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict is “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals (Wilmot & Hocker, 2007, p. 9). Romantic and interpersonal conflict are provoked and/or caused by the same forces described in this basic definition of interpersonal conflict. For the purposes of this study, a romantic relationship is defined as any dating, engaged, or marital relationship between two individuals. Romantic conflict results from differences in culture, familial socialization, and/or individual differences in how to approach, treat, and handle the norms of his/her world. Romantic conflicts, conflict between two intimately involved individuals, are under investigation in the current study.

Culture

Culture is “a learned system of meanings that foster a particular sense of shared identity and community among its group members. It is a complex frame of reference that consists of patterns of traditions, beliefs, values, norms, symbols, and meanings that are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a community” (Ting-Toomey, 1999, p. 10). Culture inherently affects communication, and communication inherently affects culture (Hall, 1959). Individualism and collectivism (I-C) are common dimensions of culture and are part of the variability dimensions outlined in Hofstede’s (1980) seminal study. Individualism is the preference of the “I” in front of the “we.” More specifically, individuals from individualistic countries (e.g., United States, Canada) believe that individuals’ needs are more important than the group’s needs (Triandis, 1995). Competition, individuality, and personal achievement are stressed in individualistic cultures. In contrast, individuals from collectivistic cultures (e.g., Japan, China) value the “we” over the “I.” The group’s needs are seen as more important than those of the individual. Collaboration and teamwork, where everyone takes equal credit, is a trait of a collectivistic culture (Triandis, 1995). Triandis (1995) argues that in order to get a larger understanding of differences and similarities between national cultures it is necessary to use the nation as a unit of analyses.

I-C typically is used to explain and/or predict communication preferences and cultural variability in Western nations, such as the United States, and Asian nations, such as Japan. African nations are not studied in the communication literature, and several scholars suggest that I-C is not be suitable and/or appropriate to explain cultural variability in African cultures (Moemeka, 1996). Instead communalism is suggested as a

possible third dimension of culture that can explain communication patterns among individuals in African cultures.

Communalism refers to the concern with the authenticity of the community-identity presentation and with symbolic meaning projected through indirect nonverbal behaviors (Moemeka, 1996). The guiding dictum of communalism is “I am because we are” (Moemeka, 1996, p. 198). Five main elements typify communal cultures: a) community is the center (i.e., the community is the most important aspect of a society or culture), b) sanctity of authority (i.e., there is always a leader whose role is to govern the community through example and wisdom), c) utility/usefulness of the individual (i.e., the community would not exist without the individual, and therefore the individual is vital), d) religion as a way of life (i.e., not necessarily a specific religion, but the belief of a spiritual existence), and e) respect for old age (i.e., elders are seen as being wise and their important role in culture is to share wisdom) (Moemeka, 1996).

Family Socialization

Socialization is the process of learning one’s culture and living within it (Clausen, 1968, p. 5). For the individual, socialization provides the resources necessary for acting and participating within their culture. For a culture, socialization processes indoctrinate all individual members into its norms, attitudes, values, roles, language and symbols. Socialization is the “means by which social and cultural continuity are attained” (Clausen, 1968, p. 5). Family socialization refers to the family’s role in introducing a child to culture. Research shows that family communication patterns and styles influence children’s attitudes and behaviors in a number of areas (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2006). Some research demonstrates a connection between family communication patterns and

communication problems, such as communication apprehension (Hsu, 1998), shyness (Huang, 1999), unwillingness to communicate (Avtgis, 1999) and conflict (Dunn & Tucker, 1991).

Face and Face Concern

The concept of face relates to identity respect and other-identity issues considered within the actual encounter episode. “Face is tied to the emotional significance and estimated calculations that individuals attach to their own social self-worth and the social self-worth of others” (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 73). Emotional calculations of self worth are resources in community identity that can be threatened, enhanced, undermined, and bargained over – on both an emotional reactive level and a cognitive appraisal level (Ting-Toomey, 2005). For example, on the emotional level, a face-threatening act in a conflict situation can arouse several identity-oriented vulnerable emotions. The cognitive appraisal level refers to the degree of face threat or face disrespect experienced when individuals think about how they should be treated in relation to how they are treated. “If the discrepancy between how an individual believes he/she should be treated, then she/he will need to employ different facework strategies in an effort to manage the conflict situation” (Ting-Toomey, 2005, p. 73).

Conflict Styles

Conflict style refers to general tendencies or modes of patterned responses used to address conflict in a variety of antagonistic interactive situations (Putnam & Poole, 1987). In the current study, eight conflict styles are used that are based on a revision of Rahim's (1983) model of concern for self and other (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001). Rahim's classification of conflict styles is on two conceptual dimensions: (a) concern for

self and (b) concern for others. The result of combining the two dimensions is the creation of five styles of handling interpersonal conflict. They include: integrating (i.e., high self and other), compromising (i.e., middle on both dimensions), dominating (high self and low other), obliging (i.e., low self and high other), and avoiding (i.e., low on both dimensions). The five-style model was extended by Ting-Toomey, Oetzel, and Yee-Jung (2001). Their eight-style model includes the five original styles plus three additional styles, third-party help, emotional expression, and passive aggression. Third-party help involves using an outsider to mediate the conflict (i.e., moderate self and other). Emotional expression refers to using one's emotions to guide communication behaviors during conflict (i.e., high self and moderate other). Passive aggression refers to indirect responses to threaten the image of another person (i.e., high self and moderate other).

Relationship Satisfaction

Relationship satisfaction is “the degree to which an individual is content and satisfied with his or her relationship” (Anderson & Emmers-Sommer, 2006, p. 5). Substantial evidence suggests that relationship satisfaction is linked to the ways in which individuals behave in romantic relationships, how people think about their romantic relationships, and the attributions that people make about a partner’s behavior (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995). Relationship satisfaction is both an individual and dyadic construct, and data shows that it is highly affected by individuals’ perceptions of their partners’ various attitudes, behaviors, and communication (Guerrero, 1994).

Forgiveness

Forgiveness occurs when the transgressing romantic partner fully acknowledges that his/her partner has a right to feel negatively toward him/her and when the

transgressed partner acknowledges that transgressing partner has no right to expect his/her sympathy (North, 1998). In order for a romantic partner to forgive his/her spouse, the romantic partner needs to be conscious of being injured/wronged by the spouse because without injury there is nothing to forgive (Enright & Coyle, 1998). The role of forgiveness conflict, and the subsequent impact of forgiveness, or lack thereof, on relationship satisfaction is important to consider. According to Waldron and Kelley (2008), forgiveness is a positive alternative to bitterness and retribution. Furthermore, they state it is a “communication process that allows people to confront the transgression, manage emotions, forgo claims of revenge, and potentially repair the relationship” (p. 5).

Rationale

Several studies suggest that the theorizing and direction of this current research proposal are indeed warranted. A plethora of information explains how face is negotiated in various cultures. For example, Ting-Toomey (2005) outlines 32 axioms that predict how individuals from different cultures (I-C) will respond to face threats or conflict. More specifically, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2003) offer a model of face negotiation that states an individual’s cultural placement (e.g., Individualism/Collectivism) impacts how they handle conflict, as part of mediating specific face concerns and self-construals. For example, individuals from individualistic cultures are more likely to protect their self-face (own face) instead of the other-face (someone else’s face), while individuals from collectivistic cultures are more likely to protect other-face instead of self-face. This relates to how each culture depicts the value of the individual versus the group. Additionally, individuals from individualistic cultures are more likely to use a dominating conflict style (avoiding and obliging styles are seen as negative), while individuals from

collectivistic cultures are more likely to use avoiding or obliging conflict styles. Although results providing a wealth of information on conflict and communication patterns in different cultures, this current study advances the research in several ways.

First, the existing cross-cultural research about conflict and/or face negotiation patterns provides a wealth of knowledge about specific cultures. African cultures are largely absent from the literature. Ting-Toomey (2007) states, “in response to the heavy reliance on the individualistic Western perspective in framing various conflict approaches, Ting-Toomey (1988) and Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) have developed an intercultural conflict theory, namely, the Face Negotiation Theory to include a collectivistic Asian perspective to broaden the theorizing process of various conflict orientations” (p. 5). However, researchers should not assume that similar patterns of cultural variability that exist in Western and Asian cultures can be applied to seemingly similar cultures, such as Uganda and Ethiopia, especially if little is known about these understudied cultures. More clearly, what communication scholars know about individualism in the U.S. should not automatically be assumed to apply to other seemingly individualistic cultures without examining that particular culture (Gudykunst, 2000). Similarly, collectivism in Japan does not act similarly to other collectivists, or more aptly communalistic, African cultures (Moemeka, 1998). Therefore, research needs to be conducted in cultures to assure what communication patterns exist. Uganda and Ethiopia represent two national cultures that have rarely, if ever, been studied using the proposed variables in this study. Yet, assumptions may be wrongly forwarded about individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia that may or may not be correct because it is based on other “similar” cultures.

Second, FNT fails to consider the role of family communication patterns and socialization in conflict outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. More clearly, how family socialization impacts romantic conflict behavior in individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia has never been addressed in the literature, despite the saliency of familial impact on conflict style behaviors and outcomes. Fitzpatrick and Koerner (2002) stress that family of origin impacts how an individual handles conflict, particularly as it relates to conflict resolution styles (e.g., aggress, resist, avoid, etc). Koerner and Fitzpatrick (1997) identify four types of families of origin (i.e., consensual, competitive, protective, and laissez faire). Each of these four types of families of origin likely affects individuals' specific orientation to conflict. For example, consensual families score high on both conversation and conformity orientation, while laissez faire families score low on both orientations. Shearman and Dumlao (2008) used Koerner's and Fitzpatrick's family of origins typology to establish differences and similarities between Japanese and North American families. They found that North American families (of European descent) are more consensual (high on both dimensions of conversation and conformity orientation), which results in more conflict, and also has the potential for healthy resolution of conflict. In contrast, Japanese families categorized predominantly as laissez faire (low on both dimensions of conversation and conformity), scored high on conflict avoidance. More specifically, laissez faire families are characterized by few interactions; consensual families are characterized by a marked need for open conversation that maintain a status quo; protective families are based on parental authority; and pluralistic families are open in conversation and discourage conformity of ideas. However, the role of families in a communalistic African society, where the community is often intertwined, is not fully

understood. Therefore, it becomes useful to assess how Fitzpatrick's and Koerner's prediction of family communication patterns and conflict styles occurs in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture.

Third, the role of communalism in romantic conflict in African cultures is important. More specifically, how individuals from two supposed communalistic cultures differ in their conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness patterns is a question that has yet to be asked in communication and conflict research. In addition, FNT does not address how culture and conflict styles impact relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. McLernon, Cairns, Hewstone, and Smith (2004) suggest that examining the role of forgiveness in a site of ongoing and historic conflict, such as Uganda and Ethiopia, provide good insight into how communication styles ease or resolve conflict and/or tension.

Finally, this study proposes to use both an etic and emic approach. The combining of these two approaches is rarely done in the field of communication. Etic and emic approaches differ in their attempt to locate specific communication phenomenon (Berry, 1980). Essentially, these research philosophies are employed to discover knowledge, specifically as it relates to universal constructs (i.e., etic) and culturally specific constructs (i.e., emic). The words etic and emic come from Pike's (1966) linguistic discussion of *phonetics*, which are universal utterances, and *phonemisc*, which are culturally specific local utterances. This dual approach allows implementation of both post-positivist and interpretive assumptions about knowledge inquiry. More clearly, this study collects data using both a survey and field interviews. I collected the survey data and the interview data concurrently and then used the subsequent results to inform both

sets of data. For example, the questions in my interview protocol were used to help illuminate the statistical data by further contextualizing it and/or by providing a clearer explanation of what the data suggests, while the quantitative data may help to initially highlight the larger themes that exist in the interview data.

Overall, this is a relatively brief overview of my dissertation about face and familial communication patterns, as related to culture, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. This project seeks to fill in some on the gaps that exist in the literature. More specifically, this project (a) extends FNT to include the role of communalism in African cultures, specifically Ugandan and Ethiopian cultures, (b) extends FNT to include the role of family communication patterns and socialization in negotiating face and resolving conflict, (c) assesses the impact of communalism on romantic conflict and subsequent outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and forgiveness), and (d) identifies how emic and etic approaches compliment each other in the search for knowledge and discovery in the field of communication.

Additionally, some potentially practical implications are likely results from this study. For example, researching conflict in African cultures is timely given globalization processes. Tomlinson (1999) argues that culture matters for globalization and vice versa. Therefore, there is a definite need for societies and cultures to re-consider how culture and globalization matter for each other in order to remain an explanatory mechanism for cross-cultural conflict in today's world of increased forces of globalization. Culture is a critical dimension of globalization in that individual cultural actions have global consequences and also that culture is a "symbolic terrain of meaning-construction" for global political interventions (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 27). This study lays some of the

groundwork for beginning to better understand individuals' romantic conflict (micro-level) in Uganda and Ethiopian cultures, which may prove useful for gaining a more complete picture of conflict at the macro-level of globalization.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the current study is to use face-negotiation theory (Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998) to explain patterns of individuals' romantic conflict in two African cultures: Uganda and Ethiopia. The current study provides the first direct test of the importance of culture and family communication patterns in predicting face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. More specifically, the purpose of this study is to use a mixed-method approach that investigates how culture (i.e., Communalism) and specific family communication patterns may impact the face concerns and conflict styles choices of romantic partners. Additionally, how do individuals' face concerns and conflict choices impact a romantic partner's satisfaction with a relationship and one's subsequent ability to forgive a partner's transgression.

In the following section, a review of the literature addresses: (a) Ugandan and Ethiopian context, (b) romantic conflict, (c) FNT (i.e., foundation of FNT, three prior iterations of FNT, and the current iteration of FNT), (d) the additional new variables under investigation (i.e., family communication patterns, relationships satisfaction, and forgiveness), (e) the relationships of the variables in FNT, (f) an overview of etic and emic, and (g) the proposed hypotheses and research questions. The figure below (figure 1) provides a basic overview of this proposed study. The study includes examining how culture and family communication patterns in Ugandan and Ethiopian romantic relationships impact face concerns and conflict style choices, which in turn may impact

relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. Essentially, this model implies that the outcome variables (relationship satisfaction and forgiveness) are mediated by conflict style and face concern choices when in conflict, while an individual's preference for face concern and conflict style may be directly informed by his/her culture and family upbringing.

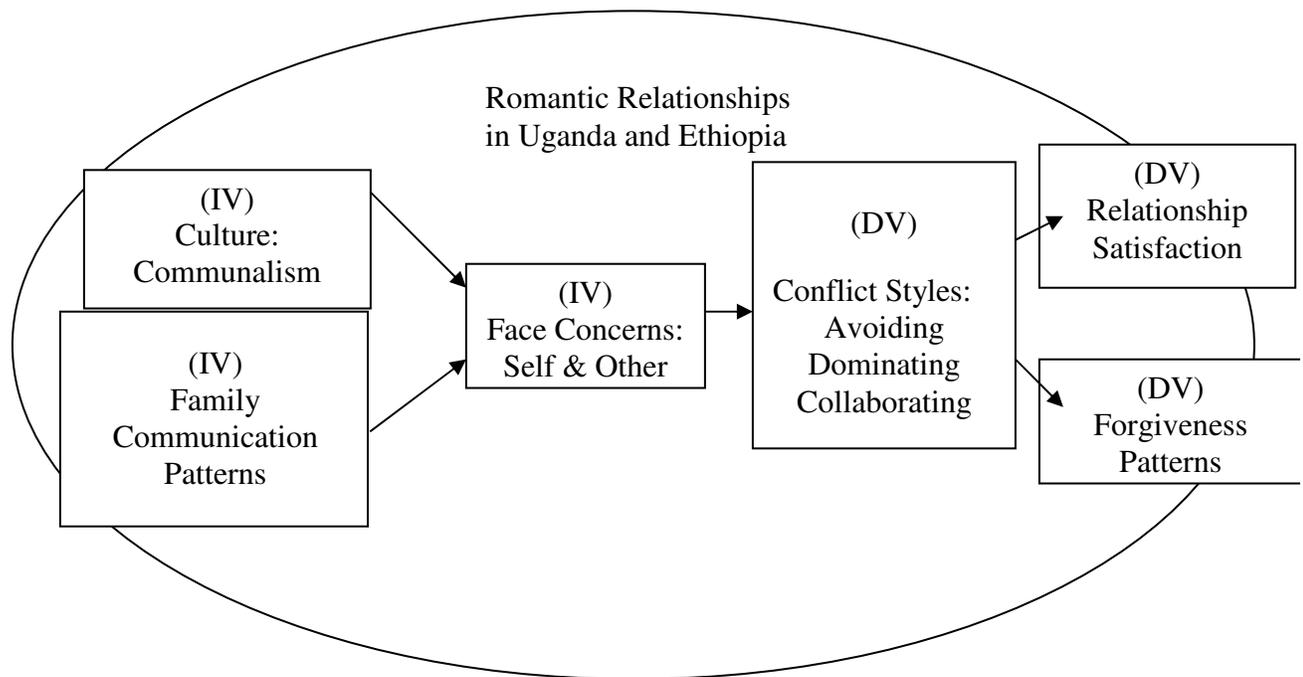


Figure 1. The Independent and Dependent Variables

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To highlight the importance and appropriateness of this inquiry, it is necessary to frame and support the current study in context of the existing literature regarding what is known about the relationships between culture, family socialization, face and face negotiation practices, romantic conflict, and communication outcomes in African communities. Therefore, the review of the literature addresses: (a) the Ugandan and Ethiopian context, (b) romantic conflict, (c) FNT (i.e., the foundation of FNT, three prior iterations of FNT, and the current iteration of FNT), (d) the additional new variables under investigation (i.e., family communication patterns, relationships satisfaction, and forgiveness), (e) the relationships of the variables in FNT, and (f) the proposed hypotheses and research questions.

Ugandan and Ethiopian Context

Uganda and Ethiopia are the sites of data collection for this study. These two countries, located in Central-Eastern Africa, have unique political, social, and cultural histories that are important to consider. This section provides a brief overview of each country's cultures, religions, literacy rate, population, and governmental system, which demonstrate the rich diversity and uniqueness of each country. This background starts to contextualize the role of culture and communication in romantic relationships in these sites.

Uganda

The British colonized Uganda until 1962, yet few Europeans ever settled in the country. According to a U.S. State Department 2007 estimate, the population of Uganda is over 30 million, the life expectancy is 51.8 years, and the literacy rate is 70%. The

capital and largest city is Kampala and the government is a multiparty democratic republic. The languages spoken include: English (official), Ganda or Luganda, other Niger-Congo languages, Nilo-Saharan languages, Swahili, and Arabic, while ethnicities include: Baganda (17%), Ankole (8%), Basoga (8%), Iteso (8%), Bakiga (7%), Langi (6%), Rwanda (6%), Bagisu (5%), Acholi (4%), Lugbara (4%), Batoro (3%), Bunyoro (3%), Alur (2%), Bagwere (2%), Bakonjo (2%), Jopodhola (2%), Karamojong (2%), Rundi (2%), non-African (European, Asian, Arab) (1%), and other (8%). Major religions include: Roman Catholic (33%), Protestant (33%), Islam (16%), and indigenous beliefs (18%). According to UNAIDS, Uganda ranks among countries hardest hit by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa, with one of the longest recorded histories in the world, and it has never been formally colonized. The capitol and largest city is Addis Ababa (population over 2 million), and the country has a population of over 70 million. The Ethiopian government operates under a Federal Republic political system. The main languages include Amharic, Tigrigna, Orominga, Guaragigna, Somali, Arabic, English, and over 70 others, while the estimated literacy rate of the country in 2003 was 43%. The dominant ethnicities include Oromo (40%), Amhara and Tigrean (32%), Sidamo (9%), Shankella (6%), Somali (6%), Afar (4%), Gurage (2%), and other (1%), while religions include: Islam (45%–50%), Ethiopian Orthodox (35%–40%), animist (12%), and other (3%–8%).

Uganda and Ethiopia are immensely complex cultures, with storied histories that involve war, corruption, and health disparities. Still, Uganda and Ethiopia maintain

cultural diversity and a richness of culture that this project intends to investigate via a two-part study that helps to illuminate more of the dense and nuanced contextual cultural information that is apparent in each country. Additionally, the current and limited literature that examines cross-cultural and intercultural communication patterns in African countries often uses a Eurocentric lens (Asante, 1980). This bias does not afford for a plethora of research on which to build an argument or clear understanding of the communication and conflict patterns of individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia.

The overwhelming majority of research that is known about individuals from African countries (e.g., Uganda and Ethiopia) is focused on health disparities, such as HIV/AIDS and Malaria (Foster & Williamson, 2000), large scale conflicts, such as the South Africa's Apartheid (Wilson, 2001) and Darfur's Genocide (Strauss, 2005), and the corruption associated with political leaders, such as Zimbabwe's Mugabe (Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004). Uganda and Ethiopia are no exception to the many calamities that are so often the focus of research in Africa as they are riddled with their own health maladies, wars, and corruption. For example, in Uganda Kony's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been in an armed conflict with the Ugandan government for countless years and is responsible for numerous war crimes, including kidnapping children and making them fight as soldiers (Bøås, 2004). Ethiopia suffers from lack of nutritional food supplies and extreme poverty in the rural areas of the country (Basu, 2006) and, therefore, is often examined by USAID and the United Nations, as well as, several global non-profits.

Additionally, because much of the research that incorporates Africans is focused on describing the cultural makeup of African communities using statistics, and as

provided above, an understanding of individual tribes and their nuanced lives is largely absent (outside of Anthropological literature). This research is useful and important, yet it fails to create a clear picture of individuals in African nation's communication patterns, especially from an Afro-centric viewpoint. This project does not claim to have employed an Afro-centric approach rather it attempted to frame and consider the results using an on-the-ground approach to data collection (e.g., interviews) versus merely collecting and interpreting from afar. Overall, the information needed to contextualize individuals from Uganda and Ethiopia from an interpersonal communication perspective is lacking (or nearly nonexistent), which is why the current project and its approach to mixed method data collection and interpretation is imperative.

Romantic Conflict

The current study uses individuals' romantic conflict experiences in Uganda and Ethiopia as the primary context of inquiry. Romantic conflict and its associated outcomes are the focus of many research studies. For example, several studies compare the conflict behaviors of distressed and non-distressed married couples. Results indicate that distressed couples more often display anger, criticism, hostility, and contempt (Gottman, 1979, 1994). Therefore, romantic conflict is a prevalent occurrence, the outcomes can be damaging to relationships. Similar studies claim that distressed couples, when compared with non-distressed couples, also show greater rates of negative reciprocity (Pike & Sillars, 1985) and lengthier sequences of negative reciprocity (Ting-Toomey, 1983). Research also indicates that couples that lack proper communication skills in conflict situations are more likely to resort to abusive or violent behavior (Sabourin, Infante, & Rudd, 1993). Overall, romantic conflict is an important context in which to examine the

effects of culture and family socialization on conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness.

Communication patterns in romantic and interpersonal conflict have been studied from a communication perspective using only a few theoretical perspectives, such as Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT: Burgoon, 1992) and Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM: Gudykunst, 1985). Gottman's (1994) Cascade Model provides the clearest understanding of communication outcomes for romantic partners in conflict. Gottman's Cascade Model, which he often refers to as "the four horsemen of the apocalypse," is one of the only communication-based theories that focuses specifically on emotional responses, as displayed by communication patterns, in conflict. The *four horsemen of the apocalypse* are contempt, criticism, defensiveness, and stonewalling. The name "cascade" comes from the movement from one stage to another as a relationship begins to fall apart (i.e., the romantic partners start not getting along with partner, they start thinking about divorce, and then they get a divorce). Gottman explains that criticism leads to contempt, contempt leads to defensiveness, and defensiveness leads to stonewalling. These basic communicative styles of contempt include: eye-rolling, mockery, and sarcasm. Criticism is communicated by negative evaluative statements. Defensiveness is communicated by crossing arms, not making eye contact, and nonverbal gestures. Stonewalling is communicated by actively not listening or leaving the scene of the argument before the other person has finished talking. Gottman explains that a couple's various communicative responses inform their patterns of interaction and their habitual nature often cause the relationship to end. Contempt and disgust have been found

to be the most damaging, with even subtle displays negatively impacting (i.e., ending) a relationship.

Despite the rich research outcomes that have resulted from Gottman's Cascade Model, and other conflict based communication theories related to conflict in romantic relationships, it is not an appropriate theoretical guide for this study because it does not allow for cross-cultural comparisons and inquiry. Still, the model does provide contextual information about romantic conflict in the United States that may be useful in helping to determine and/or interpret results from the current study. Therefore, FNT, which has been tested in a variety of cross-cultural settings, is used to guide the current study.

Face Negotiation Theory (FNT)

FNT (Ting-Toomey, 1988; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998, Ting-Toomey, 2003) provides the necessary communication, culture and conflict framework to theoretically support the current study. FNT is used in a variety of cross-cultural comparison studies and results from various studies data have been highly relevant to the field of communication (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). The following section previews (a) the foundation of face and FNT, (b) the three prior iterations of FNT, (c) the current iteration of FNT, and (d) the proposed addition of family communication patterns and outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and forgiveness) to FNT.

Foundation of Face and FNT

The concept of face can be traced to Hu's (1944) definitional description of the concept in Chinese as being either labeled as *Lien* or *Mien-tzu*. *Lien* is described as the loss of respect for a group member by the community due to a morally irreprehensible act that another group member committed. For example, if a group member steals or stole

from another group member, than he/she would lose *lien*. *Mien-tzu* is the loss of respect due to an act that is a lesser transgression, but still causes a loss of “face.” For example, if someone commits a social crime, such as not being polite, then this person is described as having lost *mien-tzu*.

The next important historical development of face occurs in Erving Goffman’s (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, which is based on U.S. American culture. Goffman focuses on the how the actor on a stage must present himself/herself in certain light that is *in line* with the appropriate expectations for that situation. He uses the metaphor or analogy of actors on a stage to describe the complexities of how individuals use their various props to act in certain ways when they are on the front of the stage (i.e., in front of an audience), while backstage this same individual may feel free to act entirely different, and not necessarily in accordance with social expectations. In Goffman’s depiction, face is largely seen as actors on the front of a stage trying to maintain the respect for the demands of the current interaction.

Following Goffman, Brown and Levinson (1978) expand on the notion of face in their development of Politeness Theory. They developed the concept of face by adding new categorizations and descriptions of face. More specifically, they suggest that individuals may use *positive* and *negative* face. They describe *positive face* as the face used in social settings and by someone who is interested in connecting to others or being seen as interdependent and hopeful of social interaction. *Negative face* is used by someone who wishes for and enacts autonomy and individuality, perhaps even purposefully, in an effort to stand outside of the group. The description of negative face

has since been criticized as being a poor word choice for labeling a behavior that is not necessarily in poor taste (Miller, 2005).

Finally, with the addition of new portrayals of face, such as *autonomy face*, *competence face*, and *fellowship face*, the notion and understanding of face was furthered (Lim & Bowers, 1991). Autonomy face is used by someone who wishes to be viewed as independent, while competence face may be used by someone who wishes to be viewed as reliable and responsible. Fellowship face is used to project that one is social and more interdependent. It is important to note that although face is often described as something that is perhaps controlled by the individual, this is not necessarily the case (Lim & Bowers, 1991).

Three Prior Iterations of FNT

The evolution of FNT over the past 25 years includes a multitude of factors and outcomes related to culture and conflict. Overall, *face* represents an individual's claimed sense of positive image in the context of social interaction (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Similarly, face is the metaphorical front that an individual uses to protect self in any social situation. It can be related to content, relational and identity aspects of an interaction. Face negotiation theory reveals cultural differences and similarities in a number of different cross-cultural studies (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel, et. al., 2001; Kurogi & Ting-Toomey, 1998). Ting-Toomey argues that individuals manage conflict in different ways because of different levels of face concerns, cultural backgrounds (e.g., self-construals), and situational factors, such as organizational position. This section outlines the three major movements in the theory's development (i.e., 1985, 1988, 1998), followed by an overview of face theory's main assumptions.

Ting-Toomey's (1985) seminal article, "Toward a Theory of Conflict and Culture," discusses different conflict styles and variables of conflicts in high-context (HC) and low-context (LC) cultures, is the precursor of the face-negotiation theory. She begins the discussion on the facework process by identifying the concept of "face" and defining it as one's projected public self-image in a relational situation or "a claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998, p. 187).

In 1988, Ting-Toomey officially presented face negotiation theory. She developed a model of facework based on face-concern and face-need principles and proposed six sets of theoretical propositions for how members of HC cultures and members of LC cultures as associated with individualism and collectivism. More specifically, taking cultural differences and context into account, Ting-Toomey developed a model of "facework" that included two principles: (1) the face-concern principle, in which people negotiate whether to protect "self-face," "other-face" or "mutual face," and (2) the face-need principle, in which people express concern for either "negative face (autonomy)" or "positive face (inclusion)." Then, based on Rahim's (1983) five types of conflict styles, Ting-Toomey identified preferences for conflict styles according to cultural variables that represented sets of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Finally, based on the basic assumption that everyone needs to negotiate face, the theorist contributed to the body of literature in intercultural relationships by proposing six sets of theoretical propositions for members of HC cultures and members of LC cultures that involved issues of (a) face-concern, (b) face-need, (c) face supra-strategies, (d) use of direct/indirect negotiation

strategy; (e) use of strategy to manage conflict, and (f) solution-oriented or avoidance-oriented conflict style.

In her 1998 collaboration with Kurogi, Ting-Toomey updated her theory by expanding it into two distinct levels, by using 20 propositions involving the cultural group level and 12 propositions incorporating the individual level. The updated FNT included three new variables: power distance, self-construal and situational factors. Specifically, power distance, according to Hofstede, is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions accept that power is distributed unequally. Self-construal (i.e., independent and interdependent) is one's self-image composed of an independent and interdependent self (Markus & Kitayama, 2001). Ting-Toomey and Kurogi (1998) also proposed a face-work competence model for the purpose of intercultural conflict training and added five new themes as directions for future research.

The development of the theory, particularly in terms of power distance, self-construal, and conflict styles, is noteworthy. The current study proposes yet another direction for the theory by adding items related to family communication patterns and relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. These specific factors have never been tested using FNT, especially using a combination of the etic and emic approaches to conflict research.

Current Iteration of FNT

The current version of FNT (Ting-Toomey, 2005) has 24 propositions. Those propositions focus on comparisons of face concerns and conflict communication styles at the cultural level (1-12), individual-level (13-22), and relational and situational-level (23-24). The cultural-level propositions center on comparisons between members of

individualistic cultures and members of collectivistic cultures regarding their selections or preferences of face concerns (e.g., self-face, other-face, and mutual-face) and conflict communication styles (e.g., dominating, avoiding, obliging, compromising, integrating, emotional expression, third-party help, and neglect). The individual-level propositions concentrate on comparisons between self-construals (e.g., independent self-construal, interdependent self-construal, biconstrual orientation, and ambivalent orientation) and conflict styles as well as face-concern types and conflict styles. The relational and situational-level propositions focus on comparisons of individualists (i.e., independent-self personalities) and collectivists (i.e., interdependent-self personalities) in terms of their face concerns and facework behaviors with both ingroup and outgroup members in conflict situations.

Three studies in the past ten years tested many of the propositions of FNT. First, to confirm the relevancy and validity of the theory's ability to explain how face operates in a variety of scenarios, numerous empirical measures of Face Negotiation Theory must be examined. For example, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey, et. al., (2000) conducted a comparative study involving a wide range of face-work behaviors with best friends and strangers in order to create a typology of face-work behaviors. Three factors emerged from the findings: (1) dominating face-work, (2) avoiding face-work, and (3) integrating face-work, which responded to and reflected the other-face, mutual-face and self-face dimensions of the face-negotiation theory, and thus validated the theory.

Second, Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Masumoto, Yokochi, Xiaohui, Takai, and Wilcox (2001) conducted a cross-cultural study of face and face-work in conflict in two individualistic cultures (i.e., Germany and the United States) and two collectivistic

cultures (i.e., China and Japan) to test several propositions concerning cross-cultural face concerns and three kinds of face-work during conflict. The results validated self-construals as the best predictors of face and face-work behaviors. More clearly, individual-level differences, such as independent or interdependent self-construal, were found to be better at explaining differences in conflict management styles than did sex or ethnic background. The results also reveal that within individualistic or collectivistic cultures, there were differences in face behavior in the examples of Germany versus the U.S. and Japan versus China.

Third, Ting-Toomey and Oetzel's (2003) study of face concerns in interpersonal conflict investigated whether or not *face* is indeed a credible mechanism for a culture's influence on conflict behavior, which is the underlying assumption of FNT. This research dealt with four hypotheses that measured conflict using data from questionnaires at four universities in China, Germany, Japan and the U.S. The findings validated FNT by revealing that face-concerns derived from cultural individualism-collectivism directly influenced conflict styles. Oetzel, Ting-Toomey, Chew-Sanchez, Harris, Wilcox and Stumpf (2003) compared face and face-work in conflicts with parents and siblings in four cultures. Results supported several propositions of FNT (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). This research showed that self-construals had a strong influence on face concerns and face-work, while power distance and national culture had small and medium effects on face.

Proposed New Theoretical and Outcomes Perspectives

In an effort to extend FNT, it is necessary to conceptualize new and different ways in which conflict may occur in romantic relationships. More specifically, thus far,

FNT only considers the role of culture in explaining face concern and conflict styles choices and outcomes. This study suggests that family communication patterns (i.e., socialization practices) should be considered in conjunction with culture when theorizing how individuals may choose to handle and/or resolve conflict. Additionally, this study proposes two new outcome variables for FNT. Specifically, this study suggests that culture and family communication patterns impact relationship satisfaction and forgiveness when mediated by specific conflict styles is a necessary addition to the theorizing about conflict. Below, an overview of family socialization, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness is offered.

Family Socialization. The existence of family communication patterns guide the proposed inquiry into how family communication values and norms impact face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia. McLeod and Chaffee (1972) first articulated the concept of family communication patterns by studying the role of family as an influence in children's use of media. According to Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990), "The family communication environment is a set of norms governing the tradeoff between informational and relational objectives of communication. Family environments can be classified according to whether the child is encouraged to develop and express autonomous opinions and ideas (concept orientation) [renamed conversation orientation] or to pursue relational objectives by conforming to parental authority (socio-orientation) [renamed conformity orientation]" (p. 524).

Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) developed a 26-item scale that assesses an individual's orientation to conformity and conversation within a family setting using a

scale developed from/modeled after McLeod's and Chaffee's (1972) Relational Dimensions Scale (RDS). Essentially, Ritchie and Fitzpatrick argue that there are two important orientations in a family that impact communication styles: conversation orientation and conformity orientation. Conversation orientation is the extent to which a family promotes open and honest conversation about a variety of topics. Individuals that score high on this dimension have families that engage in lengthy and lively debates about a number of different topics where differences of opinion are the norm. Individuals who score low on this dimension have families that discourage or do not engage in open discussion about a variety of topics. Conformity orientation is the extent to which a family prefers similarity in beliefs, actions, and feelings. An individual high that scores high on this dimension have families that values similarity and discourage difference among the familial group, while an individual who scores low on this dimension have families that value or emphasize individual perspectives and values. This theoretical perspective will allow the study to consider and/or contextualize more individual and interpersonal factors in conflict situations, while also predicting and/or explaining the use of certain conflict styles, relational satisfaction outcomes, and forgiveness tendencies.

Relationship Satisfaction. As noted earlier, relationship satisfaction is “the degree to which an individual is content and satisfied with his or her relationship” (Anderson & Emmers-Sommer, 2006, p. 5). Substantial evidence suggests that relationship satisfaction is linked to the way individuals behave in romantic relationships, how people think about their romantic relationships, and the attributions that people make about a partner's behavior (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995). There is significant support for the belief that individuals who resolve conflict are more satisfied with their romantic relationship. For

example, Smith, Heaven, and Ciarrochi (2008) examined trait emotional intelligence (EI), conflict communication patterns, and relationship satisfaction in cohabiting heterosexual couples. Participants were 82 couples who completed the TEI-Que - Short Form (Petrides & Furnham, 2006), the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Christensen & Sullaway, 1984), and the Perceived Relationship Quality Components (PRQC) Inventory (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000). Results indicated that the most satisfied couples were those who did not avoid discussion of relationship problems and who rated their partners high in EI. Similarly, Cramer (2002) examined whether conflicts over minor issues and over major issues were equally strongly related to satisfaction in romantic relationships. Sixty-four women and 29 men completed the Hendrick (1988) Relationship Assessment Scale and a 12-item conflict scale (Cramer, 2000). The study showed that satisfaction was significantly and equally negatively correlated with conflict over minor and major issues, suggesting that whether an issue is of major or minor importance does not affect satisfaction or dissatisfaction in a romantic relationship. More clearly, conflict was found to be an unsatisfying experience regardless of how small or large the argument.

Forgiveness. Fundamental to forgiveness, is “an attitude of real goodwill towards the offender as a person” (Holmgren, 1993, p. 34). When considering how satisfied a couple may or may not be, it is necessary to consider the role of forgiveness following a conflict. “Forgiveness entails a positive or benevolent motivational state towards the transgressor that is not achieved simply by overcoming the avoidance goal set in motion by an unacceptable self-image or the negative motivational state that is caused by the transgression” (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004, p. cite). Forgiveness may therefore have substantial implications for long-term romantic relationship outcomes as well as

short-term patterns of interaction, specifically historically conflict-oriented sites, such as Uganda and Ethiopia. Specifically, when one partner opts out of the disruptive cycle of reciprocal negative interaction, the other partner may be less likely to continue his or her negative behavior as well. In short, forgiveness may lessen the use of ineffective conflict strategies likely to emerge from an un-forgiven transgression. For some problem behaviors, overcoming un-forgiveness may be critical. For example, if couples are to break the back and forth conflict mode of interaction that characterizes much of the problem-focused behavior of distressed couples, overcoming unforgiveness may be particularly important (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004).

Relationships of Variables in FNT

The current model of FNT displays the relationships between cultural I-C, self-construal, face concerns, and conflict styles (see figure 2). The current study expands on this model by incorporating communalism, family communication patterns, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness (see figure 3). It should be noted that due to poor measurement, self-construal was not included in the present study. Levine et. al., (2003; 2005) reports similar problems in examining self-construal(s) in cross-cultural contexts. This section provides a brief overview of the literature regarding the specific relationships in this study that include (a) Culture to Face/Conflict Styles, (b) Family Socialization to Face/Conflict Styles, (c) Face to Conflict Styles, (d) Face/Conflict Style to Satisfaction/Process, and (e) Conflict Styles/Face to Forgiveness.

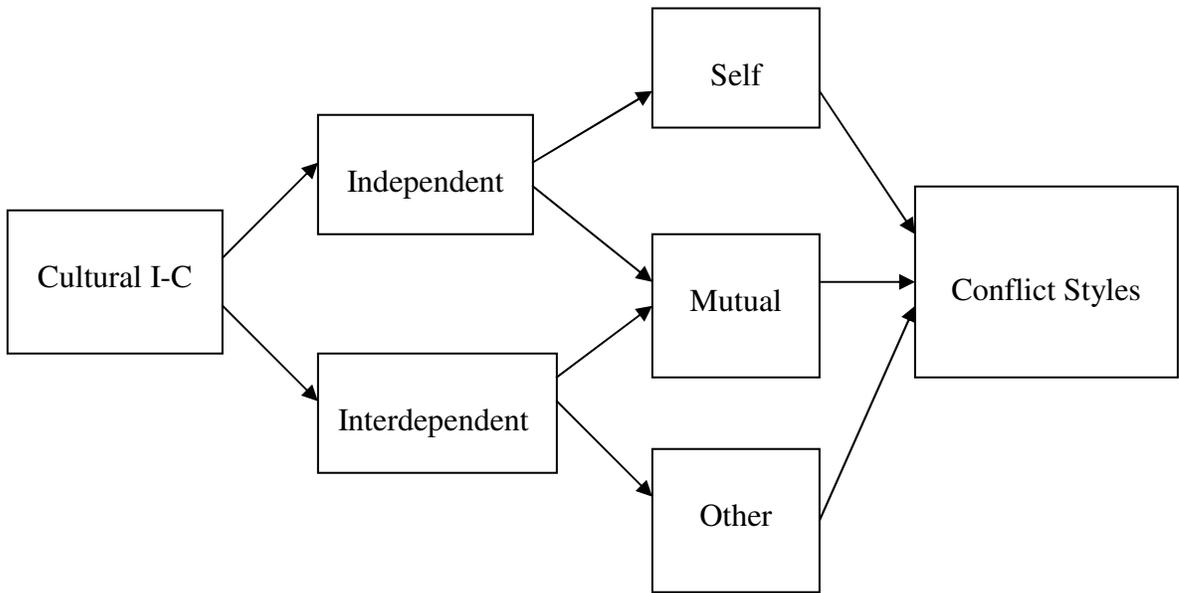


Figure 2. Original Relationships Explored in FNT

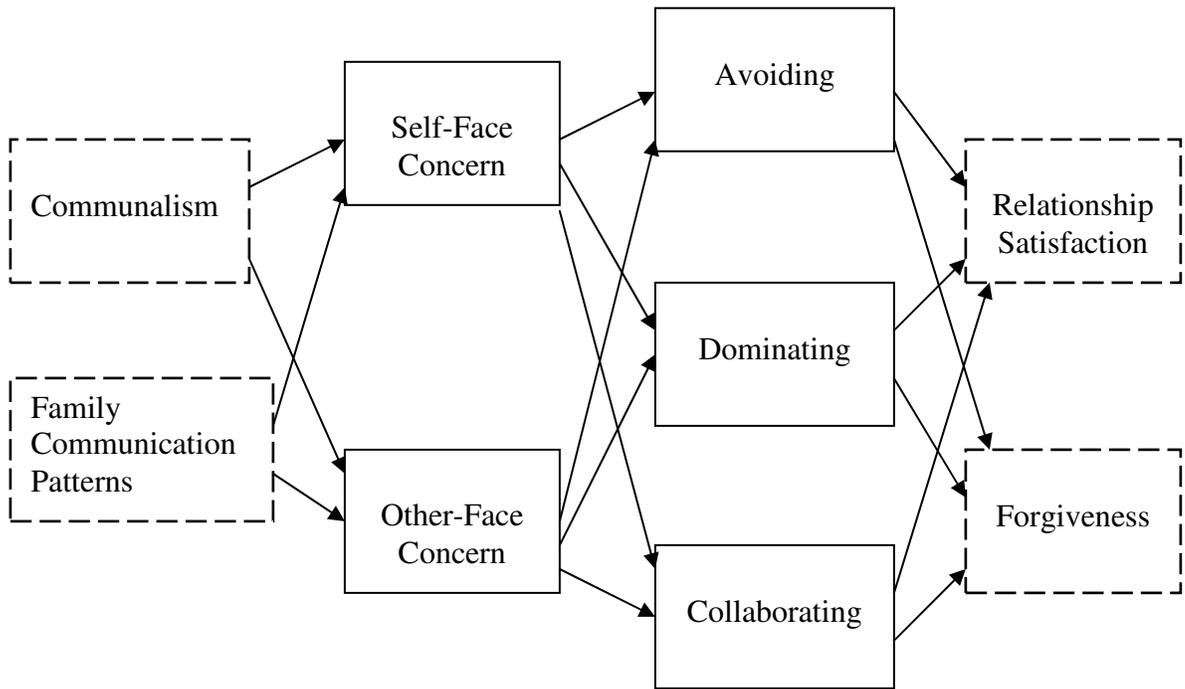


Figure 3. New Contributions to FNT in this Study (dotted shapes)

Culture to Face/Conflict Styles

The dimension of I-C impacts romantic relationships across cultures, while communalism and its subsequent impact on face and conflict process is largely unknown. Still several studies have examined how culture influences conflict. Gao (1998) reports that cultural variability, such as individualism and collectivism, impact how individuals feel about intimacy, love, and commitment. Furthermore, she found that Chinese men and women are less expressive of their love for one another, while North American men and women are much more expressive of intimacy. Gudykunst and Lee (2000) also report that cultural variability impacts different cultures views of romantic love. For example, Dion and Dion (1988) found that individuals from individualistic cultures when in romantic relationships are often negatively impacted by the primacy of the “I” in the relationship. Similarly, the authors concluded that individuals struggle to give up their personal freedom and autonomy when in a romantic relationship and/or justify sacrifices made on the behalf of the other person. Additionally, individuals from individualistic cultures are more likely to report the importance of perceived attitude similarity with their romantic partner, versus perceived background similarity, which is important in collectivistic cultures. Finally, collectivistic individuals are less likely to marry for love than individuals from individualistic cultures, while familial acceptance of a mate is more important in collectivistic cultures.

Additionally, Oetzel and Ting-Toomey (2003) tested the underlying assumption of the face-negotiation theory that face is an explanatory mechanism for culture’s influence on conflict behavior. The authors administered a questionnaire to 768 participants in four national cultures (i.e., China, Germany, Japan, and the United States)

that asked respondents to describe interpersonal conflict. Results of this study indicated: (a) cultural individualism-collectivism had direct and indirect effects on conflict style choice; (b) independent self-construal related positively with self-face and interdependent self-construal related positively with other-face; (c) self-face related positively with dominating conflict styles and other-face related positively with avoiding and integrating styles; and (d) when considering face concerns, cultural individualism-collectivism, and self-construals, face accounted for all of the variance explained in dominating, most of the variance explained in integrating, and some of the total variance explained in avoiding. Because the focus of FNT is on I-C, little is known about the role that communalism plays in conflict in romantic relationships.

Moemeka (1996) states that communalism “is the principle or system of social order in which the supremacy of the community is culturally and socially entrenched” (p. 197). Essentially, individuals are not important on their own, and therefore derive their sense of place from the community. The members of a community become interdependent on one another for the development and reinforcement of norms, values, and beliefs. Ultimately, communication acts to “confirm, solidify, and promote communal social order” (Moemeka, 1996, p. 199). This is a particularly salient idea when considering how individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia manage and resolve conflict, which is nearly absent from the communication literature.

Family Socialization to Face/Conflict Styles

How individuals learn to handle conflict from their families is an important predictor for how they will handle conflict in romantic relationships later in life. Rossler, Ting-Toomey, and Lee (2007) examined the relationship among family communication

patterns, face concern dimensions, and conflict styles in dating relationships. The authors used the family orientation typological model and the conflict face negotiation theory as guiding conceptual frameworks. They posited eight sets of hypotheses. The findings included: in pluralistic families, as conversation trait increases, the emotional expression conflict style increases, and in consensual families, as conversation trait increases, compromising conflict style also increases.

Similarly, Harp, Webb, and Amason (2007) examined family communication patterns and young adults' conflict styles within romantic partners using self-reports from 160 college students. They tested two alternative paths of influence between family communication patterns (FCP) in young adults' family-of-origin and their communicative conflict behavior during conflicts with their romantic partners. Analyses revealed strong and significant relationships between (a) FCP-related variables and reported communication behaviors during parent-child conflicts as well as between (b) reported conflict behaviors with parents and with romantic partners. Their results provided evidence that that FCP directly impact communication in parent-child conflicts and may indirectly impact communication in conflicts with romantic partners. What is largely missing from the family socialization and conflict literature is the role of face, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness, specifically within romantic relationships.

Face to Conflict Styles

A detailed study of conflict styles conducted by Ting-Toomey in 2000 studied influences of ethnic and cultural background and identity on conflict styles. Of four broad groups, she found that those who identified with more 'individualistic values' were more likely to use direct modes of controlling in their conflict styles. Consequently, those who

identified with 'collectivistic,' or group based values, tended to use indirect modes in their conflict styles. These findings are consistent with a portion of the propositions in FNT (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Investigating face and conflict styles in the workplace, Oetzel, Myers, Meares and Lara (2003) determined how important face concerns are in predicting conflict styles. Their study found that face concerns were intimately tied to conflict styles and were significant predictive factors. That is face concerns (e.g., self, other, or mutual face) were better predictors of six of the eight conflict styles (e.g., integrating, compromising, dominating, emotional expression, obliging, and passive aggression) than self-construals and organizational position, which supports the face-conflict style relationship.

Face/Conflict Style to Satisfaction/Process

Researchers have never directly tested how face concern and conflict style in romantic partners in conflict impacts overall satisfaction with the relationship. Still, several studies examined similar scenarios. For example, Steuber (2005) sought to determine if adult attachment acted as a predictor of conflict style and if attachment style, mediated by conflict style, influenced relationship satisfaction. The author administered a questionnaire that measured measuring attachment style, relational conflict style, and relationship satisfaction, to three hundred and twenty one undergraduate students in romantic relationships ($n = 321$). Results of the study indicated that highly avoidant individuals are more likely to engage in hostile relational conflict with their partners and feel significantly less satisfied with their adult romantic relationships than their non-avoidant counterparts. The results also suggested that avoidance and hostility might be more influential on relationship satisfaction levels than anxiety and validation.

In a similar study, Clymer, Ray, Trepper, and Pierce (2006) assess the relationship among romantic attachment style, conflict resolution, and sexual satisfaction via a questionnaire. Results showed that if an individual had a highly ambivalent attachment style, he/she would have less sexual satisfaction. In addition, the authors found that those who scored high on ambivalent or avoidant attachment had lower relationship satisfaction, and those individuals who used verbal aggression as a means of conflict resolution were less likely to be satisfied in their relationships.

Conflict Styles/Face to Forgiveness

FNT has not examined how face negotiation and conflict processes impact forgiveness, yet several studies investigate the role of forgiveness in romantic relationships. Kachadourian, Fincham, and Davila (2004) examine the tendency to forgive in romantic relationships. The authors conducted two studies tested the hypothesis that the tendency to forgive mediates the association between attachment models of self and other and relationship satisfaction. The first explored dating relationships and the second explored marital relationships. Results showed that the tendency to forgive mediated the relationship between relationship partner and relationship satisfaction for those in dating relationships. In marital relationships, the tendency to forgive mediated the relationship between oneself and relationship satisfaction. More specifically, for wives, a greater tendency to forgive was related to forgiveness of an actual transgression, regardless of the severity of that transgression. In contrast, for husbands, endorsing a greater tendency to forgive was related to forgiveness of an actual transgression, but only for more severe transgressions.

Overall, the relationships under investigation in my study provide the possibility to extend FNT in relation to the role of communalism in conflict, the role family communication and socialization in conflict, and the role of relationship and forgiveness following a conflict.

Hypotheses/Research Questions

Based on the purpose of this study and the gaps in literature regarding the relationship between culture, family communication patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction and forgiveness in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia, the following hypotheses are posited:

Hypotheses

H1: Avoiding Conflict Styles

H1a: The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.

H1b: The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report an other-oriented face concern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict when in conflict with their romantic partners.

H2: Dominating Conflict Styles

H2a: The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.

H2b: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a self-oriented face concern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

H3: *Collaborating Conflict Styles*

H3a: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using a conversation-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

H3b: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using an other-oriented face concern, the more they will use a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

H4: Family Socialization/Face concerns/Conflict styles to Relational Outcomes (Relationship Satisfaction)

H4a: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia from a conversation-oriented family will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals from a conformity-oriented family.*

H4b: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ self-oriented face concern will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ other-oriented face concerns.*

H4c: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with a romantic other will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ an avoiding or dominating conflict style.*

Research Questions

The research questions were developed in an effort to shed more light on some of the potential underlying factors associated with conflict and conflict related behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. Based on Moemeka's (1996) description of the significant role of communalism and religion in African societies, the need for further assessment of these potentially influencing factors were assessed through the posing of six research questions. The asking of the research questions was also essential in helping to establish equivalency between the quantitative and qualitative data. The following research questions were asked:

RQ1: *Which family socialization and face concern variables best explain conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction?*

RQ2: *Does family socialization and face concerns act as a mediation model for predicting conflict style choices in Uganda and Ethiopia romantic relationships?*

RQ3: How do participants from Uganda and Ethiopia define conflict, face, and conflict styles?

RQ4: How do participants see the relationship between culture, family, and conflict styles?

RQ5: How do participants see the role of religion in Ugandan and Ethiopian conflict?

RQ6: How do participants see the relationships between conflict styles and relational outcomes?

Chapter 3: Methods

The present study's primary goal is to examine how culture (i.e., communalism) and family socialization and face concerns (dependent variables) impact conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness patterns (dependent variables) in romantic relationships in two distinctive African cultures (i.e., Ugandan and Ethiopian) using a mixed-method approach. This chapter will detail the specific methods that were employed to answer the proposed hypotheses and research questions. The major sections of this chapter include: (a) overview of methods, (b) etic and emic approach, (c) justification for using particular methods, (d) establishing equivalency, (e) description of the survey (e.g., participants, instruments, procedures, and data analysis), and a (f) description of the interview (e.g., participants, data collection, role of researcher, and data analysis).

Overview of Methods

The main methodological premise behind this study is to examine Ugandans and Ethiopians in terms of how their culture and family socialization patterns impact their face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness in romantic relationships. The methods needed to address the hypotheses and answer the research questions calls for a mixed-method approach to design, data collection, and analyses. Typically, data regarding patterns among cultures is gathered using an etic approach. However, for the purposes of this study, data will be collected using methods that support both an etic and emic approach.

Etic and Emic Aspects of Face and Conflict in Romantic Conflict

Etic and emic approaches differ in their attempt to locate specific communication phenomenon (Berry, 1980). When using an etic approach (a) behavior is observed from outside of a culture, (b) many cultures are examined in an attempt to compare two (or more) for similarities and differences, (c) the structure is *created* by the analyst, and (d) the information garnered is considered universal or absolute in nature. Essentially, an etic approach is concerned with comparing and contrasting universal behaviors in attempt to make draw patterns of similarities and differences across and between cultures. More specifically, etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers (i.e., etic constructs must be precise, logical, comprehensive, replicable, falsifiable, and observer independent).

In contrast, when using an emic approach, (a) behavior is observed from within the culture, (b) only one culture is examined, (c) the structure of the construct is *discovered* by the analyst, and (d) the information gained is relative to the internal characteristics of that community. Essentially, an emic approach is concerned with describing communication behavior from the perspective of the members living within that community and/or culture for that culture's own understanding. Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the members of the culture under study. The validation of emic knowledge thus becomes a matter of consensus--namely, the consensus of native informants, who must agree that the construct matches the shared perceptions that are characteristic of their culture.

In an effort to provide a more inclusive and valid picture of conflict in romantic relationships, data was collected using a combination of both approaches. First, data was collected using an etic approach by investigating communalism, family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness using a questionnaire. Next, an interview protocol was developed and 14 face-to-face interviews were conducted. The study occurred in a concurrent format, with the quantitative data (i.e., etic) and qualitative data (i.e., emic) being collected in conjunction with one another (Creswell, 2003). More clearly, this is a mixed-method design in which both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to answer the hypotheses and research questions. Therefore, the final results are based on both types of data analysis results. More clearly, the two types of data are collected independently at the same time or with a time lag. In this study, the instruments were not administered at the same temporal time, but rather they were administered with a time lag (i.e., survey first, followed by interviews). Both instruments compliment and clarify one another based on the theoretical framework of the study, the hypotheses, and the research questions. The survey and the interviews were helpful in clarifying specific elements of Ugandan and Ethiopian romantic conflict in different and distinct ways, and helped to clarify different aspects of the mixed-method results. For example, contextually bound patterns that emerged from the interview data helped to inform the results of the survey data, and vice versa.

Justification of Methods

The mixed-method design of the current study is both timely and relevant given the dearth of knowledge known about Ugandan and Ethiopian romantic conflict

communication and outcomes. Creswell (2003) suggested that concurrent data collection is an appropriate mixed method approach. Essentially, the quantitative and qualitative data collection may be presented in different sections, but the analysis and interpretation combines the two forms of the data to seek convergence, similarities, and differences between the two sets of results. When collecting concurrent data, it is important to select participants from a similar demographic pool for each portion of the study and use a large sample size for the quantitative data collection and a small sample size for the qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2003). Similarly, when analyzing the data, it is important to (a) choose significant results and/or strong predictors to follow-up on, (b) use major themes in the design of the qualitative instrument, and (c) address both quantitative and qualitative validity (Creswell, 2003). The proper use of concurrent mixed method data collection and analyses can provide a richer understanding of the relationships and variables under investigation.

Establishing Equivalency

Because this study examined perspectives of individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia in an effort to locate conflict and communication patterns, equivalency had to be established both prior to and following the mixed-method data collection (van de Vijer & Leung, 2006). Gudykunst (2000) suggests that at least five different equivalencies must be accounted for when conducting cross-cultural research: functional, conceptual, linguistic, metric, and sample. A brief description of each is provided below.

Functional equivalency is associated with the macro perspective of whether or not the concept or construct under investigation is similarly understood or received in each culture. For example, communication apprehension is often depicted as having a negative

connotation in U.S culture, whereas in Japan reticence is seen as socially desirable (Gudykunst, 2000). These two constructs are not functionally equivalent because they carry two different outcome responses for the local culture. Therefore, when establishing functional equivalence, researchers need to be careful to ascertain whether or not the construct functions in the same way in the cultures being compared and/or contrasted. This can be achieved by interviewing individuals in each separate culture in an effort to confirm that a construct functions similarly or by using textual resources (library materials/journal articles). In the current study, this equivalency concern was addressed by conducting background research on each country and via interviews with local representatives of each country now living in the United States.

Conceptual equivalency is associated with whether or not the construct has a similar cognitive meaning in the minds of the members of each different culture under investigation. For example, the universality of the construct of face is debated, with some researchers, such as Brown and Levinson, arguing that it is a universal concept (and therefore has the same conceptual meaning in the minds of all people, despite perhaps different words being used to describe it); while Hofstede (1984) suggests that face is culturally specific. In this example, a derived etic measure must be developed.

Additionally, it is important to establish the similar referent for a construct such as face. For example, the concept of face is not exactly the same in all circumstances because it is metaphorical; however, research has shown that the two are very similar in terms of public image in the United States and Japan. This suggests that the two cultures could be compared and contrasted in a conceptually equivalent manner if the study examined face in terms of public image. In the current study, this equivalency concern was addressed by

providing a romantic partner conflict scenario that members of both cultures could relate to in a similar way.

Linguistic equivalence is associated with whether the participant is completing the survey in his or her own native tongue. If a respondent is not completing a survey or questionnaire in his/her first language, linguistic equivalence may not be established. Two techniques assure that linguistic equivalence can be established when data is being collected in two different cultures where different languages are spoken: back-translation and de-centering. Back translation involves a bilingual person translating the questions from the survey's original language into the second language and then a second bilingual translates that initially translated survey back into the original language of the survey. Once the survey has been translated twice, then differences in language interpretation must be reconciled. The current study employed de-centering or the removal of wordy language in a questionnaire in an effort to make the translation as perfect as possible. This is in response to surveys where the words and/or phrases were directly translated, often losing or projecting completely different meanings in the second language.

Metric equivalence is associated with accounting for the differences in how people answer questions from different cultures. For example, research shows that Japanese respondents often do not use extreme score values (e.g., strongly agree, strongly disagree), while Hispanic respondents have been found to heavily favor extreme score values (i.e., extremity) (Gudykunst, 2000). Additionally, Mexican respondents have been found to often provide socially desirable answers (i.e., acquiescence). The difference in response styles forces researchers to ask if the differences in two or more cultures are real, or merely based on differences in response styles. Van de Vijver and Poortinga

(2002) offers three alternatives for why metric differences may exist: (a) the differences are in fact real and exist, (b) there is a qualitative measurement error (related to linguistic and conceptual equivalency), or (c) there is a quantitative error. In any case, raw and standardized scores should be closely examined and researchers should identify possible culturally specific response styles before analyzing data in an effort to minimally keep the results in check. The current study addressed this equivalency issue by carefully analyzing and cleaning the quantitative data, while also keeping different response styles in mind during the face-to-face interviews.

Sample equivalence is associated with assuring that the two sample populations under investigation are, in fact, similar. For example, researchers should try not to compare the results of undergraduates in the United States with middle-aged factory workers in China when examining the construct of face. These two populations are not similar enough to make proper comparisons. To assure that similar populations are used, the demographics of participants should be closely examined, and more contextual data should be assessed. For example, when comparing romantic partners in two different cultures, it is important to further contextual the dyad by asking clarifying questions such as, *how long have you been married?* There may be important differences between those couples that are newlyweds and those that have been married for more than 25 years. Additionally, making sure that the population chosen is representative of the population needed to examine the construct. The current study addressed this potential equivalency issue by collecting questionnaire data and interview data from similar demographics and by formulating several clarifying questions that allow the emergence of severe demographic differences and that may skew data drastically or render it useless.

Part I: Survey

Participants

Because this study employs mixed-methods and the data collection occurred concurrently, there were two participant pools. The first pool consisted of 385 participants (N=385; Ugandan =231 and 154=Ethiopian) enrolled at large universities (e.g., undergraduate and graduate students) in the capitol cities of Kampala, Uganda and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The survey portion of the data was collected first. Results from 200 surveys were collected in each country in an effort to increase the statistical power of the results based on the analyses needed to answer the hypotheses and research questions. Statistical power is “a gauge of the sensitivity of a statistical test; that is, its ability to detect effects of a specific size, given the particular variance and sample size of the study” (Vogt, 1999, p. 277).

Descriptive Statistics

There were 385 participants (n = 385, 231 Ugandan and 154 Ethiopian, 257 males and 127 females) in the survey portion of the data collection. See table 1 and 2.

Table 1. Number of Ugandan and Ethiopian Participants

	Frequency	Percent
Ugandans	231	60.0
Ethiopians	154	40.0
Total	385	100.0

Table 2. Number of Ugandans and Ethiopians Participants by Sex

	Frequency	Percent
Males	257	66.8
Females	127	33.0
Total	385	100.0

Instruments

The *Communalism Scale* is a seven-item forced choice instrument designed to measure an individual's cultural preferences as they relate communalism. The items are statements measured by five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). Higher scores are indicative of individuals who have a communalistic cultural orientation. Sample items include: “*The core communities I belong to are an important reflection of who I am,*” “*Overall, my community memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself,*” “*People should be aware that if they are going to be a part of a community, they will sometimes have to do things they don't want to do,*” and “*It is important to me to respect decisions made by my ingroup community.*”

The *Revised Family Communication Patterns* instrument (RFCP) was used to assess the effect of family communication patterns and underlying norms on individuals' conflict style, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic relationships. The items are statements measured by five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). This scale is used to assess family communication patterns from the children's perspective. Sample items

include: *“In my family we often talk about topics like politics and religion, where some family members often disagree with others,” “In our home, my parents usually have the last word,” “If my parents do not approve of my action, they do not want to know about it,”* and *“My parents and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.”* The scale is composed of 26 statements across two dimensions. Conversation orientation refers to the perception “parental encouragement of conversation and the open exchange of ideas and feelings” (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990, p. 525). Conformity orientation, the second dimension, corresponds to the perception of “parental power to enforce the child’s conformity to the parent” (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990, p. 525). Research supports the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the scale (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Cronbach’s alpha indicated high internal consistency for both scales (Conversation Orientation .92; Conformity Orientation .82). Research supports the internal consistency and test-retest reliability of the scale (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Prior studies have obtained an internal reliability of conversation orientation .92 and of conformity orientation .82 (Kelly, Keaten, Finch, Duarte, Hoffman, & Michels, 2002).

Face Concern was measured using a revised version of the 34-item scale. The scale used for this data collection included 15-items designed to assess the respondents face concern in conflict. More specifically, is the participant primarily concerned with saving his/her own face, the other’s face, and/or concerned equally with saving both of their faces (i.e., mutual). Answers were scored on a five-point Likert-type scale and sample questions include: *“I was concerned with respectful treatment for both of us,” “I was concerned with not bringing shame to myself,” “Relationship harmony was important to me,”* and *“Maintaining humbleness to preserve the relationship was*

important to me.” Prior studies reported an internal reliability of .90 for other-face, .80 for mutual-face, and .85 for self-face (Oetzel, et. al., 2001).

Conflict Styles were measured using a 32-item scale. The scale is designed to assess individuals’ conflict style preference when engaged in conflict with their romantic partners. The specific styles that are assessed include: avoiding, integrating, dominating, third party help, emotional expression, passive aggression, obliging, and compromising. Respondents answered on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). Thus, higher scores are indicative of preference for certain conflict styles. Sample items include: “*I relied on a close friend to help negotiate a resolution for the conflict,*” “*I said nasty things about my partner to another person,*” “*I said nothing and waited for things to get better,*” and “*I told my partner that there are problems and suggested that we work them out.*” Prior research has examined the relationship between conflict styles and specific outcomes, such as face concerns, in a variety of contexts (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the conflict styles in other studies has ranged from .73 to .88 (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003).

The *Relationship Satisfaction Scale* was used to measure the extent to which one is satisfied with his/her relationship with their romantic partner. It is a five-item self-report instrument in which respondents answer on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). Five elements of relationship satisfaction are assessed: acceptance, understanding, appreciation, other’s friends, and social life. Higher scores indicate being more satisfied with the relationship. Sample items include: “*Overall, I feel at ease and accepted in my romantic relationship,*”

“I am satisfied that in our relationship there is mutual understanding of one another,” “I am satisfied that I am appreciated by my romantic partner” and “I am satisfied that I can communicate my true feelings to my romantic partner.”

The *Marital Forgiveness Scale* is a nine-item scale measuring forgiveness. Forgiveness is seen as an essential factor in healing and restoring relationships between people (Hargrave, 1994). Respondents answered on a five-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). Thus, higher scores are indicative of preference for forgiving others following a conflict situation. The scale measures three separate approaches towards forgiveness: benevolence, avoidance, and retaliation. Sample items include: *“I soon forgave my partner,” “I gave him/her the cold shoulder,” “I found a way to make him/her regret it,”* and *“I am able to act as positively toward my partner now as I was before it happened.”* Past research has found that forgiveness is important for marital conflict and spousal goals (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004). Prior research has indicated the following internal reliabilities for each dimension: Benevolence = .86 and .85, Avoidance = .76 and .80, and Retaliation = .79 and .77 (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004).

Procedures

Section one of the survey asked participants to *“Please recall a specific situation in the last 6 months when you and your romantic partner fought or had a disagreement. If you are not in a [romantic] relationship currently, please recall a disagreement you had with a prior intimate other. Write a very brief description of what the conflict argument was about, and whether the conflict was resolved or not resolved.”* Following the recall description, several authored developed questions were used to help clarify the

status of the participant's romantic relationship and particular conflict issues. More specifically, a one-item question asked "*when you recall the conflict situation, did it occur in a current or past romantic relationship?*" The participants were then prompted to check a space next to "*current*" or "*past*." If the participant answered current, then he/she was asked to designate "*how long have you been in this relationship?*" by filling in the blank with the appropriate months and years. If the participant indicated that he/she recalled a conflict that occurred in a past romantic relationship, then he/she will be asked to designate in months and years "*what was the duration of the romantic relationship?*" The participants were then asked "*how often do you have disagreements with your romantic partner?*" by circling only one of the following responses "*very seldom*," "*once a month*," "*twice a month*," "*once a week*," or "*more than once a week*." Finally, participants were asked to answer the question "*what is the major issue you fight over in your romantic relationship?*" in an open-ended format (see Appendix A for survey, see Appendix B for scoring).

In section 1, 2, and 3 of the questionnaire, six scales were used to assess communication patterns related to communalism, family socialization, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. They were: (a) the Communalism Scale, (b) the Revised Family Communication Patterns Instrument (RFCP: Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990), (c) Face Concern Scale (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001), (d) Conflict Styles Scale (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000), (e) the Relationship Satisfaction Scale (need), and (f) the Marital Forgiveness Scale (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004).

The final section of the questionnaire asked 12 clarifying and demographic oriented questions designed by the author. A one-item question asked participants to indicate their biological sex. The answer indicated (1) for *male* and (2) for *female*. A one-item question asked participants to indicate their romantic partner's biological sex. The answer indicated (1) for *male* and (2) for *female*. A one-item question asked participants to indicate their age. The answer format was fill-in-the-blank. A one-item question asked participants to indicate their current education level by checking next to one of five possible responses: *high school student*, *college student*, *college graduate*, *graduate student*, or *other*. A fill-in-the-blank formatted question asked the participant to indicate their "*cultural or ethnic background*," which is followed by a similarly formatted question that asked the participant to indicate their "*romantic partner's cultural or ethnic background*." A fill-in-the-blank formatted question asked respondents to indicate their "*permanent residence/citizen of what country*." A one-item question asked respondents to indicate their answer to the question "*Do you practice a religion?*" by circling either "*yes*" or "*no*." If yes, respondents were asked to disclose "*What religion?*" by writing it in the blank. This question was followed by the question "*If you practice a religion, how often do you practice your religion?*" The answers included *very seldom*, *once a month*, *twice a month*, *once a week*, and *more than once a week*. The next question asked "*where did you meet your romantic partner?*" The final two questions asked "*Did your parents approve of your romantic relationship?*" and "*Did your romantic partner's parents approve of your relationship with their son/daughter?*" Both questions asked the respondent to indicate their answers by circling "*yes*" or "*no*."

To maintain confidentiality, participation in the questionnaire portion of the study was anonymous. Participation was voluntary, and no extra credit was awarded to participants. The questionnaire consisted of a cover page that explained the students' rights and the Institutional Review Board's stamp of approval for the study. Following the cover page, there are seven pages consisting of six measures, demographic information (e.g., sex, age...) and several author-developed questions.

Data Analysis

To analyze the statistical data that resulted from the questionnaires, two statistical software programs (i.e., SPSS and AMOS) were used. Several types of statistical analyses were implemented in order to properly determine the hypotheses and answer the research questions purported by this project. More specifically, (a) confirmatory factor analyses was employed to help determine equivalency and model fit and (b) multiple regression analyses were used to model the dependent variables and their relationships with the independent variables. A brief overview of the function of each analysis is provided below.

CFA for Equivalency. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a form of structural equation modeling that tests the factorial structure of the instruments. CFA is in contrast to exploratory factor analysis, where factor loadings are free to vary. Ultimately, CFA allows for the explicit constraint of certain loadings to be zero and helps assure construct validity. More clearly, CFA helps show if the model is a good fit with the variables that are being measured. For the current study, CFA will be used to help determine cross-cultural equivalency (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). Both the Ugandan and Ethiopian data sets were combined for these analyses because no differences were found between the

two data sets and the combined data allowed for more powerful patterns to be found (i.e., due to increased sample size).

Multiple Regression Analysis. This analysis takes into account the relationship (the term was first used by Pearson, 1908) between several independent or predictor variables and a dependent or criterion variable. (Kaplan, 2000). More specifically, for the purposes of this study, multiple regression (both linear and hierarchical) was used to develop a better understanding (via SPSS) of the mediated relationship of culture, face concern, family socialization, conflict styles, and relationship satisfaction. In addition, multiple regression allowed for the calculation of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables and the subsequent variance accounted for by each variable under investigation.

Part II: Interviews

Participants

The second pool of participants consisted of approximately 14 undergraduate and graduate students (7 males and 7 females; 7 Ugandans and 7 Ethiopians) attending universities in the capital cities of Kampala, Uganda and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. For a more detailed description of each participant, including sex, religion, age, and profession, see Table 3. These participants were interviewed in a face-to-face format in their local communities. Interviews were conducted until saturation, or the point at which no new information or themes are observed in the data.

Table 3. Interview Participant Descriptives

	Participant ID	Sex	Religion	Age	Profession
Uganda	Mark	Male	Christian	29	Student (Graduate)
	Nancy	Female	Christian	24	Student (Undergraduate)
	Jacob	Male	Christian	23	Student (Undergraduate) Boda Boda Driver
	Patience	Female	Christian	19	Student (Undergraduate) Waitress
	Hasifa	Female	Muslim	24	Recent Graduate (BA) Teacher
	David	Male	Christian	24	Student (Undergraduate) Bellboy
	Christine	Female	Christian	18	Student (Undergraduate) Waitress
Ethiopia	Abdi	Male	Muslim	24	Student (Undergraduate)
	Tsebay	Female	Christian	19	Student (Undergraduate)
	Jonathan	Male	Christian	19	Student (Undergraduate)
	Sarah	Female	Muslim	21	Student (Undergraduate)
	Abraham	Male	Christian	22	Student (Undergraduate)
	Michael	Male	Muslim	28	Student (Undergraduate)
	Eth7	Female	Christian	31	Recent Graduate (BA) Hotel Worker

Data Collection

Interview Protocol. The interview protocol for this study was developed based on the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and research questions for the study. It was collected concurrently with the statistical data from the surveys completed in Uganda and Ethiopia. Specifically, the questions were designed and driven by the theoretical framework proposed in the study and were developed in conjunction with the survey questions. An interview question asked participants to define face and/or explain how face operates in conflict situations in their culture. This question, combined with the scaled responses to the face concern scale included in the survey, provided a more nuanced understanding of face concerns in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture. The intent of the interviews was to help contextualize the survey data and clarify possible similarities and differences in the data, in addition to providing additional information that may not have been captured by the survey data. Overall, based on the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and research questions, three open-ended questions were developed for the interview protocol in an effort to better contextualize the results, followed by several standardized probing questions (see Appendix C for Interview Protocol).

Interview Procedures

The interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes in length and were tape-recorded. The following procedures took place directly before the interview began. First, I approached and greeted the participant and introduced myself. "*I'm a graduate student at the University of New Mexico in the United States working on a study. . .*" I then indicated to him/her how or through whom I had found their contact information (unless I had met them myself) and thanked them for participating. Second, I briefly mentioned the

goal of the study, while refraining from getting into too much detail at that point. For example, "*I wish to understand how people maintain their romantic relationships following an argument; how does family communication impact how he/she tries to resolve the argument; how satisfied are romantic partners with their relationship following a fight and/or they likely to forgive their partner?*" Here I mentioned that this is a preliminary study and based on the study's results I will consider doing a broader experiment with other participants in the future. Third, I let participants know that I have been approved to conduct this study by UNM, and hence I would be following strict guidelines and methods to maintain their privacy and confidentiality. To verify their consent, I explained that UNM requires participants to sign a consent form. I told them about the consent form by focusing on the main points (e.g., UNM wants to make sure you experience no harm in any way). I asked them to read and sign the consent form. I then discussed what I plan to do with audio-taping and asked them if they would mind being contacted in the future for clarifications. Finally, I provided each participant with my business card, and local contact information in case they needed to reach me immediately following the interview.

During the interview, the emphasis was on obtaining narratives or accounts in the person's own word and/or experience. The three basic prompts and/or questions asked include (a) *Tell me about a typical disagreement you have with a current or past romantic partner*, (b) *Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements (family, cultural influences, religion, etc.)?* and (c) *Using your own experiences and understandings, could you define the following concepts (i.e., face, conflict, conflict styles)?*. The interview protocol served as a primary reference guiding the interviews, but

I also felt free to change topics based on the responses given/heard. Therefore, the interviews were semi-structured, in which the interviewee has a prepared set of questions, but he/she is free to ask a series of *probes*, which were often connected to a specific question, in an effort to engage the participant to discuss issues not mentioned or only slightly disclosed upon (e.g., *What specifically did you say during the disagreement?*) (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). In contrast, a structured interview, in an effort to be consistent, would only allow the interviewee to ask the list of questions he/she had prepared prior. For example: “*You have mentioned that.... Why? What does it mean for you?*” Following the interview, participants were debriefed about what will be done with their interview (i.e., transcribe interview and understand common patterns of communication). Then I let them know that they can contact me at any time they wish to learn more or choose to have their interview withdrawn from the study, and thanked them for their time.

Role of Researcher

Because the interviews require an emic approach (i.e., less distance between the knower and the known), I was an active facilitator of the interview. In contrast to the role of the researcher in the survey data collection, where the researcher is nonexistent, the researcher becomes a necessary instrument in this portion of the data collection. In this role, there are several ethical issues to consider. Cohen, et. al., (2000) states “ethical concerns need to be addressed at the outset of the research process and acknowledged as it is undertaken. Professional codes exist to provide guidance, but the responsibility for upholding them must lie with the individual researcher” (p. 49).

In addition, I had to openly own my personal biases while also trying to objectively hear and analyze the qualitative responses. It was particularly necessary that I understand and reflect upon my positionality as a white outsider collecting data in African nations. The assumptions about communication pertinent to this study revolve around the belief that communication, within a highly-contextualized situation, can be accurately studied from an outsider, specifically by someone who may lack the language or schema necessary to estimate the relevant utterances in the text. Still, Collier (2005) suggests that cultural identifications within language “are not constructed in isolation, but are produced within and across dynamic contexts” (p. 297). This realization further suggests the need for caution when estimating meaning or making sense of a particular communicative phenomenon.

Data Analysis

To analyze the qualitative data that resulted from the interviews, the data was first transcribed from the tape recordings of the interviews. Several considerations and qualitatively oriented analyses were implemented in order to properly address the research questions purported by this project. In addition, a (a) constant comparison was employed to help identify underlying and emergent themes in the data, (b) frequency of idea, (c) intensity of idea, and (d) verifying interpretations were used to assure that the emergent themes are an accurate representation of the culture under investigation, in a manner representative of the data, that allows the hypotheses and research questions to be answered. A brief overview of each analysis is provided below.

Constant Comparison. First, a constant comparison method (CCM) was used to help collect and analyze the initial interview data. More specifically, this method helped

to develop tentative conclusions, hypotheses, and themes from the transcribed data. The data was initially transcribed and coded, and then this coded data helped to identify passages that illuminated the topic being asked by the research question(s). Similarly, interview quotes and/or passages were grouped together to organize the findings and create a more cohesive theme. The analysis allowed the identification of emergent and recurrent themes and social meanings. Each transcription was then screened and re-screened for accuracy and hidden meanings not immediately apparent. Systematic processes of identification, confirmation, and refining was helpful in developing the relevant analytical categories. This method helped to develop tentative conclusions, hypotheses, and themes from the transcribed data. It is a grounded theory building mechanism that is supported by a body of evidence that starts with a set of field notes and/or a narrative (i.e., interview data). The data is initially transcribed and coded, and then this coded data helps to identifying passages that may help illuminate the topic under investigation.

Similarly, selected quotations and/or passages from interviews were grouped together to organize the findings and create a more cohesive theme. The analysis allowed the identification of emergent and recurrent themes and social meanings. Each transcription was then screened and re-screened for accuracy and hidden meanings not immediately apparent. Systematic processes of identification, confirmation, and refining was helpful in developing my relevant analytical categories.

Frequency. The second criterion for theme and sub-theme development was focused on frequency, or the sheer number of times an idea or concept was mentioned. More clearly, many of the quotations chosen below are representative of a common

theme that emerged in the interview data. The ideas mentioned in these particular quotations characterized a general feeling that was mentioned often and represented a saturation point in the data.

Intensity. The third criterion for quotation or exemplar selection from the interviews was based on intensity, or the marked strength of the idea being shared. If an individual spoke about a topic using powerful and affective language, or if an interviewee appeared particularly forceful about the significance of a certain idea and/or point being expressed, then that articulated value or behavior warranted more consideration attention, even if it was not mentioned as often. Additionally, each quotation is placed within the larger frame of the theoretical themes being investigated in this study: (a) communalism, (b) family socialization, (c) face concerns, (d) conflict styles, (e) relationship satisfaction, and (f) forgiveness.

Verifying Interpretations. Finally, in an effort to assure that the themes and patterns identified as a result of the transcribed interviews are accurate, it was necessary to verify the researcher's interpretation of the data by performing a member check. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that "the member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected, is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility. . . .Member checking is both informal and formal, and it occurs continuously" (p. 314). In addition, "member checking may be conducted at the end of an interview. . . .may be conducted in interviews by verifying interpretations and data gathered in earlier interviews. . . .may be conducted in informal conversations with members. . . .Before submission of the final report, a member check should be

conducted by furnishing entire copies of the study to a review panel of respondents and other persons in the setting being studied.” (Erlandson, et. al., 1993, p. 142). I fulfilled this member check by emailing the qualitative results to two participants in each country under investigation, Uganda and Ethiopia, and asked each individual to verify the themes that had emerged from the data, a process called member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). All four members (i.e., prior interviewees) were excited to participate in this portion of the study and were quick to provide feedback on the themes and sub-themes forwarded. Feedback indicated strong support for the majority of the themes that emerged in the data. One member (Ugandan) did state that the role of violence in Uganda seemed understated. She suggested that I highlight the significance of violence in romantic relationships. Two members (Ugandan and Ethiopian) suggested that I mention more about the health disparities that exist in Uganda and Ethiopia, and the subsequent role that this fact plays in families and romantic relationships. I agreed with this suggestion but explained that the focus of this study did not allow for much inclusion of that data. Still, I acknowledged the seriousness of this issue. Finally, one additional member (Ethiopian) mentioned that a stronger caveat should be made about the gender differences that exist in the Ethiopian communities, particularly in terms of gender roles and expectations in romantic relationships.

Chapter 4: Results

The results of the study are presented below in two phases. The quantitative results are presented first and include a preliminary analysis (confirmatory factor analyses of the four main scales used, the results of the internal reliability analyses of each scale, an overview of the descriptive statistics, and the dependent variable assumption verification) and a primary analysis (hypothesis and research question analyses). The qualitative results are presented second and include the answering of four research questions through the identification of emergent themes and sub-themes.

Phase 1: Quantitative Results

Preliminary Analysis: Confirmatory Factor Analyses

To ensure distinct measures of the concepts, four separate confirmatory factor analyses of the family socialization, face concern, conflict style, and relationship satisfaction items were completed. The AMOS version 7.0 structural equation modeling software, with maximum likelihood estimation of the covariances of the items, was utilized to test the models. Several criteria were employed to determine the inclusion of the items and model fit. First, factor loading values needed to be .4 or higher for items to remain in the scale. Second, items had to be unidimensional, as demonstrated by the tests of internal consistency and parallelism (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Internal consistency requires that items have a similar statistical relationship to the primary factor, while parallelism requires that the items have a similar statistical relationship to other factors. Items were removed from the model that the modification indices suggested had a direct path to another factor (e.g., a path was suggested for an other-face item to the independent self-construal factor in order to improve model fit). Essentially, this

procedure assured that an item only loads on one factor of the scale. Third, the items need to have homogeneous content. Finally, items needed to have adequate internal reliability (i.e., Cronbach's Alpha).

Because the chi-square test statistic and p-value is biased by sample size and model size (see Maruyama, 1998), the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio is considered a more meaningful summary than chi-square alone (Marsh & Hocevar, 1985). Researchers suggest that a ratio as high as 3 to 1 indicates good fit (Kline, 1998). The expected ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom is 1 and the smaller the ratio, the better the fit. Multiple fit indices were utilized to test the model fit, including chi-square, chi-square to degrees-of-freedom ratio, the comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), the root mean square residual (RMR), and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA). The recommended fit standard for the CFI and IFI is at or above .90 (Kline, 2005; Marsh et al., 1988), the recommended level of acceptability for RMR is at or less than .08, and RMSEA is at or less than .06 (Kline, 2005; Mancini & Marek, 2004).

Family Socialization. First, the family socialization items were examined. This scale has two distinct factors that emerged: *conversation* and *conformity orientation*. Therefore, a two-factor model was tested, χ^2 (298, n = 385) = 654.417, p < .000, GFI = .88, CFI = .76, RMR = .12, RMSEA = .06. The X²/df ratio in this model was 2.12 suggesting an adequate fit. Still, the original model did not have a very good fit to the data overall. To improve the model fit, several items were removed based on low factor loadings and the modification indices, which suggested overlapping measurement in items. Six items were removed from the *conversation orientation* factor (1, 7, 11, 13, 17,

23) and seven items were removed from the *conformity orientation* factor (2, 6, 8, 12, 14, 20, 22). The final two factor model suggested a good model fit to the data, $\chi^2(64, n = 385) = 87.738, p = .03, GFI = .97, CFI = .97, RMR = .06, RMSEA = .03$. The X2/df ratio in this model was 1.37 also suggesting an adequate fit. Overall, the model fit showed a good fit with all five model fit indicators. The remaining 13 items included nine items measuring *conversation orientation* and four items measuring *conformity orientation*. See table 4 for Factor Loadings.

Table 4. Factor Loadings for Family Socialization

<i>Family Socialization</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor Loadings</i>
<i>Conversation Orientation</i>	<i>3. My parents often say something like “every member of the family should have some say in family decisions.”</i>	<i>.51</i>
	<i>5. My parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something.</i>	<i>.49</i>
	<i>9. My parents often say something like “you should always look at both sides of an issue.”</i>	<i>.47</i>
	<i>15. In our family, we often talk about our feelings and emotions.</i>	<i>.54</i>
	<i>19. I really enjoy talking with parents, even when we disagree.</i>	<i>.42</i>
	<i>21. My parents encourage me to express my feelings.</i>	<i>.63</i>
	<i>24. We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day.</i>	<i>.65</i>
	<i>25. In our family, we often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.</i>	<i>.59</i>

Table 4 Continued

<i>Family Socialization</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor Loadings</i>
	26. <i>My parents like to hear my opinion, even when I do not agree with them.</i>	.63
<i>Conformity Orientation</i>	4. <i>In our home, my parents usually have the last word.</i>	.48
	10. <i>If my parents don't approve of my action, they don't want to know about it.</i>	.48
	16. <i>My parents often say things like "my ideas are right and you should not question them."</i>	.57
	18. <i>My parents often say things like "a child should not argue with adults."</i>	.63

Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis, the revised Family Socialization Scale/model reported the following internal reliabilities for the two distinct factors found in Uganda and Ethiopia combined: *conversation orientation* ($\alpha = .79$) and *conformity orientation* ($\alpha = .62$). Each factor of the scale reported slightly different internal reliabilities when examined in Uganda and Ethiopia alone. See table 5 for Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 5. Family Socialization: Cronbach's Alpha

Family Socialization Orientation	Uganda	Ethiopia	Combined
Conversation Orientation (9 items)	.79	.80	.79
Conformity Orientation (4 items)	.64	.57	.62

Face Concern. Second, the *face concern* items were examined. This scale has two distinct factors that emerged: *self* and *other* orientation. Therefore, a two-factor model

was tested, $\chi^2(34, n = 385) = 64.959, p < .000, GFI = .97, CFI = .94, RMR = .06, RMSEA = .05$. The X^2/df ratio in this model was 1.91 suggesting an adequate fit.

Therefore, all five items of both dimensions of the Face Concern Scale were used and the model fit showed a good fit with all five model fit indicators. See table 6 for Factor Loadings.

Table 6. Factor Loadings for Face Concern

Face Concern	Item	Factor Loading
Self-Face	2. I was concerned with not bringing shame to myself.	.41
	6. I was concerned with protecting my self-image.	.40
	8. I didn't want to embarrass myself in front of my partner.	.43
	10. I wanted to maintain my dignity in front of my partner.	.54
	14. I was concerned with not appearing weak in front of my partner.	.50
Other-Face	5. Helping to maintain the pride of my partner was important to me.	.42
	7. My concern was to help my partner maintain his/her dignity.	.54
	12. My primary concern was helping partner to save face.	.64
	13. I was concerned with helping my partner maintain his/her credibility.	.61
	15. I was concerned with helping my partner to preserve his/her self image.	.67

Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis, the Face Concern Scale reported the following internal reliabilities for the two distinct factors found in Uganda and Ethiopia combined: Self-Face ($\alpha = .54$) and Other-Face ($\alpha = .71$). Each factor of the scale reported slightly different internal reliabilities when examined in Uganda and Ethiopia alone. Mutual-face was dropped from the analysis due to poor internal reliability ($\alpha = .41$). See table 7 for Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 7. Face Concern: Cronbach's Alpha

Face Concern	Uganda	Ethiopia	Combined
Self-Face (5 items)	.60	.39	.54
Other-Face (5 items)	.74	.57	.71

Conflict Styles. Third, the conflict style items were examined. The original measurement scales included eight distinct factors that emerged: *avoiding*, *obliging*, *passive aggression*, *integrating*, *third party help*, *comprising*, *emotional expression*, and *dominating* (Ting-Toomey, et. al., 2000). Based on prior theoretical understanding of conflict styles, the conflict styles were arranged in a second order confirmatory factor analysis: *avoiding* (*avoiding* and *obliging*), *dominating* (*passive aggression*, *emotional expression*, and *dominating*) and *collaboration* (*third party help*, *compromising*, and *integrating*). Therefore, a 3-factor model was tested, $\chi^2(458, n = 385) = 932.319, p < .000, GFI = .86, CFI = .81, RMR = .14, RMSEA = .05$. The X2/df ratio in this model was 2.04 suggesting an adequate fit, but the remaining indices suggested a poor fit to the data overall. To improve the model fit, several items were removed based on factor loadings and the modification indices, which suggested overlapping measurement in items. The

latent variable and its accompanying items, *integrating*, was removed completely and several items were removed from the remaining seven latent variable conflict styles, including item 16 (*avoiding*), item 21 (*passive aggression*), item 13 (*emotional expression*), and item 2 (*compromising*). The final three factor model suggested a good model fit to the data, χ^2 (246, n = 385) = 437.234, $p < .00$, GFI = .91, CFI = .90, RMR = .11, RMSEA = .05. The X2/df ratio in this model was 1.78 suggesting an adequate fit. Overall, the model fit showed a good fit with four of five model fit indicators. The remaining items included seven items measuring *avoiding*, 10 items measuring *dominating*, and seven items measuring *collaborating*. See table 8 for Factor Loadings.

Table 8. Factor Loadings for Conflict Styles

Conflict Style	Item	Factor Loadings	
Avoiding	Oblige	20. I tried to satisfy the conflict expectations of my partner.	.48
		23. I gave in to the wishes of my partner.	.71
		28. I tried to satisfy the needs of my partner.	.68
		30. I went along with the suggestions of my partner.	.58
	Avoid	11. I said nothing and waited for things to get better.	.61
		24. I sucked it up and held my resentment in silence	.52
		31. I generally kept quiet and waited for things to improve.	.71
Dominating	Dominate	1. I used my influence to get my ideas accepted.	.43
		6. I used my authority to make a decision in my favor.	.69
		14. I used my power to win a competitive edge.	.66

Table 8 Continued

Conflict Style	Item	Factor Loadings
	32. I tried to persuade my partner that my viewpoint is right.	.43
Emotion Expression	8. I used my feelings to determine what I should do in the conflict situation.	.67
	10. I used my feelings to guide my conflict behaviors.	.58
	26. I preferred my partner to be emotionally expressive with me in the conflict situation.	.40
Passive Aggression	5. I said nasty things about my partner to other people.	.65
	9. Out of anger, I said things to damage my partner's reputation.	.65
	17. I said and did things out of anger to make my partner feel bad.	.60
Collaborating		
Compromise	4. I tried to find a middle course to resolve the impasse.	.41
	18. I win some and lose some so that a compromise can be reached.	.40
	22. I used a "give and take" so that a compromise could be made.	.51
Third Party Help	3. I relied on a close friend to help negotiate a resolution to the conflict.	.76
	7. I asked a close friend to make a decision about how to settle the dispute between myself and my partner.	.66
	15. I typically go through a close friend to settle our conflict.	.76
	19. I asked a close friend to help negotiate the disagreement with my partner about his/her behavior.	.67

Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis, the revised conflict style measures reported the following internal reliabilities for the three distinct factors found in Uganda and Ethiopia combined: *avoiding* ($\alpha = .74$), *dominating* ($\alpha = .71$), and

collaborating ($\alpha = .75$). Each factor of the scale reported slightly different internal reliabilities when examined in Uganda and Ethiopia alone. See table 9 for Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 9. Conflict Styles: Cronbach's Alpha

Conflict Styles	Uganda	Ethiopia	Combined
Avoiding (7 items; obliging, avoiding)	.76	.67	.74
Dominating (10 items; pass agg, emotional expression, dominating)	.69	.74	.71
Collaborating (7 items; third party help, compromising)	.73	.70	.75

Relationship Satisfaction. Finally, the relationship satisfaction items were examined. This scale has five items that measure one factor: *relationship satisfaction*. Therefore, a one-factor model was tested, $\chi^2 (5, n = 385) = 16.813, p < .005, GFI = .98, CFI = .99, RMR = .04, RMSEA = .08$. The X2/df ratio in this model was 3.36 suggesting a less than adequate fit. Still, all five items of the scale were used and the model fit showed a good fit with three of the five model fit indicators. See table 10 for Factor Loadings.

Table 10. Factor Loadings for Relationship Satisfaction

<i>Relationship Satisfaction</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Factor Loading</i>
	<i>1. Overall, I feel at ease and accepted in my romantic relationship.</i>	<i>.61</i>
	<i>2. I am satisfied that in our relationship there is mutual understanding of one another.</i>	<i>.73</i>
	<i>3. I am satisfied that I am appreciated by my romantic partner.</i>	<i>.77</i>
	<i>4. I am satisfied that I can communicate my true feelings to my romantic partner.</i>	<i>.60</i>
	<i>5. I am satisfied with the companionship I receive from my partner.</i>	<i>.67</i>

Based on the results of the confirmatory factor analysis, the Relationship Satisfaction Scale/Model reported the following internal reliabilities in Uganda and Ethiopia combined: *relationship satisfaction* $\alpha = .81$. The scale reported slightly different internal reliabilities when examined in Uganda and Ethiopia alone. See table 11 for Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 11. Relationship Satisfaction: Cronbach's Alpha

Relationship Satisfaction	Uganda	Ethiopia	Combined
Relationship Satisfaction (5 items)	.85	.69	.81

Due to the lack of good model fit and poor internal reliability, the communalism ($\alpha = .55$) and forgiveness ($\alpha = .49$) scales had to be removed from the quantitative analysis. However, the important role of forgiveness in Uganda and Ethiopia culture, as

related to conflict and conflict behavior, was demonstrated in the qualitative portion of the data collection.

Descriptives

Six scales were used to assess the relationship between culture (i.e., communalism), family communication, face concerns, conflict styles and relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. See tables 12, 13, 14, and 15 for means, standard deviations, and correlations. The communalism and the forgiveness scales did not report acceptable internal reliabilities ($\alpha = .55$ and $\alpha = .49$, respectively) and were therefore removed from the quantitative portion of the study. However, it should be noted that the role of communalism and forgiveness in conflict in romantic relationships emerged frequently in the qualitative data. Therefore, the constructs did remain part of the overall study.

Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations: Uganda and Sex

	Uganda (N= 231)		Uganda- Male (N =144)		Uganda-Female (N=87)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Conversation	31.88	6.37	31.58	6.61	32.38	5.96
Conformity	11.79	3.54	12.04	3.53	11.37	3.54
Self	18.48	3.96	18.64	3.69	18.23	4.39
Other	17.40	4.33	17.43	3.99	17.36	4.87
Avoiding	19.15	5.90	19.51	5.59	18.55	6.35
Dominating	29.77	6.85	30.06	6.64	29.29	7.19
Collaborating	19.21	5.73	19.81	5.69	18.22	5.69
Rel. Sat.	18.37	5.09	17.59	5.03	19.66	4.94

Table 13. Means and Standard Deviations: Ethiopia and Sex

	Ethiopia (N= 153)		Ethiopia- Male (N=113)		Ethiopia-Female (N=40)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Conversation	32.32	6.37	32.14	6.55	33.05	5.72
Conformity	11.82	3.25	11.78	3.18	11.80	3.36
Self	17.77	3.26	17.90	3.12	17.25	3.54
Other	19.28	3.28	19.57	3.22	18.63	3.27
Avoiding	21.90	4.98	21.96	4.70	21.58	5.69
Dominating	28.57	6.95	27.64	7.07	31.38	5.85
Collaborating	23.73	5.07	24.31	5.03	22.13	4.93
Rel. Sat.	19.45	3.71	19.98	3.49	18.10	3.93

Table 14. Means and Standard Deviations: Uganda and Ethiopia Combined

	Uganda & Ethiopia Combined (N= 384)	
	M	SD
Conversation	32.05	6.37
Conformity	11.80	3.42
Self	18.20	3.71
Other	18.15	4.05
Avoiding	20.25	5.70
Dominating	29.29	6.91
Collaborating	21.02	5.90
Rel. Sat.	18.80	4.61

Table 15. Correlations

	Conv.	Conf.	Self	Other	Avoid	Dom.	Collab.
Conv.							
Conf.	-.229**						
Self	.068	.031					
Other	.137**	.083	.314**				
Avoid	.149**	.106*	.049	.216**			
Dom.	.087	.247**	.151 **	.026	.109*		
Collab.	.187**	.009	.071	.271**	.415**	.143**	
Rel. Sat	.242**	.005	.047	.125*	.102*	-.049	.131*

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

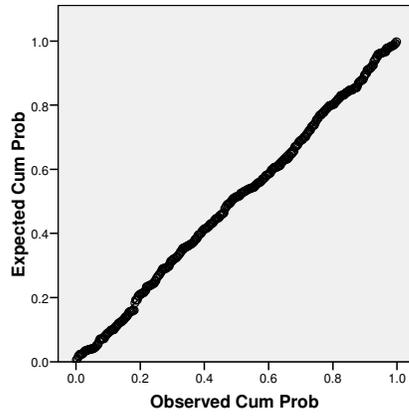
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Statistical Assumptions Check: Dependent Variables

Four dependent variables, *avoiding*, *dominating*, *collaborating*, and *relationship satisfaction*, were screened for missing data and outliers and blank and incomplete cases were excluded. Data were additionally examined for fulfillment of the statistical assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. See Figure 4-7 for Normal P-P Plot and Scatterplots.

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: Favoiding



Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: Favoiding

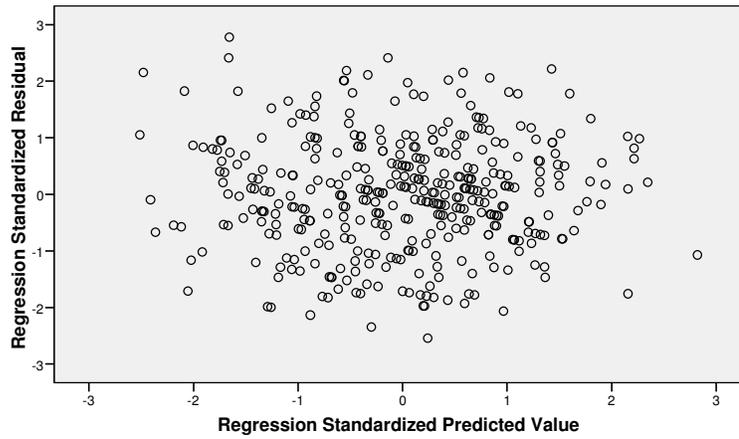
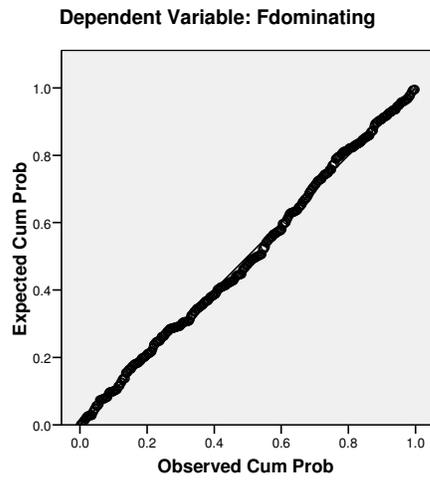


Figure 4. Avoiding P-P Plot and Scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual



Scatterplot

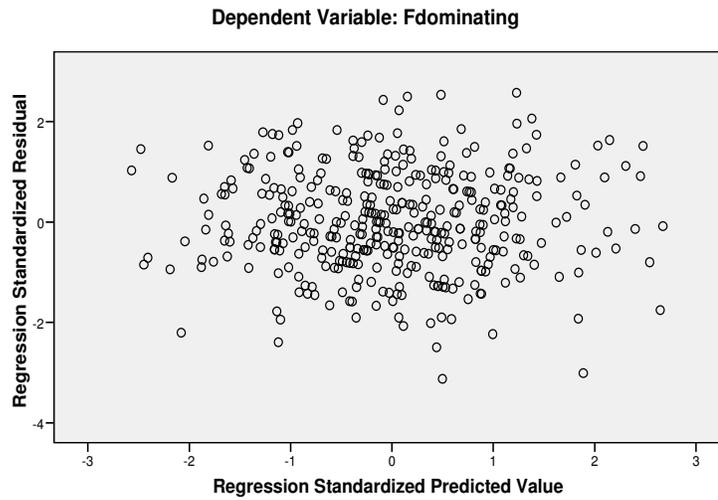
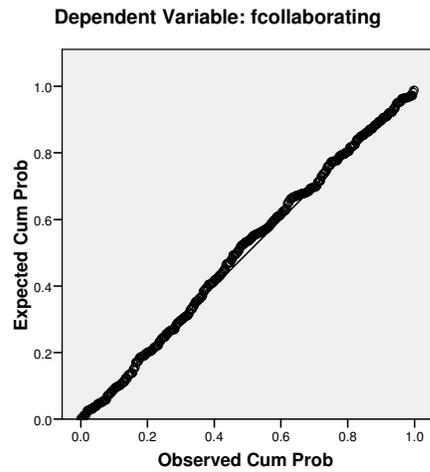


Figure 5. Dominating P-P Plot and Scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual



Scatterplot

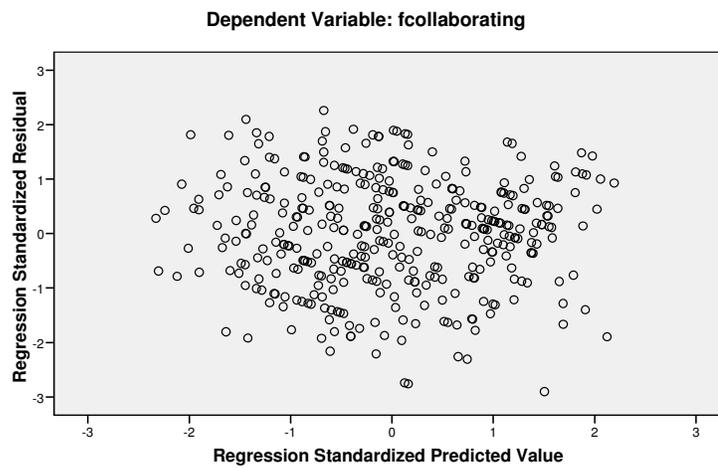


Figure 6. Collaborating P-P Plot and Scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

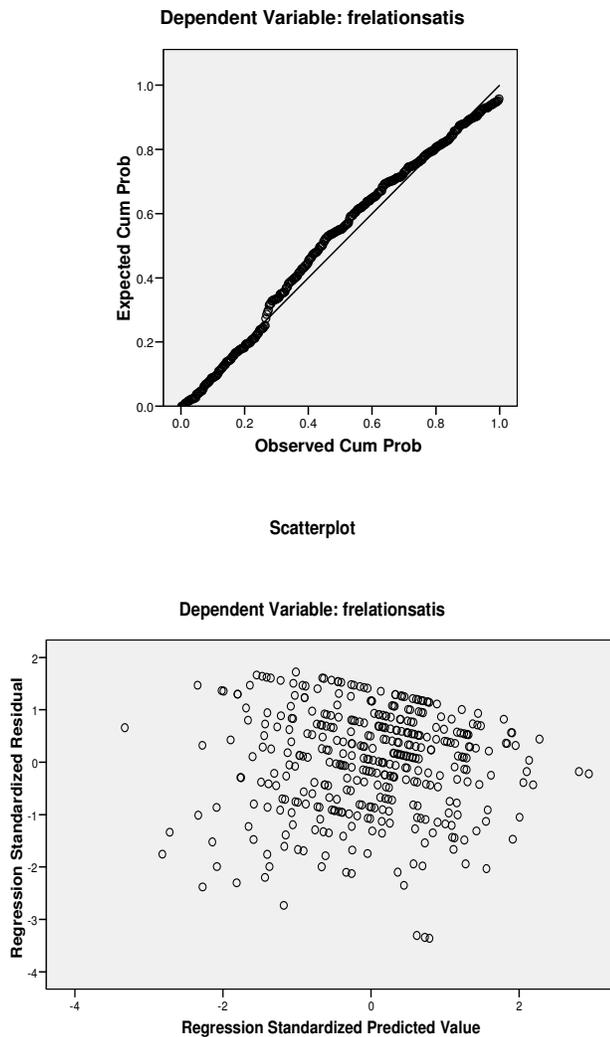


Figure 7. Relationship Satisfaction P-P Plot and Scatterplot

Primary Analysis

Quantitative Analysis: Test of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Nine hypotheses were purported and two research questions were asked in an effort to gain a better understanding of the relationship among family socialization

patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, and relationship satisfaction. Hypotheses H1-H3 are concerned with assessing the relationship between family socialization patterns (conversation and conformity) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating) and the relationship between face concerns (self and other) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating). Hypothesis H4 was concerned with assessing the relationship between family socialization and relationship satisfaction and face concerns and relationship satisfaction and conflict styles and relational satisfaction. The first research question asked “*Which family socialization and face concern variables best explain conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction?*” and the second research question asked “*Does family socialization and face concerns act as a mediation model for predicting conflict style choices in Uganda and Ethiopia romantic relationships?*”

H1: *Avoiding Conflict Style*

Hypothesis H1a: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

Hypothesis H1b: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report an other-oriented face concern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

To test hypotheses H1a and H1b, a hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the level of prediction in the independent variables (i.e., family socialization and face concerns) on avoiding conflict style, after controlling for country and sex. Country and sex were entered at Step 1, explaining 6.1% of the variance in avoiding. After entry of the family socialization orientations (i.e., conversation and conformity) in Step 2 the

total variance explained by the model as a whole was 10.1%, $F(4, 380) = 10.70, p < .000$. Family socialization patterns explained an additional 4% of the variance, after controlling for country and sex, $R^2 \text{ change} = .04, F \text{ change}(2, 380) = 8.50, p < .000$. After entry of face concerns (i.e., self and other) in Step 3 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 11.8%, $F(6, 378) = 8.46, p < .000$. Face concerns explained an additional 2% of the variance, after controlling for country, sex, and family socialization, $R^2 \text{ change} = .017, F \text{ change}(2, 378) = 3.67, p = .03$. In the final model, only conversation ($\beta = .16, p = .002$), conformity ($\beta = .13, p = .013$) and other-face ($\beta = .13, p = .013$) were statistically significant. Hypothesis 1a and 1b were supported. See Table 16 Presents Data for Avoiding.

Table 16. Dependent Variable: Avoiding

IVs	Block 1				Block 2				Block 3			
	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p
Uganda/ Ethiopia	2.65	5.54	.23	.00	2.57		.22	.00	2.24		.19	.00
Male/Female	-.84		-.07	.16	-.89	5.43	-.07	.14	-.81		-.07	.17
Conversation					.16		.18	.00	.14	5.40	3.12	.00
Conformity					.23		.14	.01	.21		.13	.01
Self									.01		.01	.90
Other									.19		.08	.01
$R^2 \Delta =$.061				.040				.017			
F =	(2, 382) = 12.421, $p < .000$				(4, 380) = 10.701, $p < .000$				(6, 378) = 8.458, $p < .000$			

The use of dominating as a conflict style by individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia was assessed next. The following two hypotheses examined how family socialization patterns and face concerns impact individuals reported preference for using a dominating conflict when in conflict with their romantic partner.

H2: Dominating Conflict Style

H2a: The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.

H2b: The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a self-oriented face concern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.

To test hypotheses H2a and H2b a hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of two control measures (i.e., family socialization and face concerns) to predict *dominating* as a conflict style, after controlling for country and sex. Country and sex were entered at Step 1, explaining 1.1% of the variance in *dominating*. After entry of the family socialization orientations (i.e., conversation and conformity) in Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 9.6%, $F(4, 380) = 10.12, p < .000$. Family socialization patterns explained an additional 4% of the variance, after controlling for country and sex, $R^2 \text{ change} = .09, F \text{ change}(2, 380) = 17.92, p < .000$. After entry of face concerns (i.e., self and other) in Step 3 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 11.5%, $F(6, 378) = 8.16, p < .000$. Face concerns explained an additional 2% of the variance, after controlling for country, sex, and family socialization, $R^2 \text{ change} = .02, F \text{ change}(2, 378) = 3.93, p = .02$. In the final model, only

conversation (beta = .15, p = .004), conformity (beta = .29, p < .000) and self-face (beta = .15, p = .005) were statistically significant. Hypothesis 2a and 2b were supported. See

Table 17 for Data for Dominating.

Table 17. Dependent Variable: Dominating

IVs	Block 1				Block 2				Block 3			
	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p
Uganda/Ethiopia	-1.09	.72	-.08	.13	-1.16	.69	-.08	.09	-.81	.72	-.06	.26
Male/Female	.90	.75	.06	.23	1.04	.72	.07	.15	1.18	.71	.08	.10
Conversation					.16	.05	.15	.00	.16	.06	.15	.00
Conformity					.58	.10	.29	.00	.58	.10	.29	.00
Self									.27	.10	.15	.01
Other									-.08	.09	-.05	.40
R ² Δ =	.011				.085				.018			
F =	(2, 383) = 2.128, p=.121				(4, 380) = 10.117, p<.00				(6, 378) = 8.16, p<.00			

The third conflict style, collaborating, was examined next. The following two hypotheses examined how family socialization patterns and face concerns impact

individuals reported preference for using a collaborating conflict when in conflict with their romantic partner.

H3: *Collaborating Conflict Styles*

H3a: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using a conversation-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

H3b: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using an other-oriented face concern, the more they will use a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.*

To test hypotheses H3a and H3b a hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of two control measures (i.e., family socialization and face concerns) to predict *collaborating* as a conflict style, after controlling for country and sex. Country and sex were entered at Step 1, explaining 16.1% of the variance in *collaborating*. After entry of the family socialization orientations (i.e., conversation and conformity) in Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 19.7%, $F(4, 380) = 23.27, p < .000$. Family socialization patterns explained an additional 4% of the variance, after controlling for country and sex, $R^2 \text{ change} = .04, F \text{ change}(2, 380) = 8.42, p < .000$. After entry of face concerns data (i.e., self and other) in Step 3 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 22.3%, $F(6, 378) = 18.08, p < .000$. Face concerns explained an additional 3% of the variance, after controlling for country, sex, and family socialization, $R^2 \text{ change} = .03, F \text{ change}(2, 378) = 6.38, p = .002$. In the final model, only conversation ($\beta = .17, p < .000$) and other-face ($\beta = .16, p$

=.002) were statistically significant. Hypothesis 3a and 3b were supported. See Table 18 for Collaborating Results.

Table 18. Dependent Variable: Collaborating

IVs	Block 1				Block 2				Block 3			
	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p
Uganda/Ethiopia	4.31	.57	.36	.00	4.21	.56	.35	.00	3.84	.57	.32	.00
Male/Female	-1.76	.59	-.14	.00	-1.90	.58	-.15	.00	-1.80	.57	-.15	.00
Conversation					.18	.04	.19	.00	.16	.04	.17	.00
Conformity					.07	.08	.04	.39	.04	.08	.02	.65
Self									.05	.08	.03	.52
Other									.23	.07	.16	.00
R ² Δ =	.161				.036				.026			
F =	(2, 382) = 36.69, p < .000				(4, 380) = 23.27, p < .000				(6, 378) = 18.08, p < .000			

Finally, the last three hypotheses examined how individuals reported family socialization patterns, face concerns, and conflict style impacted their relationship satisfaction.

H4: *Family socialization/face concerns/conflict styles to relational outcomes (relationship satisfaction)*

H4a: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia from a conversation-oriented family will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals from a conformity- oriented family.*

H4b: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ other-oriented face concern will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ self-oriented face concerns.*

H4c: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with a romantic other will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ an avoiding or dominating conflict style.*

To test hypotheses H4a, H4b, and H4c a hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of three control measures (i.e., family socialization, face concerns, and conflict styles) to predict relationship satisfaction, after controlling for country and sex. Country and sex were entered at Step 1, explaining 1.9% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. After entry of the family socialization orientations (i.e., conversation and conformity) in Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 7.8%, $F(4, 380) = 7.99, p < .000$. Family socialization patterns explained an additional 6% of the variance, after controlling for country and sex, $R^2 \text{ change} = .06, F \text{ change}(2, 380) = 12.04, p < .000$. After entry of face concerns (i.e., self and other) in Step 3 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 8.2%, $F(6, 378) = 5.66, p < .000$. Face concerns explained an additional .1% of the variance, after controlling for country, sex, and family socialization, $R^2 \text{ change} = .01, F \text{ change}(2, 378) = .992, p = .372$. After entry of conflict styles (i.e., *avoiding, dominating, and*

collaborating) in Step 4 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 9.5%, $F(9, 375) = 4.38, p < .000$. Conflict styles explained an additional 1% of the variance, after controlling for country, sex, family socialization, and face concerns, R^2 change = .013, F change $(2, 375) = 1.77, p = .15$. In the final model, only conversation ($\beta = .24, p < .000$) and dominating ($\beta = -.11, p = .04$) were statistically significant. Hypothesis 4a was supported and hypothesis 4b was not supported, while hypothesis 4c was partially supported. See Table 19 for Relationship Satisfaction results.

Table 19. Dependent Variable: Relationship Satisfaction

IVs	Block 1				Block 2				Block 3				Block 4			
	B	SE B	β	p	β	SE B	β	p	β	SE B	β	p	B	SE B	β	p
Uga/Eth	1.18	.48	.13	.02	1.08	.47	.12	.02	.98	.49	.10	.05	.68	.52	.07	.19
M/F	.74	.50	.08	.14	.61	.48	.06	.20	.65	.49	.07	.18	.85	.49	.09	.09
Conv.					.18	.04	.25	.00	.17	.04	.24	.00	.17	.04	.24	.00
Conf.					.09	.07	.07	.20	.08	.07	.06	.26	.11	.07	.09	.11
Self									.03	.07	.02	.65	.05	.07	.04	.48
Other									.07	.06	.06	.27	.05	.06	.04	.45
Avoid													.02	.05	.02	.69
Dom.													-.07	.04	-.1	.04
Coll.													.05	.05	.07	.26
R ² Δ =	.019				.058				.005				.013			
F =	(2, 382) = 3.72, p=.03				(4, 380) = 7.99, p<.000				(6, 378) = 5.66, p<.000				(9, 375) = 4.38, p <.000			

Research Questions: Quantitative Analysis

RQ1: Which family socialization and face concern variables best explain conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction?

This question was answered by examining the results of the quantitative analyses, and filtering out the most significant result. This revealed the following best predictors of

conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia in romantic relationship. First, a conversation orientation explained the greatest amount of variance in relationship satisfaction. Therefore, individuals who reported being from a conversation-oriented family reported being more satisfied in their romantic relationships. Second, family socialization patterns (conversation) explained an additional 4% of the variance in an individual's reported preference for using a collaborating conflict style in their romantic relationships. Third, family communication patterns (i.e., conformity) reported 4% of the variance of an individual's preference to use both an avoiding and dominating conflict style. Finally, individuals who reported being more concerned with protecting the face of their significant other in conflict accounted for 3% of the variance in an individual's report of the use of a collaborating conflict style. It should also be noted that sex and country predicted a large percentage of the variance in conflict styles and relationships satisfaction, but because they were not part of the study's focus, their specific contributions were not considered.

RQ2: Does family socialization and face concerns act to create a mediation model for predicting conflict style choices in Uganda and Ethiopia romantic relationships?

To answer research question two, nine separate multiple regression analyses were used in an effort to assess the direct and mediated effects of family socialization, face concerns, and the combined effect on *avoiding* (regression analyses 1-3), on *dominating* (regression analyses 4-6), and on *collaborating* (regression analyses 7-9). Each group of analyses is discussed in order below.

Multiple Regression Analyses 1-3: Avoiding (DV)

To help answer the second research question, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization patterns to predict *avoiding* as a conflict style. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity (see Normal P-P Plot and Scatterplot tables). Family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) was found to explain 4.3% of the variance in *avoiding*, R^2 change = .04, F change (2, 382) = 8.59, $p < .000$. Conversation (beta = .05, $p < .000$) and conformity (beta = .09, $p = .004$) were both found to be statistically significant predictors of the use of an *avoiding* conflict style. Therefore, family socialization was found to have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for using an *avoiding* conflict style.

In an effort to answer the second research question, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of face concerns to predict *avoiding* as a conflict style. Face concerns (i.e., self and other) was found to explain 4.7% of the variance in *avoiding*, R^2 change = .047, F change (2, 382) = 9.44, $p < .000$. Only other-face (beta = .19, $p < .000$) was both found to be statistically significant predictors of the *avoiding* conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were found to have a direct effect on individuals reported preferences for using an *avoiding* conflict style.

Finally, to help answer research question 2, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization and face concerns to predict *avoiding* as a conflict style. Family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) and face concerns (i.e., self and other) was found to explain 8% of the variance in *avoiding*, R^2 change = .08, F change (4, 380) = 7.88, $p < .000$. Conversation (beta = .15, $p = .003$),

conformity (beta = .13, $p = .01$), and other-face (beta = .19, $p < .000$) were all found to be statistically significant predictors of the *avoiding* conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were not found to mediate the effect of family socialization patterns on individuals' reported preferences for using an *avoiding* conflict.

Multiple Regression Analyses 4-6: Dominating (DV)

First, to help answer the second research question, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization to predict *dominating* as a conflict style. Family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) was found to explain 7.8% of the variance in *dominating*, R^2 change = .08, F change (2, 382) = 17.25, $p < .000$. Conversation (beta = .15, $p = .003$) and conformity (beta = .28, $p < .000$) were both found to be statistically significant predictors of the *dominating* conflict style. Therefore, family socialization was found to have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for a *dominating* conflict style.

Second, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of face concerns to predict *dominating* as a conflict style. Face Concerns (i.e., Self and Other) was found to explain 2.3% of the variance in *dominating*, R^2 change = .02, F change (2, 382) = 4.55, $p = .01$. Only self-face (beta = .15, $p = .003$) was both found to be statistically significant predictors of the dominating conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were found to have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for using a *dominating* conflict style.

Finally, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization and face concerns to predict *dominating* as a conflict style. Family socialization (i.e., Conformity and Conversation) and face concerns (i.e., self and other)

was found to explain 10% of the variance in *dominating*, R squared change = .104, F change (4, 380) = 11.04, $p < .000$. Conversation (beta = .15, $p = .003$), conformity (beta = .28 $p < .000$), and self-face (beta = .15, $p = .003$) were all found to be statistically significant predictors of the *dominating* conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were not found to mediate the effect of family socialization patterns on individuals' reported preferences for using a *dominating* conflict style.

Multiple Regression Analyses 7-9: Collaborating (DV)

To answer the second research question, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization to predict *collaborating* as a conflict style. Family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) was found to explain 4% of the variance in *collaborating*, R squared change = .04, F change (2, 382) = 7.46, $p = .001$. Only Conversation (beta = .20, $p < .000$) was both found to be statistically significant predictors of the *collaborating* conflict style. Therefore, family socialization patterns were found to have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for using a *collaborating* conflict style.

Again, to answer the second research question, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of face concerns predict *collaborating* as a conflict style. Face concerns (i.e., self and other) was found to explain 7.4% of the variance in *collaborating*, R squared change = .074, F change (2, 382) = 15.24, $p < .000$. Only other-face (beta = .25, $p < .000$) was both found to be statistically significant predictor of the *collaborating* conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were found to have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for using a *collaborating* conflict style.

Finally, to answer the research question 2, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of family socialization and face concerns to predict *collaborating* as a conflict style. Family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) and face concerns (i.e., self and other) was found to explain 10% of the variance in *collaborating*, R^2 change = .104, F change (4, 380) = 10.242, $p < .000$. Conversation (beta = .16, $p = .002$) and other-face (beta = .25, $p < .000$) were all found to be statistically significant predictors of the *collaborating* conflict style. Therefore, face concerns were not found to mediate the effect of family socialization patterns on individuals' reported preferences for using a *collaborating* conflict style.

Phase 2: Qualitative Results

In order to answer research questions three, four, five and six, the transcribed data from the 14 (seven Ugandan and seven Ethiopian) face-to-face interviews were analyzed using Nvivo, a qualitative software program. Several different types of categories and/or schemes were used to help locate, understand, and compare the various answers provided during the recorded interviews. Identifying various schemas or categories present within the data allows for an in-depth analysis of the underlying themes and subject matter (Foss, 2004). Analysis of qualitative data is primarily an inductive, as opposed to a deductive process, meaning that the researcher hopes to discern patterns in the data rather than formally test pre-determined hypotheses. The end result is typically a detailed account of particular phenomena, often described as a "thick description," a list of propositions, or the construction of a typology indicating how one set of variables is related to one another (Geertz, 1973). This analysis then develops an integrated framework to show how the salient variables are related to one another.

The objective of the qualitative analysis was to gain a better understanding of the context-specific processes that may shape conflict strategies and individual/group behaviors related to culture, family socialization, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. In addition, the role of religion in individuals living in Uganda and Ethiopia was assessed as it relates to and informs conflict behavior(s) in romantic relationships. As noted earlier, the analytic findings generated by qualitative research also informed the outcomes of the quantitative data. Therefore, the findings below help to clarify many of the quantitative conclusions determined in the quantitative analyses, particularly in the case of *communalism* and *forgiveness*. Specifically in the quantitative results, the constructs of *communalism* and *forgiveness* were measured by using scales, yet the results failed to show acceptable internal reliabilities, and therefore warranted their exclusion from the quantitative analyses. A plethora of descriptions and direct references to *communalism* and *forgiveness* emerged in the qualitative data. This observation in the interview data permitted a deeper understanding of the important role community and forgiveness play in Ugandan and Ethiopian conflict behavior. This role would have otherwise been overlooked by the omission of these scales in the quantitative data. Furthermore, this fact highlights the need for current *communalism* and *forgiveness* scales to better capture these constructs, particularly for use in these specific societies. This example illuminates the reciprocal and informative strength of a mixed method study.

The chosen exemplars and/or quotes help in contextualizing the emergent themes that were present throughout the 14 interviews conducted in Uganda and Ethiopia. Several methods were employed to identify themes in the data (which were described in

detail in the Method section): (a) a constant comparison method; (b) frequency of idea; (c) intensity of idea; and (d) verifying interpretations were used to assure that the emergent themes are an accurate representation of the culture under investigation. Finally, the integration of the quantitative and qualitative data was used in an effort to report the findings from both portions of the study in a manner representative of the data that allowed the hypotheses and research questions to be answered.

Research questions three through research question six were answered using the methods described above and the subsequent themes and sub-themes are provided below. Each research question is followed by the emergent themes that were chosen and categorized based on the constant comparison method, frequency, and intensity, which help to answer the question. Next, several quotes are used to help clarify the assigned theme within the larger context of its meaning. This meaning specifically relates to the constructs under investigation in this study. It should be noted that the 14 interviews did not reveal any discernible differences between the two cultures under investigation, and therefore, each theme and sub-theme applies to both the Ugandan and Ethiopian data sets collectively. This fact suggests that Ugandan and Ethiopian culture is fairly similar in terms of conflict behavior, which may suggest the salience of commonality given the communalistic nature of the culture in each country and their many overlapping cultural beliefs and traditions. Still, more interviews would need to be conducted in each country to fully conclude this idea.

The three basic prompts and/or questions asked during the 14 interviews included the following: (a) *Tell me about a about a typical disagreement you have with a current or past romantic partner?*, (b) *Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements*

(family, cultural influences, religion, etc.)?, and (c) *Using your own experiences and understandings, could you define the following concepts (i.e., face, conflict, conflict styles)?*

The interview protocol served as a primary reference, but where necessary, probing questions, such as "*What specifically did you say during the disagreement?*" were asked to garner a more detailed account of the described conflict. Based on these questions, the following four research questions were answered:

RQ3: *How do participants from Uganda and Ethiopia define conflict, face, and conflict styles?*

RQ4: *How do participants see the relationship between culture, family, and conflict styles?*

RQ5: *How do participants see the role of religion in Ugandan and Ethiopian conflict?*

RQ6: *How do participants see the relationships between conflict styles and relational outcomes?*

Research Question Three

RQ3: *How do participants from Uganda and Ethiopia define conflict, face, and conflict styles?* In an effort to examine conceptual equivalency, or whether the construct has a similar cognitive meaning in the minds of the members of each culture under investigation, participants were asked to define conflict, face, and conflict styles. Definitions of conflict were fairly straightforward and were not broken into larger themes, while the definition of face yielded two themes (i.e., *respect* and *impressions*)

and the definitions of conflict styles yielded two overarching themes (i.e., *indirect* and *confrontation/explicit*)

Conflict. The overarching definition of conflict was described by Jonathan, an 18 year-old Ethiopian, when he stated that conflict is “when you don’t come into equal terms with whomever you are talking to. If you don’t really agree about something.” Others in Uganda and Ethiopia described it as a “quarrel,” “fighting back,” and/or a “disagreement,” and were further expanded on by both Ugandan and Ethiopian participants in the following way:

A disagreement, misunderstanding of something as in they have told you something, or you found something and you start quarreling, as if you are annoyed. That is how you can define a quarrel. When someone is hurt and he wants to talk it out, and he is really angry, and has to quarrel. Some people don’t quarrel. They just come to you with this and this. So, a quarrel is something when someone shows something then how he was very, very, bad and he wants to shout it out, or talk it out.

Another definition of conflict was offered by Michael, a 28 year-old Ethiopian, when he stated the following description of conflict:

This is where people have different ways of thinking. That is a disagreement. You have different ways of attitude. You have different attitudes and ways of thinking. So, when they bring their attitudes and thinking together, it doesn’t meet. Then it leads to a disagreement.

Overall, participants in both countries described conflict as being similar to a U.S. based definition of conflict. The focus on the tension that arises when individuals express

different attitudes and ways of thinking is paramount to their understanding of how conflict arises, which is in line with how U.S. Americans would depict the basis of conflict.

Face. The concept of face was more difficult to ascertain, but two themes did emerge in the analysis of the interview data: respect (“*never insult someone*”) and impressions (“*dress code is very important*”). Respect was described as being related to how an individual is expected to treat others based on specific cultural norms and values. Disrespect was also described as “*destroying somebody’s name - somebody’s image.*” The emergent themes were not identical to the concept of face in offered by Ting-Toomey (2005), which states “face is tied to the emotional significance and estimated calculations that individuals attach to their own social self-worth and the social self-worth of others” (p. 73). Still, despite an equivalent interpretation of face emerging in the data, individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia had strong ideas about identity-respect and other-identity consideration issues within an actual conflict episode that are closely related to Western notions of face. For example, identity respect was demonstrated by showing respect for self and others through various rhetorical strategies (i.e., greeting others). Identity respect was also described as someone appearing to be neat and clean (i.e., dress) and was closely linked to how individuals viewed themselves and others in the community. Impressions were centered on the idea that in an interdependent society where everyone represents everyone else how each person presents him- and/or herself is critical.

Theme 1: *Respect*

The following quotation from Nancy, a 24 year-old Ugandan, makes this point. She was speaking in great detail about the specifics that females are taught when interacting and reacting to men's needs in her culture. She stresses that women will be “spoiled” if they do not attend to their husbands' needs, which could be compared to losing face. Essentially, if a woman is not performing certain duties or fulfilling certain roles in her marriage, then she risks losing face with her husband and her community. This idea of losing face due to improper displays of disrespect was repeated in the data often, stressing that respect was an integral part of the Ugandan and Ethiopian equivalent of face, face-saving, and face-loss.

You have to kneel to the man, or to your husband. If you want to welcome, you welcome anybody but then you kneel down, and then you greet the husband.

Don't just say you're welcome. You come in. We see it as a bad thing. For us we see it as bad thing. We have to respect the husband. You kneel down. That is respect. You greet your husband. Bring tea or water. When he first arrives you give him water to drink to show him that you respect him. You see that he has been from the sunshine so he has to take what? Water. So you have to see according to what you see. You have to be creative to what you see. It is how it works in Uganda. If you do not do this then there is trouble. You may be spoiled.

In addition, several of the interviewees expressed how important age and gender are in determining how an individual interacts with others, especially in demonstrating respect and deference.

When prompted about his understanding of face, David, a 24 year-old Ugandan male, stated:

For Ugandans you know if you don't respect, like us, for me I'm still a young person. As I see somebody who is older than me, I have to respect you as you are even if you don't say things I agree with. If I see that you are older than me I have to respect you, I understand it. The way you come.

Abdi, a 24 year-old Ethiopian male, corroborated David's statement regarding the importance of showing respect for elders, as well as all community members, when he also stressed the importance of gender and greeting others in a respectful manner. He stated:

In our culture, the man is not supposed to kneel down when greeting somebody but ladies are supposed to kneel down. That is respect, giving the elders respect. I understand that is what we have to do to keep our culture booming. You respect your elders. You greet him. You handle him as you've seen him, even if you are not older than that you have to respect him also, or her.

Theme 2: Impressions

The second theme related to face generally focused on customs of dress and acceptable modes of identity expression. This interpretation of face is less obvious in Western-based definitions of the term, but it emerged that individuals in communalistic cultures emphasize how each individual represents the larger community identity, and if an individual fails to represent a good “*first impression*” then that individual may lose face with other community members. The following three examples help to illustrate the tension of trying to make a good impression and in turn to manage how others view you.

Christine, an 18 year-old Ugandan female, responded to the following interview question giving her opinion about the Ugandan version and/or equivalent of face.

You see someone and you begin categorize someone, the way you think, they appear to you and if someone is bad, or maybe because of the way they look. Even before, you can get to communicate with them. When I see someone, it's natural. It's a natural thing to someone, and maybe you don't feel impressed, or that is natural for everyone I believe. But I also give it the benefit of the doubt, and what I had to talk about to communicate to someone. That is what I'm saying that many times a first time impression is accepted to me.

Christine reflected that first impressions are important, but she also “gives the benefit of the doubt” to another in an interaction. This suggests that she made an effort to protect the other’s face in an interaction, especially when an individual was not dressed according to the larger community’s expectations.

The second quotation was echoed frequently (by 6 interviewees), and highlighted the push-pull tension between first impressions and helping others save face by “going the extra mile of getting to know more about that person” before casting judgment or perhaps evaluating that person’s face. Again, there is a focus on protecting the other’s face in an interaction. Tsebay, a 19 year-old Christian Ethiopian, stated the following:

So, many times I don't look at things at face value. Many times when you see people personally, you are either impressed or not impressed by a person but there is always time, I get an extra mile of getting to know more about that person. The real someone, not just by face value. They call it impression something.

The final quotation represents the sub-theme of face chosen for its intensity.

Sarah, a 21 year-old (Christian) Ethiopian, expressed the “worry” that she associated with how others’ in the community view you and the way you present yourself. She also addressed the important of regaining face if it is lost and/or threatened by stating:

Yeah, I do worry. Sometimes it’s important. If someone sees you as someone who is bad, it’s bad. You ask you why do you do that? I ask them to tell me something that I can do that can make me good in your face, so that you can see that I’m a good person. I can ask you so that if you say do this and this behave very well, respect your elders, I can start doing it so that you can see me as someone who is good. If you say I’m bad, and someone says you are good, you need to do things that show that you are really good. If they say you are bad you need to start doing good things.

While the definitions of face offered by the interviewees were not exactly the same as depictions of face in U.S. American culture, individuals’ interpretations of face in Uganda and Ethiopia make sense for a culture that places specific emphasis on nonverbal and indirect displays of respect and identity, such as issues related to acts of respects (e.g., greetings) and expressions of identity (e.g., dress).

Conflict Styles. Two overarching themes emerged from the interview data that describe the general ways in which Ugandans and Ethiopians deal with conflict in romantic relationships. The themes were: (1) *indirect*, which was comprised of three sub-themes: (a) *avoiding*, (b) *third party help*, and (c) *cooling off*; and (2) *confrontation/explicit*, which was comprised of two sub-themes: (a) *violence* and (b) *emotional expression*. These two overarching themes seem to be in slightly contradict

with one another, but certain situations and factors help to determine the use of an indirect style and/or a confrontational style.

Theme 1: *Indirect Style* (sub-themes: *Avoiding, Third Party Help, and Cooling Off*)

The three sub-themes that emerged from the data indicated that individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia often prefer to deal with conflict by either avoiding it, seeking third party help, and/or by consciously choosing to have a cooling off period, which consists of taking time to let the issue alone. Often these themes are intertwined or combined; that is, with some individuals describe how they both avoid a conflict while simultaneously seeking outside counsel in an effort to resolve the conflict.

(a) *Avoiding* was often referred to as “*controlling my anger*” and “*keeping quiet*” in an effort “*to get past whatever*” and it was further described/demonstrated as follows by Abraham, a 28 year-old Ethiopian male, when he stated:

The first time I met them I didn't really react. After a few hours she felt guilty. She started calling me, calling me. I refused to answer her calls for something like three-days. For those three-days, I was keeping quiet.

This avoidance response to conflict was frequently (i.e., 9 interviewees) mentioned in the responses about romantic conflict in the interviews conducted in Uganda and Ethiopia. This idea was reinforced in the following statement offered by Jane, a 31 year-old Ethiopian, when she said:

What I'll do if I'm guilty I'll just avoid you. Then we don't speak not until maybe is that person is good at apologizing that person will come up himself. But I'm not so good at that.

It is noteworthy that she stated that if she is guilty she will avoid the apologizing because the importance of apologizing emerges later in the data. Still, no variances emerged in the interview data that showed any sex differences in the use of avoiding as a general response to conflict. It appeared that both men and women employ an avoidant conflict style in an effort to either ignore or diffuse a conflict. There was also a tendency to use silence or refer to the silence of others either during a conflict or following a conflict. Hasifa, a 24 year-old Ugandan female, described the actions of a friend in a disagreement they were having by saying:

No, she doesn't yell. She kept silent. I asked her about why or something and she just don't give me answers. I just leave her alone.

Using an avoidance style was often described as sending an apathetic message about either the situation or the other person (e.g., “*don't care*”). Mark, a 29 year-old Ugandan, described his parents' conflict style as follows:

They don't care. They don't talk. They get misunderstandings and they don't take some time to talk to each other. They keep on looking so angry and moody all of the time. I just didn't see them to try to rectify issues, not one time.

Finally, Mark offered his own way of dealing with conflict in a romantic situation as being similar to his parents as he too chooses to avoid and/or “ignore” a conflict. He chooses this similar choice pattern despite his expressed frustration with his parents' avoidant style mentioned in the previous quotation. This response suggests the power of family socialization in determining how certain individuals choose to respond to conflict. He stated:

Yeah ignore. I don't stay angry so long. I don't like fighting. The not liking of fighting will lead me to ignore most of the things. Then some other people want to always like if you hear so-and-so has talked about you. Then you want to go and ask the person. Then you go and ask you may end up quarreling. So, you just ignore some of the things in order to live in good terms with most of the people.

(b) Seeking *Third Party Help* was often referred to as the preferred way of handling a conflict. Eight interviewees mentioned this idea: “*In our culture, it's strictly indirect. Maybe tell her friends*”. Patience, a 19 year-old Ugandan, described how she handled a conflict she was having with a boyfriend:

They directed me there. So, I had to go there. He counseled me. He was a real counselor. We sorted everything out. I cooled down. I didn't even mind, I forgot. My life continued. If you see counselors they can counsel you. If you go to bad people they just let you down. But if you go to good people, they do for you something good.

The above quote serves to stress the importance in Uganda and Ethiopia of individuals' of listening and how individuals should take advice as they try to resolve a conflict with a romantic partner. Patience was “*directed*” and therefore “*had to go*” to see someone who would counsel her. Probing questions revealed that as a result of this counsel “*everything*” was resolved.

Gender emerged as another aspect of seeking third party help. Jonathan, a 19 year-old Ethiopian, demonstrated how females often seek the counsel of other females.

He added a contrast where other males sometimes will seek the counsel of other males. In response to the interview question, *How did your romantic conflict end?* Jonathan stated:

Okay the mom, the mom talked to my mom. The dad went to my dad. They tried to solve that problem. The mom was like what is up, what is wrong? You know the mom they talk straight to the mom[s].

Finally, Michael, a 28 year-old Ethiopian male, expressed how others' "told" him to seek counsel in an effort to resolve his romantic conflict. He also commented on the "indirect" ways in which individuals choose to talk about their romantic conflict. His approach resembled preservation of self-face and/or other-face. He described his response in this way:

I went to some people, counselors. They counseled me. They told me to go down. I just leave[left] him. Then I went home, and found out my decision. I also receive some advice from my friends. Sometimes I don't do it directly. I ask about somebody else in such a situation I know it is really me in that situation. I know that I have to show them that it is really me in that situation.

(c) A *Cooling Off* ("You know they say patience pays but pains" and "If someone is so angry, give time to that person") period was described frequently by participants (e.g., nine times) as an important reaction to romantic conflict often used. This idea is similar to avoiding but emerged as distinct theme due to its intended purpose, which was stated by the interviewees. Many individuals framed this decision to allow a post-conflict cooling off period as a necessary step. Then, everyone essentially took a step back from the situation in order to acquire more perspective and perhaps in an effort to not overreact to the situation. Again, there seems to be an element of face-saving suggested in the

following exemplars: as it seems that individuals may “cool off” to avoid looking foolish to their romantic partner or avoid making their partner look foolish. Abraham, a 22 year-old Ethiopian male, described how he and his girlfriend chose to end arguments:

After cooling down, because what normally happens, what used to happen to me with my girlfriend [is that] I have principles. We both had principles. When the temper goes high, one has to cool down, when you both cool down. When both of you your anger got high, you may happen to end up in a very bad mood. But when you cool down, even if you are right or she is wrong, cool down, try to explain to her afterwards, after she has cooled down, or after you have cooled down.

Again, the idea of cooling off immediately following a romantic conflict was expressed by Christine, an 18 year-old Ugandan. In her explanation, she defined her general conflict style by stating the following:

I didn't think it was good because I wanted to first cool down. Take a moment of cool down, and then talk to him later. I didn't want to confront him at that moment because I was too angry.

The idea of patience or being patient following a disagreement with a romantic partner emerged in the transcribed data as another important function of cooling down. Therefore, the cooling off period following a romantic conflict is regarded as playing an important role in helping to elicit significant questions such as: why the conflict developed; who may be at fault; and how it should be resolved and/or handled. When describing how he handles conflict with his girlfriend, Mark, a 29 year-old Ugandan,

emphasized the importance of patience in helping find a solution to a conflict. He explained its subsequent role in helping to maintain the relationship:

What I believe in, it is like everybody should be patient. So, you have to be patient. First, see what is coming forth. Then you follow. You first settle down. You first talk about what is happening, and then you get a solution from the other one, then you combine all. Do you understand? Then you get the solution in between that. You settle down. You don't need to show every feeling that you have outside. You have to leave everything inside. You can have a long lasting relationship if you behave in that way, if you don't show your temper everywhere. You need to control them.

Implied in the overarching theme of *indirect* is the lack of interest in confronting the individual(s) someone may be in a conflict with. In addition to cooling off, forgiving and forgetting about the conflict emerged as another component of the cooling off conflict style. This also appears to be related to avoiding. Michael, a 28 year-old Ethiopian, explained his general conflict style in the following way:

Well, I would say that I don't use a confrontational approach. I don't confront. There are moments that call for confrontations sometimes. But that confrontation will probably come later. I will maybe look at it as very necessary. I wouldn't confront somebody immediately. You need to forgive and forget. You have to cool down. Let me say if you found something that you really need to quarrel, first ask yourself something I'm going to need this right? You first think before you react. If I quarrel will I be making a solution? Quarreling doesn't solve anything. You just need to cool down. Call the person who has made you

annoyed, who wants to make you [to] quarrel, call him when you chill down, or cool down and tell him this and this. Tell him don't quarrel with me. Let us solve this in this way.

Theme 2: *Confrontational/Explicit* (Sub-Themes: *emotional expression and violence*)

The two sub-themes that emerged from the data indicated that individuals in both Uganda and Ethiopia often prefer to deal with conflict by either using an emotional expression or by resorting to violent outbursts. These conflict styles were in direct contrast to the overarching indirect conflict style theme described above, but the presence of a confrontational approach did emerge in the interviews as being a specific way in which certain individuals chose to handle conflict. It should be noted that in all of the narratives related to the use of violence in a romantic conflict, the males were either being described or self-described as the enactor of the violent behavior. More specifically, females were never described as acting violent. This was found to be true in both the Ugandan and Ethiopian interview data sets. Two sub-themes emerged: (a) *Emotional Expression* and (b) *Violence*.

(a) *Emotional Expression*

The first theme of emotional expression was often demonstrated through acts of yelling and/or “*crying outbursts*” and was often described as being connected to physical violence. Some examples from the interview data include statements such as “*he attacks you yelling as in stop suspecting this, stop doing this*” and “*he was so angry. He was speaking so rudely, like I've never seen him speak. He was like yelling and shouting at me and saying I'm not honest.*”

Jacob, a 23 year-old Ugandan, provided a detailed account of his use of emotional expression and confrontation as he described a typical disagreement between he and his girlfriend. It is interesting to note that he seems to be ashamed by his apparent inability to remain calm or react less expressively. Specifically the data records his wishes to just “*leave her alone.*” He stated:

When her reactions come, it's like I blow off. When she says no, I don't know, I confronted her and it was not good for her I think. She has some feelings for me, but the way I do things is not the way that I should do. I don't have any experience before. I have some nasty things. But not closely enough [for me] to do things. Then I try to push her she becomes so angry. I told you before I react so ugly I just leave her alone.

Research also captured the female’s anecdotal evidence on handling conflict in a romantic relationship. In all 14 interviews, three women mentioned that they would cry during and/or after a conflict with their romantic partner. This contrasted with the lack of evidence given by male participants who did not mention crying as an actual or possible outcome of an argument with a girlfriend. When describing how she typically handles a conflict with her romantic partner, Nancy, 21 year-old Ugandan, reflected this idea when she stated:

Actually when I'm such a disaster like that I don't normally yell. I first want to chill down, because I don't normally yell. My yelling will be through my tears. I really have to shed some tears to cool down. Then I sort things out. I think it was effective. Since I really love this guy I didn't want us to go deeply into quarrel

because if I really wanted him to take him to this lady I could insist, but I just chilled down, that is what you wanted since he has convinced let me just chill.

(b) *Violence*

Violent reactions to conflict in romantic relationships emerged in the interview data as a relatively prevalent conflict style among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia: eight interviewees mentioned violence in their responses. Examples of violence include descriptions of individuals having objects “*thrown*” at them, “*attacked*,” “*slapped*” and being “*hit*” and/or “*punched*.”

David, a 24 year-old Ugandan, described the possibility of violence existing in romantic conflict in the general community. He responded to a probing question regarding whether or not others in the community would agree with his way of handling conflict. This quotation demonstrated some of the factors associated with the use of avoidance and/or cooling off as a common conflict style. If a confrontational style provides the possibility of a violent backlash, it seems that avoiding a conflict would be an important style to display. It should be recorded, that this interview was the only reference to an episode of intense violence, and therefore is not applicable to the population as a whole. He said:

Because if you attack that person, and at that time, the person is angry you may lead to a little problems. They might get something and hit you, leading to accidents, or loss of life. Some people fight badly and may kill you. Don't argue so much. If you see the other person is hollering a lot of words you may ignore. A long argument leads to very many problems. They may hate each other for good. They may holler and fight.

As stated above, females often expressed a general fear of experiencing a violent act from their partner. Specifically the data shows four of seven women mentioned this fear in their interviews. The following two descriptions help to further support the idea that violence is used to deal with and/or resolve conflict in Uganda and Ethiopia. Sarah, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, said the following as she described an episode of her boyfriend disagreeing with her:

He shouted at me. They told me if I also answered it would cause chaos around because the girl may fight me, or the boy may slap me or box me and I'd find myself having some wounds.

David, a 24 year-old Ugandan, offered a similar description of violence while dealing with conflict in romantic relationships. He offered:

When you have a girlfriend maybe like him he don't like what she's wears, he beats her like that. He beats her.

Analysis of the 14 interviews provided a range of anecdotal evidence that depicts ways in which individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia define conflict, face, and conflict styles. When defining conflict, face, and conflict styles, members of both countries provided similar answers, and therefore the Ugandan and Ethiopian results were collectively analyzed. Definitions of conflict were rather straightforward, but definitions of face yielded two themes of *respect* and *impressions*. Definitions of conflict styles yielded two overarching themes: *avoiding* and *confrontation/explicit*. Underneath *avoiding* and *confrontation/explicit*, five sub-themes emerged: *avoiding*; *third party help*; *cooling off*; *emotional expression*; and *violence*. Overall, the emergent themes and

quotations offered a clearer picture of the role of conflict, face, and conflict styles among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia.

Research Question Four

RQ4: *What do participants view as their sources for their conflict behavior?*

In an effort to better understand the quantitative data collected and thus gain a clearer understanding of conflict among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia, participants were asked to describe some of their actions and choices during a romantic conflict with a partner. More specifically, interviewees were asked to explain how the larger national culture and family socialization practices might influence the ways in which they choose to handle/deal with conflict. The participants in both Uganda and Ethiopia offered similar answers, and therefore, the transcribed themes below are inclusive of individuals living in both national cultures. It should be noted that many of the exemplars chosen do not explicitly name the ways in which the four overarching themes mentioned directly impact their own conflict style choices. Rather, based on the context of the questions asked, their answers must be anchored in the larger dialogue. This dialogue focused on answering the question “*Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements*”? Four overarching themes emerged from the interview data: (1) *Family as Primary*, (2) *Community/Tribal*, (3) *Third Parties*, and (4) *Patriarchy*.

Theme 1: Family is Primary

In terms of handling conflict, the role of family was the primary factor mentioned in the Ugandan and Ethiopian interviews. One interviewee offered this judgment, “*there is a very strict system in the family.*” Individuals detailed the ways in which their family members informed their own understanding of conflict, conflict behaviors, and conflict

resolution choices. The frequency and the intensity in which interviewees expressed the above ideas warranted its inclusion. The overwhelming importance of family was stressed in all fourteen interviews. An individual's relationship with his/her family was exclusively revered as important in terms of impacting an individual's understanding of conflict and its related processes. For example, Christine, an 18 year-old Ugandan, captured the essence of the family's role in identity construction in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture by stating, *"When you don't have a family you don't live a normal life, I think that way, because family is a partner for our parents, for the country."* Parents in particular were described as often being domineering. For example one interviewee stated, *"Some parents who really cage you up and you don't have any freedom actually"*; while another added, *"Families is a problem because you don't have any open communication with [y] our family."* Others described their family conflict communication patterns as peaceful: *"I don't have to see the challenges between my families."* Examples given in the interviews centered on the specific role of each parent in a conflict: *"I learned a lot from my mother because she would keep quiet, and not quarrel."* Reviewing the above listed exemplars reiterates again how three sub-themes emerged from the data that are reflective of the general ways in which family informs conflict and conflict style choices: (a) *Conformity*, (b) *Conversation*, (c) *collaboration*.

(a) *Conformity*

Many interviewees gave evidence of how they attempt to avoid disagreements with parents and work towards compliance to the norms, attitudes, opinions, and beliefs insisted upon by the individual's family. Outside of the exemplars given below, ten interviewees remarked directly upon their acquiring familial norms, attitudes, opinions,

and beliefs. The relationship between family socialization practices and individuals conflicts styles is not entirely and explicitly stated in the chosen quotations. But the effect of such relationships could be anticipated. This sub-theme found enormous support from the participants, and therefore five quotations will be shared in an effort to express the intense importance of conformity. All five quotations were offered in response to the probing interview question that asked “*How were differences (e.g., in opinion, disagreements) handled in your family when you were a child?*”

Mark, a 29 year-old Ugandan, responded to the probing question by stating the following:

I would never challenge her answers. There is a way to express difference in some families, but our cultures pushes you to say—to say no about your family is rude. It’s mainly forbidden to say no to your family. You have to obey your family whatever it takes.

Mark’s answer highlighted how many individuals view their relationships with their parents. Mainly, children are strongly discouraged from expressing any difference of opinion that is in opposition to their parents’ opinions. In addition to not disagreeing with parents, Hasifa, a 24 year-old Ugandan, contextualized the idea by adding that even if a child thinks he/she is right, one must still remain silent as a sign of respect. She stated:

Sometimes parents are hard, sometimes. But you have to respect the parents even if you see you are on the right-side. You have to respect and sometimes your parent wants to do this, and you want to do the other. I think parents are right, and they know what is right for us. So if your parents tell you do this, you should

do what she is telling you to do and live what you want, because what you want may lead you to trash.

Interestingly, the conformity of the family unit in Uganda and Ethiopia does not end after adolescence. Several interviewees commented that children must always agree with their parents, even as adults. Jane, a 31 year-old Ethiopian, said that seeking the permission of one's parents is often required into late adulthood. Jane emphasized that this may be especially true for women. She stated:

Yes, yes, everything needs permission from family. Not only 18-years even 30, 35 year-olds. When maybe in your country after –18-years they have to go out with family without permission. In our country you need to be married. Otherwise they are not going outside. Even the nightclub you cannot go. Is it Saturday, no one is going on Saturday, some very rare. No, not go alone never.

Two additional quotations highlighted how family communication patterns have the ability to impact individuals' understanding of conflict and conflict behaviors, specifically as it relates to their own romantic conflict. Abraham offered the following in response to the probing question about how his family influenced his own understanding of conflict:

I don't know, but I just find myself like because they told me quarreling, and shouting, and fighting doesn't solve any problem. Because when you keep quiet, silence is the best answer, so they say. So, if I would quarrel she would always reply. No one would be right. That is how I grow-up. I don't know but I just find myself like that. My mother was like that at home. My mother warned me about quarreling and fighting. I guess sometimes you ignore. So, you just need to

control yourself. If you control yourself everything can be good for you. But if you don't control yourself, nothing can be good for you. That's how I am.

In Abraham's quotation, the importance of avoiding (e.g., "ignore") conflict is stressed by his mother, and he claimed that this advice informed his own conflict behaviors and style. Nancy, a 24 year-old Ugandan, was also instructed about a avoidant conflict style, but her mother stipulated that this avoidant style only be used with individuals who are outsiders. She stated:

Yeah, she doesn't like quarreling. My mother, I like her. She has a principle. That is what I learned. She limits the people she talks to. She doesn't quarrel. She may quarrel maybe inside of the house if you've done something wrong, she may show that to you, and it ends there. She doesn't need to take it out that you know my child has done this and this. She doesn't do that. If you've done something she calls you. She says you did this, so next time don't do it. If she needs to cane you, she'll cane you. She doesn't quarrel with outside people, she doesn't.

(b) *Conversation*

A conversational approach to family communication was not nearly as prevalent (i.e., frequent) in the interview data. However, it emerged with two interviewees that their families practiced a more open-communication style. It warranted inclusion as a sub-theme because of the intensity of the quotation offered by Jacob, a 23 year-old Ugandan, and given below. In light of the overwhelming data collected that positioned the father figure as a feared character, the fact that Jacob called his father "very understanding" is important. This quote suggests that some individuals are exposed to a conversationally-

oriented family socialization pattern, and he described his parental relationship as being peaceful. This description further suggested an avoidance style, which is indicative of conformity. He said:

Yeah, I think I'm very lucky, I lived with my parents both my mother and my dad. I think that I had a very understanding father. I don't know how many times I have seen my parents quarreling. As a matter of fact, I have never seen them quarrel. Actually, one of my parents died, my father, last year. I have never seen the two like exchanging kind of thing. My late dad was a quiet man. He was laid back. He just kept quiet. I think that is what I now do.

(c) *Collaboration*

Finally, two interviewees mentioned that their parents taught them the importance of collaborating with other members of the community in the use of certain principles, such as forgiveness, love, honesty, and respect. The following exemplar was chosen for its intensity and because it reflected the significant role that families play in encouraging harmonious and collaborative approaches to conflict. Sarah, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, remarked:

My parents taught me to forgive, to love, to be honest, to respect elders, and respect my fellow ones, to treat people well, because when you are treating that person badly thinking about what if you were the one being treated like that how would you feel? So, you put yourself into someone's place, and see what you are doing. You do things to people that you would like them to do to you.

Theme 2: *Community/Tribal* (Sub-Themes: (a) *Direction*, (b) *Obedience*, (c) *Respect Others*, and (d) *Social Harmony*)

Notions of community were the second most commonly mentioned factor individuals noted when speaking about their orientation towards conflict and conflict practices and strategies. It emerged as an important theme in terms of understanding the role of the individual in a relationship. Community was largely described as “*extremely important*” to people in both Ugandan and Ethiopian cultures. One interviewee summarized the role of the community by stating “*one is never apart from the community*” and “*if you fear something you have to share it with the community. . . .it is a way that we deal with things that happen in personal lives.*” Community is more specifically defined as “*two, or more than two, you would call it a community. One is not a community. But you and him is a community.*” Other definitions of community included notions of identity, advising, morale building, sense of belonging, and traditions, as demonstrated in the chosen sub-themes (i.e., *Direction, Obedience, Respect Others, and Social Harmony*) that emerged in the quotations below:

(a) *Direction*

Abdi, a 24 year-old Ethiopian mentioned, “*A child is owned by the community*” after describing the ways in which community informs their choices of conflict style in their romantic relationships. The community provided individuals with a sense of direction that is often situated within the larger community’s expectations for the individual. This direction is expressed in the reinforcement of certain positive behaviors, such as attending school and getting married. Because certain achievements are expected of the individual, she/he is positively affirmed when those achievements are attained. This relationship between the community and the individual helps to demonstrate the powerful influence of the community on individuals in other dimensions of their lives.

The community may in turn influence identity construction. Similarly, this data also suggested that the community's role of informing and/or influencing an individual's approach to conflict is important. Michael, a 28 years-old Ethiopian, pressed the importance of the role of the community in individual accomplishments:

I know I've lived in a community. The people give you morale. They hope you grow-up in your mind, because like me at my school, people like me, and they always get impressed in talking to me. That gives me a good feeling, and makes me do the right things. It prevents one from okay, the community, it prevents one from doing bad things, wrong things because you always think people are looking at me. People know me.

David, a 24 year-old Ugandan, also noted the expectations of the community, particularly when considering marital affairs and customs. He described how customs help to provide a script, or direction, for the individual in terms of creating an understanding of place in the community. He offered:

The community is very important in Ugandan culture. Like here when they are proposing to marry what happens, you prepare. There are things that you are given. When you are going to marry in Baganda, you take a cow. You take a basket, sacks of sugar, sacks of salt. So, it's respect to the parents who are giving the girl. So, it is that way. We learn the money side, and no money side we have to give respect to each other.

Finally, one powerful exemplar demonstrated the ways in which an individual feels intrinsically tied to his/her community. This quotation was stated by Mark, a 29 year-old Ugandan, and it helps to capture how the community's expectations provide

direction for an individual. Such statements also affirmed the importance of an individual's accomplishments, such as graduation from school in the eyes of the community. Mark explained:

When you are talking about community in Uganda, just like when I'm going graduate here, a graduation party. When you are addressing, you are not supposed to only thank your parents for playing a very great role, the community has also played and must be thanked. You know in Uganda they normally say a child is not only for your two parents, but a child is owned by the community. So, like they have to advise you. You have to thank them about advising you and helping you and such. So whatever advice they give you just say thank-you. So, that is why they say a child is owned by the community.

(b) *Obedience*

Individuals offered several detailed examples of how they are expected to be deferential to the larger community, or more simply, the idea that the community comes before the individual. This is closely linked to respect, but it is also about obeying the rules and/or norms that are set-forth by the community. In addition to obedience, the next quotation taps into the community-watching (surveillance) that occurs among various individuals within the community. For example one interviewee said, "*the community. . . they will tell her [mother] about me.*" This quote also connotes the pressure to conform. Patience, a 19 year-old Ugandan, commented:

It's [community is] very important. My mother lives in the community. She respects the community. I'm her son so I have to obey the rules that she gives me. So, how the community sees me is very important. If the community says he's a

bad guy or something, the way I express my feelings outside of my house, so they will tell her about my feelings. So, that is going to be a problem. So, I have to be there something good view on the community about me. That is very important.

Tsebay, a 19 year-old Ethiopian, further expressed the community's desire for the individual to be obedient to the community's cultural expectations (e.g., "*we will do what the community does*"). She stated:

Yeah, it has a strong bond with us because we are part of the community and we will do what the community does. We reflect what the community does. I can say the best thing is the social interaction. The bad thing is also the social interaction. Because it has good sides, it has many good sides. If you see the living standard for them, for Ethiopian people they are highly socially interactive. There may even be two or three ceremonies in a day. That also becomes a problem for them, because somebody will not try to succeed by himself. He wants to rely on others. That is the main problem I think in the community.

(c) *Respect Others*

The theme of respect emerges in many of the descriptions and answers given in the interviews. However, the role of respect in relation to community emerged as extremely powerful. The idea that an individual is supposed to treat everyone as a "*mother and father*" helps to frame why individuals' approaches to conflict may often be avoiding or seeking third party help. It appears that giving respect to other community members is paramount to the survival of the community. Up to seven interviewees mentioned that greeting someone on the street was of the utmost importance. Sarah, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, described the following example of respect for community members:

Actually in our culture here, have they told you in the African culture, we have that sense of community. From the time you are child, when you meet someone on the streets, you are supposed to greet everybody. So, that is one thing that is for sure. All of the kids are brought up to respect everybody as their parents. Supposed to treat everyone as if they are your father and mother.

Another important, but closely linked component to community, is the role of tribal customs and practices in conflict(s). Tribes play an integral role in the life of individuals of Uganda and Ethiopia in several important ways, but most notably in (d) social harmony. It is important to note that the interviewees lived in large cities, where tribal presence and influence is diminished. Therefore, the role of tribal customs in conflict is perhaps heightened in rural areas of Uganda and Ethiopia, as indicated by interviewees stated references and comparisons to the village way of life. Examples of the role of tribes are described in the following sub-theme of (d) *social harmony*.

(d) *Social Harmony*

Tribal influence on conflict resolution relates to how individuals view the importance of keeping peace in the community. This idea again supported the claim that in communalistic societies, the community is more important than the individual. Additionally, hierarchical ways of resolving conflict emerged as a common tribally influenced way of viewing who gets to decide the resolution to a conflict. Abraham, a 22 year-old Ethiopian, described one of the sources of his understanding of conflict in the following way:

In the past they would call like the elders of the family, like the big, big people, the grannies, the dads and then they would sit down, they call conflicting parties,

talk to them. Then after they would finish resolving that conflict, they would bring drinks, traditional drinks. Then they encourage people to forgive each other.

After they will dance together and hug like that.

Another quotation by Jacob, a 23 year-old Ugandan, helped to solidify the role of hierarchy in tribal culture, which in turn, helped to inform the individual's understanding of appropriate conflict behaviors and resolution strategies. He stated:

Yeah, a culture here in Uganda we have tribes speaking different languages. So, in those tribes there are small units, which are called clans. In those clans there are clan heads, there are certain figures that are respecting society. So in case of conflict the warring parties are brought together and the clan has a meeting. The clan members come together plus the warring parties and they resolve their differences. So, the clan head actually makes the decision or makes the judgment and maybe says you are guilty, or not guilty. So, that is just some more of resolving conflict in this country. We are part of a clan, and each clan having a clan head, and so the clan head is like the one that makes the judgment.

Theme 3: *Third Party Help* (Sub-Themes: (a) *parents/family*, (b) *religious leaders*, (c) *friends*, and (d) *elders*)

Seeking “*counsel*” or “*advice*” from someone outside of a conflict situation was a commonly encouraged and supported approach used when attempting to resolve a contentious disagreement. Often the couple visited a third party together (e.g., “*friend*,” “*pastor*,” “*family*”) or an individual sought the help of a neutral party alone. A third party was often used to deliver a message to the romantic other following a conflict. It was also mentioned that it is quite typical that the families of the two conflicting parties would

meet and discuss the situation collectively in an effort to resolve the conflict. These themes narrowed further into the following four sub-themes: *parents/family; religious leaders; friends; and elders*. The four sub-themes are represented in the quotes provided below:

(a) *Parents/Family*

In terms of informing individuals' understanding of appropriate conflict styles and behaviors, parents and family members emerged frequently (i.e., mentioned by eleven interviewees) as dominant sources of knowledge regarding conflict resolution practices. Jonathan, a 19 year-old Ethiopian, explained how he has been taught to handle romantic conflict:

You rush to the parents, explain to them what happened. So, after explaining to them what happened they call both of you, sit you down, advise you. After advising you, so if you were wrong, you are fined. You fine the man. If the man is wrong, he is fined to the woman. Then afterwards they give you a hen, a chicken.

Five interviewees mentioned conflict as being routinely settled by family members outside of the initial nuclear family. Examples of outside the direct family unit included both grandparents and in-laws. Hasifa, a 24 year-old Ugandan, explained what happened in her family:

Especially in my family between the children, our father advised us and we discuss [ed] only. I remember when I was a child that my mom and dad they quarreled and she went not to her family but she went to his father, and his father came to our house and he quarreled with my dad.

(b) *Religious Leaders*

Religious leaders, such as, pastors, sheiks, and priests, were mentioned as third parties that often helped individuals understand how to define and resolve their romantic conflict, and conflict in general. Nancy, a 24 year-old Ugandan, described in the following anecdote how she and her romantic partner learned about forgiveness and keeping “cool” after visiting their pastor:

Yes, because we went together sometime to the Pastor. I was desperate. I told him we go there together. We went. I told the Pastor what happened. The Pastor prayed for us. The Pastor told me to decide what I want to do. After that is when I said to the Pastor I want to be friends. Maybe if time reaches we shall meet again, and be as boyfriend and girlfriend, or lovers. So, the Pastor advised us to do something, which is correct, not doing something wrong, not to fight one another. He said it's not good, it's not the only solution. That is what he told us. He prayed for us. Kept everything cool. So, we couldn't even quarrel. I also forgave him.

(c) *Friends*

The role of friends also emerged in the data as a imperative aide in shaping individual's orientation to romantic conflict. Ten interviewees mentioned that one or both of their parents were deceased and due to their absence it left many of them sorely displaced from a core familial unit. As a consequence, friends and relatives often helped to substitute parents as an emotional outlet. Individuals learned to model their friends' conflict behavior. Christine, an 18 year-old Ugandan, explained that she learned about handling conflict with her boyfriend:

I saw my friends. I have friends that are bigger than you that are married. They consult me. You know when you are in trouble. You can find yourself consulting someone. My auntie when I was still small, we used to live together. So, I could see how they could quarrel and how they could solve. So, through experience I can say I know how to handle quarrel.

(d): *Elders*

Elders emerged in the interview data as another influential participant in individual's orientation towards conflict. Elders around the community emphasized the idea to the interviewees that one should "*respect the elders, respect all the people* because "*most problems are solved by them and one must have great respect and agree with them.*" This idea highlighted further the use of third parties in resolving romantic conflict. Because individuals place an important emphasis of age, elders are viewed as having wisdom that is essential to understanding conflict. Michael, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, remarked:

Each culture has its way, I mean each tribe has its own way of handling quarrels. If you happen to quarrel with your wife, and you are officially married, the first thing you have to do rush to the elders because they have more experience than you.

Theme 4: *Patriarchy* (Sub-Themes: (a) *fear*, (b) *respect*, and (c) *dominance*)

The final theme that emerged from the interview question, "*Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements?*" concerned the dominant role of men in Ugandan and Ethiopia society. The authority and power of men ("*man was the one who has the power*") according to individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia, was prevalent in responses by

ten interviewees. Participants often commented that they “*are afraid of the dad*” and that “*in most families, he decides.*” Several sub-themes emerged: (a) *fear*, (b) *respect*, and (c) *dominance*. The three sub-themes exemplified many participants’ statements and made it difficult to flesh out the various individual components as demonstrated in the examples cited below. The father figure was continually depicted as being someone that was to be feared and respected by other family members, while his general dominance (“*the man is always the head of the family*”) often portrayed through his silence and authoritative actions (“*the man runs the house*”).

(a) *Fear*

Both males and females in the interviews frequently commented on their fear of men, fears that appeared to be associated to their fathers. The fathers’ were often described as silent or quiet in conflict situations; however, while mothers are often described as approachable. These responses demonstrated the gender specific roles in Ugandan and Ethiopian societies, such as those that permit men to be emotionally removed. Jacob, a 23 year-old Ugandan, described how his dad was viewed in his family in this way:

I get along mostly with my mom, not with my dad. You know we grew-up with [the] family way but we are not social with my dad. He acts so rude. So, we give him a distance actually. So even if he is like you’ve done this, and you’ve not done it, you just have to keep quiet. You never want anybody to disagree with him. So you just keep quiet. Like my mom we discuss things with her.

Similarly to the conformity expectation of certain families, men were often depicted as being a feared figure perceived in terms of possible negative consequences of

acting against the desires of the head of the household. Michael, a 28 year-old Ethiopian, remarked on the fear-based dynamic that sometimes exists between children and fathers in Uganda and Ethiopia:

She tells me that her father is conservative. She needs to accept all of his idea.

He always forces her. Fathers are very conservative okay. They always need to accept their ideas, not yours but their ideas. You have to do what they say.

(b) *Respect*

Another common theme that emerged in response to numerous questions/probes of the interview analysis was respect. This theme considered many dimensions of how individuals defined their culture and their subsequent role in that culture. Demonstrating respect for men was mentioned by five interviewees as an important component of understanding acceptable conflict behaviors. Particularly women conveyed how they were conditioned to show respect to men. Sarah, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, recalled her experiences with her father:

I learned to keep quiet when someone is quarreling. Not keep the anger for long.

After quarreling my mom would serve him food, serve him drinks, then in the morning give him tea. You have to keep silent. You are not supposed to argue

with the dad. You have to give him respect. A dad is not like me with the mom.

The mom it is okay.

(c) *Dominance*

Finally, men in Ugandan and Ethiopian societies were described as playing a dominant role in family and community life. Men essentially are the decision makers for the family and what he feels is best for the family or community must be accepted. The

following remark made by Abdi, a 24 year-old Ethiopian, captured the intensity of this dominant role that men play in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture. “*The father makes the decisions. He says something and the family says okay.*”

The qualitative data created a better understanding of the quantitative data because it gave insight into how Ugandans and Ethiopians understand conflict. Interviewees’ descriptions of their actions and choices during a romantic conflict with a partner, specifically as informed by family, community, and cultural expectations, gave a depth dimension to the quantitative findings. The four overarching themes that emerged when answering the research question “*What do participants view as their sources for their conflict behavior?*” included: (1) Family as Primary (Sub-Themes are: (a) *conformity* (b) *conversation*, and (c) *collaboration*), (2) community/tribal (Sub-Themes are: (a) *direction*, (b) *obedience*, and (c) *respect others*), (3) Third Party Help (Sub-Themes are: (a) *parents/family*, (b) *religious leaders*, (c) *friends*, and (d) *elders*), and (4) Patriarchy (Sub-Themes are: (a) *fear*, (b) *respect*, and (c) *dominance*). The participants in both Uganda and Ethiopia offered similar answers, and therefore, the transcribed themes were inclusive of the individuals in both national cultures.

Research Question Five

RQ5: *What is the role of religion in Ugandan and Ethiopian conflict?*

Religion and its integral role in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture was a central element in every interview, for instance, explicitly given in one quote, “*we want to lead by the Bible.*” It was often spoken of in the highest regard: “*religion is the most influencing power.*” And many participants elaborated on religion’s influence by referencing how it directs an individual’s everyday decisions and actions. The answers

provided in response to the interview question “*Was your religion a factor in how you chose to handle conflict? How so?*” were used to develop the themes to answer this research question. As mentioned above, many of the exemplars chosen to support the three emergent religious themes failed to explicitly name the ways in which conflict styles are directly impacted and informed by interviewees’ religion and its associated influences. However, based on the context of the question asked, their answers must be considered in terms of the larger implications for conflict in romantic relationships in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture.

Four of the interviewees were self-reported Muslims and ten self-reported their religion as Christianity, such as “*Born Again,*” or “*Protestant.*” No discernible patterns of difference could be found in responses except that three of the four Muslim participants mentioned that their fathers had more than one wife, while only two of ten Christian participants mentioned this fact (yet, interviewees were not directly asked about this, so more may have reported that their father’s had multiple wives if prompted). Three themes emerged in the data that highlighted how religion impacts individuals’ lives in terms of conflict: (1) *religion as a teacher/guide* (e.g., “*they give us advice*”), (2) *religion as comfort/reassurance*, and (3) *religion as conflict resolution/forgiveness* (e.g., “*Pastor tells you love your neighbor as you love yourself*”).

Theme 1: *Religion as a Teacher/Guide*

Both Ugandans and Ethiopians alike commented that their religion teaches them to relate to others and act within the larger community. In fact, religious values and beliefs are often the backbone of community and of familial beliefs that guide individuals in their day-to-day actions. This idea was conveyed by Jane, a 31 year-old Ethiopian,

when she described the role of religion in her life and in particular how it related to her handling conflict (e.g., “*faithful*,” “*honest*”). She stated:

There is so much other that religion teaches. Religion teaches people how to love, how to be faithful, how to be honest, and also corruption, because when you are honest then you are not corrupt. Then again, there is tribalism. We are getting people of different races, we are getting people of different tribes. Religion encourages people to be together to be united.

Similarly, religion teaches individuals how to be in a committed relationship, and often it requires individuals to seek the permission of the church before beginning a romantic relationship. Despite the overt mentioning of how a person’s prevailing relationship with his/her religion and/or the church impacts his/her understanding of conflict, it is implied in much of the language and context that religion does indeed teach individuals how to deal with conflict such as “*prayer*”). Patience, a 19 year-old Ugandan, described in detail how she felt that her religion informed her approach to romantic relationships:

The church teaches about a boyfriend. Without our church permission we don’t start a relationship. The permission is needed. They have to pray. You have to tell him the Pastor before starting even the sexual relation, all of the religions is not good for permission. People are married, even the Christian, Orthodox, even the Protestant, they say always don’t start before marriage, sex.

In another example, Nancy, a 24 year-old Ugandan, explained how her religion taught her the importance of waiting to have sex until after she is married. In addition,

religion taught her how forgiveness is an important part of avoiding and dealing with her romantic conflict. She explained:

I'm a Catholic. My religion encourages the youth not to fornicate. Fornication is having sex before marriage. That is good because it keeps you pure. It keeps your body pure. When you are so much into faith, you do what your faith tells you do. This would help stop a lot of things like diseases, a lot of okay these things bad things behind pregnancy, dropping out of school. I think religion encourages us to forgive. When you forgive you avoid a lot conflicts. So, when you forgive you don't keep the anger. You stay on good terms with people around you. Religion encourages a good marriage. It helps to stop trial marriages. Do you understand when I said trial marriages? This is where a man meets a woman and then they start staying together to learn each other. During that process, they produce kids. It's not right before you go to church.

Theme 2: Religion as Comfort/Reassurance

Religion as a comforting force for individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia emerged as a theme based on the frequency and intensity of the ideas mentioned in the following two quotations. Essentially, the power of prayer in dealing with problems in life emerged as one of the fundamental roles of religion in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture. More clearly, seven interviewees described how a belief in God and prayer acts as a reassuring force in their lives. The role of prayer in dealing with romantic conflict was explicitly mentioned by some participants and implied by the majority due to the framing of the interview protocol questions. Tsebay, 19 year-old Ethiopian, described her own understanding of the role that religion has played in her conflict style/orientation:

Yeah, because the Lord has helped me in very many ways. I don't tell the father but I manage. Right here I'm studying at school but I don't know who is going to fund my tuition or my school fees. So, yesterday I prayed. If you have trust and faith in the Lord everything will be good for you. If you pray and you know he can do it for you, and he can make a road for you that you can't. Because my mother is also working. I have a stepfather. He is also working. Sometimes he pays half of my school, and my mother also. But this time around, I don't know if he is going to pay for me. My mother told me that. Everything is working because the Lord is there for me. He accepts everyone the way she is, or the way he is. That is what helps us.

Hasifa, 24 year-old Ethiopian, explained how hard work, praying, atonement, and belief help her to handle and resolve her romantic conflicts. She offered the following description of her relationship with religion as it affected her approach to romantic conflict and thereafter dealt with it:

Religion is very important in our life, in my life. If you happen to get a—it's just a belief. I don't know if it's happening, whether there is a God, or what, or something. But I just grew up believing that God is there. If you preach him, he get answer to prayers. So, what happens to me? There are times that I can stranded. I've got problems. I've got to clear this. What do I do? I go to my atoning and pray to God. Oh God please. And it happens. I don't mean that if you pray to God things are going to happen automatically. You still have to work. That is why I have a saying I don't that God is there, because if you just wait for him, that please God help me with this and this he brings it. You still

have to go work. Work solves the problem. If he was really there you could just pray and things come automatically. Why doesn't it happen that way? You only pray to him because you believe he is there.

Theme 3: *Religion as Conflict Resolution/Forgiveness*

Finally, religion in Uganda and Ethiopia provided a model that enforced the ways individuals choose to deal with their romantic conflict. It emerged frequently during ten interviews as a common source for understanding the relationship between men and women. It emerged especially in terms of gender expectations and roles. Jane, a 31 year-old Ethiopian, commented on how the Bible preaches that women should be concerned with “*what the husband is doing.*” Her description implied that her religion supported her subservience, suggesting that her conflict style mirrored this idea. She stated:

When you see in some religion if they are so committed for their religion, they respect their family. They respect their wife because in the Bible everything is what the husband is doing especially here in Ethiopia a good life is lived with religion and peace.

Religion also emerged to be largely linked to individuals' beliefs about forgiveness being an essential practice in romantic relationships. Christine, an 18 year-old Ugandan, offered an anecdote that centered on forgiveness of self and of others. Her conflict style as detailed was sanctioned by a church “*official*” as the effective way to resolve romantic conflict. Her reflection about the events and their subsequent importance in resolving romantic conflicts was mentioned frequently by five other interviewees. She stated:

Again, there is another word forgiving, settling quarrels under religions. Not like if you are married with your wife, official. You went to the church. You were given rings. You get in a quarrel. You go back to the church. You meet the Bishop. That is the person who gives you the rings. You explain to him. He prays for you. Then he anoints you, and then you go back home. So, if he prays for you that means you both are going to forgive yourself automatically because the Bishop has prayed for you. So, it is reuniting you.

Jacob, a 24 year-old Ugandan, argued that his religion and its associated values are directly responsible for the choices he makes when attempting to resolve romantic conflict. He ultimately believes that “*best offense is to resolve things peacefully or forgive.*” His belief was not only expressed via the intensity of his statement below, but this religiously informed belief about the positive role of forgiveness in romantic conflicts was also shared (frequency) by eight other interviewees. Jacob offered:

I am a Christian you know. I've learned a lot everyday. I go and listen to the Word, I meet a lot of Christians and I read Christian literature and I read the Bible. I listen to many preachers. I learn a lot. As I told you when you become a Christian you begin to see things from the perspective of God, not from the perspective of the. . . ideally taking your time and not reacting immediately or for that matter, the best offense is not to react immediately. The best offense is to resolve things peacefully or forgive. I learned that just after becoming a Christian. So, resolving helps me look at situations different now.

Because such powerful emphasis was placed on the role of forgiveness in resolving conflict in romantic relationships, particularly as informed by religious

teachings, it is necessary to address how forgiveness is depicted by religion. Abraham, a 22 year-old Ethiopian, commented that forgiveness of a transgression by a romantic other is essential for “*healing*.” He stated:

Actually, forgiveness is important. That one is really important. After becoming a Christian, I knew. I understand forgiveness is very important. Forgiving someone actually you are helping yourself. The thing is if somebody offends or somebody hurts you can forgive but you can't forget. The level of trust is never the same. But somehow, by the grace of God, there are things we human beings can't comprehend. At the end of the day I think the healing comes not with respect to the bad things that you do, offense, or insult, I believe that you get the healing. So, that is what I believe as a Christian.

In summary, religion and its important role in the life's of individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia was a central element in every interview conducted and often regarded as one of the most powerful forces in individuals' lives, especially in terms of how it influenced the handling of romantic conflict. As a result, three themes emerged in the data that helped to highlight how religion impacts individuals' lives in terms of conflict: (a) *teaches/guides*, (b) *comforts/reassurance*, (c) *conflict resolution/forgiveness*.

Research Question Six

RQ6: How do participants see the relationships between conflict styles and relational outcomes (e.g., forgiveness, relationship satisfaction)?

Interviewees commented on the relationships between specific conflict and conflict resolution styles and subsequent relational outcomes, such as, relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. Three sub-themes emerged from the data that illuminated

how specific strategies relate to specific positive and negative outcomes. More specifically, (1) *seeking third party help* was positively associated with resolving conflict, (2) *apologizing and forgiving* (“*to become closer and to live a longer time is one of the key elements. If we don’t forgive the people, it isn’t nice*”) was similarly associated with favorable relationship outcomes, while (3) *avoiding* (“*ignoring*”) was viewed as a necessary but harmful strategy.

Theme 1: *Third Party Help*

Seeking third party help emerged as positive way of dealing with and attempting to resolve romantic conflict. Despite the lack of a direct mentioning of relationship satisfaction being related to seeking third party help, several other indicators surfaced (e.g., *Your relationship can last for long*) that helped denote the positive outcomes that third parties can have on a relationship. Patience, a 19 year-old Ugandan, offered her own experiences with seeking the help of a third party when attempting to resolve her romantic conflict. She noted that forgiveness and relationship satisfaction are both likely outcomes of requesting the guidance of an outside person. She stated:

If a boyfriend and a girlfriend quarrels, unless it’s good—because quarreling is not the only solution. You know when you go to a Pastor or a Priest they give you advice. They tell you quarreling is not good. The only solution if you found him in the wrong thing, you just need to forgive, it’s the only thing that they can say. If you find him today doing something wrong, forgive him. Your relationship can last for long.

Turning to a third party for help in resolving conflict was often linked to the increased belief that forgiveness is the best outcome for resolving an issue. Jonathan, a 19

year-old Ethiopian, demonstrated this idea in a powerful exemplar about his beliefs in the role of forgiveness during romantic conflict. He stated:

Yeah, they do. But someone may go to church today, and he prays on Sunday. They tell him forgive one another. Then you say yes I'm going to forgive you. I'm going to forgive everyone who did something wrong to me. So, as when he goes out of the church he forgets everything, which is outside someone steps on him. He quarrels, he even slaps, abuses, someone abuses him. Every Sunday I go to church they teach how to forgive people. If you don't forgive someone the Lord says he also won't forgive you. So, unless there is a reason why I shouldn't forgive because you've gone something which is not going to destroy my life. If I thought you've done something, which is going to destroy my life I can still pray unless there is a reason I don't forgive you. Because if I don't forgive you nothing I will gain. I will still remain as I am. Also, you will still remain the way you are. Because I also remain with that sin. Everyone is a sinner. Some people have hearts that they don't forgive.

Theme 2: Apologizing and Forgiving

Apologizing to your romantic partner as a general conflict strategy was described frequently five interviewees as being an important part of resolving conflicts and moving towards forgiveness. Individuals' often described how an apology was offered even before she/he had determined the details of the argument. More specifically, individuals said that they would readily apologize as a first step in resolving the conflict with their romantic partner(s) because it provided the possibility for more relationship satisfaction

and forgiveness. Sarah, a 21 year-old Ethiopian, described in detail why she feels that apologizing is the best way to move forward to the healing process:

I would say confrontation I wouldn't want continually. That is one approach that is out. I believe in resolving the situation, resolving the conflicts. The other thing is when someone has offended you, but you spread peace now. If I'm in a situation where someone has offended me, I think I can also do that. When someone has offended me, I can go and apologize to him, because to me I believe that is healing. I'm actually healing and living a better life.

Mark, a 29 year-old Ugandan, also stated his views about the relationship between apologizing as a conflict style. He argued that apologizing ultimately leads to forgiveness and increased satisfaction with the relationship:

You know when you apologize what comes after apologizing. It's forgiving. So, you forgive. Most of them would agree that forgiveness is very important. You are then happier with that partner.

Theme 3: Avoiding

Avoiding conflict in an effort to maintain a relationship was depicted by two interviewees as being positively related to relationship satisfaction (e.g., “*peace in the world*”). Abdi, a 24 year-old Ethiopian, described the dynamic between avoiding conflict and positive relational outcomes in his experiences in dealing with his parents:

I've grown up in this typical Muslim family. So, the fact that we know that for us to heaven first you have to be in great agreement with your parents. So, if your parents have to cuss you over something just know there is something wrong in between you. Because I've grown up in such a family we are so careful with

making them annoyed, most especially my dad because actually he normally uses that as a defense. Cuss and yell, cuss out my family and it is not normally good. If your parent cusses you there is no peace in this world.

Avoiding as a conflict style was also described by three interviewees as being an important part of one's ability to forgive another for his/her transgression. Mark (a 29 year-old Ugandan) shared this belief about avoiding conflict:

If somebody really upsets you like right now but I learn to—you know my emotions don't really get the better of me. I need to relax fast and see sometimes. I learn to forgive even if somebody has offended me because I forgive. I am actually not helping that person, but I'm helping myself. So, I learn not to confront people physically. I learn to first relax and maybe give it some time before I can—okay I learn to relax first. By relaxing first then you can think of [Inaudible] people react differently. So, I [Inaudible] I've not had that kind of outburst when someone confronted me, and I react. I've learned to handle things slowly.

To answer the sixth research question, interviewees commented on the relationship between specific conflict and conflict resolution styles and subsequent relational outcomes such as, relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. Three themes emerged from the data that help illuminate how specific strategies are related to specific positive and negative outcomes: (1) *third party help*, (2) *apologizing and forgiving*, and (3C) *avoiding*.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Using FNT and its associated assumptions to guide the study, the current project addressed the lack of African centered communication research by conducting a two-part study in Uganda and Ethiopia regarding how culture and family socialization patterns impact romantic partners in conflict. Specifically, this study examined how culture and family communication patterns influence face concerns, conflict style choices, overall relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic relationships. This investigation helps researchers gain a better understanding of the role of culture and family socialization patterns in romantic relationships situated in an African context, as well as extend FNT to include the role of family communication patterns and relational outcomes (i.e., relationship satisfaction and forgiveness).

Quantitative data was collected via survey collection in Uganda and Ethiopia to test nine hypotheses and answer two research questions. Hypotheses H1-H3 were concerned with assessing the relationship between family socialization patterns (conversation and conformity) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating) and the relationship between face concerns (self and other) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating). Hypothesis H4 was concerned with assessing the relationship between family socialization and relationship satisfaction and face concerns and relationship satisfaction. Two research questions were also asked and answered using the survey data. The first research question with assessed the overall best predictors of the relational outcomes, while the second research question assessed the possibility of a mediation model resulting from the data.

Qualitative data was used to answer an additional four research questions that were aimed at providing a clearer understanding of the relationship among family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. In addition, the qualitative data was used to examine the role of communalism and religion in romantic conflict in Uganda and Ethiopia. These questions were answered by using transcribed data from 14 face-to-face interviews that were conducted in Uganda and Ethiopia. Research questions three through six were asked to help clarify and inform the concurrently collected quantitative data (and vice versa).

In the first section, the findings from both data sets, survey (i.e., Phase 1) and face-to-face interviews (i.e., Phase 2), are discussed in detail below in terms of their contributions, extensions, and contradictions to the existing literature on culture, family communication patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. A second section examines the integration of the quantitative and qualitative results. In addition, a third section includes the theoretical implications of the findings. In the final section, the study's limitations, ideas for future directions, and conclusions are offered.

Findings: Phase 1 (Quantitative Data)

Hypotheses H1-H3 assessed the relationship between family socialization patterns (conversation and conformity) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating) and the relationship between face concerns (self and other) and conflict styles (avoiding, dominating, and collaborating). H4 pertained to analysis about the role

of family socialization patterns, face concerns, and conflict styles on relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1A

Hypothesis 1A stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* This hypothesis received support. Individuals who reported that they were raised in a family that was conformity oriented did report use avoiding when in conflict with their romantic other. More specifically, the relationships between conformity oriented families and the use of an avoiding conflict style was positive. Additionally, individuals who reported being part of a family socialization dynamic that was conversation oriented also reported using an avoiding conflict style when in conflict with their significant other. Family socialization patterns (i.e., conversation and conformity) explained 4% of the variance in an individual's use of avoiding as a conflict style during a romantic conflict involving individuals from Uganda and Ethiopia.

These findings, despite supporting the hypothesis, provide a mixed view of the role of avoiding as a conflict style in romantic relationships in Ugandan and Ethiopian. More clearly, because both family socialization patterns (i.e., conversation and conformity) were found to predict the use of avoiding as a conflict style choice in romantic relationships, it is difficult to explain the actual impact that each family orientation (i.e., conversation and conformity) has on the use of avoiding in a romantic relationship conflict. Overall, this finding suggests that avoiding conflict in a romantic relationship is influenced by both types of family socialization patterns (i.e., conversation

and conformity). Yet, because the results do not show a discernible difference between conversation and conformity-oriented family's preferences for using avoiding, it is difficult to ascertain what role family communication patterns play in the use of avoidance as a conflict style.

The use of family communication patterns in FNT is an extension of the current model of face and conflict styles, so the current results are neither in support of or contrary to past results. This fact suggests that more data about family dynamics and family communication patterns needs to be gathered before a proper interpretation of the data is made. Still, that avoiding seems to part of the larger cultural norms and/or expectations for handling conflict in Ugandan and Ethiopian society, and therefore is promoted by both conversation and conformity oriented families. For example, Etounga – Manguelle (1998) argues that Africans often prefer to “reject open conflict” (p. 72). This supports this idea that the larger cultural expectation for avoidance may supersede the familial expectations and/or influence.

Hypothesis 1B

Hypothesis 1B stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report an other-oriented face concern, the more they will report using an avoiding conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* This hypothesis was supported. More clearly, individuals who reported more concern for protecting the face of their romantic partner in a conflict were more inclined to use avoiding as a conflict style. After controlling for country, sex, and family socialization (11.8% of variance), other-face concern explained an additional 2% of the variance in an individual's use of avoiding as a conflict style during a romantic conflict in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture.

This finding is in line with prior research that states that individuals who prefer to protect the image of the other person in conflict will often use an avoiding conflict style (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003), which consists of avoiding and obliging. Other measures of FNT, particularly in collectivistic cultures, have found a similar result in terms of individuals using an avoidant conflict style when they were interested in protecting the other person's face in conflict (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). Overall, this finding supports and/or affirms the existing literature involving FNT. Still, it helps to advance a greater understanding of how individuals from communalistic cultures, such as Uganda and Ethiopia, deal with face and conflict style choice in romantic relationships. This finding is especially relevant because FNT and face-related influences have never been measured in communalistic cultures.

Hypothesis 2A

Hypothesis 2A stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a conformity-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* The data supported this hypothesis. Individuals who reported being from a family that was conformity oriented did use a dominating style when in conflict with their romantic other. That is, the relationship between conformity oriented families and the use of a dominating conflict style was positive. Additionally, individuals who reported being part of a family socialization dynamic that was conversation oriented also reported using a dominating style (i.e., dominating, passive aggression, and emotional expression) when in conflict with their significant other. Family socialization patterns explained an additional 4% of the variance (beyond country and sex) of a dominating conflict style in a

romantic conflict. These findings, despite supporting the hypothesis, provide a mixed view of the role of dominating as a conflict style in romantic relationships among individuals from Uganda and Ethiopia because both family socialization patterns (i.e., conversation and conformity) predicted the use of dominating as a conflict style choice in romantic relationships.

Being raised in a conformity-orientated family was found to be a more significant predictor of the use of a dominating style, which makes intuitive sense. Having been raised in a conversation-orientated family was also a significant predictor. This finding extends the existing literature regarding FNT by adding the relationship between family communication patterns and conflict styles to the theory's ability to explain outcomes based on specific predictor variables.

Hypothesis 2B

Hypothesis 2B stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report a self-oriented face concern, the more they will report using a dominating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* This hypothesis was supported. Therefore, individuals who reported being more concerned with protecting their self face in a conflict, versus protecting the face of their romantic partner, were more inclined to use dominating as a conflict style. After controlling for country, sex, and family socialization (11.5%), self-face concerns explained an additional 2% of the variance in an individual's use of dominating as a conflict style during a romantic conflict in Ugandan and Ethiopian culture.

This finding supported prior research that states that individuals' who prefer to protect their own image (i.e., self-face), versus the face of the other person in conflict,

will often use a dominating conflict style (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 2005). The dominating conflict style consists of dominating, passive aggression, and emotional expression. Dominating has been found to be preferred relative to avoiding in individualistic cultures, like the United States, where the focus is on individual needs and goals in an interaction. Individuals in a communalistic culture generally reported a preference for using an avoiding conflict style, relative to using a dominating style (although members of both communal and individualistic cultures have a preference for collaborating approaches) (Cai & Fink, 2001; Oetzel et al., 2001).. Still, concern for one's own face appears to fall on a continuum, which allows some members of communalistic culture to report being self-oriented in conflict. More clearly, even some individuals in a communalistic culture will be more concerned with protecting their own face in a romantic conflict, and these individuals will attempt to enact that protection via a dominating conflict style.

Hypothesis 3A

Hypothesis 3A stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using a conversation-oriented family socialization pattern, the more they will report using a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* This hypothesis was supported. More specifically, individuals who reported being raised in a conversation-oriented family was a significant predictor of individuals reported use of a collaborating style when in conflict with a significant other. More clearly, a positive relationship was found for the relationships between conversation oriented families and the use of collaborating as a conflict style. After controlling for country and sex (19.7%),

family socialization patterns explained an additional 4% of the variance in an individual's use of a collaborating conflict style.

This finding extends the existing literature regarding FNT by adding the relationship between family socialization and collaborating as a preferred conflict style. This result suggests that individuals who report being raised in families that encourage open disagreement with parents are more likely to see the benefits of collaborating with a romantic partner in a conflict situation. A collaborating conflict style involves seeking third party help and compromising.

Hypothesis 3B

Hypothesis 3B stated: *The more individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia report using an other-oriented face concern, the more they will use a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with their romantic partners.* This hypothesis was supported. The more individuals who reported being more concerned with protecting the face of their significant other in conflict, the more likely they were to report using a collaborating style, which consisted of compromising and seeking third party help. Face concerns explained an additional 3% of the variance in the model, after controlling for country, sex, and family socialization.

This finding both supports and extends the existing literature on FNT. Prior research involving face concerns supports that individuals' reporting to be interested in saving the face of the other person a conflict would be more likely to report a preference for using a collaborating conflict style (cite). For example, in prior studies conducted using FNT as a framework in individualistic and collectivistic cultures, this has been found to be the case (Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Oetzel et al., 2003). However, how

this same relationship would function in communalistic cultures was unknown, and therefore the current results help to expand FNT's understanding of the conflict behaviors and preferences of individuals from communalistic cultures, such as Uganda and Ethiopia.

Hypothesis 4A

Hypothesis 4A stated: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia from a conversation-oriented family will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals from a conformity-oriented family.* This hypothesis was supported.

Individuals who reported being raised in families that promoted open disagreement and conversation were found to report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships.

Essentially, a positive relationship was found between conversation oriented families and relationship satisfaction. Family socialization patterns, specifically individuals who reported being from conversation-oriented families, explained an additional 6% of the variance in an individual's satisfaction in their relationship with their significant other.

This finding extends the current understanding of the role of family communication patterns and relational outcomes by considering the impact of family socialization on romantic relationship satisfaction in among individuals in Africa cultures (i.e., Uganda and Ethiopia). Previous research involving family communication patterns and relationship satisfaction found that individuals from conversation-oriented families report more relationship satisfaction than individuals from conformity oriented families (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). This suggests that if an individual is encouraged to challenge and/or disagree with his/her parents during childhood, the more self-reported satisfaction she/he will report in his/her own romantic relationships as an adult. This may

be because individuals who feel they can express themselves openly with their romantic partner may feel less restricted in the relationship despite differences in value, beliefs, or opinions. More specifically, if an individual feels that she/he can comfortably and openly disagree with their romantic partner then she/he appears to feel more satisfied with the relationship as a whole. Still, it must be considered that in Africa, the “community dominates the individual,” suggesting that despite the findings in this study suggesting that family communication patterns and dynamics do influence an individual’s conflict behavior, these results must be tempered in light of the larger cultural norm of deferring to cultural expectations and preferences (Etounga-Manguelle, 1998, p. 71).

Hypothesis 4B

Hypothesis 4B stated: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ other-oriented face concern will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ self-oriented face concerns.* This hypothesis was supported. A concern for the other in a romantic conflict was found to be an appropriate predictor of satisfaction in a relationship. Still, face concerns only explained an additional 1% of the variance in an individual’s relationship satisfaction. Relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction, are not currently considered in FNT, therefore this finding does not contradict the current understanding of the role of face in predicting relationship satisfaction. Still, the support of a significant predictive relationship between an individual’s concerns for their partner’s image (i.e., face) in a conflict and relationship satisfaction could suggest that individuals from a communalistic culture are encouraged to feel satisfied when they are putting their partner’s needs or image before the own. It should be noted, however, that the effect size for this relationship is rather small, and

therefore, this positive relationship should be understood in terms of its limited explanatory power.

Hypothesis 4C

Hypothesis 4C stated: *Individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia who employ a collaborating conflict style when in conflict with a romantic other will report being more satisfied in their romantic relationships than individuals who employ an avoiding or dominating conflict style.* The hypothesis was partially supported. Conflict styles only explained an additional 1% (beyond country and sex) of an individual's report of satisfaction in a romantic relationship, but collaborating was not found to be a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction. Yet, the use of a dominating conflict style was negatively related to relationship satisfaction, which suggests that the more dominating, emotionally expressive, and passive aggressive an individual reports to use in a romantic conflict, the less likely he/she is to report being satisfied with that relationship and/or his/her significant other (Gottman, 1994).

This finding also extends the current understanding of how conflict styles impact relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction, because this outcome has yet to be considered in the literature involving FNT. The fact that collaboration was not a significant predictor of satisfaction in a romantic relationship suggests that individuals may seek third party help and/or a compromise to appease a romantic partner or family member, but the solution reached/offered by the third-party or the compromise does not necessarily help to satisfy that individual in light of the conflict at hand. However, the data does not suggest that collaborating negatively impacts an individual's satisfaction either. Therefore, it may be that collaborating, as a conflict style, is a cultural norm that is

expected during a conflict but that individuals do not necessarily gain, nor lose, anything from this conflict resolution approach.

The fact that dominating was negatively related to relationship satisfaction helps to extend the literature's understanding of the relationship between conflict style choice and relational outcomes. Intuitively this result makes sense, but prior research in this context has yet to be conducted. Therefore, this finding highlights how individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia feel about a dominating conflict style, which makes particularly good sense when considered in light of the preference for communalistic society to focus on the needs of community before the needs of the individual. Therefore, it seems that individuals who used a dominating style are seen as acting outside of the community's best interests (Moemeka, 1989).

Research Questions

The first research question pertained to the overall best predictors of the relational outcomes, while the second research question was concerned with assessing the possibility of a mediation model resulting from the data. Both questions were answered using the quantitative results. The subsequent findings are discussed below.

Research Question I

Research question I asked: *Which family socialization and face concern variables best explain conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction?* This question was answered by examining the results of the quantitative analyses and by filtering out the most significant results. The results revealed the following best predictors of conflict style choices and relationship satisfaction among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia in romantic relationships. First, family socialization patterns, specifically a conversation-

orientation, explained the greatest amount of variance in relationship satisfaction. Therefore, individuals who reported being from a conversation-oriented family also reported being more satisfied in their romantic relationships. Second, family socialization patterns (conversation) explained an additional 4% of the variance in an individual's reported preference for using a collaborating conflict style in their romantic relationships. Third, family communication patterns (i.e., conformity) reported 4% of the variance of an individual's reported preference for using both an avoiding and dominating conflict style. Finally, individuals who reported being more concerned with protecting the face of their significant other in conflict accounted for 3% of the variance in an individual's report of the use of a collaborating conflict style.

It should also be noted that sex and country predicted a large percentage of the variance in conflict styles and relationship satisfaction, but because they were not part of the study's focus, their specific contributions were not considered. The important extensions that these significant predictors and relationships offer to the existing literature were discussed above.

Research Question 2

Research question two asked: *Does family socialization and face concerns act as a mediation model for predicting conflict style choices in Uganda and Ethiopia romantic relationships?* This question is presented in three parts in order of each dependent variable: (a) avoiding, (b) dominating, and (c) collaborating. First, conversation and conformity were both found to be statistically significant predictors of individuals reported preference for using an avoiding conflict style and face concerns (i.e., self and other) were also found to be statistically significant predictors of an individuals reported

preference for using an avoiding conflict style when in a romantic conflict. These relationships suggest that both family socialization patterns and face concerns have a direct effect on individuals' reported preferences for using avoiding as a conflict style.

When the model was tested to determine if the direct effects of family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) on an individuals use of avoiding was mediated by face concerns (i.e., self and other), it was found that both predictors still had significant direct effects. This result suggests that no mediation effects occur in the relationship between family socialization, face concerns, and individuals reported preference for using an avoiding conflict style in their romantic relationships.

Second, conversation and conformity were both statistically significant predictors of individuals reported preference for using a dominating conflict style and face concerns (i.e., self and other) were also statistically significant predictors of individuals reported preference for using a dominating conflict style. These relationships suggest that both family socialization patterns and face concerns have a direct effect on an individuals' reported preference for using dominating as a conflict style. When the model was tested to determine if the direct effects of family socialization (i.e., conformity and conversation) on an individuals' use of dominating was mediated by face concerns (i.e., self and other), both predictors still had significant direct effects. This result suggests that no mediation effects occur in the relationship between family socialization, face concerns, and individuals reported preference for using a dominating conflict style in their romantic relationships.

Third, family socialization and face concerns were statistically significant predictors of an individual's reported preference for using a collaborating conflict style in

romantic conflict. These relationships suggest that both family socialization patterns and face concerns have a direct effect on an individual's reported preference for using collaborating as a conflict style. Again, when the model was tested to determine if the direct effects of family socialization on an individual's use of collaborating was mediated by face concerns, both predictors still had significant direct effects. This result suggests that no mediation effects occur in the relationship between family socialization, face concerns, and an individual's reported preference for using a collaborating conflict style in their romantic relationships.

Overall, a direct relationship was found between family socialization and face concerns and conflict styles (i.e., avoiding, dominating, collaborating), yet no mediating effects were found in the data. These findings extend the literature regarding FNT by adding the combined role of family socialization and face concerns on conflict style preferences among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. More clearly, the fact that both family socialization and face concerns have a direct effect on avoiding, dominating, and collaborating, yet family socialization patterns impact on conflict styles are not mediated by face concerns, was not known prior to this study. Still, these findings do not necessarily support FNT because the effect sizes were still relatively small and, because each construct is not influenced by the presence of the construct, the relationship may merely be spurious in nature.

However, because little prior research has examined the role of family communication patterns, face concerns, and conflict styles in African culture, this information may help to at least contextualize beyond consensus data collected (Ziehl, 2001). These findings may help expand researchers' understanding of the contribution

that family patterns and interactions, as well as, face concerns make to the role of conflict patterns and choices among individuals in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia.

It could be suggested that because both family socialization patterns and face concerns directly impact conflict behavior, the role of communalism may be the overarching influencing factor. More specifically, as the qualitative results from this study demonstrate, as well as, prior research, communalism in African communities plays an integral role in individuals' lives, particularly in terms of informing their verbal and nonverbal communication choices (Moemeka & Nicotera, 1993). Therefore, it may be more appropriate to frame the mediation model to include the larger role of communalism and cultural norms. Yet, because quantitative data could not be collected that accurately measures communalism in this study, this theoretical model cannot be tested at this point.

Findings: Phase 2 (Qualitative Data)

Qualitative data was used to answer an additional four research questions aimed at gaining a clearer understanding of the relationship among family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness. In addition, the qualitative data was used to examine the role of communalism and religion in individuals' lives in Uganda and Ethiopia. These questions were answered using the data from over 300 pages of transcriptions from 14 face-to-face interviews conducted in Uganda and Ethiopia. Participants in both Uganda and Ethiopia offered similar answers to the four research questions, and therefore, the transcribed themes below pertain to both national cultures as a whole. Research questions 3 through 6 helped clarify and inform

the concurrently collected quantitative data, as well as, contributed new data that could not be assessed via quantitative measures.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 asked: *How do participants from Uganda and Ethiopia define conflict, face, and conflict styles?* Anecdotal evidence about the ways in which Ugandans and Ethiopians define conflict, face, and conflict styles emerged in the data. Similar answers were provided by members of both countries when defining the three concepts. Definitions of conflict were rather simplistic (e.g., quarrel, disagreement), but the definition of face yielded two themes (i.e., *respect* and *impressions*) and the definition of conflict styles yielded two overarching themes (i.e., *avoiding* and *confrontation/explicit*) and five sub-themes (i.e., *avoiding*, *third party help*, *cooling off*, *emotional expression* and *violence*).

This finding added conceptual understanding for many of the ideas advanced in both the quantitative and qualitative data. For example, to establish equivalency, it was imperative to determine if the notion of “face,” as defined in FNT, could/would be interpreted similarly among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. The definitions offered by the interviewees did suggest that the idea of *face* did exist in Uganda and Ethiopia culture, albeit face-loss, face-respect, and face-threats were demonstrated in different ways. For example, because individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia are socialized to communicate in an indirect manner, it appears that subtle face-threats exist in their culture more than they exist in U.S. culture. Specifically, the idea that face is related to how people present self in public, in terms of dressing appropriately (i.e., *impression*), emerging frequently and with intensity in the data, suggests that a difference exists

between how U.S. Americans and Africans perceive face (i.e., direct styles involving more verbal exchanges, as opposed to nonverbal)

The conflict styles that emerged in the interviews expanded the current research's understanding of the nuances of the communication behavior among individuals from indirect and communalistic societies. The two contradictory styles, avoiding and confrontational/explicit, represent two ends of the spectrum. This dichotomous presentation of conflict style choice makes interpretation of this outcome less obvious, still it could be argued that avoiding is the preferred and/or socially sanctioned style among the youth and among females as determined by the community, whereas a confrontational/explicit conflict style choice is socially sanctioned by the community to be used primarily by elders and men. Although, I argue that the overarching preference by all groups (e.g., youth, women, men, and elders) is an avoiding style, and more specifically the sub-themes of the avoiding style (i.e., *avoiding, third party help, cooling off*). Moemeka (1996) similarly offers that although the community is the supreme force in communalistic societies like Uganda and Ethiopia, reverence for authority, such as elders and men, is also extremely important. Therefore, who chooses to avoid conflict and who is able to openly express emotions may be rooted in societal hierarchy.

My assertion is rooted in the main premise of a communalistic society, which states that the community comes before the individual in all instances. This idea further supports the notion that avoiding, seeking third party help, and cooling off would be more community-oriented responses to conflict, as opposed to emotional expression and violence. Prior research that has examined individualistic and collectivistic cultures using a similar approach as employed in this study. More specifically, Cai and Fink (2001) felt

that conflict and conflict styles must be first locally defined, versus using a pre-established Western based definition, before they can be assessed. In their study of individualistic and collectivistic cultures, they found that by using a “dual concern method,” they were able to better conceptualize and understand how conflict is defined in various cultures. Kim and Leung (2000) have also found that it avoiding as a conflict style choice is understood differently in various cultures, which further supports the need to have representatives of a culture define conflict styles before interpreting a study’s results. Both of these studies were in direct contrast to Hoefstede’s 1980 cross-cultural study that examined conflict as a universally defined construct, which failed to define the meaning of conflict locally prior to collecting data.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 asked: *What do participants view as their sources for conflict behavior?* Participants were asked to describe some of their actions and choices during a romantic conflict with a partner. Specifically, interviewees were asked to explain how the larger national culture and family socialization practices might influence the ways in which they choose to handle/deal with conflict. The interview question prompted many of the responses for this research question was: *“Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements?”* Four overarching themes emerged from the interview data that help to shed light on this research question. They are: (1) *family as primary*, (2) *community/tribal*, (3) *third parties*, and (4) *patriarchy*.

The themes that answered this research question were supported by a large number of exemplars and anecdotal evidence, both in frequency and intensity of use. Additionally, the themes largely mirrored prior descriptions of the main components and

relationships among individuals in communalistic cultures (Moemeka, 1996; 1998). The emergent themes located the ways in which individuals from Uganda and Ethiopia learned how to deal with conflict in their romantic relationships. The themes were not too surprising in light of what is known about communalistic cultures and their subsequent members. Nonetheless, these themes have rarely (if ever) been validated in such detail in the context of romantic relationships, therefore giving more credence to this finding. It is fascinating to consider the extreme importance of family, community, third parties, and men in shaping the ways in which Ugandans and Ethiopians conceptualize and enact their communication styles when in conflict.

The main idea contribution to the existing literature is the (re) affirmation of the interdependent nature of individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia (Moemeka, 1996; 1998). The overwhelmingly majority of their shared experiences focused on the roles of others in their lives. More clearly, when in conflict with a romantic partner, individuals' choices are almost entirely developed from the reciprocal influences of their families, community members, and third parties (e.g., pastors, friends). Additionally, men play a significant role in determining and reinforcing the interdependent nature of the hierarchical relationships between men and women, and men and other men (Etounga-Manguelle, 1998).

It is interesting to note that the interdependence of individuals is actively (e.g., seeking third party help) and passively (e.g., community expectations and norms) enacted, suggesting the necessity of using both direct and indirect conflict styles when in conflict with a romantic partner. Ultimately, the individual in conflict must navigate the push-pull tension between putting the community first (i.e., communalism necessitates

that the individual put his/her needs aside for the sake of the community) and involving others (i.e., interdependency reinforces community) in an effort to resolve the issue/conflict. Nwanko and Nzelibe (1990) found evidence of a similar struggle in communalistic cultures when examining how to balance the distribution of scarce resources in Africa and power struggles about competing groups. They found that the interdependent nature of communalistic communities can often be challenge to navigate in a part of the world where many other large-scale issues (e.g., war, poverty) must be dealt with simultaneously.

Research Question 5

Research question 5 asked: *What is the role of religion in Ugandan and Ethiopian conflict?* Religion's crucial role in Ugandan and Ethiopian societies was a central element in every interview conducted, with many participants referencing the significant ways in which religion informs individuals' everyday decisions and actions. The answers provided in response to the interview question "*Was your religion a factor in how you chose to handle conflict? How so?*" developed the themes used to answer this research question. Three themes emerged in the data that help to highlight how religion impacts individuals' lives in terms of romantic conflict: (1) *religion as a teacher/guide* (e.g., "*they give us advice*"), (2) *religion as comfort/reassurance*, and (3) *religion as conflict resolution/forgiveness* (e.g., "*Pastor tells you love your neighbor as you love yourself*"). It should be noted that no discernible patterns of difference could be found in their responses based on religious affiliation and I did not probe about specific religions (e.g., Christianity or Islam).

The themes make an important and noteworthy contribution to the literature. Mainly, religion acts in a multitude of ways for the individual, both practically and in the creation of meaning and sense making. Specifically, it appears that individuals utilize religion in a practical way (e.g., teaches/guides and conflict resolution skills) by employing their associated religious teachings and values as a way of becoming informed about themselves and their behaviors in relation to others (Moemeka, 1996). For example, interviewees described how religion literally teaches and guides them to make wise choices (e.g., forgive) and enact certain behaviors, while religion is also described as actively helping (e.g., third party help from Pastors) individuals resolve conflict in their romantic relationships. Used in this manner, religion has tangible outcomes and perhaps observed measurable effects on individuals' lives – while ultimately serving as possible surrogate parents and teachers.

Still, religion also plays a less observable and tangible role in individuals lives as well. Religious practices and beliefs appear to help comfort and reassure individuals in their daily lives (Gifford, 1999). The power of prayer and the belief that healing can come from seeking a life that reflects God's wishes emerged in the data as being paramount to the emotional survival of individuals living in Uganda and Ethiopia. In a war torn and impoverished Uganda, and poverty-stricken Ethiopia, many individuals said that they awaken to each new day uncertain of where their next meal may come from. Religious beliefs help alleviate the daily stress associated with such conditions. In this way, the real effects of religion become more difficult to associate with any real or observable outcomes because it is a rather intangible and/or immeasurable phenomenon. Overall, whether religion played a tangible and/or intangible role in the lives of

individuals living in Uganda and Ethiopia is important to consider in terms of conflict in romantic relationships because it informs, both actively (e.g., skill development) and passively (e.g., prayer and fear of God), how individuals choose to resolve conflicts.

Research Question 6

Research question 6 asked” *How do participants see the relationships between conflict styles and relational outcomes (e.g., forgiveness, relationship satisfaction)?*

Interviewees commented on the relationships between specific conflict and conflict resolution styles and subsequent relational outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction and forgiveness. Three sub-themes emerged from the data that illuminate how specific strategies are related to specific positive and negative outcomes. More specifically, (1) *seeking third party help* was positively associated with resolving conflict, (2) *apologizing and forgiving* was similarly associated with favorable relationship outcomes, while (3) *avoiding (“ignoring”)* was viewed as a necessary but harmful strategy.

The association individuals made between certain conflict styles and relational outcomes was difficult to discern in terms of romantic conflict. Individuals expressed a preference for employing certain conflict styles, but often failed to directly connect their choices of conflict style with specific outcomes. Still, individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia did express the belief that seeking the help of a third party was often the most effective method to repair the relationship burdened by conflict, while others reflected the importance of forgiveness in repairing a romantic relationship following a conflict. The salient role of forgiveness was often linked to religion, suggesting that forgiveness is often taught to individuals via their religious leaders and/or religious readings.

Overall, while seeking third party help was often described as being a common and effective way of resolving conflict in a relationship and forgiveness was often directly linked with self-healing, neither conflict style was depicted as being directly related to satisfaction with a romantic partner. Still, several interviewees implied that the relationship could heal or continue if they sought third party help or forgave a partner of her/his transgressions, but again, satisfaction and/or levels of happiness was never truly addressed by interviewees. This could be another by-product of communalistic cultures, where as long as you are resolving conflicts (at least in theory or on the surface), then the individual is fulfilling his/her duty to the community (e.g., otherwise the conflict may detract from the community's harmony), but seeking personal fulfillment or happiness from a relationship with another may be seen as being too individual centered. More clearly, the personal rewards of a relationship from an individual's perspective may be less relevant and therefore not worthy of direct attention and/or consideration.

Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Results

Because this study uses a mixed-method design, data derived from quantitative methods and qualitative methods. The following section discusses the (a) consistency and clarification of data and (b) measurement issues as they relate to the studies design and subsequent results.

Consistency and Clarification of Data

When integrating the collected data, it is necessary to consider several factors. Specifically, Ivanoka, Creswell, and Stick (2006) discussed some procedural issues related to the mixed-methods concurrent explanatory design, which implies collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data at the same time. Such issues include

deciding on the priority or weight given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in the study and the stage/stages in the research process at which the quantitative and qualitative data are connected and the results are integrated.

For the purposes of integrating and making sense of the collective results of the two data sets, I gave relatively equal weight and priority to the relevant findings from each method, while focusing more intently on the ways in which they best complimented and/or informed one another. Overall, the results from the two data sets were relatively similar, with many findings being affirmed by both sets of analyses (i.e., consistency). Still, the role of family and the role of religion emerged as factors that needs to be more fully expanded (i.e., clarifying) in an effort to understand their impact on romantic conflict. The dual affirmation of the importance of a construct, belief, or practice by both data sets helped to explain the results and understand subsequent implications. In the following section, the consistent findings (i.e., role of avoiding, dominating, and collaborating) and the inconsistent findings (i.e., role of family and role of religion) between the two data sets will be interpreted, clarified, and discussed.

First, avoidance as a preferred conflict style emerged in the results from both data sets as being an important conflict style choice among individuals in romantic relationships dealing with conflict. Despite the statistically significance of avoidance as a relational conflict style choice in the quantitative results, the nuances of an individual's choice to avoid conflict are not fully captured until the quantitative data is considered. For example, through the sharing of ideas regarding romantic conflict, individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia, elaborated on some of the influences that impact their decisions to avoid a conflict with their romantic partners. For example, avoiding is described and/or

implied by interviewees as a constructive way of dealing with conflict in communalistic cultures, where the community's goals are equally important as the individuals' goals. Yet, the quantitative data highlighted the importance of family and concern of saving others' face in predicting an individual's use of avoiding as a conflict style in romantic conflict. It was the significant relationship between face concerns and avoidance depicted in the quantitative data that demonstrated that concern for other is related to communalism. Thus, the result from either data set alone would have failed to paint an accurate picture of the importance of the role of avoidance in romantic conflicts.

Second, the quantitative results indicated that an individual's preference for using a dominating style when in romantic conflict was predicted by being raised in either a conversation and conformity-oriented family. This same conclusion was validated by the qualitative data, as it emerged as a popular response to conflict in romantic relationships, regardless of the family's communication patterns. Therefore, despite the initial confusion associated with the quantitative result that indicated that family orientations are predictive of an individual's preference for using a dominating style, the qualitative data confirmed the results and helped to contextualize this outcome. Ultimately, this outcome may be related to gender socialization differences, and therefore needs to be more fully investigated. In addition, the quantitative data indicated a negative relationship between an individual's preference for using a dominating style and relationship satisfaction. This, too, was affirmed in the qualitative data, therefore giving both results more credibility and explanatory power than using one data set.

Third, it is important to recognize the complimentary nature of the results of both the quantitative and qualitative results in helping to confirm that seeking advice or

counsel from others (i.e., third party help) is strongly encouraged and supported. For example, third party help (i.e., collaborating in the quantitative set) emerged in both data sets as being an important part of resolving conflict in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia. Yet, whom the targets of the third party help only emerged in the qualitative data set. This finding helps to contextualize and clarify details that underline the quantitative findings. Hence, the mixed method approach allows the inclusion of pastors, family members, and friends as sources of third party help and adds them to the analysis.

Still, the results from the two sets of data failed to mirror one another in some notable ways, and therefore these inconsistencies need to be clarified. This was especially true for understanding the role of family and the role of religion in romantic relationship conflict. First, the quantitative findings reported that individuals who reported being from a family that promoted open and challenging dialogue in family communication patterns (i.e., conversation-orientation) were more likely to seek third party help than were individuals who reported being from a family that promoted conformity orientation in dealing with a conflict. In slight contrast, the qualitative results suggest that individuals who reported being from both family types would seek third party help equally, which is part of the collaborating conflict style. This inconsistency between the results of the data sets was partially clarified in the themes that emerged from the interview data, and it may be better understood in light of communalism in Uganda and Ethiopia.

Second, the role of religion was not fully addressed via the survey data, but it emerged in the qualitative data as an extremely important piece of the puzzle in understanding conflict in romantic relationships among individuals in Uganda and

Ethiopia. Religion emerged in the qualitative themes as one of the primary sources from which individuals derive their understanding of conflict and acceptable conflict resolution behaviors. The quantitative data merely assessed what religion was practiced by the respondent and the frequency with which the respondent practiced that religion. This descriptive information alone suggested that religion is important to individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia, but it did not ascertain the reasons that religion is important, which may be a crucial part of understanding conflict in romantic relationships. Still, more data would have to be collected to ascertain more specifically how religion functions in African communities in terms of informing conflict preferences and styles.

Measurement Issues

Communalism and forgiveness were expanded and used in practical ways in this study, specifically as a result of its mixed method design, data collection, and integration and interpretation of the results. The role of communalism and forgiveness in Uganda and Ethiopia were main foci in the original conceptualizations of this study, but failed to be accurately captured by the quantitative results alone. This fact allows two important conclusions to be drawn.

First, the current ways of measuring communalism and forgiveness, specifically in cross-cultural studies, are not effective. Therefore, and as a result of these inaccurate measurement tools, the statistical outcomes of these scales cannot (and should not) be considered valid for this population. Furthermore, this discovery suggests that the creation of new quantitative measures for the constructs of communalism and forgiveness be considered to more fully reflect the concepts/constructs. The qualitative data from this study provides a useful starting point for this endeavor.

Second, as a result of the qualitative portion of this study, the significant role of communalism and forgiveness to played an essential role in the conflict decisions of individuals in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia. Communalism and forgiveness emerged as dominant and overarching themes in terms of outlining how romantic conflict is conceptualized, handled, and resolved. Because of the overwhelming evidence that emerged in the qualitative data, it is necessary to state that the absence of the interview portion of this study would have been a monumental mistake in terms of capturing how conflict operates in romantic relationships Uganda and Ethiopia.

Overall, this conclusion suggests that essentially the lack of quantitative data involving communalism and forgiveness, would never question the validity of existing scales. Moreover, a lack of anecdotal and interview evidence in this study may have rendered the quantitative results relatively simplistic or obsolete in terms of explanatory power. This discovery solidifies the importance of mixed method research, particularly in cross-cultural data collection.

Theoretical Implications

This study had two primary goals: (1) to extend FNT to include family socialization patterns and relational outcomes and (2) to gain a better understanding of the role of communalism in African societies. Both goals were related to assessing how individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia deal with and/or resolve romantic conflict. The theoretical implications of both goals are discussed below.

First, thus far, FNT has only considered the role of culture in explaining face concern and conflict style choices and outcomes. Therefore, one of the goals of this study was to extend FNT to include the role of family socialization and relational outcomes in

an effort to assess how individuals may choose to handle and/or resolve conflict. Additionally, this study proposed two new outcome variables for FNT. Specifically, this study suggests that how culture and family communication patterns impact relationship satisfaction and forgiveness when mediated by specific conflict styles is a necessary addition to the theorizing about conflict. Below, an overview of the theoretical implications of adding family socialization, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness to FNT is discussed.

According to Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) family communication patterns are constituted by a set of norms that govern the family environment and socialization practices. More clearly, family communication patterns can be classified according to whether the child is encouraged “to develop and express autonomous opinions and ideas (i.e., conversation orientation) or to pursue relational objectives by conforming to parental authority (i.e., conformity orientation” (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990, p. 524). In this study, family communication patterns guided the proposed inquiry into how family communication values and norms impact face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness in romantic relationships in Uganda and Ethiopia. Several significant results supported that conclusion that FNT should be extended to include family socialization patterns. This added theoretical perspective contextualizes individual and interpersonal factors in conflict situations, predicts and explains the use of certain conflict styles, and demonstrates relationship satisfaction outcomes, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic conflicts between individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia.

Relationship satisfaction is “the degree to which an individual is content and satisfied with his or her relationship” (Anderson & Emmers-Sommer, 2006, p. 5).

Substantial evidence suggests that relationship satisfaction is linked to the ways in which individuals behave in romantic relationships, how people think about their romantic relationships, and the attributions that people make about a partner's behavior (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995). Additionally, there is significant support for the belief that individuals who resolve conflict are more satisfied with their romantic relationships. This study found support for these claims. Based on the strong support provided by the quantitative and qualitative results from this study, FNT should be extended to include the role of relationship satisfaction. It adds to the theorizing about how conflict functions in individuals' lives, especially as it relates to romantic relationships. Overall, it is important that FNT begin to consider the role of relationship satisfaction as an outcome variable.

Fundamental to forgiveness is "an attitude of real goodwill towards the offender as a person" (Holmgren, 1993, p. 34). When considering how satisfied a romantic couple in Uganda and/or Ethiopia may be, it is necessary to consider the role of forgiveness following a conflict. "Forgiveness entails a positive or benevolent motivational state towards the transgressor that is not achieved simply by overcoming the avoidance goal set in motion by an unacceptable self-image or the negative motivational state that is caused by the transgression" (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004, p. cite). In this study, forgiveness emerged as playing an extremely important role in romantic conflict between individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. Specifically, in historically conflict-oriented sites, such as Uganda and Ethiopia, it is necessary to consider how forgiveness (often referred to as reconciliation) may function in individuals' lives. Based on the results in this study, FNT would benefit from the inclusion of forgiveness as an outcome variable.

The second goal of this study was to broaden the understanding of romantic conflict in an African context, specifically as it relates to communalism. In communalism, the concern is with the authenticity of the community-identity presentation and meaning is projected through indirect nonverbal behaviors (Moemeka, 1996). The guiding dictum is “I am because we are” (Moemeka, 1996, p. 198) and it is comprised of five main elements. (a) community is the center (i.e., the community is the most important aspect of a society or culture), (b) sanctity of authority (i.e., there is always a leader whose role is to govern the community through example and wisdom), (c) utility/usefulness of the individual (i.e., the community would not exist without the individual, and therefore the individual is vital), (d) religion as a way of life (i.e., not necessarily a specific religion, but the belief of a spiritual existence), and (e) respect for old age (i.e., elders are seen as being wise and their important role in culture is to share wisdom) (Moemeka, 1996). Based on the overwhelming similarities found between Moemeka’s description of communalism and the description of communalism reported by the interviewees in the qualitative portion of this study, FNT should consider adding communalism as another independent variable in its theorizing. As FNT is a post-positivist theory, it would be necessary to construct a better measure of communalism. However, as stated above, the results from this study would provide a good starting point for this endeavor.

Another important implication of this study in terms of understanding how individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia frame their needs and choices when communicating and resolving conflict with their romantic other can be considered in terms of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs offers that individuals’ are motivated

to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other needs. More specifically, the hierarchy outlines that individuals have five layers of needs, physiological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1970). Physiological needs must be met before an individual works to have his/her security needs met, and individuals must have both their physiological and security needs met before they attempt to satisfy their need for social belonging. This hierarchy is important to consider when interpreting the results from this study because of the impoverished standard of living in Uganda and Ethiopia. For example, relationship satisfaction did not emerge in the interview data as an important theme. Perhaps the lack of concern with relational satisfaction and personal reward from a romantic relationship is both a by-product of a communalistic society, where the individual is minimized in relation to the community, and from the perspective of needs. If an individual from Uganda and Ethiopia is unsure how his/her basic physiological (e.g., food and water) and security needs are being met, then perhaps he/she is less concerned with his/her personal satisfaction.

Finally, this study demonstrates the imperative need to reconsider the relationship between Western based approaches to communication research and African based approaches to research. Essentially, this project allowed for the emergence of new and noteworthy understandings of how individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia communicate and handle conflict because data was able to be collected from both an etic and emic approach. Additionally, the ability to clarify specific definitions and concepts was an integral part of understanding why a Western based approach alone is not enough when considering knowledge creation in understudied cultures, such as Uganda and Ethiopia. Ultimately, this finding affirmed that both inductive and deductive theory building must

be considered when attempting to make cross-cultural comparisons. Still, with this in mind, I feel strongly that if studies are designed with these considerations in mind, that cross-cultural projects can be effective in creating new understandings of different cultures.

Limitations, Future Directions, and Conclusions

In this section, three notable limitations, ideas for future directions involving conflict and FNT, and the study's conclusions will be offered.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the language barrier between the researcher and the participants may have inhibited data collection. Both in the survey construction and in the interviews I felt that language was an unfortunate obstacle. Despite the surveys being back-translated, I argue that the language in certain survey questions was too complicated (both countries surveys were administered in English). This limitation did not become apparent until I visited both Uganda and Ethiopia and witnessed the low-level of English comprehension. I strongly believe that future studies conducted in African countries should strive to be administered in the first language of the country. Still, this idea does result in obvious obstacles because there is no primary language spoken by the majority of the population in either Uganda or Ethiopia, due to the influence of numerous tribal languages. This being said, English is the primary language of instruction in the Universities where I collected both data sets. Therefore, students were expected to be able to read and write English at the college level (Gudykunst & Asante, 1989).

A second limitation of the research is the lack of people (i.e., numbers) that I was able to interview in Uganda and Ethiopia, if not merely for the experience of hearing additional anecdotal evidence. Ideally, I would have been able to interview a minimum of ten individuals from each country (I did conduct seven interviews in both Uganda and Ethiopia). I believe additional participants would have allowed me to firmly identify and clarify some of the emergent themes in the qualitative results. Still, the study was originally designed to focus on gathering larger quantities of survey data and smaller quantities of qualitative (i.e., big quantitative-little qualitative design). Overall, after seeing the powerful interview evidence that emerged, I firmly believe that I reached a saturation point for the questions that I was asking. Similarly, the use of self-report measures in the surveys and this is a notable limitation of many quantitative and/or scale based studies because people are being asked to objectively remark on their own personalities and behaviors.

Finally, the study was limited by the fact that I used a convenience sample comprised of college students. When I was in Uganda and Ethiopia, several indicators suggested I was getting a specific viewpoint due to my choice of population. In many of my interviews, and in my everyday interactions with the locals, I was offered comparative statements regarding the differences between the individuals living in the city, and their associated beliefs/behaviors, and individuals living in the “villages.” That said, I strongly believe that the cliché regarding the over-studied college sophomore (due to convenience sampling) does not apply in this study simply because so little is known about romantic partner communication patterns about any population in Uganda and Ethiopia.

Future Research

In light of the limitations and results of his study, future research should focus more readily on obtaining differing types of samples (i.e., demographics), gaining more information about the role that communalism plays in individuals communication patterns in Uganda and Ethiopia, and other African countries, and examining the varying effects of the type of conflict (e.g., infidelity, betrayal) on outcome variables. More specifically, if the conflict involves infidelity, would individuals handle or deal with conflict differently could be interesting to assess.

Also, it may be important to investigate the important role of gender in African communities. It emerged as playing an important role in the results from both the quantitative and qualitative data sets. It appears that patriarchy and the varying expectations that exist for males and female may be quite different in African communities. This findings may be helpful to gain a better understanding of how specifically men and women's roles in society are reinforced, affirmed, and transferred. Additionally, how the difference in role expectations helps to keep certain communalistic behaviors and norms in place may help to shed more light on the role of culture in African societies. Overall, this project could evolve in several new and noteworthy directions that incorporate interesting ways of examining communication, conflict, and culture patterns in African communities.

Conclusions

Overall, using FNT and its associated assumptions to guide the study, the current project addressed the lack of African centered communication research by conducting a two-part study in Uganda and Ethiopia regarding how culture and family socialization

patterns impact romantic partners in conflict. Specifically, this study examined how culture and family communication patterns influence face concerns, conflict style choices, overall relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness tendencies in romantic relationships. This investigation contributes a better understanding of the role of culture and family socialization patterns in romantic relationships situated in an African context, as well as extends FNT to include the role of family communication patterns and relational outcomes.

Quantitative data, collected via survey collection in Uganda and Ethiopia, validated nine hypotheses and answered two research questions. Hypotheses H1-H3 measured the relationship between family socialization patterns and conflict styles and the relationship between face concerns and conflict styles. Hypothesis H4 measured the relationship between family socialization and relationship satisfaction and face concerns and relationship satisfaction. Two research questions were also asked and answered using the survey data. The first research question was concerned with assessing the overall best predictors of the relational outcomes, while the second research question was concerned with assessing the possibility of a mediation model resulting from the data.

Qualitative data was used to answer an additional four research questions that were aimed at providing a clearer understanding of the relationship among family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. In addition, the qualitative data was used to examine the role of communalism and religion in romantic conflict in Uganda and Ethiopia. These questions were answered by using transcribed data from 14 face-to-face interviews that were conducted in Uganda and Ethiopia. Research questions

three through six were asked to help clarify and inform the concurrently collected quantitative data.

The results from this study are significant and noteworthy in terms of shedding light on the role of family socialization patterns, face concerns, conflict styles, relationship satisfaction, and forgiveness among individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. Additionally, the role of communalism and religion provided a plethora of information regarding how these constructs impact conflict in romantic relationships between individuals in Uganda and Ethiopia. In addition to the quantitative and qualitative research oriented goals that were met in this study, I also experienced numerous experiences during the data collection process that have impacted me on a personal level. For example, while traveling in Uganda and Ethiopia, I noticed two interesting patterns. First, the Health Concerns (HIV/AIDS) of the individuals living in Uganda and Ethiopia were quite prevalent and, at times, hard for me to grapple with. A specific quotation offered by Mark from Uganda helps illuminate and echoes many of the health concerns associated with life in Africa. He stated:

They used to give us those papers that say true love waits so that you wait up until your age then you get married. So you don't interfere, you want to play with this one. Then you go and play sex what-what, so you can get more diseases that you don't know, like HIV, STD's and these days people get those things. It is very high here. Very. Lots of people are dying. But No one knows who is doing what.

Second, the short length of life due to disease/war/poverty became quite obvious in my daily observations and interviewees. Many of the interviewees remarked that at least one and often both parents had perished. This was a fact that I began to realize I take

for granted in the U.S., where people live on average approximately 30 years longer than an average Ugandan and Ethiopian. Finally, being a white American researcher in Africa caused me to reflect on my own positionality and privilege. I quickly realized that people were treating me differently because of my race. I do not dare qualify how I was being treated differently, but I definitely felt that despite being a visitor, I was in a power-up situation. One quotation in particular helps to illustrate some of the desperation associated with life in Africa that often escapes Americans. Zizophoe offered:

You know what I tell you? When I was a little girl, I used to wish that my grandparents or great grandparents had been part of the slave trade to America. Then I would be living the life now. Oh, yeah, I used to think about that all the time. Wishing.

Overall, I was faced with some real emotional challenges that were tangential to my goals as a researcher. Nonetheless, many of the stories that individuals shared with me have left me emotionally raw and unsure of how to deal with the reality that Ugandans and Ethiopians faced on a daily basis. That said, I did finish the project feeling an enormous amount of empathy, respect and admiration for the individuals I came in contact with during the project.

Appendices

Appendix A. Survey.....	185
Appendix B. Scoring for Instrument.....	193
Appendix C. Interview Protocol Questions	194

Appendix A. Survey

CONFLICT SURVEY

We are going to ask you to respond to a series of items regarding the way in which you handle conflict in romantic relationship. For this survey, conflict is defined as “any intense disagreement between two parties which involves incompatible goals, needs, or viewpoints.” Romantic relationship is defined as “any dating, engaged, or marital relationship between two individuals.” There are no right or wrong answers in this survey; we simply want to know what you think and how you act during conflicts. We’ll ask about your own personal views and opinions in general, and then move to specific issues related to conflict in your own romantic relationship.

SECTION I. Direction: Please recall a specific situation during the last 6 months when you and your romantic partner fought or had a disagreement. If you are not in a [romantic] relationship currently, please recall a disagreement you had with a prior intimate other. Write a very brief description of what the conflict argument was about, and whether the conflict was resolved or not resolved:

1. When you recall the conflict situation, did it occur in a current or past romantic relationship (check only one with an “x”)?

_____ Current (Go to question#2) _____ Past (Go to question#3)

2. If current, how long have you been in the relationship? (e.g., 3 months, 1 year, 1 ½ yrs)_____

3. If past, what was the duration of the romantic relationship? _____ Year(s)
_____ Months

4. How often do you have disagreements with your romantic partner? (please circle one ONLY)

Very Seldom Once a month Twice a month Once a week More than once a week

5. What is the major issue you fight over in your romantic relationship?

Direction: When completing this section, please keep the same recalled conflict situation in mind. Think about the self-image concerns (or face-saving issues) that were important to you in this recalled conflict situation. If you strongly agree with the item, circle 5; if you strongly disagree with the item, circle 1. Feel free to circle any number between 5 and 1 with: 5 =Strongly Agree [SA], 4 =Agree [A], 3 =Neutral [N], 2 =Disagree [D], and 1 =Strongly Disagree [SD].

During this interpersonal conflict.....	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I was concerned with respectful treatment for both of us.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I was concerned with not bringing shame to myself.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Relationship harmony was important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Maintaining humbleness to preserve the relationship was important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Helping to maintain the pride of my partner was important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I was concerned with protecting my self-image.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My concern was to help my partner maintain his/her dignity.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I didn't want to embarrass myself in front of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
9. Maintaining peace in our interaction was important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I wanted to maintain my dignity in front of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
11. A peaceful resolution to the conflict was important to me.	5	4	3	2	1
12. My primary concern was helping my partner to save face.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I was concerned with helping my partner maintain his/her credibility.	5	4	3	2	1
14. I was concerned with not appearing weak in front of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
15. I was concerned with helping my partner to preserve his/her self-image.	5	4	3	2	1

For the following items, please consider the actual behaviors or actions you used during the conflict situation you just recalled. Please indicate what you actually did, not what you wish you did.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I used my influence to get my ideas accepted.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I proposed a middle ground for breaking up the conflict situation.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I relied on a close friend to help negotiate a resolution to the conflict.	5	4	3	2	1

4. I tried to find a middle course to resolve the impasse.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I said nasty things about my partner to other people.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I used my authority to make a decision in my favor.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I asked a close friend to make a decision about how to settle the dispute between myself and my partner	5	4	3	2	1
8. I used my feelings to determine what I should do in the conflict situation.	5	4	3	2	1
9. Out of anger, I said things to damage my partner's reputation.	5	4	3	2	1
10. I used my feelings to guide my conflict behaviors.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I said nothing and waited for things to get better.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I worked with the my partner to reach a joint resolution to our conflict.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I preferred my partner to be emotionally expressive with me in the conflict situation.	5	4	3	2	1
14. I used my power to win a competitive edge.	5	4	3	2	1
15. I typically go through a close friend to settle our conflict.	5	4	3	2	1
16. I tried to downplay our disagreement and not make waves.	5	4	3	2	1
17. I said and did things out of anger to make my partner feel bad.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I win some and lose some so that a compromise can be reached.	5	4	3	2	1
19. I asked a close friend to help negotiate the disagreement with my partner about his/her behavior.	5	4	3	2	1
20. I tried to satisfy the conflict expectations of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
21. While in the presence of one's partner, I acted as though he/she does not exist.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I used a "give and take" so that a compromise could be made.	5	4	3	2	1
23. I gave in to the wishes of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
24. I sucked it up and held my resentment in silence.	5	4	3	2	1
25. I told my partner that there are problems and suggested that we work them out.	5	4	3	2	1
26. I used my gut feelings to determine whether to trust my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
27. I made sure my partner realized that solving our differences was Important.	5	4	3	2	1
28. I tried to satisfy the needs of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1

29. I tried to get us to work together to settle our differences.	5	4	3	2	1
30. I went along with the suggestions of my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
31. I generally kept quiet and waited for things to improve.	5	4	3	2	1
32. I tried to persuade my partner that my viewpoint is right	5	4	3	2	1

Please rate the following statements based on how you felt and/or what you did after the intense disagreement or conflict situation in this particular romantic relationship.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I didn't want to have anything to do with her/him.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I soon forgave my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I found a way to make her/him regret it.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I gave him/her the cold shoulder.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I withdrew from my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
6. I did something to even the score.	5	4	3	2	1
7. It was easy to feel warmly again toward my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I retaliated or did something to make her/him feel miserable.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I am able to act as positively toward my partner now as I was before 5 it happened.	5	4	3	2	1

Direction: Based your own personal experiences and viewpoints in your selected romantic relationship, please indicate a number from 5 to 1 for the series of statements below, depending on the degree to which you agree with the statement.

1. Overall, I feel at ease and accepted in my romantic relationship.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I am satisfied that in our relationship there is mutual understanding of one another.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I am satisfied that I am appreciated by my romantic partner.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I am satisfied that I can communicate my true feelings to my romantic partner.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I am satisfied with the companionship I receive from my partner.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION II. Direction: When completing this section, please reflect upon some of the norms and communication patterns that are common in your family of origin. In general, a family is “a group of individuals who generate a sense of home and group identity.” When you answer each statement below, please think of the underlying norms and repeated patterns in your family. If you strongly agree with the item, circle 5; if you strongly disagree with the item, circle 1. Feel free to circle any number between 5 and 1 with: 5 =Strongly Agree [SA], 4 =Agree [A], 3 =Neutral [N], 2 =Disagree [D], and 1 =Strongly Disagree [SD].

Think of your family system, your parents or your primary caretakers when answering the following questions.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. In our family we often talk about topics like politics and religion, where some family members often disagree with others.	5	4	3	2	1
2. When anything really important is involved, my parents expect me to obey.	5	4	3	2	1
3. My parents often say something like “Every member of the family should have some say in family decisions.”	5	4	3	2	1
4. In our home, my parents usually have the last word.	5	4	3	2	1
5. My parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something.	5	4	3	2	1
6. My parents often feel that it is important to be the boss.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My parents encourage me to challenge their ideas and beliefs.	5	4	3	2	1
8. My parents sometimes become irritated with my views if they are very different from theirs.	5	4	3	2	1
9. My parents often say something like “You should always look at both sides of an issue.”	5	4	3	2	1
10. If my parents don’t approve of my action, they don’t want to know about it.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I usually tell my parents what I am thinking about in my mind.	5	4	3	2	1
12. When I am at home, I am expected to obey my parents’ rules.	5	4	3	2	1
13. I can tell my parents almost anything.	5	4	3	2	1
14. My parents often say things like “You’ll know better when you grow up.”	5	4	3	2	1
15. In our family, we often talk about our feelings and emotions.	5	4	3	2	1

16. My parents often say things like “My ideas are right and you should not question them.”	5	4	3	2	1
17. My parents and I often have long, relaxed conversations about nothing in particular.	5	4	3	2	1
18. My parents often say things like “A child should not argue with adults.”	5	4	3	2	1
19. I really enjoy talking with my parents, even when we disagree.	5	4	3	2	1
20. My parents often say things like “There are some things that shouldn’t be talked about.”	5	4	3	2	1
21. My parents encourage me to express my feelings.	5	4	3	2	1
22. My parents often say things like “You should give in on arguments rather than risk making people mad.”	5	4	3	2	1
23. My parents tend to be openly expressive about their emotions.	5	4	3	2	1
24. We often talk as a family about things we have done during the day.	5	4	3	2	1
25. In our family, we often talk about our plans and hopes for the future.	5	4	3	2	1
26. My parents like to hear my opinion, even when I don’t agree with them.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION III. Direction: Based [on your own personal experiences and viewpoints], please circle a number from 5 to 1 for the series of statements below, depending on the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. I respect the decisions made by my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I act as a unique person separate from my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I would stick with my partner even through difficulties.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I would not support a decision made by my partner if I thought it was wrong.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I would stay with my partner if he/she needed me, even if I was not happy with my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
6. It was important for me to act as an independent person from my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I respect the majority of my partner’s wishes.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I assert my opposition when I disagree with my partner.	5	4	3	2	1
9. I met the demands of my partner, even if it means controlling my own desires.	5	4	3	2	1
10. In a discussion with my partner, my personal identity was very important to me.	5	4	3	2	1

When completing this section, please reflect upon some of the ideals and norms of most situations in your cultural group or community. If you strongly agree with the statement, circle 5; if you strongly disagree with the item, circle 1. Feel free to circle any number between 5 and 1 with: 5 =Strongly Agree [SA], 4 =Agree [A], 3 =Neutral [N], 2 =Disagree [D], and 1 =Strongly Disagree [SD].

	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. In community matters, people in high status positions have a right to expect compliance from lower-status people.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Community members who often question authority sometimes prevent the community from running effectively.	5	4	3	2	1
3. Once a person in authority makes a decision, individuals under him/her should not question it.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Low-status people should not express direct disagreement with high-status Individuals in a community.	5	4	3	2	1
5. People in authority should be able to make the proper decisions without consulting others.	5	4	3	2	1
6. People in authority who consistently consult others in decisions are indecisive.	5	4	3	2	1
7. In most situations, high-status community members should tell low-status community members what to do rather than consult with them.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Overall, my community memberships have very little to do with how I feel about myself.	5	4	3	2	1
9. The core communities I belong to are an important reflection of who I am.	5	4	3	2	1
10. The communities I belong to are unimportant to my sense of what kind of a person I am.	5	4	3	2	1
11. People should be aware that if they are going to be part of a community, they sometimes will have do things they don't want to do.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I usually sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the core community I am in.	5	4	3	2	1
13. It is important to me to respect decisions made by my ingroup Community.	5	4	3	2	1
14. If my ingroup community is slowing me down, it is better to leave it and work alone.	5	4	3	2	1

When answering the questions above, which important ingroup communities came to your mind?

Please list them. _____

Directions: In order to interpret your answers to all the previous questions in a meaningful way, we need some additional background information about you. Please checkmark \checkmark the appropriate answer or fill in the blank

1. Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

2. Romantic partner's sex: _____ Male _____ Female

3. Age: _____

4. Education level: Currently, I am a _____ (checkmark with a \checkmark)

_____ High School Student _____ College Student _____ College Graduate

_____ Graduate Student (Master/ Doctorate) _____ Other

5. Cultural or Ethnic Background (please be specific) _____

6. Romantic Partner's Cultural or Ethnic Background (please be specific)

7. Permanent Resident/Citizen of what country _____

8. Do you practice a religion? Circle one: YES NO If yes, what religion _____

9. If you practice a religion, how often do you practice your religion? (please circle one ONLY)

Very Seldom Once a month Twice a month Once a week More than once a week

10. Where did you meet your romantic partner?

11. Did your parents approve of your romantic relationship? Circle: Yes No

12. Did your romantic partner's parents approve of your relationship with their son/daughter? Circle: Yes No

Appendix B. Scoring for Instrument

The items on the instruments include the following (in order)

<u>Section/Variable</u>	<u>Item</u>
Section I	
Write brief description of the recalled conflict	
1. Face Concerns	
Self	
Mutual	
Other	
2. Facework/conflict styles (1-32)	
Avoiding	11, 16, 24, 31
Integrating	12, 25, 27, 29
Dominating	1, 6, 14, 32
Third Party Help	3, 7, 15, 19
Emotional Expression	8, 10, 13, 26
Passive Aggression	5, 9, 17, 21
Obliging	20, 23, 28, 30
Compromising	2, 4, 22, 32
3. Forgiveness Scale (1-9)	
Benevolence (2, 7, 9)	
Avoidance (1, 4, 5)	
Retaliation (2, 6, 8)	
4. Relationship Satisfaction (1-5)	
Acceptance	
Understanding	
Appreciation	
Other's friends	
Social life	
Section II	
1. Family Socialization Typology (1-26)	
Section III	
1. Self-construals (1-10)	
Interdependent	1, 3, 5, 7, 9
Independent	2, 4, 6, 8, 10.
2. Power distance (1-7)	
Communalism (7-14)	
3. Demographics (1-12)	

Appendix C. Interview Protocol Questions

QUESTION ONE:

Tell me about a typical disagreement you have with a current or past romantic partner.

Probes:

- a. What happened?
- b. What did you say during the disagreement?
- c. What did your partner say during the disagreement?
- d. Did this help to solve the disagreement or did it make it worse?
- e. How did it end? How did you feel when it ended? (during the conflict?)
- f. What were your biggest concerns during the disagreement? (e.g., were you concerned about the other person? Your own needs?)

QUESTION TWO:

Where did you learn how to deal with disagreements?

Probes:

- a. How were differences (e.g., in opinion, disagreements) handled in your family when you were a child?
- b. Was your religion a factor? How so?
- c. Is your culture a factor? How so? Which culture?

QUESTION THREE:

Using your own experiences and understandings, could you define the following concepts (there are no right or wrong answers)?:

- a. Face
- b. Disagreement/conflict
- c. Conflict styles
- d. Do you think that your family and circle of friends would describe these concepts similarly? Why or why not?

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