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Self-Monitoring Differences in Best Friendship Maintenance: Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and Neglect

Sarah Danielle Sommerfeld
University of North Florida

SELF-MONITORING DIFFERENCES IN BEST FRIENDSHIP MAINTENANCE: EXIT, VOICE, LOYALTY, AND NEGLECT

Sarah Danielle Sommerfeld

Faculty Sponsors:

Dr. Christopher Leone,
Professor of Psychology

LouAnne B. Hawkins, RN, MA,
Coordinator, Undergraduate Research

Abstract

The relationship between self-monitoring and maintenance strategies for best friendships was examined in this investigation. The 25-item Self-Monitoring Scale was used to assess participants' self-monitoring type. Rusbult's exit-voice-loyalty-neglect measure was used to assess participants' maintenance strategies. It was predicted that high self-monitors more than low self-monitors would engage in destructive maintenance strategies, and low self-monitors more than high self-monitors would engage in constructive maintenance strategies. High self-monitors did use neglect, a destructive and passive strategy, more than did low self-monitors. However, high self-monitors did use loyalty, a constructive and passive strategy, more than did low self-monitors. The use of maintenance strategies may differ for self-monitoring types on an active vs. passive dimension as opposed to a constructive vs. destructive dimension. Limitations and future directions are discussed later in detail.

Many people assume that a true singular identity of self exists within each individual. Mark Snyder would agree with the idea of the existence of only one true self but only as it applies to certain individuals. For many individuals, personal identity is established through their relationships with other people rather than on one fixed notion of the self.

Everyone to some degree controls how others perceive him or her, but for some people impression management is an important strategy in their life. In his ground breaking self-monitoring theory, Mark Snyder states that people differ in the manner in which they systematically control their expressive behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). Specifically, high and low self-monitors differ in the degree to which they "monitor" the way they present themselves to others. For high self-monitors "all the world's a stage" and they are the actors that perform in it. Low self-monitors follow the old proverbial message "to thine own self be true." High self-monitors and low self-monitors vary in their motivation, focus of attention, behavior, use of ability, and consistency of behavior.

High and low self-monitors differ in their motivation to control expressive behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). High self-monitors are motivated to monitor themselves because of a desire to be socially appropriate. High self-monitors are motivated to behave in a manner consistent with a situation. High self-monitors desire to be "the right person at the right place and the right time". Low self-monitors are motivated to monitor themselves because they desire to have congruence between their actions and dispositions. Low self-monitors are motivated to behave in a manner consistent with their attitudes and personality. Low self-monitors desire to "be themselves."

High and low self-monitors focus their attention on different sources of information to create a pattern of appropriate behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). High self-monitors are sensitive to situational cues around them and high self-monitors adjust their behavior based on those perceived guidelines. High self-monitors focus their attention externally on situational factors. Through the use of social comparison, high self-monitors conform and adjust to their surroundings by choosing a corresponding self from the many selves those high self-

monitors posses. Low self-monitors are sensitive to the thoughts and feelings occurring within themselves and low self-monitors adjust their behavior based on those thoughts. Low self-monitors focus their attention internally on intrapersonal factors. Through the use of introspection, low self-monitors look within themselves to determine how they should behave by choosing a behavior that corresponds to their dispositions.

High and low self-monitors vary in their ability to control expressive behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). High self-monitors have great control over their expressive behavior. High self-monitors are talented at controlling their self-presentation, and high self-monitors have a well-developed repertoire of behavior that can correspond to what is socially appropriate at a particular time and situation. Low self-monitors have some control over their expressive behavior. Low self-monitors possess the behavioral skills to match their dispositions with their behavior. Low self-monitors are talented at outwardly expressing their inner thoughts, and low self-monitors have a well-developed repertoire of behavior that can correspond to their dispositions at that particular time.

High and low self-monitors differ in the way they use their ability (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). Through their motivation to be socially appropriate, their possession of well-developed behaviors, and their focus on social comparison, high self-monitors use their ability to achieve strategic self-presentation. High self-monitors have many selves or "faces" that they could present to specific social groups or at specific events. High self-monitors use social comparison to choose an appropriate self which changes to correspond to many different environments. Through their motivation to be self-congruent and their focus on introspection, low self-monitors use their abilities to achieve self-verification. Low self-monitors have only one self that they present to all social groups and at all social events. Low self-monitors use introspection to choose a self which does not change even though the situation is continually changing.

High and low self-monitors differ in the consistency of their behavior (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). High self-monitors have very specific behaviors that change according to different situations. Social situations change often; therefore, what is socially appropriate for high self-monitors also changes often. Inconsistent behavior is a product of a high self-monitor's tendency to adapt their behavior to fit a changing environment. High self-monitors may have little coordination between their actions and personal dispositions. The behavior of high self-monitors is difficult to predict because their behavior is based on their own assessment of an environment. Low self-monitors have very specific behaviors that change according to their dispositions. Dispositions are relatively stable; therefore, what is self-congruent for low self-monitors stays stable over time. Consistent behavior is a product of a low self-monitor's tendency to adapt their behavior to fit their dispositions. Low self-monitors have a high coordination between their actions and personal dispositions. The behavior of low self-monitors can be predicted by assessing their dispositions because their behavior is based on their dispositions and personalities.

Implications for the self and the social world

High and low self-monitors have different self-concepts (Snyder, 1974, 1979, 1987). High self-monitors have a pragmatic self-concept because high self-monitors base their self-identity on their participation in certain social environments and specific roles they play in those environments. High self-monitors view themselves as flexible, and high self-monitors tend to explain their behavior in terms of the situation (Snyder, 1987). High self-monitors rely largely on their connection with others to determine their self-concept. Low self-monitors have principled selves because low self-monitors base their identity on their own attitudes, values, needs, and traits. Low self-monitors view themselves as principled, and low self-monitors tend to explain their behavior in terms of their dispositions (Snyder, 1987). Low self-monitors rely largely on the congruence

between their behavior and their dispositions to determine their self-concept.

High and low self-monitors differ in how they choose their dating partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors choice in dating partners is activity based in which high self-monitors choose more frequently than low self-monitors to go out with an other-sex friend to participate in an activity that was that other-sex friend's specialty instead of participating in an activity with a current dating partner that is not their specialty. On the other hand, low self-monitors choice in dating partners is affect based in which low self-monitors choose more frequently than high self-monitors to go out on a casual date with a current dating partner to participate in an activity that was not that current dating partner's specialty instead of participating in a specialized activity with a other-sex friend.

High and low self-monitors differ in their degree of commitment to their current dating partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors have a less committed orientation to dating relationships than low self-monitors. Low self-monitors have a more committed orientation to dating relationships than high self-monitors. Low self-monitors were less willing than high self-monitors to substitute an alternative partner for their current dating partner.

This idea that low self-monitors have committed orientations and high self-monitors have uncommitted orientations is supported by their choice of different size networks of dating partners and by the amount of time they date most partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors reported that they had dated nearly twice as many different partners in the last year than did low self-monitors. Low self-monitors reported that they had dated their steady romantic partners for nearly twice as long as high self-monitors had dated their steady romantic partners.

Not only do high and low self-monitors differ in their commitment orientations, but they also differ in the amount of intimacy they experience in their romantic relationships (Snyder & Simpson, 1984; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors experience more intimacy than do low self-monitors in the beginning of a dating relationship. In long-term relationships, low self-monitors report experiencing more intimacy than high self-monitors.

High and low self-monitors also differ in their orientation to sexual relations (Snyder, Simpson, & Gangestad, 1986; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors have an unrestricted sexual orientation. In contrast, low self-monitors have a restricted sexual orientation.

Self-monitoring and Friendships

High and low self-monitors differ in their conceptions of friendships (Snyder & Smith, 1986). Snyder and Smith asked individuals to write an essay about their relationship with a friend. These essays were coded on the following five dimensions: basis of friendship, tone of the interaction, shallowness or depth, sense of enduring compatibility, and nurturance. High self-monitors were found to conceptualize their friendships in terms of (a) an activity-based orientation, (b) an animated (high degree of action) and emphatic (excitable) tone to their interactions, (c) a rather shallow sense of friendship, (d) a perception of low compatibility and endurance beyond the current moment, and (e) a perception of low nurturance. Low self-monitors were found to conceptualize their friendships in terms of (a) an affect-based orientation, (b) a relatively less animated and emphatic tone to their interactions, (c) a definite sense of depth of friendship, (d) a perception of high compatibility and endurance beyond the current moment, and (e) a perception of high nurturance and sympathy.

Jamieson, Lydon, and Zanna (1987) found similar findings to Snyder and Smith. Jamieson et al. (1987) found that low self-monitors had more intellectual attraction to an attitude-congruent person than an activity-congruent person and high self-monitors had more social attraction to an activity-congruent

person than an attitude-congruent person. In other words, both high and low self-monitors are attracted to the type of person that corresponds to their type of orientation.

Howells (1993) has found results that conflict with Snyder and Smith (1984) and Jamieson et al. (1987). Howells found that both high and low self-monitors prefer the characteristics of a high self-monitor for their "ideal" friend. The findings of Howells (1993) are dissimilar to the findings of many other studies conducted by multiple researchers who found evidence to support the notion that high and low self-monitors look for different characteristics in friends.

Snyder, Gangestad, and Simpson (1983) found further support that high and low self-monitors differ in their conceptions of friendships. Snyder et al. (1983) found differences in ways that high and low self-monitors allocate their leisure time. Individuals were asked to choose between a friend that was very likable but not a specialist at a particular activity and a friend that was not as likable but a specialist at a particular activity. High self-monitors choose more often than low self-monitors to participate in an activity with a friend who was a specialist at a particular activity. Low self-monitors choose more often than high self-monitors to participate in an activity with a friend who was well liked but not necessarily a specialist at a particular activity. Not only do high and low self-monitors have different conceptions of friendship but their actions parallel their own conceptions of friendship with high self-monitors having an activity-based orientation and low self-monitors having an affect-based orientation to friendship.

High and low self-monitors also differ in whom they choose to be their close friends. Snyder, Simpson, and Smith (1984) asked individuals who were already known to be high or low self-monitors to bring in a close same-sex friend to complete the Self-Monitoring Scale. High self-monitors had close friends that scored higher on the Self-Monitoring Scale than did the close friends of low self-monitors. These findings were not

obtained when the self-monitoring scores of casual friends were compared to the self-monitoring scores of close friends. Snyder and his colleagues found that close friends of high self-monitors scored significantly higher on the Self-Monitoring Scale than did casual friends of high self-monitors. Close friends of low self-monitors scored significantly lower on the Self-Monitoring Scale than did casual friends of low self-monitors. When choosing close friends, it appears as though high self-monitors tend to choose other high self-monitors and low self-monitors tend to choose other low self-monitors as their closest friend (cf. Gudykunst, 1985). In a study by Broderick and Beltz (1996), low self-monitoring, adolescent girls rated dispositional support, dispositional affection, and dispositional intimacy as significantly more important in their friendships than did high self-monitoring adolescent girls. This finding may be interpreted to support the idea that low self-monitors choose their friends for their dispositional similarity.

Contradictory findings have been found in other studies (e.g., Broderick & Beltz, 1996, Henderson & Furnham, 1982). Broderick and Beltz (1996) found no significant correlations for scores on the Junior Self-Monitoring Scale for adolescent friendship pairs. This contradictory data by Broderick et al. may have been due to the scale that was used because of the age of the participants and the type of lose friendships pairs that were measured. The Junior Self-Monitoring Scale may not be as valid as the original Self-Monitoring Scale. Henderson and Furnham (1982) found no significant correlations of the scores on the 25-item Self-Monitoring Scale for close friends. This contradictory data by Henderson and Furnham may have been due to the sample from which the data was collected and the type of method used to collect the data. This entire sample was female and close friendship was only determined by mutual nominations of classmates in a college course.

Consistent with their conceptions of friendship, allocations of leisure time, and choices of close friends, high and low self-

monitors tend to have different social worlds (Snyder & Smith, 1986; Snyder et al., 1983). Snyder et al. (1983) asked participants to make a list of their social worlds. High self-monitors were found to have more variation in their friendship lists than did low self-monitors. This variation is a sign of differentiated or heterogeneous social worlds of high self-monitors who participate in specific activities with specific people. High self-monitors tend to have larger friendship networks compared to low self-monitors because high self-monitors have particular friends for particular activities. In contrast, low self-monitors were found to have less variation in their lists than did high self-monitors. This lack of variation is a sign of undifferentiated or homogenous social worlds of low self-monitors who participate in most activities with mostly the same people. Low self-monitors tend to have smaller friendship networks compared to high self-monitors because low self-monitors engage in most activities with the same few friends.

This difference in social worlds has an effect on how individuals cope with social phenomena. Clinton and Anderson (1999), for example, conducted a study to test the effect of self-monitoring on loneliness. Clinton and Anderson found that Self-Monitoring Factor A (ability to monitor self-presentation) was inversely related to social loneliness. In other words, high self-monitors are less likely than low self-monitors to feel social loneliness. Malikiosi-Loizos and Anderson (1999) found similar results. Maliskiosi-Loizos and Anderson found that self-monitoring was negatively correlated with both global loneliness (a combination of social and emotional loneliness) and social loneliness in the United States. This difference in social loneliness and global loneliness may be attributed to the large network of friends that high self-monitors acquire through the use of their ability to aptly monitor their own self-presentation.

How individuals make decisions in their choice of employment is also a factor affected by self-monitoring. Kilduff (1992) found that high self-monitors were more

similar to their friends in their decision of where to apply for a job interview than were low self-monitors. High and low self-monitors found different factors in the choice of employment to be most important. High self-monitors ranked more highly than did low self-monitors social conformity factors in organizational choice. Low self-monitors ranked more highly than did high self-monitors individual freedom factors in organizational choice.

Lippa and Mash (1981) have found support for high self-monitors inconsistent behavior with different groups of people. Lippa and Mash (1981) asked parents, friends, and strangers to judge the anxiety of both high and low self-monitors. There was less agreement between the judges on the anxiety of high self-monitors than low self-monitors. In other words, high self-monitors expressed their anxiety differently to strangers, friends, and parents. High self-monitors would most likely act differently when they are around their friends then if high self-monitors are around their parents. These findings can be interpreted to lend support to the idea that high self-monitors express themselves as different people depending on who they are with. Contrary to this finding, Miell and Voi (1985) found no differences in high and low self-monitors' perceptions of their interactions with strangers or friends.

Self-monitoring scores have been found to be significantly correlated with sex (e.g., Haferkamp, 1991). Haferkamp found significant correlations between self-monitoring and sex. High self-monitors were significantly more likely to be male than female. Low self-monitors were significantly more likely to be female than male. Males and females significantly differed on aspects related to relationships such as commitment, importance of conflict, and cooperative strategies. For example, females saw themselves as having more commitment and intimacy in their relationships than did males. High commitment and intimacy are most often associated as characteristics of relationships for low self-monitors as opposed

to characteristics of relationships for high self-monitors.

Maintenance Strategies

Times of conflict and/or dissatisfaction occur in every relationship. To measure how people respond to dissatisfaction in relationships Rusbult, Zembrodt, and Gunn (1982) developed a typology of responses called exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. This typology is largely based on work by Hirschman (1970) who believed that decline of satisfaction in economic/political organizations could be examined using a typology of exit, voice, and loyalty.

An exit response is defined as "ending the relationship or behaving in an actively destructive manner" (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986, p. 46). Examples of exit responses are breaking up or threatening to end a relationship. A voice response is defined as "actively and constructively attempting to improve conditions" (Rusbult et al., 1986, p.46). Examples of voice responses are communicating how an individual is feeling or asking another person what is wrong. A loyalty response is defined as "remaining loyal to the relationship and waiting for conditions to improve" (Rusbult et al, 1986, p.46). Examples of loyalty responses are praying for improvement in the relationship or hoping that things will change. A neglect response is defined as "passively allowing the relationship to atrophy" (Rusbult et al., 1986, p.46). Examples of neglect responses are ignoring another person and criticizing the other person for issues not related to the topic at hand.

In this typology responses can be categorized into two dimensions: constructive/destructive and active/passive. Constructiveness or destructiveness of a response is determined by the intention of a particular response (Rusbult et al., 1986). Voice and loyalty are categorized as constructive responses because they are intended to preserve and restore a relationship. Exit and neglect are categorized as destructive responses because they are intended to be harmful or terminate a relationship. Passivity or activity of a response is determined by the amount of action a response entails. Voice and exit are categorized as active responses because something is being done about a relationship. Loyalty and neglect are categorized as passive responses because no action is being done in a relationship.

Rusbult et al. (1982) believed that the frequencies of each response during conflict or dissatisfaction could be predicted using three factors: prior satisfaction, investment size, and quality of alternatives. High prior satisfaction should promote constructive instead of destructive responses to dissatisfaction. Individuals that have experienced high levels of prior satisfaction most likely believe that it will be favorable to restore their relationships and constructive responses have a higher probability of restoring their relationships than do destructive responses (Rusbult et al., 1982, p. 1232).

Greater investment size should also be associated with constructive responses to dissatisfaction. Rusbult et al. (1982) defined investment as "the resources the individual has put directly into the relationship that are then intrinsic to that involvement or resources that are extrinsic but have become indirectly connected to the association" (p.1232). Individuals that have a great number of resources invested in their relationships have more to lose in the termination of those relationships; therefore, individuals with high investment size are more likely to engage in constructive rather than destructive responses in order to help maintain their relationships (Rusbult et al., 1982, p. 1232).

Good alternatives should be associated with active responses. Good alternatives to current relationships can motivate dissatisfied individuals to be active and make changes occur within their relationships. If there is an absence of good alternatives dissatisfied individuals will be more likely to passively wait for things to get better or allow their relationships to whither away on their own (Rusbult, et al., 1982, p. 1233).

Rusbult, et al. (1982) conducted several studies to test the influence of prior satisfaction, investment size, and alternatives on the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect typology. Rusbult et al. asked participants to imagine that they were the protagonists in an essay and then answer a questionnaire concerning their feelings about the essay and their likely behavior. This essay had been manipulated to portray varying degrees of prior satisfaction, investment size, and quality alternatives for a dating relationship on a decline. Participants who had protagonists with high prior satisfaction responded with increased voice and loyalty responses and decreased exit and neglect responses than did participants who had protagonists with lower prior satisfaction. Participants responded to high investment size with significantly more voice and loyalty responses than exit and neglect responses. Participants responded to high quality alternatives with more exit and neglect responses than voice and loyalty responses. In summation, prior satisfaction and investment size were found to have the expected relationship with the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect typology, but alternative quality was found to have only a weak relationship with the typology.

Rusbult et al. (1982) also conducted a study to see if similar results would be found when asking individuals who are in a romantic relationship. Participants were asked to think about a time when they were dissatisfied in their romantic relationships and to describe the situation, their feelings, and how they responded to it. Participants also completed a questionnaire containing the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect typology. Prior satisfaction and high investment size were positively correlated with voice and loyalty and negatively correlated with exit and neglect. Quality alternatives were only positively correlated with exit and negatively correlated with loyalty. Similar results were found for both research on current relationships and fictional scenarios using the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect typology.

What are the actual consequences of these responses on maintenance of a relationship? Rusbult, Johnson, and Morrow (1986) asked participants to answer a 28-item scale of the exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect typology for both themselves and their partners. Participants were also asked 20 open-ended questions about their reactions to their partners' response tendencies as well as answering a loving and liking questionnaire. Participants brought an identical packet of questionnaires home for their partners' to complete.

Destructive responses were found to have a negative effect on couple functioning. It was also found that ones partner's responses have an effect on what the other partner will do when responding to dissatisfaction. Rusbult found that when distressed, a couple will most likely respond to destructive responses by one partner in a relationship with more destructive responses from the other partner. It appears as though a powerful predictor of nondistress in relationships is individuals' responses to their partners' destructive behaviors. Responding to destructive responses constructively is a good predictor of non-distress in a relationship. Responding destructively to destructive responses is a good predictor of distress in a relationship.

It is hypothesized that high self-monitors will engage in more exit and neglect during times of dissatisfaction in their best friendships than will low self-monitors. This is expected to occur because of high self-monitors' larger network of friends, uncommitted and unrestricted relationship orientation, and lower amounts of nurturance, endurance, and compatibility in friendships when compared to low self-monitors. High self-monitors are believed to have lower satisfaction and investment in their relationships than are low self-monitors, so high self-monitors should be more likely to engage in the destructive maintenance strategies of exit and neglect that previous research has found to be related to low satisfaction and investment (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986). It is also hypothesized that low self-monitors will engage in more voice and loyalty during times

of dissatisfaction in their best friendships than will high self-monitors. This is expected to occur because of low self-monitors' smaller network of friends, committed and restricted relationship orientation, and higher amounts of nurturance, endurance, and compatibility in friendships when compared to high self-monitors. Low self-monitors are believed to have higher satisfaction and investment in their relationships than are high self-monitors, so low self-monitors should be more likely to engage in the constructive maintenance strategies of voice and loyalty that previous research has found to be related to high satisfaction and investment (Rusbult, Johnson, & Morrow, 1986).

Method

Participants

A total of 170 students were recruited to participate in this study from undergraduate psychology classes at the University of North Florida. The students agreed to voluntarily participate in a study of "Individual Differences and Close Relationships." In exchange for their participation, students received extra credit toward their course grade. All students were eligible to participate in this study.

There were 96 (56%) females and 74 (44%) males in this sample. The majority of participants were Caucasian (73%). Most participants (71%) were between the ages 18 and 23 years. The majority of participants had been in a relationship with their best friend for more than three years and expected the friendship to be permanent. Participants' best friends were 44% male and 56% female. Participants' best friends were someone other than a dating or marital partner 77% of the time.

A total of 170 of the 173 participants that volunteered for this study completed the entire survey. Two males and one female failed to follow instructions on this survey. All participants were orally informed of (a) their right as participants to withdraw from this study, (b) the procedure and the purpose of this study, and (c) the possible risks involved in participation. Participants were

then asked to sign a written consent form. All participants were treated in accordance with the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association, 1992).

Procedure

Participants were surveyed in small groups of up to eight participants. A female researcher explained the purpose and procedure of this study. Participants then received a written consent form to sign. The researcher verbally explained the consent form to participants. After signing the informed consent form, participants received a three part survey entitled "Individual Differences and Close Relationships." Participants were instructed to think of their very best friend and to keep in mind the same best friend throughout the entire survey.

In the first section of the survey, participants responded to statements on how they maintain their own friendship and how these participants believe their friends maintain that same friendship. Maintenance strategies were assessed using a typology of responses developed by Rusbult, Zembrodt, and Gunn (1982). Rusbult et al. originally developed the typology of maintenance strategies to apply to romantic relationships. For this current survey, the researcher altered the terminology of Rusbalt's typology to apply to friends. For example, the statement "When I'm irritated with my partner, I think about ending the relationship" was altered to state "When I'm irritated with my friend, I think about ending the relationship." Participants responded to each statement in this survey using 5-point scales. Participants chose from the following response options when responding to statements about how *they* maintain their friendships: (1) "*I never do this*," (2) "*I sometimes do this*," (3) "*I don't know*," (4) "*I often do this*," and (5) "*I always do this*." Participants chose from the following response options when responding to statements about how they perceive their *friends* maintain that same friendship: (1) "*He/she never does this*," (2) "*He/she sometimes does this*," (3) "*I don't know*," (4)

"*He/she often does this*," and (5) "*He/she always does this*."

This measure is 120 items. Rusbult et al. (1982) designed several items to measure exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect. The following are examples of statements that were used in this survey to asses participants' tendencies to use a particular maintenance strategy: (1) "When we have problems, I discuss ending the relationship" (exit), (2) "When I am unhappy with my friend, I tell him/her what's bothering me" (voice), (3) "When we have troubles, no matter how bad things get, I am loyal to my friend" (loyalty), and (4) "When I'm upset with my friend, I ignore him/her for a while" (neglect). The following are examples of statements that were used in this survey to assess participants' beliefs about their friend's tendency to use a particular maintenance strategy: (1) "If we had a minor problem in our relationship, my friend would probably think about ending our relationship" (exit), (2) "If my friend was annoyed by one of my personal habits, he/she would talk to me about how he/she felt" (voice), (3) "If my friend was irritated by something I had done, he/she would wait patiently for it to pass away" (loyalty), and (4) "If we had a minor problem in our relationship, my friend would want to ignore it" (neglect).

None of the statements in this survey were worded negatively. Responses to all individual items were scored such that higher total scores of a strategy meant an increased use of that strategy. The responses to scores within each of the four categories were summed.

Rusbult et al. (1982) found construct validity for the measure. It would be expected that people with high prior satisfaction and investment in romantic their relationships would engage more in voice and loyalty. It would also be expected that people with alternatives to their romantic relationships would engage in more exit and less loyalty. Rusbult et al. (1982) found empirical support for these expectations that lends support for the construct validity of the Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and Neglect Measure. Rusbult et al.

(1982) found significant alphas for the four maintenance strategies: .79 (exit), .80 (voice), .76 (loyalty), and .66 (neglect). In this study, Cronbach alphas of .83 (exit), .80 (voice), .61 (loyalty), and .74 (neglect) were found for participants' own maintenance strategies. In this study, Cronbach alphas of .81 (exit), .85 (voice), .60 (loyalty), and .70 (neglect) were also found for participants' beliefs about the maintenance strategies used by their friend.

In the second section of the survey, self-monitoring was assessed using the 18-item version of the Self-Monitoring Scale developed by Snyder and Gangestad (1986). Participants responded to statements in this scale using *true-false* responses. Snyder (1974) designed the Self-Monitoring scale to have five dimensions: motivation, attention, ability, use of ability, and behavior. The following is an example of an item that is designed to measure motivation: "I can only argue for ideas which I already believe" (Snyder, 1987). The following is an example of an item that is designed to measure attention: "When I am uncertain how to act in social situations, I look to the behavior of others for cues" (Snyder, 1987). The following is an example of an item designed to measure ability: "I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting" (Snyder 1987). The following is an example of an item that is designed to measure use of ability: "I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them" (Snyder, 1987). The following is an example of an item that is designed to measure behavior: "At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say thing that others will like" (Snyder, 1987).

There are 8 positively worded statements and 10 negatively worded statements in the Self-Monitoring Scale. Of the 18 items, 10 responses were reverse scored because those 10 responses were true for low self-monitors. The following is an example of an item that is true for low self-monitors and was reverse scored: "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people." Participants' responses to all individual items were scored such that higher scores indicated

higher self-monitoring. Scores for responses on the Self-Monitoring Scale were summed together. Participants were classified as high or low self-monitors based on a median split of the full range of total scores for the Self-Monitoring Scale. Participants who scored above the median split on the Self-Monitoring Scale were classified as high self-monitors. Participants who scored below the median split on the Self-Monitoring Scale were classified as low self-monitors.

Scores on the revised 18-item Self-Monitoring Scale correlate highly with the scores of the original 25-item scale (Snyder, 1987; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Snyder (1974) found a reliability score of +.66 of the original 25-statement inventory by conducting a Kuder-Richardson 20 test. Over a one month period, Snyder (1974) found a test-re-test reliability score of +.83 on the 25-statement scale. Two months later, the test-retest reliability score remained stable at +.77 (Snyder, 1974). In this study, a Cronbach's alpha of .77 was found for scores on the revised 18-item Self-Monitoring Scale.

Convergent validity for scores of the Self-Monitoring Scale has been demonstrated by finding positive correlations with scores on measures of related concepts such as attention to others and expressive control (Snyder, 1987). Convergent validity of the scores on the scale was also confirmed when Snyder (1987) found that how peers evaluated each other was highly similar to findings of the Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Snyder (1987), using the known groups method, discovered that a group of actors who would be expected to score high on the Self-Monitoring Scale did score higher on the Self-Monitoring Scale when compared to a sample of college students. He also found that a group of psychiatric patients who would be expected to score low on the Self-Monitoring Scale did score lower on the scale when compared to an average sample of adults.

Discriminate validity for scores of the Self-Monitoring Scale has been demonstrated through an absence of a relationship between the Self-Monitoring Scale and scores of unrelated concepts such as need for approval, extraversion, and Machiavellianism (Snyder, 1987; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). The construct of self-monitoring has often been confused with the construct of need for approval. Unlike those high in self-monitoring, those high in the need for approval may less often than high self-monitors imitate the behavior of others, may lack the skills to communicate feelings through verbal or facial channels, and may lack the social skills to attain the approval they desire (Snyder, 1987). The construct of self-monitoring is also often confused with the construct of extraversion. Although self-monitoring and extraversion may involve the use of similar social skills, high self-monitors use their social abilities to be situationally-specific and extroverts use their social abilities to attain a consistent, sociable and gregarious personality across most situations and time (Snyder, 1987).

In a third section of the survey, participants were asked for demographic information. Participants were asked to indicate their age in terms of the following categories: (a) *18-23* (b) *24-29* (c) *30-34* (d) *35-39* or (e) *40 or older*. Participants were asked to indicate their sex in terms of the following categories: (a) *male* or (b) *female*. Participants were also asked to indicate their race in terms of the following categories: (a) *Caucasian/White* (b) *African American/Black* (c) *Latino/Hispanic* (d) *Asian/Pacific Islander* or (e) *Other*.

Information was also collected on participants' friendships. Participants were asked to indicate the length of their relationships with their best friends in terms of the following categories: (a) *less than 6 months* (b) *6 months to 12 months* (c) *13 months to 24 months* (d) *25 months to 36 months* or (e) *more than 37 months*. Participants were asked to identify the current statuses of their relationships with their best friends in terms of the following categories: (a) *current best friend* or (b) *former best friend*. If participants answered (b) to the preceding question, participants were then asked to indicate the length of time that they

have not been friends in terms of the following categories: (a) *less than 6 months* (b) *6 months to 12 months* (c) *13 months to 24 months* (d) *25 months to 36 months* or (e) *more than 37 months*.

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Researchers have found that self-monitoring scores are often correlated with sex of participants (Day, Shleicher, Unckless, & Hillard, 2002). For my sample, a chi-square was conducted to see if there was a relationship between self-monitoring scores and sex of participants, X^2 (1, N =170) = 9.01, $p < .01$. Although this relationship was reliable, the strength of this relationship was weak (phi coefficient = -.23). Therefore, self-monitoring scores of this sample were not adjusted for sex of participant. The sample was composed of 48% ($n = 82$) low self-monitors and 52% ($n = 88$) high self-monitors. There were 26 male low self-monitors and 56 female low self-monitors. There were 48 male high self-monitors and 40 female high self-monitors.

Main Analyses

It was expected that high self-monitors would use more exit and neglect strategies than would low self-monitors. This hypothesis was analyzed using *t*-tests with self-monitoring (high or low) as the independent variable; frequency scores for each strategy as used by self and best friend were the dependent variables. As expected, there was a significant difference between high and low self-monitors in use of neglect by themselves ($t = -1.66$, $p < .05$) and by their best friend ($t = -1.40$, $p < .08$). High self-monitors ($M = 13.25$, $SD = 4.59$) used neglect more often than did low self-monitors ($M = 12.20$, $SD = 3.61$). As indicated by their self-report, high self-monitors' best friends ($M = 9.27$, $SD = 3.53$) also used neglect more often than did low self-monitors' best friends ($M = 8.51$, $SD = 3.55$). There were, however, no differences in exit use between high and low self-monitors for either self or best friend (both *t*s < 1.00).

It was also expected that low self-monitors would use more voice and loyalty than would high self-monitors. This hypothesis was analyzed using *t*-tests with self-monitoring (high or low) as the independent variable; frequency scores for each strategy as used by self and best friend were the dependent variables. There was a moderately significant difference between high and low self-monitors in use of loyalty by self ($t = -1.23$, $p < .10$). Contrary to our hypotheses, high self-monitors ($M = 20.82$, $SD = 4.53$) used loyalty more often than did low self-monitors ($M =19.99$, $SD = 3.92$). There was no significant difference between high and low self-monitors in use of loyalty for best friend ($t < 1.00$). There were no significant differences between high and low self-monitors in the use of voice by self and best friend (both *t*s < 1).

Exploratory Analyses

No predictions were made for the effect of maintenance strategy. In order to see if maintenance strategy type had an effect on what participants said they did or if maintenance type interacted with self-monitoring, a 2 x 4 ANOVA was conducted with self-monitoring (high/low) and type of strategy (exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) as the independent variables and the frequency of use of strategies by self as the dependent variable. There was a significant effect of type of maintenance strategy for self, F (3,170) = 291.81, $p < .0001$. Participants said they engaged most often in voice ($M = 22.37$, $SD = 5.57$), next in loyalty ($M = 20.42$, $SD = 4.24$), then in neglect ($M = 12.74$, $SD = 4.14$), and least often in exit ($M = 9.41$, $SD = 3.37$). There was no interaction between maintenance strategy type and self-monitoring ($F < 1.00$).

In order to see if maintenance strategy type had an effect or if maintenance type interacted with self-monitoring, a 2 x 4 ANOVA was conducted with self-monitoring (high/low) and type of strategy (exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) as the independent variables and the frequency of use of strategies by best friend as the dependent

variable. There was a significant effect of type of maintenance strategy for best friend, $F(3,170) = 201.82$, $p < .01$. As indicated by their self-report, participants said their best friends engaged most often in voice ($M = 17.62$, $SD = 5.2$), next in loyalty ($M = 14.61$, $SD = 3.43$), then in neglect ($M = 8.91$, $SD = 3.53$), and least often in exit ($M = 7.64$, $SD = 3.45$). There was no interaction between maintenance strategy type and self-monitoring ($F < 1.00$).

No predictions were made about the effect of participants' sex (either alone or in combination with self-monitoring and type of maintenance strategy). One 2 x 2 x 4 ANOVA was conducted with participants' sex (male/female), self-monitoring (high/low), and type of maintenance strategy (exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) as independent variables, and the frequency of use of maintenance strategies by themselves. There was no overall significant main effect of participants' sex or interaction involving participants' sex and either self-monitoring or type of maintenance strategy (all Fs < 2.40). For the use of exit by themselves, there was a marginally reliable interaction between participants' sex and self-monitoring, $F(1, 166) = 3.24$, $p = .074$. Male low self-monitors ($M = 10.23$, $SD = 5.87$) were more likely than were female low self-monitors ($M = 9.16$, $SD = 2.83$) to engage in exit strategies. Female high self-monitors ($M = 9.80$, $SD = 2.78$) were more likely than male high self-monitors ($M = 8.94$, $SD = 2.38$) to engage in exit strategies.

One 2 x 2 x 4 ANOVA was conducted with sex (male/female), self-monitoring (high/low), and type of maintenance strategy (exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect) as independent variables, and the frequency of use of maintenance strategies by best friend as the dependent variable. There was no overall significant main effect of participants' sex or interaction involving participants' sex and either self-monitoring or type of maintenance strategy (all Fs < 2.20).

No predictions were made about the attributes of friendships. Chi-squares analyses were conducted for all friendship attributes using self-monitoring as one of the two variables. There was no significant chi-square for best friend sex, $X^2 (1, N = 170) = 2.11$, $p < .15$. Of the 82 low self-monitors, there were 31 (37.8%) male and 51 (62.2%) female best friends. Of the 88 high self-monitors, there were 43 (48.86%) male and 45 (51.14%) female best friends.

For best friend status, the categories of marital partner and dating partner were grouped together and compared to the category of other. There was no significant chi-square for best friend status, $X^2 < 1.00$. Of the low self-monitors, 19 (23.17%) chose marital/dating partner and 63 (76.83%) chose other as their best friend status. Of the 88 high self-monitors, 19 (21.59%) chose marital/dating partner and 69 (78.41%) chose other.

There was no significant chi-square for best friend permanence, $X^2 < 1.00$. Of the 82 low self-monitors, 77 (93.90%) chose yes and 5 (6.10%) chose no to friendship permanence. Of the 88 high self-monitors, 84 (95.45 %) chose yes and 4 (4.55%) chose no to friendship permanence.

There was no significant chi-square for number of previous best friends, $X^2 < 1.00$. Of the 82 low self-monitors, 7 (8.54%) chose zero, 23 (28.05%) chose 1, 22 (26.83%) chose two, 18 (21.95%) chose three, and 12 (14.63%) choose four or more previous best friends. Of the 88 high self-monitors, 7 (7.95 %) chose zero, 23 (26.14%) chose one, 22 (25%) chose two, 15 (17.05%) chose three, and 21 (23.86%) chose more than four previous best friends.

There was no significant chi-square for number of close friends besides the current best friend, $X^2 < 1.00$. Of the 82 low self-monitors, 3 (3.66%) chose zero, 12 (14.63%) chose 1, 17 (20.73%) chose two, 18 (21.95%) chose three, and 32 (39.02%) chose four or more close friends besides the current best friend. Of the 88 high self-monitors, 2 (2.27 %) chose zero, 10 (11.36%) chose one, 18 (20.45%) chose two, 21 (23.86%) chose three, and 37 (42.05%) chose more than four close friends besides the current best friend.

Discussion

It was hypothesized that high self-monitors would engage in more destructive maintenance strategies than would low self-monitors and that low self-monitors would engage in more constructive maintenance strategies than would high self-monitors. In support of these hypotheses, high self-monitors stated that both they and their best friends engage in more neglect responses than did low self-monitors. Contrary to these hypotheses, high self-monitors stated that they also engage in more loyalty responses than did low self-monitors.

Recall that neglect and loyalty are both passive responses whereas voice and exit are both active responses. High self-monitors engaged in more passive maintenance strategies than did low self-monitors. There was no significant difference in the frequency that high self-monitors and low self-monitors engaged in active maintenance strategies. These results are similar to findings obtained by Gaines, Work, Johnson, Youn, and Lai (2000). Gaines et al. found that one aspect of self-monitoring called other-directedness was related to the use of neglect and loyalty. High self-monitors engaged more in neglect and loyalty than did low self-monitors.

The finding that high self-monitors say they engage in loyalty more often than do low self-monitors is counter to findings by Rusbult, Johnson, and Morrow (1986). Rusbult, Johnson, and Morrow found that the use of loyalty was related to satisfaction and investment size in dating relationships. Snyder and Smith (1986) found that high self-monitors are less invested and satisfied than are low self-monitors in their friendships. High self-monitors should therefore be less likely than low self-monitors to be loyal in their friendships if loyalty is related to satisfaction and investment. However, in my sample 95% of all participants believed their friendship with their best friend is a permanent relationship. High self-monitors may be just as motivated and willing as low self-monitors to maintain their best friendships.

The degree of investment and satisfaction in best friendships and in acquaintanceships most likely is different. It is possible that due to the close nature of a best friend relationship, there are certain things that must be done to maintain that friendship. This idea is supported by the fact that all participants in this sample said they engaged in more constructive than destructive strategies during times of dissatisfaction with their best friends. Constructive strategies have better consequences for a relationship in the long run than do destructive strategies. Rusbult, Johnson, and Morrow (1986) found that in romantic relationships voice was consistently associated with superior consequences and loyalty was associated with better consequences for the relationship than were exit and neglect responses.

Overall, these findings could be interpreted as follows, due to high self-monitors' motivation to always be socially appropriate, high self-monitors may maintain their best friendship more often than would low self-monitors in a passive manner so as to not look inappropriate during times of conflict. High self-monitors may use passive maintenance strategies in their best friendships as a way to appear less negative during times of conflict.

Limitations of Current Study

The current study was limited due to several factors. The first limiting factor was use of a measure of self-report. Behavior was not directly observed and recorded. In self-report research, participants only "say" what they did in the past. Participants may not recall a behavior or situation accurately or their personal perspective may bias a memory of an event.

When using a self-report measure, concerns of social desirability can occur. During experiments, participants may realize they are being measured on certain variables of interest and may feel a need to look socially desirable to a researcher. This motivation for participants to look more positive than they actually are can be intentional or unintentional. In this study,

participants filled out their questionnaires anonymously to decrease the likelihood that participants might engage in socially desirable responding. Despite anonymity, participants may still respond in a socially appropriate manner because they want to appear socially appropriate to themselves. This desire may apply directly to the high self-monitors in this sample who want to look socially appropriate to others and themselves at all times.

The wording of a question and/or answer can impact how participants respond and this difference in responding creates another problem with the use of self-report measures. If a question and/or answer were worded differently then other responses may have been found. Responses given by participants are only valid for those exact questions asked on a questionnaire and may not generalize to other related types of questions. The findings of the current study may not be generalized to other types of maintenance strategies besides exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect type of strategies.

A second limitation of this study is that no causal inferences can be made from the findings in this study. All variables were measured rather than manipulated; therefore, there is no way to rule out possible influences of confounding variables on the results in this study. This limitation is often found in personality research because personality variables, such as self-monitoring, can not be manipulated. Random assignment can not be used to ensure that groups in this sample were equal on all other variables besides the variable of interest. Other variables such as self-esteem or extraversion/introversion could have played a role in how participants maintained their best friendships not just their self-monitoring type.

A third limitation of this study is a restricted amount of generalization of the findings. Most participants in the sample were Caucasians ranging in age from 18 to 23 years old. Young Caucasians with college experience make up a very small percentage of the American population. Factors of age, race, and education can have a tremendous impact on individuals' perspectives and behavior. This sample is a sample of convenience, not a representative sample of the population.

Future Directions

Other findings have implications self-monitoring and friendship. High and low self-monitors differ in how they choose their dating partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984, 1987). Snyder and Simpson (1984) asked high and low self-monitors to choose between going out on a casual date with a current dating partner in an activity that was not that dating partner's specialty or going out on a casual date with an other-sex friend in an activity that was this other-sex friend's specialty. High self-monitors choose more frequently than did low self-monitors to go out with an other-sex friend to participate in an activity that was that other-sex friend's specialty. On the other hand, low self-monitors choose more frequently than did high self-monitors to go out on a casual date with a current dating partner to participate in an activity that was not that current dating partner's specialty. Future researchers could investigate whether low self-monitors are more likely than are high self-monitors to date their best friend.

High and low self-monitors differ in their degree of commitment to their current dating partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984, 1987). When having to choose between forming a close, intimate dating relationship with their current dating partner or another opposite-sex friend, high self-monitors chose more often than did low self-monitors to form a close, intimate dating relationship with another opposite-sex friends. These findings can be interpreted to suggest that high self-monitors have a less committed orientation to dating relationships than do low self-monitors. Low self-monitors were less willing than high self-monitors to substitute an alternative partner for their current dating partner. When having to choose between forming a close, intimate dating relationship with their current dating partner or another opposite-sex friend, low self-monitors more often than high self-monitors chose to form a

close, intimate dating relationship with their current dating partners. These findings can be interpreted to suggest that low self-monitors have a more committed orientation to dating relationships than do high self-monitors. Future researchers could investigate whether high and low self-monitors differ in how they use their friendships. It is possible that high self-monitors use their large network of friends as a dating pool, whereby with so many alternatives, high self-monitors may be less committed or invested in their current dating relationships when compared to low self-monitors.

This idea that low self-monitors have committed orientations and high self-monitors have uncommitted orientations is supported by their history of dating partners (Snyder & Simpson, 1984, 1987). High self-monitors reported that they had dated nearly twice as many different partners in the last year than did low self-monitors. Low self-monitors reported that they had dated their steady romantic partners for nearly twice as long as high self-monitors had dated their steady romantic partners. Future researchers could investigate if a similar parallel could be found in friendships for high and low self-monitors. Do high self-monitors change best friends more often than do low self-monitors?

Not only do high and low self-monitors differ in their commitment orientations, but they also differ in the amount of intimacy they experience in their romantic relationships (Snyder & Simpson, 1984, 1987). As the length of a dating relationship increases, low self-monitors experience a faster growth in intimacy over the span of a relationship than do high self-monitors. It would be interesting to investigate if low self-monitors experience a faster growth in intimacy over the span of a best friendship than do high self-monitors.

High and low self-monitors also differ in their orientation to sexual relations (Snyder, Simpson, & Gangestad, 1986; Snyder & Simpson, 1987). High self-monitors report having multiple sexual partners, predicting multiple future sexual partners, having one night stands, and endorsing casual

sex as a comfortable experience. These behaviors and attitudes can be defined as an unrestricted sexual orientation. In contrast, low self-monitors report having relatively few sexual partners, predicting relatively few future sexual partners, having fewer if any one night stands, and endorsing a view that commitment is necessary for sex. These behaviors and attitudes can be defined as a restricted sexual orientation. This orientation may apply in friendships as well. An area of further research could involve investigating whether low self-monitors are more likely than are high self-monitors to have fewer best friends over a lifetime, view these relationships as more permanent or enduring, and view commitment as an important aspect of friendship.

Conclusion

Due to the nature of close relationships, it likely that all people (high or low self-monitors) must take steps to maintain these relationships. Personality differences, such as self-monitoring, may only influence some aspects how these close relationships are maintained. The findings of the current study could be interpreted to suggest that the individual difference variable of self-monitoring is influential in how actively or passively a best friendship is maintained. Self-monitoring type could be influential in other aspects of how best friendships are maintained, and self-monitoring type could also be influential in how other close relationships such as dating or marriage are maintained.

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