

Purpose: Communion is an innate motivator in humans that refers to one's relationships with others (Bakan, 1966; McAdams, Hoffman, Mansfield, & Day, 1996). Communion has direct implications for life satisfaction and well-being (McLean et al., 2019) and reflects individual differences in personality and shapes individuals' values. We were interested in considering the role of communion for well-being among emerging adults (Arnett, 2000). Communion is salient during emerging adulthood, as this developmental transition involves challenges in exploring personal identity and building intimacy with others (i.e., romantic dating, child-rearing). We were interested in the ways demographic differences (i.e., gender, SES) explain differences in communion and in the ways displays of communion inform reports of well-being.

Procedure: As part of a secondary analysis, 300 adults aged 18-to-29 ($m_{age} = 24.29$ years, $SD = \pm 2.67$ years; 60% women) were considered from an online study. Participants responded to narrative prompts about high- and low-point life events. These autobiographical narratives were rated on a scale indicating displays of overall communion (i.e., whether other partners were mentioned, whether implications for the relationship were mentioned), based on a coding scheme by Grysman, Fivush, Merrill, and Graci (2017).

Results: Bivariate correlations showed that women displayed more communion in recollections of positive life events than men. Age, income, and education level were not associated with communion. Displays of communion in negative, life events were significantly associated with multiple reports of well-being. Communion was associated with more optimal reports of well-being.

Discussion: Gender informed differences in communion for positive life events, whereas communion in recollections of negative life events informed reports of well-being. These findings partly supported our hypotheses. This research is important in expanding the existing literature on communion, especially among emerging adults. Further research should consider the longitudinal effects of communion among emerging adults.