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Literature Review

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Long-Distance Romantic Relationships

Long-distance romantic relationships can occur for various reasons, from going away for college to a work opportunity and everything in between. Today's communication systems allow people to interact with each other in settings that are not face-to-face (Farrugia & Rianne 2013). Technology has paved the way for enhanced ways to communicate with others with devices like phones, computers phones, and more. They are making it easier for long-distance relationships to remain stable without physically being with each other. It is a relationship that one has to be understanding, patient, and willing to do what is necessary for a successful relationship. There are many misconceptions of long-distance romantic relationships specifically, ones where you have seen your partner at least once. Many factors can affect a long-distance relationship, and this may include but is not limited to social media, jealousy, intimacy, or communication. This literature review examines how interpersonal communication is affected by long-distance romantic relationships negatively and positively in various ways. Additionally, it illustrates what lengths couples go through to help their relationship stay stable. Geographical separation between romantic partners has to find ways to feel like they are with each other at all times, whether that be determining each other's affection styles, their way of communicating, and how they handle their social media.

**Affection styles in LDR**

When in a relationship, it is known that one spends the majority of their time with their significant other, sharing the same space and giving them your undivided attention. It is a great feeling to know that you have someone that can comfort you. However, what if your significant other lived miles away from you? One would have to get comfortable with the fact that you won't see them and give/receive the affection you desire. As demonstrated in Jimenez, F., & Asendorpf, J. (2010), availability in attachment theory does not necessarily refer to physical presence but rather to the perception of partner availability. We, therefore, argue that in LDRs, this perception depends on the partners' efforts to establish availability using communication. It is essential to communicate about availability when in a long-distance relationship because finding time for each other to comply with each other's needs will save the relationship. There are various attachment styles that couples may utilize in their relationship. Frequently the type of attachment style for you corresponds with how one was raised as a child. (Hammonds et al., 2020) argue that adults can be divided into attachment style categories according to how they formed relationships as children and interacted with their primary caregiver. An example of this would be the preoccupied attachment style, indicating that an individual's caregivers were inconsistent and did not meet the child's needs. Giving individuals a hard time accepting the love and attention from their significant other but has no problem giving the love/attention. (Hammonds et al., 2020) In an LDR couple may experience a level of uncertainty which leads to negative communication. Jimenez, F., & Asendorpf, J. (2010) illustrates that attachment styles play an essential role by regulating communicative behaviors with each other. You will not know your partner's love language if it weren't for communication.

**Interpersonal Communication**

Interpersonal communication is essential when it comes to romantic relationships. The first time you meet someone can either extinguish or ignite the way one predicted a romantic future with them (Vangelisti, 2002). It is known that communication is essential, but with long-distance romantic relationships, it is crucial to have a great deal of communication. Being that it is an LDR, couples cannot see each other as often as they would like; they utilize technology such as phones and computers to see each other's faces. Jiinag et al., (2013) illustrates that geographical separation leads to restricted communication, reduced interdependence, and uncertainty about the relationship's future. It makes it challenging to believe that the relationship will last when there are more obstacles than accomplishments. Being restricted in your relationship is not ideal, but you would make an effort to love someone. Every relationship is different; some couples find a sense of attachment to each other regardless of the distance. Communication is what Face to face communication is always needed, but that is not the only aspect of a relationship; Janning, Gao, & Snyder (2018) argue that face-to-face communication is not necessary to feel intimate. To rebuttal against this argument, it is vital to see each other once before establishing a romantic relationship. Although it is not always like this, there is no way of seeing your significant other for various reasons in certain instances. For starters, geographic difficulties, financial status, family, work, and the list continues. Making it harder for intimacy and communication overall. Interpersonal communication is one of the most critical communication styles because of face-to-face interactions, gestures, facial expressions, and body language. It is essential to learn these aspects from your partner if one wants a stable and healthy relationship. Janning, Gao, & Snyder (2018) argues that it is possible that face-to-face interaction can cause the relationship to be more assertive when it comes to trust, stability, and satisfaction. The best way in which one can learn this is through intimacy enhancement. Out of all the available cues, cue multiplicity works best for long-distance relationships. Cue multiplicity allows one to visually see verbal expressions, voice inflection, facial expressions, and body gestures. (Jiinag, et al., 2013) Facetime communication is the best form of cue multiplicity because it allows one to exchange verbal, audio, and visual cues giving the illusion that one is in person.

Social Media & Long distance relationships

From the beginning of time, different communication styles have been created in order to communicate with others. It is the fastest way to communicate, and it has been made easier over the years. Some of the various communications include Facebook, email, skype, Instagram, and many more social media. Long-distance romantic relationships often form through such platforms and continue. The media affects all relationships because of the vast platform; there are things that one cannot avoid. Online communication and numerous social media sites can positively or negatively affect relationship quality. (Bailey et al., 2017) Social media has turned to be a cruel place where everyone thinks it is a competition. The pressure is high for long-distance couples because they fear what might happen. For instance, jealousy; comparing your life to another person's life can get one frustrated, leading to arguments. Social media is a public platform, and when it comes to relationships, it gives them a chance to find information on their history which can begin jealousy (Farrugia, 2013). It would be best if couples do not let social media feed into them and to communicate rather than assume.

Long-distance romantic relationships are never easy, but it is not impossible. They are common and happen regularly; people are continually making changes in their lives, affecting the environments around them. It is often customary to discuss each other's attachment styles, the most effective way of communication, and how social media can positively affect their relationships. All factors that couples have to take into account when wanting a healthy relationship. Adults who are highly satisfied with their significant other may be able to construe the physical separation and think highly of the relationship's overall stability (Borelli et al., 2014). There are both negatives and positives aspects of being in a long-distance romantic relationship, there are certain things that one may be able to research, but experiences learn others.

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