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**The Positive Side of Hurtful Communication:
When Hurt Feelings Improve Close Relationships**

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to those who I love and who have supported me throughout my doctoral journey.

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**The Positive Side of Hurtful Communication:
When Hurt Feelings Improve Close Relationships**

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The adaptive effects of hurtful communication have rarely been observed in the hurt literature. This could be due to one or more of three limitations in the literature: an emphasis on major rather than minor hurtful interactions, a focus more on negative behavior than positive, or a recall of personal biases caused by situation-specific beliefs when examining the effects of hurt feelings. Given that research suggests that negative emotions can have a positive influence on relational outcomes, this dissertation investigated whether hurt feelings function to maintain and/or repair close relationships by addressing the aforementioned limitations. Building on Bradbury and Fincham's (1987, 1988, 1991) contextual model, this dissertation examined the effects of both proximal and distal context factors on prosocial communication and relationship outcomes following major and minor hurtful interactions. A community sample of people involved in romantic relationships ($N = 513$) completed a set of questionnaires regarding hurtful communication. Overall, the results indicated that as opposed to message intensity and perceived intentionality, hurt intensity and communal strength positively predicted constructive communication and positive relationship outcomes; these associations were also mediated by constructive communication. Communal strength emerged as a stronger predictor of positive outcomes of hurt than did hurt intensity. Further, this study revealed

the moderating effects of hurt on the link between the aforementioned factors and positive outcomes for behavior and relationships. In conclusion, the adaptive effects of hurtful communication were more pronounced in minor hurtful events than in major ones.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Feeling hurt has been theoretically and empirically linked to negative social functions and consequences (e.g., Burchell, Gorelik, & Wilkinson, 2016; Feeney, 2004; Feeney & Hill, 2006; Leary, Springer, Negel, Ansell, & Evans, 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; McLaren & Solomon, 2008, 2010; Miller & Roloff, 2014; Vangelisti, 1994; Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Vangelisti, Young, Carpenter-Theune, & Alexander, 2005; Young, Kubicka, Tucker, Chávez-Appel, & Rex, 2005; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Hurt sometimes motivates people to engage in avoidance and even aggressive actions. For instance, when feeling hurt, people are inclined to use destructive communication, distance themselves from the source of their pain, or even take revenge on perpetrators in order to reduce emotional pain or prevent continued harm (McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Miller & Roloff, 2014; Vangelisti et al., 2005; Young et al., 2005). In many cases, such reactions to hurt decrease relationship quality and closeness and are associated with long-term negative effects on relationships (Feeney, 2004; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Although extant research on hurtful communication provides insight into how the experience of hurt negatively affects emotional states and relationship functioning, limited data exist on how hurtful communication improves personal relationships.

Based on the notion that negative emotions can have positive effects on relationships (e.g., Baker, McNulty, & Overall, 2014; Graham, Huang, Clark, & Helgeson, 2008; Van Doorn, Van Kleef, & Van Der Pligt, 2015), the current research suggests that hurt feelings should be beneficial to close relationships under some circumstances. More specifically, the experience and expression of hurt should improve the relationship in relatively minor hurtful episodes and/or in high-quality relationships. Indeed, a small number of studies on hurtful communication have shown the adaptive

effects of hurt on subsequent reactions to hurtful messages and interactions. Although receiving hurtful messages often evokes negative feelings, hurtful messages can be interpreted as beneficial under certain circumstances. For instance, recipients in a satisfying relationship with the speaker could interpret a hurtful message as less acrimonious, or they could take the message as a form of advice rather than a directive (Young, 2004, 2010). Interpreting a hurtful message in a positive way may motivate people to adopt constructive behavior such as asking for explanations from partners who said something hurtful (Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998), communicating constructively with partners who hurt them (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Sanford, 2007), and forgiving what the partner did (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006a; Hannon, Rusbult, Finkel, & Kamashiro, 2010). In other words, hurt feelings can enhance relationship satisfaction (Sanford & Rowatt, 2004) and contribute to positive relationship outcomes (Lemay, Overall, & Clark, 2012) when countering hurtful comments with such adaptive functions.

A close examination of current research on hurtful communication indicates three limitations to understanding of the positive effects of hurt feelings. The first limitation is that most studies overlook the functions and outcomes of hurtful interactions characterized by pro-relationship behavior (e.g., Burchell et al., 2016; Feeney, 2004, 2005; Leary et al., 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; Miller & Roloff, 2014; Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Vangelisti et al., 2005). These hurtful episodes may involve apology, forgiveness, and repair, can be quickly forgotten (Lemay et al., 2012), and are often relatively minor; conversely, people are prone to ruminate about interpersonal interactions that have detrimental outcomes (Feeney, 2004; Thomsen, 2006; Watkins, 2008, 2013). The potential recall bias associated with such interactions might artificially inflate the maladaptive functions and the negative relationship consequences of hurt feelings. The second limitation is that recollections of any hurtful interaction are most

likely influenced by semantic emotion knowledge, or people's beliefs about how a given occurrence influences one's emotion. This situation usually evolves with the passage of time between a hurtful event and its later recollection, so that participants can easily access semantic emotion knowledge in reporting on their emotions over long time frames (Robinson & Clore, 2002a, 2002b). Because of their easy access to semantic emotion knowledge, individuals may report biased emotional experiences that entail relatively unpleasant relationship outcomes.

The third limitation is that the measures used in most studies focus on negative behavior and outcomes more than the positive counterparts (e.g., Leary et al., 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Young et al., 2005; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Since hurt is by nature painful and unpleasant and often damages individual and relational well-being, relationship theorists and researchers have placed importance on the maladaptive impact of hurt on interpersonal relationships. Because of this, the adaptive role of hurt has rarely been observed. However, some researchers recently have started exploring the positive effects of hurt and found that hurt can elicit pro-relationship behavior and positive relationship outcomes (e.g., Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007; Young et al., 2005). It is worth noting that the range of positive behavior examined in these studies except for Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) is quite limited. Hence, to better understand the positive social functions of hurtful communication, the assessment of a broader range of positive behavior is needed.

The aforementioned limitations and the scant research on the positive effects of hurtful communication bring out an essential question: How can we better understand situations when hurtful communication functions to maintain and repair close relationships? This dissertation's primary focus addresses this question. The present

study aims to investigate the factors influencing the positive effects of hurtful messages by addressing the limitations in the study of hurtful communication and exploring constructive communication and relationship consequences following hurtful interactions. In particular, the present study employs Bradbury and Fincham's (1987, 1988, 1991) contextual model as a conceptual framework to analyze the effects of proximal (i.e., interaction-specific variables) and distal context factors (a relationship variable) on individuals' constructive communication (relational repair tactics, integrative communication, loyalty), individuals' perceptions of their partner's constructive communication, and relationship consequences following hurtful interactions. In addition, given that hurt differing in intensity can have dissimilar behavioral and relational outcomes, the moderating role of hurt in the associations between context factors and constructive communication as well as relationship ramifications is probed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Rationale

This chapter first discusses the nature of hurt feelings in the context of close relationships. The next section goes on to explicate the positive effects of hurt by focusing on people's reactions to hurtful interactions. Then, a contextual model is used to discuss the factors associated with hurtful messages that shape people's communicative responses and relationship consequences. The last section elucidates the possible limitations of the literature on hurt to explain why researchers have overlooked positive social functions of hurt.

DEFINITION OF HURT FEELINGS

In pioneering work investigating emotion, researchers conceptualized hurt feelings as emotional injury (Folkes, 1982) that is closely linked with the concepts of suffering and anguish (Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, & O'Connor, 1987). In one study probing people's accounts of hurtful incidents, Leary and his colleagues (1998) characterized hurt as relational devaluation, namely, the perception that one's relationship is not as valued as the person wishes. Hurt feelings can be elicited by an individual's negative verbal remarks (e.g., criticism) and destructive behaviors (e.g., betrayal) (Leary et al., 1998).

From a different perspective, Vangelisti and Young (2000) asserted that hurt feelings result from relational transgressions in which individuals become aware that another person did or said something hurtful to them. Additionally, hurt reflects a sense of vulnerability because people in closer relationships tend to rely on their partner's support, reassurance, and help (Lemay et al., 2012). When feeling hurt, those in close relationships usually perceive themselves as victims in the interpersonal interaction and are susceptible to further emotional pain (Vangelisti, 2001).

Although these hurt studies define hurt feelings differently, Feeney (2005) consolidated these views and argues that hurt is provoked by relational transgressions that imply relational devaluation because devaluing the relationship seems a violation of the typical norms of close relationships. Further, Feeney (2005) viewed hurt feeling as a sense of injury that occurs due to threats to positive working models of the self and others. Even though Feeney found an association between attachment styles and hurt feelings, her findings did not indicate that threats to positive working models are a defining element of hurt feelings.

Another feature of hurt is that hurt feelings are typically accompanied by other negative emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, and guilt (Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti, 1994; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998) because the hurtful episodes precipitate other emotions. One early conceptualization of hurt has thus suggested that hurt is a blend of other negative emotions (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Leary and Springer (2001), however, examined the relationship between hurt feelings and some negative emotions and found that hurt has unique variance that cannot be explained by other negative emotions. As a result, they contend that hurt is an emotion distinguishable from other emotions. Similar conclusions have also been drawn by Feeney's (2005) and Lemay et al.'s (2012) studies.

Taken together, prior research has demonstrated the complexity of hurt feelings, and empirical evidence has suggested that the characteristics of hurt differ from those of other negative emotions. Despite different conceptualizations of hurt in the literature, hurt can be seen as a social emotion because hurt often occurs in interpersonal interactions, especially in the context of close relationships (Leary et al., 1998). It is within close relationships that hurt feelings are particularly likely to involve dependence, vulnerability, and the need to maintain a connection with significant others (Lemay et al.,

2012; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). The elicitation of hurt is based upon people's perceptions and interpretations of something another did or said to them. Because of this, hurt feelings can be conceptualized as emotional pain caused by individuals' perceptions that those close to them depreciate or do not value their relationship. Given that interpersonal communication is the primary source of hurt feelings, hurtful communication in the present study is characterized as emerging from interpersonal interactions in which the elicitation of hurt feelings involves people's perceived relational devaluation.

RESPONSES TO HURTFUL COMMUNICATION

The experience of hurt feelings is negative, even poignant, and reflects perceptions of threats to people's close relationships. When people detect any cues that threaten their intimate relationships, their sociometers—psychological systems that monitor relational value—can motivate them to grapple with the threats (Leary, 2005; Leary & Downs, 1995) by engaging in relationship-constructive behavior (Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). As such, people experiencing emotional pain caused by perceived relational devaluation could attempt to alleviate such feelings by engaging in communicative behavior that is conducive to positive relationship outcomes.

Importantly, we must note that the subjective experience of emotion informs us about specific situations and guides our behavior with problems that emerge in social situations; the expression of emotion can convey our needs, goals, and desires to others in order to facilitate social coordination and bonds (Anderson & Guerrero, 1998; Keltner & Haidt, 1999). As a result, hurt feelings typically provide people with evaluative information about relationship quality and signal a need or desire to maintain the relationship with a relational partner (Lemay et al., 2012; Vangelisti, 2009). Because hurt

feelings signal commitment and desires to keep a relationship going (Leary & Springer, 2001; Lemay et al., 2012), experiencing hurt can motivate people to directly address relationship problems by enacting constructive communication to restore the relationship to a previous preferred condition.

Scholars interested in hurt feelings have examined the ways people react to hurtful remarks or behavior. In one study investigating people's reactions to hurtful interactions, Vangelisti and Crumley (1998) categorized communicative responses into three types. The first type is active verbal responses that require people to communicate with those who hurt them. These responses include asking for an explanation, verbally attacking another, using sarcasm, and defending oneself. The second type is acquiescent responses, including apologizing, crying, and conceding. The third type consists of invulnerable responses such as ignoring the event, laughing, or being silent. Invulnerable responses are often characterized by the victim acting as if he or she has not been hurt. Of these communicative responses, asking for an explanation and apologizing appear to start constructive communication behavior.

Leary et al. (1998) also investigated behavioral reactions to hurtful interactions. They found that people respond to being hurt by saying something critical or nasty, telling their offenders about their own hurt feelings, and crying alone or in front of the offenders. These reactions relate positively to the intensity of hurt. Moreover, incorporating those behavioral reactions investigated by Leary et al. (1998) as well as Vangelisti and Crumley (1998), Feeney (2004) factor analyzed reactions into two sorts: constructive versus destructive communication. She found that people using more destructive communication tend to report a negative long-term relationship. It is important to note that in the measures of communicative responses used in prior studies (e.g., Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998), most items are relatively negative.

Only a few of them, such as apologizing and asking for an explanation, are instrumental in maintaining or repairing close relationships. Assessing a limited range of communicative responses might not capture the nuances of the effects of hurtful communication.

To investigate a wider array of communicative responses regarding hurtful interactions, Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) developed more comprehensive measures of communication that covered a broader range of communicative responses. The measure of constructive communication consisted of relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty. The measure of destructive communication included de-escalation, distributive communication, revenge, and active distancing. Bachman and Guerrero's findings indicated that people tend to use constructive responses when perceiving their partner as more rewarding. This reflects a core concern for remaining in a relationship that gives them significant rewards. In addition, people feeling a greater degree of hurt are more inclined to adopt both constructive and destructive communication, suggesting that hurtful experiences can contribute to both positive and negative behavioral reactions.

Like Bachman and Guerrero (2006b), Young et al. (2005) also examined people's communicative responses to hurtful episodes in family relationships by using a measure tapping a relatively broader range of behaviors. They indicated that family members tend to react to hurtful messages by using negative communication such as negative affective expressions and distributive communication. Only the topic of hurtful messages predicts integrative communication. In other words, the topic regarding comments about one's value as a relational partner is more likely to engage people in a calm discussion of the problems than one regarding threats. But it is noted that the communicative responses then under investigation focused primarily on negative communication because the

measure of the communicative responses that Young et al. (2005) used contains five types of negative communication and one type of positive communication.

Another study by Lemay et al. (2012) provides other evidence that hurt feelings can elicit constructive and reparative behaviors. Lemay et al. claim that hurt reflects dependence, commitment, and vulnerability, and thus feeling hurt can predict positive behavior and positive relationship outcomes. Their results supported this prediction. Hurt associated closely with people's goals to restore the perpetrator's acceptance and value the relationship. It was also linked with the perpetrator's tendency to engage in constructive behavior. These researchers noted that the small effects of hurt on constructive behavior could be due to the experience of victims' uncertainty about the relationship. Lemay et al. (2012) also claim that hurt feelings can be seen as a commitment signal that elicits constructive behavior, which in turn leads to positive relationship outcomes. Similarly, given that hurt as a soft emotion focuses on concerns for relationship maintenance, Sanford (2007) demonstrated that hurt predicts one's own and perpetrators' positive communication, such as carefully listening to the partner to understand him or her or calmly discussing the issue with the partner.

In sum, the results of prior studies about people's response to hurtful interactions are somewhat inconsistent, showing a mix of constructive and destructive communication patterns. The evidence has demonstrated that hurt feelings are a relationship-oriented emotion. On the one hand, then, feeling hurt conveys victims' devotion to the relationship with the perpetrator, which should elicit more his or her constructive responses. Also, hurt feelings can elicit victims' constructive behavior, but at least one previous study has shown that the effect is small. On the other hand, people are more likely to use negative communication following hurtful interactions when they have doubts about their partner's involvement in the relationship or perceive that their partner deliberately hurt

them. Also, the fact that many studies show relatively consistent results of people having a tendency to negatively communicate could be due to recall bias and/or general emotional beliefs—negative emotional interactions lead to negative outcomes (Robinson & Clore, 2002a). In other words, the hurtful interactions that individuals are instructed to recall tend to be deeply hurtful or salient to them, and the interactions are less likely to elicit constructive responses and relational outcomes (Lemay et al., 2012).

In addition to this methodological factor, it is important to note that how people communicatively react to hurtful behavior or messages depends on other factors. Prior research has shown that communicative responses can be influenced mainly by interaction- and relationship-related factors (e.g., Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Young et al., 2005). For instance, in terms of interaction-relevant factors, message intensity and the degree of hurt are positively associated with negative forms of communication such as negative affect expression and active distancing (Young et al., 2005). In light of relationship-relevant factors, relationship satisfaction is related positively to active verbal responses (Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998), but inversely to negative communicative responses such as distributive communication and avoidance/denial (Young et al., 2005). Uncertainty associated with hurtful interactions is linked with destructive communication (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b). Because of this, it is necessary to examine these two types of factors affecting the ways people use positive communicative responses following hurtful communication. To better understand the effects of hurtful communication, Bradbury and Fincham's contextual model (1988, 1989, 1991) is an optimal conceptual framework to explore the links between interaction- and relationship-related factors and responses.

CONTEXTUAL MODEL

An understanding of how hurtful communication benefits close relationships requires a complete understanding of how people's cognitive and affective reactions to hurtful interactions impact their subsequent behavior and relationship consequences. Bradbury and Fincham's (1987, 1988, 1991) contextual model of marital interaction provides a conceptual framework for studying how people constructively respond to hurtful communication. Their model contends that a spouse's overt behavior engages the partner in affective and cognitive processing, which then elicits behavioral responses to the spouse's behavior.

Considering the context in the processing of behavior, the model identifies proximal and distal factors. The proximal context consists of one's transient thoughts and feelings evoked by an immediate relational event. These thoughts and feelings will vary across relational events and therefore cause corresponding variations in responsive behavior. In contrast, the distal context is comprised of relatively stable psychological variables of a person. Examples of the distal context are personality, mood states, perceptions of the relationship, and relationship goals. The model posits that the two contexts are related to each other (Bradbury & Fincham, 1991). That is, people's stable characteristics shape their thoughts and feelings within a relational interaction, and individuals' repeatedly occurring thoughts and feelings also change their stable characteristics.

Bradbury and Fincham's (1991) contextual model has been extended to hurtful communication research, an area in which communication scholars have investigated the joint and unique contributions of the proximal and distal contexts on perceptions, communicative responses, and relational consequences (Sanford, 2007; Young, 2004; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Recognizing that the contextual model has shown heuristic

value for studying hurtful communication, the present research investigated how proximal and distal contexts shape positive effects and relationship ramifications of hurtful communication. In the following sections, the effects of proximal and distal contexts on victims' constructive communication, victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication, and relationship consequences will be discussed.

THE EFFECTS OF PROXIMAL AND DISTAL CONTEXT FACTORS ON VICTIMS' CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

The first part of this section illuminates the correlations between the proximal context factors (message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt) and victims' constructive communication. Next, the reasons as to why hurt is viewed as a moderator are discussed. Secondly, how a distal context factor (communal strength) relates to victims' constructive communication and the interaction effect of communal strength with the intensity of hurt is explained.

Proximal Context Factors

As noted above, proximal context factors are temporal, or immediate, thoughts and feelings that change quickly across relationship situations (Bradbury & Fincham, 1987, 1988, 1991). Proximal factors in the study of hurtful communication include the features and people's appraisals of hurtful messages. In a number of prior studies (e.g., Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005; Zhang & Stafford, 2009), proximal factors have been linked to reactions to the messages and/or behaviors that hurt people's feelings. As such, this dissertation investigates message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt, and their associations with constructive communication in terms of the victim perspective.

Message intensity. Message intensity refers to the degree of harshness or causticity with which a message is communicated (Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005). How hurtful messages (i.e., message intensity) affect people's reactions to them is the focus of Young and her colleagues (Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005), who explored the effects of message intensity on people's perceptions of and communicative responses to hurtful messages. Their findings noted that intensely conveyed messages tend to be associated with negative outcomes. Specifically, one of Young's studies (Young et al., 2005) found a clear link between how a hurtful message is conveyed and how people react. The more caustic the hurtful messages are, the more often individuals respond by using negative communication (e.g., arguing, yelling, cursing, giving the silent treatment, or expressing irritation through nonverbal behavior).

In another study about positive perceptions of hurtful communication, Young (2004) probed the relation between message intensity and people's positive evaluations of hurtful messages. The results showed that hurtful messages with a more offensive tone are interpreted as less positive (or negative). Indeed, messages with abrasive language can be regarded as criticism or verbal aggression that hurt people's feelings. Several researchers have demonstrated criticism as a type of hurtful event and verbal aggression as a cause of hurt feelings (Feeney, 2004; Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti et al., 2005). Of course, no one likes receiving negatively-valenced, intense comments or statements, as these messages can damage self-concept for recipients (Infante & Wigley, 1986), thereby causing emotional injury (Vangelisti, et al., 2005). Obviously, highly intense hurtful messages appear to serve a maladaptive function such that message intensity should be negatively related to people's constructive communication (relational repair tactics, integrative communication, loyalty) in response to hurtful messages. As Young (2004) noted, a message's expression is essential to determine recipients' evaluation of it. Due to

the possible relationship between message intensity and constructive communication, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Message intensity is inversely related to relational repair tactics.

H1b: Message intensity is inversely related to integrative communication.

H1c: Message intensity is inversely related to loyalty.

Perceived intentionality. A number of studies examined cognitive processes associated with hurtful communication. One of the cognitive processes studied is perceived intentionality, which is conceptualized as appraisals of one's responsibility for a given behavior (Vangelisti, 1994; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). This line of work indicates that the role of intentionality influences outcomes associated with hurtful messages. Specifically, hurtful messages judged as intentional are more likely to bring about negative outcomes than are those judged as unintentional. For instance, Vangelisti and Young (2000) demonstrated that when they perceive that an intimate partner purposely said something hurtful, people might have a tendency to distance themselves from such a partner. Furthermore, these researchers note a link between perceived intentionality and relationship quality. People in satisfying versus dissatisfying relationships judge hurtful remarks differently. Those satisfied with close relationships typically see hurtful messages as inadvertent because they tend to interpret hurtful messages made by their close partners through rose-colored glasses (Murray et al., 2011; Murray & Holmes, 1993, 1997). On the contrary, those dissatisfied with close relationships usually interpret hurtful messages as intentional.

It must be noted that people's appraisals of behavior are influenced by perceptions of intentionality. The impact of hurtful messages or behavior varies depending on people's interpretations of intentionality (Malle & Knobe, 1997; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). If recipients view a message as unintentionally hurtful, individuals often think it

can be understood and forgiven. It is thus likely to improve relationship satisfaction and closeness (Fincham, 2000; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Conversely, because hurtful messages are inherently unpleasant, perceiving them as intentional reflects a certain amount of blame for causing emotional pain. As a result, hurtful messages judged as intentional often lead to intense hurt feelings, provoke relationship withdrawal, and even inflict long-term relationship damage (Feeney, 2004; Leary et al., 1998; McLaren & Solomon, 2008, 2010).

Not only does perceived intentionality affect emotional experience and relationship outcomes, it also influences communicative responses to hurtful messages. The results of Bachman and Guerrero's (2006b) study support the link between perceived intentionality and communicative responses. These researchers hypothesized that partner intent would positively predict destructive communication and inversely predict constructive communication. But only the prediction for destructive communication was significant. Bachman and Guerrero suggested that the perceptions of an intentional act that hurts victims give a justification for responding by yelling, cursing, or acting rude toward the perpetrator. Furthermore, relationship quality could deteriorate when victims worry that the perpetrators will repeatedly hurt them intentionally.

Based on the findings of prior research, perceived intentionality is typically associated with aversive relational outcomes regarding the victim's perspective. When people believe that their partner purposely hurt them, they will assign more blame and responsibility for the hurtful interaction. There is thus a strong likelihood that perceiving messages as intentionally hurtful is associated with victims' destructive communication following a hurtful interaction, regardless of whether it is minor or serious. Based on such an association, the second set of hypotheses is posited:

H2a: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their relational repair tactics.

H2b: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their integrative communication.

H2c: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their loyalty.

Intensity of hurt. The intensity of hurt refers to the degree or amount of hurt a person experiences following a hurtful interaction. In some studies, the intensity of hurt is treated as a predictor that affects the outcomes of hurtful interactions (e.g., Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). In other studies, however, it is viewed as an outcome that is affected by message-related characteristics (e.g., Bippus & Young, 2012; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). To completely understand the effect that people's hurt feelings have on positive communicative behavior, the intensity of hurt in this dissertation is treated not only as a predictor, but also as a moderator. The reasoning behind the intensity of hurt as a moderator will be discussed later in this section.

Feeling hurt, by its nature, is distressing and unpleasant. Thus, the intensity of hurt has been theoretically and empirically linked to negative consequences. For instance, when they investigated the relational outcomes of honest but hurtful messages, Zhang and Stafford (2009) found that people who experience much hurt are prone to worry about being hurt again, and they also distrust and dislike the other person in both friendships and romantic relationships. In addition, when victims interpreted hurtful messages as intentional and frequent, they are motivated to stay away from relational partners (McLaren & Solomon, 2008). Malachowski and Frisby's (2015) findings also indicate that the intensity of hurt correlates inversely with forgiveness and positively with rumination.

Although the intensity of hurt often relates to negative outcomes, a few studies have shown the opposite pattern. Hurt feelings are characterized as a soft emotion, and soft emotions can elicit positive interpersonal outcomes such as high satisfaction and low avoidance (Sanford & Rowatt, 2004). Hurt occurs more often in highly satisfying relationships than dissatisfying ones (Young, Bippus, & Dunbar, 2015). In a study investigating relational quality and communicative reactions to hurtful events, Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) also show that the intensity of hurt is positively associated with relational quality when controlling for other predictors such as perceived intent and uncertainty. These researchers provide two possible explanations for such a positive relationship. First, the intensity of hurt can result in temporary relationship damage. Second, in highly interdependent relationships, people feeling more intense hurt could still want to maintain a connection with those who hurt them. In brief, Bachman and Guerrero's (2006b) explanations suggest that although hurt inevitably has a negative short-term effect on the relationship, it also has an adaptive function; that is, hurt can elicit relationship maintenance behavior, especially in highly intimate relationships.

Certainly, hurt feelings can indicate a desire to keep a close relationship going when constructive responses to hurtful interactions are engaged in (Lemay et al., 2012). Lemay and his colleagues (Lemay et al., 2012) explored the experience and relationship consequences of hurt through retrospective reports, a dyadic daily diary, and dyadic behavioral observation. Their findings indicate adaptive functions of hurt feelings; within close relationships, hurt involves dependence on a close partner, and vulnerability to hurt displays a desire to continue a relationship with the partner. As such, individuals' hurt feelings can elicit positive relationship consequences through the constructive behavior of their relational partner. Examples of constructive behaviors include expressing positive feelings about the relationship and asking a partner for reassurance. Moreover, Lemay et

al.'s findings suggest that highly committed people tend to feel greater hurt, and that hurt feelings convey high commitment to the partner who hurts them. Young's work (2004) yielded a similar result. In short, Lemay et al.'s work supports the assertion that hurt plays an important role in close relationships because hurt can be regarded as an alternative expression of commitment.

Given the evidence that communication is the major source of hurt, communication can also serve to alleviate hurt. One study conducted by Sanford (2007) found that soft emotions, including hurt feelings, predicted positive forms of communication while controlling for relationship satisfaction. People who experienced hurt and/or sadness attempted to understand their partners by listening carefully and calmly discussing relationship problems. This is also the case when people perceive their partner's sadness and/or hurt. Based on his findings, Sanford (2007) emphasized that soft emotions function to resolve relationship conflicts and reduce negative behaviors that could make situations worse. Nevertheless, soft emotions can have a negative influence on communicative responses when they become extreme or chronic. Although Sanford's (2007) results indicate soft emotion's positive functions, it remains unclear which specific soft emotion (hurt or sadness) has a greater amount of unique variance in positive communication. Taken together, the findings of previous studies show a positive link between hurt and positive communication; therefore, the hypotheses below are proposed:

H3a: The intensity of hurt is positively related to relational repair tactics.

H3b: The intensity of hurt is positively related to integrative communication.

H3c: The intensity of hurt is positively related to loyalty.

Intensity of hurt as a moderator. As noted earlier, hurt has been treated as either a predictor or an outcome in the study of hurt feelings (e.g., Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Burchell et al., 2016; Leary et al., 1998; Lemay et al., 2012; Malachowski &

Frisby, 2015; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Still, extant research has paid no attention to the moderating effect of hurt on behavioral and relational outcomes. Evidence from previous studies has indicated that hurt varies in intensity and can be associated with different communicative responses and relationship consequences. Yet studies examining the main effects of hurt do not consider the potential effects of cognitive and relational factors that can interact with hurt (e.g., Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). In fact, it is relatively unlikely that individuals' responses to hurtful events are based solely on the intensity of hurt. Rather, these responses are probably guided by the combination of emotional experiences, cognitive reactions, and/or relationship quality.

For example, research indicates a positive association between perceived intentionality and relational distancing (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). However, the magnitude of this link may become weaker when the intensity of hurt is taken into consideration. Put differently, when individuals experience extreme hurt and find that their partner hurt them deliberately, they may have a propensity to distance themselves from their partners. This is because more intense hurt might prompt victims to protect themselves from being hurt again. To the contrary, when people feel less intense hurt and still see their partner's hurtful behavior as intentional, they might have lower motivation to withdraw from the relationship. Feeling slight hurt might not pose a major threat to victims and the relationship, even when their partner is blameworthy.

Given that different levels of hurt can have different impacts on relevant outcomes, it is necessary to investigate the moderating effect of hurt in the course of hurtful interactions. The present study treats the intensity of hurt as a moderator in research questions and hypotheses to explore whether various degrees of hurt interact with other cognitive reactions and relational quality and then result in different

constructive communication and relationship consequences. To capture more nuances of hurt feelings, the intensity of hurt is viewed as a factor moderating relationships between other proximal factors (message intensity, perceived intentionality) and constructive communication.

Intensity of hurt × message intensity. Previous work by Young and her colleagues (Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005) reveals a positive link between message intensity and negative communication. Hurtful messages stated harshly may prompt victims to respond by cursing, arguing or yelling. By contrast, it is conceivable that hurtful messages using extreme language motivate victims not to display positive communication because these messages can diminish their self-concept (Infante & Wigley, 1986). The intensity of hurt is found to be positively associated with constructive communication (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b). Nonetheless, when the intensity of hurt and message intensity interact, it is likely that for individuals feeling more or less intense hurt, message intensity might inversely predict constructive communication because abrasive messages tend to be more hurtful. Still, whether the intensity of hurt has a moderating effect on the relationship between message intensity and constructive communication remains unclear. For this reason, the following research questions are advanced:

RQ1a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and relational repair tactics?

RQ1b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and integrative communication?

RQ1c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and loyalty?

Intensity of hurt × perceived intentionality. In a study investigating communicative responses to hurtful events in dating relationships, Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) posited that perceived intentionality was negatively related to constructive communication. Their results did not support this prediction. In addition, they explored the association between the intensity of hurt and constructive communication and found a positive link between these two variables. Although Bachman and his colleague did not examine the interaction effect of the intensity of hurt and perceived intentionality on constructive communication, it is possible that hurt may have a moderating effect on the aforementioned relationship. It is intuitively reasonable that hurtful messages that recipients view as intentional make victims reluctant to engage in positive communication because victims believe that perpetrators have little regard for victims' feelings. As such, perceived intentionality might be more strongly and negatively predictive of constructive communication for those feeling more intense hurt, whereas the association between perceived intentionality and constructive communication might be weaker for those experiencing less intense hurt. Nonetheless, whether the intensity of hurt moderates the relationship between perceived intentionality and constructive communication is still unclear. Hence, the following research questions are put forth:

RQ2a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and relational repair tactics?

RQ2b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and integrative communication?

RQ2c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and loyalty?

As a whole, a small number of studies have demonstrated that hurt feelings positively affect communication reactions and relationship outcomes. It is important to note, though, that hurt might not be adaptive, especially when people have doubts about their partners' acceptance and caring (Lemay et al., 2012; Murray, Holmes, & Collins, 2006). Because of this, in addition to proximal factors discussed above, relationship characteristics should partially explain the positive effects of hurtful communication, a topic discussed in more detail in the next section.

Distal Context Factors

According to the contextual model, distal factors refer to less transient and stable variables such as personality traits, chronic mood states, expectations, relational beliefs, and relationship qualities (Bradbury & Fincham, 1991). This section elaborates on one distal-level concept that is particularly relevant to constructive responses to hurtful messages and relationship consequences: communal strength.

Communal strength. Communal relationships are relationships where individuals feel responsible for the needs and welfare of partners, and they have no expectation of receiving comparable benefits in return (Clark & Mills, 1979; Mills & Clark, 1982). Typical examples of communal relationships consist of those between family members, romantic partners, and friends. In these types of relationships, people often assume that they have the same level of responsibility for each other's needs and welfare; however, communal relationships such as the parent-child relationship can also be asymmetrical. In a common example, a parent usually feels a greater responsibility than does his or her young child (Clark & Mills, 2012).

Communal relationships can differ in strength from one relationship to another. Mills and his colleagues (Mills, Clark, Ford, & Johnson, 2004) have defined communal

strength as the extent to which individuals are motivated to respond to a communal partner's needs. Compared to a weaker level of communal strength, greater communal strength is more beneficial for close relationships because people are willing to provide more support and help to partners in stronger communal relationships. Indeed, empirical evidence supports this notion. For instance, willingness to express emotion is positively related to communal strength. In one study investigating an association between dispositional communal orientation and willingness to express emotion, Clark and Finkel (2005b) noted that people are more likely to express positive and negative emotions to relational partners in stronger communal relationships. In addition to communal relationships, communal orientation is positively associated with willingness to express emotion. Moreover, these researchers found that a significant interaction effect between communal orientation and relationship type emerges in predicting willingness to express emotion that conveys vulnerability. In all, people having higher relative to lower communal orientation are willing to express more anxiety and fear in close relationships (i.e., communal relationships). However, in business relationships (i.e., exchange relationships), the effect of communal orientation on willingness to express anxiety and fear was minor. In essence, other evidence also indicates that emotion, whether negative or positive, is easily expressed to those who care about others' needs and welfare (Clark, Fitness, & Brissette, 2001; Clark & Taraban, 1991; Graham et al., 2008).

In addition to willingness to express emotion, communal strength is also tied to positive responses to others' emotional expression. One study by Clark and Taraban (1991) examined the influence of expressing happiness, sadness, and irritability on liking for another individual in communal versus exchange relationships. Their findings indicated that participants in communal relationships tend to react positively to those emotions. Similarly, another study revealed that people who desire a communal

relationship with another person are inclined to offer help in response to that person's sadness (Clark, Oullette, Powell, & Milberg, 1987). In addition, a high-strength communal relationship has a benign influence on relationship functioning. For example, Mills et al. (2004) found a positive association between communal strength and closeness as well as the spouse's marital satisfaction. In brief, communal relationships provide a context that encourages people to provide support for, to express more emotion to, and react more positively to relational partners. People within communal relationships also tend to feel more satisfied with and close to their partners.

To date, no direct evidence exists indicating the effects of communal strength on hurtful communication. Despite this, relationship characteristics have been treated as a crucial factor that influences individuals' experience of hurtful interaction in previous studies (e.g., Feeney, 2004; Feeney & Hill, 2006; McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Vangelisti et al., 2005). Evidence consistently demonstrates that relational quality is inversely associated with hurtful communication having negative outcomes. For instance, people in satisfying relationships tend to report feeling less hurt and are less likely to distance themselves from partners following a hurtful interaction than are those in dissatisfying relationships (Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998). By contrast, those dissatisfied with their relationships are more likely to experience greater hurt (Vangelisti et al., 2005), to recognize more face threat of honest but hurtful messages (Zhang & Stafford, 2008), and to exhibit negative behavior (Young et al., 2005). Indeed, good relationship quality prompts people to transform their judgment of their partners' negative behaviors (Murray & Holmes, 1993, 1997), which in turn reduces maladaptive relationship functioning (McLaren & Solomon, 2008, 2010).

In short, the strength of communal relationships should play an important role in shaping people's perceptions about, appraisals of, and reactions to hurtful messages.

Slightly different from other relationship variables such as relational satisfaction, communal relationships emphasize people's obligation to be responsive to a communal partner's welfare such that stronger communal relationships typically result in more positive outcomes (Clark et al., 2001; Clark et al., 1987). Drawing on such evidence, the current study posited that communal relationships might play a buffering role against the negative impact of hurtful messages. Moreover, within stronger communal relationships, people could tend to interpret and respond to their partners' hurtful messages in more constructive (or less destructive) ways. Thus, people are more likely to make less negative appraisals of hurtful messages and use positive communication during hurtful episodes. In a similar vein, they may be willing to express hurt feelings because those feelings represent their dependence, vulnerability, and need for support to relational partners. Since most studies have used relational quality or satisfaction and explored their association with hurt feelings, little evidence supports a connection between communal relationships and hurt feelings. Based on the findings concerning the effects of communal relationships on positive outcomes, the following research questions are raised:

RQ3a: Is communal strength positively related to relational repair tactics?

RQ3b: Is communal strength positively related to integrative communication?

RQ3c: Is communal strength positively related to loyalty?

Intensity of hurt × communal strength. In addition to examining the associations between communal strength and constructive communication after hurtful events, it is worthwhile to explore whether the intensity of hurt plays a moderating role in such associations. Hurt conveys both individuals' vulnerability and commitment to their partner (Lemay et al., 2012). People high in communal strength have a greater tendency to positively respond to their partner's negative emotions (Clark & Taraban, 1991). Consequently, people feeling greater hurt in stronger communal relationships may be

more willing to repair the relationship and thus more likely to engage in constructive communication. Given this, the association between communal strength and constructive communication might be stronger for those who experience more intense hurt than that for those who feel less intense hurt. To test whether the intensity of hurt and communal strength interact with constructive communication, the following research questions are postulated:

RQ4a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and relational repair tactics?

RQ4b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and integrative communication?

RQ4c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and loyalty?

THE EFFECTS OF PROXIMAL AND DISTAL CONTEXT FACTORS ON VICTIMS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERPETRATOR'S CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

The first part of this section reviews research on perpetrator communication in hurtful interactions, which includes discussions about victim-perpetrator differences in appraisals of hurtful interactions as well as the reason for assessing victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Next, the second part of this section elucidates the main and interaction effects of proximal context factors on victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Lastly, the third part of this section discusses the effects of a distal context factor as well as the interaction effects of the factor and the intensity of hurt on victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication.

Perpetrators' Responses to Hurtful Communication

A great deal of research on hurt is victim-centered, providing insight into the influence of victim's responses to hurtful communication. In addition to victims' communicative responses to hurtful interactions, perpetrator communication is influential in the dynamics and outcomes of hurtful interactions. It is important to note that whether perpetrators are willing to maintain and/or repair their relationship following hurtful episodes (relational transgressions) hinges upon various factors, including self-attributions and emotions, victims' emotional and cognitive reactions, and relationship quality (Hannon et al., 2010; Knight, in press; Lemay et al., 2012; Leunissen, De Cremer, Reinders Folmer, & van Dijke, 2013; Meyer & Rothenberg, 2004). Certainly, people engage in a variety of maintenance/repair behaviors including communication strategies and/or prosocial strategies when their relationships are going poorly and falling apart (Dindia & Baxter, 1987). Research on perpetrator communication has consistently shown that perpetrators have a tendency to utilize different strategies to repair their relationship after committing hurtful acts. For example, researchers and theorists found that after individuals engage in hurtful behavior, they are inclined to apologize for their wrongdoings and seek their partner's forgiveness (Hannon et al., 2010; Leary et al, 1998; Lemay et al. 2012; Meyer & Rothenberg, 2004). In addition to explicit apologies, perpetrators enact other amends-relevant behaviors such as appeasing the partner, offsetting hurt inflicted, or expressing remorse (Knight, in press; Meyer & Rothenberg, 2004). After making amends, perpetrators also make sure that their repair strategies are effective in a variety of ways (Dunleavy & Dougherty, 2013). For instance, perpetrators can confirm when they successfully conciliate their partner by explaining why they made hurtful remarks, correcting their behavior that inflicts hurt, or receiving affectionate

responses from the partners (e.g., kisses, hugs). In brief, perpetrators often try to mend the relationship with their partner by engaging in positive behavior.

Although extant research shows that perpetrators exhibit amends-related behavior to maintain their close relationships, perpetrators' cognitive, emotional, and relational factors also play important roles in whether they are willing to engage in relationship-constructive behavior. In a study investigating attribution and perpetrator communication strategies following a hurtful interaction in romantic relationships, Knight (in press) found that perpetrators' self-attributions significantly predicted communication strategies such as apology/concession, appeasement/positivity, and avoidance/silence. Specifically, attributed responsibility and feelings of guilt were positively associated with apology/concession, whereas attributed intent was negatively related to apology/concession. Put differently, perpetrators tended to apologize and express remorse when they viewed their hurtful acts as unintentional, felt more guilt, and took responsibility for those acts. Moreover, perpetrators also used appeasement/positivity (soothing the hurt partner by displaying positive/affectionate behavior) when they felt greater guilt and culpability but less responsibility for the hurtful acts. Conversely, perpetrators who perceived the hurtful acts as intentional and blameworthy were more likely to use avoidance/silence (avoiding discussion about the hurtful event).

In addition to perpetrators' cognition and emotion, relationship quality can shape perpetrators' willingness to engage in communicative behavior to repair relationships. Evidence from Meyer and Rothenberg's (2004) work supports the association between relationship quality and the use of repair strategies for regrettable messages. Their findings indicated that intimacy was positively related to offering apologies and excuses, but negatively related to remaining silent. That is, when feeling closer to their partners, perpetrators were inclined to express remorse and offer excuses for regretted messages,

but not to keep silence. Similarly, Meyer and Rothenberg (2004) found that stronger feelings of guilt prompted perpetrators to use apologies and nonverbal reactions such as covering one's mouth.

Although perpetrators' emotional reactions are one of antecedents affecting the use of repair strategies, victims' emotional reactions also play a crucial role in eliciting perpetrators' constructive behavior. In examining perpetrators' responses to hurtful events, Lemay et al. (2012) posited that since victims' hurt feelings signaled relational commitment and dependency to perpetrators, victims' expression of hurt could elicit perpetrators' constructive behavior. The results gleaned from retrospective accounts, daily reports, and behavioral observations demonstrated that victims' hurt was related to perpetrators' positive responses such as feeling guilty and empathy, becoming more caring, and displaying more constructive behavior (e.g., apologizing, being affectionate) as victims experienced hurt and afterwards. Furthermore, perpetrators' constructive responses to victims' hurt predicted positive relationship consequences. Sanford's (2007) work revealed similar findings.

Taken together, prior research has consistently indicated that perpetrators often engage in positive communication strategies to maintain/repair relationships following hurtful episodes. Yet previous studies comparing both victim and perpetrator perspectives indicate that self-serving biases existed in individuals' accounts of hurtful events. For example, Feeney and Hill (2006) examined victim-perpetrator differences in evaluations of hurtful encounters and found that role-related biases affected how participants evaluated and responded to hurtful events. Perpetrators tended to attribute less animosity and more remorse to themselves than victims to perpetrators. Likewise, Leary et al. (1998) found that perpetrators had a greater tendency to attribute more responsibility for the hurtful event to victims, view the hurtful event as less intentional, and report the use

of apologies more often than the victim reported. For these reasons, it is possible that perpetrators tend to report more positive responses to hurtful events due to social desirability or self-presentational concerns when researchers investigate perpetrator communication following hurtful events.

To reduce perpetrators' self-serving biases, perpetrators' constructive communication can be examined from the victims' perspective. Social perception plays an important role in ongoing close relationships (Clark, Von Culin, Clark-Polner, & Lemay, 2017; Kenny & Acitelli, 2001). Previous research notes that victims' perceptions (e.g., perceived intent, causes) shape how victims think about and react to hurtful interactions (Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Vangelisti et al., 2005). Therefore, when victims perceive that the perpetrator makes amends for hurtful incidents, the perpetrator's efforts to repair the relationship can be seen as effective. Although it can be argued that victims have their self-serving biases in reporting hurtful events, such biases can be seen as a methodological advantage that allows researchers to examine perpetrators' willingness to exhibit constructive communication in a more stringent manner. That is, victims usually attenuate positive responses by perpetrators and overestimate perpetrators' culpability and negative motivations (Feeney & Hill, 2006; Leary et al., 1998). As such, due to their role, victims are more likely to evaluate strictly the extent to which perpetrators engage in constructive communication in response to hurtful events. Victims' perceptions of perpetrators' constructive communication also reflect relational meanings that victims ascribe to constructive communication. For this reason, the present study investigated victims' perceptions of perpetrators' constructive communication rather than directly soliciting perpetrators' reports of their constructive communication.

It is worth noting that how victims perceive the perpetrator's constructive communication can vary as a function of their cognitive and emotional responses to

hurtful messages/behavior by the perpetrator as well as relationship quality. Given that proximal (message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt) and distal (communal strength) factors are posited to be associated with victims' constructive communication, it is highly likely that proximal and distal factors also play significant roles in their perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Hence, because of the focus of this dissertation, it is necessary to explore the link between these factors and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication (relational repair tactics, integrative communication, loyalty). In the following section, each of several proximal and distal context factors and their possible associations with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication will be discussed.

Proximal Context Factors

Message intensity. To date, no direct evidence exists indicating an association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Yet several studies on the intensity of hurtful messages (Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005) show that victims perceiving hurtful messages as more abrasive tend to engage in negative communication and interpret the messages more negatively. According to these findings, it is possible that when victims receive more caustic hurtful remarks from the perpetrator, they are relatively unlikely to expect him or her to exhibit positive behavior to make amends. Victims' pessimistic expectations may be based on perpetrators' ill intentions or personality traits. As a result, a negative association possibly exists between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. The following research questions are thus proposed:

RQ5a: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?

RQ5b: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?

RQ5c: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?

Perceived intentionality. Empirical evidence about perpetrator communication has demonstrated a negative association between perpetrators' intentionality and positive communication (Knight, in press; Leunissen et al., 2013). In particular, when perpetrators purposefully hurt their partner's feelings, they are inclined to engage in non-constructive communication such as avoidance and justification (Knight, in press). Accordingly, when victims perceive the perpetrator's hurtful behavior as intentional, they might anticipate that the perpetrator is less likely to display constructive communication to repair hurtful events. The following research questions are posed:

RQ6a: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?

RQ6b: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?

RQ6c: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?

Intensity of hurt. Research on hurt feelings indicates that the expression of hurt often signals victims' relational commitment and dependency on perpetrators and then induces them to respond constructively (Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). When perpetrators perceive that their partner experiences more intense hurt, they are more likely to make positive evaluations of victims, feel guilty, and engage in constructive behavior such as apologies (Lemay et al., 2012). Further, Sanford (2007) found evidence that individuals who perceived their partner's hurt tend to communicate with the partner

in a positive manner. Based on this account, it is plausible that when experiencing greater hurt feelings, victims tend to perceive the perpetrator displaying constructive communication in response to hurtful events. The following hypotheses are put forth:

H4a: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics.

H4b: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication.

H4c: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty.

This section has discussed how proximal factors could be associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. To decipher the complexity of hurtful communication, it is necessary to further examine whether such associations vary as a function of more or less intense hurt. As noted, people's behavioral responses to hurtful episodes should depend on the coordination of their emotion, cognition, and/or relationship characteristics. As a consequence, the interaction of the intensity of hurt and other proximal factors (message intensity, perceived intentionality) is likely to affect the extent to which individuals perceive that their partner engages in constructive communication following hurtful events. The following sections will discuss the interaction effects of the intensity of hurt with the other two proximal factors.

Intensity of hurt × message intensity. Previous studies reveal that when perceiving their partner's hurt feelings, perpetrators in close relationships are more likely to show positive communication (Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). Nevertheless, this association might not hold true for those using caustic statements that hurt the partner's feelings. Perpetrators (speakers) who say something harsh tend not to display constructive communication as a means of making amends following hurtful episodes,

likely because of their negative intentions or personality traits. But perceiving that their partners experience more intense hurt may predispose even these perpetrators to use constructive communication to repair relationships. Thus, it is intriguing to examine the extent to which victims tend to perceive perpetrators' constructive communication when hurt intensity and message intensity interact. Since little evidence to date supports the notion that the relationship between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication depends on the intensity of hurt, the following research questions are advanced:

RQ7a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?

RQ7b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?

RQ7c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?

Intensity of hurt × perceived intentionality. The intentionality associated with hurtful instances plays an important part in determining whether perpetrators engage in relationship-repairing behavior. In terms of perceived intentionality, perpetrators who purposefully hurt partners are often disinclined to engage in constructive communication (Knight, in press; Leunissen et al., 2013). However, there are times when perpetrators are likely to display reparative behavior because the victim's hurt signals to perpetrators that the victim is highly committed to the relationship and needs the perpetrators' reassurance and support (Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). When considering the interaction of the intensity of hurt with perceived intentionality, it must be asked, to what extent do victims perceive that the perpetrator is more or less likely to exhibit constructive communication?

To date, little empirical evidence supports this prediction; therefore, the following research questions are posed:

RQ8a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?

RQ8b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?

RQ8c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?

In addition to the importance of proximal factors to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication, distal context factors can have an impact on the extent to which victims view their partner's communicative responses as constructive. The following section will discuss how communal strength and the interaction between the intensity of hurt and communal strength are associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication.

Distal Context Factors

Communal strength. The nature of communal relationships is that people are willing to take care of their partners and satisfy the partners' needs and welfare unconditionally (Clark & Mills, 1979, 2012; Mills & Clark, 1982). Individuals in high-strength communal relationships typically provide more social support and respond more positively when facing unpleasant or difficult situations than those in weaker communal relationships (Clark & Taraban, 1991; Yoo, Clark, Lemay, Salovey, & Monin, 2011). Because of this, there is a probability that perpetrators in high communal strength relationships have a greater tendency to engage in relationship-restoring behavior after they perceive that they have hurt their partner's feelings. In this circumstance, victims

experiencing more intense hurt are more likely to perceive that the perpetrator engaged in constructive communication after hurtful episodes. Thus, the following hypotheses are raised:

H5a: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics.

H5b: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication.

H5c: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty.

Intensity of hurt × communal strength. According to the literature, high-strength communal relationships tend to have positive relational outcomes; for example, individuals provide more support and help to relational partners (Clark et al., 1987; Clark & Taraban, 1991). It is conceivable that compared to those in weaker communal relationships, perpetrators in stronger communal relationships have a greater inclination to respond positively to hurtful events, particularly when they are aware that their partners experienced more intense hurt. Furthermore, this could be the case when perpetrators observe less intense hurt of their partner. However, it is less clear whether the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication is contingent on the intensity of hurt. Recognizing this, the following hypotheses are put forth:

RQ9a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?

RQ9b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?

RQ9c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?

THE EFFECTS OF PROXIMAL AND DISTAL CONTEXT FACTORS ON RELATIONSHIP CONSEQUENCES OF HURTFUL COMMUNICATION

Although proximal and distal context factors shape the way people respond to hurtful communication, it is also critical to understand how these factors associate with relationship consequences following hurtful episodes. On the one hand, since hurtful experiences are unpleasant and evoked by relational devaluation and/or relational transgressions (Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti, 2001; Vangelisti & Young, 2000), hurt feelings can have negative implications for close relationships (Feeney, 2004; Leary et al., 1998). On the other hand, hurt can also have positive relationship outcomes if they are associated with constructive behavior, especially within the context of high quality relationships (Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007; Sanford & Rowatt, 2004). In addition to emotional experiences, the features of hurtful messages and cognitive processes are closely tied to relationship ramifications (Zhang & Stafford, 2008, 2009). To understand the benefits of hurtful communication, researchers need to investigate the connections between proximal and distal factors and relationship consequences (positive versus negative). In the following sections, how these factors are associated with relationship consequences is discussed.

Proximal Context Factors

Message intensity. Research on the link between message intensity and relationship consequences in the study of hurtful communication is limited. Two studies conducted by Young and her colleagues (2004; 2005) probed the role of message intensity in hurtful communication. Although they did not examine the relational

outcomes of message intensity, the findings have implicit implications for the association between message intensity and relationship consequences. In Young's (2004) work, message intensity was found to affect people's appraisals of hurtful messages. Hurtful messages high in harshness predispose individuals to interpret the hurtful messages in a less-positive (negative) way. Additionally, Young et al. (2005) found that message intensity predicted negative communication such as distributive communication, active distancing, and negative affect expression. The findings from these two studies indicate the maladaptive impact of message intensity on the interpretations of and responses to hurtful communication. Since negative evaluations of and responses to hurtful communication tend to be damaging to relationships (Feeney, 2004), message intensity likely has negative consequences for close relationships.

In addition, a study examining verbally aggressive communication from the target perspective implicitly supports such a possibility (Roper, Johnson, & Bostwick, 2017). Roper and his colleagues noted that male targets high in verbal aggressiveness were inclined to use emotive coping strategies. Such strategies that might involve reciprocal verbal aggression were then likely to bring about more relational harm. In short, Roper et al.'s (2017) work appears to support the notion that verbally aggressive communication can lead to negative relationship outcomes via emotive, non-repair strategies. As a whole, though research has yet to directly link message intensity to relationship consequences in the study of hurtful communication, the aforementioned studies appear to imply a potential connection between these two. To further understand whether message intensity is associated with positive and negative relationship consequences, the following research questions are put forward:

RQ10a: Is message intensity associated with positive relationship consequences?

RQ10b: Is message intensity associated with negative relationship consequences?

Perceived intentionality. Perceived intentionality is related to relational outcomes of hurtful communication. In examining the relational ramifications of honest but hurtful messages in close relationships, Zhang and Stafford (2009) found support for this association. Their findings revealed that perceived intentionality was positively related to negative relational outcomes and worries. That is, when victims saw hurtful messages as intentional, they had a tendency to hold disdain for their partners and worried about being hurt again. Perceived intentionality was more likely to weaken relationships. As previously noted, hurtful messages perceived as intentional tend to prompt victims to relationally distance themselves from perpetrators (Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Those who hurt their partners deliberately are inclined to engage in negative behaviors such as avoidance or silence (Knight, in press). Both relational distancing and avoidance/silence can have a negative impact on relationships. Taken together, the empirical evidence shows that perceived intentionality is associated with relationship consequences; hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6a: Perceived intentionality is inversely associated with positive relationship consequences.

H6b: Perceived intentionality is positively associated with negative relationship consequences.

Intensity of hurt. The majority of the literature shows that hurt can have negative relationship outcomes. For example, in a study concerning the interpersonal consequences of hurt, Leary et al. (1998) explored the associations between the intensity of hurt felt by victims and negative consequences. The researchers used four indicators to measure negative interpersonal outcomes: temporary relational damage, permanent relational damage, dislike, and distrust. Their findings showed that the intensity of hurt

was only positively related to temporary relational damage. That is, hurt feelings tended to weaken the relationship with a relational partner only temporarily.

Another study by Feeney (2004) examined the longer-term influences of hurtful interactions in couple relationships by using Leary et al.'s (1998) measure of relationship consequences. Feeney found that perceived intentionality and victims' destructive reactions were positively associated with maladaptive effects on the relationships, whereas perceived partner remorse showed an opposite relationship with those maladaptive effects. These findings demonstrate that people's attributions for and reactions to hurt influence relationship outcomes. When victims make negative evaluations of and/or display destructive behavior in response to hurtful messages/behavior from their partner, their relationships may be harmed. Conversely, when victims are aware of their partner's repentance, they may be more willing to repair relational problems, which in turn reduces the negative impact of hurtful interactions on the relationship.

Zhang and Stafford (2009) examined the associations between the antecedents and relational outcomes of honest but hurtful messages. They found that hurt was positively associated with negative relational outcomes and worries. People who experienced hurt tended to worry about being hurt again. Moreover, greater hurt tended to result in more negative relational consequences (i.e., distrust, dislike, and relational damage) in romantic relationships, relative to friendships. This suggests that hurtful messages had more detrimental effects on romantic relationships than friendships, which supports the notion that hurt feelings may be easily elicited in more intimate contexts (Leary et al., 1998; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998). Importantly, although both Leary et al.'s (1998) and Feeney's (2004) studies provide insight into the impact of hurtful interactions on relationship consequences, the measures of relationship consequences in

both studies focus on negative outcomes such that there is a likelihood that the positive effect of hurt feelings might be overlooked.

In addition to the negative impact of hurt on close relationships, a small number of studies have shown that hurt can benefit personal relationships. Zhang and Stafford (2008) argued that honest but hurtful evaluative messages can result in positive relational outcomes; because these hurtful messages are honest, they can enhance or protect the message recipients. Zhang and Stafford's results support the argument they advanced, indicating a positive association between perceived honesty and positive relational outcomes. Hurtful messages perceived as honest were conducive to increasing victims' trust and liking of their romantic partners and to strengthening the relationship.

Additionally, Zhang and Stafford (2009) found that perceived enhancement and honesty motives predicted positive relational outcomes in romantic relationships. In other words, when partners were believed to make hurtful remarks due to good intentions, victims were more willing to trust and like their partners, and the relationship was strengthened by those hurtful remarks. As a whole, Zhang and Stafford's studies (2008, 2009) shed light on the adaptive effects of hurtful communication by examining the link between emotional and cognitive reactions and positive relational outcomes. Indeed, hurt feelings induced by relational devaluation in close relationships may have positive relational consequences because individuals are motivated to repair their close relationships by displaying pro-relationship behavior once they identify any relational threats (Leary, 2005; Leary & Downs, 1995).

A study focusing on interpersonal consequences of hurt feelings lends further support to this notion (Lemay et al., 2012). Lemay et al. (2012) argued that the negative effects of hurt feelings observed in research on hurt occur due to methodological issues, for example, participants tend to remember and recall hurtful events that are salient to

them, but not events that include reparative behavior. By having participants recall a hurtful episode that transpired within the past month or so, the results of their study indicated that from both victim and perpetrator perspectives, victims' hurt significantly predicted positive outcomes for both romantic relationships and friendships. Specifically, higher degrees of hurt made both interactants care more about the relationship and treat each other better. By conducting additional analyses, Lemay et al. (2012) found that for victims, hurt resulted in positive relationship outcomes primarily through perpetrators' constructive behavior. To sum up, according to the aforementioned studies, hurt feelings can produce both positive and negative consequences for close relationships. Therefore, the following hypotheses are presented:

H7a: The intensity of hurt is associated with positive relationship consequences.

H7b: The intensity of hurt is associated with negative relationship consequences.

Hurtful experiences play a central role in the outcomes of personal relationships. But as described earlier, the combination of emotional and cognitive responses can influence on communicative behavior during and after hurtful episodes; likewise, this interaction effect can influence relationship consequences. Thus, it is beneficial to explore whether the associations between message intensity and perceived intentionality (proximal factors) and relationship consequences depend on the intensity of hurt. The following sections discuss hurt's moderating role in relational outcomes.

Intensity of hurt × message intensity. Several studies directly and indirectly examining message intensity have implied that particularly harsh hurtful messages can have a detrimental effect on relational outcomes (Roper et al., 2017; Young, 2004; Young et al., 2005). In addition, hurt feelings are found to result in positive and negative outcomes for close relationships (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Leary et al., 1998; Lemay et al., 2012; McLaren & Solomon, 2008, 2010; Sanford, 2007; Zhang & Stafford,

2008). Still, current research has yet to investigate whether the extent to which message intensity affects relationship consequences is a function of the intensity of hurt. Therefore, to better understand the interaction between the intensity of hurt and message intensity on positive and negative relationship consequences, the following research questions are raised:

RQ11a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and positive relationship consequences?

RQ11b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and negative relationship consequences?

Intensity of hurt × perceived intentionality. Hurtful communication perceived as intentional is linked to negative relationship outcomes. People who view their partner's hurtful acts as deliberate are more likely to distrust and dislike the perpetrator; such intentional acts also harm the relationship with the perpetrator (Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Likewise, the magnitude of link between perceived intentionality and relationship consequences can change depending upon different levels of hurt feelings. Perceived intentionality may be more likely to predict relationship outcomes when victims experience more intense hurt than when victims feel less intense hurt. Even so, no research has looked into this moderation association. With this in mind, the following research questions are posed:

RQ12a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and positive relationship consequences?

RQ12b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and negative relationship consequences?

Distal Context Factors

Communal strength. Stronger communal bonds motivate people to give their partner non-contingent benefits and improve their partner's welfare; these people have a tendency to engage in positive behavior in response to unpleasant interpersonal encounters. For example, individuals in communal relationships are more likely to display positive responses to others' negative emotions (Clark & Taraban, 1991; Yoo et al., 2011). In a study probing pro-relationship behavior in friendships, Mattingly, Oswald, and Clark (2011) argued that the enactment of routine relationship maintenance behavior tends to occur in communal relationships because individuals often emphasize partner-oriented preferences over self-oriented preferences. Mattingly et al.'s findings support this prediction. Indeed, communal relationships are characterized by norms of mutual responsiveness (Mills & Clark, 2001). Moreover, people in stronger communal relationships are more relationally satisfied (Mills et al., 2004).

As a result, it is conceivable that communal relationships may positively influence hurtful interactions in that people who behave communally have a predisposition to exhibit constructive communication after they experience hurt. It should be noted, however, that although some researchers have mentioned that reparative behavior for hurtful episodes is likely to occur in communal relationships (e.g., Feeney, 2009; Lemay et al., 2012), the effect of communal relationships on the outcomes of hurtful communication have not yet been empirically supported. Investigating the effects of communal strength on the relationship consequences associated with hurtful events will inform the literature and increase understanding of the interpersonal processes associated with hurtful communication. As a consequence, the following research questions are advanced:

RQ13a: Is communal strength related to positive relationship consequences?

RQ13b: Is communal strength related to negative relationship consequences?

Intensity of hurt × communal strength. In addition to exploring the associations between communal strength and relationship consequences, it is crucial to examine whether communal strength and the intensity of hurt jointly affect relationship outcomes. Given that communal relationships typically provide a communal partner support and care unconditionally and meet the partner's needs (Clark & Mills, 1979; Mills & Clark, 1982), communal strength should be positively associated with positive relationship consequences and inversely with negative relationship consequences, regardless of whether more or less intense hurt is reported. Again, to date, no direct evidence has shown such interaction effects on the outcomes of close relationships. The following research questions are thus put forth:

RQ14a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and positive relationship consequences?

RQ14b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and negative relationship consequences?

LIMITATIONS IN CURRENT LITERATURE ON HURTFUL COMMUNICATION

A review of research on hurt feelings suggests that hurt feelings are often not found to have adaptive social functions. Some researchers (e.g., Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007) have noted that the absence of positive effects of hurt may have been due to methodological factors.

First, the majority of studies on hurtful communication might have only examined hurtful interactions that elicited extreme hurt feelings (e.g., Burchell et al., 2016; Feeney, 2004, 2005; Leary et al., 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; Miller & Roloff, 2014; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Vangelisti et al., 2005).

Retrospective reports of emotion are a primary source of data used to investigate the experience of hurt feelings. Participants are instructed to recall any past hurtful interaction and then describe subsequent reactions and outcomes following those interactions. Given such instructions, participants are likely to recall personal experiences that are extremely hurtful because people tend to remember personal relevance that is unfinished (Lemay et al., 2012; Martin & Tesser, 1996). Such hurtful episodes often include infidelity or betrayal, which typically are associated with negative outcomes. To avoid overlooking the effects of relatively minor hurtful events, Lemay et al. (2012) asked participants to recall hurtful experiences that they had had within the past month. The researchers found that hurt had positive effects, such as triggering perpetrators' constructive responses and was associated with positive relationship consequences. Still, the possibility remains that some participants could encounter a serious hurtful incident directly before they take part in a hurt study. Such an event could offset the association between hurt and constructive responses. This issue can be solved by asking participants to recollect two or three hurtful interactions that they recently experienced (see Sanford, 2007; Sanford & Rowatt, 2004).

The second methodological factor is that semantic emotion knowledge (situation-specific beliefs)—how a specific event is likely to impact one's emotion—can bias participants' reports of their perceptions and interpretations of hurtful communication and even relational outcomes (Robinson & Clore, 2002a, 2002b). According to Robinson and Clore (2002a), people's ability to remember contextual details diminishes quickly over time, so that episodic recall is often based on semantic memory (i.e., situation-specific beliefs) when episodic memory becomes inaccessible. This issue partially explains the finding in extant hurt research that the associations between hurt and negative outcomes are stronger than those with positive outcomes (e.g., Bippus & Young, 2012; Feeney,

2004; McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Young, 2004; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). To reduce retrospective biases stemming from semantic emotion memory, participants in this study were asked to identify and describe hurtful events that happened recently. But it is critical to note that although hurtful interactions are a common phenomenon in close relationships, not all participants may have encountered hurtful incidents recently. In some cases, if participants had not yet experienced the incidents recently, they likely selected and reported hurtful interactions that happened in the distant past. Given this, the best way to reduce the potential recall bias is to control for recency (i.e., the time since the hurtful event had occurred) while analyzing data.

The third limitation is that most studies on hurtful communication focus more on negative behavioral responses than positive ones (e.g., Leary et al., 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; McLaren & Solomon, 2008, 2010; Miller & Roloff, 2014; Vangelisti & Young, 2000; Young et al., 2005). Intuitively, hurt is unpleasant and involves distressing feelings, which are then labeled as negative emotion. Most researchers and scholars have paid much attention to understanding the negative effects of hurt on individual and relational well-being. Accordingly, the potential adaptive role of hurt has received less attention. Although some previous influential work has examined a few positive responses to being hurt (e.g., Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Young et al., 2005), most measures of behavioral reactions tap negative reactions. Recently, some researchers have turned their attention to positive social functions of hurt feelings. For instance, Lemay et al. (2012) and Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) employed measures tapping constructive communication in response to hurt, finding that hurt can elicit positive communication. As a result, to obtain a clear picture of whether hurt feelings can benefit close relationships, measures assessing a broader range of positive behavioral responses as well as positive and negative relationship outcomes should be employed.

Taking into consideration the limitations discussed above, the present study requires participants to recall and describe two recent hurtful conversations with the same intimate partner for two reasons. First, soliciting one major and one minor hurtful episode can capture a broader range of hurtful interactions in that hurtful events can vary in severity; some are major, and others are relatively minor. In other words, it is easy to observe how hurtful experiences affect behavioral responses and relational outcomes in respective major and minor hurtful episodes. Second, asking participants to recall recent events can reduce recall biases from situation-specific beliefs. The reason the current research does not require participants to recall two hurtful events within a specific time frame is that some participants may not encounter two recent hurtful interactions. Forcing them to do so could quite possibly yield methodological artifacts. In addition, some participants are likely to recall hurtful events that took place several months or even years ago if they have not yet had recent hurtful events. To minimize the effect of situation-specific beliefs, the elapsed time since the event is therefore treated as a control in data analysis.

In addition, because of the focus of this dissertation, a wider array of positive communication in response to being hurt is surveyed. Most research except for Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) investigating the link between hurt and behavioral responses covers a limited range of positive behavior (e.g., Feeney, 2004; Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007; Young et al., 2005). As a consequence, positive social functions of hurtful communication might not have been clearly observed. To address this issue, Bachman and Guerrero's (2006b) measure tapping three types of constructive communication (relational repair tactics, integrative communication, loyalty) is treated as outcome variables in an effort to capture the positive side of hurtful communication.

Chapter 3: Method

The current research seeks to explicate the positive side of hurtful communication by investigating how the proximal (interaction-specific variables) and distal contexts (a relationship variable) shaped pro-relationship behavioral responses and relationship consequences. This chapter describes the method employed to recruit participants, the procedures designed to capture participants' hurtful experiences in episodes with their current relational partners, as well as the instruments assessing participants' emotion, cognition, and behavior in response to hurtful episodes.

PARTICIPANTS

The researcher recruited a community sample of 530 individuals via Amazon Mechanical Turk, an online survey website, who then completed the online survey. Relative to college student samples, samples (also known as workers) from Amazon Mechanical Turk have a variety of demographics and can provide quality data, especially when workers' approval ratings on the Human Intelligence Task (HIT) are above 95% (Peer, Vosgerau, & Acquisti, 2014; Sheehan, 2017). Participants received minor (50 cents) compensation for completing the survey, which is the standard compensation for a person participating in a brief, online survey.

To ensure all participants' involvement in a romantic relationship at the time of this study, they were required to have been in a dating relationship for at least three months or to be currently engaged or married. Given that each participant received instructions to recall two different hurtful interactions, those who did not report any hurtful interactions ($n = 11$) and who could only recall one rather than two hurtful interactions ($n = 5$) were eliminated from the data set. Based on concerns about recall accuracy, one participant who described a major hurtful event that transpired 27 years

ago was removed from the data. Fourteen participants did not remember the length of time since the hurtful episode ($n = 5$ for both major and minor episodes, $n = 2$ for the major episode, and $n = 7$ for the minor episode). For the rest of the participants, the average time since the major hurtful episode had occurred was 18.96 weeks ($SD = 43.21$, ranging from one day to 480 weeks) while the average time since the minor hurtful episode had occurred was 9.67 weeks ($SD = 23.59$, ranging from one day to 336 weeks).

The final sample consisted of 513 participants (150 males and 363 females). The average age of the sample was 35.44 years ($SD = 11.04$), ranging from 19 to 74 years. The majority of participants were White/Caucasian (77.2%), followed by African American/Black (7.6%), Hispanic/Latino(a) (7.2%), Asian/Pacific Islander (4.5%), and other (3.5%). The average length of their relationship with their relational partner was 8.16 years ($SD = 8.44$), ranging from 9.6 months to 52.67 years. As for relationship status, 34.8% of the participants ($n = 179$) were dating, 49.1% ($n = 252$) were married, and 16% ($n = 82$) were engaged. About half of participants' highest level of formal education was a college degree including 2-year and 4-year degrees (49.7%), followed by some college but no degree (25.1%), a graduate degree (16.5%), a high school degree (8.2%), and less than high school (0.5%). In terms of occupation, nearly one-third of the participants engaged in management or professional work (31.2%), followed by service (18.5%), sales and office (14.8), unemployed (13.8%), student (9%), government (4.1%), and other, including manual labor-related work and retired (8.5%).

PROCEDURES

The online survey employed in the present study was administered using *Qualtrics* software. Once interested participants began the online survey, they were directed to read a consent form. After agreeing to take part in the online survey, they first

answered a set of questions to indicate the length and type of their relationship, as well as their partner's age, sex, and first name (see Appendix A). The purposes of asking participants to answer these questions were to: (a) ensure that participants had either been in a dating relationship of at least three months or were currently engaged or married at the time of this study, and (b) assist them in recounting hurtful episodes as accurately as possible. After finishing this initial set of questions, they provided the information about their current relationship status (i.e., communal strength) with the partner before hurt-eliciting procedures began. To avoid order effects, the measure of communal strength was randomly placed either before the questionnaire for the first hurtful interaction recall or after the questionnaire for the second hurtful interaction recall.

Next, because this study was designed to manipulate the intensity of hurtful experiences, so the survey directed participants to recall two hurtful interactions that transpired recently. One was a major hurtful episode where their relational partner said something that was *extremely* hurtful. The other was a minor hurtful episode where the partner said something that *slightly* hurt their feelings. To avoid order effects, two versions of the questionnaires were created. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two versions. In the first version, participants were instructed first to describe a major hurtful interaction; they then answered a set of measures assessing their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses as well as relationship outcomes. After completing the measures, participants proceeded to recollect a minor hurtful interaction and then complete the same set of measures. Conversely, people assigned to the second versions first recalled a minor hurtful interaction and answered a set of questionnaires assessing their emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses as well as relationship outcomes. After that, these participants described a major hurtful interaction and responded to the same set of questionnaires.

Both versions of the hurtful episode recall consisted of two parts. Following the hurt-eliciting procedure used in previous studies (e.g., Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Vangelisti & Young, 2000), the first part of both versions started with a set of open-ended questions that asked participants to recall and describe the most recent incident that hurt their feelings (see Appendix B). After describing the situation and what led to it, participants next reconstructed the hurtful conversations in a script-like format (e.g., “He/she said...” and “I said...”), put a star next to the statements or questions that they found hurtful, and estimated the time since the conversation had occurred. In the second part of the questionnaires, participants rated their emotional experiences, cognitive reactions, communication responses, and relationship consequences for the hurtful interaction. All measures were counterbalanced to reduce order effects. Finally, participants provided their background information.

MEASURES

Message intensity. To assess the intensity of the hurtful messages, five items from Young (2004) were employed. Participants responded to the items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (see Appendix C), ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores represented more intense, harsh messages. Sample items include “The words he/she used were extreme” and “The language he/she used was harsh.” One item, “The statement/question was stated gently,” was reverse coded. Scores for each respondent were computed by averaging the responses to form two composites: one for major hurtful episodes ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.49$, $\alpha = .88$) and one for minor hurtful episodes ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 1.44$, $\alpha = .86$).

Perceived intentionality. Participants completed a three-item measure of perceived intentionality (see Appendix D; Young & Bippus, 2001). They were instructed

to rate the extent to which participants perceived hurtful messages as intentional on 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated a greater degree of perceived intentionality. Sample items are “He/she intentionally hurt my feelings” and “He/she did not know this would hurt my feelings.” One item, “He/she did not know this would hurt my feelings,” was reverse coded. The ratings on the items were averaged to create a measure of perceived intentionality for major hurtful episodes ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 1.76$, $\alpha = .85$) and for minor hurtful episodes ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.68$, $\alpha = .87$).

Intensity of hurt. The intensity of hurt was assessed using Vangelisti and Young’s (2000) two-item measure (see Appendix E), which asked participants to rate the degree to which the messages they recalled were hurtful and the degree to which they caused emotional pain on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *not at all hurtful/painful*, 7 = *extremely hurtful/painful*). Higher scores indicated more intense hurt feelings. The two items are: “How hurtful was the hurtful statement/question?” and “How emotionally painful was the hurtful statement/question?” Scores for each respondent were calculated by averaging responses to form a composite for the intensity of hurt for major hurtful episodes ($M = 5.82$, $SD = 1.22$, $\alpha = .88$) and for minor hurtful episodes ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.50$, $\alpha = .89$).

Communal strength. To assess the communal strength of participants’ relationship, participants completed a 10-item measure (Mills et al., 2004). Respondents rated each item on a 7-point Likert-type scale (see Appendix F), ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Sample items are: “How high a priority for you is meeting the needs of [perpetrator name]” and “How happy do you feel when doing something that helps [perpetrator name].” Of these items, three were reverse coded (i.e., “How readily can you put the needs of [perpetrator name] out of your thoughts?”, “How

reluctant would you be to sacrifice for [perpetrator name]?", and "How easily could you accept not helping [perpetrator name]?"). Higher scores represented stronger communal strength. The ratings were averaged to create an index of communal strength ($M = 5.53$, $SD = 1.15$, $\alpha = .91$).

Constructive communication. Participants completed a 19-item measure designed to assess their perceptions of their own communicative responses to being hurt as well as their perceptions of their partner's communicative responses to being hurt (see Appendix G). This measure, developed by Bachman and Guerrero (2006b), consists of three subscales concerning constructive communication: relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty. The four subscales regarding destructive communication assess de-escalation, distributive communication, revenge, and active distancing. Because the focus of the current study was on constructive communication in response to hurtful messages, the current research only used the subscales assessing relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty.

The subscale measuring relational repair tactics consisted of seven items. Sample items for victims' relational repair tactics include "I acted more affectionate toward him/her" and "I apologized for my previous behavior." Sample items for victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics are "He/she acted more affectionate toward me" and "He/she apologized for his/her previous behavior." The subscale assessing integrative communication contained seven items. Sample items for victims' integrative communication are "I tried to talk to him/her and reach an understanding" and "I explained my feelings to him/her." Sample items for victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication include "He/she tried to talk to me and reach an understanding" and "He/she explained his/her feelings to me." The subscale tapping loyalty consisted of five items. Sample items for victims' loyalty consist

of “I waited and hoped that things would get better” and “I hoped if I just hung in there, things would get better.” Sample items for victims’ perceptions of the perpetrator’s loyalty are “He/she waited and hoped that things would get better” and “He/she hoped if he/she just hung in there, things would get better.” Items on each scale were completed on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Higher scores indicated a greater tendency to enact constructive communication.

For victims’ constructive communication, the total scores for major and minor hurtful episodes, respectively, were averaged to index relational repair tactics (Major: $M = 3.03$, $SD = 1.52$, $\alpha = .91$; Minor: $M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.45$, $\alpha = .91$), integrative communication (Major: $M = 4.68$, $SD = 1.55$, $\alpha = .91$; Minor: $M = 4.36$, $SD = 1.50$, $\alpha = .90$), and loyalty (Major: $M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.42$, $\alpha = .87$; Minor: $M = 4.37$, $SD = 1.43$, $\alpha = .88$). For victims’ perceptions of the perpetrator’s constructive communication, the total scores for major and minor hurtful episodes, respectively, were averaged to index relational repair tactics (Major: $M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.55$, $\alpha = .90$; Minor: $M = 3.36$, $SD = 1.44$, $\alpha = .90$), integrative communication (Major: $M = 4.15$, $SD = 1.61$, $\alpha = .92$; Minor: $M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.52$, $\alpha = .91$), and loyalty (Major: $M = 4.19$, $SD = 1.52$, $\alpha = .90$; Minor: $M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.50$, $\alpha = .90$).

Relationship consequences. To assess the consequences of hurtful incidents, the survey used an 11-item measure developed by Lemay et al. (2012) (see Appendix H). To ensure that participants’ responses reflect accurate relationship consequences due to each of two specific hurtful interactions they recalled, one statement (“Please rate each statement below to describe the consequences resulting from this hurtful conversation”) appeared in the instruction for this measure. For the sake of conciseness, a minor modification of the measure was made by removing a phrase (i.e., “as a result of this event”) from each item. Seven of the items assessed positive relationship consequences

of the hurtful interaction, while four items measured negative relationship consequences of the hurtful interaction. Sample items concerning positive relationship consequences are “Overall our relationship is stronger” and “I treat [perpetrator name] better.” Sample items for negative relationship consequences include “[perpetrator name] cares less about our relationship” and “Overall, our relationship is damaged.” Participants completed the 11 items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Scores for major hurtful episodes were averaged to index positive relationship consequences ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 1.23$, $\alpha = .84$) and negative relationship consequences ($M = 3.06$, $SD = 1.48$, $\alpha = .82$). Scores for minor hurtful episodes were averaged to create two indexes: one for positive relationship consequences ($M = 3.90$, $SD = 1.20$, $\alpha = .84$) and one for negative relationship consequences ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 1.43$, $\alpha = .84$).

Demographic information. Each participant completed a questionnaire about his or her age, sex, ethnicity, education level, and occupation. See Appendix I for a copy of the questionnaire.

Chapter 4: Results

This current research is aimed at understanding the positive effects of hurtful communication by investigating how characteristics of hurtful messages (i.e., proximal factors) shape constructive communication behaviors (i.e., relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty) following hurtful interactions and by exploring whether communal strength (i.e., the distal factor) has an influence on these communication behaviors. Before testing the primary hypotheses and research questions, a series of preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the descriptive statistics and normality of all primary variables and to check the manipulation of the intensity of individuals' hurt feelings. To examine the main and interaction effects of the proximal and distal factors, path analyses with observed variables were conducted using *Mplus 7.4* (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012) with the maximum likelihood estimation.

To evaluate whether the hypothesized model fit the data adequately, five model fit indices were used: (a) model chi-square; (b) the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA); (c) the comparative fit index (CFI); (d) the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); and (e) the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). Application of the following criteria aided in determining goodness of fit: the relative chi-square value (χ^2/df) of less than 3.00; CFI and TLI values greater than .95; and RMSEA and SRMR values of less than .08 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Kline, 2016). Given that the chi-square statistic is sensitive to sample size, the relative chi-square statistic was used in the present study.

PRELIMINARY ANALYSES

First, the normality of sample data was assessed by inspecting the skewness and kurtosis of all primary variables. When data are normally distributed, the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis should be less than two (Terrell, 2012). All variables' absolute

skewness and kurtosis values were less than two, indicating that the data were normally distributed.

Second, the descriptive statistics of all primary variables were examined to provide insight into the data. Table 1 displays the means and standard deviations of the primary variables. To understand the associations between the primary variables and the potential impact of covariates (i.e., variables regarding participants' demographic and relational information), zero-order correlations among all study variables were examined. Before performing the correlation analysis, two variables (i.e., relationship type and sex) were dummy coded. For sex, males were recoded as 0 and females as 1. For relationship type, two dummy codes were created in which engaged relationships were compared with dating relationships (dating = 1, married = 0, engaged = 0) and marital relationships (married = 1, dating = 0, engaged = 0).

Table 2 includes the correlations among all variables under investigation. Only correlations regarding key variables in respective major and minor hurtful episodes are reported below. For major hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt was positively associated with message intensity ($r = .43, p < .001$), perceived intentionality ($r = .34, p < .001$), communal strength ($r = .12, p = .01$), and negative relationship consequences ($r = .14, p = .002$). The intensity of hurt was negatively associated with relational repair tactics ($r = -.14, p = .002$), but positively with loyalty ($r = .14, p = .002$) and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty ($r = .10, p = .02$). Communal strength was positively correlated with relational repair tactics ($r = .09, p = .04$), integrative communication ($r = .32, p < .001$), loyalty ($r = .20, p < .001$), victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($r = .24, p < .001$), and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty ($r = .16, p < .001$). Also, communal strength was negatively linked to perceived

intentionality ($r = -.20, p < .001$), but positively to positive relationship consequences ($r = .18, p < .001$), but inversely to negative relationship consequences ($r = -.48, p < .001$).

For minor hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt was positively associated with message intensity ($r = .44, p < .001$), perceived intentionality ($r = .29, p < .001$), positive relationship consequences ($r = .09, p = .04$), and negative relationship consequences ($r = .28, p < .001$). Moreover, the intensity of hurt was positively related to integrative communication ($r = .18, p < .001$), loyalty ($r = .24, p < .001$), and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty ($r = .16, p < .001$). Communal strength was positively correlated with integrative communication ($r = .24, p < .001$), loyalty ($r = .12, p = .01$), victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($r = .14, p = .002$), and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty ($r = .12, p = .01$). Also, communal strength was inversely tied to message intensity ($r = -.11, p < .010$), perceived intentionality ($r = -.31, p < .001$), and negative relationship consequences ($r = -.49, p < .001$), but positively to positive relationship consequences ($r = .14, p = .001$).

In addition, two demographic variables (sex and age), two relational variables (relational type and length), and time since the event from the correlation analysis related significantly with some of characteristics of hurtful messages, communal strength, constructive communication, and relationship consequences. Therefore, these stated variables were treated as control variables when analyzing research hypotheses and questions. See Table 2 for the significant correlations.

Third, the present study required participants to recall one major and one minor hurtful interaction with their same romantic partner. To ensure that these different hurtful interactions produced the expected differences in emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational outcomes, a series of paired-sample *t* tests were conducted. The intensity of hurt that participants reported in extremely hurtful interactions ($M = 5.82, SD = 1.22$) was

significantly higher than that which participants reported in slightly hurtful interactions ($M = 4.20, SD = 1.50$), $t(512) = 22.81, p < .001, d = 1.01$. The means of the other primary variables concerning emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and relational outcomes in major hurtful episodes were significantly higher than those in minor hurtful episodes (see Table 1 for the significant differences). The means of a behavioral variable (i.e., relational repair tactics), however, did not differ between minor and major hurtful episodes, $t(512) = 0.41, p = .68$. The difference between time since the major event and time since the minor event was also probed. The results of a paired-samples t test showed that time since the major event ($M = 19.16$ weeks, $SD = 43.48$) was significantly higher than time since the minor event ($M = 9.69$ weeks, $SD = 23.63$), $t(498) = 4.78, p < .001, d = .21$. Overall, the manipulation of the major and minor hurtful interactions was effective. In addition, the means of other predictors and outcomes for major hurtful episodes differed significantly from those for minor hurtful episodes. See Table 1 for the significant differences.

MAIN ANALYSES

Given that the prompt required each participant to recall one major and one minor hurtful episode, the residual terms of endogenous variables were allowed to covary in each path model because they are equivalent constructs assessing the same behavior/outcomes in different hurtful episodes. Although the endogenous variables had the shared variance explained in the path models, they might also share something unexplained by the models. Likewise, all exogenous variables were allowed to covary. Specifications of such correlations between the exogenous variables and between the endogenous variables can partial out the additional sources of dependency such as personality effects. In addition, the preliminary analysis yielded significant relationships

between both demographic and relational variables and proximal and distal factors, so it was necessary to control for these covariates (i.e., sex, age, relationship type, relationship length, time since the major hurtful event, and time since the minor hurtful event) when analyzing the research questions and hypothesis of interest. To reduce the number of parameters estimated in the path models, summary data (i.e., partial correlation matrices with the means and standard deviations of the primary variables) were used as the input for *Mplus* to conduct path analyses. A partial correlation analysis was performed with the aforementioned covariates before analyzing each path model.

PROXIMAL AND DISTAL EFFECTS ON VICTIMS' CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

To probe the main and interaction effects of proximal and distal factors on victims' constructive communication, the first hypothesized model (see Figure 1a) was tested. The model consisted of seven exogenous variables (message intensity, perceived intentionality, and the intensity of hurt for each major and minor hurtful episode; and communal strength) and six interaction terms as simultaneous predictors of six endogenous variables (victims' constructive communication: relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty for each major and minor hurtful episode). The interaction terms were calculated using the intensity of hurt and other proximal (i.e., message intensity and perceived intentionality) and distal factors (i.e., communal strength): Hurt \times Message Intensity, Hurt \times Perceived Intentionality, and Hurt \times Communal Strength for each hurtful condition. All primary variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms. A partial correlation matrix with the means and standard deviations of the primary variables (see Table 3) was used as the input for this proposed path model. Examination of the model fit indices indicated that Model 1 showed a good fit to the data, $\chi^2(36, N = 513) = 53.78, p = .03, \chi^2/df = 1.49$;

RMSEA = .031 (90% CI = .010, .047); CFI = .984; TLI = .959; SRMR = .025. In the following section, the main and interaction effects of the proximal and distal factors will be described. The results from this path analysis appear in Figure 1b and Table 4.

Main Effects

H1 posited that message intensity is negatively correlated with relational repair tactics (H1a), integrative communication (H1b), and loyalty (H1c). Findings of the path analysis revealed that, in both major and minor hurtful episodes, message intensity was not significantly related to relational repair tactics (Major: $B = -.08$, $\beta = -.07$, $p = .09$; Minor: $B = -.01$, $\beta = -.01$, $p = .79$), integrative communication (Major: $B = -.06$, $\beta = -.06$, $p = .20$; Minor: $B = .05$, $\beta = .05$, $p = .27$), or loyalty (Major: $B = -.06$, $\beta = -.07$, $p = .15$; Minor: $B = .05$, $\beta = .05$, $p = .25$). Thus, H1a, H1b, and H1c were not confirmed.

H2 proposed that perceived intentionality is negatively linked to relational repair tactics (H2a), integrative communication (H2b), and loyalty (H2c) following hurtful episodes. According to the path analysis for Model 1, in major hurtful episodes, perceived intentionality did not significantly predict relational repair tactics ($B = .01$, $\beta = .01$, $p = .83$), integrative communication ($B = -.004$, $\beta = -.01$, $p = .92$), or loyalty ($B = .06$, $\beta = .08$, $p = .08$). In minor hurtful episodes, perceived intentionality significantly and negatively predicted integrative communication ($B = -.09$, $\beta = -.10$, $p = .02$), but not relational repair tactics ($B = -.02$, $\beta = -.02$, $p = .67$) or loyalty ($B = .03$, $\beta = .03$, $p = .45$). These results reveal that higher level of perceived intentionality predicted less integrative communication in minor hurtful episodes. Therefore, H2b was supported only for minor hurtful episodes, but H2a and H2c were not confirmed.

According to H3, the intensity of hurt was expected to be positively associated with relational repair tactics (H3a), integrative communication (H3b), and loyalty (H3c).

Results of the path analysis indicated that in major hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt was significantly and negatively associated with relational repair tactics ($B = -.11, \beta = -.09, p = .05$) and positively with loyalty ($B = .12, \beta = .10, p = .03$), but not significantly with integrative communication ($B = .08, \beta = .07, p = .15$). These findings suggest that in major hurtful events, participants were less likely to engage in relational repair tactics and more likely to exhibit loyalty when they reported highly intense hurt feelings. In minor hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt was a significant predictor of integrative communication ($B = .19, \beta = .19, p < .001$) and loyalty ($B = .17, \beta = .18, p < .001$), but not relational repair tactics ($B = .07, \beta = .07, p = .09$). These results show that in minor hurtful events, participants were inclined to exhibit integrative communication and loyalty when they experienced more intense hurt feelings. As a result, H3c was supported for both major and minor hurtful events, and H3b was confirmed only for minor hurtful events. H3a was not supported, but a significant opposite association was found in major hurtful episodes.

RQ3 investigated the associations between communal strength and relational repair tactics (RQ3a), integrative communication (RQ3b), and loyalty (RQ3c). The path analysis indicated that communal strength was significantly and positively associated with relational repair tactics (Major: $B = .20, \beta = .15, p = .001$; Minor: $B = .15, \beta = .12, p = .01$), integrative communication (Major: $B = .42, \beta = .32, p < .001$; Minor: $B = .31, \beta = .24, p < .001$), and loyalty (Major: $B = .26, \beta = .21, p < .001$; Minor: $B = .20, \beta = .17, p < .001$) in both major and minor hurtful episodes. In other words, people in stronger communal relationships were inclined to exhibit constructive communication in response to hurtful episodes. RQ3a, RQ3b, and RQ3c were therefore supported for both major and minor hurtful episodes.

Interaction Effects

Three sets of research questions explored whether the intensity of hurt has a moderating effect on the association between message intensity and constructive communication (RQ1), between perceived intentionality and constructive communication (RQ2), and between communal strength and constructive communication (RQ4).

Of six interaction terms (three for major hurtful episodes and three for minor hurtful episodes), two (Hurt \times Perceived Intentionality and Hurt \times Communal Strength) were significant predictors of victims' constructive communication (see Table 4). More specifically, the interaction between hurt and perceived intentionality was associated significantly with relational repair tactics (RQ2a; $B = -.07$, $\beta = -.09$, $p = .03$) in major hurtful episodes. Figure 2 displays this interaction. A post-hoc analysis probing of this interaction effect based on Aiken and West's (1991) procedure (i.e., simple slope analysis) was conducted to clarify the association between the intensity of hurt and perceived intentionality. According to Aiken and West, a significant interaction effect needs to be decomposed into two simple effects in order to determine whether simple slopes of an outcome on a predictor vary at two meaningful values of a moderator. In the current study, the moderator (the intensity of hurt) of interest takes on two values: one is one standard deviation (SD) above the sample mean of the intensity of hurt and one is one SD below the sample mean of the intensity of hurt. The full data set is used to generate the estimates of simple slopes and test whether these slopes differ significantly from zero.

As such, two regression slopes reflecting the relations between relational repair tactics and perceived intentionality were estimated when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD above the mean and at one SD below the mean. Results of the post-hoc analysis probing demonstrated that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant

($B = -.14$, $SE = .05$, $\beta = -.16$, $p = .01$), while the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was not significant ($B = .04$, $SE = .06$, $\beta = .05$, $p = .51$). This suggests that in major hurtful episodes, higher levels of relational repair tactics were related to lower levels of perceived intentionality, especially when participants reported experiencing more intense hurt. Therefore, RQ2a was supported only for major hurtful episodes.

In minor hurtful episodes, the interaction between hurt and communal strength was a significant predictor of integrative communication (RQ4b; $B = .11$, $\beta = .13$, $p = .001$) and loyalty (RQ4c; $B = .07$, $\beta = .08$, $p = .04$). Figure 3 and Figure 4, respectively, depict these interactions. Again, a post-hoc analysis for each interaction effect was performed. In the first post-hoc test for RQ4b, two main effect slopes for the regression of integrative communication on communal strength were computed. One was calculated when the intensity of hurt was one SD above the mean and one was calculated when the intensity of hurt was one SD below the mean. Results of the post-hoc test indicated that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant ($B = .44$, $SE = .07$, $\beta = .34$, $p < .001$), and the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was also significant ($B = .19$, $SE = .08$, $\beta = .15$, $p = .02$). This suggests that in minor hurtful episodes, participants high in communal strength were more likely to display integrative communication, both when experiencing more and less intense hurt.

In the second post-hoc test for RQ4c, two slopes for the relationship between loyalty and communal strength were generated. One was calculated when the intensity of hurt was one SD above the mean and one when the intensity of hurt was one SD below the mean. The post-hoc test showed that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant ($B = .26$, $SE = .07$, $\beta = .21$, $p < .001$) while the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was not significant ($B = .07$, $SE = .08$, $\beta = .06$, $p = .36$). The results of this test demonstrate that in minor hurtful episodes, only when participants reported

experiencing more intense hurt did higher levels of loyalty correlate with greater levels of communal strength. As a whole, RQ4b and RQ4c were confirmed only for minor hurtful episodes.

PROXIMAL AND DISTAL EFFECTS ON VICTIMS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERPETRATOR'S CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

In addition to victims' constructive communication, it is important to understand how proximal and distal factors are associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. To do this, the second proposed model evaluated the main and interaction effects of these proximal and distal factors on victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's communication behavior. Model 2 (see Figure 5a) was comprised of seven exogenous variables (message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt for each major and minor hurtful episode; and communal strength) and six interaction terms as simultaneous predictors of six endogenous variables (victims' constructive communication: relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty for each major and minor hurtful episode). These interaction terms were created using the intensity of hurt and other proximal (i.e., message intensity and perceived intentionality) and distal factors (i.e., communal strength): Hurt \times Message Intensity, Hurt \times Perceived Intentionality, and Hurt \times Communal Strength for each hurtful condition. All key variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms. A partial correlation matrix with the means and standard deviations of the key variables (see Table 5) was used as the input for Model 2. According to the model fit indices, Model 2 fit the data adequately, $\chi^2(36, N = 513) = 60.88, p = .01, \chi^2/df = 1.69$; RMSEA = .037 (90% CI = .020, .052); CFI = .985; TLI = .962; SRMR = .027. Figure 5b and Table 6 describe the results of this path analysis.

Main Effects

RQ5 explored whether message intensity was linked with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics (RQ5a), integrative communication (RQ5b), and loyalty (RQ5c). The path analysis showed that in major hurtful interactions, message intensity was significantly associated with loyalty ($B = -.10, \beta = -.10, p = .03$), but not with relational repair tactics ($B = -.07, \beta = -.07, p = .12$) or integrative communication ($B = -.08, \beta = -.08, p = .08$). This negative link between message intensity and loyalty suggested that when participants felt hurtful messages were highly caustic, they perceived that their partner were less likely to engage in relational repair tactics. In minor hurtful interactions, message intensity was significantly correlated with relational repair tactics ($B = -.13, \beta = -.13, p = .003$), but not with integrative communication ($B = -.06, \beta = -.05, p = .26$) or loyalty ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .69$). These findings indicate that when participants felt hurtful messages were harsher, they perceived that their partner used relational repair tactics. Therefore, RQ5a was confirmed only for minor hurtful interactions and RQ5c was confirmed only for major hurtful interactions; however, RQ5b was not confirmed.

RQ6 was put forth to understand the association between victims' perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics (RQ6a), integrative communication (RQ6b), and loyalty (RQ6c) following hurtful episodes. Results of the path analysis revealed that in both major and minor hurtful episodes, perceived intentionality was not significantly related to perpetrators' relational repair tactics (Major: $B = -.05, \beta = -.05, p = .23$; Minor: $B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .61$), integrative communication (Major: $B = .02, \beta = .03, p = .58$; Minor: $B = -.05, \beta = -.05, p = .27$), or loyalty (Major: $B = .07, \beta = .08, p = .09$; Minor: $B = .01, \beta = .01, p = .83$). Hence, the set of RQ6s was not supported.

H4 posited that the intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics (H4a), integrative communication (H4b), and loyalty (H4c) following hurtful episodes. The findings of the path analysis demonstrated that in major hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt emerged as the only significant predictor of loyalty ($B = .17, \beta = .14, p = .003$) and did not significantly predict relational repair tactics ($B = .08, \beta = .06, p = .18$) or integrative communication ($B = .04, \beta = .03, p = .54$). That is, in major hurtful events, when participants experienced a greater degree of hurt, they tended to perceive that their partner engaged in loyalty. In minor hurtful episodes, the intensity of hurt significantly predicted relational repair tactics ($B = .14, \beta = .15, p < .001$), integrative communication ($B = .16, \beta = .15, p < .001$), and loyalty ($B = .19, \beta = .19, p < .001$), which suggests that in minor hurtful events, participants who experienced more intense hurt were more likely to perceive that their partner engaged in constructive communication. As a result, H4a and H4b were supported only for minor hurtful episodes; H4c was supported for both major and minor hurtful episodes.

H5 was hypothesized that communal strength was positively connected with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics (H5a), integrative communication (H5b), and loyalty (H5c) after hurtful interactions. The results from this path analysis indicated that in major hurtful interactions, communal strength was significantly correlated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($B = .36, \beta = .26, p < .001$), and loyalty ($B = .21, \beta = .16, p < .001$), but not with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics ($B = .08, \beta = .06, p = .19$). In other words, when participants had stronger communal relationships with their partner, they perceived that the partner had a tendency to use integrative communication and loyalty in response to major hurtful incidents. In minor hurtful

interactions, communal strength was positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics ($B = .15, \beta = .12, p = .01$), integrative communication ($B = .21, \beta = .16, p = .001$), and loyalty ($B = .19, \beta = .14, p = .001$). Participants high in communal strength were more likely to perceive that their partner engaged in constructive communication in response to minor hurtful incidents. Consequently, H5a was confirmed only for minor hurtful events, and H5b and H5c were supported for both major and minor hurtful episodes.

Interaction Effects

Three sets of research questions explored whether the intensity of hurt has a moderating effect on the relationships between message intensity and constructive communication (RQ7), between perceived intentionality and constructive communication (RQ8), and between communal strength and constructive communication (RQ9).

In Model 2, four out of six interaction terms (three for major hurtful events and three for minor hurtful events) significantly predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication (see Table 6). More specifically, the interaction between hurt and message intensity was significantly associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty (RQ7c; $B = .05, \beta = .08, p = .05$) in minor hurtful episodes. Figure 8 shows the interaction. The same post-hoc probe was performed to generate two regression slopes for the relation between victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty and victims' message intensity when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD above the mean and when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD below the mean. The results indicated that neither the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt ($B = .08, SE = .07, \beta = .07, p = .22$) nor the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt ($B = .02, SE = .07, \beta = .02, p = .73$) was significant. This post-hoc test further suggested that in

minor hurtful interactions, victims' perceived intentionality was not significantly correlated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty, either when participants reported higher or lower levels of hurt. In sum, victims' intensity of hurt did not moderate the relation between victims' perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty (RQ7c). Thus, the set of RQ7s was not supported.

The interaction between hurt and perceived intentionality was the only significant predictor of victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication (RQ8b; $B = -.07, \beta = -.10, p = .02$) in major hurtful episodes. The interaction appears in Figure 6. A post-hoc probe of the interaction effect was conducted using Aiken and West's (1991) procedure. Two regression slopes for the relations between integrative communication and perceived intentionality were estimated: one when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD above the mean and one when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD below the mean. The computation of these two slopes was based on the full sample of data. According to the post-hoc test, the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt ($B = -.19, SE = .05, \beta = -.20, p = .001$) was significant, whereas the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt ($B = -.002, SE = .07, \beta = -.002, p = .98$) was not significant. These results demonstrate that in major hurtful interactions, perceived intentionality was significantly linked with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication when participants reported higher levels of hurt.

In minor hurtful interactions, the interaction between hurt and perceived intentionality significantly predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty (RQ8c; $B = -.06, \beta = -.10, p = .03$). Figure 7 shows the interaction. The same post-hoc test took place for this interaction effect. Two regression slopes for the relation between loyalty and perceived intentionality were estimated: one when the intensity of hurt was set at one SD above the mean and one when it was set at one SD below the mean.

Findings of the post-hoc test showed that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt ($B = -.19, SE = .05, \beta = -.21, p < .001$) was significant, whereas the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt ($B = .01, SE = .06, \beta = .01, p = .88$) was not significant. This indicates that in minor hurtful events, higher levels of victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty were significantly related to lower levels of perceived intentionality when hurt was perceived as intense. Consequently, RQ8b was confirmed only for major hurtful events, and RQ8c was confirmed only for minor hurtful events.

The interaction between hurt and communal strength significantly predicted relational repair tactics (RQ9a; $B = .06, \beta = .07, p = .05$), integrative communication (RQ9b; $B = .07, \beta = .08, p = .05$) and loyalty (RQ9c; $B = .08, \beta = .10, p = .02$) in minor hurtful episodes. These interactions appear in Figure 9, Figure 10, and Figure 11, respectively. Drawing on Aiken and West's (1991) procedure, a post-hoc probe of each interaction effect was conducted. In the first post-hoc test for RQ9a, two slopes for the regression of relational repair tactics on communal strength were computed. For one slope, the intensity of hurt was set at one SD above the mean and for the other, the intensity of hurt was set at one SD below the mean. The results demonstrated that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant ($B = .18, SE = .07, \beta = .14, p = .01$) while the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was not significant ($B = -.01, SE = .08, \beta = -.01, p = .92$). This suggests that in minor hurtful interactions, participants high in communal strength had a greater tendency to perceive that their partner displayed relational repair tactics, especially when they reported more intense hurt feelings.

The second post-hoc test for RQ9b similarly estimated two regression slopes for the association between integrative communication and communal strength with the intensity of hurt set at one SD above the mean and set at one SD below the mean. The post-hoc test indicated that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant

($B = .28, SE = .08, \beta = .21, p < .001$) but that the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was not significant ($B = .08, SE = .09, \beta = .06, p = .37$). These results indicate that when participants had high-strength communal relationships, they perceived that their partner engaged in integrative communication following minor hurtful events, particularly when participants reported higher intensity of hurt.

In the third post-hoc test for RQ9c, two regression slopes for the link between loyalty and communal strength were generated with the intensity of hurt set at one SD above the mean and set at one SD below the mean. The post-hoc test showed that the slope set at one SD above the mean of hurt was significant ($B = .31, SE = .07, \beta = .24, p < .001$), whereas the slope set at one SD below the mean of hurt was not significant ($B = .01, SE = .08, \beta = .01, p = .92$). These findings reveal that in stronger communal relationships, individuals had a tendency to perceive that their partner engaged in loyalty when they reported more intense hurt feelings. As a whole, the intensity of hurt had a moderating effect on the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Furthermore, participants tended to perceive that their partner displayed an inclination to exhibit relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty in high-strength communal relationships. This would be the case in particular when participants experienced higher levels of hurt. In sum, the set of RQ9s were confirmed only for minor hurtful events.

PROXIMAL AND DISTAL EFFECTS ON RELATIONSHIP CONSEQUENCES

To look into the main and interaction effects of proximal and distal factors on relationship consequences following hurtful interactions, the third path model was proposed (see Figure 12a). Identical with two previous models, Model 3 included seven exogenous variables (message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt for

each major and minor hurtful episode; and communal strength) and six interaction terms as simultaneous predictors of four endogenous variables (positive and negative relationship consequences for each major and minor hurtful episode). The interaction terms were generated using the intensity of hurt and other proximal (i.e., message intensity and perceived intentionality) and distal factors (i.e., communal strength) for each hurtful episode: Hurt \times Message Intensity, Hurt \times Perceived Intentionality, and Hurt \times Communal Strength. All primary variables underwent mean-centering before the interaction terms were computed. A partial correlation matrix with the means and standard deviations of the primary variables (see Table 7) was used as the input for this hypothesized path model. The model fit indices showed that Model 3 had an acceptable fit, $\chi^2(24, N = 513) = 69.69, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 2.90$; RMSEA = .061 (90% CI = .045, .078); CFI = .950; TLI = .880; SRMR = .032. Figure 12b and Table 8 described the results of this path analysis. The following section reports the main and interaction effects of the proximal and distal factors.

Main Effects

RQ10 was put forth to examine whether message intensity connects with positive relationship consequences (RQ10a) and negative relationship consequences (RQ10b) after hurtful encounters. The results of path analysis showed that message intensity significantly predicted negative relationship consequences after minor hurtful encounters (Major: $B = .04, \beta = .04, p = .35$; Minor: $B = .13, \beta = .13, p < .001$), but it was not significantly related to positive relationship consequences (Major: $B = .01, \beta = .02, p = .71$; Minor: $B = .04, \beta = .05, p = .28$). This suggests that higher levels of message intensity were linked to negative relationship outcomes. RQ10b was thus confirmed only for minor hurtful encounters.

H6 examined whether perceived intentionality was associated with positive relationship consequences (H6a) and negative relationship consequences (H6b). The path analysis revealed that in minor hurtful interactions, perceived intentionality was significantly related to negative relationship consequences ($B = .12, \beta = .15, p < .001$), but not to positive relationship consequences ($B = -.04, \beta = -.05, p = .22$). In major hurtful interactions, perceived intentionality was also significantly associated with negative relationship consequences ($B = .15, \beta = .17, p < .001$), but not with positive relationship consequences ($B = -.02, \beta = -.03, p = .52$). These findings indicate that in both major and minor hurtful events, relationship outcomes were relatively negative when participants perceived hurtful messages by partners as intentional. H6b was thus supported for both major and minor hurtful events.

H7 examined the link between the intensity of hurt and positive relationship consequences (H7a) as well as negative relationship consequences (H7b) after hurtful events. In major hurtful events, the intensity of hurt significantly predicted negative relationship consequences ($B = .13, \beta = .11, p = .01$), but not positive relationship consequences ($B = -.01, \beta = -.01, p = .81$). Since the intensity of hurt had a moderating effect on the association between perceived intentionality and negative relationship consequences, the relationship between hurt and negative consequences will be described later. But in minor hurtful events, the intensity of hurt significantly predicted both positive relationship consequences ($B = .08, \beta = .11, p = .01$) and negative relationship consequences ($B = .08, \beta = .08, p = .02$). The latter findings suggest that the intensity of hurt may be associated with different relationship outcomes, especially in minor hurtful events. Therefore, H7a was supported only for minor hurtful events, and H7b were supported for both major and minor hurtful events.

RQ13 was raised to examine whether communal strength was linked to positive relationship consequences (RQ13a) and negative relationship consequences (RQ13b). In both major and minor hurtful episodes, communal strength was positively associated with positive relationship consequences (Major: $B = .22, \beta = .20, p < .001$; Minor: $B = .18, \beta = .17, p < .001$), but communal strength was negatively associated with negative relationship consequences (Major: $B = -.55, \beta = -.43, p < .001$; Minor: $B = -.49, \beta = -.41, p < .001$). These results reveal that after hurtful episodes, individuals in high-strength communal relationships were more likely to report positive relationship outcomes, whereas those in low-strength communal relationships tended to report negative relationship outcomes. Therefore, RQ13a and RQ13b were confirmed for both major and minor hurtful episodes.

Interaction Effects

Three sets of research questions explored whether the intensity of hurt has a moderating effect on the relationship between message intensity and relationship consequences (RQ11), between perceived intentionality and relationship consequences (RQ12), and between communal strength and relationship consequences (RQ14).

Among six interaction terms (three for major hurtful events and three for minor hurtful events), the interaction between hurt and perceived intentionality was the only significant predictor of negative relationship consequences in major hurtful events (RQ12b; $B = .05, \beta = .07, p = .05$; see Table 9). Figure 13 shows this interaction. The same post-hoc test based on Aiken and West's (1991) procedure was implemented to further examine the moderating role of the intensity of hurt on the link between negative relationship consequences and perceived intentionality. Two regression slopes for the relations between negative relationship consequences and perceived intentionality were

examined. In one, the intensity of hurt was one SD above the mean, and in the other, one SD below the mean. The results demonstrated that the slopes set at both one SD above the mean of hurt ($B = .28, SE = .06, \beta = .33, p < .001$) and at one SD below the mean of hurt ($B = .28, SE = .06, \beta = .33, p < .001$). This suggests that in major hurtful events, higher levels of perceived intentionality were negatively associated with negative relationship consequences, either when participants experienced more or less intense hurt feelings. As a consequence, RQ12b was confirmed for major hurtful events.

Additional Mediation Analyses

Model 3 showed that both the intensity of hurt and communal strength were associated with positive and negative relationship consequences. It is plausible that such associations may be mediated by constructive communication. Specifically, the intensity of hurt and communal strength, respectively, predict relationship consequences through constructive communication. To probe whether these mediating effects exist, two additional mediation models were conducted in which victims' constructive communication and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication, respectively, were added as mediators. Considering that each participant recalled two different hurtful episodes, all exogenous variables, the error terms of mediators, and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary in order to control for the additional sources of dependency.

The first posited model (Model 4; see Figure 14a) included three exogenous variables (the intensity of hurt for each major and minor hurtful episode as well as communal strength) as simultaneous predictors of six mediators (victims' relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty for each major and minor hurtful episode) and four endogenous variables (positive and negative relationship consequences

for each major and minor hurtful episode). A partial correlation matrix with the means and standard deviations of the said variables was employed as the input for this mediation model. Table 9 shows the partial correlations with the effects of message intensity, perceived intentionality, and demographic and relational variables excluded. Because of the use of summary data, bootstrapped-based confidence intervals for indirect effects cannot be obtained. The model fit indices showed that Model 4 fit marginally well, $\chi^2(22, N = 513) = 88.86, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 4.04$; RMSEA = .077 (90% CI = .061, .094); CFI = .967; TLI = .889; SRMR = .048. Figure 14b and Table 10 described the results of this mediation analysis.

According to Model 4, the mediating role of victims' constructive communication was confirmed. Specifically, the mediating effects from the intensity of hurt to positive relationship consequences through victims' loyalty were significant in both major ($B = .01, \beta = .01, p = .04$) and minor hurtful episodes ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .004$). In addition, the associations between communal strength and positive relationship consequences were significantly mediated by victims' constructive communication in both major and minor hurtful episodes. More specifically, in major hurtful episodes, the mediating effects from communal strength to positive relationship consequences through victims' relational repair tactics ($B = .05, \beta = .05, p = .01$), integrative communication ($B = .04, \beta = .03, p = .01$), and loyalty ($B = .03, \beta = .03, p = .01$), respectively, were significant. Similarly, in minor hurtful episodes, the mediating effects from communal strength to positive relationship consequences partially via victims' relational repair tactics ($B = .04, \beta = .04, p = .03$) and loyalty ($B = .03, \beta = .03, p = .01$), respectively, were significant. In brief, these results indicate that victims' constructive communication in response to being hurt was conducive to positive relationship ramifications in hurtful interactions.

Like Model 4, the second hypothesized model (Model 5; see Figure 15a) consisted of three exogenous variables (the intensity of hurt for each major and minor hurtful episode as well as communal strength) as simultaneous predictors of six mediators (victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty for each major and minor hurtful episode) and four endogenous variables (positive and negative relationship consequences for each major and minor hurtful episode). A partial correlation matrix with the means and standard deviations of the stated variables was used as the input for this posited mediation model. Table 11 shows the partial correlations with the effects of message intensity, perceived intentionality, and demographic and relational variables controlled. Because of the use of summary data, bootstrapped-based confidence intervals for indirect effects cannot be obtained. The model fit indices showed that Model 5 fit the data marginally well, $\chi^2(22, N = 513) = 85.79, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 3.90$; RMSEA = .075 (90% CI = .059, .094); CFI = .974; TLI = .912; SRMR = .048. Figure 15b and Table 12 described the results of this path analysis.

Model 5 found the mediating effects of victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication significant. Specifically, in minor hurtful episodes, the mediating effects from the intensity of hurt to positive relationship consequences through victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics ($B = .02, \beta = .03, p = .01$), integrative communication ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .01$), and loyalty ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .02$), respectively, were significant. Additionally, victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication significantly mediated the relationships between communal strength and positive relationship consequences in both major and minor hurtful episodes. More specifically, in major hurtful episodes, the mediating effect from communal strength to positive relationship consequences partially through victims'

perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($B = .07, \beta = .07, p < .001$) was significant. In minor hurtful episodes, the mediating effects from communal strength to positive relationship consequences partially via victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .03$) and loyalty ($B = .02, \beta = .02, p = .05$), respectively, were significant.

Besides, in major hurtful episodes, victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication partially mediated the link between communal strength and negative relationship consequences ($B = -.04, \beta = -.03, p = .02$). That is to say, communal strength positively predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication ($B = .28, \beta = .20, p < .001$), which, in turn, inversely predicted negative relationship consequences ($B = -.13, \beta = -.14, p = .01$) while controlling for communal strength. In short, these findings demonstrate that both victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication were beneficial to positive relationship ramifications in hurtful interactions.

By and large, both victims' constructive communication and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication play important mediating roles in the beneficial effect of hurt feelings on relationship ramifications, particularly in minor hurtful interactions. Likewise, these two mediators have significant effects on the path between communal strength and relationship ramifications in both major and minor hurtful interactions. These findings appear to imply that the experience and expression of hurt can benefit couple relationships only in minor hurtful interactions, yet high-strength communal relationships are beneficial to outcomes for couple relationships, especially in both major and minor hurtful interactions.

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

This section summarizes the complex findings for all hypotheses and research questions as well as the results of additional mediation analyses. Table 13 presents a summary of these findings.

Proximal and distal effects on victims' constructive communication

- Perceived intentionality negatively predicted integrative communication in minor hurtful interactions.
- The intensity of hurt positively predicted integrative communication in minor hurtful events and loyalty in both major and minor hurtful events. By contrast, the intensity of hurt negatively predicted relational repair tactics in major hurtful events.
- Communal strength positively predicted relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty in both major and minor hurtful events.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the association between perceived intentionality and relational repair tactics in major hurtful events, so that perceived intentionality was inversely correlated with relational repair tactics, but only for those who experienced highly intense hurt.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between communal strength and integrative communication in minor hurtful interactions, so that communal strength was positively linked to integrative communication, both when individuals reported more and less intense hurt.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between communal strength and loyalty in minor hurtful interactions, so that communal strength was positively associated with loyalty, but only when people reported more intense hurt.

Proximal and distal effects on victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication

- Message intensity negatively predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty in major hurtful encounters and relational repair tactics in minor hurtful encounters.
- The intensity of hurt positively predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics and integrative communication in minor hurtful events, but loyalty in both major and minor hurtful events.
- Communal strength positively predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics (only in minor hurtful events), integrative communication, and loyalty in both major and minor hurtful events.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication in major hurtful episodes, so that for those feelings highly intense hurt, perceived intentionality was inversely related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty in minor hurtful episodes, so that perceived intentionality was inversely linked to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty, but only for those reporting more intense hurt.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty in minor hurtful episodes, so that for those reporting more intense hurt, communal strength was positively related to victims'

perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty.

Proximal and distal effects on relationship consequences

- Message intensity positively predicted negative relationship consequences in minor hurtful encounters.
- Perceived intentionality positively predicted negative relationship consequences in both major and minor hurtful encounters.
- The intensity of hurt positively predicted positive relationship consequences in minor hurtful interactions and negative relationship consequences in both major and minor hurtful interactions.
- Communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences and inversely predicted negative relationship consequences in both major and minor hurtful events.
- The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between perceived intentionality and negative relationship consequences, so that both when people reported highly and less intense hurt, perceived intentionality was positively related to negative relationship consequences.

The mediation roles of victims' constructive communication in the association between (a) the intensity of hurt and (b) communal strength and relationship consequences

- The intensity of hurt positively predicted positive relationship consequences through loyalty in both major and minor hurtful episodes.
- Communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences through relational repair tactics and loyalty in major hurtful episodes, but partially via relational repair tactics and loyalty in minor hurtful episodes. In addition,

communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences through integrative communication, but only in major hurtful episodes.

The mediation roles of victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication in the association between (a) the intensity of hurt and (b) communal strength and relationship consequences

- The intensity of hurt positively predicted positive relationship consequences through relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty, respectively, in minor hurtful episodes.
- Communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences partially through integrative communication in both major and minor hurtful episodes. Yet communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences partially through loyalty, but only in minor hurtful episodes.
- Communal strength negatively predicted negative relationship consequences partially through integrative communication in major hurtful episodes.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The current literature on hurtful communication has consistently demonstrated the maladaptive effects of hurtful communication on relational functioning and consequences. The adaptive effects, however, have received limited attention. Although such positive effects have been found in a small number of studies, when hurtful communication improves close relationships between significant others remains unclear. This could be due to several methodological limitations: an emphasis on major rather than minor hurtful interactions, a focus more on negative behavior than positive, or recall biases caused by situation-specific beliefs when examining the effects of hurt feelings. Taking these limitations into account, the primary purpose of this dissertation was to address this thought-provoking question: When can hurtful communication be good for close relationships?

Bradbury and Fincham's (1987, 1988, 1991) contextual model was employed as a conceptual framework to examine how proximal (message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt), and distal context (communal strength) factors were associated with constructive communication (relational repair tactics, integrative communication, loyalty) and relationship consequences following hurtful interactions. More specifically, the present study investigated the main and interaction effects of these factors on victims' constructive communication, victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication, and positive and negative relationship consequences. In addition, whether hurt feelings and communal strength predict relationship consequences through constructive communication is probed.

To capture a broader range of hurtful episodes and diminish the recall biases from situation-specific beliefs, this dissertation required participants to reconstruct and

describe two recent hurtful interactions: one when their relational partner said something that extremely hurt the participant's feelings; the other when the partner said something that only slightly hurt the individual's feelings. Using this particular hurt-provoking procedure, different patterns of positive responses to major and minor hurtful events were examined, and the relational outcomes of hurtful communication were likewise explored.

Overall, the findings of this dissertation indicate positive social functions of hurtful communication—hurtful experiences can motivate both partners in a close relationship to respond to hurtful episodes with relationship-restoring behaviors. Furthermore, hurtful experiences can lead to both positive and negative relationship outcomes. Importantly, cognitive reactions to hurtful episodes and relationship quality also play critical roles in individuals' willingness to exhibit pro-relationship behavior. This chapter begins with a discussion of the proximal and distal effects on constructive communication and relationship consequences. Then, theoretical contributions and implications are discussed. Finally, the chapter closes by addressing the study's limitations and offering suggestions for future research.

HURTFUL COMMUNICATION AND VICTIMS' CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

The current study examined how proximal and distal context factors were associated with victims' constructive communication in response to major and minor hurtful episodes. The results revealed that perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt, and communal strength predicted victims' constructive communication, suggesting that hurtful communication has adaptive effects on individuals' relationship-restoring behavior.

Among three proximal factors, message intensity was the only proximal factor not associated with victims' constructive communication. Initially, message intensity was

expected to be negatively associated with relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty (H1). But contrary to expectations, message intensity did not emerge as a significant predictor of those three types of constructive communication for either major or minor hurtful interactions. Further, the relationship between message intensity and constructive communication did not depend on the intensity of hurt (RQ1). It is worth noting that the directions of most associations between message intensity and constructive communication were negative. This appears to imply that the causticity with which the perpetrator expressed the message prompted victims not to display any reparative behavior. Indeed, prior research has indicated that the harsher the perpetrator's hurtful messages, the less likely the victims will be to perceive the hurtful messages as positive (Young, 2004). Consistent with Young et al.'s (2005) findings, hurtful statements high in causticity tended to be associated to victims engaging in negative communication such as yelling, cursing, or active distancing (Young et al., 2005). Nonetheless, this explanation for the current results should be considered with caution because the negative links between message intensity and constructive communication were not significant. In brief, message intensity might not play a central role in victims' constructive communication.

Like message intensity, perceived intentionality was expected to inversely predict victims' constructive communication. As predicted, perceived intentionality was negatively associated only with victims' integrative communication in minor hurtful episodes (H2b), which is consistent with Bachman and Guerrero's (2006b) prediction, although their findings were not statistically significant. When hurtful remarks were perceived as intentional, victims were less likely to engage in integrative communication such as disclosing their feelings to the partner or discussing problems with the partner. Perceived intentionality reflects attributions of responsibility and blameworthiness for a

particular hurtful act (Boon & Sulsky, 1997), and it thus influences people's willingness to respond positively or negatively (Fincham, 2000; Vangelisti, 1994; Vangelisti & Young, 2000).

In addition to the direct effect of perceived intentionality on integrative communication, the intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between perceived intentionality and relational repair tactics in major hurtful episodes (RQ2a). Specifically, perceived intentionality was negatively related to relational repair tactics only for those who experienced highly intense hurt in major hurtful incidents. In other words, in major hurtful events, people perceiving that their partner deliberately hurt them tended not to engage in affectionate behavior or spend more time together, especially when they experienced highly intense hurt. Indeed, intentional transgressions are less likely to initiate the apology-forgiveness cycle than unintentional ones (Leunissen et al., 2013). People usually react to intentional harm with a desire to punish, rather than forgive, the perpetrator (Darley & Pittman, 2003). In sum, the data consistently showed an inverse relation between intentionality and victims' constructive communication, suggesting that hurtful messages seen as deliberate discourage hurt partners from using prosocial communication to repair hurtful events. This is probably because they tend to place more blame on the perpetrator and wait for his or her amends.

Different from perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt positively predicted two types of constructive communication in hurtful interactions. This finding is congruous with previous work (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). More specifically, in major hurtful encounters, the intensity of hurt was positively associated with loyalty (H3c), but inversely with relational repair tactics (H3a). Major hurtful episodes often involve serious transgressions that violate relationship norms, such as infidelity, betrayal, or humiliation (Feeney, 2005; Leary et al., 1998).

Such transgressions tend to elicit highly intense hurt (Burchell et al., 2016; Leary et al., 1998). Under these circumstances, victims experiencing extreme hurt feelings were less likely to reestablish intimacy and restore the relationship to its prior state by engaging in relational repair tactics such as acting more affectionate, initiating romantic activities, or spending more time together (Guerrero & Bachman, 2008). Further, experiencing deep hurt seemed to induce individuals to protect themselves from being hurt again. That is, victims tended to respond passively to major hurtful events with loyalty (e.g., hoping that the situation would improve). It is possible that because of a desire to remain in a relationship with the partner who hurt them, people patiently and optimistically waited for positive changes.

In a similar vein, the intensity of hurt was positively related to integrative communication (H3b) and loyalty (H3c) in minor hurtful encounters. Although minor hurtful events did not prompt victims to exit the relationship, hurt elicited in such events motivated them to maintain and/or repair their close bonds with perpetrators. People thus engaged in active, open communication such as explaining their thoughts and feelings or talking about problems in order to reach a mutual understanding. On the contrary, rather than engaging in active communication, victims also used a passive strategy (loyalty) in response to minor hurtful events. Those who tended to wish things would become better probably did not view minor hurtful events as a major threat to their relationship. In all, these findings suggest that hurt feelings provoked by relational devaluation reflect victims' relational dependence and needs for a perpetrator's support and reassurance (Lemay et al., 2012); therefore, to reestablish relatedness, more intense hurt is more likely to promote both active and passive communicative responses to minor hurtful events, whereas passive communication occurs as a response to major hurtful events.

In addition to proximal factors, communal strength as a distal factor also plays a prominent role in victims' constructive communication. As expected, communal strength positively predicted three types of constructive communication in both major and minor hurtful episodes (RQ3). Individuals in stronger communal relationships were inclined to respond to hurtful incidents, whether major or minor, with relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty. Moreover, the relationship between communal strength and victims' constructive communication (integrative communication and loyalty) also hinged upon the intensity of hurt (RQ4b and RQ4c) in minor hurtful episodes. Particularly, the association between communal strength and integrative communication was stronger for those feeling more intense hurt than for those feeling less intense hurt. Likewise, individuals' communal strength was positively related to loyalty for those who experienced intense hurt, not for those who felt less intense hurt.

These findings align with prior research on communal relationships demonstrating that people who have higher communal orientation tend to react positively to negative emotions (Clark & Taraban, 1991; Yoo et al., 2011). Communal relationships are characterized by individuals' willingness to take responsibility for and respond unconditionally to a relational partner's needs and welfare (Clark & Mills, 1979, 2012). Close romantic relationships can also be regarded as strong mutual communal relationships in which both partners are highly motivated to respond to the other's needs and welfare (Mills & Clark, 2001). Because of the social norm of mutual responsiveness to needs, the partner's needs and welfare take precedence over one's own, such that those having high communal orientation are willing to exhibit positive behavior for the benefit of their partner and relationship (Clark, Armentano, Boothby, & Hirsch, 2017). Accordingly, victims in high-strength communal relationships have a greater tendency to

engage in constructive communication in both active and passive fashion to repair relationship problems after hurtful incidents.

Overall, the results accentuate the importance of proximal and distal context factors in understanding victims' constructive communication. These factors (except for message intensity) were associated with victims' constructive responses to both major and minor hurtful interactions. In particular, the more hurtful messages were judged as intentional, the less likely victims were to exhibit constructive communication. In contrast, more intense hurt and high communal strength tended to promote victims' constructive communication. Notably, communal strength more strongly predicted constructive communication than the intensity of hurt. In terms of communication patterns, passive communicative responses were preferable in major hurtful events, whereas active and passive communicative responses commonly occurred in minor hurtful events. As has been noted, hurtful communication can have positive social functions.

HURTFUL COMMUNICATION AND VICTIMS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PERPETRATOR'S CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

Not only do victims respond positively to hurtful interactions, but perpetrators also engage in constructive communication to repair their relationships after engaging in hurtful actions. To avoid self-serving biases in perpetrators' reports of behavioral responses to hurtful interactions, this study assessed victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Victims' perceptions can be viewed as a stricter evaluation of the perpetrator's tendency to display constructive behavior because self-serving biases frequently lead victims to underestimate the perpetrator's amends-related behavior. To understand the extent to which perpetrators exhibit relationship-restoring behavior following hurtful events, the current research explored how proximal

and distal context factors were associated with relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty. The results indicated that message intensity, perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt, and communal strength significantly predicted victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. This implies that expression of victims' hurt can encourage perpetrators to engage in amends-making behavior.

Message intensity was found to negatively predict victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics in minor hurtful encounters (RQ5a) and loyalty in major hurtful encounters (RQ5c). In addition, the link between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication did not vary as a function of the intensity of hurt (RQ7). For the direct effects of message intensity, when victims judged hurtful remarks as more caustic, they were less likely to perceive that the perpetrator showed constructive behavior to mend the relationship. It is possible that perpetrators who say things that are particularly abrasive are less willing to make amends.

Like message intensity, perceived intentionality was proposed to inversely predict victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication (RQ6). The results revealed no significant associations between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, or loyalty. Still, the intensity of hurt and perceived intentionality interacted in their effect on integrative communication in major hurtful events (RQ8b) and loyalty in minor hurtful events (RQ8c). In major hurtful events, perceived intentionality was negatively related to integrative communication for those feeling highly intense hurt, but not for those feeling less intense hurt. Similarly, in minor hurtful events, there was a negative link between perceived intentionality and loyalty only for individuals reporting more intense hurt, but not for those reporting less intense hurt. One possible explanation is that when

perpetrators hurt their partners intentionally, they may have justified their hurtful acts beforehand, thus predisposing them to avoid discussing problems or feel less guilty about not making amends (Knight, in press; Leunissen et al., 2013). As such, when messages were perceived as intentionally hurtful, victims who reported greater hurt tended to perceive that the perpetrator was disinclined to respond to hurtful episodes with constructive behavior.

As opposed to message intensity and perceived intentionality, the intensity of hurt was proposed to be positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. The data confirmed this prediction and offers support for prior studies on perpetrator communication showing that perpetrators engage in reparative behavior (Hannon et al., 2010; Knight, in press; Lemay et al., 2012). In particular, victims who experienced highly intense hurt tended to observe that the perpetrator engaged in loyalty (H4c) in major hurtful episodes. Yet in minor hurtful episodes, victims feeling more intense hurt oftentimes recognized that the perpetrator tended to show relational repair tactics (H4a), integrative communication (H4b), and loyalty (H4c). Briefly, victims realized that the perpetrator was more likely to engage in different types of constructive communication in minor hurtful episodes than in major hurtful episodes. In addition, these findings connect well with the notion that expressions of negative emotion can have adaptive social functions (e.g., Baker et al., 2014; Graham et al., 2008; Sanford & Rowatt, 2004; Van Doorn et al., 2015). Expression of hurt can signal victims' commitment and need for reassurance and support; hurt can also induce perpetrators' guilt, motivate pro-relationship responses, and mitigate victims' hurt (Lemay et al., 2012; Vangelisti & Sprague, 1998). In short, the positive connection between victims' hurt and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive

communication indirectly demonstrates that perceiving victims' hurt can promote perpetrators' constructive behavior following hurtful encounters.

In addition to proximal factors, one distal factor (communal strength) plays a significant role in victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Communal strength was expected to positively predict victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. As expected, communal strength was positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication (H5b) and loyalty (H5c) in both major and minor hurtful events, but to relational repair tactics only in minor hurtful events (H5a). Individuals in high-strength communal relationships perceived their partner as more likely to engage in constructive behavior to repair problems. As previously noted, individuals with higher communal motivation tend to be responsive to the needs and welfare of a communal partner (Mills & Clark, 2001). Due to such mutual responsiveness, when perpetrators notice their partner's pain, they are more willing to make amends. By the same token, the interaction of hurt intensity with communal strength supports this notion. The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication in minor hurtful episodes (RQ9). The connections between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty were positive only for individuals reporting more intense hurt, not for those feeling less intense hurt. These findings suggest that expressing a greater degree of hurt in strong communal relationships is linked to victims' tendency to view the perpetrator as romantic, to resolve relationship problems in an active manner, and to wait and hope that the bad situation will improve. This also highlights the importance of perceived partner responsiveness to the beneficial effects of hurtful communication on close relationships (Clark & Lemay, 2010). Additionally, victims high

in communal strength are more likely to positively interpret perpetrators' repair messages (Bello, Brandau-Brown, & Ragsdale, 2008), which can enhance the effectiveness of perpetrators' constructive communication. In a word, strong communal relationships that promote healthy relational functioning engage victims to perceive their partner's constructive communication in ways that embody the partner's responsiveness to their needs and welfare.

In sum, the data indicate that proximal and distal context factors shaped the way victims perceived their partner's constructive communication. Most specifically, victims who perceived that hurtful messages were conveyed in a more caustic manner were less likely to perceive that their partner engaged in constructive communication. There also was a negative association between perceived intentionality and more intense hurt. Conversely, both the intensity of hurt and communal strength were positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Relative to the intensity of hurt, communal strength is a more prominent predictor of victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Like the patterns associated with victims' constructive communication, victims in major hurtful episodes observed that perpetrators engaged in passive communication, while victims tended to perceive perpetrators' active and passive communication in minor hurtful episodes. Given these points, hurtful communication appears to have an adaptive force to motivate perpetrators to mend broken relationships.

HURTFUL COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP CONSEQUENCES

In addition to responses to hurt, relationship consequences are also a significant research area for hurtful communication. Proximal and distal factors are proposed to be associated with positive and negative relationship ramifications. According to path

analysis, message intensity was positively related to negative relationship ramifications only in minor hurtful episodes (RQ10b); the intensity of hurt did not moderate the link between message intensity and relationship ramifications (RQ11). One potential reason for these findings is that hurtful messages perceived as harsher often lead victims to engage in negative communication such as active distancing and aggressive communication by way of cursing and yelling (Young et al., 2005), thereby damaging the relationships. Evidence from research on verbally aggressive communication also indicates that in romantic relationships, individuals who received verbally aggressive messages from partners are inclined to perceive that their relationships have been damaged (Roper et al., 2017). It should be noted that the direct effect of message intensity on negative relationship ramifications was not significant in major hurtful interactions. The reasoning behind this is that when victims encounter major hurtful incidents, message intensity might not be a primary factor that adversely affects the relationship. This is perhaps because hurt intensity and perceived intentionality weigh heavily in negative relational outcomes in major hurtful incidents. The data lend support for this view.

Perceived intentionality was posited to negatively predict positive relationship consequences and positively predict negative relationship consequences (H6). The results of this present study revealed that perceived intentionality was positively related to negative relationship consequences (H6b). The intensity of hurt moderated the relationship between perceived intentionality and negative relationship consequences (RQ12b) only in major hurtful episodes. In particular, perceived intentionality positively predicted negative relationship consequences, both when individuals reported highly and less intense hurt. Certainly, previous studies have yielded similar evidence that perceived intentionality is damaging to close relationships, both permanently and temporarily

(Feeney, 2004; Leary et al., 1998). From the victims' perspective, intentional untoward acts lead to increased culpability; given this, partners may be unwilling to forgive the perpetrators for their wrongdoing unless they express remorse and apologize first (Boon & Sulsky, 1997; Merolla & Zhang, 2011). Victims also may use destructive communication rather than constructive communication in response to intentional transgressions (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b). From the perpetrators' perspective, people who hurt their partners deliberately are inclined to engage in negative responses such as avoidance or silence (Knight, in press). It is likely that such differences in behavioral responses impede the initiation of the apology-forgiveness cycle and, consequently, damage close relationships. For instance, both partners may become unwilling to care about each other. Briefly, perceived intentionality had a maladaptive function in relationship consequences.

The intensity of hurt was expected to predict both positive and negative relationship consequences (H7). The data indicated that the intensity of hurt was positively associated with negative relationship consequences in both major and minor hurtful episodes, which is consistent with prior studies (Leary et al., 1998; Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Likewise, the intensity of hurt positively predicted positive relationship consequences in minor hurtful episodes, but not in major hurtful episodes. This prediction comports with Lemay et al.'s (2012) findings. At first blush, these findings appeared contradictory. But in fact, hurt may have both positive and negative outcomes for close relationships. First, as Leary et al. (1998) and Bachman and Guerrero (2006b) noted, damage to relationships resulting from hurt are often temporary. If this is the case, the means for positive relationship consequences that participants reported in the current study should be higher than those for negative relationship consequences. If not, the opposite pattern should be detected. To examine this, two paired-samples *t* tests were

conducted and showed that the differences in means between positive and negative relationship consequences were significant in both major and minor hurtful episodes. In particular, the mean for positive outcomes ($M = 4.09$) was greater than that for negative outcomes ($M = 3.06$) in major hurtful events, $t(512) = 11.09, p < .001, d = .49$. The mean for positive outcomes ($M = 3.90$) was greater than that for negative outcomes ($M = 2.85$) in minor hurtful events, $t(512) = 12.17, p < .001, d = .56$. According to this finding, participants recalling hurtful interactions tended to report more positive outcomes than negative ones, demonstrating that negative relationship consequences may be short-lived.

Second, individuals have a deep-seated aversion to hurtful experiences, so that even though people interpret hurtful messages as supportive or helpful, they still experience emotional pain (Young, 2004, 2010). Moreover, hurtful experiences induced by relational devaluation can motivate individuals to engage in constructive behavior to minimize any threats to their relationships (Leary, 2005; Sanford, 2007), which could result in positive or less negative outcomes for close relationships (Lemay et al., 2012). As such, negative relationship outcomes may be temporary. Indeed, the results of the present study appear to lend credence to this reasoning, showing that the intensity of hurt was positively correlated with positive relationship consequences only in minor hurtful incidents. When feeling more intense hurt in minor events, individuals tended to report that they and their partners cared more about the relationship and the relationship became stronger due to the event. This supports the argument advanced in the beginning of the dissertation that hurtful experiences can benefit relational outcomes in relatively minor hurtful events.

To further explore the adaptive processes of hurtful communication, whether or not constructive communication mediates the connections between hurt and relationship outcomes was probed by performing two additional mediation analyses. The first

mediation analysis showed that hurt predicted positive relationship outcomes only through victims' loyalty in both major and minor hurtful episodes. The second mediation analysis revealed that hurt predicted positive relationship outcomes only through victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty in minor hurtful episodes. These results demonstrated that experience and expression of hurt often led both partners to care more about each other and the relationship via both partners' constructive behaviors. On the one hand, individuals who felt more intense hurt tended to use passive communication responses to resolve problems. This is probably because victims attributed more blame to the perpetrator's hurtful remarks and wished to see the perpetrator's amends. On the other hand, victims' hurt can provoke the perpetrator's guilt and empathy that motivate reparative behavior, so that victims tended to perceive that their partner engaged in both active and passive communication to repair the relationship following hurtful incidents. Consistent with Lemay et al.'s (2012) work, the present findings demonstrate that constructive communication plays a prominent and adaptive role in the association between hurtful experiences and positive relationship consequences following hurtful events. In terms of victims' viewpoints, perpetrators tended to respond constructively to minor hurtful episodes.

In addition to the positive effects of hurtful experiences, communal strength is another important antecedent of positive relationship consequences. It was proposed that communal strength is linked to relationship consequences. The results showed that communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences (RQ13a), but inversely predicted negative relationship consequences (RQ13b), and that these associations did not depend on the intensity of hurt (RQ14). Because strong communal relationships are characteristic of responsiveness to each other's welfare (Mills & Clark,

2001), highly communally-oriented individuals downplay self-interest and are thus more willing to repair relationship problems and restore closeness than those low in communal orientation following hurtful encounters. The enactment of constructive behavior is thus likely associated with positive consequences for relationships. To explore the mediating role of constructive communication in the link between communal strength and relationship consequences, additional mediation analyses were conducted in which victims' constructive communication and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication, respectively, were included as mediators. Mediation analysis results indicated that communal strength positively predicted positive relationship consequences through victims' relational repair tactics, integrative communication, and loyalty in major hurtful episodes, and partially through victims' relational repair tactics and loyalty in minor hurtful episodes. A similar pattern also emerged for victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. The data showed that victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication was a significant mediator of the association between communal strength and positive relationship consequences. Specifically, communal strength predicted positive relationship consequences partially through integrative communication in both major and minor hurtful events, as well as partially through loyalty only in minor hurtful events. In addition, communal strength inversely predicted negative relationship consequences partially via integrative communication only in major hurtful events.

As for victims, different communication strategies were used in both major and minor hurtful episodes; for instance, people reported using open communication and relational repair to actively mend the relationship as well as sanguinely waiting for the perpetrator to change. As for perpetrators, victims perceived more their partner's integrative communication in both major and minor hurtful episodes and perceived the

partner patiently hoping things would improve in minor hurtful episodes. Taken together, both partners having high communal motivation were more likely to respond to hurtful episodes with active and passive constructive communication because they felt responsible for meeting the other's needs and also expected the other to do the same for them (Mills et al., 2004). As Clark, Armentano, et al. (2017) noted, individuals who behave communally tend to relax their self-protective vigilance. This, in turn, allows them to pay more heed to their partner and relationship, and feel more empathic emotion during a time of relational turbulence. Experiencing hurt in communal relationships can elicit people's positive responses and those positive responses can facilitate relationship maintenance and repair. Further, the present findings appear to provide support for Mills and Clark's (2001) claim that high quality romantic relationships can be seen as mutual communal relationships in which both partners share a strong concern for each other's needs and welfare.

On the whole, the present findings showed the role of proximal and distal factors in predicting positive and negative relationship consequences. Message intensity and perceived intentionality appear to have adverse effects on close relationships in both major and minor hurtful events. This is probably because hurtful messages stated more harshly and perceived as intentional tend to elicit victims' destructive communication, which in turn leads to negative relationship outcomes. In contrast, positive outcomes for close relationships were more likely to occur in that both partners high in communal strength were more concerned about each other's needs and welfare, which promoted more constructive communication following hurtful interactions in both major and minor hurtful episodes. As for the intensity of hurt, more intense hurt not only was associated with positive outcomes in minor hurtful episodes, but with both positive and negative consequences in both major and minor hurtful incidents. Notwithstanding that negative

relationship consequences were usually temporary, greater victims' hurt also produced positive outcomes for the relationship through victims' constructive communication only in minor hurtful events as well as partially through victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication in both major and minor hurtful episodes. Consistent with the previous findings of this research, communal strength is still a stronger predictor of relationship consequences than the intensity of hurt, indicating that communal context may shape the nature and function of hurtful communication. In conclusion, hurtful communication can improve close relationships through both partners' constructive communication.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this dissertation make three contributions to extant literature on hurtful communication. The first contribution is that different patterns of constructive communication were observed in major versus minor hurtful events. In general, people were more likely to use a passive repair strategy (loyalty) in responses to those events that hurt their feelings a great deal, whereas individuals were inclined to respond to minor hurtful events with both active (relational repair tactics, integrative communication) and passive repair strategies. This makes good sense. Major hurtful events, such as infidelity and betrayal, often severely sabotage intimate relationships. Although victims may be motivated to retaliate and engage in destructive behaviors (Guerrero & Bachman, 2008), when considering that many investments and resources have been put into the relationship, they may prefer to maintain the relationship by using passive repair strategies such as waiting for the other to change (Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001; Rusbult, Verette, Whitney, Slovik, & Lipkus, 1991). On the other side, after committing a serious transgression, perpetrators may be very concerned about face threat

or not certain about how to make amends in effective ways. Given this, they may be perceived by victims to respond with more passive strategies to repair the relationship. Conversely, minor hurtful events (e.g., criticism and deception) might not be as damaging as major hurtful events, but can still harm peoples' self-concept and/or relationships to some extent (Infante & Wigley, 1986). To reestablish closeness, victims feeling greater hurt may tend to use active, open communication to repair relationship problems and patiently wait for circumstances to improve. In a similar vein, perpetrators may wish to restore the damaged relationships to a preferred state and then may be more willing to engage in active communication strategies, like being more affectionate and explaining their thoughts and feelings to their victims, as well as passive strategies such as hoping that the situation will improve.

Additionally, it is worth noting that different patterns of prosocial communication in major hurtful interactions were found. The results of mediation path models showed that victims' constructive communication (loyalty) mediated the association between the intensity of hurt and positive relationship consequences, whereas victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication did not mediate such an association. This appears to suggest that victims did not view their partner's repair strategies in a favorable light. One possible explanation is that feeling highly intense hurt predisposes victims to disbelieve perpetrators' intentions to repair relationship problems perhaps because victims are worried about being hurt again (Zhang & Stafford, 2009). Further, three types of victims' constructive communication mediated the relationship between communal strength and positive relationship consequences, while only perpetrators' integrative communication, as perceived by victims, mediated this relationship. This communication pattern indicates that from victims' perspective, integrative communication seems to be the first step for perpetrators to repair the relationship after committing a serious

relational transgression. Indeed, it makes sense that both partners must reach a mutual understanding by discussing relationship problems and explaining their feelings and thoughts to the other. Afterwards, perpetrators are able to engage in other repair strategies such as restoring closeness or optimistically hoping that the situation will improve. Overall, this study sheds light on different communication patterns that exist in major and minor hurtful episodes.

The second contribution is that the moderating role of hurt intensity was found in the relationships among perceived intentionality, communal strength, and constructive communication. The data demonstrated that the intensity of hurt moderated the links between perceived intentionality and constructive communication, as well as communal strength and constructive communication in both major and minor hurtful interactions. Perceived intentionality was inversely associated with both victims' constructive communication and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication for people who reported more intense hurt in both major and minor hurtful interactions. This pattern suggests that hurtful messages perceived as intentional are less likely to prompt both partners to perform pro-relationship behavior, especially when one party is feeling more intense hurt. As for relational quality, for those feeling more intense hurt in both major and minor hurtful interactions, communal strength positively predicted both victims' constructive communication and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. As opposed to the negative effects of perceived intentionality on constructive communication, communal strength exerts a positive influence on constructive communication after hurtful events. This highlights that good quality relationships can predispose both partners to use prosocial communication (Guerrero & Bachman, 2008; Rusbult et al., 2001) and then buffer the detrimental effects of hurtful communication on close relationships. In general, a closer examination of the

moderating role of hurt can allow researchers to understand better and more fully the different processes in which various degrees of hurt shape communication and relational outcomes in order to decipher the complexity of hurt feelings.

The third contribution is that communal strength can have a beneficial influence on the dynamics of hurtful communication. Relationship characteristics have been identified as important for the correlates and outcomes of hurtful communication. The roles of relationship satisfaction, commitment, and closeness have been investigated considerably in research on hurt (e.g., Guerrero & Bachman, 2008; Lemay et al., 2012; McLaren & Solomon, 2008; Vangelisti & Crumley, 1998; Vangelisti et al., 2005). Although relationship research also emphasizes the importance of communal relationships to positive outcomes of negative emotions (e.g., Clark & Finkel, 2005a; Clark & Finkel, 2005b; Clark & Taraban, 1991), the role of communal relationships in hurtful communication has been unclear. Some researchers (e.g., Feeney, 2009; Lemay et al., 2012) have noted that hurt feelings should elicit constructive emotions (i.e., guilt and empathy) and responses in the course of hurtful communication, particularly in communal relationships. But whether communal relationships are linked to constructive responses to hurtful events has not yet been empirically examined. To the researcher's knowledge, this dissertation is the first empirical study to explore such an association. The results of the present study provide consistent support for a theory of communal relationships, demonstrating that among the factors associated with the positive effects of hurt, communal strength is the most prominent predictor of constructive communication and positive relationship consequences following hurtful encounters. People in strong mutual communal relationships have a greater tendency to enact constructive communication in both active and passive ways as well as to perceive that their partner engages in constructive behavior in the same ways. Also, communal relationships involve

a norm of mutual responsiveness that both partners abide by, which states that high motivation to be responsive to the other's needs and welfare is perhaps a key variable that motivates individuals to respond to hurtful episodes with prosocial communication.

Although high-strength communal relationships seem to have a positive effect on hurtful communication, it should be noted that individuals who have extremely high communal strength may be too self-sacrificing to have positive relationship consequences in the end. For example, people high in communal orientation may be inclined to respond positively to their partner's hurtful remarks for the sake of the perpetrator and relationship. This could reinforce the perpetrator's behavior because the victim always responds to hurtful messages with positive behavior. Hence, by taking advantage of the victim's responsiveness to their needs and welfare, perpetrators might not worry too much about relational damage while hurting their partner's feelings, which could generate negative relationship consequences in the long run. In other words, extremely high-strength communal relationships can have adaptive relationship outcomes (prosocial communication) following hurtful communication over a short period of time but possibly produce maladaptive relationship ramifications (domestic abuse and violence) over a relatively long period of time.

In addition to the aforementioned theoretical contributions and implications, the study design of this dissertation has four strengths. First, this dissertation examined the course and outcomes of hurtful communication through soliciting participants' accounts of both major and minor hurtful events with the same romantic partner. By doing this, the effects from major and minor hurtful incidents were not counterbalanced; thus, different communication patterns and relationship outcomes in respective major and minor hurtful incidents could relatively easily be observed. This study design also improves one main limitation that the majority of previous research has—requiring participants to recall a

single hurtful event (e.g., Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Feeney, 2004; Leary et al., 1998; Malachowski & Frisby, 2015; Vangelisti & Young, 2000). Because most participants in prior research may have reported on events that were extremely hurtful or were salient to them (Lemay et al., 2012), that variation in the intensity of hurt may have been constrained. This may be a reason that the positive effects of hurtful communication have been largely missing from the literature.

Another strength is that the present study investigated a wider range of constructive communication so as to better understand the ways people respond adaptively to hurtful incidents. Some studies examining prosocial behavior in hurtful interactions employed measures that tapped a limited range of positive behavior (e.g., Lemay et al., 2012; Sanford, 2007). To expand on this, both active and passive communication were included in the present study. The data showed that participants did use different types of constructive communication in both major and minor hurtful encounters.

The third strength is that this dissertation collected people's accounts of hurtful events that transpired recently to reduce retrospective biases due to situation-specific beliefs (Robinson & Clore, 2002a). It is possible that participants might not often encounter hurtful events so that they tend to identify and report hurtful events in the distant past. To diminish the potential effect of recall biases, the time since the events occurred was controlled while testing hypotheses and research questions. The last strength of this study design is the use of a community sample of different ages and economic backgrounds to enhance the generalizability of the present findings.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Several limitations should be acknowledged in this dissertation. First, this research did not consider the roles of other relational variables (e.g., relationship uncertainty, commitment, or relationship satisfaction) and individual differences (e.g., self-esteem or perceived and desired interpersonal value) in constructive communication and relationship consequences after hurtful interactions. Prior research suggests that relationship uncertainty and commitment can be important factors in shaping the experience and outcomes of hurtful communication (Lemay et al., 2012; Theiss, Knobloch, Checton, & Magsamen-Conrad, 2009). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that evidence also indicates that relationships high in communal strength tend to have greater levels of relationship satisfaction and positive outcomes (Clark & Finkel, 2005b; Clark et al., 2001; Mills et al., 2004). Because of this, it is quite possible that stronger communal relationships could in part reflect better relationship quality, which indirectly indicates less relationship uncertainty, higher commitment, and/or greater relational satisfaction. Given a paucity of research examining the connection between relationship uncertainty and hurtful communication, researchers should consider the influence of relationship uncertainty on the positive effects of hurtful communication.

As for individual differences, self-esteem has an influence on individuals' interpretations and responses to the events that elicit hurt feelings. People high in self-esteem are inclined to make less-negative attributions of their partners' hurtful behavior than those with low self-esteem (Vangelisti et al., 2005). What is more, another set of personality dispositions is perceived and desired interpersonal value, which is perceiving and wanting to be valued by others. In a recent study, Lemay and Spongberg (2015) found that these two constructs were positively associated with promoting prosocial behavior and negatively with antisocial behavior in romantic relationships. Considered

together, these relationship and personality variables may play roles in affecting how people respond constructively to interactions involving their hurt feelings. Identification of factors, such as these, opens up an area of inquiry that may assist researchers and theorists in better understanding the positive effects of hurtful communication.

Second, the current investigation did not examine the enactment of constructive communication responses in any given order. Constructive communication in this study can be viewed as active and passive communication responses. Relational repair tactics and integrative communication are active strategies because the former involves relationship repair actions people enact on their own initiatives and the latter includes trying to discuss relationship problems with the partner and expressing one's feelings and thoughts to the partner. By contrast, loyalty is a passive strategy because it involves behavior designed to avoid addressing problems directly and to wait optimistically for positive changes. Although participants reported three different types of constructive communication responses, it is still difficult to discern the order in which participants used the responses. For instance, some individuals may have first engaged in a passive strategy to see how things were going. When the problems became worse, they may have switched to active strategies to repair the relationship. Conversely, others may also have employed active strategies first to reach a solution to relationship issues. Moreover, the sequences of constructive communication responses probably varied depending on the characteristics of hurtful behavior (e.g., event type, perceptions of intentionality, or perceived causes). Future research would therefore benefit from investigating the sequences of and the effectiveness of different sequences of constructive communication in which people engage following hurtful interactions.

Third, the current research did not examine the content of the hurt-eliciting messages. Prior studies have investigated different types of hurtful messages/events. For

instance, in one study examining the content of messages that people experienced as hurtful, Vangelisti (1994) proposed nine categories of hurtful messages. Among these categories, factual, informative statements were perceived as the most hurtful perhaps because they are hard for recipients to dispute. Another study conducted by Young (2010) found that different types of message content shaped the extent to which individuals interpreted hurtful messages in a positive light. For example, hurtful statements that negatively characterized recipients were seen as more supportive than those that disbelieved their abilities and intelligence. In addition, Feeney (2004) categorized five types of hurtful events and found that different types of the events elicited different degrees of hurt. In one instance, passive disassociation (being excluded from a partner's conversations, or activities) was perceived as less hurtful than active disassociation (behaviors regarding relationship termination or rejection of love and commitment) and infidelity. For these reasons, it is quite likely that various types of message content affect people's willingness to engage in constructive communication and relationship outcomes. It would be useful for future research to explore whether constructive communication strategies come into use depending on the type of hurtful messages.

Fourth, prior research has demonstrated that pro-relationship behavior often occurs in the context of good quality relationships (Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b; Clark, Boothby, Clark-Polner, & Reis, 2015; Lemay et al., 2012; Rusbult et al., 2001). Since the sample in the present study has relatively high communal strength ($M = 5.53$), it is quite possible that the adaptive social functions of hurtful communication were relatively easily detected. In other words, the positive effects of hurtful communication on behavioral and relational outcomes might not have manifested themselves if more of the participants were lower, on average, in communal strength. In addition, it should be noted

that this project did not recruit people who had extremely negative relationship outcomes (i.e., relationship distress) so the present findings cannot be generalized to those people. For these reasons, it would be illuminating to explore how differences in the experience and expression of hurt feelings function to maintain and/or repair personal relationships in high- versus low-strength communal relationships.

Lastly, some might argue that the positive effects of hurtful communication found in this dissertation could be methodological artifacts because the study focused on investigating people's constructive communication following hurtful events. In fact, the present study does not suggest that hurt does not elicit negative communication; rather, it takes the opposite perspective—that hurt elicited by relational devaluation can pose a relational threat, thus motivating individuals to alleviate hurt by engaging in constructive behavior. Incidentally, if positive social functions of hurtful communication did not exist, no significant links between proximal and distal factors and the positive outcomes of hurt should have been found. Investigating both pro-relationship behavior and relationship-destructive behavior allows researchers to obtain a more complete picture of the benefits of hurtful communication.

CONCLUSION

Due to substantial literature showing maladaptive outcomes of hurtful communication, a central question was raised at the outset of this dissertation: How can we better understand when hurtful communication functions to maintain and repair close relationships? To answer this question, this dissertation, building on Bradbury and Fincham's (1988, 1991) contextual model, probed how proximal (message intensity, perceived intentionality, hurt intensity) and distal (communal strength) context factors predict people's constructive communication and relationship consequences. As

evidenced by the present findings, hurtful communication can benefit close relationships. In particular, hurtful remarks conveyed abrasively and viewed as intentional diminish the extent to which individuals engage in positive responses to hurt. Further, people feeling more intense hurt are inclined to display constructive communication, which further facilitates positive relationship ramifications. In major hurtful interactions, the use of passive communication (loyalty) was the most frequent repair strategy; conversely, both active (relational repair tactics and integrative communication) and passive communication were common strategies for relational repair in minor hurtful interactions. In addition, relational contexts have a significant impact on the positive outcomes of hurtful communication. Constructive responses to and positive relationship consequences of hurtful interactions often take place in high-strength communal relationships. Indeed, communal strength is more strongly predictive of pro-relationship behavior and positive relationship consequences, suggesting that a relationship of good quality is an important factor that promotes the adaptive effects of hurt feelings. Additionally, the results of this dissertation provide valuable insight into the adaptive effects of hurtful communication on behavioral and relational outcomes. In conclusion, hurtful communication can indeed be good for close relationships.

Tables

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Alpha Coefficients, and Results of Paired-Samples *t* Test for Primary Variables

Primary Variables	Major Hurtful Episodes			Minor Hurtful Episodes			Paired-Sample <i>t</i> Test		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Cohen's d^b</i>
Communal Strength ^a	5.53	1.15	.91	5.53	1.15	.91	–	–	–
Message Intensity	4.89	1.49	.88	3.95	1.44	.86	12.69***	512	0.56
Perceived Intentionality	4.23	1.76	.85	3.53	1.68	.87	8.66***	512	0.38
Intensity of Hurt	5.82	1.22	.88	4.20	1.50	.89	22.81***	512	1.01
Relational Repair Tactics	3.03	1.52	.91	3.00	1.45	.91	0.41	512	0.02
Integrative Communication	4.68	1.55	.91	4.36	1.50	.90	4.87***	512	0.21
Loyalty	4.63	1.42	.87	4.37	1.43	.88	4.30***	512	0.19
P-Relational Repair Tactics	3.57	1.55	.90	3.36	1.44	.90	3.63***	512	0.16
P-Integrative Communication	4.15	1.61	.92	3.82	1.52	.91	4.95***	512	0.22
P-Loyalty	4.19	1.52	.90	3.96	1.50	.90	3.49***	512	0.15
Positive Relationship Consequences	4.09	1.23	.84	3.90	1.20	.84	4.00***	512	0.18
Negative Relationship Consequences	3.06	1.48	.82	2.85	1.43	.84	4.23***	512	0.19

Note. *N* = 513. P = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication.

^aCommunal strength as a relational variable was measured once.

^b*Cohen's d* = effect size.

*** *p* < .001

Table 2
Bivariate Correlations among All Study Variables^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. CS	–														
2. S-MI	.054	–													
3. S-Intent	-.203**	.485**	–												
4. S-Hurt	.116**	.434**	.342**	–											
5. S-Repair	.089*	-.103*	-.113*	-.135**	–										
6. S-Comm	.323**	-.005	-.077	.078	.492**	–									
7. S-Loyalty	.195**	.059	.046	.139**	.394**	.386**	–								
8. S-PRepair	.050	-.052	-.103*	-.051	.533**	.334**	.163**	–							
9. S-PComm	.240**	-.034	-.103*	.004	.570**	.608**	.280**	.668**	–						
10. S-PLoyalty	.155**	.033	.025	.102*	.438**	.415**	.486**	.535**	.653**	–					
11. S-PRC	.179**	.009	-.086	-.042	.563**	.402**	.353**	.495**	.558**	.446**	–				
12. S-NRC	-.482**	.178**	.341**	.139**	-.083	-.222**	.028	-.151**	-.265**	-.099*	-.192**	–			
13. S-TIME ^b	.096*	-.012	.097*	.045	-.034	.055	.002	.078	.011	.066	.055	-.110*	–		
14. M-MI	-.113*	.358**	.268**	.205**	-.042	-.039	.108*	-.050	-.032	.016	-.002	.286**	-.099*	–	
15. M-Intent	-.305**	.170**	.433**	.077	-.098*	-.196**	.014	-.182**	-.269**	-.171**	-.121**	.398**	-.064	.489**	–
16. M-Hurt	-.083	.168**	.113*	.310**	.016	.061	.141**	-.015	-.025	-.024	-.005	.236**	.001	.440**	.285**
17. M-Repair	.059	.005	-.059	-.058	.602**	.330**	.269**	.492**	.416**	.410**	.450**	.054	-.014	-.011	-.069
18. M-Comm	.241**	.063	-.049	.068	.314**	.543**	.187**	.279**	.425**	.298**	.344**	-.067	.009	.051	-.151**
19. M-Loyalty	.122**	.112*	.025	.105*	.217**	.222**	.544**	.121**	.164**	.352**	.239**	.133**	.008	.184**	.067

Table 2 cont.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
20. M-PRepair	.074	.016	-.079	-.088*	.459**	.285**	.136**	.606**	.479**	.430**	.419**	-.061	-.011	-.071	-.137**
21. M-PComm	.139**	.003	-.123**	-.017	.424**	.389**	.143**	.414**	.530**	.384**	.396**	-.097*	-.003	-.026	-.180**
22. M-PLoyalty	.122**	.066	-.055	-.003	.301**	.259**	.313**	.317**	.354**	.504**	.277**	-.017	.018	.110*	-.063
23. M-PRC	.140**	.052	-.064	-.037	.450**	.282**	.282**	.401**	.404**	.411**	.621**	-.072	.018	.069	-.070
24. M-NRC	-.485**	.138**	.250**	.049	-.012	-.191**	.061	-.114**	-.211**	-.070	-.113*	.708**	-.101*	.353**	.453**
25. M-TIME ^b	.001	-.019	.000	.044	-.015	.040	.064	-.032	-.066	-.070	-.010	.002	.238**	.101*	.102*
26. SEX ^c	.070	.012	-.059	.110*	-.141**	.061	-.053	.020	.029	-.068	-.081	-.100*	.012	.020	-.090*
27. AGE	.101*	.041	.041	.060	-.210**	-.077	-.044	-.212**	-.148**	-.102*	-.117**	-.024	.047	.010	.013
28. RLength ^b	.211**	.074	.080	.097*	-.162**	.002	-.022	-.185**	-.096*	-.084	-.110*	-.092*	.090*	.035	.026
29. DATING ^d	-.200**	-.118**	-.104*	-.089*	.087*	-.018	-.028	.110*	.041	-.018	.027	.119**	-.096*	-.075	-.038
30. MARRIED ^e	.190**	.150**	.122**	.117**	-.185**	-.019	.033	-.151**	-.098*	-.027	-.115**	-.095*	.068	.078	.075

Table 2 cont.

	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
16. M-Hurt	–														
17. M-Repair	.049	–													
18. M-Comm	.176**	.469**	–												
19. M-Loyalty	.239**	.383**	.292**	–											
20. M-PRepair	.052	.654**	.430**	.213**	–										
21. M-PComm	.067	.601**	.644**	.237**	.681**	–									
22. M-PLoyalty	.155**	.471**	.412**	.505**	.574**	.588**	–								
23. M-PRC	.093*	.597**	.398**	.374**	.471**	.475**	.408**	–							
24. M-NRC	.278**	.091*	-.086	.101*	-.063	-.083	.004	-.001	–						
25. M-TIME ^b	.146**	-.021	.039	.054	-.037	-.037	.013	.039	-.012	–					
26. SEX ^c	.100*	-.186**	.047	-.055	-.059	-.088*	-.038	-.141**	-.148**	-.042	–				
27. AGE	.050	-.218**	-.094*	-.068	-.154**	-.134**	-.075	-.109*	-.022	.067	-.040	–			
28. RLength ^b	.083	-.204**	-.042	-.088*	-.166**	-.112*	-.070	-.102*	-.061	.065	.055	.644**	–		
29. DATING ^d	-.122**	.130**	.000	-.006	.139**	.059	.015	.056	.087*	-.022	-.051	-.251**	-.464**	–	
30. MARRIED ^e	.163**	-.220**	-.076	-.021	-.182**	-.133**	-.037	-.138**	-.053	.036	.083	.329**	.564**	-.719**	–

Note. $N = 513$. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; Repair = relational repair tactics; Comm = integrative communication; PRepair = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics; PComm = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication; PLoyalty = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequences; Time = time since the episode; Rlength = relationship length.

^aCorrelations between continuous variables and dummy coded variables are point-biserial correlations.

^bTime since the episode was measured in weeks and relationship length was measured in years.

^c0 = male; 1 = female.

Table 2 cont.

^d1 = dating relationships; 0 = married relationships; 0 = engaged relationships.

^e1 = married relationships; 0 = dating relationships; 0 = engaged relationships.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 3
 Partial Correlations among Variables of Interest for Model 1^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. CS ^b	–																		
2. S-MI ^b	.029	–																	
3. S-Intent ^b	-.245**	.480**	–																
4. S-Hurt ^b	.086	.430**	.342**	–															
5. S-H*MI	-.028	-.067	-.033	-.372**	–														
6. S-H*Intent	-.085	-.036	.073	-.224**	.459**	–													
7. S-H*CS	.203**	-.002	-.057	-.094*	.094*	-.188**	–												
8. S-Repair	.141**	-.083	-.106*	-.102*	.012	-.075	.056	–											
9. S-Comm	.327**	-.001	-.078	.073	-.024	-.052	.068	.507**	–										
10. S-Loyalty	.205**	.055	.040	.143**	-.056	-.071	.071	.403**	.391**	–									
11. M-MI ^b	-.125**	.356**	.281**	.200**	-.080	-.059	-.026	-.035	-.041	.099*	–								
12. M-Intent ^b	-.318**	.164**	.441**	.079	-.040	.008	-.107*	-.106*	-.195**	-.003	.479**	–							
13. M-Hurt ^b	-.121**	.152**	.110*	.290**	-.124**	-.074	-.080	.062	.057	.135**	.425**	.276**	–						
14. M-H*MI	.033	.031	-.018	.013	.154**	-.009	.068	-.018	.093*	.052	.070	-.012	-.051	–					
15. M-H*Intent	-.070	.033	.100*	.035	-.004	.109*	-.103*	-.028	.024	.009	-.033	.122**	-.024	.440**	–				
16. M-H*CS	.153**	.059	-.034	-.091*	.146**	-.026	.377**	-.020	.010	-.046	.043	-.053	-.029	-.057	-.338**	–			
17. M-Repair	.124**	.038	-.050	-.011	.028	-.019	.087	.563**	.345**	.274**	.007	-.074	.110*	-.028	-.039	.023	–		
18. M-Comm	.256**	.076	-.040	.072	.021	.002	.046	.305**	.537**	.189**	.049	-.148**	.185**	.029	-.011	.131**	.478**	–	
19. M-Loyalty	.144**	.117**	.025	.116**	-.017	-.055	.063	.206**	.225**	.541**	.183**	.058	.247**	.045	-.071	.083	.381**	.292**	–
<i>M</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.73	0.16	3.03	4.68	4.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.94	0.71	-0.14	3.00	4.36	4.37
<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.49	1.76	1.22	2.05	2.08	1.47	1.52	1.55	1.42	1.44	1.68	1.50	2.35	2.62	1.78	1.45	1.50	1.43

Table 3 cont.

Note. $N = 513$. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; H*MI = the intensity of hurt \times message intensity; H*Intent = the intensity of hurt \times perceived intentionality; H*CS = the intensity of hurt \times communal strength; Repair = relational repair tactics; Comm = integrative communication; M = means; SD = standard deviations.

^aCovariates include four continuous variables (sex, age, relationship length, time since the major hurtful episode, and time since the minor hurtful episode) and three dummy-coded variables (sex, dating relationships, and married relationships).

^bAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 4
 Results of Model 1 for Proximal and Distal Effects on Victims' Constructive Communication

	Major Hurtful Episodes											
	Relational Repair Tactics				Integrative Communication				Loyalty			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.20	.15	.06	.001	.42	.32	.06	<.001	.26	.21	.06	<.001
S-MI ^a	-.08	-.07	.05	.09	-.06	-.06	.05	.20	-.06	-.07	.05	.15
S-Intent ^a	.01	.01	.04	.83	-.004	-.01	.04	.92	.06	.08	.04	.08
S-Hurt ^a	-.11	-.09	.06	.05	.08	.07	.06	.15	.12	.10	.06	.03
S-Hurt*MI	.001	.001	.03	.98	-.01	-.01	.03	.88	-.01	-.01	.03	.87
S-Hurt*Intent	-.07	-.09	.03	.03	-.02	-.02	.03	.61	-.01	-.02	.03	.63
S-Hurt*CS	-.03	-.03	.04	.46	.02	.02	.04	.69	.03	.03	.04	.46
	Minor Hurtful Episodes											
	Relational Repair Tactics				Integrative Communication				Loyalty			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.15	.12	.06	.01	.31	.24	.06	<.001	.20	.17	.06	<.001
M-MI ^a	-.01	-.01	.05	.79	.05	.05	.05	.27	.05	.05	.05	.25
M-Intent ^a	-.02	-.02	.05	.67	-.09	-.10	.04	.02	.03	.03	.05	.45
M-Hurt ^a	.07	.07	.05	.09	.19	.19	.04	<.001	.17	.18	.05	<.001
M-Hurt*MI	-.01	-.02	.03	.66	-.02	-.03	.03	.51	.03	.05	.03	.20
M-Hurt*Intent	-.01	-.01	.02	.81	.03	.06	.03	.20	-.04	-.07	.02	.14
M-Hurt*CS	.02	.03	.03	.52	.11	.13	.03	.001	.07	.08	.03	.04

Note. $N = 513$. $\chi^2(36, N = 513) = 53.78, p = .03, \chi^2/df = 1.49$; root mean square error of approximation = .031 (90% CI = .010, .047); comparative fit index = .984; Tucker-Lewis index = .959; standardized root mean square residuals = .025.

Table 4 cont.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; H*MI = the intensity of hurt × message intensity; H*Intent = the intensity of hurt × perceived intentionality; H*CS = the intensity of hurt × communal strength.

^aAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

Table 5
 Partial Correlations among Variables of Interest for Model 2^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
1. CS ^b	–																		
2. S-MI ^b	.029	–																	
3. S-Intent ^b	-.245**	.480**	–																
4. S-Hurt ^b	.086	.430**	.342**	–															
5. S-H*MI	-.028	-.067	-.033	-.372**	–														
6. S-H*Intent	-.085	-.036	.073	-.224**	.459**	–													
7. S-H*CS	.203**	-.002	-.057	-.094*	.094*	-.188**	–												
8. S-PRepair	.086	-.031	-.096*	-.034	.041	-.027	.043	–											
9. S-PComm	.265**	-.022	-.097*	.017	-.028	-.115**	.066	.660**	–										
10. S-PLoyalty	.168**	.036	.015	.119**	-.076	-.121**	.058	.530**	.653**	–									
11. M-MI ^b	-.125**	.356**	.281**	.200**	-.080	-.059	-.026	-.028	-.019	.035	–								
12. M-Intent ^b	-.318**	.164**	.441**	.079	-.040	.008	-.107*	-.169**	-.259**	-.168**	.479**	–							
13. M-Hurt ^b	-.121**	.152**	.110*	.290**	-.124**	-.074	-.080	.014	-.003	-.002	.425**	.276**	–						
14. M-H*MI	.033	.031	-.018	.013	.154**	-.009	.068	-.022	.024	.017	.070	-.012	-.051	–					
15. M-H*Intent	-.070	.033	.100*	.035	-.004	.109*	-.103*	-.075	-.054	-.044	-.033	.122**	-.024	.440**	–				
16. M-H*CS	.153**	.059	-.034	-.091*	.146**	-.026	.377**	.010	-.001	-.009	.043	-.053	-.029	-.057	-.338**	–			
17. M-PRepair	.124**	.044	-.063	-.060	.081	.030	.029	.593**	.468**	.425**	-.055	-.131**	.095*	-.068	-.109*	.084	–		
18. M-PComm	.175**	.021	-.120**	.010	.018	-.045	.037	.398**	.521**	.372**	-.013	-.181**	.106*	-.017	-.102*	.096*	.671**	–	
19. M-PLoyalty	.140**	.073	-.056	.006	.035	-.054	.040	.310**	.351**	.501**	.115**	-.066	.167**	.035	-.126**	.128**	.575**	.587**	–
<i>M</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.73	0.16	3.57	4.15	4.19	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.94	0.71	-0.14	3.36	3.82	3.96
<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.49	1.76	1.22	2.05	2.08	1.47	1.55	1.61	1.52	1.44	1.68	1.50	2.35	2.62	1.78	1.44	1.52	1.50

Table 5 cont.

Note. $N = 513$. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; H*MI = the intensity of hurt \times message intensity; H*Intent = the intensity of hurt \times perceived intentionality; H*CS = the intensity of hurt \times communal strength; PRepair = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics; PComm = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication; PLoyalty = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty; M = means; SD = standard deviations.

^aCovariates include four continuous variables (sex, age, relationship length, time since the major hurtful episode, and time since the minor hurtful episode) and three dummy-coded variables (sex, dating relationships, and married relationships).

^bAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 6

Results of Model 2 for Proximal and Distal Effects on Victims' Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication

	Major Hurtful Episodes											
	Relational Repair Tactics				Integrative Communication				Loyalty			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.08	.08	.06	.19	.36	.26	.06	<.001	.21	.16	.06	<.001
S-MI ^a	-.07	-.07	.05	.12	-.08	-.08	.05	.08	-.10	-.10	.05	.03
S-Intent ^a	-.05	-.05	.04	.23	.02	.03	.04	.58	.07	.08	.04	.09
S-Hurt ^a	.08	.06	.06	.18	.04	.03	.06	.54	.17	.14	.06	.003
S-Hurt*MI	.02	.02	.03	.61	-.001	-.002	.03	.97	-.02	-.03	.03	.46
S-Hurt*Intent	-.03	-.04	.03	.29	-.08	-.10	.03	.02	-.05	-.07	.03	.10
S-Hurt*CS	.03	.03	.04	.43	.01	.01	.04	.78	.05	.04	.04	.25
	Minor Hurtful Episodes											
	Relational Repair Tactics				Integrative Communication				Loyalty			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.15	.12	.06	.01	.21	.16	.06	.001	.19	.14	.06	.001
M-MI ^a	-.13	-.13	.04	.003	-.06	-.05	.05	.26	.02	.02	.05	.69
M-Intent ^a	.02	.02	.04	.61	-.05	-.05	.04	.27	.01	.01	.04	.83
M-Hurt ^a	.14	.15	.04	<.001	.16	.15	.04	<.001	.19	.19	.04	<.001
M-Hurt*MI	-.02	-.03	.02	.51	.004	.01	.03	.89	.05	.08	.03	.05
M-Hurt*Intent	-.02	-.04	.02	.40	-.02	-.04	.03	.35	-.06	-.10	.02	.03
M-Hurt*CS	.06	.07	.03	.05	.07	.08	.03	.05	.08	.10	.03	.02

Note. $N = 513$. $\chi^2(36, N = 513) = 60.88, p = .01, \chi^2/df = 1.69$; root mean square error of approximation = .037 (90% CI = .020, .052); comparative fit index = .985; Tucker-Lewis index = .962; standardized root mean square residuals = .027.

Table 6 cont.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; H*MI = the intensity of hurt × message intensity; H*Intent = the intensity of hurt × perceived intentionality; H*CS = the intensity of hurt × communal strength.

^aAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

Table 7
 Partial Correlations among Variables of Interest for Model 3^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. CS ^b	–																
2. S-MI ^b	.029	–															
3. S-Intent ^b	-.245**	.480**	–														
4. S-Hurt ^b	.086	.430**	.342**	–													
5. S-H*MI	-.028	-.067	-.033	-.372**	–												
6. S-H*Intent	-.085	-.036	.073	-.224**	.459**	–											
7. S-H*CS	.203**	-.002	-.057	-.094*	.094*	-.188**	–										
8. S-PRC	.208**	.026	-.088*	-.021	.015	-.045	.019	–									
9. S-NRC	-.463**	.197**	.370**	.169**	-.077	.035	-.107*	-.205**	–								
10. M-MI ^b	-.125**	.356**	.281**	.200**	-.080	-.059	-.026	.014	.293**	–							
11. M-Intent ^b	-.318**	.164**	.441**	.079	-.040	.008	-.107*	-.117**	.398**	.479**	–						
12. M-Hurt ^b	-.121**	.152**	.110*	.290**	-.124**	-.074	-.080	.024	.267**	.425**	.276**	–					
13. M- H*MI	.033	.031	-.018	.013	.154**	-.009	.068	.061	.014	.070	-.012	-.051	–				
14. M-H*Intent	-.070	.033	.100*	.035	-.004	.109*	-.103*	-.021	.067	-.033	.122**	-.024	.440**	–			
15. M-H*CS	.153**	.059	-.034	-.091*	.146**	-.026	.377**	-.016	-.074	.043	-.053	-.029	-.057	-.338**	–		
16. M-PRC	.179**	.075	-.061	-.009	.040	-.054	.048	.609**	-.094*	.080	-.078	.128**	-.004	-.084	.071	–	
17. M-NRC	-.476**	.150**	.266**	.077	-.089*	-.052	-.091*	-.124**	.700**	.364**	.450**	.312**	.009	.078	-.098*	-.022	–
<i>M</i>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.73	0.16	4.09	3.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.94	0.71	-0.14	3.90	2.85
<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.49	1.76	1.22	2.05	2.08	1.47	1.23	1.48	1.44	1.68	1.50	2.35	2.62	1.78	1.20	1.43

Note. *N* = 513. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; H*MI = the intensity of hurt × message intensity; H*Intent = the

Table 7 cont.

intensity of hurt \times perceived intentionality; H*CS = the intensity of hurt \times communal strength; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequence; *M* = means; *SD* = standard deviations.

^aCovariates include four continuous variables (sex, age, relationship length, time since the major hurtful episode, and time since the minor hurtful episode) and three dummy-coded variables (sex, dating relationships, and married relationships).

^bAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 8
Results of Model 3 for Proximal and Distal Effects on Relationship Consequences

	Major Hurtful Episodes							
	Positive Relationship Consequences				Negative Relationship Consequences			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.22	.20	.05	<.001	-.55	-.43	.05	<.001
S-MI ^a	.01	.02	.04	.71	.04	.04	.04	.35
S-Intent ^a	-.02	-.03	.03	.52	.15	.17	.03	<.001
S-Hurt ^a	-.01	-.01	.04	.81	.13	.11	.05	.01
S-Hurt*MI	-.01	-.01	.03	.78	-.02	-.03	.03	.40
S-Hurt*Intent	-.01	-.02	.02	.67	.05	.07	.03	.05
S-Hurt*CS	-.02	-.02	.03	.56	-.003	-.003	.03	.93
	Minor Hurtful Episodes							
	Positive Relationship Consequences				Negative Relationship Consequences			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
CS ^a	.18	.17	.05	<.001	-.49	-.41	.05	<.001
M-MI ^a	.04	.05	.04	.28	.13	.13	.04	<.001
M-Intent ^a	-.04	-.05	.03	.22	.12	.15	.03	<.001
M-Hurt ^a	.08	.11	.03	.01	.08	.08	.03	.02
M-Hurt*MI	-.02	-.03	.02	.47	-.01	-.02	.02	.60
M-Hurt*Intent	-.01	-.03	.02	.50	.02	.04	.02	.34
M-Hurt*CS	.04	.06	.03	.14	-.02	-.03	.03	.38

Note. $N = 513$. $\chi^2(24, N = 513) = 69.69, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 2.90$; root mean square error of approximation = .061 (90% CI = .045, .078); comparative fit index = .950; Tucker-Lewis index = .880; standardized root mean square residuals = .032.

Table 8 cont.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; MI = message intensity; Intent = perceived intentionality; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; Hurt*MI = the intensity of hurt \times message intensity; Hurt*Intent = the intensity of hurt \times perceived intentionality; Hurt*CS = the intensity of hurt \times communal strength.

^aAll exogenous variables were mean-centered before computing the interaction terms.

Table 9
 Partial Correlations among Variables of Interest for Model 4^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. CS	–												
2. S-Hurt	.130**	–											
3. S-Repair	.116*	-.070	–										
4. S-Comm	.288**	.084	.502**	–									
5. S-Loyalty	.222**	.124**	.410**	.394**	–								
6. S-PRC	.170**	-.028	.544**	.389**	.356**	–							
7. S-NRC	-.385**	.059	-.069	-.165**	.006	-.181**	–						
8. M-Hurt	-.062	.269**	.093*	.103*	.111*	.030	.159**	–					
9. M-Repair	.095*	-.023	.564**	.336**	.273**	.416**	.058	.125**	–				
10. M-Comm	.218**	.043	.300**	.521**	.177**	.318**	-.028	.204**	.471**	–			
11. M-Loyalty	.159**	.076	.218**	.234**	.536**	.226**	.101*	.192**	.383**	.285**	–		
12. M-PRC	.146**	-.039	.419**	.272**	.272**	.601**	-.081	.114*	.569**	.377**	.355**	–	
13. M-NRC	-.407**	-.011	.008	-.119**	.040	-.094*	.631**	.171**	.101*	-.041	.047	-.008	–
<i>M</i>	5.53	5.82	3.03	4.68	4.63	4.09	3.06	4.20	3.00	4.36	4.37	3.90	2.85
<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.22	1.52	1.55	1.42	1.23	1.48	1.50	1.45	1.50	1.43	1.20	1.43

Note. *N* = 513. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; Repair = relational repair tactics; Comm = integrative communication; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequence; *M* = means; *SD* = standard deviations.

^aCovariates include four continuous variables (sex, age, relationship length, time since the major hurtful episode, and time since the minor hurtful episode) and three dummy-coded variables (sex, dating relationships, and married relationships).

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 10

Results of Model 4 for Mediation Effects of Victims' Constructive Communication on the Relationship between (a) the Intensity of Hurt and Relationship Consequences and (b) Communal Strength and Relationship Consequences

Direct Effects	Major Hurtful Events			Minor Hurtful Events		
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Hurt → PRC	-.01	-.01	.88	.03	.04	.21
Hurt → NRC	.11	.09	.01	.08	.09	.01
CS → PRC	.07	.07	.08	.07	.07	.05
CS → NRC	-.50	-.39	<.001	-.49	-.40	<.001

Indirect Effects	Major Hurtful Events			Minor Hurtful Events		
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Hurt → Repair → PRC	-.02	-.02	.14	.02	.03	.09
Hurt → Comm → PRC	.01	.01	.13	.02	.01	.08
Hurt → Loyalty → PRC	.01	.01	.04	.02	.02	.004
Hurt → Repair → NRC	<.001	<.001	.89	.01	.01	.16
Hurt → Comm → NRC	-.01	-.01	.21	-.01	-.01	.15
Hurt → Loyalty → NRC	.01	.01	.22	-.001	-.001	.89
CS → Repair → PRC	.05	.05	.01	.04	.04	.03
CS → Comm → PRC	.04	.03	.01	.02	.02	.08
CS → Loyalty → PRC	.03	.03	.01	.03	.03	.01
CS → Repair → NRC	.001	.001	.88	.01	.01	.09
CS → Comm → NRC	-.03	-.02	.10	-.02	-.01	.14
CS → Loyalty → NRC	.02	.01	.18	-.001	-.001	.89

Note. $N = 513$. $\chi^2(22, N = 513) = 88.86, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 4.04$; root mean square error of approximation = .077 (90% CI = .061, .094); comparative fit index = .967; Tucker-Lewis index = .889; standardized root mean square residuals = .048.

Hurt = the intensity of hurt; CS = communal strength; Repair = relational repair tactics; Comm = integrative communication; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequences.

Table 11
 Partial Correlations among Variables of Interest for Model 5^a

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. CS	–												
2. S-Hurt	.130**	–											
3. S-P-Repair	.031	-.022	–										
4. S-P-Comm	.207**	.022	.647**	–									
5. S-P-Loyalty	.138**	.098*	.519**	.636**	–								
6. S-PRC	.170**	-.028	.470**	.543**	.424**	–							
7. S-NRC	-.385**	.059	-.109*	-.218**	-.076	-.181**	–						
8. M-Hurt	-.062	.269**	.045	.034	.006	.030	.159**	–					
9. M-P-Repair	.076	-.080	.588**	.459**	.420**	.391**	-.039	.141**	–				
10. M-P-Comm	.110*	.012	.377**	.498**	.354**	.355**	-.048	.141**	.665**	–			
11. M-P-Loyalty	.109*	-.024	.299**	.336**	.496**	.249**	-.008	.143**	.577**	.579**	–		
12. M-PRC	.146**	-.039	.383**	.389**	.397**	.601**	-.081	.114*	.450**	.441**	.383**	–	
13. M-NRC	-.407**	-.011	-.058	-.142**	-.032	-.094*	.631**	.171**	-.030	-.036	.004	-.008	–
<i>M</i>	5.53	5.82	3.57	4.15	4.19	4.09	3.06	4.20	3.36	3.82	3.96	3.90	2.85
<i>SD</i>	1.15	1.22	1.55	1.61	1.52	1.23	1.48	1.50	1.44	1.52	1.50	1.20	1.43

Note. *N* = 513. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; CS = communal strength; Hurt = the intensity of hurt; PRepair = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics; PComm = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication; PLoyalty = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequence; *M* = means; *SD* = standard deviations.

^aCovariates include four continuous variables (sex, age, relationship length, time since the major hurtful episode, and time since the minor hurtful episode) and three dummy-coded variables (sex, dating relationships, and married relationships).

p* < .05, *p* < .01.

Table 12

Results of Model 5 for Mediation Effects of Victims' Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication on the Relationship between (a) the Intensity of Hurt and Relationship Consequences and (b) Communal Strength and Relationship Consequences

Direct Effects	Major Hurtful Events			Minor Hurtful Events		
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Hurt → PRC	-.03	-.03	.40	.03	.04	.28
Hurt → NRC	.12	.10	.01	.08	.09	.01
CS → PRC	.10	.10	.01	.11	.10	.01
CS → NRC	-.48	-.38	<.001	-.50	-.40	<.001
Indirect Effects	Major Hurtful Events			Minor Hurtful Events		
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>p</i>
Hurt → PRepair → PRC	.01	.01	.19	.02	.03	.01
Hurt → PComm → PRC	.01	.01	.31	.02	.02	.01
Hurt → PLoyalty → PRC	.01	.01	.31	.02	.02	.02
Hurt → PRepair → NRC	-.001	-.001	.79	-.01	.01	.33
Hurt → PComm → NRC	-.01	-.01	.34	-.003	-.004	.57
Hurt → PLoyalty → NRC	.01	.01	.28	.01	.01	.33
CS → PRepair → PRC	.004	.004	.59	.02	.02	.08
CS → PComm → PRC	.07	.07	<.001	.02	.02	.03
CS → PLoyalty → PRC	.01	.01	.33	.02	.02	.05
CS → PRepair → NRC	<.001	<.001	.81	-.01	-.004	.37
CS → PComm → NRC	-.04	-.03	.02	-.004	-.003	.58
CS → PLoyalty → NRC	.01	.01	.30	.01	.01	.35

Note. $N = 513$. $\chi^2(22, N = 513) = 85.79, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 3.90$; root mean square error of approximation = .075 (90% CI = .059, .094); comparative fit index = .974; Tucker-Lewis index = .912; standardized root mean square residuals = .048.

Hurt = the intensity of hurt; CS = communal strength; PRepair = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics; PComm = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication; PLoyalty = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty; PRC = positive relationship consequences; NRC = negative relationship consequences.

Table 13

Summary of Results for All Hypotheses and Research Questions and Mediation Effects

Hypotheses and Research Questions for Victims' Constructive Communication	Major Events	Minor Events
	Supported	Supported
H1a: Message intensity is inversely related to relational repair tactics.	No	No
H1b: Message intensity is inversely related to integrative communication.	No	No
H1c: Message intensity is inversely related to loyalty.	No	No
H2a: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their relational repair tactics.	No	No
H2b: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their integrative communication.	No	Yes
H2c: Perceived intentionality is negatively associated with their loyalty.	No	No
H3a: The intensity of hurt is positively related to relational repair tactics.	No ^a	No
H3b: The intensity of hurt is positively related to integrative communication.	No	Yes
H3c: The intensity of hurt is positively related to loyalty.	Yes	Yes
RQ1a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and relational repair tactics?	No	No
RQ1b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and integrative communication?	No	No
RQ1c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between message intensity and loyalty?	No	No
RQ2a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and relational repair tactics?	Yes	No
RQ2b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and integrative communication?	No	No
RQ2c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the relationship between perceived intentionality and loyalty?	No	No
RQ3a: Is communal strength positively related to relational repair tactics?	Yes	Yes

Table 13 cont.

Hypotheses and Research Questions for Victims' Constructive Communication	Major Events	Minor Events
	Supported	Supported
RQ3b: Is communal strength positively related to integrative communication?	Yes	Yes
RQ3c: Is communal strength positively related to loyalty?	Yes	Yes
RQ4a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and relational repair tactics?	No	No
RQ4b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and integrative communication?	No	Yes
RQ4c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and loyalty?	No	Yes
Hypotheses and Research Questions for Victims' Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication	Major Events	Minor Events
	Supported	Supported
RQ5a: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?	No	Yes
RQ5b: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?	No	No
RQ5c: Is message intensity inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?	Yes	No
RQ6a: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?	No	No
RQ6b: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?	No	No
RQ6c: Is perceived intentionality inversely associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?	No	No
H4a: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics.	No	Yes
H4b: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication.	No	Yes
H4c: The intensity of hurt is positively associated with victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty.	Yes	Yes

Table 13 cont.

Hypotheses and Research Questions for Victims' Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication	Major Events	Minor Events
	Supported	Supported
RQ7a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?	No	No
RQ7b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?	No	No
RQ7c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?	No	No
RQ8a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?	No	No
RQ8b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?	Yes	No
RQ8c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?	No	Yes
H5a: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics.	No	Yes
H5b: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication.	Yes	Yes
H5c: Communal strength is positively related to victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty.	Yes	Yes
RQ9a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics?	No	Yes
RQ9b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication?	No	Yes
RQ9c: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty?	No	Yes

Table 13 cont.

Hypotheses and Research Questions for Relationship Consequences	Major Events Supported	Minor Events Supported
RQ10a: Is message intensity associated with positive relationship consequences?	No	No
RQ10b: Is message intensity associated with negative relationship consequences?	No	Yes
H6a: Perceived intentionality is inversely associated with positive relationship consequences.	No	No
H6b: Perceived intentionality is positively associated with negative relationship consequences.	Yes	Yes
H7a: The intensity of hurt is associated with positive relationship consequences.	No	Yes
H7b: The intensity of hurt is associated with negative relationship consequences.	Yes	Yes
RQ11a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and positive relationship consequences?	No	No
RQ11b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between message intensity and negative relationship consequences?	No	No
RQ12a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and positive relationship consequences?	No	No
RQ12b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between perceived intentionality and negative relationship consequences?	Yes	No
RQ13a: Is communal strength related to positive relationship consequences?	Yes	Yes
RQ13b: Is communal strength related to negative relationship consequences?	Yes	Yes
RQ14a: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and positive relationship consequences?	No	No

Table 13 cont.

Hypotheses and Research Questions for Relationship Consequences	Major Events Supported	Minor Events Supported
RQ14b: Does the intensity of hurt moderate the association between communal strength and negative relationship consequences?	No	No
<hr/>		
Results for the Mediating Effects of Victims' Constructive Communication	Major Events Supported	Minor Events Supported
1. The Intensity of Hurt → Relational Repair Tactics → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	No
2. The Intensity of Hurt → Integrative Communication → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	No
3. The Intensity of Hurt → Loyalty → Positive Relationship Consequences	Yes	Yes
4. The Intensity of Hurt → Relational Repair Tactics → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
5. The Intensity of Hurt → Integrative Communication → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
6. The Intensity of Hurt → Loyalty → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
7. Communal Strength → Relational Repair Tactics → Positive Relationship Consequences	Yes	Yes
8. Communal Strength → Integrative Communication → Positive Relationship Consequences	Yes	No
9. Communal Strength → Loyalty → Positive Relationship Consequences	Yes	Yes
10. Communal Strength → Relational Repair Tactics → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
11. Communal Strength → Integrative Communication → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
12. Communal Strength → Loyalty → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No

Table 13 cont.

Results for the Mediating Effects of Victims' Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication	Major Events	Minor Events
	Supported	Supported
1. The Intensity of Hurt → Relational Repair Tactics → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	Yes
2. The Intensity of Hurt → Integrative Communication → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	Yes
3. The Intensity of Hurt → Loyalty → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	Yes
4. The Intensity of Hurt → Relational Repair Tactics → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
5. The Intensity of Hurt → Integrative Communication → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
6. The Intensity of Hurt → Loyalty → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
7. Communal Strength → Relational Repair Tactics → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	No
8. Communal Strength → Integrative Communication → Positive Relationship Consequences	Yes	Yes
9. Communal Strength → Loyalty → Positive Relationship Consequences	No	Yes
10. Communal Strength → Relational Repair Tactics → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No
11. Communal Strength → Integrative Communication → Negative Relationship Consequences	Yes^b	No
12. Communal Strength → Loyalty → Negative Relationship Consequences	No	No

^aA significant negative relationship between the intensity of hurt and relational repair tactics was found in major hurtful episodes.

^bThe indirect effect was negative.

Figures

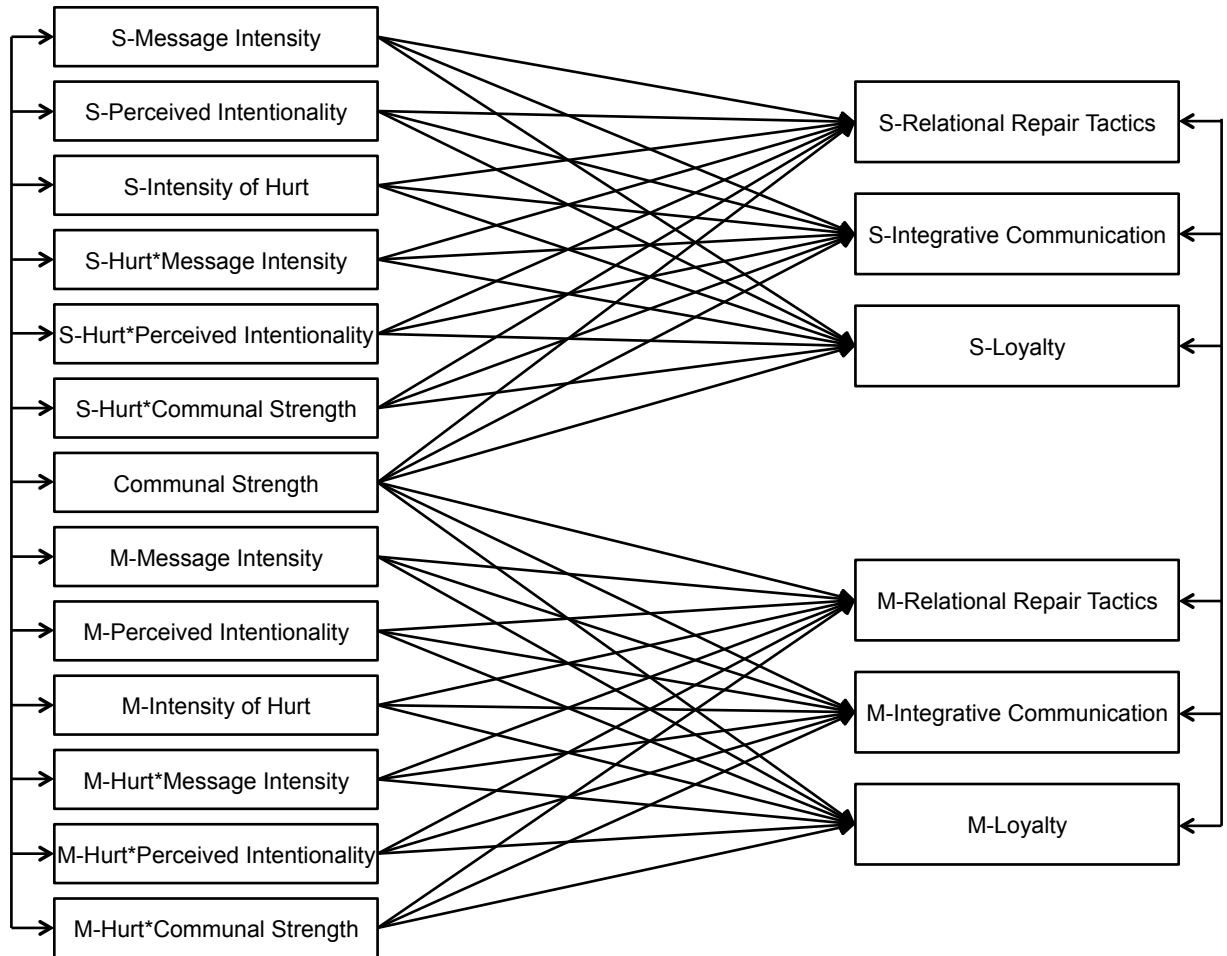


Figure 1a. Hypothesized path model 1 for victims' constructive communication.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

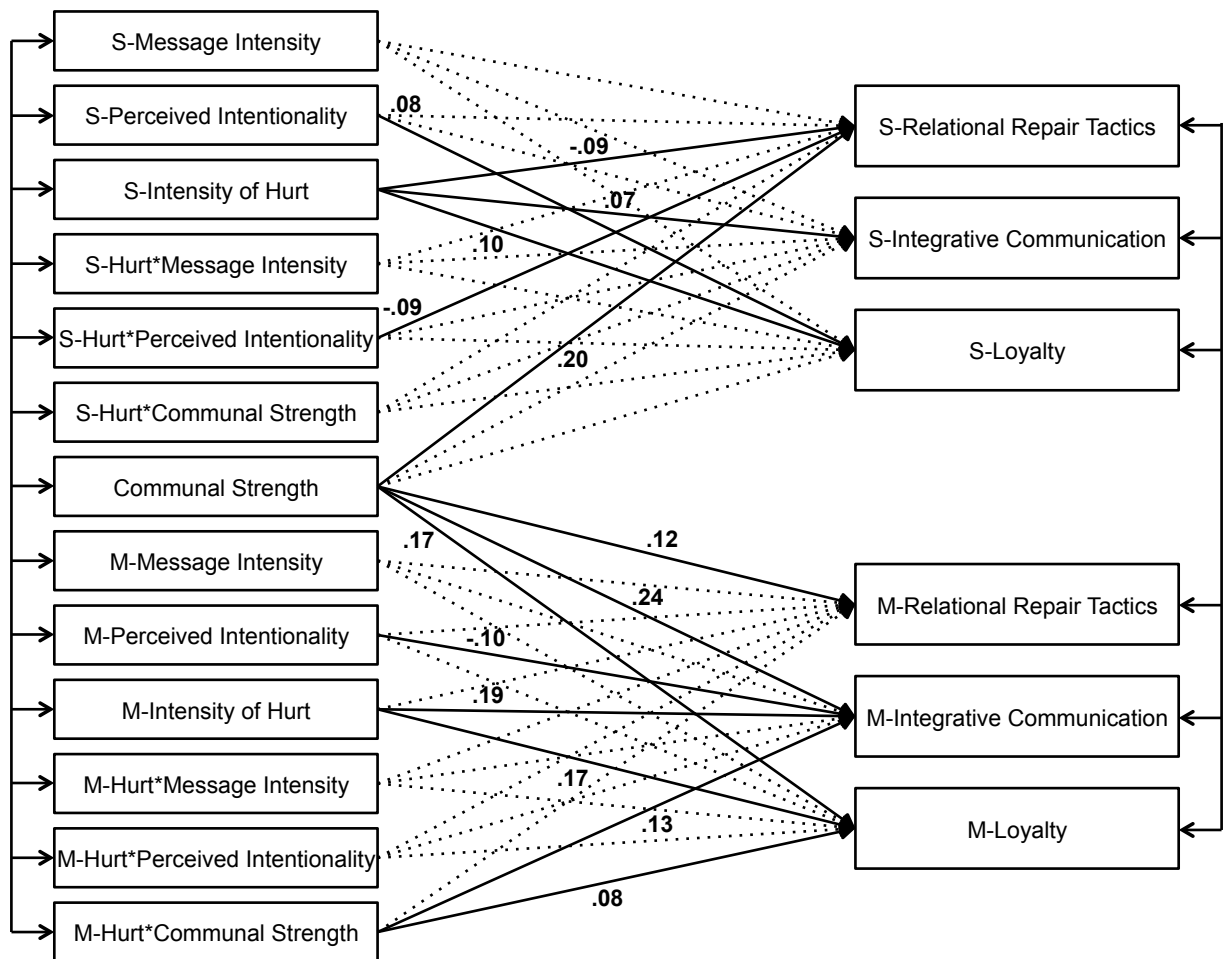


Figure 1b. Final path model 1 for victims' constructive communication.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. Standardized coefficients are presented. Solid lines represent significant paths ($p < .01$). The dotted lines indicate non-significant paths. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

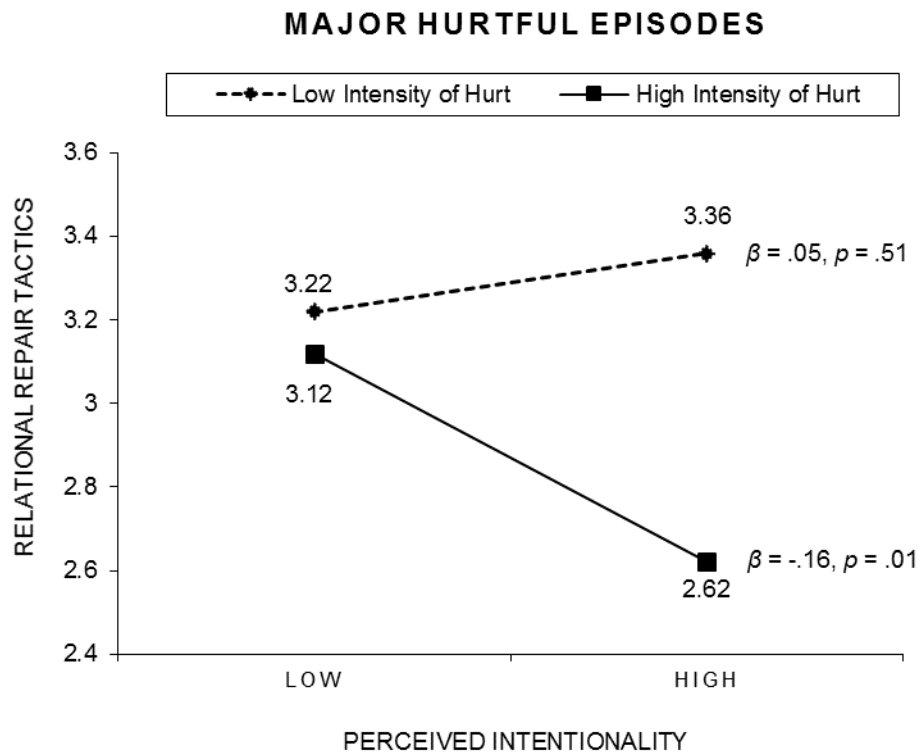


Figure 2. Victims' relational repair tactics as a function of perceived intentionality and the intensity of hurt in major hurtful episodes.

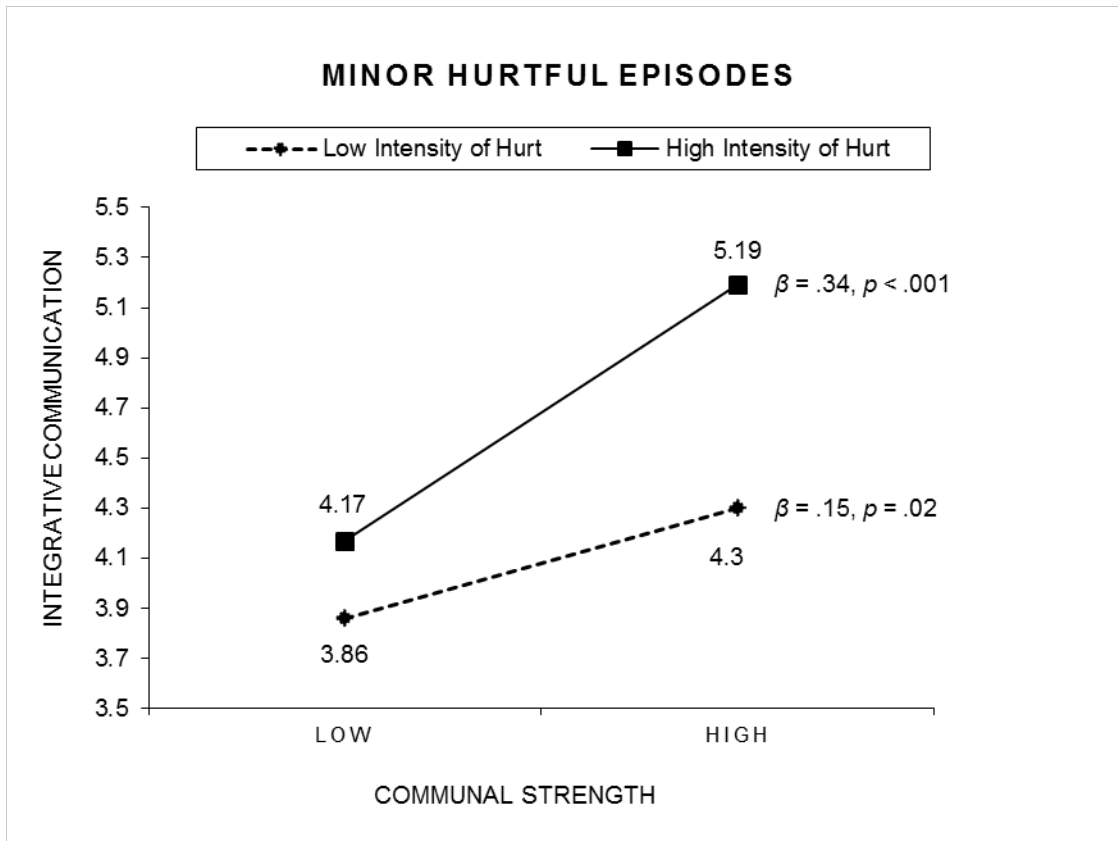


Figure 3. Victims' integrative communication as a function of communal strength and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

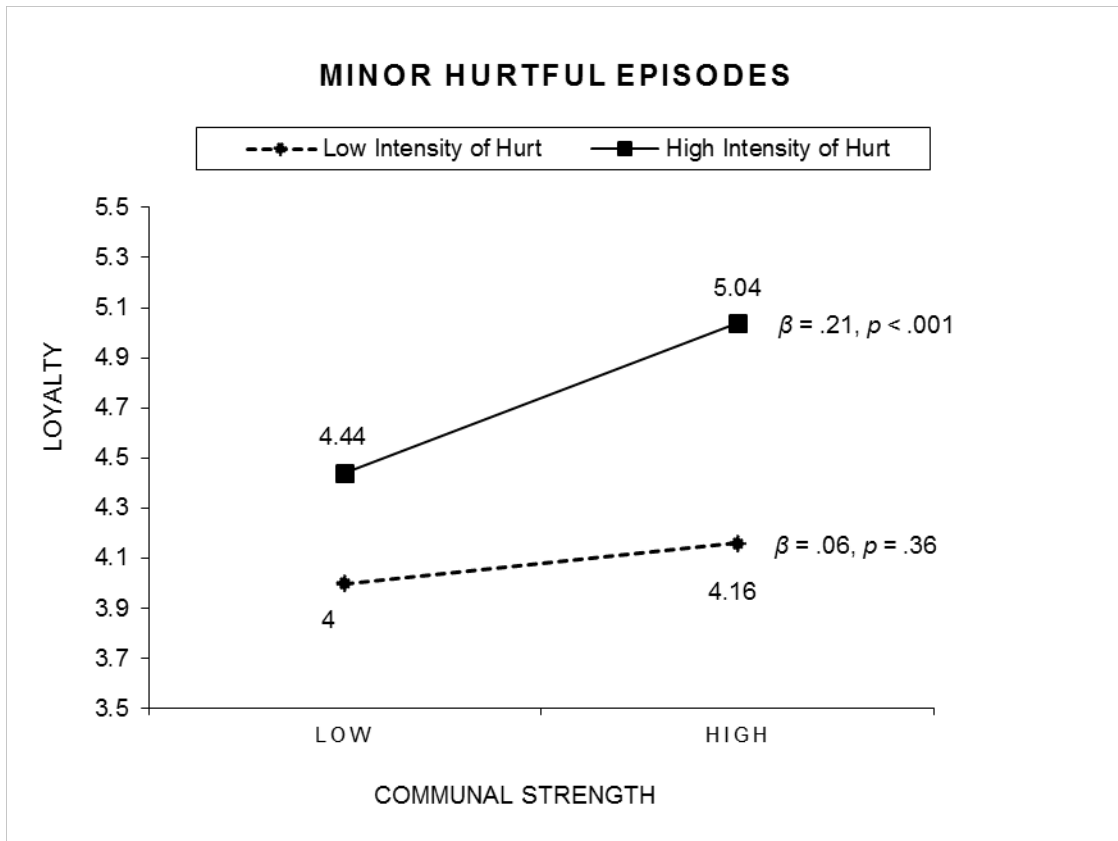


Figure 4. Victims' loyalty as a function of communal strength and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

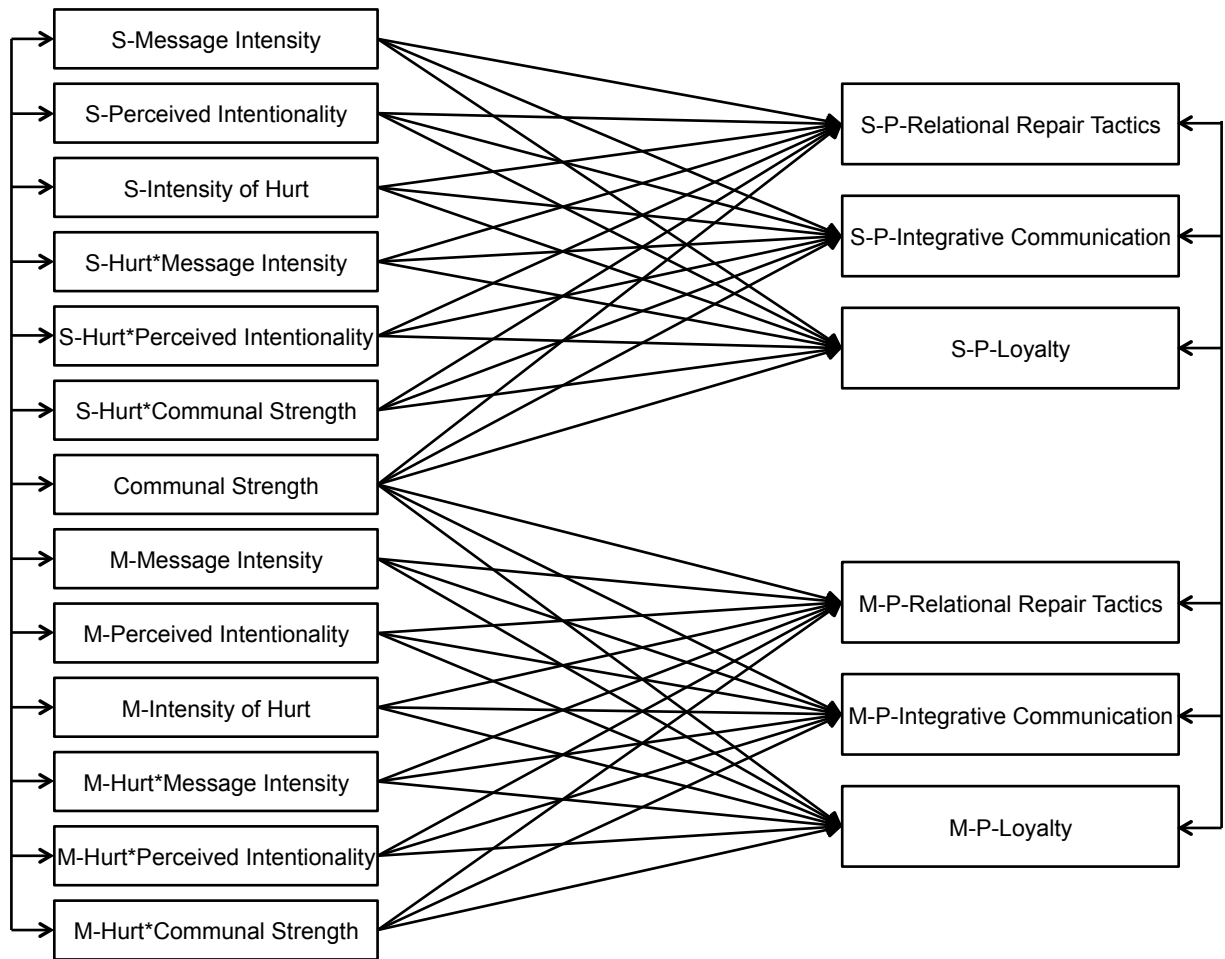


Figure 5a. Hypothesized path model 2 for victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; P = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

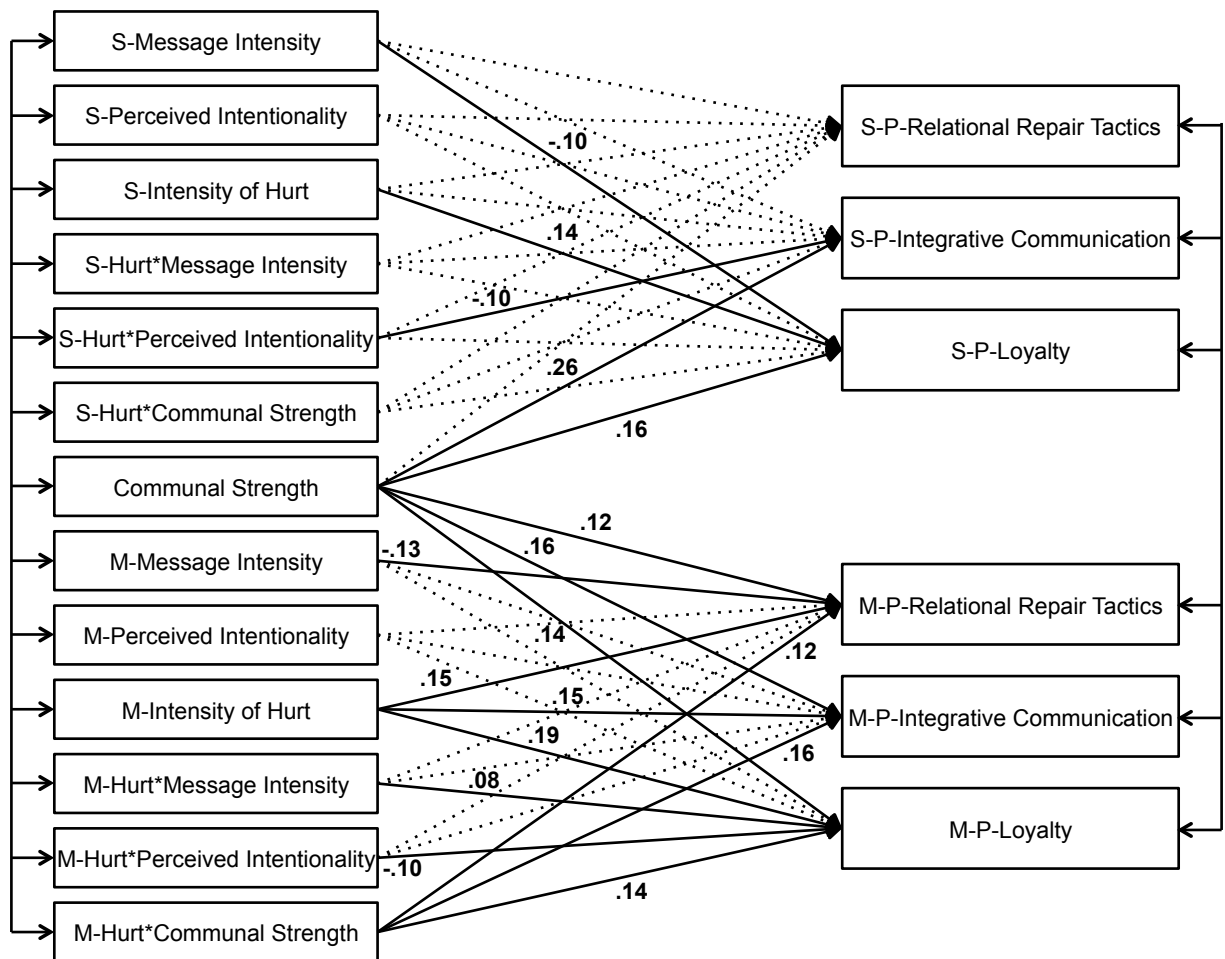


Figure 5b. Final path model 2 for victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; P = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Standardized coefficients are presented. Solid lines represent significant paths ($p < .05$). The dotted lines indicate non-significant paths. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

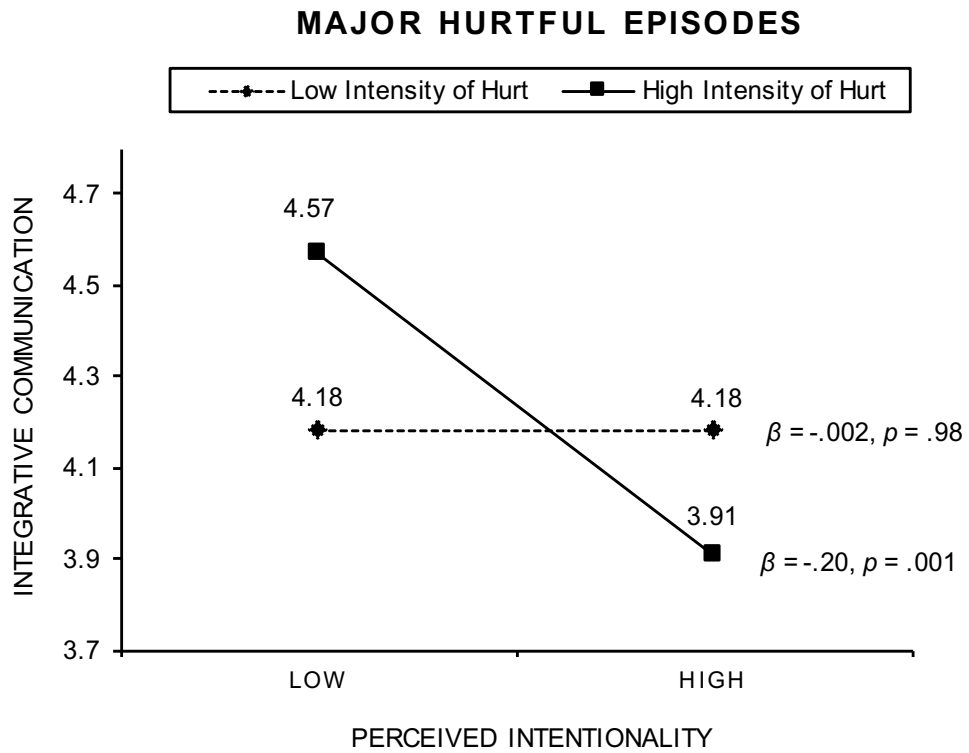


Figure 6. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication as a function of perceived intentionality and the intensity of hurt in major hurtful episodes.

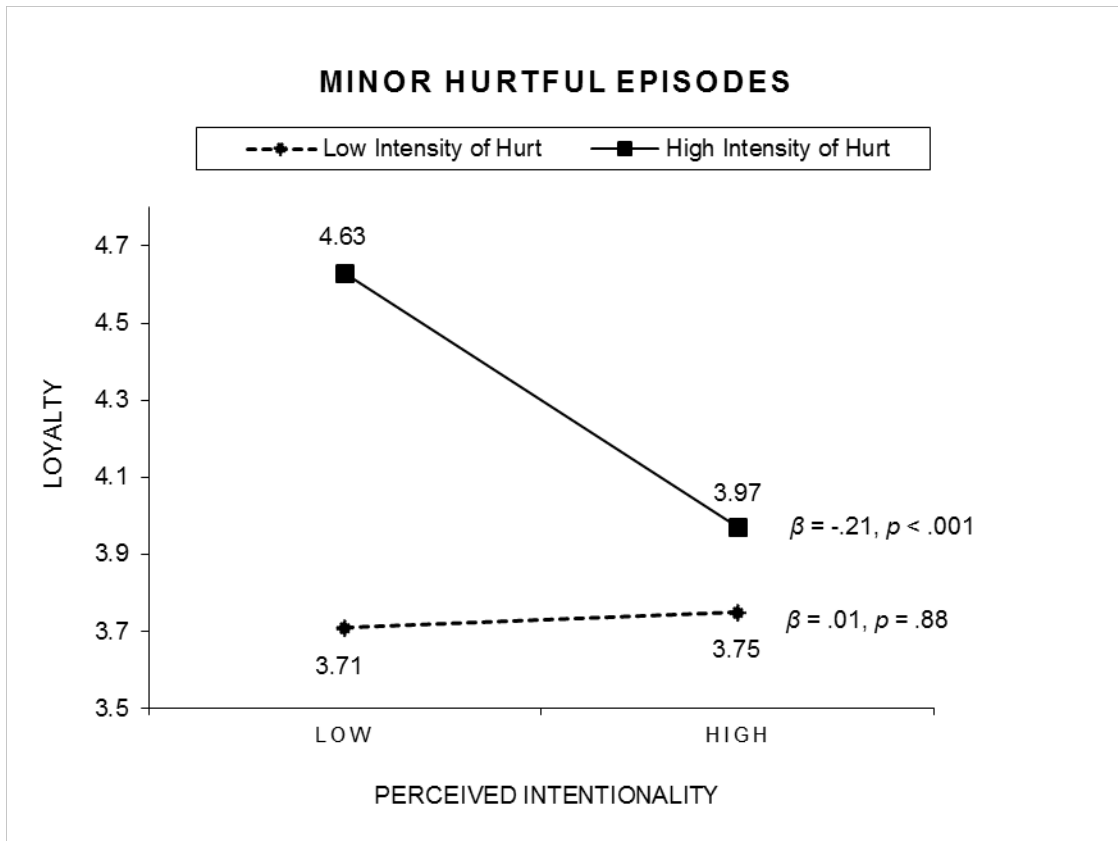


Figure 7. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty as a function of perceived intentionality and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

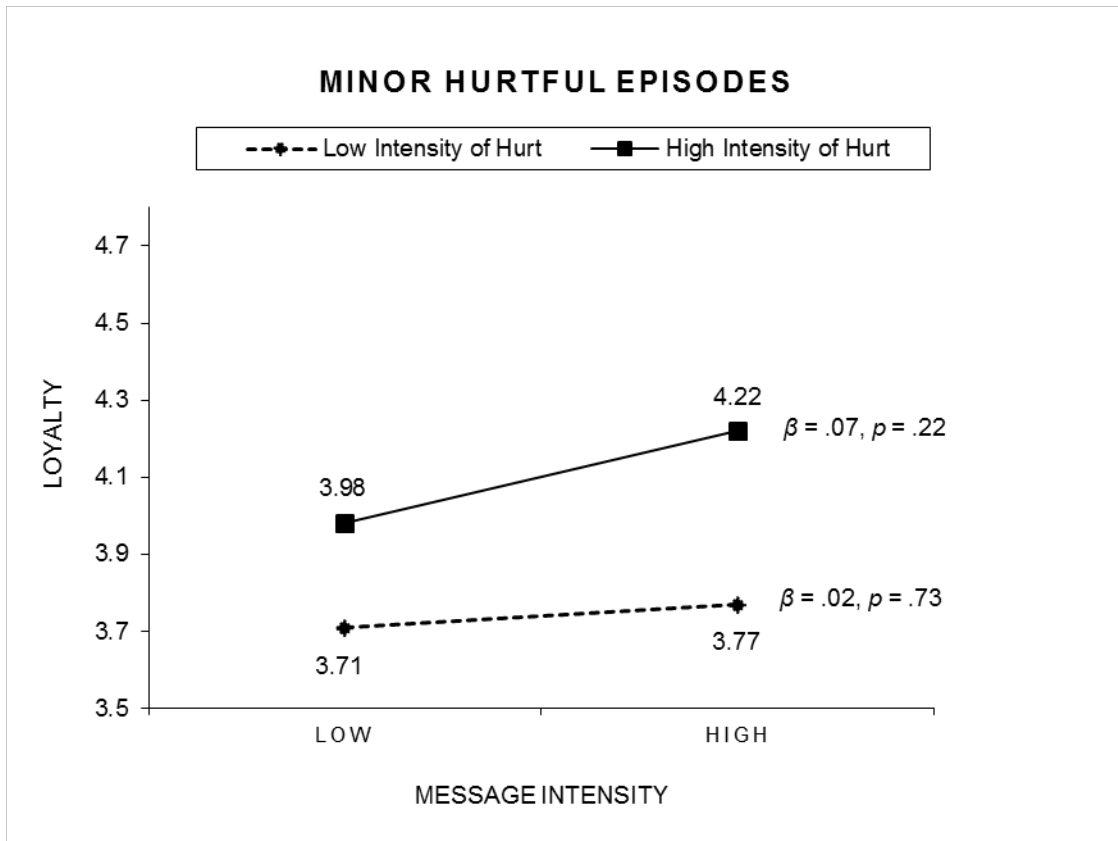


Figure 8. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty as a function of message intensity and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

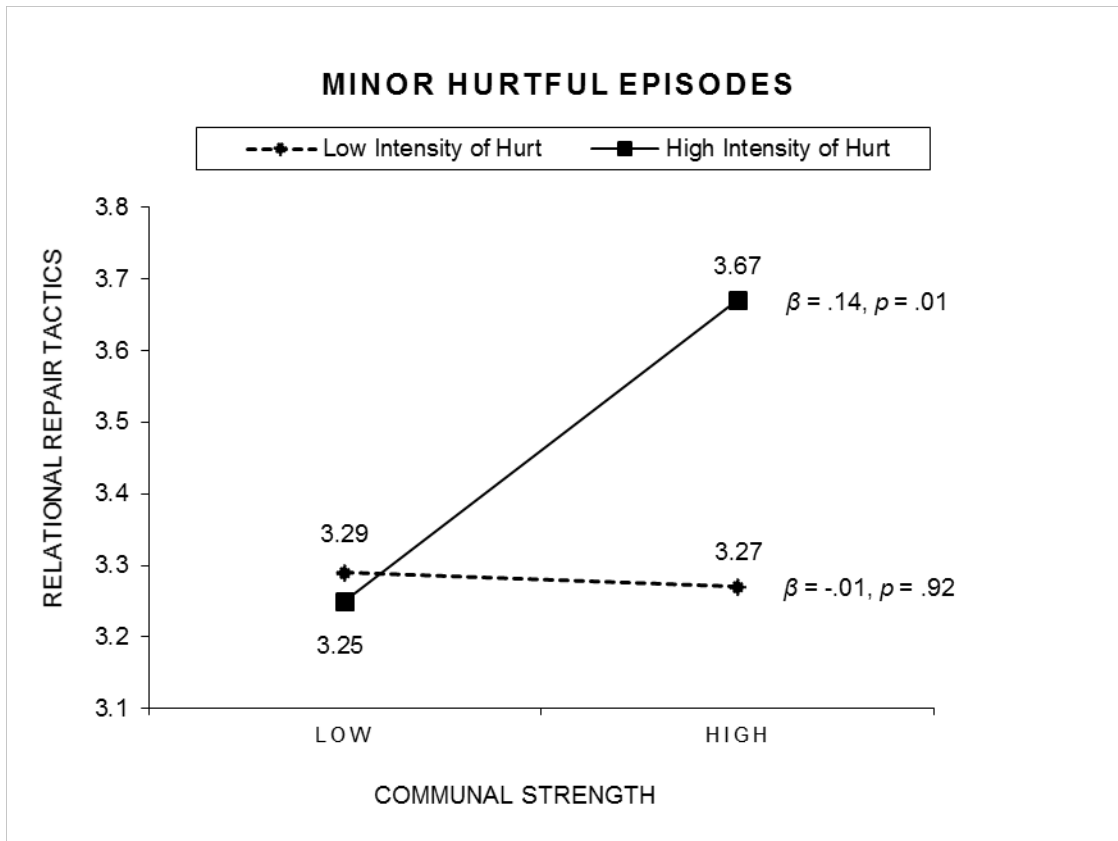


Figure 9. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's relational repair tactics as a function of communal strength and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

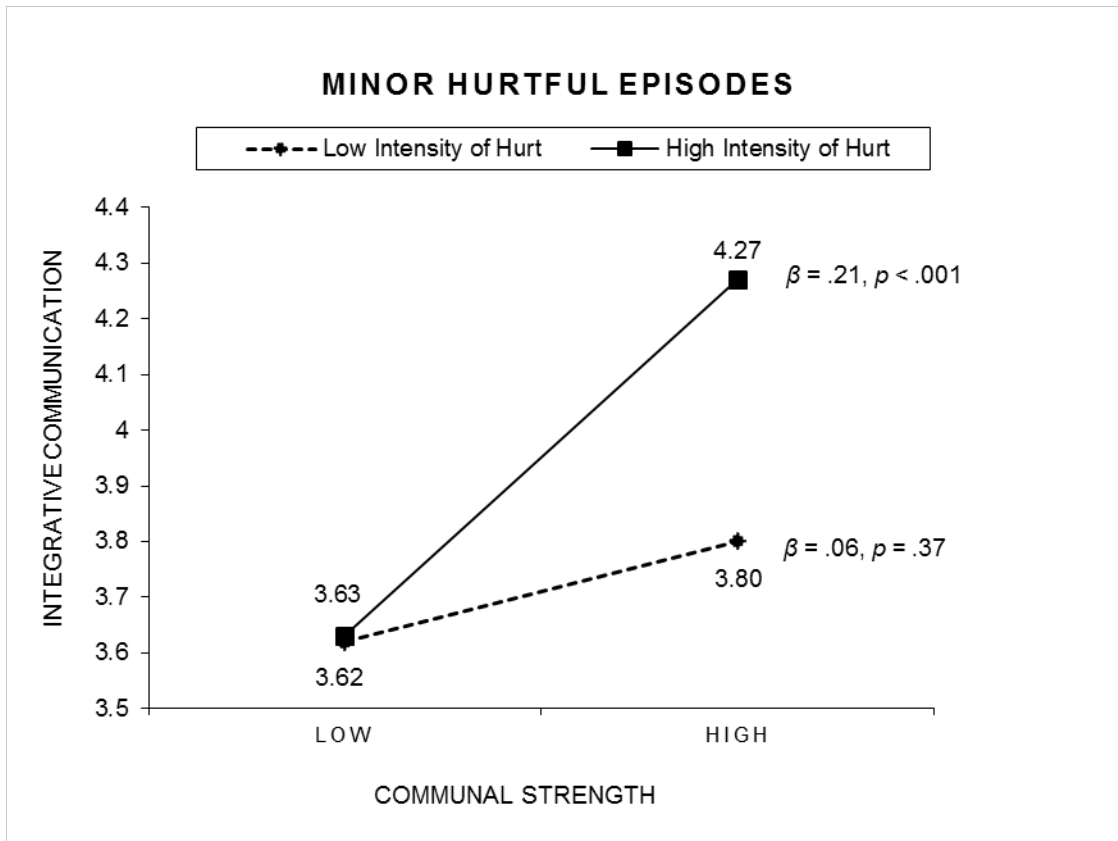


Figure 10. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's integrative communication as a function of communal strength and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

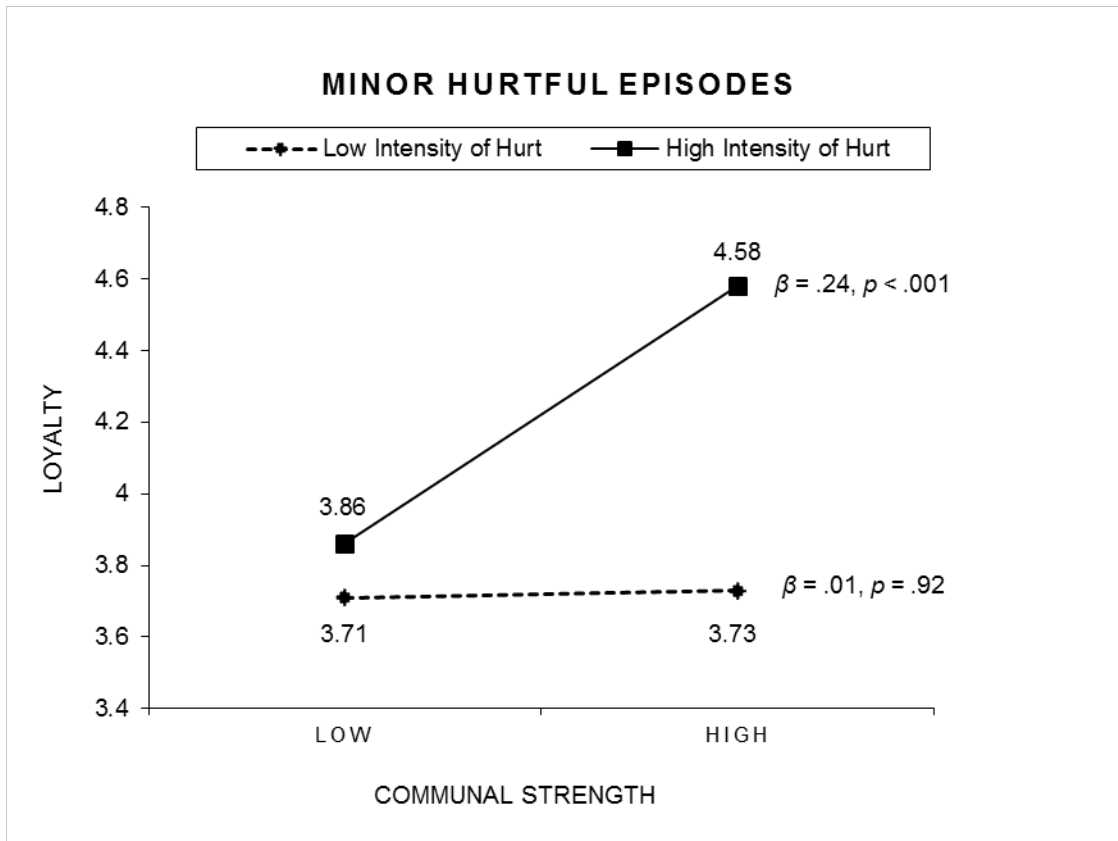


Figure 11. Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's loyalty as a function of communal strength and the intensity of hurt in minor hurtful episodes.

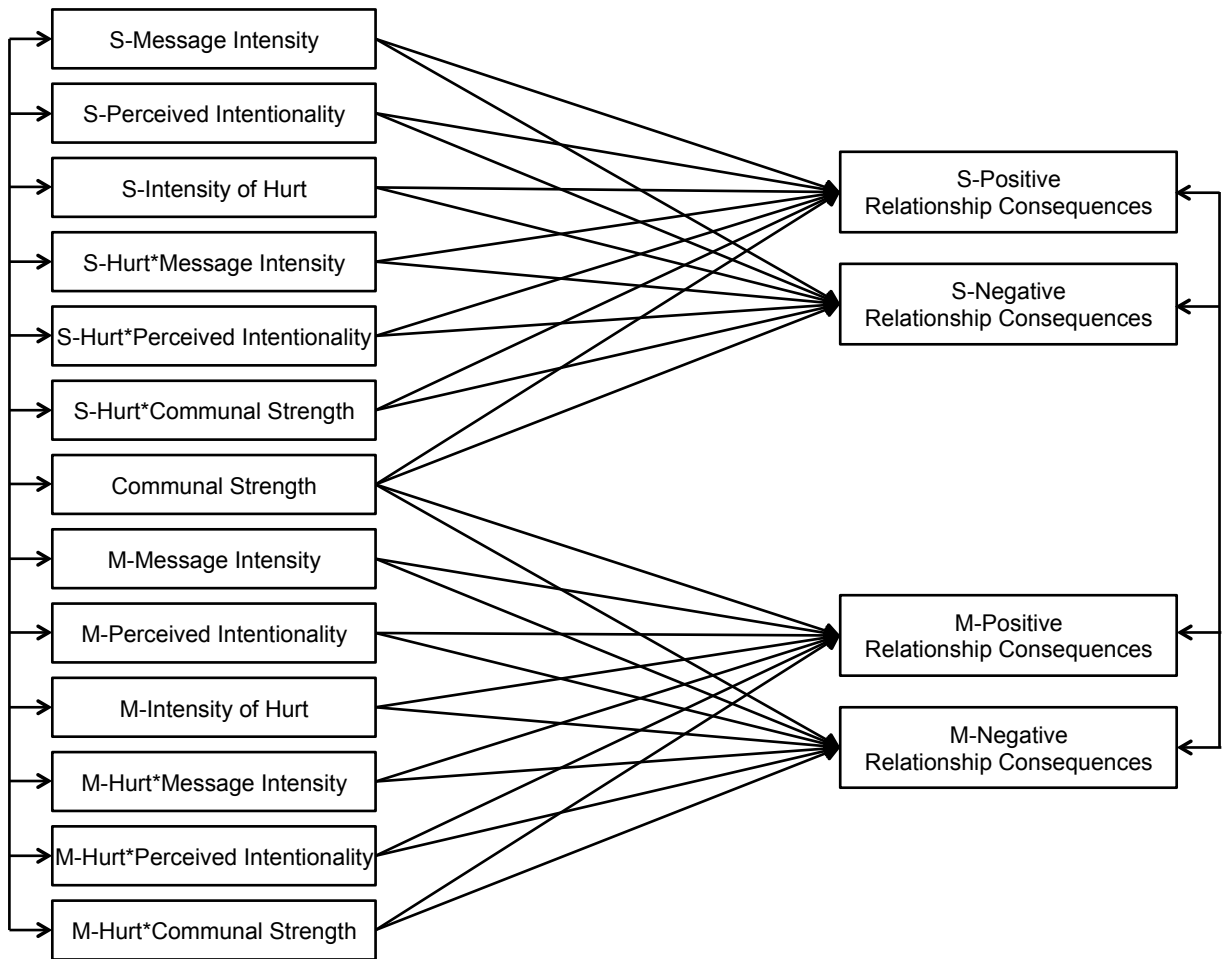


Figure 12a. Hypothesized path model 3 for relationship consequences.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

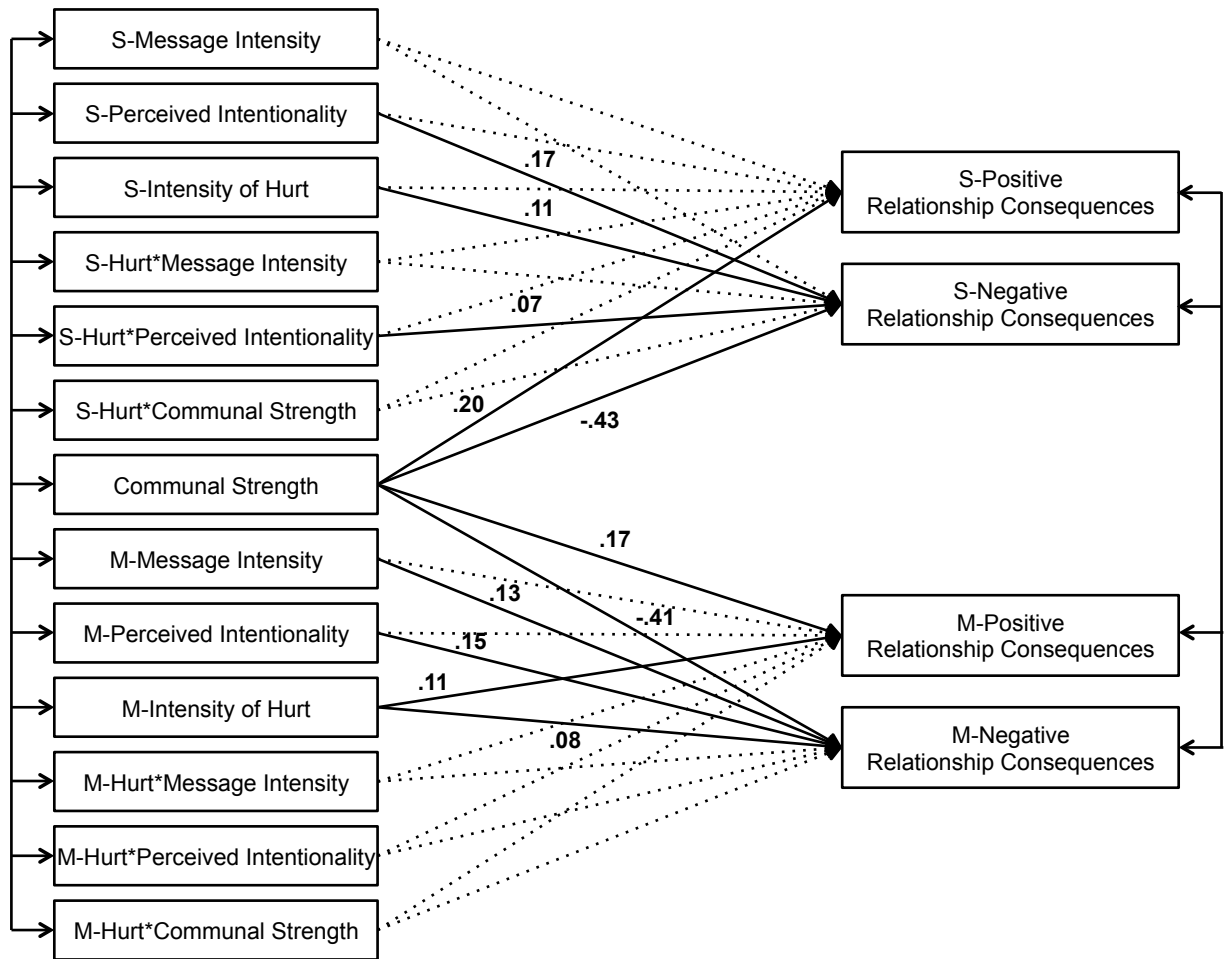


Figure 12b. Final path model 3 for relationship consequences.

S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. Standardized coefficients are presented. Solid lines represent significant paths ($p < .01$). The dotted lines indicate non-significant paths. All exogenous variables and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

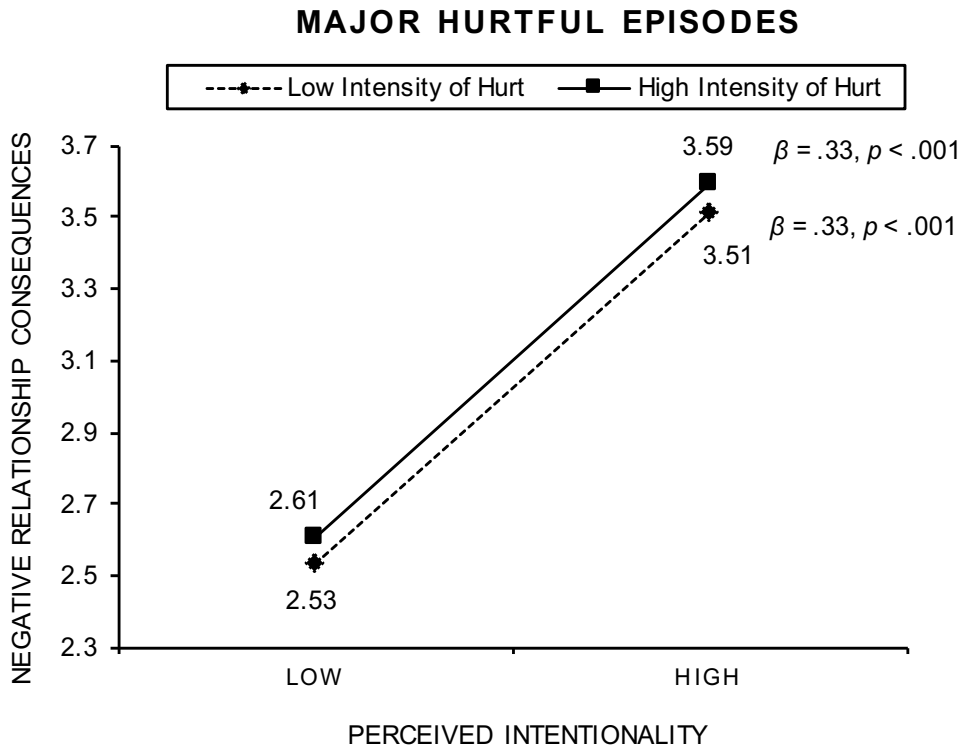


Figure 13. Negative relationship consequences as a function of perceived intentionality and the intensity of hurt in major hurtful episodes.

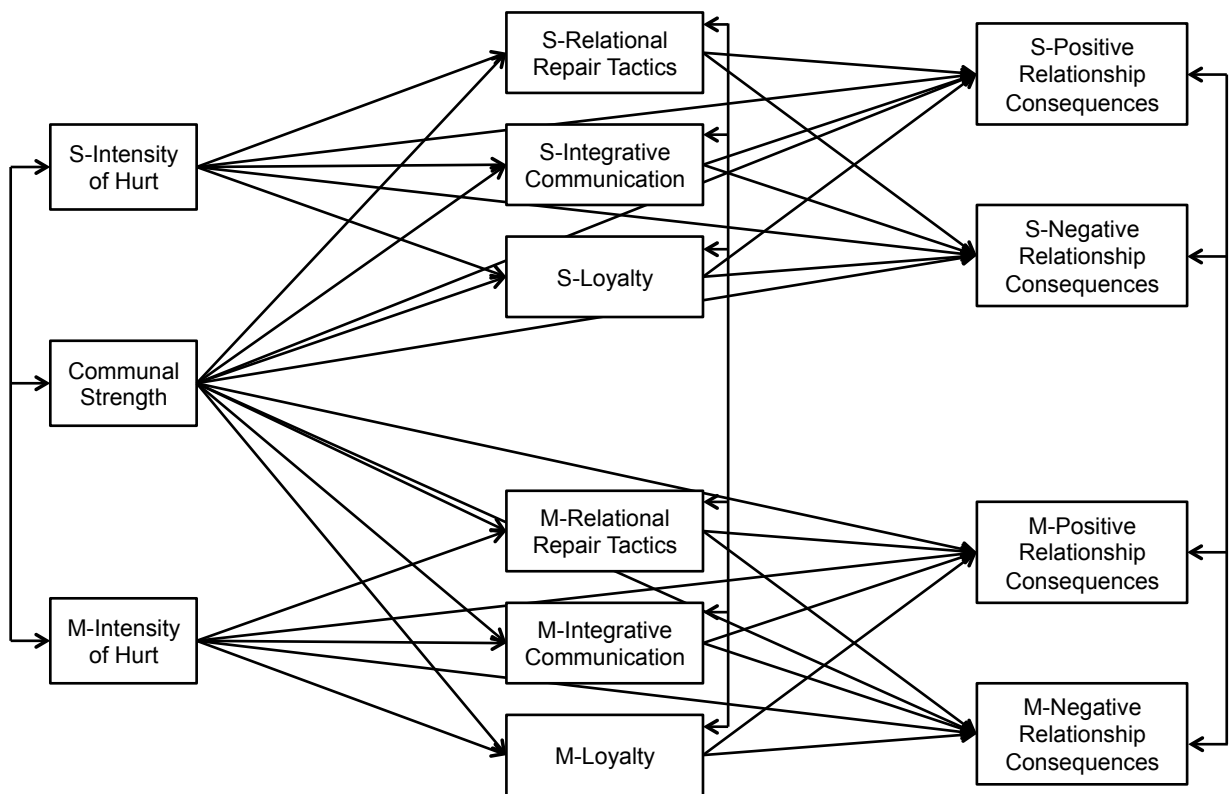


Figure 14a. Hypothesized mediation model 4 for relationship consequences.

Victims' constructive communication as mediators between the intensity of hurt and relationship consequences as well as between communal strength and relationship consequences. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. All exogenous variables, the error terms of mediators, and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

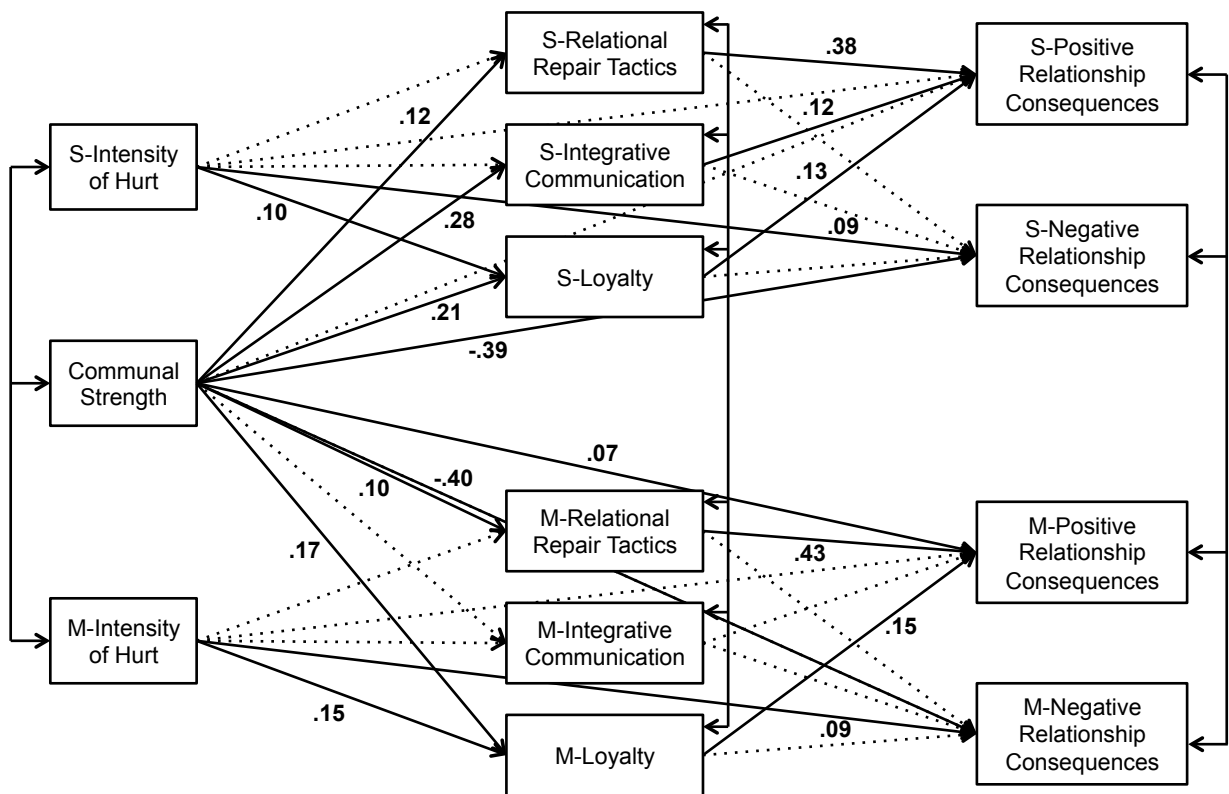


Figure 14b. Final mediation model 4 for relationship consequences.

Victims' constructive communication as mediators between the intensity of hurt and relationship consequences as well as between communal strength and relationship consequences. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes. Standardized coefficients are presented. Solid lines represent significant paths ($p < .05$). The dotted lines indicate non-significant paths. All exogenous variables, the error terms of mediators, and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

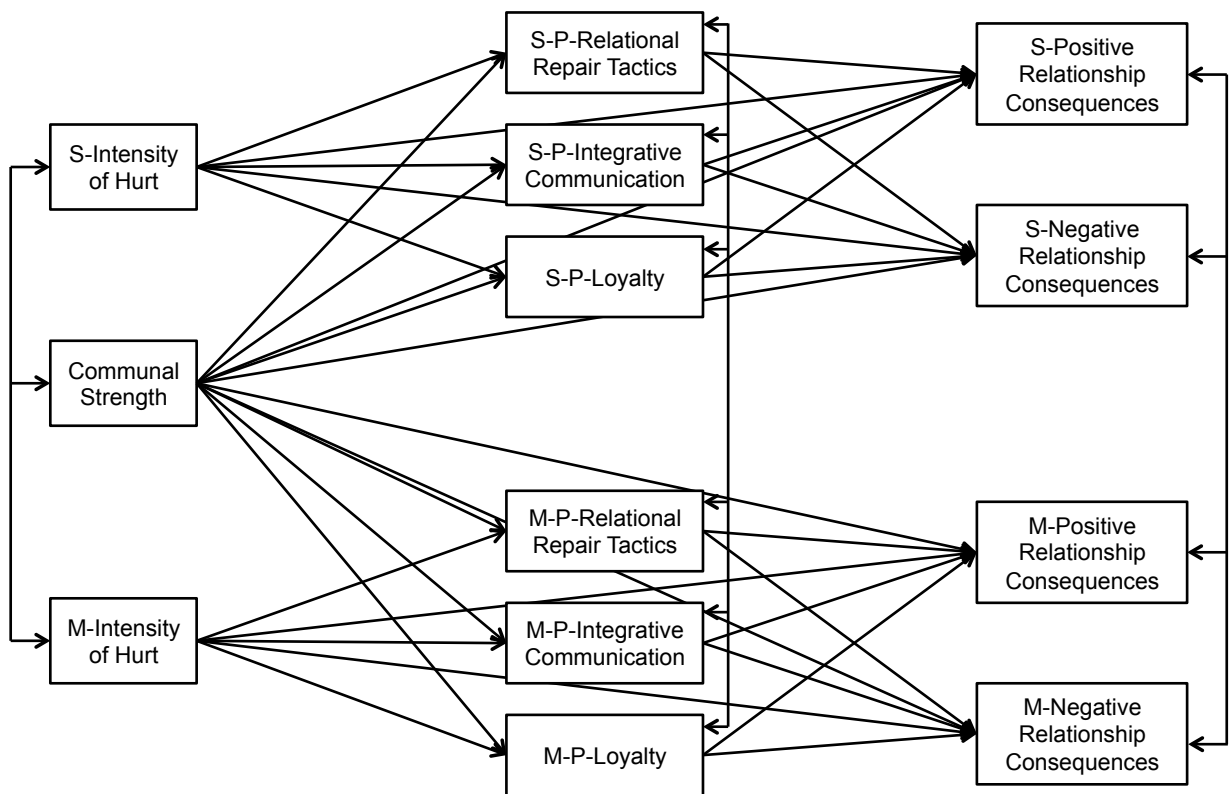


Figure 15a. Hypothesized mediation model 5 for relationship consequences.

Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication as mediators between the intensity of hurt and relationship consequences as well as between communal strength and relationship consequences. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; P = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. All exogenous variables, the error terms of mediators, and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

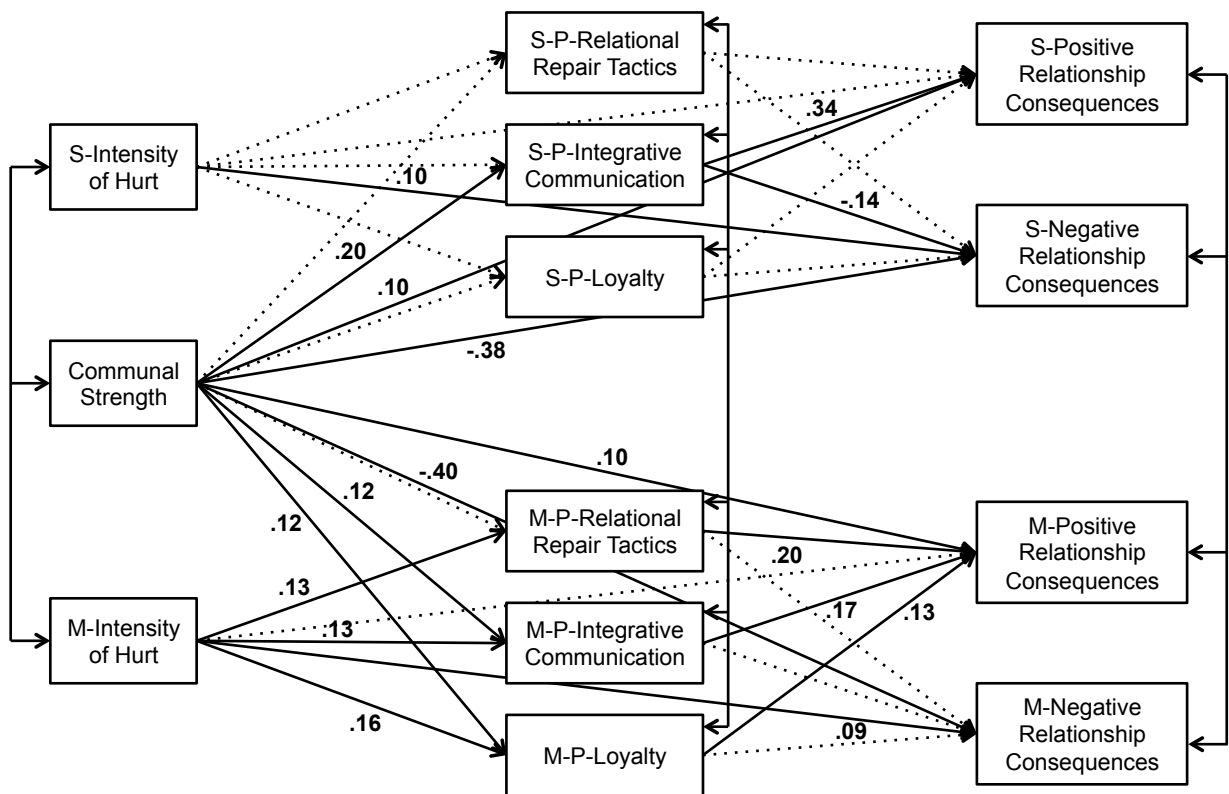


Figure 15b. Final mediation model 5 for relationship consequences.

Victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication as mediators between the intensity of hurt and relationship consequences as well as between communal strength and relationship consequences. S = major hurtful episodes; M = minor hurtful episodes; P = victims' perceptions of the perpetrator's constructive communication. Standardized coefficients are presented. Solid lines represent significant paths ($p < .05$). The dotted lines indicate non-significant paths. All exogenous variables, the error terms of mediators, and the error terms of endogenous variables, respectively, were allowed to covary (double arrowhead lines) to control for additional sources of dependency.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: RELATIONAL INFORMATION

1. To be eligible to participate in this survey, you must have been in a dating relationship for at least three months or you must be engaged or married.
 Yes, I am currently in a relationship.
 No, I am not in any relationship right now.
2. What type of the relationship are you involved in?
 Dating
 Engaged
 Married
3. How long have you been in this relationship?
 Year(s) Month(s)
4. What is his/her sex?
5. What is his/her age?
6. What is his/her first name?

APPENDIX B: HURTFUL MESSAGE PROMPT

Minor Hurtful Communication Recall

Directions: Please take a moment to think about the MOST RECENT instance in which [perpetrator name] said something that MINIMALLY (SLIGHTLY) hurt your feelings.

1. In the space provided, please answer the following questions:
 - a. What was the situation?
 - b. What happened that led up to the hurtful statement or question?
2. In the space below, please reconstruct a brief “script” of the hurtful conversation as you remember it and put a star (*) next to the statement/question that hurt your feelings.

For example:

I said:

[perpetrator name] said:

I said:

[perpetrator name] said:

Please note who started the conversation, what you said, and what [perpetrator name] said that was minimally (slightly) hurtful to you.

3. How long ago did the hurtful conversation mentioned in the previous question take place?
____Month(s) ____Week(s) ____Day(s)

Major Hurtful Communication Recall

Directions: Please take a moment to think about the MOST RECENT instance in which [perpetrator name] said something that EXTREMELY (DEEPLY) hurt your feelings.

1. In the space provided, please answer the following questions:
 - a. What was the situation?
 - b. What happened that led up to the hurtful statement or question?
2. In the space below, please reconstruct a brief “script” of the hurtful conversation as you remember it and put a star (*) next to the statement/question that hurt your feelings.

For example:

I said:

[perpetrator name] said:

I said:

[perpetrator name] said:

Please note who started the conversation, what you said, and what [perpetrator name] said that was extremely (deeply) hurtful to you.

3. How long ago did the hurtful conversation mentioned in the previous question take place?
____Month(s) ____Week(s) ____Day(s)

APPENDIX C: MESSAGE INTENSITY

(Young, 2004)

Directions: Below is the hurtful conversation script you typed previously.

[a participant's conversation script]

From the above conversation, please indicate your perceptions of the intensity of the hurtful statement/question (marked by *) [perpetrator name] communicated to you.

Strongly disagree 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Strongly agree

1. The words he/she used were extreme.
2. The language he/she used was harsh.
3. The statement/question was stated gently.*
4. The way the statement/question was phrased seemed intense.
5. The wording of the statement/question was abrasive.

* = Reverse-coded

APPENDIX D: PERCEIVED INTENTIONALITY

(Young & Bippus, 2001)

Directions: Below is the hurtful conversation script you typed previously.

[a participant's conversation script]

Based on the hurtful conversation, please rate each statement to indicate the degree to which [perpetrator name] hurt your feelings intentionally.

Strongly disagree 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Strongly agree

1. He/she intentionally hurt my feelings.
2. He/she did not know this would hurt my feelings.*
3. He/she hurt my feelings on purpose.

* = Reverse-coded

APPENDIX E: INTENSITY OF HURT

(Vangelisti & Young, 2000)

Direction: Below is the hurtful conversation script you typed previously.

[a participant's conversation script]

Please think about how hurtful the statement/question (marked by *) was to you. On a scale of 1 to 7, please rate your experience.

1. How hurtful was it?
Not at all hurtful 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Extremely hurtful

Direction: Below is the hurtful conversation script you typed previously.

[a participant's conversation script]

Please think about how emotionally painful the hurtful statement/question (marked by *) was to you. On a scale of 1 to 7, please rate your experience.

4. How much emotional pain did it cause?
Not at all painful 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Extremely painful

APPENDIX F: COMMUNAL STRENGTH

(Mills et al., 2004)

Direction: Now we would like you to answer a few questions about your association with the person you described above. We're interested in your CURRENT relationship with [perpetrator name]. Please rate each question on the scale from 1 "not at all" to 7 "extremely."

Not at all 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Extremely

1. How far would you be willing to go to visit [perpetrator name]?
2. How happy do you feel when doing something that helps [perpetrator name]?
3. How large a benefit would you be likely to give [perpetrator name]?
4. How large a cost would you incur to meet a need of [perpetrator name]?
5. How readily can you put the needs of [perpetrator name] out of your thoughts?*
6. How high a priority for you is meeting the needs of [perpetrator name]?
7. How reluctant would you be to sacrifice for [perpetrator name]?*
8. How much would you be willing to give up to benefit [perpetrator name]?
9. How far would you go out of your way to do something for [perpetrator name]?
10. How easily could you accept not helping [perpetrator name]?*

* = Reverse-coded

APPENDIX G: CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION

(Bachman & Guerrero, 2006b)

Victims' Constructive Communication

Direction: Below we have included the hurtful conversation you had with [perpetrator name].

[a participant's conversation script]

After you had this conversation with [perpetrator name], please think about **what you said and did to [perpetrator name]**. Please rate each statement to indicate whether **you** engaged in the following behaviors in response to the hurtful instance.

Strongly disagree 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Strongly agree

Relational Repair Tactics

1. I tried to be romantic.
2. I became more affectionate (e.g., be sexual).
3. I acted more affectionate toward him/her.
4. I initiated romantic dates and activities for us to do together.
5. I spent more time with him/her.
6. I gave him/her gifts.
7. I apologized for my previous behavior.

Integrative Communication

1. I talked to him/her about what was bothering me.
2. I talked about our relationship.
3. I tried to talk to him/her and reach an understanding.
4. I explained my feelings to him/her.
5. I shared my hurt feelings with him/her.
6. I suggested things that might help us.
7. I calmly questioned him/her about his/her actions.

Loyalty

1. I waited and hoped that things would get better.
2. I was patient and waited to see what would happen.
3. I waited for things to improve.
4. I hoped if I just hung in there, things would get better.
5. I wished things would get better.

Victim's Perceptions of the Perpetrator's Constructive Communication

Direction: Below we have included the hurtful conversation you had with [perpetrator name].

[a participant's conversation script]

After you had this conversation with [perpetrator name], please think about **what [perpetrator name] said and did to you**. Please rate each statement to indicate whether [perpetrator name] engaged in the following behaviors in response to the hurtful instance.

Strongly disagree 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Strongly agree

Relational Repair Tactics

1. He/she tried to be romantic.
2. He/she became more affectionate (e.g., be sexual).
3. He/she acted more affectionate toward me.
4. He/she initiated romantic dates and activities for us to do together.
5. He/she spent more time with me.
6. He/she gave me gifts.
7. He/she apologized for his/her previous behavior.

Integrative Communication

1. He/she talked to me about what was bothering him/her.
2. He/she talked about our relationship.
3. He/she tried to talk to me and reach an understanding.
4. He/she explained his/her feelings to me.
5. He/she shared his/her hurt feelings with me.
6. He/she suggested things that might help us.
7. He/she calmly questioned me about my actions.

Loyalty

1. He/she waited and hoped that things would get better.
2. He/she was patient and waited to see what would happen.
3. He/she waited for things to improve.
4. He/she hoped if he/she just hung in there, things would get better.
5. He/she wished things would get better.

APPENDIX H: RELATIONSHIP CONSEQUENCES

(Lemay et al., 2012)

Direction: Below we have included the hurtful conversation you had with [perpetrator name].

[a participant's conversation script]

Please rate each statement to describe the consequences resulting from this hurtful conversation.

Strongly disagree 1—2—3—4—5—6—7 Strongly agree

Positive Consequences

1. I care more about our relationship.
2. [perpetrator name] cares more about our relationship.
3. [perpetrator name] feels that I care more about our relationship.
4. Overall, our relationship is stronger.
5. I treat [perpetrator name] better.
6. I have corrected some of my behaviors.
7. I have learned a lesson about how to behave with [perpetrator name].

Negative Consequences

1. [perpetrator name] cares less about our relationship.
2. I care less about our relationship.
3. [perpetrator name] feels that I do not care about our relationship.
4. Overall, our relationship is damaged.

APPENDIX I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?
 Male
 Female

2. In what year were you born? _____

3. Please indicate which racial category comes closest to your own.
 African-American or Black
 Asian or Pacific Islander
 Caucasian/White
 Hispanic or Latino/a
 Middle Eastern
 Native American
 Other, please specify _____

4. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
 Less than high school degree
 High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
 Some college but no degree
 Associate degree in college (2-year)
 Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
 Master's degree
 Doctoral degree
 Professional degree (JD, MD)

5. Please indicate your occupation:
 Management, professional, and related
 Service
 Sales and office
 Farming, fishing, and forestry
 Construction, extraction, and maintenance
 Production, transportation, and material moving
 Government
 Student
 Retired
 Unemployed

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