THE ROLE OF ATTITUDE FAMILIARITY IN INTERPERSONAL

DECISION MAKING

by

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ABSTRACT

Research suggests that knowledge of a partner's attitudes is functional (e.g., Sanbonmatsu, Uchino, & Birmingham, 2011). This study examined the role of specific knowledge of a close friend's attitudes and more general knowledge of an unknown college student's attitudes in interpersonal decision making. We measured student attitudes toward 97 attitude objects as well as the attitudes of participants' close friends. Participants were then asked to make decisions in five hypothetical scenarios that centered on their friend or an unknown student. Results did not support the hypothesis that greater knowledge of others' attitudes would be associated with better interpersonal decisions. Additionally, narcissism and individualism were expected to be associated with less knowledge of others' attitudes, while self-monitoring and collectivism were predicted to be positively correlated with attitude familiarity. Results indicated there were no associations between these personality variables and knowledge of others' attitudes. An examination of gender differences indicated that females were more likely to show the predicted trends: greater knowledge of others' attitudes was associated with better quality decisions and the individual difference variables were more in keeping with predictions.

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of one's partner has been shown to play an important role in relationships. Evidence shows that people who are in interdependent relationships are more likely to form accurate impressions of one another than those who are not (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990). Specifically, people in close relationships are very accurate in assessments of their partner's values (Acitelli, Kenny, & Weiner, 2001) and feelings of closeness (Kenny & Acitelli, 2001).

The tendency for people in relationships to be highly knowledgeable about one another is linked to successful relationship outcomes (Gagne & Lydon, 2004; Lackenbauer, Campbell, Rubin, Fletcher, & Troister, 2010). Accurate knowledge of one's partner has been associated with greater feelings of partner intimacy (Swann, De La Ronde, & Hixon, 1994) and greater relationship satisfaction (Gottman, 1994). Strikingly, spouses report greater commitment and are more likely to remain in the relationship even when their partners verify an identity that is negative (Swann et al., 1994; Swann, Hixon, & De La Ronde, 1992). One hypothesis for this association is that partner knowledge may contribute to smoother interactions (Neff & Karney, 2002; Swann, Stein-Seroussi, & Giesler, 1992). However, aside from work on self-verification (e.g., Swann, et al., 1992), scant research has examined the ways in which partner knowledge affects specific relationship outcomes. An exception to this is a study by Neff and Karney (2005), which examined the accuracy of spouses' familiarity with their partners' traits and how it

related to marital longevity. Newlyweds rated both themselves and their partners on six traits (e.g., intelligence, tidiness). The extent to which wives' perceptions of their husbands' traits matched the husbands' self-reports predicted higher feelings of control in the relationship, more support behaviors, and a decreased likelihood of divorce. This study by Neff and Karney (2005) was the first to indicate that partner knowledge may affect specific interpersonal processes such as social support.

One form of partner knowledge that may play a particularly important role in interpersonal relations is knowledge of partners' attitudes, or what we call "attitude familiarity." Attitudes are evaluations of and feelings toward objects, persons, situations, issues, events, and behaviors that are stored in memory (e.g., Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). A vast body of research has shown that attitudes are functional (e.g., Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1990); attitudes guide information processing (e.g., Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979), appraisals of situations and response alternatives (e.g., Sanbonmatsu & Fazio, 1990), and behavior (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Fazio, 1990). The availability of strong attitudes facilitates decision making and reduces the stress associated with making difficult choices (Blascovich, Ernst, Tomaka, Kelsey, Salomon, & Fazio, 1993; Fazio & Powell, 1997).

We believe that knowledge of other peoples' attitudes may be similarly functional. Because attitudes play a central role in behavior, familiarity with the attitudes of others may enable an individual to anticipate, influence, and respond to their behavior. The development of attitude familiarity may be particularly important in close relationships in which partners interact on a frequent basis. Partners who are familiar with each other's likes and dislikes should be more adept in avoiding contentious

discussion and interaction. As a consequence, they should report less fighting and fewer episodes of upsetting one another. Following Neff and Karney (2005), we anticipate that attitude familiarity also enables individuals to better fulfill their partners' support needs. Finally, attitude familiarity may help individuals make decisions that are agreeable to their partners and mutually beneficial. Altogether, knowledge of partners' attitudes may contribute to closer and more lasting relationships.

<div align="center">The Role of Attitude Familiarity in Relationships</div>

Some prior work has already examined how knowledge of others' attitudes may affect relationship functioning. Sanbonmatsu, Uchino, and Birmingham (2011) found that partners who were more familiar with each other's attitudes perceived one another as more responsive. They also reported more positive interactions and higher state self-esteem when compared to other couples. In contrast, couples lower in attitude familiarity had higher daily ambulatory blood pressure readings, a strong predictor of future cardiovascular risk (Pickering, Shimbo, & Haas, 2006).

In a separate study, Sanbonmatsu, Uchino, Wong, and Seo (2012) examined attitude familiarity in relation to *specific* interpersonal processes. The results indicated that familiarity with partners' attitudes was predictive of relationship functioning independently of marital status, relationship length, and gender. Partners who knew each other's attitudes reported that they were less likely to fight, less likely to upset one another, and were more helpful. These relationships were also characterized by less conflict, greater perceived importance, and higher levels of affiliation. This is of particular note as conflict and support are predictors of both relationship satisfaction and health (De Vogli, Chandola, & Marmot, 2007; Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Laytong, 2010).

While research suggests that knowledge of a partner's attitudes guides our interactions with that partner, it is not known what guides our interactions with less familiar persons. That is, what sort of attitude familiarity drives interpersonal decisions when individuals interact with people they do not know well? Additionally, research has not examined how differences in important personality traits affect attitude familiarity and interpersonal decisions. Both the type of attitude familiarity as well as differences in relevant personality traits may affect the quality of those decisions.

<u>Types of Attitude Familiarity</u>

In social situations, people often make interpersonal decisions that directly impact those around them. Typically, people strive to make decisions benefiting not only the self, but also that support their interaction partner and their relationship. The ability to make supportive interpersonal decisions may partially depend on knowledge of others' attitudes. For example, to know which choice of action would best support a friend, we would need to know how he or she feels towards either option. When we know the preferences of others, our chances of making decisions that complement their likes, needs, or values should be increased. Knowledge of a person's attitudes may be specific or more general and less individualized depending on how well one knows the person. When we interact with someone familiar, we often have considerable knowledge of that individual's attitudes. However, when we encounter those we are unacquainted with, it may be necessary to infer their values and preferences instead. In this instance, the attitudes of acquaintances may be inferred from stereotypes or beliefs about the typical attitudes of groups to which they belong. These inferences may then serve as the basis for making interpersonal decisions involving that unfamiliar person. Thus, when interacting

with others, we may utilize our specific knowledge of the attitudes of those individuals or our knowledge of group attitudes.

Personality Differences in Attitude Familiarity

Knowledge of others' attitudes may also vary as a function of personality traits. One personality difference that could impact attitude familiarity is narcissism. Narcissists must work to maintain a highly positive, albeit fragile, self-concept (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Specifically, they continually strive to validate their unrealistic and idealized views of the self (Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993). Because of their grandiose self-views, narcissists are likely to believe their opinions count for more than those of others (see John & Robins, 1994). They also tend to be less interested in intimacy (Campbell, Foster, & Finkel, 2002; Carroll, 1987) and others' views (Watson, Grisham, Trotter, & Biderman, 1984), and more concerned with winning attention and admiration (e.g., Buss & Chiodo, 1991).

Because of their fragile self-concept, narcissists tend to have poor relationships (Campbell & Foster, 2002; Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998; Paulus, 1998). One contributor to their interpersonal difficulties may be their failure to interact in a way that allows them to learn the attitudes of others. Narcissists may make their own attitudes known and in dominating the conversation, block the attempts of others to do the same. Because of this, narcissists may develop little familiarity with the attitudes of those around them, while others would become all too familiar with their preferences. Thus, we expected those high in narcissism to be less familiar with the attitudes of others compared to those with lower levels of narcissism. Consequently, narcissists were also predicted to make interpersonal decisions of poorer quality.

Self-monitoring is another individual difference that may affect how well people know and utilize information about others' attitudes. Self-monitoring refers to "self-observation and self-control guided by situation cues to social appropriateness" (Snyder, 1974, p. 526). There are some key differences between high self-monitors and low self-monitors. High self-monitors are more concerned with social appropriateness and because of this, they are more sensitive to the expressions and self-presentation of others. They are also more likely to use those cues to guide their own behavior in a given situation (Snyder, 1974). In contrast, low self-monitors are less concerned about how they present themselves as a function of the social situation, and they are less likely to monitor or adjust their behavior than high self-monitors (Snyder, 1974). Correspondingly, low self-monitors also pay less attention to how others present themselves and to their expressions (Snyder, 1974). Generally, the low self-monitor's decisions are driven by dispositional factors (e.g., their own attitudes), while the high self-monitor's decisions are more likely to be driven by the situational context (Snyder & Cantor, 1980).

Because low self-monitors are less affected by situational and interpersonal factors when making decisions (Snyder & Monson, 1975), they may be less likely to rely on knowledge of others when making interpersonal decisions. In contrast, high self-monitors are particularly aware of social comparison information (Snyder, 1979), relying on information about their peers more often and for a greater amount of time (Snyder, 1974). For example, when high self-monitoring individuals are provided with the opportunity to observe someone with whom they expect to later interact, they are more likely to remember information about the person (Berscheid, Graziano, Monson, &

Dermer, 1976). High self-monitors purposefully invest more time and effort into reading those around them and paying more attention to the behavior, context, and intent of others (Jones & Baumeister, 1976). Even if it comes at some type of cost to the self, they will try to obtain information about others; they then use that information to manage how they present themselves when later interacting with that person (Elliott, 1979). Thus, high self-monitors have been shown to be especially skilled at interpreting the behavior and emotions of others (Geizer, Rarick, & Soldow, 1977; Krauss, Geller, & Olson, 1976). This suggests that high self-monitors are more apt to learn about the attitudes of others than low self-monitors. If low self-monitors have less knowledge of others' attitudes or preferences, then they should tend to make less supportive interpersonal decisions.

Another individual difference expected to have an effect on attitude familiarity is the collectivism/individualism cultural dimension, which describes the tendency for individuals to either prioritize group or individual goals, respectively (Triandis, 1995). Specifically, those scoring high on collectivism are more likely to perceive the self as part of a group, while those scoring high on individualism are more likely to view the self as an autonomous individual (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995). However, cultures are not made up purely of one orientation. For example, different situations and circumstances in an individualist culture will call for a collectivist orientation (Singelis, Triandis, Bhawuk, & Gelfand, 1995).

Because those scoring high on collectivism value group goals, it would make sense that they would be concerned with learning the attitudes of others. To help a group achieve its goals, it would be important to be familiar with the group members' attitudes. Therefore, it was predicted that those scoring higher on collectivism would be more

familiar with the attitudes of others and would make better quality interpersonal decisions. In contrast, because those scoring high on individualism view themselves as autonomous individuals, they may be less likely to invest time in learning the attitudes of others. With a focus on individual goals rather than group goals, there would be less need to learn others' attitudes. Thus, it was expected that those scoring higher on individualism would be unlikely to be familiar with the attitudes of others and would therefore make decisions of poorer quality.

<u>The Present Study</u>

This study investigated the role of attitude familiarity in interpersonal decision making. Participants had a friend indicate his or her attitudes toward various attitude objects. Participants later indicated their own attitudes, their perceptions of their friend's attitudes, and their perceptions of a typical college student's attitudes. They then made hypothetical decisions in social scenarios involving either the friend or an unknown college student. We examined how accurate participants were in their perceptions of the attitudes of their friends and the typical college student. It was expected that just as our attitudes guide our own behavior, beliefs about a friend's attitudes would guide decisions involving that friend, while beliefs about group attitudes would guide decisions involving an unknown group member.

We hypothesized that the greater individuals' familiarity with another's attitudes, the better interpersonal decisions they would make when interacting with that person. To the extent that individuals accurately perceived their friend's attitudes, we expected them to make quality (i.e., supportive) decisions involving that friend. Additionally, greater knowledge of the typical college student's attitudes would allow individuals to make

good interpersonal decisions when interacting with an unknown college student.

Participants also completed measures of narcissism, self-monitoring, and the collectivism/individualism cultural dimension, as knowledge of the attitudes of others was also expected to vary as a function of personality. Specifically, compared to those low in narcissism, it was predicted that individuals high in narcissism would be less accurate in their perceptions of others' attitudes. Because of this lack of familiarity, we also expected them to make interpersonal decisions that were less supportive. It was expected that high self-monitors would be more accurate in their perceptions of others' attitudes and would make more supportive interpersonal decisions compared to low self-monitors. It was also predicted that those scoring higher on collectivism would have greater knowledge of others' attitudes than those with lower scores and would make interpersonal decisions of better quality. Finally, those with higher levels of individualism were expected to have less knowledge of others' attitudes than those with lower scores and to also make decisions of poorer quality.

METHODS

Participants

Seventy-four male and female undergraduates participated in this study (53 females, 21 males). They were recruited from the Psychology Department participant pool and received extra course credit for serving in the study. Participants were asked to have a friend assist them in the study. For female participants, 21% of selected friends were men and 79% were women. For male participants, 67% of selected friends were men and 33% were women.

Procedure

Participants signed up to participate in two different experimental sessions. When they came into the lab for their first session, informed consent was obtained, and participants were asked to arrange for a close friend to complete an attitude survey (see Appendix A). It was required that this close friend be another college student whom the participant had known for at least 6 months but whom was not a significant other. The selected friend received an email that directed him or her to the online attitude survey. The questionnaire asked the friend to indicate his or her attitudes toward 97 different attitude objects, including behaviors, institutions, events, and products, on a 7-point scale from "very negative" to "very positive." Several of the judged attitude objects were the response options that participants considered in the second phase of the study when making interpersonal decisions. After the attitude survey, the friends also completed a

subset of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Costa & McCrae, 2008), a measure designed to assess personality. Participants then arrived at the lab for their second scheduled session where they were asked to report their own attitudes using the attitude survey. They were also asked to indicate their perception of their friend's attitudes towards those same 97 objects using a different version of the attitude survey (see Appendix B). They then indicated their perception of a typical college student's attitudes towards the objects on a third attitude survey (see Appendix C). Participants also were asked to indicate their perception of their friend's personality by filling out a subset of the NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Costa & McCrae, 2008).

Participants then indicated the decisions they would make in five hypothetical social scenarios. In each scenario, the participant's goal was to make the decision that would provide the other person (either a friend or college student acquaintance) with the most possible support. The target attitude for each scenario was measured in the first phase of the study. Participant's knowledge of others' relevant attitudes was expected to guide the interpersonal decisions they made. For example, in one scenario, participants imagined that they were in a group with their friend/an unknown student in which others were discussing a controversial religious topic. Participants were asked to decide if they would allow the conversation to continue or change the subject if they wanted to ensure that the friend/the student was comfortable (see Appendices D and E). Thus, for this particular scenario, "discussing religion with strangers" was the key attitude object. Decisions were expected to be made based on whether the target person was perceived to like or dislike discussing religion. Participants finished by completing demographic questions, the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-16 (Raskin & Terry, 1988), Snyder's

Self-Monitoring Scale (Snyder, 1974), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the Horizontal and Vertical Individualism-Collectivism Scale (Singelis et al., 1995).

<p style="text-align:center">Measures</p>

NEO-PI-R. Participants completed a subset of the NEO-PI-R. The NEO-PI-R operationalizes the five-factor model of personality and assesses normal personality traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Costa & McCrae, 2008). Respondents answered statements such as "I rarely feel lonely or blue" on a five point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16). Participants completed the shortened version of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16; Raskin & Terry, 1988), which has been shown to be psychometrically sound (Emmons, 1987). The NPI-16 consists of 16 forced choice pairs, wherein participants chose between statements such as "I usually get the respect that I deserve" or "I insist on getting the respect that is due me."

Snyder's Self-Monitoring Scale. Participants answered "True" or "False" to 25 different statements such as "I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people" (Snyder, 1974).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). Participants indicated their agreement with statements, such as "I feel that I have a number of good qualities," on a four point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (Rosenberg, 1965).

The Horizontal and Vertical Individualism-Collectivism Scale. This measure consists of 32 items and is comprised of four subscales, which evaluate horizontal collectivism, vertical collectivism, horizontal individualism, and vertical individualism.

Participants responded to items such as "I feel good when I cooperate with others" on a nine point scale, where 1 indicated *never* or *definitely no* and 9 indicated *always* or *definitely yes* (Singelis et al., 1995). For the purpose of this study's hypotheses, the scales were collapsed to form a single collectivism score and a single individualism score.

RESULTS

Attitude Familiarity

Participants' familiarity with a friend's attitudes was calculated by determining the correlation between their ratings of their friend's attitudes toward 97 objects and that friend's expressed attitudes towards those objects. Similarly, to determine participants' familiarity with their friend's personality, a correlation was calculated between participants' ratings of that friend's personality using a subset of the NEO-PI (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Costa & McCrae, 2008) and the friend's own responses on the NEO-PI.

To determine participants' familiarity with the attitudes of college students, we first calculated the mean attitude expressed by participants and their friends toward each of the 97 attitude objects. These means served as our operationalization of the typical college student's attitude. The correlation between the average expressed attitudes and participants' ratings of the typical college student's attitudes represented the level of familiarity with college student attitudes.

Participants were more familiar with their friend's attitudes ($M = .52$, $SD = .14$) than with the typical college student's attitudes ($M = .35$, $SD = .12$, $t(73) = 7.98$, $p < .001$). They were less accurate rating their friend's personality ($M = .38$, $SD = .16$) than their friend's attitudes ($t(73) = 5.77$, $p < .001$). Familiarity with a friend's attitudes was not associated with familiarity with the attitudes of college students ($r = .04$, $p > .10$) nor was it related to familiarity with that friend's personality ($r = .08$, $p > .10$).

We predicted that high self-monitors would have greater knowledge of others' attitudes compared to low self-monitors and that narcissists would have less knowledge of others' attitudes compared to those low in narcissism. It was also expected that increases in individualism would be related to decreases in familiarity with others' attitudes while increases in collectivism would be associated with greater knowledge of others' attitudes. Familiarity with a friend's attitudes was not significantly correlated with any of the individual difference measures. See Table 1. However, the relationship between familiarity with the attitudes of college students and individualism was marginally significant ($p = .08$); as individualism increased, so did familiarity with college students' attitudes. For familiarity with the friend's personality, only collectivism was significantly correlated. As collectivism increased, familiarity with friends' personalities also increased.

<div align="center">Decision Quality</div>

Participants made decisions in five different scenarios involving their friend. Decision quality for each scenario was determined by whether a choice was consistent with the friend's expressed preferences. In scenario 1, a supportive decision was one that was consistent with the friend's sandwich preferences. In the second scenario, a supportive decision was one in which participants chose to change the subject if friends disliked discussing religion or allowed the discussion to continue if friends enjoyed discussing religion. A good decision in the third scenario was one in which participants' choice to either write a paper or do a presentation matched their friend's preference. A supportive decision in scenario 4 was one in which participants chose to turn off the political program if friends disliked discussing politics or chose to allow the program to

remain on if friends enjoyed discussing politics. In the final scenario, choosing to stay up for a late flight or wake up early for a flight was scored as a good decision if it matched the friend's expressed preference. Each supportive decision was scored as +1, while a poor decision was scored as -1. These were then summed to obtain a total score of decision quality that could range from +5 to -5. For the college student scenarios, the quality of decisions was calculated similarly, relying on the average attitude expressed by participants and participants' friends to determine the preferences of college students.

The primary prediction was that attitude familiarity would guide decision making. Thus, it was expected that familiarity with friends' attitudes would be correlated with better quality decisions in the friend scenarios and that familiarity with college students' attitudes would be correlated with better quality decisions in the student scenarios. Overall, there was not a significant difference between the quality of decisions in the friend scenarios ($M = 1.26$, $SD = 1.97$) and in the college student scenarios ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 2.28$, $t(73) = -1.29$, $p > .10$). Unexpectedly, the quality of decisions made in scenarios involving friends was not significantly correlated with participants' familiarity with their friends' attitudes ($r = .06$, $p > .10$) or personalities ($r = .09$, $p > .10$). It was also not correlated with narcissism ($r = -.21$, $p = .08$), self-monitoring ($r = -.04$, $p > .10$), collectivism ($r = .11$, $p > .10$), or individualism ($r = -.06$, $p > .10$). See Table 2. The supportiveness of decisions made in scenarios involving college students was not significantly correlated with knowledge of college students' attitudes ($r = .13$, $p > .10$), narcissism ($r = .02$, $p > .10$), collectivism ($r = .15$, $p > .10$), or individualism ($r = -.13$, $p > .10$). Self-monitoring was significantly correlated with making more supportive decisions for college students ($r = .30$, $p = .01$).

Gender Differences

The correlations between the study relevant variables were calculated separately for males and females. The significance of the difference between the correlations was assessed using an *r* to *z* transformation and determining the value of the *z*-score difference. Females unexpectedly showed many more of the predicted trends than males. Many of these comparable male correlations were surprising because they showed trends in the *opposite* direction. See Table 3. The association between attitude familiarity and the supportiveness of decisions was more positive for females than males ($z = -2.19$, $p < .05$). As knowledge of a friend's attitudes increased, females tended to make better quality decisions while males made worse decisions. Similarly, as knowledge of a friend's personality increased, females but not males tended to make better decisions ($z = -1.94$, $p = .053$) Narcissism was more significantly negatively correlated with familiarity with a friend's attitudes for females than males ($z = 2.06$, $p < .05$). Thus, as narcissism increased, females exhibited less knowledge of friends' attitudes while males showed slightly greater knowledge of friends' attitudes. Finally, males who scored higher on collectivism tended to show less knowledge of the attitudes of college students, while females who scored higher on collectivism tended to show greater familiarity with college students' attitudes ($z = -2.08$, $p < .05$).

Although the correlations between familiarity, decision quality, and the individual differences tended to vary as a function of gender, independent sample t-tests showed that there were no significant differences between males and females in familiarity with friends' attitudes, familiarity with student attitudes, familiarity with friends' personality, or the quality of decisions made for friends and students (all *p's* > .10).

Table 1

The Relationship Between Types of Familiarity and Personality Measures

Familiarity	Self-esteem	Self-Monitoring	Narcissism	Individualism	Collectivism
Friend attitudes	-.01	.06	-.18	-.16	.09
Student attitudes	.22	-.09	-.00	.20	-.06
Friend personality	.19	.02	.05	.12	.23*

Note: *N* = 74, * *p* < 0.05.

Table 2

Correlations Between Familiarity, Narcissism, Self-Monitoring, and Decision Quality

	Decision quality	
	Friend	Student
Familiarity ($N = 74$)		
Friend attitudes	.06	.15
Student attitudes	-.17	.13
Friend personality	.09	-.07
Narcissism ($N = 73$)	-.21	.02
Self-monitoring ($N = 73$)	-.04	.30*

Note: * $p = 0.05$.

Table 3
Correlations of Interest as a Function of Gender

Correlation	Males (N = 21)	Females (N = 53)
Friend decision quality &:		
Friend attitude familiarity	-.36	.22
Friend personality familiarity	-.26	.26
Student decision quality &:		
Student attitude familiarity	-.20	.19
Friend familiarity &:		
Narcissism	.25	-.30*
Self-monitoring	.33	-.04
Collectivism	.06	.11
Individualism	.07	-.23
Student familiarity &:		
Narcissism	.07	-.03
Self-monitoring	-.09	-.17
Collectivism	-.43	.11
Individualism	.44*	.14
Friend personality familiarity &:		
Narcissism	.12	.02
Self-monitoring	-.04	.02
Collectivism	.21	.26
Individualism	.16	.10
Friend decision quality &:		
Narcissism	-.07	-.26
Self-monitoring	-.25	.09
Collectivism	-.12	.20
Individualism	-.41	.07

Table 3 cont…

Student decision quality &:		
Narcissism	.15	-.03
Self-monitoring	.37	.25
Collectivism	.53*	.10
Individualism	.13	-.20

Note: * $p \leq .05$.

DISCUSSION

Previous research has shown that just as our own attitudes are functional (Katz, 1960; Shavitt, 1990), knowledge of others' attitudes can be similarly functional. Greater knowledge of a partner's attitudes has been favorably linked to relationship functioning, such as more positive interactions, more responsive partners (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2011), and less conflict and higher levels of affiliation (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2012). However, the role of potential differences in specific versus more general knowledge of others' attitudes and the relevance of individual differences in personality in interpersonal decisions had not been examined prior to this paper. In this study, we built upon previous research by examining two different types of attitude familiarity: friend and unknown group member (i.e., a college student). Our goal was to examine the link between familiarity with one's attitudes and the quality of decisions chosen for that person in hypothetical scenarios. Additionally, we measured the personality differences of narcissism, self-monitoring, and individualism-collectivism to determine how they were related to knowledge of others' attitudes and interpersonal decision making.

Attitude Familiarity

One goal of this study was to examine attitude familiarity in relationships beyond married couples. Therefore, we examined participants' familiarity with a close friend's attitudes and the attitudes of college students. Contrary to our predictions, familiarity with others' attitudes was not related to narcissism, self-monitoring, or individualism-

collectivism. It is possible the linkage between these individual differences and familiarity with friends' attitudes may depend on how long individuals know one another. The longer two people know one another, the more familiar they would be with one another's likes, dislikes, personality, etc. It could also be that these personality differences have a cumulative effect, such that they only impact knowledge of others' attitudes over time. That is, for those of varying levels of narcissism, we may see no difference in attitude familiarity early on in relationships. However, as time passes, the effects of narcissism on learning the attitudes of others may become more apparent. Conversely, it could also be that over long acquaintances, personality variables become *less* important as one spends more time with the friend in question and increases one's overall knowledge of him or her. This is something that could have been examined if we had recorded the specific length of participants' relationship with their friend. While it was explained to participants that they should choose a close friend whom they had known for at least 6 months, the actual length of those relationships likely varied. It would be relevant if one participant had known his friend since preschool while another participant had only known her friend for the minimum 6 months.

Participants' familiarity with their friends' personalities was associated with higher collectivism scores. This particular finding fits with past literature, as collectivism describes an orientation toward group goals and a greater tendency to view oneself as part of a group (Triandis, 1995; Singelis et al., 1995). It makes sense that those higher in collectivism would place more importance on familiarizing themselves with the personalities of close friends. Greater knowledge of the attitudes of college students was marginally related to higher individualism. The possible reasoning behind this is not

readily apparent and may require further research.

Previous research has shown that similar people are drawn to one another and have closer and more lasting relationships (Byrne, Clore, & Smeaton, 1986; Gaunt, 2006; Luo & Klohnen, 2005). Past research (Sanbonmatsu et al., 2012) found that attitude similarity and familiarity were positively correlated. In the future, we plan to examine these data to determine whether the supportiveness of interpersonal decisions varies as a function of similarity. Additionally, we plan to examine whether participants relied on their own attitudes when making decisions involving others, a tendency that we might expect to be related to high narcissism or low self-monitoring. Specifically, narcissists' lack of interest in others' views (Watson et al., 1984) and low self-monitors' reliance on their own attitudes versus the situational context (Snyder & Cantor, 1980) may lead to a greater reliance on their own attitudes when making interpersonal decisions.

<u>Decision Quality</u>

Another goal of this study was to examine the relationship between attitude familiarity and the quality of interpersonal decisions. Unexpectedly, the supportiveness of decisions involving friends was not related to familiarity with their attitudes or their personalities. Additionally, familiarity with the attitudes of college students was not associated with the quality of decisions involving students. This is inconsistent with research suggesting that partner knowledge should enable individuals to better fulfill their partners' support needs (Neff & Karney, 2005; Sanbonmatsu et al., 2011; Sanbonmatsu et al., 2012), as knowledge of others' attitudes was not related to making more supportive decisions. It may be that the hypothetical nature of these scenarios hindered the ability of participants to fully invest in the outcomes of their decisions. Specifically, because the

decisions were hypothetical and inconsequential, participants may not have been motivated to make the best decision. Consequently, participants may not have made the effort to fully utilize their knowledge of others' attitudes when making their decisions.

Additionally, it may not be correct to assume that a single attitude of a friend indicates exactly what he or she would prefer in a scenario. Interactions are complex; it is likely that when we make decisions when interacting with others, we take many different factors into account. It would be better in the future to have the friends assisting with the study directly indicate the choice they would prefer in each of the scenarios and to determine the typical preference of college students as well. This may be a more reliable indicator of the quality of participants' interpersonal decisions.

Gender Differences

We also examined gender differences for these questions of interest. Overall, females showed many more of the expected trends than males. In fact, males in our study mostly showed trends in the *opposite* direction of our predictions. The most noteworthy finding is that familiarity with a friend's attitudes was related to better quality decisions for females but poorer quality decisions for males. It is possible females may be more likely to utilize attitude familiarity when interacting with others. In line with this, Neff and Karney (2005) previously found that gender mediated the role of partner knowledge in relationships; support behavior and relationship longevity were predicted by *wives'* accurate perceptions of their husbands' traits but not vice versa. However, several other studies (e.g., Sanbonmatsu et al., 2012) have found no differences between husbands and wives in the relation between attitude familiarity and relationship outcomes. Furthermore, our results indicated that there was no significant difference between males and females

in overall familiarity with others' attitudes or the quality of decisions made.

Could this be due to the moderating role of relationship importance? Prior research has found that simply knowing a partner's attitudes is not enough. Uchino, Sanbonmatsu, and Birmingham (2012) previously found that spousal importance moderated the link between attitude familiarity and ambulatory blood pressure (ABP). Partner knowledge was related to lower ABP when spouses were viewed as more important. In our study, differences in the importance males and females place on relationships with friends and less familiar people may have led women to utilize their knowledge more than men when making these decisions. Prior research supports the idea that females may place more emphasis on their ties with friends and acquaintances. Not only are females more distressed by negative interpersonal events (Leadbeater, Blatt, & Quinlan, 1995), but they also have a more relational self-construal than do males (Josephs, Markus, & Tafarodi, 1992; Clancy & Dollinger, 1993). Thus, females may be more motivated to make good interpersonal decisions when interacting with friends and acquaintances due to a greater desire to avoid conflict and because they tend to view relationships as more relevant to their sense of self.

APPENDIX A

ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate your <u>personal evaluations</u> of each of the activities, persons, objects, and events listed below using the provided scale, on which "-2" indicates very negative and "+2" indicates very positive.

exercise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
waking up early	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
swimming	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
camping	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
reading	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
watching movies	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
staying up late	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
partying	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
household chores	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
money	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
having kids	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
romance	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
in-laws	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
parents	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
family gatherings	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

large social gatherings	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
meeting new people	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
recycling	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
skiing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
football	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Pepsi	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
yoga	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
gasoline	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
whiskey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
computers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
coffee	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cigarettes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
peanuts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
wine	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
beer	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
broccoli	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rock and roll	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
classical music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
lasagna	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
hamburger	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
ham sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
turkey sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

vegetarian

	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
milk	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
guns	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
tomatoes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Catholics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
George W. Bush	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Hilary Clinton	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Oprah Winfrey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dentists	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Tom Cruise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
museums	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Idaho	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Rome	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
China	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Africa	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
winter	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
movies	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
church	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
concerts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Thanksgiving	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Halloween	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rap music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
spiders	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

snakes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
salmon	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cats	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dogs	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
birds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
horses	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
television	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
video games	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Nike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Wal-Mart	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
McDonalds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
affirmative action	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
politics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing politics with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing religion with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
school	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
writing papers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
public speaking	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Republican Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Democratic Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

APPENDIX B

FRIEND'S ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate your <u>perception of your friend's evaluations</u> of each of the activities, persons, objects, and events listed below using the provided scale, on which "-2" indicates very negative and "+2" indicates very positive.

exercise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
waking up early	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
swimming	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
camping	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
reading	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
watching movies	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
staying up late	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
partying	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
household chores	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
money	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
having kids	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
romance	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
in-laws	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
parents	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
family gatherings	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

large social gatherings	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
meeting new people	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
recycling	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
skiing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
football	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Pepsi	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
yoga	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
gasoline	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
whiskey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
computers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
coffee	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cigarettes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
peanuts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
wine	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
beer	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
broccoli	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rock and roll	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
classical music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
lasagna	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
hamburger	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
ham sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
turkey sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

vegetarian

sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
milk	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
guns	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
tomatoes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Catholics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
George W. Bush	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Hilary Clinton	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Oprah Winfrey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dentists	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Tom Cruise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
museums	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Idaho	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Rome	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
China	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Africa	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
winter	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
movies	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
church	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
concerts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Thanksgiving	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Halloween	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rap music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
spiders	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

snakes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
salmon	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cats	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dogs	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
birds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
horses	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
television	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
video games	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Nike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Wal-Mart	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
McDonalds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
affirmative action	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
politics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing politics with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing religion with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
school	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
writing papers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
public speaking	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Republican Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Democratic Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

APPENDIX C

COLLEGE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate your <u>perception of the typical college student's evaluations</u> of each of the activities, persons, objects, and events listed below using the provided scale, on which "-2" indicates very negative and "+2" indicates very positive.

exercise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

| waking up early | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| swimming | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| camping | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| reading | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| watching movies | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| staying up late | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| partying | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| household chores | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| money | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| having kids | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| romance | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| in-laws | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| parents | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

| family gatherings | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | +3 |

large social gatherings	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
meeting new people	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
recycling	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
skiing	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
football	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Pepsi	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
yoga	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
gasoline	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
whiskey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
computers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
coffee	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cigarettes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
peanuts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
wine	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
beer	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
broccoli	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rock and roll	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
classical music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
lasagna	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
hamburger	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
ham sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
turkey sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

vegetarian sandwiches	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
milk	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
guns	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
tomatoes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Catholics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
George W. Bush	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Hilary Clinton	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Oprah Winfrey	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dentists	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Tom Cruise	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
museums	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Idaho	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Rome	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
China	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Africa	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
winter	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
movies	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
church	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
concerts	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Thanksgiving	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Halloween	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
rap music	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
spiders	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

snakes	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
salmon	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
cats	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
dogs	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
birds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
horses	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
television	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
video games	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Nike	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Wal-Mart	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
McDonalds	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
affirmative action	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
politics	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing politics with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
discussing religion with strangers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
school	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
writing papers	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
public speaking	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Republican Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
Democratic Party	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

APPENDIX D

FRIEND SOCIAL SITUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Imagine that you are in various hypothetical situations with the friend that you recruited to help with this study. Please indicate what you would choose to do in each of the following situations involving your friend.

1. You and your friend are student representatives on a university committee. The committee is meeting at noon and sandwiches are to be served. You arrive at the meeting but your friend tells you that she is going to be 10 minutes late. You decide to grab a sandwich for your friend before they are all taken. The options are ham, turkey, or vegetarian. What type of sandwich do you choose for your friend?

a. ham
b. turkey
c. vegetarian

2. You are attending a luncheon with your friend. There are only 3 people at your table – you, your friend, and a person you just met. The person who you just met expresses a provocative view about organized religion which you briefly discuss. Your friend says nothing. You think about whether he or she enjoys talking about religion with people he or she doesn't know. Assuming that you want your friend to be comfortable in the setting, do you allow the discussion to continue or attempt to change the subject?

a. allow the discussion to continue
b. change the subject

3. You and your friend have paired up for a class project in your marketing course. The instructor has given groups the option of presenting to the class or writing a paper on an assigned topic. You attend class and find out that groups need to sign up that day if they want to do a presentation. You are informed that if you don't sign up, you will have to write a paper. Unfortunately, you and your friend forgot to discuss these options. Moreover, your friend did not make class that day and you can't get a hold of him or her.

Imagine that you are personally indifferent about writing a paper or presenting. You think about whether your friend would be comfortable speaking in front of the large class. Do you sign up for a class presentation or plan on writing a paper?

a. class presentation
b. paper

4. You have arranged for a study group to meet at your apartment near campus to prepare for an important exam. One of the study group members is your friend. Imagine that you are a Republican and are watching a political forum on Fox television which is lambasting the policies of the Obama administration. Your friend arrives early for the study group meeting. After greeting your friend, you consider turning off the program. Although you would like to continue watching and it will be awhile before the other group members arrive, you are concerned that your friend will be put off by the partisan (anti-Democratic) content. You think about which political party your friend favors. Do you turn off the program or leave it on?

a. turn off the program
b. leave it on

5. You and your friend are part of a team working on a university research project. At the last minute, it has been determined that you need to fly to Oklahoma to assist with the data collection for the project. The only flights available are late night, which would entail getting in after 1:30 A.M., or the following morning, which would entail getting up around 4:30 A.M.. Your lodging has been arranged. You are responsible for making the plane reservations. Imagine that you are personally indifferent about when you travel. However, you want to book a flight that works for your friend, who you have not been able to reach. You consider whether your friend would prefer to travel early in the morning or late at night. There are very few seats left so you need to make reservations right away. Do you reserve a late night flight or an early morning flight?

a. late night flight
b. early morning flight

APPENDIX E

COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIAL SITUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Imagine that you are in various hypothetical situations with an acquaintance who is a college student. Please indicate what you would choose to do in each of the following situations involving your acquaintance.

1. You and a college student acquaintance are student representatives on a university committee. The committee is meeting at noon and sandwiches are to be served. You arrive at the meeting but the other student tells you that she is going to be 10 minutes late. You decide to grab a sandwich for your acquaintance before they are all taken. The options are ham, turkey, or vegetarian. What type of sandwich do you choose for your acquaintance?

a. ham
b. turkey
c. vegetarian

2. You are attending a luncheon with another college student. There are only 3 people at your table – you, this college student acquaintance, and a person you just met. The person who you just met expresses a provocative view about organized religion which you briefly discuss. The other college student says nothing. You think about whether he or she enjoys talking about religion with people he or she doesn't know. Assuming that you want your acquaintance to be comfortable in the setting, do you allow the discussion to continue or attempt to change the subject?

a. allow the discussion to continue
b. change the subject

3. You and another college student have paired up for a class project in your marketing course. The instructor has given groups the option of presenting to the class or writing a paper on an assigned topic. You attend class and find out that groups need to sign up that day if they want to do a presentation. You are informed that if you don't sign up, you will have to write a paper. Unfortunately, you and your college student acquaintance

forgot to discuss these options. Moreover, the other student did not make class that day and you can't get a hold of him or her. Imagine that you are personally indifferent about writing a paper or presenting. You think about whether the other student would be comfortable speaking in front of the large class. Do you sign up for a class presentation or plan on writing a paper?

a. class presentation
b. paper

4. You have arranged for a study group to meet at your apartment near campus to prepare for an important exam. One of the study group members is a college student acquaintance. Imagine that you are a Republican and are watching a political forum on Fox television which is lambasting the policies of the Obama administration. Your student acquaintance arrives early for the study group meeting. After greeting them, you consider turning off the program. Although you would like to continue watching and it will be awhile before the other group members arrive, you are concerned your acquaintance will be put off by the partisan (anti-Democratic) content. You think about which political party your acquaintance would favor. Do you turn off the program or leave it on?

a. turn off the program
b. leave it on

5. You and a college student acquaintance are part of a team working on a university research project. At the last minute, it has been determined that you need to fly to Oklahoma to assist with the data collection for the project. The only flights available are late night, which would entail getting in after 1:30 A.M., or the following morning, which would entail getting up around 4:30 A.M.. Your lodging has been arranged. You are responsible for making the plane reservations. Imagine that you are personally indifferent about when you travel. However, you want to book a flight that works for your acquaintance, who you have not been able to reach. You consider whether this student would prefer to travel early in the morning or late at night. There are very few seats left so you need to make reservations right away. Do you reserve a late night flight or an early morning flight?

a. late night flight
b. early morning flight

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