Abstract: Men's and Women's Evaluations of Communication Skills in Personal Relationships

Communication plays a central role in most personal relationships (Sillars & Vangelist, 2006), which suggests that how people conceptualize their relationships can be understood, in part, by assessing the value placed on diverse communication skills of partners (Burleson & Samter, 1990; Samter & Burleson, 1990).

Much recent research on gender and communication has emphasized differences in men's and women's communicative conduct, with some theorists going so far as to claim that men and women constitute different cultures. However, comparatively little research has assessed both similarities and differences in men and women's communication to determine whether the sexes are more alike or different. This study will provide such assessments with respect to men's and women’s evaluations of the importance of diverse communication skills in two relationships, friendship and romance. In this study researcher will evaluate the importance of ten communication skills for either same-sex friendship or opposite-sex romances within the college students in a mid-anatolian university.

For this purpose, Communication Functions Questionnaire (CFQ), which was developed, by Burleson and Samter (1990) will be used to gather data. CFQ adapted by Küçük and Kumtepe (2015) into Turkish language and culture. Reliability (cronbach alfa) and validity (exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) analysis showed that Turkish version of questionnaire consistent with the original version and it is appropriate to gather information about diverse communication skills in Turkish culture.

CFQ is a measure to assess the value people place on communication skills, particularly same sex friends. The Communication Functions Questionnaire assesses the value placed on ten skills relevant in communication with others and the features the management of feelings and the management of behavior. Skills that focus on the management of affect and emotion (i.e., feelings) include: comforting skills (assisting others when they are in need) and ego supportive skills (boosting another’s feelings about himself or herself). The skills that reflect managing activity and behaviors are: referential skills (sharing information in clear and understandable fashion); conversational skills (talking with ease in casual settings); narrative skills (entertaining by telling jokes and stories); and persuasion (influencing others to change or alter their behavior). Two other skills, conflict management (solving problems effectively) and regulation (helping someone recover from a mistake and remedy the problem), are an indication of both the management of feelings and thoughts of others. Recent versions of CFQ include two additional affectively oriented dimensions: expressiveness (the ability to express feelings in a manner accessible to others), and listening (the ability to comprehend the message of others). The last version of CFQ includes 30-item, 10 factor measure anchored by 5-point Likert-type response option format. Respondents are requested to indicate the relative importance of a series of communication.

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