

Introduction

Origin and Meaning of Intimacy

The word *intimacy* originates from the Latin word “*intimus*,” which means the most internal or deepest nature of loving relationships between two individuals. Intimacy, generally, refers to very close or deep personal relationships between two individuals marked by emotional attachment, warmth, affection, and love.

Elements of Intimacy

The essential elements of intimacy include emotional attachment and close personal relationships characterized by close physical, psychological, and social contact; friendliness, positive attitudes, mutual cherishing, appreciation, and interest; intense likings, feeling of warmth, affection, care, and concern for the loved ones; and responsiveness to one another’s needs (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008; Prager et al., 2013; Rohner, 2008). In addition, they include mutual self-disclosure, unre-served communication, trust, confidence, commitment, interdependence, mutual acceptance, feelings of pleasure when together with the partner, and feelings of distress when separated (Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto, 2004; Collins & Miller, 1994; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Douglas and Heer (2013) have broken down intimacy into the following five elements:

1. **Honor.** Showing honor to one’s intimate partner means treating him/her with due regard and respect. Not to say or do anything that may harm his/her

self-esteem. Respecting partner's opinions, values, beliefs, and faiths regardless of whether they are similar to or different from one's own (Simpson, 2007a).

2. **Trust.** Believing in the honesty, integrity, and sincerity of the intimate partner. However, trust does not necessarily mean blind faith. But baseless suspicion is harmful to developing trust between partners. Trust depends on the confidence that the partner will do and choose what is right for both of them and will not deceive (Reis, 2014).
3. **Allowance.** Allowance means believing in the freedom of thought, expression, and activities of the intimate partner. Allowing to let the partner live his/her life the way he/she chooses, and accepting different viewpoints with an open mind. Allowance means not to try to control the partner, to let the partner be his/her own self with a unique sense of identity.
4. **Vulnerability.** Vulnerability means not to create any barriers between partners. That means not to try to separate or defend good or bad habits or behaviors of the partner, but rather accept the partner in totality and have free and fair communion with him/her.
5. **Gratitude.** Gratitude means showing gratefulness to one's partner for who he/she is, and for what he/she does, taking care of the partner as an enjoyable attachment figure without expecting any return, and focusing more on giving to the partner than on getting in return from the partner.

Intimate Relationships

An intimate relationship refers to an individual's emotionally close and deep personal relationship with a partner. This is a kind of attachment relationship that is characterized by mutual love, affection, care, concern, sense of happiness, well-being, and emotional security between intimate partners. An intimate partner is a significant other as well as an attachment figure (Khaleque, 2001).

Significant other. Significant others are individuals with whom one has a relatively long-lasting and important emotional bond. The significant other is viewed as a unique, irreplaceable person, interchangeable with no one else (Rohner, 2005; Rohner & Khaleque, 2010).

Attachment figure. An attachment figure refers to a person with whom one has a uniquely important emotional bond like significant others, but also where the individual's sense of emotional security, comfort, and well-being are dependent to some degree on the quality of the relationship (positive or negative relationship) with his/her attachment figure (Ainsworth, 1989, 1991).

Note that the significant other and attachment figure are overlapping concepts with one major distinction between them. Specifically, the two social categories are hierarchically arranged so that the concept of an attachment figure contains all the defining attributes of a significant other, plus one additional attribute. That is, in an attachment relationship one's sense of well-being, emotional security, and happiness are dependent to some degree on the perceived quality of the relationship with one's attachment figure. But this is not true of a significant other. Thus all attachment figures are also significant others, but not all significant others are attachment figures (Khaleque, 2001; Rohner & Khaleque, 2008).

Dynamics and Dimensions of Intimate Relationships

As intimate relationships develop over individuals' lifespan, the nature of relationships changes from casual to close, and the relationships become increasingly multidimensional. Several authors (Cassidy & Shaver, 2008; Feeney, 2008) have suggested that the following changes take place as the relationship become close:

1. Frequency, duration and settings of interaction increase.
2. Individuals gain more in-depth knowledge about the personality and behavior of partners.
3. Individuals become more skilled in identifying and predicting partners' opinions and behaviors.
4. Individuals increase their investment in the intimate relationship.
5. Interdependence and sense of belongingness to one another increase.
6. Partners start feeling that their separate interests are inextricably linked to the outcome of their relationship.
7. The magnitude of positive feeling toward one another such as liking, loving, caring, commitment, and trust increases.
8. Partners increasingly like to stay in close proximity and avoid separation.
9. Partners perceive their relationships as unique and irreplaceable.

Dimensions of Intimate Relationships

Several authors have suggested that as intimacy grows, the dimensions of intimate relationships expand to the following domains of life (Augsburger, 1988; Chapman, 2004; Rohner & Khaleque, 2005):

Physical intimacy. Physical intimacy includes a variety of physical interactions between partners such as hugging, kissing, fondling, caressing, and other sexual activities. But physical intimacy is neither limited to sexual intercourse nor ends with it. This is much more than just sexual intercourse, because individuals' sexual potency and performance can diminish due to physical and psychological problems, ill health, and old age. Despite these problems, physical intimacy between partners can continue lifelong.

Emotional intimacy. Emotional intimacy refers to positive attachment bonds expressed through feelings and behaviors characterized by warmth, affection, love, care, concern, and support for one another. Emotional intimacy is also revealed by the spontaneity, comfort, and ease with which a partner is able to respond emotionally to another partner. The degree of comfort and mutual experience of closeness might indicate the magnitude of emotional intimacy between partners. Emotional intimacy is a psychological phenomenon that can be achieved when the level of trust and communication between two partners are such that it fosters the mutual sharing of one another's deepest selves. Emotional intimacy depends mainly on trust, and confidence that the partners can share their dreams, and positive and negative characteristics without the fear of losing emotional intimacy. Emotional intimacy is different from sexual intimacy. Because sexual intimacy can take place with or without emotional intimacy. Similarly, emotional intimacy can also occur with or without sexual intimacy. Partners may come across tough moments in life when intimate relationships can be at a breaking point. But this risk can be overcome with patience and sincere communication of feelings to show how much each partner cares for the other (Reis, 2013).

Intellectual intimacy. This form of intimacy is also called cognitive intimacy, where intimate partners exchange opinions, share thoughts and ideas with open minds, and accept and enjoy similarities and differences between their viewpoints. If partners interact comfortably in creative and problem-solving activities, they can develop good intellectual intimacy.

Spiritual intimacy. This kind of intimacy depends on sharing and practicing common faiths, beliefs, and values, and working together to develop intimacy through spiritual growth. However, if religious and spiritual beliefs of partners are different, they should respect and appreciate each other's spiritual needs, beliefs, and values.

Parenting intimacy. When intimate partners become parents, their intimate relationships enter into a new phase called parenting intimacy. Parenting intimacy largely depends on performing shared responsibilities of parenting duties by being supportive to each other while helping the child to grow in socially desirable ways. Parenting is a process that includes nourishing, protecting, and guiding the child through the course of development jointly by both parents. Parents should provide the child with self-help skills, age

appropriate toilet training, and social and intellectual learning. Parenting intimacy grows if parents help each other in performing these duties.

Work intimacy. This kind of intimacy involves helping the partner in maintaining the home, family income and expenses, and social and occupational activities. Supporting each other in achieving common goals can lead to a high work intimacy between partners.

Conflict and crisis management intimacy. This kind of intimacy depends on partners' attitude and ability to compromise and sort out differences in a fair and amicable way, and reach mutually agreeable and satisfactory solutions, especially in time of family crisis. The most important factor that can enhance conflict and crisis management intimacy is recognizing and accepting the fact that there are no perfect solutions to human problems.

Play intimacy. Play intimacy depends on partners' ability to have fun together through recreation, humor, and relaxation in home or out of home during vacation.

Aesthetic intimacy. This intimacy depends on enjoying and supporting each other's aesthetic pleasures. Aesthetic intimacy can be obtained from listening to music, visiting museums and historic places, viewing arts and natural scenes, and so on.

Finally, the nature and dynamics of intimate relationships are very complex. All the components discussed previously are not absolutely essential for intimate relationships to occur. These components are not mutually interdependent. Intimate relationships can occur and exist even in the absence of some components. Generally, intimacy exists to a higher degree when a greater number of components are present and to a lesser degree when a smaller number of components are present (Fletcher & Kerr, 2013).

Fear of Intimacy

The concept fear of intimacy (FOI) refers to a psychological condition where an individual is afraid of forming or anxious about forming an intimate relationship with another individual who is significantly important to her/him. According to interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory (IPARTheory), FOI refers to an individual's anxiousness or reluctance about disclosing and exchanging deeply personal thoughts and feelings with a significant other with whom the individual has a significant emotional tie, who is uniquely important to the individual, and exchangeable with no one else (Rohner, 2005).

According to Sherman and Thelen (1996), fear of intimacy involves three essential elements:

1. **Communication.** Exchange of deeply personal information between partners.
2. **Strong feelings.** Partners have very close or deep personal relationship characterized by emotional attachment, warmth, affection, and love.
3. **Unique importance.** Each partner is uniquely important to the other and exchangeable with no one else.

Descutner and Thelen (1991) reported that individuals who are high in FOI are more likely to be psychologically maladjusted, anxious, depressed, and to have low self-esteem than individuals who are low in FOI. Similarly, evidence from IPARTheory-based research has shown that adults' remembered childhood rejection tends worldwide to be not only related with many of the problems reported by Descutner and Thelen, but also with negative self-adequacy, anger, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability, dependence, and negative world view (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012; Rohner & Britner, 2002). In addition, a number of studies conducted in different countries including Bangladesh (Uddin et al., 2016), Croatia (Glavak-Tkalic, Vulic-Prtoric, & Zoroja, 2016), Greece (Giovazolias & Goitsa, 2016), Pakistan (Butt, Malik, & Faran, 2016), and the United States (Lindsey & Khan, 2016) showed that experiences and memories of parental rejection in childhood have significant relations with fear of intimacy, psychological maladjustment, and anxiety of adults in these countries. Moreover, remembered parental rejection and psychological maladjustment of adults have independent effects on their fear of intimacy, and in most cases psychological maladjustment and relational anxiety mediated the relationship between parental rejection and fear of intimacy.

Correlates of Intimate Relationships

Some of the important factors that have been found to have significant association with intimate relationships are culture, ethnicity, personality, experience, and gender. The patterns of association between intimate relationships and these factors are discussed in somewhat more detail in the following section.

Culture and Ethnicity

Several researchers have indicated that cultural background, cultural values, and attachment styles have a profound impact on the way people think, feel, and behave in intimate relationships (Hatfield & Rapson, 2005, 2010; Schmitt, 2008). Research findings have also revealed that culture and ethnicity have a significant impact on people's romantic preferences, comfort in romantic commitments, and on the reaction and behavior in marital and nonmarital romantic relationships (Hatfield & Rapson, 2010). In a landmark study of 17,000 men and women from 56 nations, Schmitt (2008) found that most people in most cultures claim to have a secure attachment style. In another study on Americans, Russians, and Japanese, Sprecher et al. (1994) found that in all three cultures, men and women generally identified themselves as secure in their love relationships. Doherty and colleagues (1994), who interviewed Americans of Chinese, European, Japanese, and Pacific Islander ancestry, found similar results. Culture also does have some impact on how men and women classify themselves as secure or insecure in their attachment relationships. Sprecher et al. (1994), for example, found that American men are more likely than Russian or Japanese men to possess a secure attachment schema. On the other hand, Japanese women are more likely to possess secure schemas than do Russian women.

Schmitt (2008) suggested that insecure romantic attachments were most prevalent in societies afflicted with political, economic and social uncertainties, where quality of life is poor and life expectancy is low. Chisholm (1999) tried to provide an evolutionary explanation for socio-cultural differences in people's love schemas. He argued that in affluent cultures with abundant resources, people can afford to plan to invest in long-term secure romantic attachments, monogamy, and a small number of high-quality offspring. By contrast, in cultures characterized with poverty, people are forced to adapt to short-term temporal horizons. In such societies, the optimal mating strategy is to engage in promiscuous sexual affairs, to reproduce more children in short time, and to invest minimally in any single romantic relationship. But this explanation is not supported by current evidence. For example, the United States, an economically affluent country, has a very high divorce rate. Currently, about 50 percent of marriages in the United States end in divorce each year (Cruz, 2013). Only about 65 percent of married couples in the United States stay together for about 10 years, and the average length of marriage is only 18 years (Elliot & Simmons, 2011).

Personality Characteristics

According to Freud (1949), a human being's first intimate relationship is the mother-child bond during infancy through the act of breast-feeding, which has a profound influence on shaping individuals' personality throughout the lifespan. Although Freud focused more on the impact of early parent-child relationships on the development of abnormal personality, a couple of other theorists including Bowlby and Ainsworth (pioneers of attachment theory), and Rohner (pioneer of interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory) have predicted that childhood experiences of attachment and love by parents shape individuals' whole range of personality characteristics throughout the lifespan. Attachment theory postulates that child-parent secure attachment relationship leads to the development of positive personality characteristics of an individual (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Note- that attachment theory and interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory (IPARTheory) are discussed extensively in Chapter 5.

Interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory postulates that parental acceptance or love is likely to lead to the development of psychological adjustment and positive personality dispositions, and parental rejection or love withdrawal is likely to lead to the development of psychological maladjustment and negative personality dispositions in children (Rohner, 1986/2000; Rohner & Khaleque, 2015). In particular, the personality subtheory of the IPARTheory postulates that children, adolescents, and adult offspring who perceive themselves to be accepted or loved by their parents are likely to develop (1) low hostility and aggression, (2) independence, (3) positive self-esteem, (4) positive self-adequacy, (5) emotional stability, (6) emotional responsiveness, and (7) positive worldview. A meta-analysis was performed to test if children's perceptions of parental warmth or love were related to their positive personality dispositions (Khaleque, 2013a). The meta-analysis was based on 30 studies from 16 countries in five continents involving 12,087 children. Results showed that perceived parental warmth/affection correlated significantly with all seven of the postulated positive personality dispositions of children across ethnicities, cultures, gender, and geographical boundaries.

On the other hand, the subtheory postulates that children who perceive themselves to be rejected or not loved by their parents are likely to develop (1) hostility and aggression, (2) dependence or defensive independence, (3) negative self-esteem, (4) negative self-adequacy, (5) emotional instability, (6) emotional unresponsiveness, and (7) negative worldview. Results of another meta-analysis based on 33 studies from 15 countries in four continents involving 11,755 children showed that perceived maternal and paternal indifference and neglect correlated significantly with negative

personality dispositions of children across cultures (Khaleque, 2015c). Findings of another meta-analysis based on 36 studies involving 8,573 children and 1,370 adults from 18 countries showed that both maternal and paternal acceptance in childhood correlated significantly in all countries with almost all of the seven personality dispositions of children and adult offspring (Khaleque & Rohner, 2011).

Several researchers found that quality of interpersonal relationships often varies because of variations in individuals' personality dispositions and behavioral functioning (Kandler, 2012; Soto et al., 2011). People characterized with extraverted, agreeable, conscientious, and friendly personality traits tend to have happier relationships with their partners (Hill, Nickel, & Roberts, 2014).

Personal Experiences

According to attachment theory, the parent-infant attachment relationship is critical for the subsequent cognitive and socioemotional development of children (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Attachment theory proposes that the following four types of parent-child attachment relationships have a profound influence on children's socioemotional and interpersonal relationships development.

The types of attachments are as follows: (1) secure-attachment (mothers/primary caregivers who foster security are more responsive), (2) insecure attachment (mothers/caregivers whose behaviors foster insecurity are less responsive), (3) avoidant attachment (insecure attachment) in which the children show little separation anxiety, and (4) ambivalent attachment in which children show both likes and dislikes for parents. Children with secure attachment tend to develop positive psychosocial characteristics, and children with insecure attachment tend to develop negative psychological characteristics. Prompt and consistent attention and response from parents or caregivers to the children's needs and comforts during the first three months help the development of basic trust between parents and children (Bowlby, 1994). The child's degree of trust about parents, other people, and the world at large depends, to a considerable extent, on the quality of care he/she receives during the first year of life (Erikson, 1950/1963). For example, the infants whose needs are met when they arise, discomforts are quickly removed, and who are fondled and played with develop a feeling that the environment is safe and the people around them are dependable.

Parental acceptance-rejection has a profound influence in shaping children's personality development over the lifespan. A meta-analysis

showed that regardless of culture, ethnicity, or geographic location, approximately 26 percent of the variability in children's psychological well-being and 21 percent of the variability in adults' psychological well-being are accounted for by perceived parental acceptance-rejection (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002a). Experience of parental rejection is expected to lead to negative personality outcomes in children and adults including hostility, aggression, dependence, impaired self-esteem, impaired self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability, and negative worldview. Rejected children are likely to feel anxious and insecure (Khaleque, 2017a).

Effects of rejection are apt to linger into adulthood, placing people at greater risk of social and emotional problems throughout life (Rohner & Khaleque, 2015). Nearly 80 percent of children and adults—irrespective of geographic location, race, and ethnicity—tend to be negatively affected by the experience of parental rejection (Khaleque & Rohner, 2002a, 2012; Rohner & Khaleque, 2015). A study on Finnish adults' experience of partner acceptance and partner control showed that controlling intimate partners are perceived to be less accepting than more permissive intimate partners, and more accepting and less controlling intimate partners are perceived to provide more emotional security than less accepting and more controlling intimate partners (Khaleque, Rohner, & Laukkala, 2008). Recent reviews showed that adult intimate relationships have significant impact on the psychological adjustment and well-being of partners (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999; Rohner & Khaleque, 2010). Psychological and behavioral outcomes of intimate relationship problems are found in adults who have difficulty in forming and maintaining intimate relationships (Hendrick & Hendrick, 2000). Individuals often experience negative consequences of disrupted intimate relationships on their mental health and well-being (Roberts & Pragner, 1997; Rohner, 2008). Since intimate relationships satisfy certain psychological needs, individuals who are not involved in such relationships are likely to feel lonely, anxious, or depressed (Solano, 1986). Several empirical studies show that disrupted intimate adult relationships tend to make individuals susceptible to many psychological problems including stress, anxiety, substance abuse, suicide, and other forms of psychopathology (Bloom, Asher, & White, 1978; Goodwin et al., 1987; Lynch, 1977; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kielcolt-Glaser, 1996). Experience of perceived rejection by a partner has been found to be associated with adult women's poor quality of life (Khaleque, 2004).

Gender Difference

Gender differences refer to psychological, social, and behavioral differences between men and women within any single culture and between different cultures (Muchlenhard & Peterson, 2011). In intimate relationships—like any other interpersonal relationships—power, position, role, status, and expectations of men and women may be quite different.

An increasing number of studies show that perceived paternal acceptance often has as strong as or even stronger implications than perceived maternal acceptance for children's positive developmental outcomes, including psychological adjustment and behavioral functioning (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). Results of a recent meta-analytic review based on 66 studies involving 19,511 respondents from 22 countries in five continents showed that father love tends to have a significantly stronger relationship with children's psychological adjustment than the relationship between mother love and children's psychological adjustment cross-culturally (Khaleque & Rohner, 2012). Moreover, in a review of a large number of cross-cultural studies, Rohner and Britner (2002) found that perceived paternal rejection tends to have stronger negative implications than perceived maternal rejection for the development of depression, conduct disorder, and substance abuse. On the other hand, some studies have indicated that maternal acceptance-rejection sometimes has significantly stronger implications for children's psychological adjustment, personality, and behavioral development than paternal acceptance-rejection (e.g., Ripoll-Nunez & Alvarez, 2008; Rohner et al., 2008). A meta-analytic review has shown that both paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection often make independent contributions to the psychological adjustment and personality development of children (Khaleque, 2013a).

From the previously mentioned research findings it remains unclear why father love sometimes has a stronger influence on offspring's psychological adjustment than mother love, why in other cases just the opposite is true, and still in other cases why both parents appear to make approximately equal contributions to offspring's adjustment and development? Some researchers have suggested that children's perceptions of differences in their parents' interpersonal power and prestige in the family may explain the differential outcomes of paternal and maternal acceptance-rejection on children's psychological adjustment and personality development (Rohner & Veneziano, 2001; Sultana & Khaleque, 2016; Veneziano, 2008; Wentzel & Feldman, 1996).

To address this issue, an international research project in 11 different countries of the world, including Bangladesh, China, Croatia, Greece,

Korea, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and the United Kingdom, was conducted under the title International Father Acceptance-Rejection Project (Rohner, 2014). Results showed that adults in 6 of the 11 nations reported that their social systems were more or less patriarchal (i.e., institutionalized gender inequality), where a woman's primary role is to maintain family, rear children, and to give social-emotional support to family members. On the contrary, a male member, generally a father, is the undisputed head of the family, who controls resources and enjoys more power and prestige in the family as well as in the society. These countries are Bangladesh, China, Korea, Pakistan, Portugal, and Turkey. Adults in the other five countries considered their countries as being more-or-less egalitarian (having gender equity). These include Croatia, Greece, Poland (marginal), Spain, and the United Kingdom. Results also showed males and females within a given country differed significantly in their perceptions of parental power. For example, in Crete (Greece), Poland, Portugal, and Turkey, males reported both parents as being approximately equal in interpersonal power, but females reported their mothers as having somewhat more power than their fathers. In all the other countries males and females perceived both parents to be approximately equal in interpersonal power and prestige.

Results of this analysis revealed that both parents made independent contributions to the psychological adjustment of male and female offspring in six countries. These include Bangladesh, Croatia, Pakistan, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom. Both parents also made independent contributions to the adjustment of adult sons (but not of daughters) in China and Crete (Greece). Interestingly, only mothers made independent contribution to daughters' adjustment in Crete (Greece) and Turkey. Finally, only mothers' acceptance contributed uniquely to the adjustment of both sons and daughters in Korea, whereas only fathers' acceptance did this in Poland. These results confirm conclusions that sometimes only mothers' love-related behaviors are significantly associated with variations in offspring's psychological adjustment, whereas in other instances, it is only fathers' love-related behaviors that are associated with offspring adjustment (Rohner, 1998; Rohner & Veneziano, 2001). But in the majority of cases, the love-related behaviors of both parents are independently associated with offspring's adjustment (Rohner, 2014).

As noted earlier that not only power and position, and role and status, but also attitudes, beliefs, values, and expectations of men and women in interpersonal relationships including friendship, love, and marriage can be quite different. Cultural norms, roles, and sense of identity generally vary according to gender. Gender roles refer to cultural norms or

expectations for appropriate male and female behavior, interest, attitudes, and personality traits. Gender identity refers to the awareness of what it means to be a male or a female in a society. Traditionally, men are expected to develop masculine characteristics such as active, assertive, aggressive, autonomous, and dominant. Women are expected to develop feminine characteristics such as emotional, nurturing, submissive, and empathic (Kite, Deaux, & Haines, 2008). According to Bem (1993), people of both sexes have a mixture of masculinity and femininity. Bem places people in one of the four categories in terms of personality characteristics:

Masculine. Having predominantly manly characteristics.

Feminine. Having predominantly womanly characteristics.

Androgynous. High in both masculinity and femininity.

Undifferentiated. Low in both masculinity and femininity.

Figure 1.1 shows different combinations of masculinity and femininity. However, regardless of gender, some people can be high in some typical

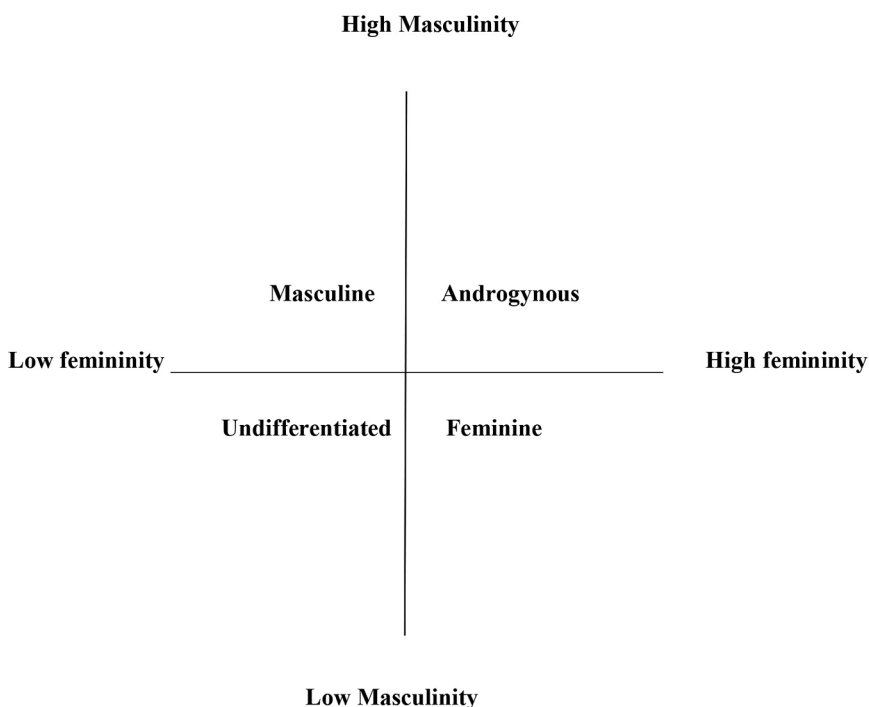


Figure 1.1 Mixture of Masculinity and Femininity (Adapted from Bem, 1993)

masculine characteristics and low in some typical feminine characteristics and vice versa (Choi, Fuqua, & Newman, 2007). There is considerable evidence that people become more androgynous in midlife. Middle-aged men tend to be more open about feelings, more interested in intimate relationships, and more nurturing than young men. Middle-aged women tend to be more assertive, active, self-confident, and achievement oriented than young women (Costa & McCrae, 1994).

Several researchers have suggested that regardless of cultures, women typically tend to be more caring, express more emotion, and define themselves more in terms of relations than men. Men and women also tend to differ in social dominance and aggression. For example, men's communicating style reflects concern for social power and dominance, whereas women's communicating style reflects connectedness and team spirit (Anderson & Leaper, 1998; Pratto et al., 1997). Concerning aggressive activities, men have about 20 times higher record of aggressive activities than do women globally (Daly & Wilson, 1989). In the United States, the man-to-woman arrest rate is 9 to 1 for murder, and 4 to 1 for assault (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Men and women also differ in attitudes and behaviors about friendship, love, and sexuality (Clark & Hatfield, 2003). For example, women typically have more intimate friends than men and may share more personal information with friends than do men. On the other hand, men are more likely to share professional but not confidential personal matters with friends (Rosenbluth & Steil, 1995). About sexual attitudes and behavior, one study showed that approximately 60 percent of men and only 12 percent of women born before 1910 admit to having premarital sex (Papalia, 2012). Although by the 1980s, women had nearly as much premarital sexual experience as did men (Smith, 1994). Yet another study showed that 48 percent of men and 12 percent of women reported that they feel comfortable and enjoy casual sex with different partners. Results of a review of 177 studies on an aggregate sample of 130,000 revealed that men are much more willing to accept casual sex than women (Oliver & Hyde, 1993). In a recent study on a multicultural sample, men were found more likely than women to accept sexual offers (Tappé et al., 2013). Men and women also have different expectations about intimacy, sex, and marriage. For example, to women marital intimacy entails sharing of emotional feelings, trust, and confidence, but men tend to express intimacy through sex and practical help (Thompson & Walker, 1989). A similar trend in gender difference is found in adolescents' intimacy, love, and sexual behavior. Generally, adolescent girls are less permissive about premarital sex than boys; and unlike adolescent boys, girls prefer to stick to a single partner with whom

they have an intimate relationship. Teenage girls tend to give more emphasis on the quality of intimate relationships before sexual intercourse occurs. But teenage boys are more likely than teenage girls to separate sex from love (Wilson & Medora, 1990).

Gender stereotypes and traditional roles of men and women have important implications for building intimate relationships because they often create more incompatibility than compatibility in the relationships between partners (Ickes, 1993). A review of research on relationships between traditional gender-role adherence and sexuality for heterosexual men and women revealed negative effects of traditional gender-role adherence for couples' romantic relationships, particularly for women's sexual problems and satisfaction (Sanchez, Fetterolf, & Rudman, 2012). Spouses who adhere to stereotyped gender roles are generally less happy in their marital relationships than spouses who follow nontraditional gender roles (Helms et al., 2006; Marshall, 2010). However, due to gradual social changes, especially in the United States, young men and women are increasingly becoming more egalitarian than middle-aged and aging men and women (Parker & Wang, 2013).

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 focuses on the origin and meaning of intimacy, elements of intimacy, definition of intimate relationships, dynamics and dimensions of intimate relationships, fear of intimacy, and correlates of intimate relationships including culture, ethnicity, personality, and gender.

Origin and meaning of intimacy. The word *intimacy* originates from the Latin word “*intimus*,” which means deepest loving relationships between two individuals.

Elements of intimacy. The core components of intimacy include emotional attachment and deep personal relationships characterized by close physical, psychological, and social contact; and intense feeling of warmth, affection, care, and concern for loved ones.

Intimate relationship. This is a kind of attachment relationship, characterized by mutual love, affection, care, concern, and emotional security between intimate partners. An intimate partner is a significant other as well as an attachment figure.

Dimensions of intimate relationship. As intimacy grows, the dimensions of an intimate relationship expand to different domains of life including physical, psychological, and social.

Fear of intimacy. It is a psychological condition of being afraid of forming an intimate relationship with any individuals.

Correlates of intimate relationship. Culture, ethnicity, personality, and gender are some of the important correlates of an intimate relationship.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Define intimate relationship. Discuss the origin, meaning, and elements of intimacy.
2. Explain how dimensions of intimate relationships grow with the level of intimacy.
3. How do cultural background, cultural values, and attachment styles impact the way people think, feel, and behave in an intimate relationship?
4. How do different types of parent-child attachment relationships influence socioemotional and interpersonal relationship development in childhood and adulthood?
5. How are different combinations of masculinity and femininity related with different attitudes and behaviors about friendship, love, and sexuality?