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# Factors Associated with General Partner and Relational Uncertainty within Early Adulthood Sibling Relationships

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## Abstract

Guided by the theoretical concept of uncertainty, the present study was an exploratory investigation of general partner and relational uncertainty within sibling relationships. Undergraduate and graduate student participants responded to a written survey utilizing scales measuring general partner uncertainty, relational uncertainty, extent of topic avoidance, and various relational and demographic items. Results revealed that siblings experience significantly more partner uncertainty than relational uncertainty, although both uncertainty types were experienced at low to moderate levels. Further, differing levels of partner and relational uncertainty were associated with frequency of sibling contact, but not with sibling dyadic gender composition. Finally, both general partner and relational uncertainty were significant predictors of levels of general topic avoidance, although neither uncertainty type predicted romantic/sexual relationship

topic avoidance levels. Theoretical implications for uncertainty management are discussed in light of the unique sibling relationship.

Keywords:

Family Relationships    General Partner Uncertainty    Relational Uncertainty    Sibling Communication

Topic Avoidance    Uncertainty Management

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## Notes

Note. N=193. 1=Relational uncertainty, 2=General partner uncertainty, 3=Romantic/sexual relationship topic avoided, 4=General topics avoided. All one-tailed correlations are significant at  $p < .01$ .

Note. N = 193. Across rows, means with superscript letters in common do not significantly differ at  $p < .05$ .

An earlier version of this paper was selected as a Top Four Paper in the Interpersonal Communication Division at the 2005 annual meeting of the Western States Communication Association.

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## Additional information

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