

Charmed, I'm Sure: Do Charismatic People Have More Satisfying Sexual and Romantic
Relationships?

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Abstract

High quality romantic relationships are a key predictor of health and well-being but sexual dissatisfaction and frequent conflict can make it challenging to maintain relationship quality over time. Although couples can maintain high levels of relationship satisfaction over time, little work has investigated *who* is more likely to report high relationship quality. Some personality traits have been linked to higher relationship and sexual satisfaction, but less is known about other individual differences that may be important in romantic relationships. The current research aims to understand the role of *charisma*, the quality of being influential and affable, in the maintenance of sexual and romantic relationship quality. Across three multi-method studies, I tested two key research questions about how charisma is associated with sexuality and the frequency and effectiveness of conflict in relationships to ultimately inform whether charismatic people are more likely to have high quality romantic relationships. In my first paper, I tested whether charismatic people and their partners reported higher sexual quality (i.e., sexual satisfaction and desire), and whether this is due to charismatic people being more communal during sex. In the second paper, I tested whether charismatic people and their partners reported higher relationship quality, in part because they are buffered against the negative effects of conflict on relationship satisfaction, and if this can be explained by better conflict management. Overall, this work contributes to the growing body of research aiming to understand the enduring traits that are associated with the maintenance of happy, fulfilling relationships.

Keywords: charisma, sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, relationship satisfaction, conflict, conflict resolution

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CHAPTER 1

General Introduction

Charmed, I'm Sure: Do Charismatic People Have More Satisfying Romantic and Sexual Relationships?

One quest in psychological research has been to understand the factors that contribute to happiness (e.g., Diener & Seligman, 2002) including the impact of various demographic characteristics (e.g., relationship status, socioeconomic status) and individual differences (e.g., personality; Myers & Diener, 1995). Consistently, satisfying romantic relationships have been found to be among the strongest predictors of happiness and life satisfaction (Coombs, 1991; Diener & Seligman, 2002). Despite the importance of relationships for overall well-being, high quality romantic partnerships can be difficult to maintain (Aron et al., 2002; Hirschberger et al., 2009; Kurdek, 1994; VanLaningham et al., 2001). Over time in a relationship, the desire and sexual connection that often draws partners together tends to decline (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Impett et al., 2008; Impett et al., 2014; Klusmann, 2002; McNulty et al., 2016; Schmiedeberg & Schroder, 2016), and the frequency and intensity of conflict can increase or become more impactful (Carrere et al., 2000; Cramer, 2002; Dailey et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2014; Noller & Feeney, 2002). However, not all couples experience poorer relationship quality over time, and some maintain a strong connection for several decades (Acevedo & Aron, 2009; Anderson et al., 2010; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). One prominent model that can help explain the differences in couples' trajectory of relationship quality is the Vulnerability Stress Adaptation (VSA) Model. The VSA model outlines how external stress impacts romantic relationships and suggests that the underlying strengths or vulnerabilities (including personality traits) that each member brings to their relationship can impact their use of and receptiveness towards adaptive relationship processes (e.g., conflict resolution, responsiveness) when experiencing stress, which ultimately affects relationship quality and stability (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

Thus, given that personality traits can impact the way individuals' think, feel, and behave (Goldberg, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1997; McCrae & John, 1992), the proposed research aims to

expand our understanding of who is more likely to maintain sexual and relationship quality over time by going beyond the Big Five and investigating the role of *charisma*—the quality of being influential and likable—in romantic relationships (Tskhay et al., 2018). Given the communal nature of being *charismatic* (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993), charisma might be a novel individual difference associated with the maintenance of relationship satisfaction and sexual connection. Research on charismatic people in workplace contexts has found that charismatic people are focused on fostering a collective identity (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993), meeting the needs of their colleagues (Pillai et al., 2003), and successfully managing conflict (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011). Charismatic people are also seen as more attractive (Bono & Ilies, 2006) and inspire passion in their colleagues (Ho & Astakhova, 2020), however it is unclear how charisma is associated with the quality of people's closest relationships—their romantic relationships.

Personality Traits and Relationship Quality

Personality traits, such as the Big Five, have been linked to greater happiness (Chan & Joseph, 2000; Costa & McCrae, 1980; Hills & Argyle, 2001), as well as romantic relationship satisfaction (Caughlin et al., 2000; Malouff et al., 2010 ; Slatcher & Vazire, 2009). In one study, low neuroticism, high agreeableness, high conscientiousness, and high extraversion were all associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction (Malouff et al., 2010). Longitudinal studies have also found that high conscientiousness and low neuroticism were associated with greater satisfaction over time (Caughlin et al., 2000; Slatcher & Vazire, 2009), however, other studies found higher levels of conscientiousness were associated with steeper declines in marital satisfaction over time (O'Meara & South, 2019) and neuroticism had little effect on change in satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1997). In addition, the Big Five personality dimensions have also been linked to conflict resolution strategies. For example, most consistently, higher levels of neuroticism have been associated with poorer conflict resolution skills (both self-reported and

observed), communication styles, as well as lower relationship satisfaction (e.g., Donnellan et al., 2004; Heaven et al., 2006; Schneewind & Gerhard, 2002; Solomon & Jackson, 2014; Taggart et al., 2019). Therefore, personality traits can be considered enduring strengths or vulnerabilities of romantic relationship quality.

Research on the Big Five personality dimensions has also found evidence for their association with sexual satisfaction and desire. Higher extraversion and lower neuroticism are associated with greater sexual satisfaction (Allen & Desille, 2007; Costa et al., 1992; Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Heaven et al., 2000) and extraversion has also been linked to higher sexual desire (Kurpisz et al., 2016). Personality traits rated as more communal, such as extraversion and agreeableness, were liked more by others (Wortman & Wood, 2011), and greater liking in romantic relationships is associated with relationship maintenance (Ogolsky & Bowers, 2013), while the lack of liking is linked to a greater likelihood of relationship dissolution (Le et al., 2010). Although charisma has some overlap with other personality traits, such as extraversion and agreeableness, past research shows they are distinct (Tskhay et al., 2018) and that people uniquely value charisma in potential dating partners (Flegr et al., 2019). Previous work also suggests that charismatic people have a keen understanding of other people's motivation (Pillai et al., 2003), demonstrate a responsive, communal nature (Conger et al., 2000; Shamir et al., 1993), and tend to work toward common goals (House 1977; Weber, 1978). Given these characteristics, charisma might uniquely shape experiences in romantic relationships, above and beyond other personality traits.

Charisma

Charisma has primarily been investigated in the context of leadership and workplace interactions (e.g., Transformational Leadership Theory; Bass, 1985), in which they promote a communal and cooperative atmosphere (Conger et al., 2000; De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011), and maintain greater relationship quality with colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010). In workplace contexts, people high in charisma promote higher performance and

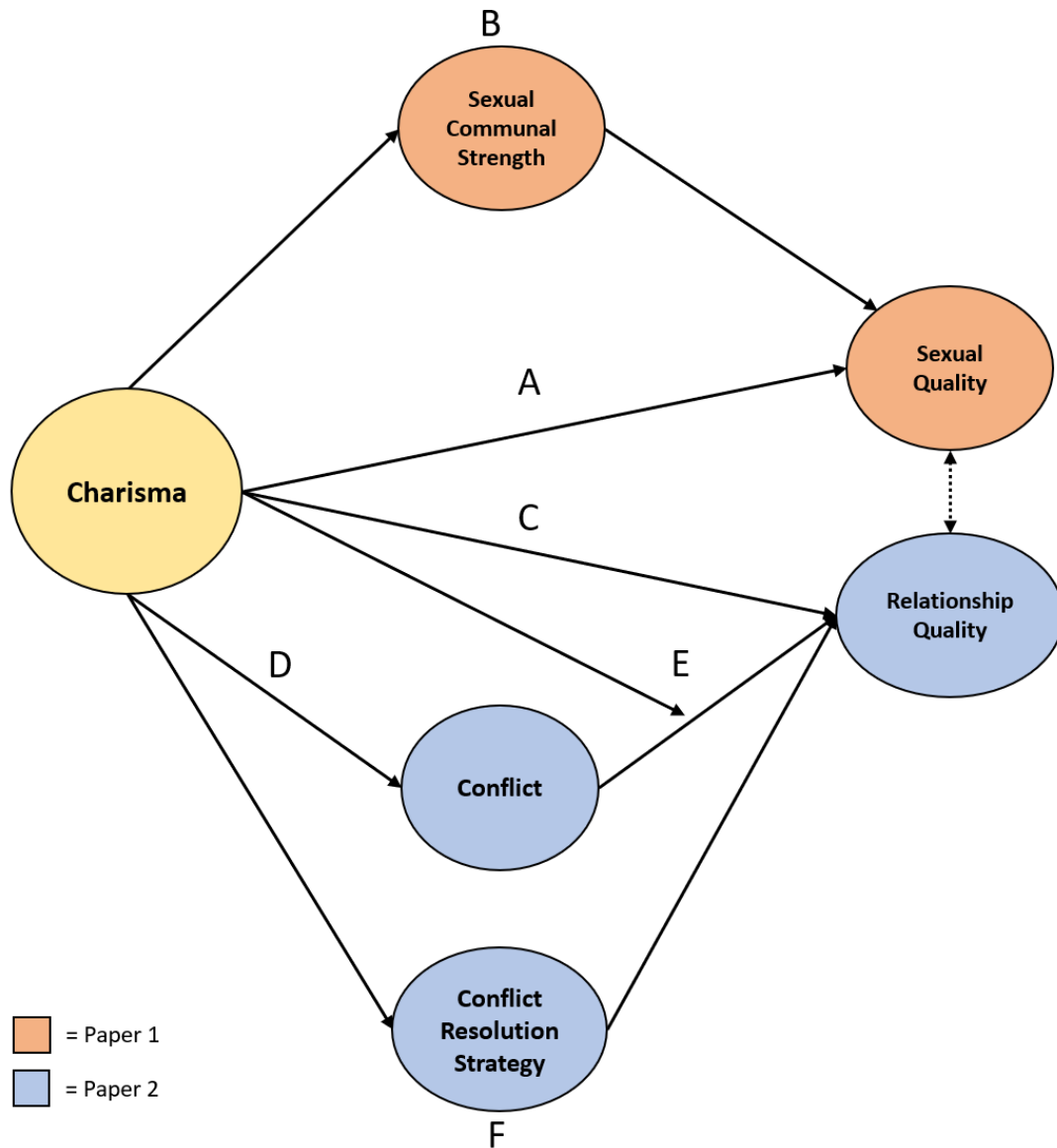
better work attitudes (Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985; Nohe et al., 2013; Vallerand et al., 2014), which is associated with greater job satisfaction and well-being for themselves and their colleagues (Erez et al., 2008; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013), and charismatic people also tend to be more passionate (Ho & Astakhova, 2020) and attractive to their colleagues (Bono & Ilies, 2006).

Outside of an organizational setting, general charisma has been studied in everyday life, and is defined as someone who has a strong presence in a room and the ability to lead a group, as well as being friendly and frequently displaying positive affect (Tskhay et al., 2018). Charisma has been found to be observable by others, and higher charisma has been linked to being more persuasive and likable (Tskhay et al., 2018). Aside from these initial studies of charisma outside of work-related contexts, it is not yet known how charismatic people experience more intimate interactions.

The Current Thesis

Given the positive impact charismatic people have in the workplace for both themselves and their colleagues, the current thesis investigates the role of charisma in romantic relationship quality of both partners. Guided by the VSA model, across two papers using three different samples with multiple methods (i.e., cross-sectional, dyadic, daily experience, and longitudinal) I aim to demonstrate that charisma is an enduring strength that is associated with sexual and relationship quality (see Figure 1). In my first paper, I test the prediction that charismatic people, their partners, and people who perceive their partner as charismatic will report greater sexual quality (i.e., sexual satisfaction, desire; Path A) and that there is an indirect effect on sexual satisfaction and desire due to charismatic people being more communal (e.g., responsive to their partner's need) during sex (Path B). In my second paper, I test the prediction that charismatic people, their partners, and people who perceive their partner to be charismatic will report higher relationship quality (Path C), less conflict (Path D), and will be buffered against the negative link between conflict and relationship satisfaction (Path E). In addition, I will test

the prediction that charismatic people and their partners will report higher relationship quality due to the more frequent use of positive, and less frequent use of negative, conflict resolution strategies (Path F). The proposed research will add to our understanding of who is better able to maintain satisfying romantic relationships by investigating the role of charisma in a romantic context. Taken together, this work aims to develop a model of the relational processes (i.e., sexual responsiveness, conflict management) through which charismatic people and their partners experience sexual and relationship satisfaction and broaden our understanding of practices important to maintaining satisfying romantic relationships.

Figure 1*Proposed Model of Charisma and Relationship Quality*

Note: This model applies to outcomes for the charismatic individual, their partner, or people who perceive their partner as charismatic, however for simplicity only the effect of charisma on a partner's outcomes is shown. Although we do not test associations between sexual quality and relationship quality, there is an abundance of research that suggests there is a bidirectional association (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; McNulty et al., 2016).

CHAPTER 2

Leading Better Sex Lives: Is Trait Charisma Associated with Higher Sexual Desire and Satisfaction in Romantic Relationships?

Chapter 2 is adapted from a manuscript that is currently under review:

Tu, E., Raposo, S., & Muise, A. (invited resubmission). Leading better sex lives: Is trait charisma associated with higher sexual desire and satisfaction in romantic relationships? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. <https://psyarxiv.com/x964m/>

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	- Data collection – 50%
	- Analysis and interpretation of the research data – 75%
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	- Data collection – 50%
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Abstract

Sexuality is a key predictor of relationship satisfaction, but sexual desire and satisfaction can be difficult to maintain over time. Past research has investigated who might be more likely to experience higher (compared to lower) levels of desire and sexual satisfaction in their relationships. Personality traits, such as extraversion, have been associated with sexual satisfaction and desire, but evidence linking personality to sexual outcomes has generally been mixed, meaning there is a lot left to learn about how personality is associated with sexual well-being. A promising, yet unexplored, trait that could be linked to sexual desire and sexual satisfaction is charisma—a combination of influence and affability—that has been identified as a desirable trait when people are selecting a romantic or sexual partner. Across two studies—a cross-sectional study of individuals in relationships ($N = 413$) and a 21-day dyadic daily experience study ($N = 121$ couples)—people higher in charisma reported being more communally responsive to their partner's needs during sex (i.e., higher in sexual communal strength), and in turn, higher sexual desire and satisfaction. Through higher sexual communal strength, people with a charismatic partner also reported higher daily sexual desire, but not sexual satisfaction. The effects were largely retained above and beyond general communal motivation and Big Five personality dimensions, although extraversion accounted for some of the associations. Therefore, charisma is a trait that is linked with higher sexual communal strength, which is associated with charismatic people reporting higher desire and sexual satisfaction in their romantic relationships.

Keywords: charisma, sexual communal strength, sexual satisfaction, sexual desire.

Leading Better Sex Lives: Is Trait Charisma Associated with Higher Sexual Desire and Satisfaction in Romantic Relationships?

Satisfying romantic relationships are one of the strongest predictors of happiness and life satisfaction (Coombs, 1991; Diener & Seligman, 2002) and sexual desire and satisfaction can be important aspects of maintaining overall relationship satisfaction (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Impett et al., 2008; McNulty et al., 2016). However, on average, couples experience lower sexual desire and sexual satisfaction over time (Impett et al., 2014; Klusmann, 2002; Schmiedeberg & Schroder, 2016), and a lack of interest in, or enjoyment of, sex are cited as reasons for ending a relationship (Regan, 2000; Sprecher, 1994; Sprecher, 2002; Yabiku & Gager, 2009). Despite the average declines, some couples maintain desire and satisfaction decades into a relationship (Acevedo & Aron, 2009; Anderson et al., 2010). Investigating how individual differences are associated with sexual desire and satisfaction in relationships may be important for understanding how couples can maintain desire and satisfaction, however the results of past research have been mixed. For example, some research has found that Big Five personality dimensions, such as extraversion, are associated with higher sexual satisfaction and desire, but these associations have been inconsistent in other studies (Allen & Desille, 2007; Costa et al., 1992; Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Heaven et al., 2000; Kurpysz et al., 2016; Shafer, 2001). Overall, many questions remain about who may be better able to maintain sexual desire and satisfaction in romantic relationships. One individual difference that has yet to be explored in the context of romantic relationships but may play a unique role in the maintenance of sexual desire and satisfaction, is *charisma*—the quality of being influential and likeable.

Charisma

Research on charisma in the context of leadership and workplace interactions has found that leaders high in charisma are typically described as inspiring, tend to communicate their vision effectively, and motivate others toward a common goal (House 1977; Weber, 1978). They also promote higher performance (Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985; Nohe et al., 2013), greater

job satisfaction (Erez et al., 2008; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013), and lower levels of aggression (Hepworth & Towler, 2004) among their colleagues. Charismatic people tend to make others feel comfortable, fostering more positive and less negative affect (Erez et al., 2008), and can inspire change and innovation (Paulsen et al., 2009). The bulk of research on trait charisma has focused on leaders in organizational contexts and the outcomes for their colleagues or employees, yet the role of charisma in other contexts, such as romantic relationships, is largely unexplored.

When investigated outside of leadership and workplace contexts, general charisma is described as a mix of influence and affability. That is, in everyday life, charismatic people tend to have a strong presence in a room and the ability to lead a group, as well as being approachable and displaying positive affect (Tskhay et al., 2018). Research using this definition of charisma has found that charisma is observable in others—people who self-report as being charismatic are also seen as charismatic by others (Tskhay et al., 2018). Charisma is also shown to be distinct from other individual differences, such as extraversion and agreeableness, and charismatic people are perceived as likable and persuasive (Tskhay et al., 2018). Although charisma has been associated with aspects of negative traits, such as narcissism, research suggests that charismatic people might present as confident and self-assured like those high in narcissism, but charisma is distinct from the antagonistic or defensive features of narcissism (Rogoza & Fatfouta, 2020). Although initial work has documented correlates of charisma outside of work-related contexts, it is not yet known how charismatic people experience more intimate interactions, such as those with a romantic partner.

Charisma and Sexuality in Relationships

Although no previous work has investigated whether being charismatic or having a charismatic partner helps people maintain desire and sexual satisfaction, recent work has begun to provide insight into the association between charisma and sexuality. In a study exploring partner preferences for short or long-term partners, when men and women were asked what

qualities they preferred in a partner for a one-night stand, one of the most important qualities was charisma, and for men, charisma was also one of the most important qualities when seeking a long-term partner (Flegr et al., 2019). These initial findings suggest that charismatic people are at least *perceived* by potential partners to have sexual prowess, and people report higher desire for a charismatic partner. However, it is unclear the extent to which charismatic people (and their partners) report greater desire for sex, or more satisfying sexual experiences, in the context of an ongoing relationship.

The bulk of the previous research that we draw on to support our claim that charisma is associated with sexual desire and satisfaction for both partners in a relationship is from findings about charisma in other, broader contexts. Charismatic leaders tend to be happier, report greater life satisfaction (Nassif et al., 2020), and have more positive interactions with others, in part because they are seen as effective and attractive (Bono & Ilies, 2006). In workplace contexts, charismatic people are also described as passionate and report greater enthusiasm and enjoyment in their work (Ho & Astakhova, 2020; Vallerand, 2015). High levels of work passion in charismatic leaders are also associated with colleagues feeling more passionate about their work (Ho & Astakhova, 2020), as well as more positive impacts on work attitudes, behaviors, well-being (Vallerand et al., 2014), relationship quality with colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010), and job and life satisfaction (Ho & Astakhova, 2020). If features of a charismatic personality involve passionate engagement with important aspects of life and the ability to inspire and excite others (Conger & Kanungo, 1998), it is possible that charismatic people also report higher sexual desire and satisfaction in their intimate relationships and may have partners who report higher desire and satisfaction as well.

The Role of Sexual Communal Motivation

One reason why charismatic people might report higher sexual desire and satisfaction is due to their communal motivation to meet the needs of others. Indeed, people who are charismatic often aim to understand the needs of others and may be particularly skilled at

intuiting other people's needs or interests. For example, charismatic leaders focus their attention on issues that are important to their colleagues (Pillai et al., 2003), are more empathetic, and pay more attention to their colleagues' needs to encourage personal development (Bass, 1985). Related to their communal approach with others, charismatic people tend to promote a collective identity among their colleagues—that is, a bond that makes their colleagues feel unified and acknowledges each member's distinct strengths (Conger et al., 2000; House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993). Communal relationships consist of members feeling a responsibility for meeting each other's needs and providing benefits to one another noncontingently (Clark & Mills, 1979). When colleagues feel they have a shared identity (i.e., when their relationship is communal in nature), this can increase collective endeavors that will be favoured over self-interests (Meindl & Lerner, 1983). Placing an emphasis on a collective identity in the workplace can also lead to greater commitment to the group's values and increase effort toward tasks (Salancik, 1977; Shamir et al., 1993). In romantic relationships, valuing a collective identity may allow partners to feel more committed toward one another, which is an important component of maintaining relationship and sexual satisfaction (Duffy & Rusbult, 1986; Sprecher, 2002). In addition, having a communal orientation in romantic relationships is linked to higher personal and interpersonal well-being for both partners (Le et al., 2018).

Although the association between charisma and communal motivation has primarily been investigated in the context of building a collective identity among work colleagues, communal motivation is a particularly important factor in the quality of sexual relationships. Communal motivation in the specific domain of sexuality, or *sexual communal strength*, is the motivation to be responsive to a partner's sexual needs (Muise et al., 2013; Muise & Impett, 2016). Broadly, past research has found that people higher, compared to lower, in sexual communal strength report higher sexual desire and satisfaction, and are better able to maintain their sexual desire over time (Muise & Impett, 2015; Muise et al., 2013). People with higher sexual communal strength also tend to be more likely to engage in sex with their partner even

when they are not in the mood and are more openminded to their partner's preferences (Muisse & Impett, 2015). In turn, partners of people with high sexual communal strength often report greater relationship and sexual satisfaction, desire, and commitment (Burke & Young, 2012; Muise & Impett, 2015; Muise et al., 2013).

Given that charismatic people emphasize a collective identity (House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993) and are able to intuit other people's needs (Bass, 1985; Pillai et al., 2003), charismatic people may also be more partner-focused in their sexual relationships. Although it is likely that charismatic people will generally be more communal in their relationships, given that charismatic people are seen as desirable sexual partners (Flegr et al., 2019) and tend to be passionate in other domains (Ho & Astakhova, 2020), they may be particularly likely to be communal in the sexual domain of relationships, above and beyond their general communal tendencies. In turn, higher sexual communal strength should then be associated with higher desire and sexual satisfaction for charismatic people and their partners.

The Current Study

Across two studies, we aim to explore whether charismatic people report higher sexual desire and sexual satisfaction in the context of romantic relationships. In our first study, we conducted a preregistered (https://osf.io/5hegp/?view_only=400fe9c64fe84a5e82757886bda69b69) cross-sectional online study as an initial test of the association between charisma, sexual desire, and sexual satisfaction. In this study, we also aimed to rule out alternative explanations for any associations between charisma and sexual quality, such as whether any effects were driven by general communal strength, Big Five personality traits, or narcissism. In our second study, we utilized data from a dyadic daily experience study to replicate and extend our findings from Study 1 in the context of couples' daily lives, and to test whether any associations between charisma and sexual quality extended to the partners of charismatic people. We also tested whether

charismatic people are more communal in their daily sexual experiences and if this accounts for the associations with sexual desire and satisfaction.

Study 1

Method

Participants and Procedures

First, we conducted a power analysis to inform the sample size for our preregistered study. The sample size was based on the smallest effect size from a pilot study which included our key variables of interest (see Supplement for details and findings of the pilot study). To detect a small effect size with an $\alpha = .05$, and 95% power, we needed a sample of 353 people.¹ However, we oversampled to account for attrition and inattentive responding. We initially recruited 453 people; 40 were removed for not meeting eligibility criteria or for completing less than 70% of the survey. Our final sample included 413 people in relationships (see Table 1 for more detailed demographic information).

We recruited participants using Prolific, an online recruitment website. Eligibility criteria for the study included being at least 18 years of age, in a romantic relationship, and currently residing in Canada, the United States, or the United Kingdom. If participants were eligible and interested in participating in the study, they were given a link to the online Qualtrics survey that took approximately 30-minutes to complete. Participants were compensated the equivalent of \$2.85 CAD (\$2.19 USD, £1.67 GBP) for their participation in the study.

Table 1*Demographic Statistics of Study 1 and 2.*

Demographic	Study 1 (<i>N</i> = 413)		Study 2 (<i>N</i> = 121 couples)	
	<i>M</i> or <i>n</i>	<i>SD</i> or %	<i>M</i> or <i>n</i>	<i>SD</i> or %
Age (years)	36	11.3	32.6	10.2
Relationship Length (years)	11.8	10.3	8.5	8.4
Gender				
Female	290	70.2	124	51.2
Male	115	27.8	115	42.5
Other	6	1.5	3	1.2
Relationship status				
Dating	59	14.3	3	1.2
Cohabiting	88	21.3	71	29.3
Common-law	25	6.1	33	13.6
Married	215	52.1	113	46.7
Engaged	19	4.6	19	7.9
Other or did not specify	7	1.7	3	1.2
Ethnicity				
White	348	84.3	158	65.3
Black	9	2.2	11	4.5
Asian	21	5.1	38	15.7
Latin American	12	2.9	10	4.1
Other or did not specify	23	5.6	25	10.3
Sexual Orientation				
Heterosexual	336	81.3	197	81.4
Bisexual	41	9.9	22	9.1
Gay or Lesbian	7	1.7	8	3.3
Other or did not specify	29	7	15	6.2

Note. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.

Measures

In addition to our measures of interest, participants reported on other demographics such as their age, gender, relationship duration, relationship status, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. See Table 2 for correlations, means and standard deviations of our main demographics and measures of interest. We report the reliability of our measures below using two indicators, coefficient alpha (α ; Cronbach, 1951) and coefficient omega (Ω ; McDonald, 1999).

Charisma

Charisma was assessed using the General Charisma Inventory (GCI) which includes six items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = “Strongly disagree” to 5 = “Strongly agree”) (Tskhay et al., 2018). The measure is composed of two subscales each with three items— influence (e.g., “Has the ability to influence people”) and affability (e.g., “Makes people feel comfortable”). We assessed people’s own self-reported charisma ($\alpha = .78$, 95% CI [.733, .806], $\Omega = .78$, 95% CI [.730, .811]), as well as their perceptions of their partner’s charisma ($\alpha = .83$, 95% CI [.796, .856], $\Omega = .81$, 95% CI [.757, .841]).

Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual satisfaction was assessed using the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX; Lawrance & Byers, 1995). Participants responded to five 7-point bipolar items about their sexual relationship: “bad” to “good”, “unpleasant” to “pleasant”, “negative” to “positive”, “unsatisfying” to “satisfying”, and “worthless” to “valuable” ($\alpha = .96$, 95% CI [.944, .964], $\Omega = .96$, 95% CI [.945, .966]).

Sexual Desire

Sexual desire was measured using two items assessing a person’s level of sexual desire over the last four weeks adapted from the Sexual Desire Inventory (Spector et al., 1996). Items include: “Over the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel sexual desire or interest for your partner?” (1 = *almost never or never* to 5 = *almost always or always*) and “Over the past 4

weeks, how would you rate your level (degree) of sexual desire or interest?” (1 = *very low or none at all* to 5 = *very high*; $\alpha = .87$, 95% CI [.831, .901], $\Omega = .88$, 95% CI [.829, .902]).

Communal Strength

Communal strength was measured using the 10-item Communal Strength Scale (Mills et al., 2004). Items are rated on an 11-point Likert scale (0 = *not at all* to 10 = *extremely*) and include: “How far would you be willing to go to visit your partner?” ($\alpha = .89$, 95% CI [.875, .911], $\Omega = .89$, 95% CI [.871, .909]). There are three reverse-scored items.

Sexual Communal Strength

Sexual communal strength was measured using the 6-item Sexual Communal Strength Scale (Muisse et al., 2013). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale (0 = *not at all*, 4 = *extremely*) and include: “How far would you be willing to go to meet your partner’s sexual needs?” ($\alpha = .81$, 95% CI [.767, .842], $\Omega = .81$, 95% CI [.767, .842]). There are two reverse-scored items.

Big Five Personality

The Big Five personality dimensions were measured using the Big Five Inventory-2 (Soto & John, 2017a). This measure includes five subscales with 12 items each assessing extraversion (e.g., “Is outgoing, sociable,” $\alpha = .86$, 95% CI [.835, .878], $\Omega = .86$, 95% CI [.831, .878]), agreeableness (e.g., “Is compassionate, has a soft heart,” $\alpha = .8$, 95% CI [.768, .829], $\Omega = .8$, 95% CI [.766, .83]), conscientiousness (e.g., “Is dependable, steady,” $\alpha = .88$, 95% CI [.857, .895], $\Omega = .88$, 95% CI [.863, .898]), negative emotionality (e.g., “Is moody, has up and down mood swings,” $\alpha = .92$, 95% CI [.913, .935], $\Omega = .93$, 95% CI [.914, .937]), and open-mindedness (e.g., “Is curious about many different things,” $\alpha = .87$, 95% CI [.848, .886], $\Omega = .87$, 95% CI [.848, .888]). All items are measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 5 = *agree strongly*). Additionally, each of these five subscales are composed of three equal item facets, each with two reverse-scored items. In our analyses, we only analyzed the facets of extraversion

(e.g., sociability, assertiveness, energy level) to get a better understanding of the potential overlap between charisma and extraversion.

Table 2*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Study 1*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>R</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Age	36.10	11.42	--													
2. Rel Duration	11.79	10.34	--	.79**												
3. Charisma	3.66	.68	1–5	.08	.08											
4. PP Charisma	3.87	.75	1–5	-.12*	-.09	.25**										
5. Sex Des	3.43	1.10	1–7	-.26**	-.25**	.22**	.27**									
6. Sex Sat	5.75	1.36	1–7	-.10*	-.04	.19**	.28**	.42**								
7. SCS	2.76	.70	0–4	-.06	-.04	.19**	.32**	.58**	.35**							
8. Communal Strength	8.17	1.38	0–10	.16**	.17**	.11*	.23**	.24**	.36**	.46**						
9. Extraversion	3.01	.71	1–5	.13**	.13*	.69**	.15**	.22**	.23**	.20**	.07					
10. Agreeable	3.77	.58	1–5	.23**	.19**	.33**	.13*	.10*	.17**	.16**	.31**	.22**				
11. Conscientious	3.11	.44	1–5	.12*	.14**	.15**	.11*	.05	.07	.06	.16**	.26**	.08			
12. Neg Emotionality	2.99	.88	1–5	-.26**	-.17**	-.37**	-.10*	-.06	-.12*	-.10	-.05	-.49**	-.29**	-.24**		
13. Openness	3.78	.69	1–5	.07	.03	.28**	.10*	.08	.01	.21**	.20**	.28**	.29**	.08	-.14**	
14. Narcissism	2.51	.61	1–5	-.01	-.04	.51**	.12*	.19**	.08	.09	-.10*	.62**	-.05	.14**	-.35**	.25**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *M*, *SD*, and *R* represent mean, standard deviation, and range, respectively. PP = Perceived Partner, SCS = Sexual Communal Strength.

Data Analyses

Data and syntax for all analyses are available on the Open Science Framework (OSF) (https://osf.io/5hegp/?view_only=400fe9c64fe84a5e82757886bda69b69). The data were analyzed using R Version 1.3.1093 (R Core Team, 2020). Data cleaning procedures (e.g., removing blank or ineligible responses and compiling items into a composite measure) were done using the dplyr package (Wickham et al., 2019). Means and standard deviations were calculated using the psych package (Revelle, 2018), summary tables for our key variables were made using apaTables (Stanley, 2018), while alpha and omega reliability coefficients were calculated using the MBESS package with a bootstrapping technique of 10000 bootstrapped resamples to get a coefficient estimate and 95% confidence intervals (Kelley, 2019). The data were analyzed using simple and multiple linear regression models. We focused on the associations between self-reported charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire, but we also tested whether perceptions of a partner's charisma were associated with sexual satisfaction and desire. Furthermore, we tested whether self-reported charisma was associated with sexual communal strength. Additionally, we conducted multiple linear regression models of self-reported charisma predicting sexual communal strength while controlling for communal strength and the Big Five personality measures. In an exploratory manner, we tested whether sexual communal strength mediated the associations between charisma and sexual desire and satisfaction. For all of the analyses, we report the unstandardized coefficients (*b*) which can be interpreted as the change in outcome for every one-unit change in the predictor. Although we did not have predictions about the role of gender in our findings, we tested whether any effects were moderated by gender in an exploratory manner. Past research suggests women are typically more warm and pleasant, which is more consistent with the affability component of charisma, while men are expected to be more emotionally neutral (Bem, 1981; Carlson, 1971; Keating, 2011). In addition, charismatic leadership styles tend to be more common among women (Carli, 1999; Costrich et al., 1975; Eagly & Karau, 2002), thus it is possible that there are

gender differences in the associations between charisma and sexual quality. However, when we tested for gender moderations, there were no consistent differences for men and women (see Supplement for details).

Results

We preregistered our key analyses of the associations between charisma and sexual desire and satisfaction, including controlling for the Big Five (https://osf.io/5hegp/?view_only=400fe9c64fe84a5e82757886bda69b69). First, we tested whether people higher in charisma report higher sexual satisfaction and desire, while accounting for their perceptions of their partner's charisma. In our model predicting sexual satisfaction, we regressed sexual satisfaction on both own and perceptions of a partner's charisma, and found there was a collective significant effect, $F(2, 410) = 21.92, p < .001, R^2 = .09$. A similar model was conducted predicting sexual desire, and there was an overall significant effect, $F(2, 410) = 21.92, p < .001, R^2 = .08$. Indeed, having higher charisma was associated with greater sexual satisfaction, $b = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.016, .079], SE = .016, t = 3.00, p = .003$, and sexual desire, $b = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.019, .071], SE = .013, t = 3.46, p < .001$. In addition, in this model we find that the extent to which a person perceives their partner as charismatic was also associated with greater sexual satisfaction, $b = .08, 95\% \text{ CI } [.054, .110], SE = .014, t = 5.75, p < .001$ and sexual desire, $b = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.031, .077], SE = .012, t = 4.69, p < .001$.

We also explored whether one of the reasons charismatic people had more satisfying sex lives and higher sexual desire was because they are more sexually communal, even after accounting for their general communal strength (which was correlated with charisma, $r = .11$). The model with charisma predicting sexual communal strength, while controlling for general communal strength was collectively significant, $F(2, 410) = 63.38, p < .001, R^2 = .23$. That is, we found that higher charisma was associated with greater sexual communal strength, $b = .03, 95\% \text{ CI } [.012, .042], SE = .01, t = 3.62, p < .001$, above and beyond general communal strength, $b = .02, 95\% \text{ CI } [.018, .027], SE = .002, t = 10.11, p < .001$. Lastly, in an exploratory manner, we

tested whether there was a significant indirect effect from charisma to sexual satisfaction and desire through higher sexual communal strength. We found a significant indirect effect of being charismatic on sexual satisfaction through being more communal during sex, $b = .02$, 95% CI [.011, .041] as well as a significant indirect effect of being charismatic on sexual desire through being more communal during sex, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.017, .050].

Distinguishing Charisma from Extraversion and Ruling out Alternative

Explanations

Past research has suggested mixed evidence for the association between extraversion and sexuality outcomes (e.g., Allen & Desille, 2007; Costa et al., 1992), and charisma has also been shown to be correlated with extraversion (Tskhay et al., 2018). In our study, charisma and extraversion were highly correlated ($r = .69$); therefore, it was important to test whether charisma was, in fact, distinct from extraversion and uniquely influenced sexuality outcomes above and beyond extraversion.

We conducted additional analyses to determine whether charisma is distinct from extraversion and has a unique impact on our outcomes of interest (see Supplement for details; Wang & Eastwick, 2020). Using confirmatory factor analyses (CFA), we found that the best fitting models were those in which charisma and extraversion were modelled as distinct factors, compared to models in which both constructs loaded on the same factor. That is, the CFA models with charisma and extraversion loaded on separate factors fit significantly better than the models with each construct loaded on the same factor, which suggests these are distinct constructs. After identifying that charisma and extraversion were distinct constructs, we conducted incremental validity tests predicting sexual satisfaction, desire, and sexual communal strength using structural equation modeling. Our incremental validity tests suggest the associations between charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire were due to the shared variance between charisma and extraversion, as neither have a statistically significant effect on our outcomes when entered simultaneously, with one exception (i.e., the energy level subscale of

extraversion predicting sexual satisfaction). However, charisma does have a unique positive association with sexual communal strength, above and beyond extraversion.

Next, we tested whether associations between charisma and sexual communal strength, desire and satisfaction remained significant after accounting for the remaining Big Five personality dimensions (i.e., agreeableness, conscientiousness, negative emotionality, openness) and narcissism (not part of our preregistration), as there is some evidence that they are associated with charisma and sexuality outcomes (Allen & Desille, 2007; Costa et al., 1992). We tested a conservative model with all of these variables predicting our sexuality outcomes, as well as separate models with charisma and each covariate predicting our outcomes. In the full and separate multiple regression models, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction, desire, and sexual communal strength remained significant after accounting for the remaining Big Five personality dimensions and narcissism (see Supplement for details).

Study 2

Study 1 provided initial evidence for an association between a person's own charisma and their perceptions of partner's charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire. In addition, in Study 1, charismatic people reported higher sexual communal strength, above and beyond general communal strength in their relationship. Largely, these associations remained significant after accounting for other individual difference variables (e.g., Big Five personality traits, narcissism). However, although charisma was identified to be distinct from extraversion, when both extraversion and charisma were entered together as predictors of sexual satisfaction and desire, neither were associated with sexual desire and satisfaction, but charisma remained significantly associated with sexual communal strength. In Study 2—a 21-day dyadic daily experience study—we aimed to replicate our findings that charisma and perceptions of a partner's charisma was associated with sexual satisfaction and desire in couples' daily lives, as well as extend our findings by exploring whether one's own charisma was associated with a partner's sexual satisfaction and desire. In addition, we tested whether charisma is associated

with greater sexual communal strength and whether the associations between charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire were mediated by sexual communal strength.

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Participants were recruited using online (e.g., Facebook, Reddit, Craigslist, Twitter, Kijiji) and physical advertisements (i.e., flyers). To be eligible for the study, participants had to be at least 18 years of age, living together, in a relationship for at least two years, currently sexually active in their relationship, living in Canada or the United States, able to read and understand English, and have daily access to a computer with Internet. Couples interested in participating in the study were sent a pre-screening survey via email to ensure they met the eligibility criteria. We then followed up with both partners over the phone. The telephone screening confirmed the eligibility criteria, and asked questions (e.g., when they met, each other's birthdays) to confirm their couple status and authentic responding. Once eligible for participation in the study, participants were emailed a link to the background survey hosted on Qualtrics. Completion of the background survey by both members initiated the start of the 21-day daily experience study. Participants were compensated up to \$60 CAD (\$48 USD) for their participation in the study. Our final sample included 121 couples (see Table 1 for more detailed demographic information).

Measures

Given the dyadic nature of the data, self-reports and partner reports were available for each measure. Similar to our first study, in addition to our measures of interest, both partners reported on other demographic characteristics such as their age, gender, relationship duration, relationship status, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. For the daily measures, we used shortened scales to measure our constructs of interest to minimize participant attrition (Bolger et al., 2003). See Table 3 for correlations, means and standard deviations of our main demographics and measures of interest. Since we utilized previously collected data from a larger study, we do

not have additional individual difference measures (e.g., Big Five Personality, narcissism) in Study 2 to test as covariates.

Charisma

Charisma was measured using the same scale as Study 1 and only at background (GCI; Tskhay et al., 2018). We had both self-reports of charisma ($\alpha = .83$, 95% CI [.818, .836], $\Omega = .82$, 95% CI [.812, .832]), as well as perceptions of partners charisma ($\alpha = .81$, 95% CI [.797, .818], $\Omega = .79$, 95% CI [.780, .807]).

Daily-Level Measures

Sexual Satisfaction

Sexual satisfaction was measured using the same scale as Study 1 (GMSEX; Lawrance & Byers, 1995), but it was adapted to be about that day ($\Omega = .99$, 95% CI [.984, .987]).

Sexual Desire

Sexual desire was measured with one item on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). The item was “Today, I felt a great deal of sexual desire for my partner”.

Sexual Communal Strength

Sexual communal strength was only measured on sex days using a 3-item measure about a person’s communal motivation to meet a partner’s needs during sex. Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*) and included: “During sex, I was focused on meeting my partner’s needs” ($\Omega = .81$, 95% CI [.776, .834]).

Table 3*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Study 2*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	32.63	10.17	--							
2. Rel Duration	8.45	8.38	--	.76**						
3. Charisma	3.93	.73	1–5	.01	-.01	.24**				
4. Perceived Partner Charisma	3.96	.79	1–5	.07**	.06**	.29**	.23**			
5. Daily Sex Sat	5.54	1.68	1–7	.09**	.06**	.12**	.16**	.53**		
6. Daily Desire	4.80	1.82	1–7	.06**	.04**	.08**	.15**	.44**	.30**	
7. Sexual Communal Strength	5.70	1.24	1–7	-.01	-.01	.14**	.06*	.17**	.25**	.05

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Correlations between partners are bolded and on the diagonal.

Data Analysis

The data from Study 2 were part of a larger 21-day dyadic daily diary study (https://osf.io/5hegp/?view_only=400fe9c64fe84a5e82757886bda69b69). We used reports of charisma at background to predict sexuality outcomes at the daily level (i.e., daily reports of sexual satisfaction and desire across the 21 days). The data were analyzed using R Version 1.3.1093 (R Core Team, 2020), using the same packages from Study 1 to clean the data and calculate means, standard deviations and scale reliability coefficients. We tested our key predictions using multilevel modeling guided by the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Kenny et al., 2006) in R using the lme4 package (Bates et al., 2015). We aimed to assess whether a person's own and their partner's charisma were associated with daily sexual satisfaction and desire. We conducted indistinguishable models predicting sexual satisfaction and desire across the 21-day study. We also allow our effects to vary across person and day and modelled random intercepts. Additionally, we conducted a multilevel APIM mediation model using the Monte Carlo Method for Assessing Mediation to explore whether the associations between charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire were mediated by sexual communal strength (Selig & Preacher, 2008). This model was a 2-1-1 mediation model in which charisma was a level 2, time invariant predictor measured at background, while our mediator and outcomes, sexual communal strength, sexual satisfaction, and sexual desire, were assessed daily. For the mediator (i.e., sexual communal strength) and any daily predictors, we included both the aggregate and person-mean centered variables in our models. However, the key effects of interest are the within person effects, which is what we report below.² Similar to our previous study, although we did not have predictions about the role of gender in our findings, past research suggests women may more likely be perceived as charismatic than men (Bem, 1981; Carli, 1999; Carlson, 1971; Costrich et al., 1975; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Keating, 2011). As such, we tested whether any effects were moderated by gender in an exploratory manner, but there was no consistent pattern of gender differences (see Supplement for details).

Results

First, we aimed to replicate the findings from Study 1 and tested whether charisma is associated with higher sexual desire and satisfaction in daily life. We found that people higher in charisma reported greater sexual satisfaction, $b = .04$, $SE = .02$, $t = 2.23$, $p = .027$, 95% CI [.006, .083]; however, the association between charisma and sexual desire did not reach significance, $b = .03$, 95% CI [-.005, .061], $SE = .02$, $t = 1.64$, $p = .102$. In Study 2 we were able to test partner effects, however there were no significant associations between a partner's self-report of charisma and one's own sexual satisfaction, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.020, .058], $SE = .02$, $t = .94$, $p = .351$, or sexual desire, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.017, .050], $SE = .02$, $t = .98$, $p = .329$.

Next, we explored whether there is an indirect effect of being charismatic on both partners' sexual satisfaction through higher sexual communal strength. In other words, we tested the role of sexual communal strength as a mediator of the associations between a person's charisma and both partners' sexual quality. First, we found that people higher in charisma report being more communal during sex over the course of the 21-day study, $b = .04$, 95% CI [.017, .070], $SE = .01$, $t = 3.16$, $p = .002$; being charismatic was not related to partner's sexual communal strength, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.006, .048], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.52$, $p = .129$. The results revealed a significant indirect effect of being charismatic on higher daily sexual satisfaction through the charismatic person being more communal during sex, $b = .001$, 95% CI [.0002, .002]; however, there was no significant indirect effect of charisma on a partner's daily sexual satisfaction through the charismatic person being more communal during sex, $b = .0004$, 95% CI [-.0003, .001]. The results also revealed a significant indirect effect of being charismatic on one's own daily sexual desire through being more communal during sex, $b = .002$, 95% CI [.0006, .004], and a significant indirect effect on partner's daily sexual desire through the charismatic person's higher sexual communal strength, $b = .002$, 95% CI [.0004, .003]. Thus, people higher in charisma tend to be more motivated to meet their partner's needs during sex

and in turn, they report higher daily sexual satisfaction and both they and their partner report higher sexual desire.³

Finally, we also tested whether perceiving a partner as charismatic was associated with an individual's own sexual desire and satisfaction in daily life. We found that people who perceived their partner as charismatic reported greater sexual satisfaction, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.002, .067], $SE = .02$, $t = 2.06$, $p = .041$, and desire, $b = .05$, 95% CI [.019, .080], $SE = .02$, $t = 3.16$, $p = .002$. We also ran mediation models to explore whether having a charismatic partner is indirectly associated with a person's own sexual satisfaction and desire through perceiving their partner as charismatic. First, we found that a partner's self-reported charisma was significantly associated with being perceived as charismatic, $b = .09$, 95% CI [.078, .102], $SE = .01$, $t = 14.48$, $p < .001$, suggesting that perceptions of a partner's charisma tend to be in line with the partner's self-report. The results also revealed a significant indirect effect of perceiving one's partner as charismatic on their own sexual desire, $b = .01$, 95% CI [.002, .008], however there was no significant indirect effect of perceiving one's partner as charismatic on their own sexual satisfaction, $b = .003$, 95% CI [-.0002, .006].

Discussion

The current findings shed light on how being charismatic is associated with sexual desire and satisfaction in romantic relationships, which are key components of maintaining overall romantic relationship quality (Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Impett et al., 2008). Past research has found that charismatic people tend to be more communally oriented (Bass, 1985; Pillai et al., 2003) and passionate in workplace contexts (Ho & Astakhova, 2020), allowing for greater job and life satisfaction for both themselves (Nassif et al., 2020) and their colleagues (Erez et al., 2008; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013). However, the current set of studies are the first to our knowledge to investigate the romantic relationships of charismatic people, which are more interdependent than the relationship between charismatic people and their colleagues. By understanding the individual differences associated with people reporting higher sexual desire

and more satisfying sex lives, we hope to add to the literature on maintaining sexual quality for both partners in romantic relationships.

Across both studies, charismatic people reported higher sexual satisfaction and desire, above and beyond other relevant covariates (i.e., Big Five, narcissism) except for extraversion. In line with past research suggesting that charisma is associated with extraversion (Tskhay et al., 2018), charisma and extraversion were highly correlated in Study 1. In fact, although we provide some evidence in Study 1 that charisma is distinct from extraversion, the associations between charisma and sexual desire and satisfaction were reduced when we accounted for extraversion, and neither extraversion nor charisma were associated with sexual desire and satisfaction when entered together as predictors. Some past research has found an association between extraversion and sexual satisfaction (Allen & Desille, 2017), as well as with greater frequency of sex (Kurpysz et al., 2016). Additionally, since charisma and extraversion both assess positivity and social adaptability, it is not entirely surprising that charisma and extraversion had shared variance when predicting sexual satisfaction and desire. However, in future work it will be important to conduct additional tests to see if and how charisma and extraversion uniquely influence sexuality in relationships.

Given that charismatic people have been described as more communally oriented in a workplace setting through their emphasis on a collective identity (House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993) and focus on other people's needs (Bass, 1985; Pillai et al., 2003), we suspected that charismatic people would be more communal in their romantic relationships, as well. More specifically, charismatic people are often viewed as passionate (Ho & Astakhova, 2020) and desirable (Flegr et al., 2019), so we believed that charismatic people might be particularly likely to be high in sexual communal strength in their relationships. Additionally, past research has found that people higher in sexual communal strength experience greater sexual satisfaction and desire in romantic relationships (Burke & Young, 2012; Muise & Impett, 2015; Muise et al., 2013). In the current studies we find that charisma is associated with greater

general and sexual communal strength in romantic relationships, and this association with higher sexual communal strength was true above and beyond general communal motivation and extraversion (which was not significantly associated with sexual communal strength). This supports the idea that being communally motivated to meet a partner's sexual needs may be a unique pathway through which charismatic people experience greater sexual desire and satisfaction above and beyond the influence of trait extraversion. That is, although the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire were not significant when controlling for extraversion in Study 1, charisma was uniquely associated with sexual communal strength, which was indirectly linked to higher sexual desire and satisfaction in Study 2.

Additionally, although we did not find that being charismatic directly impacted a partner's sexual desire, we found that through being more communal during sex, partners of charismatic people also report greater sexual desire. These results suggest that one of the reasons charismatic people and their partner report greater sexual desire and satisfaction is through being more communal during sex, which is consistent with past research on sexual communal strength (Muisse & Impett, 2015; Muise et al., 2013). In addition, given that perceptions of a partner's charisma were strongly associated with sexual desire and satisfaction in Study 1, we tested whether a person's charisma in Study 2 was indirectly associated with their partner's sexual desire and satisfaction through perceptions of their partner's charisma. In fact, perceptions of a partner's charisma are another mechanism through which charisma is associated with a partner's higher desire (albeit not sexual satisfaction). Additional research needs to be done to explore other ways in which charismatic people may behave that can indirectly impact their partner's sexual quality.

One of the reasons why charismatic people are more communal during sex may be due to their perspective-taking ability. For instance, past research suggests charismatic people possess greater empathy and a more individualized consideration for their colleagues (Bass, 1985). Charismatic people have been found to display frequent support for their colleagues' efforts

(Avolio & Bass, 1985), and are concerned with their colleagues' feelings and needs (Pillai et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 1990). Given that charismatic people focus on a collective identity (House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993) and the concerns of others (Podsakoff et al., 1990), charismatic people may feel rewarded through other people's fulfilment, and this may explain charismatic people's motivation to satisfy their partner's sexual needs in their romantic relationships.

It is also important to note that our effect sizes varied from medium to large in Study 1, and small to very small in Study 2 (Funder & Ozer, 2019). In Study 1, we had medium sized effects between charisma and sexual satisfaction, desire, and sexual communal strength ($r_s = .21-.22$). When looking at the effects of perceived partner charisma on these outcomes, we saw larger effects ($r_s = .27-.32$). In Study 2, we found small effect sizes between actor's charisma and daily sexual satisfaction, desire, and sexual communal strength ($r_s = .08-.14$), very small effect sizes between partner's charisma and these outcomes ($r_s = .06-.08$), and very small to small effect sizes between perceived partner's charisma and these outcomes ($r_s = .06-.16$). Our largest effects across both studies are between perceptions of a partner's charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire, which suggests it may be more important to view one's partner as charismatic, compared to simply having a charismatic partner. Although it is important to note that this larger effect may be also due to a person's own biases or shared method variance. However, there is a very large effect between a partner's charisma and perceptions of a partner's charisma ($r = .54$), which suggests people's perceptions of their partner's charisma are consistent with their partner's own reports. Although additional research needs to be done to determine the precise magnitude of the effect charisma can have on sexual quality, the current study provides initial evidence for the role of charisma in sexual desire and satisfaction in relationships.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the current work provides preliminary evidence that charismatic people and their partners may experience more satisfying sexual lives in their romantic relationships, and that this is at least partially due to charismatic people being more communal during sex, there are limitations to the current research. Although in Study 1 we found that perceiving a partner as charismatic was consistently associated with sexual desire and satisfaction, in our dyadic study (Study 2), there were limited partner effects (i.e., only an indirect effect to a partner's sexual desire through sexual communal strength). When testing the effect of perceiving a partner as charismatic in Study 2, we found an effect for sexual desire but not sexual satisfaction. This suggests that for sexual desire, it may be important for partners to perceive their partner as charismatic; however, for sexual satisfaction, there might be other factors that account for this association. We do find an indirect association between a person's charisma and their partner's sexual desire, which is due to a charismatic person's motivations (i.e., sexual communal strength) that are not dependent on a partner's perceptions of their charisma. Future work could explore other possible pathways for the association between charisma and both partner's sexual well-being, such as more effective and open communication (Jiang et al., 2018; Zhou & Long, 2012).

Although our studies include replicated results to bolster support for the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction and desire, the results are correlational and cannot confirm the causal direction of the association. In Study 2, although we assess sexual communal strength, desire and satisfaction over time, we cannot provide definitive evidence of the causal direction between charisma and our mediator, sexual communal strength. It is possible that people who develop greater responsiveness during sex begin to consider themselves as more charismatic, thus additional studies need to be conducted to clarify this relationship. Given that past research suggests the Big Five personality dimensions, which are correlated with charisma, are fairly stable over time (Vaidya et al., 2002; Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000; Specht et al., 2011), it is likely that charisma is a relatively stable trait. Therefore, we suspect a person's charisma

likely precedes their sexual quality and sexual motivations in a particular relationship. Past research investigating charisma, however, suggests it is possible to increase charisma in leaders through training (Antonakis et al., 2011), and, although the conceptualization of charisma differs in workplace contexts, it may be possible to manipulate the charisma of people in romantic relationships to test whether increases in charisma or perceptions of a partner's charisma have consequences for sexual satisfaction, desire, and sexual communal strength.

Charisma has been found to be a desirable quality when seeking a short-term partner (Flegr et al., 2019), and in the current research we also demonstrate that it is associated with sexual communal strength and higher desire and sexual satisfaction in established relationships. However, it remains unclear how charisma influences the development of relationships and the maintenance of sexual desire and satisfaction over time. Future research could recruit new couples and follow them over time in their relationship to test how charisma is associated with sexual quality early on in relationships and if charismatic people and their partners are more likely to maintain desire and satisfaction over time. In addition, a longitudinal design would allow the exploration of other mechanisms that might account for why charismatic people may have more satisfying sex lives, such as whether they are more skilled communicators about sexual topics. Lastly, it would be interesting to explore whether couples who match in charisma differ in their sexual quality from couples who are mismatched (e.g., one partner is higher in charisma and the other is low). An ideal method to test this would be the use of response surface analysis (Barranti et al., 2017), which requires a very large sample size to sufficiently power the models. In future work, it may be fruitful to compile multiple studies to test this question of whether matching on charisma is important for sexual quality.

Conclusion

The results of the current set of studies extend past research on charisma by providing preliminary evidence that trait charisma is associated with sexual quality in romantic relationships. Extensive research on charisma in workplace contexts has found many benefits

for charismatic people and their colleagues (Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985; Erez et al., 2008; Hepworth & Towler, 2004; Nohe et al., 2013; Paulsen et al., 2009; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013); however, to our knowledge, only one other study has documented the closest relationships of charismatic people. Our results suggest that charisma is associated with greater sexual satisfaction and desire in romantic relationships, and this is, in part, due to their more communal approach to their sexual relationship. Although past research shows significant benefits for colleagues of charismatic people (e.g., Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985), our findings suggest that in romantic relationships it may be more important to perceive one's partner as charismatic rather than whether one's partner self-reports as charismatic. The current studies are the first to our knowledge to explore trait charisma in romantic relationships, and we hope this work will encourage more research on charisma by highlighting that trait charisma that can uniquely predict important outcomes in romantic relationships.

Footnotes

¹In Study 1, we intended on oversampling from 353 participants to 390 participants to account for potentially losing participants due to our exclusion criteria. Due to the way Prolific recruits participants, when we closed our study we had 453 submissions. After removing participants due to incompleteness or not meeting our eligibility criteria, the remaining sample was 413 participants. All participants completed at least 70% of the study, passed attention checks, and were compensated for their participation. We only conducted analyses on the final sample, prior to exclusions.

²In these models the pattern is the same for between-person (aggregate effects)

³In Study 2, we also ran all of our analyses with “Day” included as a fixed effect; however, the pattern of effects was the same. We also conducted lagged analyses in which we control for outcomes on the previous day, and all of the effects remained consistent.

Supplemental Materials I

Pilot Study

With a sample of 303 people (164 female, 137 men, 2 trans) recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk, we explored whether charisma (measured by the General Charisma Inventory; Tskhay et al., 2018) was associated with various romantic relationship and sex outcomes. Using linear regression, we found that charisma predicted 14% of the variance in sexual desire, $F(1, 130) = 22.94, p < .001$, and 3% of the variance in sexual satisfaction, $F(1, 292) = 15.71, p = .001$. Charisma was associated with greater sexual satisfaction, $b = .28$, 95% CI [.111, .445], $SE = .08, t = 3.278, p < .01$, and sexual desire, $b = .18$, 95% CI [.108, .249], $SE = .04, t = 5.017, p < .001$. We used the smallest effect size of interest, which was between charisma and sexual satisfaction, to inform the sample of our preregistered replication study. Using G*Power, based on a small effect size ($f^2 = .037$), an $\alpha = .05$, and power of 95%, we needed a sample of 353 people. However, we oversampled to account for attrition and inattentive responding.

Gender Analyses

In Study 1, we did not find a significant gender moderation between charisma and sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, or sexual communal strength. In Study 2, gender did not significantly moderate the association between one's own charisma (or partner's charisma) and daily sexual desire, sexual satisfaction, or sexual communal strength.

Ruling out Alternative Explanations in Study 1

Distinguishing Charisma from Extraversion

Due to the high correlation between charisma and extraversion in our study ($r = .69$), we conducted additional analyses to distinguish these two constructs from one another. As a strong test of the distinction between charisma and extraversion, we followed guidelines by Wang and Eastwick (2020) for testing incremental validity and the distinctiveness of two constructs using confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM). The first step in these tests is to determine the best fitting measurement models for charisma and extraversion.

For all of our CFA models, we used the lavaan package in R (Rosseel, 2012) and the variance standardization method for factor identification with full information maximum likelihood option for missing data and allowed the latent factors to correlate.

To determine the best factor structure for charisma, we conducted one- and two-factor CFA models of charisma. For the one-factor model, we see the factor loadings vary drastically (β s = .33–.83, z s > 6.286, $p < .001$), however the overall model fit was poor ($\chi^2(9) = 228.17$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .72$, $TLI = .54$, $RMSEA = .243$, 90% CI [.216, .271]). For the two-factor model, we see the factor loadings are more consistent (β s $\geq .606$, z s > 12.70, $p < .001$), and the fit indices are much stronger ($\chi^2(8) = 9.99$, $p = .265$, $CFI = .99$, $TLI = .99$, $RMSEA = .025$, 90% CI [.00, .066]). Furthermore, a chi-square comparison test indicated the two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the one-factor model ($\chi^2(1) = 218.18$, $p < .001$). This finding is also consistent with Tskhay and colleagues (2018) which found a two-factor model of charisma, with the subscales of affability and influence, was the best fitting measurement model.

Following this, we also aimed to find the best factor structure for extraversion measure before conducting incremental validity tests (Wang & Eastwick, 2020). We conducted CFA models fitting a one- and 3-factor model for the extraversion items. For the one-factor model, we see the factor loadings varied (β s = .29–.74, z s > 5.657, $p < .001$), however the overall model fit was poor ($\chi^2(54) = 654.09$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .70$, $TLI = .63$, $RMSEA = .164$, 90% CI [.153, .175]). We then tested the three-factor model, we see the factor loadings are more consistent (β s $\geq .59$, z s > 9.69, $p < .001$), and the fit indices are stronger, however, the model is only approaching acceptable fit ($\chi^2(51) = 285.86$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .88$, $TLI = .85$, $RMSEA = .11$, 90% CI [.094, .118]). However, a chi-square comparison test indicated this three-factor model was significantly better than the one-factor model of extraversion ($\chi^2(3) = 368.22$, $p < .001$). Based on the Big Five Inventory scale development paper by Soto and John (2017), this was the best fitting model, with similar fit statistics. This model had the 12-items of extraversion loaded onto three factors representing sociability, assertiveness, and energy level (Soto & John, 2017).

After identifying the best fitting measurement models for charisma and extraversion in our data, we then conducted CFA models loading the subscales of extraversion onto each factor of the two-factor model of charisma to test whether these constructs are distinct from one another. That is, we tested six different two-factor CFA models each with an extraversion subscale loaded onto one of the charisma subscales (See Table S1 for fit indices of these models) and compared these against a three-factor CFA model with the charisma and extraversion subscales loaded onto separate factors (See Table S2 for fit indices of these models). In sum, all of the models with the charisma subscales and extraversion subscales loaded onto three factors had better fit indices compared to the models with the extraversion subscale loaded onto one of the charisma subscales. Furthermore, model comparison tests indicated that the three-factor models with sociability ($\chi^2(2) = 150.65, p < .001$), assertiveness ($\chi^2(2) = 67.90, p < .001$), and energy level ($\chi^2(2) = 203.68, p < .001$) loaded onto a separate factor from influence was significantly better than two-factor models with the extraversion subscales loaded onto influence. Similarly, the three-factor models with sociability ($\chi^2(2) = 190.26, p < .001$), assertiveness ($\chi^2(2) = 310.18, p < .001$), and energy level ($\chi^2(2) = 150.37, p < .001$) loaded onto a separate factor from affability was significantly better than the two-factor models with the extraversion subscales loaded onto affability. Together this provides evidence that charisma and extraversion are distinct, albeit related, constructs.

Table S1*CFA Models That Test the Subscales of Charisma and Extraversion Loading Together*

Model	<i>df</i>	χ^2	<i>CFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	90% <i>CI</i>
Sociability loaded onto Influence	34	340.25***	.825	.768	.148	[.134, .162]
Assertiveness loaded onto Influence	34	220.65***	.889	.853	.115	[.101, .130]
Energy Level loaded onto Influence	34	341.21***	.777	.704	.148	[.134, .162]
Sociability loaded onto Affability	34	379.87***	.802	.738	.157	[.143, .171]
Assertiveness loaded onto Affability	34	462.94***	.745	.662	.175	[.161, .189]
Energy Level loaded onto Affability	34	287.90***	.815	.756	.134	[.120, .149]

Table S2*Models That Test the Subscales of Charisma and Extraversion as Distinct*

Model	<i>df</i>	χ^2	<i>CFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	90% <i>CI</i>
Influence, Affability, and Sociability	32	189.61***	.910	.873	.109	[.094, .124]
Influence, Affability, and Assertiveness	32	152.76***	.928	.899	.096	[.081, .111]
Influence, Affability, and Energy Level	32	137.53***	.923	.892	.089	[.074, .105]

Effect of Charisma on Key Outcomes, Controlling for Extraversion

Next, we conducted incremental validity tests of these scales predicting sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and sexual communal strength. For each of our outcomes, we tested three models that included the two charisma subscales and the three extraversion subscales as predictors.

In all of these models, the associations between charisma or extraversion and the outcomes are no longer significant, with three exceptions. When predicting sexual satisfaction with the charisma subscales and energy level subscale, the association between energy level and sexual satisfaction remains, $b = .19$, $SE = .09$, $z = 2.21$, $p = .027$. Furthermore, the influence subscale significantly predicted sexual communal strength while controlling for the sociability subscale, $b = .38$, $SE = .11$, $z = 3.54$, $p < .001$, and energy level subscale, $b = .245$, $SE = .08$, $z = 3.00$, $p = .003$. It is possible that the shared variance between extraversion and charisma is driving the associations with sexual desire and satisfaction, thus leading to non-significant effects when including both subscales in our models, however charisma seems to have a unique association with sexual communal strength. It is also possible that the null effects are due to the loss in power when conducting incremental validity testing using SEM due to this technique appropriately adjusting the standard errors to the actual uncertainty of the data (Ledgerwood & Shrout, 2011). As mentioned by Wang and Eastwick (2020), multiple regressions inflate the likelihood of Type I errors, however SEM may have a greater frequency of Type II errors. Ultimately, the ways in which charisma impacts sexual satisfaction and desire may be similar to extraversion, however it seems charisma is uniquely associated with sexual communal strength. It is important to consider power limitations of our data to detect an effect when conducting these incremental validity test, however taken together, we were able to find some evidence through our CFA that charisma is best modeled as two factors with the extraversion subscales loaded onto their own latent construct.

Controlling for Covariates

Next, using our sample from Study 1, we conducted conservative models that included all Big Five traits, except extraversion as we conducted more rigorous tests to distinguish charisma from extraversion and found some shared variance (see above), simultaneously predicting sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and sexual communal strength (as per a reviewer comment). When predicting sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and sexual communal strength (see Table S3–S5), the effect of charisma remained significant with the remaining Big Five and narcissism simultaneously entered into the model. When predicting sexual satisfaction, there was a, $F(6, 406) = 4.53, p < .001, R^2 = .05$, sexual desire, $F(6, 406) = 4.50, p < .001, R^2 = .05$, and sexual communal strength, $F(6, 406) = 5.14, p < .001, R^2 = .06$, there was a collective significant effect. To get a better sense of which factors may reduce the associations between charisma and our sexuality outcomes, we conducted more nuanced regression models with charisma and each covariate independently predicting our sexuality outcomes (see below).

Table S3

Regression Model with All Covariates Predicting Sexual Satisfaction

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
Charisma	.06	.02	2.69	.008	[.015, .096]
Agreeable	.03	.01	2.44	.015	[.005, .049]
Conscientiousness	.01	.01	.91	.362	[-.013, .037]
Negative Emotionality	-.001	.01	-.17	.865	[-.016, .013]
Openness	-.01	.01	-1.06	.288	[-.026, .008]
Narcissism	.002	.02	.151	.880	[-.028, .032]

Table S4*Regression Model with All Covariates Predicting Sexual Desire*

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
Charisma	.04	.02	2.54	.012	[.009, .074]
Agreeable	.01	.01	1.18	.240	[-.007, .028]
Conscientiousness	.004	.01	.41	.684	[-.016, .024]
Negative Emotionality	.01	.01	1.29	.199	[-.004, .019]
Openness	-.002	.01	-.33	.739	[-.016, .011]
Narcissism	.03	.01	2.27	.024	[.004, .052]

Table S5*Regression Model with All Covariates Predicting Sexual Communal Strength*

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% <i>CI</i>
Charisma	.03	.01	2.93	.004	[.010, .052]
Agreeable	.003	.01	.53	.595	[-.008, .014]
Conscientiousness	.002	.01	.31	.756	[-.011, .015]
Negative Emotionality	.001	.004	.22	.828	[-.007, .008]
Openness	.01	.004	2.92	.004	[.004, .022]
Narcissism	-.004	.01	-.56	.578	[-.020, .011]

Big Five Personality Analyses

Using our sample from Study 1, we conducted additional analyses controlling for each of the Big Five personality traits in models in which charisma was predicting sexual satisfaction, sexual desire, and sexual communal strength. Regression models controlling for extraversion

were not included as we underwent more rigorous testing to distinguish the association of charisma and extraversion on our sexuality outcomes. Overall, each of these models had significant collective effects, predicting 4–5% of the variance in the outcome (i.e., sexual desire, sexual satisfaction, or sexual communal strength; see Table S6–S8 for model statistics). When predicting sexual satisfaction, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction remained significant with agreeableness controlled in the model, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.022, .089], $SE = .02$, $t = 3.29$, $p = .001$; however, the association between agreeableness and sexual satisfaction was also significant, $b = .02$, 95% CI [.005, .044], $SE = .010$, $t = 2.52$, $p = .012$. When controlling for conscientiousness, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction remained significant, $b = .07$, 95% CI [.035, .099], $SE = .02$, $t = 4.14$, $p < .001$, while the association with conscientiousness was nonsignificant, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.012, .037], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.02$, $p = .310$. For negative emotionality, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction remained significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.030, .098], $SE = .02$, $t = 3.71$, $p < .001$, while the association between negative emotionality and sexual satisfaction was nonsignificant, $b = -.01$, 95% CI [-.020, .007], $SE = .01$, $t = -.94$, $p = .347$. Lastly, when controlling for openness, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction remained significant, $b = .07$, 95% CI [.039, .105], $SE = .02$, $t = 4.25$, $p < .001$, while the association between openness and sexual satisfaction was nonsignificant, $b = -.003$, 95% CI [-.020, .013], $SE = .01$, $t = -.42$, $p = .677$.

When predicting sexual desire, the association between charisma and sexual desire remained significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.031, .085], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.24$, $p < .001$, while controlling for the association between agreeableness and sexual desire, $b = .002$, 95% CI [-.013, .018], $SE = .01$, $t = .32$, $p = .753$. Next, when controlling for conscientiousness, the association between sexual desire and charisma was significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.033, .084], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.49$, $p < .001$, while the association between conscientiousness and sexual desire was nonsignificant, $b = .004$, 95% CI [-.017, .024], $SE = .01$, $t = .36$, $p = .717$. Following this, we found that the association between charisma and sexual desire was significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.035, .089], SE

= .01, $t = 4.48$, $p < .001$, when controlling for the association between negative emotionality and sexual desire, $b = .003$, 95% CI [-.008, .013], $SE = .01$, $t = .522$, $p = .602$. Finally, the association between charisma and sexual desire also remained significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.032, .085], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.33$, $p < .001$, when controlling for the association between openness and sexual desire, $b = .001$, 95% CI [-.012, .015], $SE = .01$, $t = .22$, $p = .823$.

When predicting sexual communal strength, the association between charisma and sexual communal strength remained significant when controlling for agreeableness, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.016, .050], $SE = .01$, $t = 3.75$, $p < .001$, while the association with agreeableness and sexual communal strength was nonsignificant, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.003, .017], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.40$, $p = .161$. When controlling for conscientiousness, the association between charisma and sexual communal strength remained significant, $b = .04$, 95% CI [.020, .053], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.349$, $p < .001$, while the association with conscientiousness was nonsignificant, $b = .003$, 95% CI [-.010, .015], $SE = .01$, $t = .40$, $p = .692$. Next, when controlling for negative emotionality, the association between charisma and sexual communal strength remained significant, $b = .04$, 95% CI [.020, .055], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.17$, $p < .001$, while the association with negative emotionality was nonsignificant, $b = .0002$, 95% CI [-.007, .007], $SE = .004$, $t = .06$, $p = .953$. Lastly, while controlling for openness, both the association between charisma and sexual communal strength, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.012, .046], $SE = .01$, $t = 3.39$, $p < .001$, and the association between openness and sexual communal strength remained significant, $b = .01$, 95% CI [.005, .022], $SE = .004$, $t = 3.15$, $p = .002$.

Table S6*Regression Model Statistics for Models with Charisma Predicting Sexual Satisfaction**Controlling for each Covariate Separately*

Model	$F(2, 410)$	R^2	p
Agreeable	12.61	.05	<.001
Conscientiousness	9.84	.04	<.001
Negative Emotionality	9.77	.04	<.001
Openness	9.39	.04	<.001
Narcissism	9.47	.04	<.001

Table S7

Regression Model Statistics for Models with Charisma Predicting Sexual Desire Controlling for each Covariate Separately

Model	$F(2, 410)$	R^2	p
Agreeable	10.57	.04	<.001
Conscientiousness	10.58	.04	<.001
Negative Emotionality	10.66	.04	<.001
Openness	10.54	.04	<.001
Narcissism	12.33	.05	<.001

Table S8

*Regression Model Statistics for Models with Charisma Predicting Sexual Communal Strength
Controlling for each Covariate Separately*

Model	$F(2, 410)$	R^2	p
Agreeable	10.86	.05	<.001
Conscientiousness	9.91	.04	<.001
Negative Emotionality	9.83	.04	<.001
Openness	15.02	.04	<.001
Narcissism	9.92	.06	<.001

Narcissism Analyses

When controlling for narcissism, the association between charisma and sexual satisfaction remained significant, $b = .07$, 95% CI [.038, .112], $SE = .02$, $t = 4.00$, $p < .001$, while the association between narcissism and sexual satisfaction was nonsignificant, $b = -.008$, 95% CI [-.035, .019], $SE = .01$, $t = -.56$, $p = .577$. Furthermore, after controlling for narcissism, the association between charisma and sexual desire remained significant, $b = .05$, 95% CI [.016, .075], $SE = .01$, $t = 3.02$, $p = .003$, while the association between narcissism and sexual desire was nonsignificant, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.001, .042], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.86$, $p = .063$. Lastly, when predicting sexual communal strength, the association between charisma remained significant, $b = .04$, 95% CI [.020, .058], $SE = .01$, $t = 4.03$, $p < .001$, while there was no significant association for narcissism, $b = -.003$, 95% CI [-.017, .011], $SE = .01$, $t = -.41$, $p = .680$.

CHAPTER 3

Inspiring Better Relationships: The Role of Trait Charisma in Predicting Conflict Resolution and
Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Chapter 3 is adapted from a manuscript that is currently in preparation:

Tu, E., Raposo, S., Balzarini, R. N. & Muise, A. (in prep). Inspiring Better Relationships: The Role of Trait Charisma in Predicting Conflict Resolution and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction.

Author	Contribution
Tu, E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conception and design of the project– 50% - Data collection – 33% - Analysis and interpretation of the research data– 75% - Manuscript writing – 65%
Raposo, S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conception and design of the project – 5% - Data collection – 33% - Manuscript writing/editing – 5%
Balzarini, R. N.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conception and design of the project – 5% - Data collection – 33% - Manuscript writing/editing – 5%
Muise, A.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conception and design of the project – 40% - Analysis and interpretation of the research data– 25% - Manuscript writing/editing – 25%

Abstract

Conflict is common in romantic relationships as partners are coordinating several life domains and making important decisions together. Frequent and poorly managed relationship conflict can erode relationship satisfaction and increase the likelihood of breaking-up. The enduring characteristics or traits that partners bring into the relationship can influence satisfaction and maintenance. Charisma—being affable and influential—is a trait that is seen as desirable in a romantic partner but has been largely unexplored in the context of established relationships. Charismatic people tend to promote more cooperation and less aggression amongst colleagues, suggesting this trait might also be associated with more successfully navigating conflict in romantic relationships. Across three studies—cross-sectional, dyadic, and longitudinal ($N = 1041$)—we demonstrated that charismatic people report higher satisfaction in their romantic relationships, above and beyond other individual differences (e.g., Big Five), and perceiving a partner as charismatic buffers against the negative link between more frequent conflict and lower relationship satisfaction. One reason that conflict is less likely to be associated with lower relationship satisfaction for charismatic people is because they tend to use more positive conflict resolution strategies, such as compromising. Together, these findings demonstrate that charisma is an important trait in helping romantic partners maintain satisfying relationships, even during conflict.

Keywords: charisma, relationship satisfaction, conflict, conflict resolution style, romantic relationships.

Inspiring Better Relationships: The Role of Trait Charisma in Predicting Conflict Resolution and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction

Although romantic relationships can be a key source of happiness (Coombs, 1991; Diener & Seligman, 2002), they also involve challenges such as joint decision-making and managing conflicts of interest between partners (Meyer & Sledge, 2021). In fact, frequent conflict in a relationship is a top reason for relationship dissatisfaction and dissolution (Carrere et al., 2000; Cramer, 2002; Dailey et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2014; Noller & Feeney, 2002). However, the detriments of conflict for relationship satisfaction are not due merely to the presence of conflict (Christensen et al., 1991), but also due to the use of negative, rather than positive or constructive, conflict resolution strategies (Birditt et al., 2010; Ridley et al., 2001; Scheeren et al., 2014; Wagner et al., 2019). A prominent model for understanding relationship quality and maintenance—the Vulnerability Stress Adaptation (VSA) model—indicates that we can better understand conflict resolution and relationship maintenance by understanding the enduring strengths or vulnerabilities that partners bring into the relationship, such as their personality traits (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). One trait that is perceived as desirable in a dating partner (Flegr et al., 2019) and is associated with better relationships and conflict management in the workplace (De Cremer, 2002; Philippe et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2011) but has not been studied in established romantic relationship is *charisma*—a combination of being influential and affable (Tskhay et al., 2018). In the current research, we test whether charismatic people and their partners report higher relationship satisfaction and better navigate relationship conflict. Specifically, we test whether people higher in charisma and their partners are buffered against the lower relationship satisfaction that is typically associated with more frequent conflict, and if they report higher relationship satisfaction in part because they use more positive and less negative conflict resolution strategies.

Conflict in Relationships

In romantic relationships, disagreements between partners are common. For example, couples might have different views on how to allocate household chores and finances, or they may have different expectations for how much time to spend together and the joint activities to engage in during their shared time—all of which has been linked to increased conflict and subsequent decreases in relationship satisfaction (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2006; Gottman, 1994; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Although conflict in romantic relationships is inevitable, the negative impact it tends to have on satisfaction can depend on the way couples communicate when trying to resolve conflict (Cramer, 2000; Gill et al., 1999). Past work suggests that in romantic relationships, the frequent use of positive conflict resolution strategies and the infrequent use of negative conflict resolution strategies are associated with higher relationship satisfaction (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Heavey et al., 1993; Kurdek, 1994). Positive strategies for managing conflict, including the use of affection, effective problem solving, compromise, and affiliative humor (Campbell et al., 2008; Gill et al., 1999; Goeke-Morey et al., 2003), can help couples feel more satisfied, even during a disagreement. In contrast, negative conflict resolution strategies such as aggression or withdrawal (Gill et al., 1999; Kurdek, 1994), can exacerbate conflict, intensify minor issues and has been linked to lower satisfaction (Greeff & Bruyne, 2000; Kaur & Sokhey, 2010; Unal & Akgun, 2020). That is, although the presence of conflict in romantic relationships is inevitable, the ways in which couples respond to or manage the conflict can have important implications for their relationship satisfaction.

To gain a better understanding of who might be able to maintain more satisfying relationships, past research has explored how personality traits are associated with relationship satisfaction and conflict resolution. The VSA model suggests that individual differences, such as personality traits, represent enduring strengths or vulnerabilities that can influence how people communicate and resolve problems (Bodie et al., 2008; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Villaume & Bodie, 2007), which, in turn, impact relationship satisfaction and stability. Past research has found that the Big Five personality dimensions, such as high conscientiousness and low

agreeableness, are associated with higher satisfaction (Caughlin et al., 2000; Malouff et al., 2010; Slatcher & Vazire, 2009), whereas other studies have found that higher levels of conscientiousness are associated with steeper declines in marital satisfaction over time (O'Meara & South, 2019), and neuroticism has little effect on change in satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1997). Past work also suggests people low in agreeableness (Asendorpf & Wilpers, 1998; Graziano et al., 1996; Suls et al., 1998) and high in neuroticism (Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995; McFatter, 1998) report more frequent conflict, and the partners of extraverted people also report greater conflict (Bono et al., 2002). In terms of links between personality traits and conflict resolution strategies, most consistently, high neuroticism has been linked with poorer conflict resolution in relationships and workplaces (Ayub et al., 2017; Donnellan et al., 2004; Heaven et al., 2006), and past research has found links between extraversion and both positive (Ayub et al., 2017) and negative (McFatter, 1998; Schneer & Chanin, 1987) conflict management styles in workplace contexts. Overall, past work suggests that personality traits are associated with conflict, conflict resolution, and relationship satisfaction. A promising, yet unexplored, individual difference that has been linked to better conflict management in workplace contexts (De Cremer, 2002; Zhang et al., 2011), but has largely been unexplored in the context of romantic relationships is *charisma*—a person's ability to inspire and influence others (Tskhay et al., 2018).

Charisma

Trait charisma has primarily been investigated in the context of leadership and workplace interactions (e.g., Transformational Leadership Theory; Bass, 1985). Leaders high in charisma are typically described as inspiring, tend to communicate their vision effectively, and motivate others toward a common goal (House 1977; Weber, 1978). Charismatic leaders and co-workers also promote higher performance (Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985; Nohe et al., 2013), greater job satisfaction (Erez et al., 2008; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013), and lower levels of aggression (Hepworth & Towler, 2004) among their colleagues. When faced with

challenging situations, charismatic people tend to promote more cooperative, and less competitive, conflict management strategies (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011), and promote change and innovation (Paulsen et al., 2009). They also tend to make others feel comfortable, fostering more positive and less negative affect (Erez et al., 2008), promote better work attitudes and well-being (Vallerand et al., 2014), and maintain higher relationship quality with colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010). That is, past research suggests charismatic people may have a unique ability to navigate adversity and maintain satisfying relationships with colleagues in workplace contexts, which could also apply to their romantic relationships.

Beyond workplace contexts, general charisma has been studied in everyday life. A charismatic individual is described as someone who has a strong presence in a room and the ability to lead a group, as well as being approachable and displaying positive affect (Tskhay et al., 2018). Charisma is shown to be distinct from other individual differences, such as extraversion and agreeableness (Tskhay, et al., 2018) and charismatic people may have the unique ability to be responsive to others and foster cooperation (Conger et al., 2000; De Cremer, 2002; Shamir et al., 1993), factors which are associated with relationship quality (Kogan et al., 2010; Le et al., 2018). Charisma has been associated with aspects of negative traits, such as narcissism, and charismatic people might present as self-assured or confident like those high in narcissism, but research suggests that charisma ultimately differs from the defensive or antagonistic features of narcissism (Rogoza & Fatfouta, 2020). Research investigating general charisma has found that charisma is observable in others—people who self-report as being charismatic are also seen as charismatic by others, and charismatic people are found to be more persuasive and likable (Tskhay et al., 2018). As such, there is evidence that people value charisma in a potential dating partner (Flegr et al., 2019). Given that charismatic people tend to be responsive and cooperative in other interpersonal settings, such as workplaces (Conger et al.,

2000; Pillai et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Shamir et al., 1993), charisma may be a trait that is associated with people's romantic relationship satisfaction and conflict management.

Charisma and Conflict Resolution

Limited work has investigated the role of charisma in maintaining satisfying relationships and navigating conflict, and no research to date has considered such associations in the context of romantic relationships. Yet, the presence of conflict is a key issue that detracts from the quality of a romantic relationship (Cramer, 2002; Dailey et al., 2009), particularly when the conflict involves negative, rather than positive, conflict resolution strategies (e.g., Birditt et al., 2010; Ridley et al., 2001). Previous research examining charisma in the context of workplaces and leadership roles suggests that charismatic people are skilled at managing interpersonal conflict among colleagues. In general, charismatic leaders promote more effective conflict resolution (De Cremer, 2002; Zhang et al., 2011) with less aggression (Hepworth & Towler, 2004), which ultimately promotes team effectiveness (Bass et al., 2003; Dionne et al., 2004) and interpersonal relationship quality amongst colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010). It is not that charismatic people shy away from conflict, in fact, there is some existing evidence that they tend to generate more discussion of disagreements (Kotlyar et al., 2011). Importantly, this greater discussion of disagreements may be due to increasing the self-esteem of colleagues and encouraging them to be more emotionally involved (Kotlyar & Karakowsky, 2006), and the disagreements that arise are more often resolved cooperatively (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011).

Given that charismatic people tend to be skilled at detecting contextual cues and appropriately adapting their behaviours (Anderson, 1990; Gardner & Avolio, 1998), as well as paying close attention to the needs of their colleagues (Pillai et al., 2003), it is possible that charismatic people and their partners will not experience steep declines in relationship satisfaction in response to conflict (Carrere et al., 2000; Cramer, 2002; Dailey et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2014; Noller & Feeney, 2002), in part, because charismatic people tend to use more

positive and effective conflict resolution strategies (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011). That is, although more frequent conflict is associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2006; Gottman, 1994; Karney & Bradbury, 1995), conflict that is managed more positively (i.e., in ways that are responsive to a partner) may not be as damaging as conflict that involves negativity and hostility, and people who are charismatic may be more apt to engage in positive conflict resolution strategies with their partners. If charismatic people approach conflict in their relationships in such a way that partners feel understood, more frequent conflict may be less strongly associated with lower relationship satisfaction. In contrast, people who are lower in charisma, who may not understand their partner's needs during conflict and use more negative strategies (i.e., aggression, withdrawal), may report steeper associations between frequent conflict and lower relationship satisfaction.

The Current Study

Across three studies we sought to test whether being charismatic, having a charismatic partner, or perceiving one's partner as charismatic is associated with greater relationship satisfaction and less conflict, and whether charisma buffers people against the lower relationship satisfaction that is typically associated with more frequent conflict. In Study 1, we utilized cross-sectional dyadic data to examine the association between charisma, relationship conflict, and satisfaction, confirming findings from an initial pilot study (see Supplemental Material), and to test whether any associations between charisma and relationship satisfaction extended to the partners of charismatic people or people that perceived their partner as charismatic. We also tested whether being charismatic, having a charismatic partner, or perceiving one's partner as charismatic, buffered people against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. In Study 2, we conducted a preregistered (<https://osf.io/vnm5/>) cross-sectional online study with individuals in relationships to assess the robustness of these findings after controlling for the Big Five personality traits and

narcissism. We also tested whether one reason being charismatic (or perceiving a partner as charismatic) buffers against the association between conflict and lower relationship satisfaction is because charismatic people more frequently use positive conflict resolution strategies (e.g., compromising, approaching the problem constructively), and less frequently use negative conflict resolution strategies (e.g., dominance, withdrawal, aggression). Lastly, in Study 3, we conducted a preregistered (<https://osf.io/xu5t8/>) longitudinal study of couples living together during the COVID-19 pandemic. We aimed to replicate the analyses from Study 2 using a dyadic sample, as well as extend these findings by testing longitudinal associations. In Studies 2 and 3, we also tested mediation models to explore whether there was an indirect effect of charisma on relationship satisfaction through the various conflict resolution strategies.

Although we did not have predictions about the role of gender in our findings, we tested whether any effects were moderated by gender in an exploratory manner. Past research suggests women may be considered more warm and pleasant, which is more consistent with the affability component of charisma, while men are typically more emotionally neutral (Bem, 1981; Carlson, 1971; Keating, 2011). In addition, charismatic leadership styles tend to be more common among women (Carli, 1999; Costrich et al., 1975; Eagly & Karau, 2002), so it is possible that there are, in fact, gender differences in the associations between charisma and relationship satisfaction. However, when we tested for gender moderations across all three studies, there were no consistent differences for men and women (see Supplemental Materials for details).

Study 1

An initial pilot study revealed that charisma is associated with higher relationship satisfaction (see Supplement for details). In Study 1, which included both partners in romantic couples, we aimed to replicate findings from our pilot study that charismatic people report more satisfying romantic relationships, and extend this to their partner, as well as to reports of conflict in the relationship. That is, we aimed to test associations between being charismatic or having a charismatic partner and relationship satisfaction and conflict, as well as whether

charisma buffered against the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. We also tested the same models with perceptions of a partner's charisma and assessed people's accuracy and bias when perceiving their partner's charisma to help determine whether there were differences between perceptions of a partner's charisma and partners' actual reports.

Methods

Participants and Procedures

Participants were recruited using online (e.g., Facebook, Reddit, Craigslist, Twitter, Kijiji) and physical advertisements. To be eligible for the study, both partners had to agree to participate, be at least 18 years of age, living together, in a relationship of at least 1.5 years, currently sexually active in their relationship, living in Canada or the United States, able to read and understand English, and have daily access to a computer with Internet. Couples interested in participating in the study were sent a pre-screening survey via email to ensure they met the eligibility criteria. Partner's responses were compared to ensure integrity, and each member of the couple was then followed up with a telephone pre-screening conversation. This conversation further confirmed the eligibility criteria and asked more personal questions (e.g., when partners met, each other's birthdays). Once eligibility was confirmed, participants were emailed private links to the background survey hosted on Qualtrics. Based on recommendations by Kenny and colleagues (2006), the aim of this study was to collect at least 100 couples and oversample by at least 20% to account for attrition and missing data. Our final sample included 121 couples (see Table 4 for demographic information). The data used in the current analyses were part of a larger study including a 21-day daily experience study, but in the current analyses, we focused on the baseline survey, which included our key measures. Participants were compensated up to \$60 CAD (\$48 USD) for their participation in the larger study. See Table 4 for descriptive statistics of key variables at background across all studies.

Table 4*Demographic Statistics of Study 1, 2 and 3.*

Demographic	Study 1 (<i>N</i> = 242)		Study 2 (<i>N</i> = 413)		Study 3 (<i>N</i> = 386)	
	<i>M</i> or <i>n</i>	<i>SD</i> or %	<i>M</i> or <i>n</i>	<i>SD</i> or %	<i>M</i> or <i>n</i>	<i>SD</i> or %
Age (years)	32.6	10.2	36	11.3	32.4	9.4
Relationship Length (years)	8.5	8.4	11.8	10.3	8.3	7.6
Gender						
Female	124	51.2	290	70.2	189	53.4
Male	115	42.5	115	27.8	159	44.9
Other	3	1.2	6	1.5	6	1.7
Relationship status						
Dating	3	1.2	59	14.3	106	29.9
Cohabiting	71	29.3	88	21.3	--	--
Common-law	33	13.6	25	6.1	49	13.8
Married	113	46.7	215	52.1	148	41.8
Engaged	19	7.9	19	4.6	49	13.8
Other or did not specify	3	1.2	7	1.7	2	.6
Ethnicity						
White	158	65.3	348	84.3	248	70.1
Black	11	4.5	9	2.2	5	1.4
Asian	38	15.7	21	5.1	49	13.8
Latin American	10	4.1	12	2.9	11	3.1
Other or did not specify	25	10.3	23	5.6	41	11.6
Sexual Orientation						
Heterosexual	197	81.4	336	81.3	284	80.2
Bisexual	22	9.1	41	9.9	26	7.3
Gay or Lesbian	8	3.3	7	1.7	16	4.5
Other or did not specify	15	6.2	29	7	28	7.9

Note. *N* represent the total number of participants. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.

Measures

Charisma. We measured charisma with the General Charisma Inventory, which includes six items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) (Tskhay et al., 2018). The measure is composed of two subscales, influence and affability, with three items each. An example of an influence item is, “Has the ability to influence people”, while an affability item includes, “Makes people feel comfortable”. Both partners reported their own charisma ($\alpha = .83$, 95% CI [.781, .863], $\Omega = .82$, 95% CI [.763, .862]), as well as perceptions of a partner’s charisma ($\alpha = .81$, 95% CI [.797, .818], $\Omega = .79$, 95% CI [.780, .807]).

Relationship satisfaction. We assessed relationship satisfaction with three items from the Perceived Relationship Quality Components Inventory (PRQC) (Fletcher et al., 2000). This measure includes the item “How satisfied are you with your relationship?” and is measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *extremely*; $\alpha = .95$, 95% CI [.924, .965], $\Omega = .95$, 95% CI [.927, .965])

Conflict. We measured conflict with the five-item Conflict Scale rated on a 9-point Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 9 = *very often*) (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). A sample item includes “How often do you and your partner argue with each other?” ($\alpha = .75$, 95% CI [.7, .807], $\Omega = .76$, 95% CI [.701, .811]).

Table 5*Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables at Background Across Samples.*

Variable	Study 1 (N = 242)			Study 2 (N = 413)			Study 3 (N =386)		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Range</i>
Charisma	3.93	.74	1-5	3.66	.68	1-5	3.82	0.67	1-5
Perceived Partner Charisma	3.96	.79	1-5	3.87	.75	1-5	--	--	--
Relationship Satisfaction	6.13	.92	1-7	5.88	1.25	1-7	6.03	1.08	1-7
Conflict	3.71	1.50	1-9	3.55	1.53	1-9	2.98	1.37	1-9
Conflict Engagement	--	--	--	2.22	0.93	1-5	--	--	--
Withdrawal	--	--	--	2.63	0.94	1-5	--	--	--
Compliance	--	--	--	2.43	0.89	1-5	--	--	--
Positive Problem Solving	--	--	--	3.84	0.71	1-5	--	--	--
Compromise	--	--	--	--	--	--	4.19	0.78	1-5
Avoidance	--	--	--	--	--	--	3.16	1.10	1-5
Reactivity	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.87	0.98	1-5
Separation	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.95	1.15	1-5
Dominance	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.80	1.06	1-5
Submission	--	--	--	--	--	--	2.70	0.96	1-5
Extraversion	--	--	--	3.01	0.71	1-5	3.18	0.83	1-5
Agreeableness	--	--	--	3.77	0.58	1-5	3.72	0.76	1-5
Conscientiousness	--	--	--	3.11	0.44	1-5	3.67	0.82	1-5

Negative Emotionality	--	--	--	2.99	0.88	1-5	2.74	1.03	1-5
Open Mindedness	--	--	--	3.78	0.69	1-5	3.64	0.85	1-5
Narcissism	--	--	--	2.51	0.61	1-5	--	--	--

Note. *N* represent the total number of participants. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation, respectively.

Data Analyses

Data and syntax for all analyses are available on the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/4qvkj/?view_only=43dc896d519c4cbebd0cc9079469cob. Data were analyzed using R Version 1.3.1093 (R Core Team, 2020). Data cleaning procedures, such as compiling items into a composite measure, were completed using the dplyr package (Wickham et al., 2019). Descriptive statistics (e.g., mean, standard deviation, skewness) were calculated using the psych package (Revelle, 2018), and summary tables for our key variables were made using apaTables (Stanley, 2018). Alpha and omega reliability coefficients were calculated using the MBESS package using a bootstrapping technique with 10000 bootstrapped resamples to get a coefficient estimate and 95% confidence intervals (Kelley, 2019). Data were analyzed using multilevel modeling guided by the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM; Kenny et al., 2006) using the nlme package in R (Pinheiro et al., 2018). We aimed to test whether a person's own charisma and partner's charisma were associated with relationship satisfaction and conflict. Additionally, we conducted multilevel APIM moderations to explore whether one's own or partner's reports of charisma buffered the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction (Garcia et al., 2015), and probed significant interactions by calculating the simple slope effects using one standard deviation value above and below the mean of the moderator (Aiken et al., 1991). To test whether people were accurate or bias in assessing their partner's charisma, we used the Truth & Bias model (West & Kenny, 2011) using SPSS 25.0. For all analyses, we mean centred the predictor and averaged the outcome for easier interpretability. We also reported the unstandardized coefficients (*b*), which can be interpreted as the change in the outcome for every one-unit change in the predictor. See Table 6 for correlations between key variables.

Table 6*Correlations for Study 1*

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Charisma	.25**			
2. Perceived Partner Charisma	.30**	.23**		
3. Relationship Satisfaction	.17**	.40**	.49**	
4. Conflict	-.18**	-.20**	-.34**	.46**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Correlations between partners are bolded and on the diagonal.

Results

Is Charisma Associated with Relationship Satisfaction and Conflict?

First, we tested whether one's own or a partner's self-reported charisma was associated with relationship satisfaction and conflict. We found that people who reported higher levels of charisma also reported greater relationship satisfaction, but their partner's self-reported charisma was not significantly associated with a person's relationship satisfaction (see Table 7). In addition, reporting higher charisma, and having a partner who reported higher charisma, were both associated with less conflict in their relationship. Accounting for their own charisma, people who perceived their partner as more charismatic also reported higher relationship satisfaction, however one's own charisma was no longer significant, $b = .02$, 95% CI $[-.004, .042]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 1.66$, $p = .099$. Perceiving a partner as charismatic was not associated with frequency of conflict, but one's own higher charisma remained significantly associated with lower conflict, $b = -.04$, 95% CI $[-.082, -.001]$, $SE = .02$, $t = -1.99$, $p = .048$.

Table 7*Associations Between Charisma and Relationship Satisfaction and Conflict Across Studies*

	Study 1					Study 2					Study 3				
	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
DV: Relationship Satisfaction															
Actor Charisma	.03	2.24	.025	.004	.054	.06	4.12	<.001	.031	.086	.02	1.56	.120	.005	.048
Partner Charisma	.02	1.81	.071	-.002	.048	--	--	--	--	--	.03	2.04	.043	.001	.054
Perceived Partner Charisma	.06	5.89	<.001	.043	.085	.10	7.69	<.001	.072	.122	--	--	--	--	--
DV: Conflict															
Actor Charisma	-.05	-2.44	.016	-.092	-.010	-.02	-.84	.401	-.052	.021	-.03	-1.44	.119	-.062	.007
Partner Charisma	-.04	-2.12	.035	-.085	-.003	--	--	--	--	--	-.02	-1.37	.173	-.058	.010
Perceived Partner Charisma	-.02	-1.01	.315	-.057	.315	-.08	-4.70	<.001	-.109	-.045	--	--	--	--	--

Note. *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals. In Study 1, the Actor Charisma effect displayed is from an APIM model with Actor and Partner Charisma, while the Perceived Partner Charisma effect is in a model controlling for Actor Charisma.

Does Charisma Buffer the Negative Association Between Conflict and Relationship Satisfaction?

Next, we tested whether one's own, a partner's self-reported charisma, or perceived partner as charismatic buffered the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. First, people who reported higher levels of conflict in their relationship did report lower relationship satisfaction, $b = -.03$, 95% CI $[-.047, -.018]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -4.33$, $p < .001$. Although this association was not moderated by a person's own charisma, it was significantly moderated by a partner's self-reported charisma (see Table 8). People with partners who self-reported lower in charisma reported significantly lower relationship satisfaction when they had more conflict in their relationship, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.066, -.027]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -4.69$, $p < .001$. However, for people with a partner high in self-reported charisma, this association was attenuated, although nonsignificant, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.033, .008]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.23$, $p = .218$. Perceiving a partner as charismatic also showed a marginal buffering effect for relationship satisfaction, following the same pattern. Specifically, perceiving a partner as higher in charisma buffered against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.02$, 95% CI $[-.036, .001]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.82$, $p = .071$, compared to perceiving a partner as lower in charisma, $b = -.04$, 95% CI $[-.059, -.022]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -4.37$, $p < .001$. See Figure 2 for a visualization of the buffering effect across all studies.

Table 8

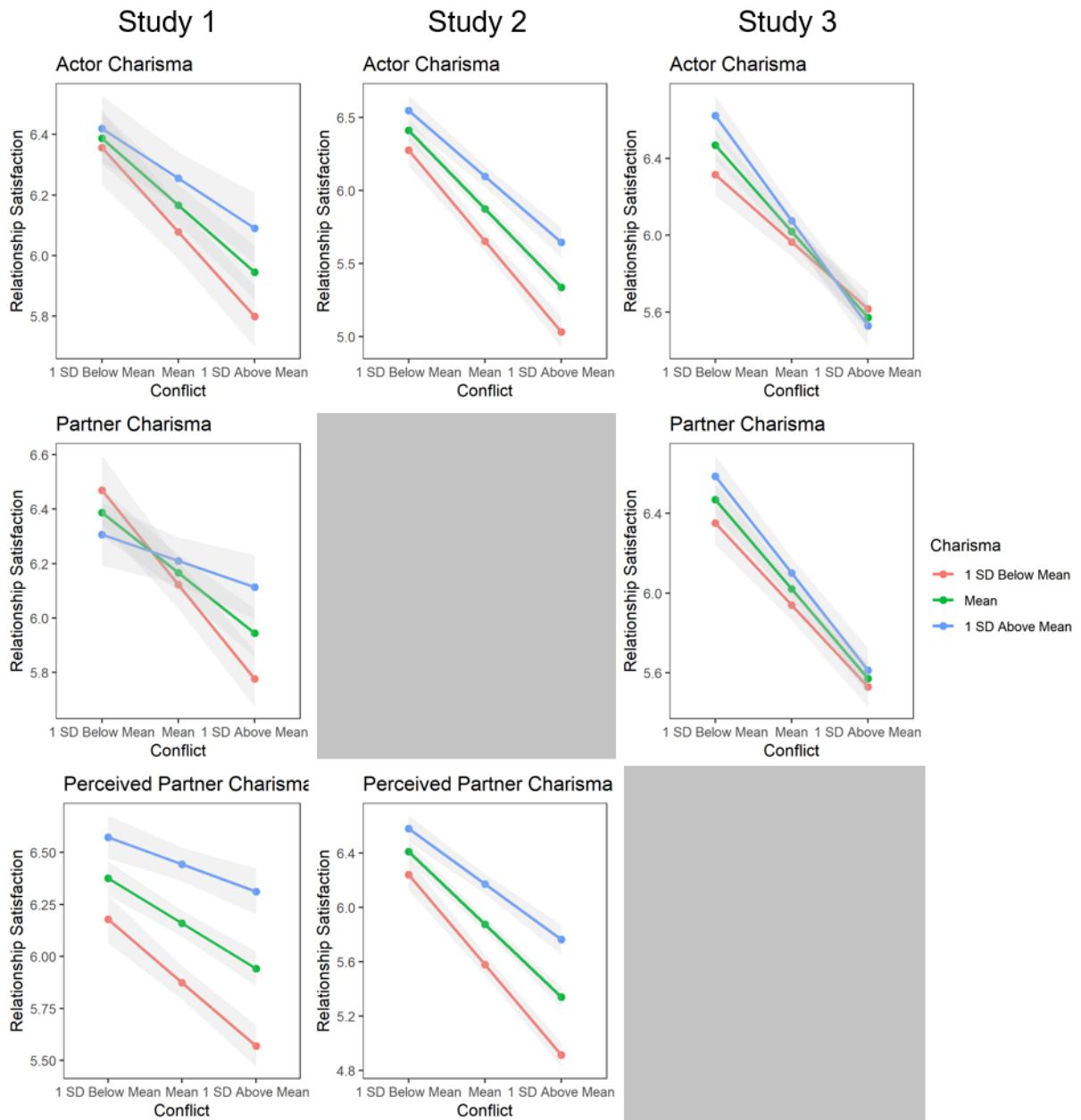
Charisma Moderating the Association Between Conflict and Relationship Satisfaction Across Studies

	Study 1					Study 2					Study 3				
DV: Relationship Satisfaction	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Conflict	-.03	-3.90	<.001	-.044	-.015	-.07	-10.49	<.001	-.083	-.057	-.06	-8.60	<.001	-.080	-.050
Conflict x Charisma	.002	1.32	.189	-.001	.004	.003	1.62	.106	-.001	.006	-.005	-2.13	.034	-.007	-.0003
Conflict x P. Charisma	.004	2.48	.014	.001	.007	--	--	--	--	--	-.001	-.75	.452	-.005	.003
Conflict x PP. Charisma	.002	1.86	.064	-.0001	.005	.004	2.66	.008	.001	.006	--	--	--	--	--

Note: *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals. In Study 1, the Actor Charisma effect displayed is from an APIM model with Actor and Partner Charisma, while the Perceived Partner Charisma effect is in a model controlling for Actor Charisma. P = Partner, PP = Perceived Partner.

Figure 2

Moderation of Conflict and Relationship Satisfaction by Charisma Across Studies



Do People Accurately Perceive Their Partner's Charisma?

Given that both partners' own self-reported charisma and perceptions of a partner's charisma (trending) buffered the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, we used the Truth and Bias model to test how accurate and biased people were at perceiving their partner's charisma (West & Kenny, 2011). That is, we tested the extent to which people's perceptions of their partner's charisma were aligned with their partner's self-report of their charisma. We found that people's perceptions of their partner's charisma were consistent with their partner's reports of their own charisma (accuracy effect: $b = .55$, 95% CI [.433, .664], $SE = .06$, $t = 9.35$, $p < .001$) and people did not tend to systematically over or under perceive their partner's charisma (directional bias: $b = .03$, 95% CI [-.053, .111], $SE = .04$, $t = .70$, $p = .488$). There was also a small projection effect, $b = .18$, 95% CI [.062, .295], $SE = .06$, $t = 3.02$, $p = .003$, suggesting that people who were charismatic were also more likely to perceive their partner as charismatic.

Study 2

Study 2, a preregistered cross-sectional study of people in a romantic relationship, was intended to replicate and extend our previous findings (<https://osf.io/vnm5/>). In this study, we tested the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction and conflict, as well as whether being charismatic buffered people against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, we extended Study 1 by investigating whether charisma was associated with positive and negative conflict resolution strategies. That is, do charismatic people use more positive conflict resolution strategies, such as positive problem solving (e.g., focusing on the problem at hand, discussing the problem constructively), and fewer negative conflict resolution strategies, such as conflict engagement (e.g., launching personal attacks, getting out of control). We also measured withdrawal (e.g., tuning the person out) and compliance (e.g., not defending your position, giving in with little effort) conflict resolution strategies, however these do not have a clear link to relationship satisfaction (Kurdek, 1994). We

did not have partner reports in this study, so instead we tested whether perceptions of a partner's charisma were linked to relationship outcomes. Finally, to gain a better understanding of the robustness of the effect charisma has on relationship satisfaction, we also tested these analyses while controlling for other individual difference measures (e.g., Big Five, narcissism).

Methods

Participants and Procedures

We used our previous pilot study to inform our sample size based on the smallest effect size of interest (see Supplemental Materials). For 95% power at $\alpha = .05$, we needed 353 participants (Erdfelder et al., 1996); however, we oversampled to account for attrition and inattentive responding. We initially recruited 453 people, but we excluded 40 for not meeting eligibility criteria or for completing less than 70% of the survey. Our final sample included 413 people. See Table 4 for demographic information.¹

Participants were recruited using Prolific, an online service that connects researchers with their target participants. Eligibility criteria for the study included being at least 18 years of age, in a romantic relationship, and currently residing in Canada, the United States, or the United Kingdom. If participants were eligible and interested in participating in the study, they were given a link to the online Qualtrics survey that took approximately 30-minutes to complete. Participants were compensated \$2.85 (\$2.19 USD, £1.67 GBP) for their participation in the study. See Table 5 for descriptive statistics of key variables.

Measures

Charisma was measured using the same scales as Study 1 (GCI; Tskhay et al., 2018). In this study, we had self-reports of charisma ($\alpha = .78$, 95% CI [.733, .806], $\Omega = .78$, 95% CI [.73, .812]) and perceptions of partners' charisma ($\alpha = .78$, 95% CI [.734, .807], $\Omega = .77$, 95% CI [.73, .812]). **Relationship satisfaction** was also measured using the same scale as Study 1 (PRQC; Fletcher et al., 2000; $\alpha = .98$, 95% CI [.972, .983], $\Omega = .98$, 95% CI [.971, .982]), as was **conflict** (Braiker & Kelley, 1979; $\alpha = .8$, 95% CI [.757, .831], $\Omega = .8$, 95% CI [.76, .835]). In Study 2, we

also assessed **conflict resolution styles** using the Conflict Resolution Styles Inventory, a 16-item scale with four subscales, all measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *always*; Kurdek, 1994). The conflict engagement subscale ($\alpha = .85$, 95% CI [.830, .878], $\Omega = .86$, 95% CI [.828, .877]) includes the item “Launching personal attacks” and is considered a negative conflict resolution strategy. The positive problem-solving subscale ($\alpha = .81$, 95% CI [.775, .846], $\Omega = .82$, 95% CI [.783, .853]) includes items like “Focusing on the problem at hand” and is a beneficial conflict resolution strategy. The withdrawal subscale ($\alpha = .79$, 95% CI [.745, .825], $\Omega = .79$, 95% CI [.748, .826]) includes “Tuning the other person out,” and the compliance subscale ($\alpha = .82$, 95% CI [.781, .845], $\Omega = .82$, 95% CI [.784, .849]) item includes “Not defending my position”, and these subscales are considered neutral, as clear links with relationship satisfaction have not been established (Kurdek, 1994). In this study we also have perceptions of a partner’s conflict engagement ($\alpha = .91$, 95% CI [.892, .926], $\Omega = .91$, 95% CI [.894, .926]), positive problem solving, $\alpha = .89$, 95% CI [.860, .909], $\Omega = .89$, 95% CI [.861, .910], withdrawal, $\alpha = .85$, 95% CI [.816, .871], $\Omega = .85$, 95% CI [.831, .880], and compliance, $\alpha = .85$, 95% CI [.816, .877], $\Omega = .85$, 95% CI [.816, .877].

In this study we also assessed **personality** using the Big Five Inventory-2 (BFI-2; Soto & John, 2017a), which assesses extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, negative emotionality, and open-mindedness, all measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 5 = *agree strongly*). Each of these five subscales are composed of three additional facets, however for our analyses we were interested in the links between the broader five factors and charisma. A sample item of the extraversion scale ($\alpha = .86$, 95% CI [.835, .878], $\Omega = .86$, 95% CI [.831, .878]) includes “Is outgoing, sociable”, an agreeableness subscale ($\alpha = .80$, 95% CI [.768, .829], $\Omega = .80$, 95% CI [.766, .83]) item includes “Is compassionate, has a soft heart”, and a conscientiousness subscale ($\alpha = .88$, 95% CI [.857, .895], $\Omega = .88$, 95% CI [.863, .898]) item includes “Is dependable, steady.” Lastly, a negative emotionality subscale ($\alpha = .92$, 95% CI [.913, .935], $\Omega = .93$, 95% CI [.914, .937]) item includes “Is moody, has up and down mood swings”,

and an open-mindedness subscale ($\alpha = .87$, 95% CI [.848, .886], $\Omega = .87$, 95% CI [.848, .888]) item includes “Is curious about many different things”. Finally, we also measured **narcissism** using the narcissism subscale in the Short Dark Triad (SD3; Jones & Paulhus, 2014). The narcissism subscale of the SD3 is a 9-item subscale measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly* to 5 = *agree strongly*) with three reverse-scored items. Example items include, “People see me as a natural leader” and, “I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so” ($\alpha = .75$, 95% CI [.710, .783], $\Omega = .75$, 95% CI [.710, .786]).

Data Analyses

Data and syntax for all analyses are available on the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/4qvkj/?view_only=43dc896d519c4cbebodocc9079469cob. For Study 2, the data were also analyzed using R version 1.3.1093 (R Core Team, 2020), using similar packages to clean the data and calculate means and standard deviations (Revelle, 2018; Stanley, 2018; Wickham et al., 2019; see Table 2 for descriptive information of our key variables). Scale reliability coefficients were also calculated using 10000 resamples, similar to Study 1 (Kelley, 2019). The data were analyzed using simple and multiple linear regression models (R Core Team, 2020). We focused on the associations between self-reported charisma and relationship satisfaction and conflict, but we also explored whether the perception of a partner’s charisma was associated with relationship satisfaction and conflict. In addition, we conducted multiple linear regression models controlling for individual differences such as the Big Five personality measures and narcissism. As in Study 1, we also tested whether charisma moderated the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction and probed significant interactions by calculating the simple slope effects using one standard deviation value above and below the mean of the moderator (Aiken, West, & Reno, 1991). Lastly, in an exploratory manner, we conducted a multiple mediation model using the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012) to test whether charisma indirectly impacted relationship satisfaction through the use of the various conflict

resolution strategies. For all analyses, we reported the unstandardized coefficients (b). See Table 9 for correlations across our key variables.

Table 9*Correlations for Study 2*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Charisma													
2. PP Charisma	.25**												
3. Rel Sat	.27**	.37**											
4. Conflict	-.10	-.24**	-.51**										
5. Conf Eng	-.12*	-.09	-.24**	.41**									
6. Withdrawal	-.22**	-.03	-.28**	.28**	.48**								
7. Compliance	-.11*	-.00	-.15**	.16**	.14**	.40**							
8. Pos Prob Solv	.32**	.20**	.30**	-.22**	-.35**	-.30**	-.05						
9. Extraversion	.71**	.15**	.24**	-.11*	-.17**	-.30**	-.26**	.32**					
10. Agreeable	.33**	.13*	.21**	-.27**	-.46**	-.32**	-.09	.39**	.22**				
11. Conscientious	.15**	.11*	.11*	-.18**	-.14**	-.13**	-.09	.11*	.26**	.08			
12. Neg Emotion	-.37**	-.10*	-.24**	.30**	.38**	.34**	.22**	-.30**	-.49**	-.29**	-.24**		
13. Openness	.28**	.10*	.03	-.01	-.20**	-.14**	-.10	.40**	.28**	.29**	.08	-.14**	
14. Narcissism	.53**	.12*	.12*	.07	.06	-.13*	-.14**	.19**	.64**	-.04	.12*	-.36**	.25**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. PP = Perceived Partner, Rel Sat = Relationship Satisfaction, Conf Eng = Conflict Engagement, Pos Prob

Solv = Positive Problem Solving, Neg Emotion = Negative Emotionality.

Results

Is Charisma Associated with Relationship Satisfaction and Conflict?

First, we aimed to replicate effects from Study 1 by demonstrating associations between charisma and relationship satisfaction. In our model predicting relationship satisfaction, we regressed relationship satisfaction on both own and perceptions of a partner's charisma, and found that charisma predicted 19% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(2, 410) = 48.24, p < .001$. When predicting conflict, we found a significant collective effect of charisma and perceptions of a partner's charisma, $F(2, 410) = 13.05, p < .001, R^2 = .06$. We found that both being charismatic, and perceiving a partner as charismatic, were associated with higher relationship satisfaction, and perceiving a partner as charismatic was also associated with less frequent conflict (see Table 7). Next, we conducted similar analyses predicting relationship satisfaction while controlling for relevant covariates (e.g., Big Five, narcissism). When testing a conservative model of the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction with all covariates, the model predicted 10% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. The effect of charisma remained significant, $b = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.008, .092], SE = .02, t = 2.35, p = .019$, and of the other covariates, only agreeableness remained significantly associated with relationship satisfaction, $b = .03, 95\% \text{ CI } [.007, .046], SE = .01, t = 2.64, p = .009$. To better understand which predictors may share variance with charisma, we also conducted models with charisma and each covariate predicting relationship satisfaction. Overall, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction remained significant when controlling for each of the covariates independently (see Supplemental Materials). Of particular note, when accounting for the personality traits that were most strongly correlated with charisma (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, narcissism), the associations remained significant.

Does Charisma Buffer Against the Lower Relationship Satisfaction Associated with More Frequent Conflict?

Next, we explored whether being charismatic or perceiving one's partner as more charismatic buffered the negative association between one's own reports of conflict and romantic relationship satisfaction (see Table 8). First, we found that conflict predicted 25% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(1, 411) = 137.90, p < .001$, and, similar to Study 1, people who reported more conflict in their relationship also reported lower relationship satisfaction, $b = -.08$, 95% CI $[-.097, -.069]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -11.74, p < .001$. We conducted a multiple moderation model with one's own charisma and perceived partner charisma as moderators of the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, which predicted 37% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(5, 407) = 49.84, p < .001$. We found that one's own charisma did not moderate the association, while perceiving a partner as charismatic was a significant moderator. That is, perceiving one's partner as highly charismatic buffered people against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.072, -.035]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -5.66, p < .001$, compared to people who perceived their partner as less charismatic, $b = -.09$, 95% CI $[-.105, -.069]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -9.75, p < .001$. Similar to Study 1, this suggests that people are buffered against the negative association of conflict on relationship satisfaction when they perceive their partner to be highly charismatic. See Figure 2 for a visualization of buffering effect across all studies.

Do Conflict Resolution Styles Explain Why Charismatic People Have Higher Relationship Satisfaction?

Next, to better understand how being, or perceiving a partner as, more charismatic might be related to relationship satisfaction, we tested whether charismatic people use more positive conflict resolution styles and fewer negative conflict resolution styles. We tested models for each conflict resolution style to explore how one's own reports of charisma were associated with the likelihood of reporting each conflict resolution style (see Table 10–11 for model statistics). Charismatic people were more likely to use positive problem solving strategies (i.e., discussing the problem constructively), $b = .06$, 95% CI $[.039, .071]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 6.67, p < .001$,

and less likely to use negative strategies, such as conflict engagement (e.g., launching personal attacks), $b = -.03$, 95% CI $[-.048, -.005]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -2.38$, $p = .018$, withdrawal, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.070, .027]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -4.44$, $p < .001$, and compliance, $b = -.03$, 95% CI $[-.047, -.005]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -2.42$, $p = .016$. Thus, the results suggest that being charismatic is associated with more frequently using positive conflict resolution styles, and less frequently using more negative styles.

Perceiving a partner as more charismatic was associated with perceiving them to use more positive problem solving strategies, $b = .08$, 95% CI $[.062, .100]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 8.46$, $p < .001$, , and less conflict engagement, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.074, -.025]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -3.97$, $p < .001$, , and withdrawal, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.072, -.027]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -4.27$, $p < .001$,. There was no significant association between perceived partner charisma and perceived partner compliance, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.029, .010]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.99$, $p = .323$.

Table 10

Regression Model Statistics for Models with Charisma Predicting each Conflict Resolution Style Separately

Model	$F(1, 411)$	R^2	p
Positive Problem Solving	44.42	.10	<.001
Conflict Engagement	5.65	.01	.017
Withdrawal	19.73	.05	<.001
Compliance	5.84	.01	.016

Table 11

Regression Model Statistics for Models with Perceptions of a Partner's Charisma Predicting Perceptions of a Partner's use of each Conflict Resolution Style Separately

Model	$F(1, 411)$	R^2	p
Positive Problem Solving	71.61	.15	<.001
Conflict Engagement	15.76	.04	<.001
Withdrawal	18.24	.04	<.001
Compliance	.98	.002	.323

In an exploratory manner, we also tested whether being charismatic indirectly impacted relationship satisfaction through the frequent use of certain conflict resolution styles. We conducted a multiple mediation model of charisma predicting relationship satisfaction with the various conflict resolution strategies as the mediator, see Table 10. In this model, we found that charisma was indirectly associated with higher relationship satisfaction through the more frequent use of the positive problem-solving strategies. There was no significant indirect effect of using the conflict engagement, withdrawal, or compliance strategies on relationship satisfaction. We also conducted a mediation model exploring the indirect effect of perceptions of a partner's charisma on relationship satisfaction through the perceptions of their partner's use of the various conflict resolution strategies. Similarly, we found that perceiving a partner as charismatic was indirectly associated with relationship satisfaction through perceiving one's partner as more frequently using the positive problem-solving strategies. Perceiving a partner as charismatic was also associated with higher relationship satisfaction through perceiving one's partner as less likely to use the conflict engagement strategy, which involves launching personal attacks. Perceptions of the withdrawal and compliance during conflict were not indirectly associated with relationship satisfaction.

Table 12

Mediation Model of Charisma Indirectly Effecting Relationship Satisfaction Through the Use of Conflict Resolution Strategies

Variable	Effect of Charisma or PP Charisma on the Mediator (a)					Unique effect of mediator on Rel Sat (b)					Indirect effect on Rel Sat (ab)				
	b	t	p	LL	UL	b	t	p	LL	UL	b	t	p	LL	UL
Positive Problem Solving	.22	6.16	<.001	.148	.288	.06	3.48	.006	.024	.087	.02	2.47	.013	.005	.031
Conflict Engagement	-.11	-2.26	.024	-.196	-.012	-.03	-1.58	.105	-.068	.006	.003	1.18	.240	.000	.011
Compliance	-.10	-2.36	.018	-.191	-.018	-.03	-1.73	.084	-.073	.004	.003	1.24	.214	.000	.012
Withdrawal	-.19	-4.18	<.001	-.284	-.104	-.03	-1.58	.114	-.077	.009	.01	1.45	.147	-.001	.018
PP Positive Problem Solving	.32	8.44	<.001	.249	.399	.09	4.52	<.001	.052	.129	.03	3.81	<.001	.016	.046
PP Conflict Engagement	-.20	-3.69	<.001	-.302	-.092	-.04	-2.60	.009	-.068	-.010	.01	2.14	.032	.002	.017
PP Compliance	-.04	-.96	.337	-.117	.043	.01	.36	.722	-.022	.031	.000	-.237	.812	-.003	.001
PP Withdrawal	-.20	-4.22	<.001	-.288	-.107	-.02	-1.37	.170	-.054	.010	.004	1.29	.197	-.001	.012

Note: *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals. PP = Perceived Partner. Rel Sat = Relationship Satisfaction. Own reports and perceptions of partner were tested in separate models.

Study 3

In Studies 1 and 2, we found that charismatic people, and people who perceived their partner as charismatic, reported greater relationship satisfaction and experienced less conflict. Having a partner or perceiving a partner higher charisma, also buffered people against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. In Study 2, the association between one's own charisma and relationship satisfaction remained significant above and beyond other relevant individual differences (e.g., Big Five, narcissism). We also found in Study 2 that one of the reasons why charisma may be beneficial for romantic relationships is due to charismatic people more frequently using positive conflict resolution strategies and being perceived as less frequently using negative conflict resolution strategies.

In Study 3, we recruited a sample of couples living together after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when stay-at-home orders were in place across most of North America (Lewnard & Lo, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique period during which couples may face more external stressors, such as job insecurity and financial hardship, which can threaten couples' relationship quality (Balzarini et al., 2021; Bolger et al., 1989; Collins et al., 2020; Conger et al., 1999; Gangopadhyaya & Garrett, 2020; Keneski et al., 2018; King, 2020). The VSA model; Karney & Bradbury, 1995) suggests that enduring strengths and vulnerabilities (e.g., personality traits) help determine how well couples can adapt when facing these stressors, and subsequently, the extent to which these stressors are harmful to their relationship quality (Pietromonaco & Overall, 2020).

In Study 3, a preregistered longitudinal study of couples living together during the COVID-19 pandemic (<https://osf.io/xu5t8/>), we aimed to replicate our findings from Study 1 and 2 in a unique sample at a time when conflict may be more prevalent (Balzarini et al., 2021; Bolger et al., 1989; Conger et al., 1999; Keneski et al., 2018; Pietromonaco & Overall, 2020). In this study, we tested the association between being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, and relationship satisfaction, conflict, and conflict resolution strategies. In this study, we

assessed conflict resolution strategies using a different measure that includes more subscales, which will provide a more nuanced understanding of conflict management in romantic relationships (Zacchilli et al., 2009). Nonetheless, the measure includes positive strategies such as compromise (e.g., finding an acceptable solution for both partners), negative strategies such as interactional reactivity (e.g., argue loudly), dominance (e.g., trying to take control), and submission (e.g., giving in to one's partner), and more neutral strategies, such as avoidance (e.g., trying to avoid arguments) and separation (e.g., withdrawing to cool off; Zacchilli et al., 2009). We aimed to replicate our findings that being charismatic or having a charismatic partner buffers against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction. In addition, given that we collected longitudinal data, we aimed to replicate the finding that the frequent use of positive, and less frequent use of negative, conflict resolution strategies explain why charismatic people report higher relationship satisfaction using a stronger test for mediation. In this study, given that the Big Five were the only individual differences to covary with charisma in Study 2, instead of controlling for all seemingly relevant individual differences, we only controlled for individual differences that were correlated with charisma at $r = .2$ or greater. See Table 5 for descriptive statistics of key variables at background.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

We recruited a sample of couples after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic when stay-at-home orders were in place across most of North America (<https://www.covidtogether.me/>) as part of a larger study aimed at understanding the experiences of romantic partners during the COVID-19 pandemic (<https://osf.io/pbq5z/>). Similar to Study 1, the recruitment goal of this study was to collect at least 120 couples to account for attrition and missing data (Kenny et al., 2006). But, given that this study was targeting a specific time period (COVID-19), we opted to recruit as many couples as possible from April 24, 2020 to June 16, 2020. We recruited 196 couples, however we removed participants based on our pre-registered exclusion criteria. We

removed one couple for not providing their age and two couples for failing both attention checks. The remaining sample included 193 couples at background. For weekly analyses, we removed one couple for failing both attention checks, and 41 couples due to either partner completing fewer than two weekly surveys, resulting in a final sample of 151 couples at the weekly level. Finally, at follow-up, beginning from the weekly sample, 45 people who did not complete the follow-up survey and 29 people whose partner did not complete the follow-up survey were removed. The final sample included for our follow-up analyses was 114 couples. See Table 4 for demographic details at background and see Supplemental Materials for details of our exclusion criteria.

The entire length of the study ranged from four to seven months and had three parts. First, both couple members completed an online survey immediately after providing consent to participate in the study. Next, members of each couple were sent a series of individual links via email to complete weekly surveys for the next three weeks (three surveys in total, one week apart), in which they answered questions about their experiences with COVID-19 and questions about their relationship, health, and well-being. Lastly, couple members completed a follow-up questionnaire 3-6 months after they completed their last survey. Participants received up to \$40 CAD (\$32 USD) as compensation for their participation in the study: \$15 CAD (or \$12 USD) for the initial background questionnaire, \$5 CAD (\$4 USD) for each weekly survey (for a total of \$15 CAD, or \$12 USD), and \$10 CAD (\$8 USD) for the follow-up survey.

To be eligible for this study, each member of a couple had to provide consent to participate, be 18 years of age or older, be able to read and understand English, and live with one another. Additionally, couples had to be in a relationship with their partner for at least six months, live in Canada or the United States, and have access to a computer with internet. Eligibility was confirmed through voice messages left by both members of the couples or a phone conversation with each partner before participating in the study.

Measures

In addition to our measures of interest, participants reported on other demographics such as their age, gender, relationship duration, relationship status, ethnicity, and sexual orientation (see Table 1). For the weekly and follow-up measures, truncated scales were used to measure our constructs of interest to minimize participant attrition (Bolger et al., 2003).

Between-Person Measures

Charisma was assessed using the same scale as Studies 1 and 2 (GCI; Tskhay et al., 2018; $\alpha = .83$, 95% CI [.802, .856], $\Omega = .83$, 95% CI [.756, .858]). **Relationship satisfaction** was assessed with three items from the Investment Model Scale (IMS; Rusbult et al., 1998) such as “I feel satisfied with our relationship” (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*; $\alpha = .91$, 95% CI [.768, .813], $\Omega = .76$, 95% CI [.721, .797]). The same items were assessed in the follow-up survey, $\alpha = .92$, 95% CI [.905, .934], $\Omega = .92$, 95% CI [.907, .935], that was sent approximately six months after the background surveys and asked about the participant’s relationship satisfaction over the last three months. **Conflict** was measured using the same scale as Studies 1 and 2 (Braiker & Kelley, 1979; $\alpha = .83$, 95% CI [.802, .856], $\Omega = .83$, 95% CI [.756, .858]).

Conflict resolution styles were measured using two items from each of the subscales of the Romantic Partner Conflict Scale (RPCS; Zacchilli et al., 2009), except the compromise subscale, which was measured with three items. The RPCS includes six subscales assessing different conflict resolution styles. Based on past research, *compromise* (e.g., “We try to find solutions that are acceptable to both of us”; $\alpha = .74$, 95% CI [.685, .779], $\Omega = .74$, 95% CI [.696, .781]). was considered a positive conflict resolution style, whereas *interactional reactivity* (e.g., “When my partner and I disagree, we argue loudly”; $r = .54$), *dominance* (e.g., “I try to take control when we argue”; $r = .51$), and *submission* (e.g., “When we have conflict, I usually give in to my partner”; $r = .62$). may be more negative conflict resolution styles (Zacchilli et al., 2009). Past research did not find an association for the *avoidance* (e.g., “My partner and I try to avoid arguments”; $r = .60$) or *separation* (e.g., “When we have conflict, we withdraw from each other for a while for a “cooling off” period”; $r = .61$) conflict resolution styles with relationship

satisfaction (Zacchilli et al., 2009), but we assessed these here to determine the association with charisma. All items were rated on a 5-point scale (0 = *strongly disagree with statement*, 1 = *moderately disagree with statement*, 2 = *neutral, neither agree nor disagree*, 3 = *moderately agree with statement*, 4 = *strongly agree with statement*; see Supplemental Materials for details of these analyses). We also measured **personality** using the Big Five Inventory-2 extra short form (BFI-2-XS; Soto & John, 2017b). The BFI-2-XS is a 15-item measure with five subscales: extraversion (e.g., “Is full of energy”; $\alpha = .59$, 95% CI [.540, .636], $\Omega = .60$, 95% CI [.544, .640]), agreeableness (e.g., “Is compassionate, has a soft heart”; $\alpha = .51$, 95% CI [.453, .558], $\Omega = .53$, 95% CI [.477, .579]), conscientiousness (e.g., “Is reliable, can always be counted on”; $\alpha = .54$, 95% CI [.489, .586], $\Omega = .59$, 95% CI [.533, .634]), negative emotionality (e.g., “Worries a lot”; $\alpha = .74$, 95% CI [.712, .771], $\Omega = .75$, 95% CI [.719, .778]), and open-mindedness (e.g., “Is original, comes up with new ideas”; $\alpha = .53$, 95% CI [.471, .581], $\Omega = .53$, 95% CI [.470, .580]). All subscales include three items assessed on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *disagree strongly*, 5 = *agree strongly*), and each subscale has one reverse scored item, with the exception of the conscientiousness scale which has two reverse scored items.

Weekly Measures

Weekly **conflict** (Braiker & Kelley, 1979) was assessed using the same scale as the background survey but asked about the previous week, $\alpha = .78$, 95% CI [.743, .808], $\Omega = .77$, 95% CI [.729, .801].² **Conflict resolution styles** were also assessed using a truncated version of the same scale as the background survey (RPCS; Zacchilli et al., 2007). This included two items measuring *compromise*, $r = .78$, *avoidance*, $r = .70$, *reactivity*, $r = .56$, *dominance*, $r = .59$, and *submission*, $r = .68$, and one-item measuring *separation*. Weekly **relationship satisfaction** was assessed using a single item from the IMS (e.g., “I felt satisfied with my relationship”; Rusbult et al., 1998), that asked about the previous week.

Data Analyses

Data and syntax for all analyses are available on the Open Science Framework: https://osf.io/4qvkj/?view_only=43dc896d519c4cbebd0cc9079469cob. For Study 3, the data were also analyzed using R version 1.3.1093 (R Core Team, 2020), with similar packages to clean the data and calculate means and standard deviations (Wickham et al., 2019; Revelle, 2018; Stanley, 2018; see Table 2 for descriptive information of our key variables). Scale reliability coefficients were also calculated using 10000 resamples, similar to Study 1 (Kelley, 2019). We used reports of charisma at background to predict outcomes (e.g., relationship satisfaction, conflict) at background, weekly (i.e., weekly reports across the three weeks), and at follow up (i.e., approximately six months after). We tested our key predictions using an indistinguishable APIM model with actor and partner effects simultaneously when possible (Kenny et al., 2006). We conducted multilevel models using the nlme package (Pinheiro et al., 2018) to test our analyses at background and follow-up, in which partners were nested in couples.

For analyses using the weekly surveys, we used the lme4 package (Bates et al., 2015) to conduct cross-classified models with partners nested within a time-point and couple. We included random intercepts in all models and tested for random slopes when possible. For our weekly analyses, we tested models analyzing both the within- (i.e., change within people over the three weeks) and between-person effects (i.e., difference between people over the three weeks) by entering both the person-mean centered and aggregated predictors in the model. For significant moderations, we followed up with simple slope tests at high (+1SD) and low (-1SD) levels of the moderator.

To test our predictions about whether charismatic people report higher relationship satisfaction because they use more positive and fewer negative conflict resolution strategies, we conducted multilevel APIM mediation models using the Monte Carlo Method for Assessing Mediation (Selig & Preacher, 2008). This model was a 2-1-1 mediation model in which charisma was a level 2, time invariant predictor measured at background, while our mediator and

outcomes, conflict resolution style, and relationship satisfaction were assessed weekly. For the mediator (i.e., conflict resolution style), we included both the person-mean centered and aggregated variables in our models. We also tested models controlling for other relevant individual difference measures (i.e., Big Five) if they correlated with charisma ($r > .2$). For all the analyses, we reported the unstandardized coefficients (b). See Table 11 for correlations across all variables.

Table 13*Correlations for Study 3*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Charisma	.11*													
2. Rel Sat	.09	.49**												
3. Conflict	-.08	-.46**	.42**											
4. Compromise	.19**	.42**	-.27**	.33**										
5. Avoidance	.01	.03	-.29**	.03	.23**									
6. Reactivity	.04	-.26**	.54**	-.23**	-.17**	.51**								
7. Separate	.01	.00	.09	-.01	.13*	.23**	.37**							
8. Dominate	-.06	-.04	.31**	-.15**	-.06	.39**	.23**	.18**						
9. Submit	-.05	-.13*	.02	-.11*	.27**	-.01	.03	.03	.01					
10. Extraversion	.54**	.11*	-.01	.15**	-.16**	.06	-.03	.05	-.20**	.001				
11. Agreeable	.25**	.13*	-.18**	.16**	.05	-.14**	-.01	-.13*	.00	-.03	.06			
12. Conscientious	.12*	.10	-.10	.04	-.08	-.01	-.00	-.03	-.12*	.11*	.10	-.04		
13. Neg Emotion	-.35**	-.10	.22**	-.12*	-.04	.13*	.03	.19**	-.05	-.22**	-.09	-.22**	-.07	
14. Openness	.26**	.10	-.07	.16**	-.06	-.06	.01	-.09	-.14**	.18**	.20**	-.02	-.04	.27**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. Rel Sat = Relationship Satisfaction, Neg Emotion = Negative Emotionality. Correlations between partners are bolded and on the diagonal.

Results

Is Charisma Associated with Relationship Satisfaction and Conflict During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

First, we aimed to replicate effects from Studies 1 and 2 by testing whether charisma was associated with relationship satisfaction. We found that having a charismatic partner was associated with higher relationship satisfaction at background, but there were no other associations between charisma and relationship satisfaction or conflict frequency at background (see Table 7), and there were no significant associations over the three-week study (see Table 12). We also tested whether being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, predicted relationship satisfaction 3-6 months later. We found that having a charismatic partner was associated with relationship satisfaction over time, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.007, .051], $SE = .01$, $t = 2.60$, $p = .010$, however there was only a trending association with one's own charisma, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.002, .041], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.74$, $p = .083$.

We also tested models predicting relationship satisfaction while controlling for the Big Five, using APIM models to control for the individual difference in both partners simultaneously. When testing all predictors in the model, there was no significant association between being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, and relationship satisfaction at background or follow-up. At background, only the effect of actor agreeableness remained, while there were no significant associations at follow-up. We also tested each covariate separately to better understand which individual difference may share variance with charisma (see Supplemental Materials for details). However, it is important to note that the association between being charismatic or having a charismatic partner and relationship satisfaction in models without covariates was weak or nonsignificant at background, over the three weeks, and at follow-up. Therefore, the lack of significance in models controlling for covariates may be due to a lack of power to detect an effect with the number of variables assessed, the lack of a unique

direct association between charisma and relationship satisfaction, or due to shared variance between charisma and relevant covariates.

Table 14

Associations Between Charisma and Relationship Satisfaction and Conflict in Study 3 at Weekly

DV: Relationship					
Satisfaction	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Main Effect on Relationship Satisfaction					
Charisma	.01	.41	.685	-.023	.036
Partner Charisma	.01	.99	.322	-.013	.040
Main Effect on Conflict					
Charisma	-.02	-1.44	.152	-.053	.008
Partner Charisma	-.02	-1.45	.147	-.050	.007
Charisma Moderating the Association Between Conflict and Relationship Satisfaction					
Conflict	-.06	-9.38	<.001	-.067	-.044
Conflict x Charisma	-.003	-2.15	.032	-.006	-.0003
Conflict x Partner Charisma	.001	.92	.359	-.002	.004

Note: *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals.

Does Charisma Buffer Against the Lower Relationship Satisfaction Associated with More Frequent Conflict During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Next, we tested whether charisma buffered people against the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction at background, weekly and at follow-up. Beginning with background associations, we found that people who reported greater conflict also reported lower relationship satisfaction, $b = -.06$, 95% CI $[-.073, -.044]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -7.82$, $p < .001$. We also found that being charismatic (but not having a charismatic partner) moderated the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction (see Table 5). However, the moderation was in the opposite direction than expected and found in previous studies. That is, people higher in charisma experienced a more negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.08$, 95% CI $[-.100, -.057]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -7.27$, $p < .001$, compared to people who reported being lower in charisma, $b = -.04$, 95% CI $[-.060, -.020]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -3.97$, $p < .001$.

Furthermore, we tested this buffering effect over the three-week study. There was a significant negative association between experiencing conflict and relationship satisfaction over the three-week study, $b = -.05$, 95% CI $[-.067, -.033]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -5.66$, $p < .001$, however this association was not moderated by being charismatic, $b = .002$, 95% CI $[-.003, .006]$, $SE = .002$, $t = .75$, $p = .452$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.001, .007]$, $SE = .002$, $t = 1.53$, $p = .126$. Lastly, we tested whether being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, buffered against the negative association between conflict over the three-weeks and relationship satisfaction at follow-up, while controlling for initial relationship satisfaction. We found that conflict over the three weeks was linked to lower relationship satisfaction, $b = -.06$, 95% CI $[-.081, .041]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -5.99$, $p < .001$, but there was no significant moderation by being charismatic, $b = -.001$, 95% CI $[-.005, .002]$, $SE = .002$, $t = -.79$, $p = .428$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = -.001$, 95% CI $[-.005, .003]$, $SE = .002$, $t = -.52$, $p = .602$, on the link

between weekly conflict and relationship satisfaction at follow-up. See Figure 2 for a visualization of the moderation analyses across all studies.

Do Conflict Resolution Styles Explain Why Charismatic People Have Higher Relationship Satisfaction During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Finally, we tested whether the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction could be explained by the more frequent use of positive conflict resolution strategies, and less frequent use of negative conflict resolution strategies. We conducted mediation models with all conflict resolution styles simultaneously predicting relationship satisfaction at the weekly level. We tested whether the person-mean centred and aggregate conflict resolution styles mediated the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction at the weekly level. First, people higher in charisma reported more compromise over the three-week study, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.001, .051], $SE = .01$, $t = 2.06$, $p = .041$, but no other associations were significant; see Supplemental Materials. We also found a significant indirect effect of being charismatic on weekly relationship satisfaction through both the person-mean centred, $b = .001$, 95% CI [.0001, .003], and aggregate of the compromise strategy, $b = .01$, 95% CI [.0004, .013]. That is, people who reported being more charismatic also reported compromising more frequently when experiencing conflict during the COVID-19 pandemic, which was linked to higher relationship satisfaction over the three-week study. There were no other significant indirect effects (see Supplemental Materials for details).

Internal Meta-Analysis

To better understand the overall size and robustness of the between person associations between being charismatic, having a charismatic partner, or perceiving a partner as charismatic, and relationship satisfaction and conflict, we conducted a meta-analysis across Studies 1, 2, and 3 (and our pilot when possible) using the metafor package in R (Viechtbauer, 2010).³ We first calculated standardized effect sizes (e.g., semi partial correlation coefficients) for the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction in models that controlled for either partner

charisma or perceptions of a partner's charisma, depending on what was assessed in each study. To make the associations the most comparable, we only used models at background in Study 3. There was a significant positive overall meta-analytic association between charisma and relationship satisfaction, $\beta = .16$, 95% CI [.090, .222], $SE = .03$, $z = 4.62$, $p < .001$, between having a charismatic partner and relationship satisfaction, $\beta = .11$, 95% CI [.036, .190], $SE = .04$, $z = 4.88$, $p < .01$, and between perceiving a partner as charismatic and relationship satisfaction, $\beta = .35$, 95% CI [.288, .419], $SE = .03$, $z = 10.61$, $p < .001$. The effects ranged from small to medium (Funder & Ozer, 2019), which suggests the level of charisma in each partner, as well as the perception of a partner's charisma, can reliably predict relationship satisfaction. However, it is important to note that the largest effect was between perceptions of a partner's charisma and relationship satisfaction, which may be due, in part, to a person's own biases or shared method variance.

Next, we tested the overall size and robustness of the moderation between charisma (i.e., own charisma, partner charisma, or perceived partner charisma) and conflict predicting relationship satisfaction. First, we tested the meta-analytic association of being charismatic, having a charismatic partner, and perceiving one's partner as charismatic on conflict. There was a significant overall meta-analytic association between being charismatic, $\beta = -.08$, 95% CI [-.136, .017], $SE = .03$, $z = -2.52$, $p = .012$, having a charismatic partner, $\beta = -.09$, 95% CI [-.171, -.017], $SE = .04$, $z = -2.39$, $p = .017$, and perceiving one's partner as charismatic, $\beta = -.20$, 95% CI [-.271, -.125], $SE = .04$, $z = -5.32$, $p < .001$, and reporting less conflict, with medium effect sizes. However, there was no significant overall meta-analytic association of the moderation by own charisma, $\beta = .01$, 95% CI [-.099, .117], $SE = .06$, $z = .16$, $p = .869$, or by a partner's charisma, $\beta = .06$, 95% CI [-.094, .209], $SE = .08$, $z = .75$, $p = .455$. However, there is a significant positive overall meta-analytic association of perceiving a partner as charismatic buffering against the effect of conflict on relationship satisfaction, $\beta = .11$, 95% CI [.051, .176], $SE = .03$, $z = 3.56$, $p < .001$, with a small effect size.

Given that conflict resolution strategies were not assessed comparably across studies, we did not meta-analyze these effects, but in the two studies in which we tested the associations, charisma was associated with positive conflict resolution strategies and in turn, higher relationship satisfaction.

Discussion

Although past research suggests that most relationships begin with partners feeling highly satisfied, feelings of satisfaction can decline over time (Aron et al., 2002; Hirschberger et al., 2009; Kurdek, 1994; VanLaningham et al., 2001), especially when couples experience frequent conflict (Carrere et al., 2000; Cramer, 2002; Dailey et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2014; Noller & Feeney, 2002). The current set of studies are the first to provide evidence that being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, is associated with the maintenance of relationship quality. Across our first two studies, we found that charismatic people and those who perceived their partners as charismatic reported being more satisfied in their romantic relationships, and in Study 3, having a charismatic partner was associated with higher relationship satisfaction over time. These findings are consistent with past work showing that charismatic people report being happier, having greater life satisfaction (Nassif et al., 2020), and higher relationship quality with their colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010).

Charisma and Conflict Resolution

Although more frequent conflict was associated with lower relationship satisfaction across all three studies, people who perceived their partner to be higher in charisma were buffered against this association such that the link between more frequent conflict and relationship satisfaction was less steep. Past research suggests charismatic people are able to lower levels of aggression (Hepworth & Towler, 2004) and promote cooperation among colleagues (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011). In Study 1, being higher in charisma and having a charismatic partner was associated with experiencing less conflict, and, although this effect did not reach significance in Studies 2 and 3, our internal meta-analysis

across all three studies suggests a medium sized robust effect. It is important to note that past research suggests charismatic people may generate more discussion of disagreements or arguments (Kotlyar et al., 2011), however when conflict arises they are more likely to cooperatively resolve problems (De Cremer, 2002; Zhang et al., 2011) with less aggression and negative affect (Hepworth & Towler, 2004). The current set of studies suggest that charisma is associated with slightly less conflict in a romantic relationship as well as using more positive strategies when conflict does occur.

Across two of our studies, charismatic people were more likely to use positive conflict resolution strategies in their romantic relationships, and this was one reason they reported higher relationship satisfaction. In Study 2, charismatic people reported being more likely to use positive problem-solving (e.g., focusing on the problem at hand, discussing the problem constructively), and in Study 3, charismatic people were more likely to compromise during conflict (e.g., finding an acceptable solution for both partners). Although we used two different scales of conflict resolution strategies in Studies 2 and 3, the only positive strategies in each scale are the positive problem solving (Kurdek, 1994) and compromising strategies (Zacchilli et al., 2009), which were both more likely to be endorsed by people higher in charisma. In Study 2 and 3, the use of the compromise strategy during conflict explained why charismatic people reported greater relationship satisfaction, including over the course of several weeks during the COVID-19 pandemic. This finding is in line with past work that suggests charismatic people may pay more attention to the opinions of others (Bass, 1985; Pillai et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 1990) and promote commitment to mutual goals (Herold et al., 2008; Yang, 2012; Yang, 2014), allowing them to resolve problems more cooperatively and effectively in the workplace (De Cremer, 2002; Dionne et al., 2004; Zhang et al., 2011). Importantly, in the current research, we provide initial evidence of charismatic people using similar constructive strategies in their romantic relationships, as well.

When considering the other conflict resolution strategies, in Study 2 we found evidence that charismatic people were less likely to use the conflict engagement (e.g., launch personal attacks), withdrawal, and compliance strategies, which have been linked to poorer relationship satisfaction in past work (Kurdek, 1994). Similar associations were found for perceiving a partner as charismatic and their perceived conflict resolution strategies (except there was no association between perceived partner charisma and perceived compliance). However, in Study 3 we did not find associations between charisma and a lower likelihood of using negative conflict strategies such as interactional reactivity (e.g., arguing loudly) and dominance. Thus, the current work provides support that charismatic people use better conflict resolution strategies in their romantic relationships, but it is unclear whether they use fewer negative conflict resolution strategies. Consistent with findings from Study 2, past work suggests that being charismatic reduces the use of competitive conflict resolution strategies in workplace contexts (De Cremer, 2002).

Overall, many of the association were weakest in Study 3. Given that the sample in Study 3 consists of couples living together during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible they are experiencing unique stressors that impact their romantic relationships differently from couples studied prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e., Studies 1 and 2). These stressors include heightened job insecurity, financial hardship, lack of social support, or restlessness due to being encouraged to stay at home (Balzarini et al., 2021; Bolger et al., 1989; Collins et al., 2020; Conger et al., 1999; Gangopadhyaya & Garrett, 2020; Keneski et al., 2018; King, 2020; Pietromonaco & Overall, 2020). Although existing traits should be associated with how people cope during a stressful time, unique and chronic stressors can pose challenges even among people well-equipped to manage them. However, although charismatic people were not buffered against the negative effects of conflict on their relationship satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic, they were still more likely to compromise when faced with conflict, which may help them maintain happy relationships post-pandemic.

Based on the internal meta-analysis, the effect sizes across all studies ranged from small to medium ($r_s = .11-.35$). The largest effect sizes are between perceptions of a partner's charisma and relationship satisfaction ($r_s = .37-.40$), which highlights the importance of partner perceptions as compared to one's own self-reported or partner-reported traits. It is important to note that this large effect could be due to a person's own biases or shared method variance, however we found evidence that the perceptions of a partner's charisma are consistent with their partner's self-reported charisma. There were also consistent effects between charisma and positive conflict resolution strategies ($r_s = .19-.32$), however effect sizes with negative conflict resolution strategies were inconsistent. Overall, there were robust associations suggesting that charismatic people (and those who have or perceive a partner to be charismatic) feel more satisfied in their relationships, in part because charismatic people tend to use more positive conflict resolution strategies. Additional research needs to be conducted to better understand the consistency and magnitude of the effect of charisma on relationship satisfaction, conflict, and conflict management.

Distinguishing Charisma from Other Personality Traits

In Studies 2 and 3, we also tested the link between charisma and relationship satisfaction while controlling for other relevant individual difference measures (e.g., Big Five, narcissism). Although past work has found that charisma is distinct from other relevant individual differences, there have been high correlations between the extraversion and agreeableness scales of the Big Five (Tskhay et al., 2018). Thus, it is important to ensure charisma is a unique construct from other related individual differences and uniquely predicts relationship outcomes. Across both studies, we provide evidence that in many cases charisma had a distinct and unique effect on relationship satisfaction. In Study 2, being charismatic was associated with relationship satisfaction when all covariates were included in the model and remained significantly related to higher relationship satisfaction when testing each covariate separately. In Study 3, we did not find a consistent link between charisma, or having a charismatic partner,

and relationship satisfaction when testing all predictors in one model or separately, however the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction in this study was relatively weak. Therefore, similar to past work, we provide some evidence that charisma has a unique link to relationship satisfaction, above and beyond other relevant individual differences (Tskhay et al., 2018), but more work is needed to test the ways in which charisma might be unique associated with relationship quality.

Limitations and Future Directions

Across three studies—using cross-sectional, dyadic and longitudinal methods—we provide preliminary evidence that charismatic people and their partners have more satisfying romantic relationships, which is due, in part, to using more positive approaches to conflict. However, this research is not without limitations. Although the conflict resolution scales in Study 2 and 3 are comparable, using the same scale across numerous studies can provide more robust evidence of the link between charisma and the use of different conflict resolution strategies. Future work should replicate our work using more consistent scales to get a better understanding of the link between charisma and conflict resolution styles, as well as to expand the possible pathways for the association between charisma and both partners' relationship satisfaction, such as more effective and open communication (Jiang et al., 2018; Zhou & Long, 2012). To advance our understanding of how charismatic people might approach conflict in romantic relationships, future work can also use behavioural observation methods to record couples discussing a conflict of interest and code for the conflict resolution strategies used, as well as other relevant behaviours such as responsiveness to their partner's needs (Pillai et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 1990).

All of our studies investigated charisma in established, mostly cohabitating or marital relationships, however past work suggests charisma has been found to be a desirable quality when seeking a short-term partner (Flegr et al., 2019). Therefore, charisma may also be associated with initial attraction and the development of relationships. Future research could

investigate whether charismatic people are more desirable in initial dating contexts, such as speed-dating or online dating applications, to determine whether charismatic people have more satisfying relationships at the outset and then maintain satisfaction over time.

Finally, all studies were correlational and although we used longitudinal methods in Study 3 to show that a partner's charisma was associated with relationship satisfaction over time, we cannot confirm the causal direction of the associations. Future work should attempt to use experimental methods to manipulate charisma or perceptions of a partner's charisma to provide support for the predicted direction of effects (Antonakis et al., 2011). Alternatively, conducting a more extensive longitudinal study, such as following people over several years, from the start of a relationship or across different relationships, could also demonstrate possible changes in both charisma and relationship quality over time and allow for a better understanding of how charisma shapes the trajectory of relationships.

Conclusion

The results of the current set of studies extend past research on charisma by providing preliminary evidence that trait charisma is associated with relationship satisfaction and conflict management in romantic relationships. Past work on charisma in workplace contexts has found many benefits for charismatic people and their colleagues (Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985; Erez et al., 2008; Hepworth & Towler, 2004; Nohe et al., 2013; Paulsen et al., 2009; Shamir et al., 1993; Vlachos et al., 2013), and people tend to view charisma as a desirable trait in a dating partner (Flegr et al., 2018). Our results suggest that charisma is associated with greater relationship satisfaction and, perceiving a partner to be charismatic can buffer against the lower relationship satisfaction that is associated with more frequent conflict. This is due to, in part, charismatic people being more likely to use positive conflict resolution strategies. Although past research has shown significant benefits for colleagues of charismatic people (e.g., Balkundi et al., 2011; Bass, 1985), our findings suggest that in romantic relationships, perceptions of a partner's charisma—rather than a partner's actual levels of charisma—may be more important for

managing conflict and maintaining relationship satisfaction. The current studies shed light on the importance of trait charisma in romantic relationships, and we hope this work will encourage more research on charisma by highlighting that trait charisma can uniquely predict important outcomes in romantic relationships.

Footnotes

¹In Study 2, we intended on oversampling from 353 participants to 390 participants to account for potentially losing participants due to our exclusion criteria. Due to the way Prolific recruits participants, when we closed our study we had 453 submissions. After removing participants due to incompleteness or not meeting our eligibility criteria, the remaining sample included 413 participants. All participants completed at least 70% of the study, passed attention checks, and were compensated for their participation. We only conducted analyses on the final sample, prior to exclusions.

²Additionally, one item of conflict (e.g., “In the last week, when you and your partner argue, how serious are the problems or arguments?”) was only presented if participants responded “yes” to an earlier question that asked if they had a disagreement last week. Therefore, there were significant missing data for this item, so we did not include it in this research.

³Given the complexity of running meta-analyses on multilevel data, we conducted regression models rather than APIM models, thus ignoring the nesting within couples for Study 1 and 3.

Supplemental Materials II

Pilot Study

With a sample of 303 people (164 female, 137 men, 2 trans) recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk, we explored whether charisma (measured by the General Charisma Inventory; Tskhay et al., 2018) was associated with various romantic relationship and sex outcomes. Using linear regression, we found that charisma predicted 5% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(1, 292) = 15.71, p < .001$, and 3% of the variance in sexual satisfaction, $F(1, 292) = 15.71, p = .001$. We found that charisma was associated with greater relationship satisfaction, $b = .18, 95\% \text{ CI } [.108, .249], SE = .04, t = 5.017, p < .001$, and sexual satisfaction, $b = .28, 95\% \text{ CI } [.111, .445], SE = .08, t = 3.278, p < .01$. We used the smallest effect size of interest, which was between charisma and sexual satisfaction, to inform the sample of study 2, our preregistered replication study. Using G*Power, based on a small effect size ($f^2 = .0371$), an $\alpha = .05$, and power of 95%, we needed a sample of 353 people. However, we oversampled to account for attrition and inattentive responding.

Gender Analyses in Study 1

We tested for moderations by gender in our APIM model of charisma predicting relationship satisfaction, however there was no significant gender moderation of being charismatic, $b = -.001, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.029, .028], SE = .01, t = -.04, p = .966$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = -.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.037, .020], SE = .01, t = -.60, p = .552$. There were also no gender differences in the association between perceptions of a partner's charisma and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.030, .017], SE = .01, t = -.56, p = .577$. Furthermore, the moderation of the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction by one's own charisma, $b = -.002, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.005, .001], SE = .001, t = -1.34, p = .181$, or a partner's charisma, $b = .0005, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.003, .004], SE = .001, t = -.29, p = .775$, did not differ depending on gender. Finally, the moderation of the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction

through perceiving one's partner as charismatic was not moderated by gender, $b = -.0001$, 95% CI $[-.003, .003]$, $SE = .001$, $t = -.12$, $p = .907$.

Gender Analyses in Study 2

We tested for moderations by gender in our model of relationship satisfaction regressed on charisma and found this model predicted 22% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(5, 403) = 23.73$, $p < .001$. There was a significant moderation by gender, $b = .04$, 95% CI $[-.007, .069]$, $SE = .02$, $t = 2.42$, $p = .016$. The association between charisma and relationship satisfaction was stronger for men, $b = .14$, 95% CI $[.089, .198]$, $SE = .03$, $t = -5.16$, $p < .001$, than for women, $b = .06$, 95% CI $[.028, .096]$, $SE = .02$, $t = 3.57$, $p < .001$, but was significant for both. Therefore, charisma is more strongly associated with their relationship satisfaction for men compared to charismatic women. There was no significant moderation of the association between perceptions of a partner's charisma and relationship satisfaction by gender, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[-.021, .036]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .51$, $p = .613$. And the associations between conflict and relationship satisfaction by one's own charisma, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.022, .038]$, $SE = .002$, $t = 1.46$, $p = .147$, or a partner's charisma, $b = -.002$, 95% CI $[-.001, .007]$, $SE = .002$, $t = -1.57$, $p = .116$, did not differ by gender.

Controlling for Covariates in Study 2

When testing the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction with all covariates, this model predicted 10% of the variance in relationship satisfaction, $F(7, 405) = 7.43$, $p < .001$, and the effect of charisma and agreeableness remained significantly associated with relationship satisfaction, see Table S9. To better understand which predictors may share variance with charisma, we also conducted models with relationship satisfaction regressed on charisma and each covariate separately (see Table S10 for model statistics).

Table S9*Model of Relationship Satisfaction Regressed on Charisma and Covariates*

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Charisma	.05	2.35	.019	.008	.092
Extraversion	.01	1.17	.244	-.009	.036
Agreeableness	.03	2.64	.009	.007	.046
Conscientious	.01	.87	.385	-.013	.033
Negative Emotion	.01	-1.40	.161	-.023	.004
Openness	-.01	-1.18	.240	-.025	.006
Narcissism	-.01	.51	.612	-.036	.022

Note. *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals.

Table S10

Regression Model Statistics for Models with Charisma Predicting Relationship Satisfaction Controlling for each Covariate Separately

Model	<i>F</i> (2, 410)	<i>R</i> ²	<i>p</i>
Extraversion	17.89	.08	<.001
Agreeable	21.77	.09	<.001
Conscientiousness	17.56	.07	<.001
Negative Emotionality	20.25	.09	<.001
Openness	16.4	.07	<.001
Narcissism	16.46	.07	<.001

When controlling for extraversion, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction remained significant, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.020, .100], $SE = .02$, $t = 2.94$, $p = .003$, and there was no significant association between extraversion and relationship satisfaction, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.003, .036], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.70$, $p = .089$. In models controlling for agreeableness, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction remained, $b = .07$, 95% CI [.038, .099], $SE = .02$, $t = 4.44$, $p < .001$, as well as the association between agreeableness and relationship satisfaction, $b = .03$, 95% CI [-.011, .046], $SE = .01$, $t = 3.18$, $p = .002$. When controlling for conscientiousness, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction was significant, $b = .08$, 95% CI [.052, .110], $SE = .02$, $t = 5.47$, $p < .001$, while there was no significant association for conscientiousness, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.005, .041], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.51$, $p = .131$. For models controlling for negative emotionality, both the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction, $b = .07$, 95% CI [.039, .100], $SE = .02$, $t = 4.44$, $p < .001$, as well as negative emotionality and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.02$, 95% CI [-.029, -.004], $SE = .01$, $t = -2.70$, $p = .007$, remained. Finally, when controlling for open mindedness, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction remained significant, $b = .09$, 95% CI [.056, .116], $SE = .02$, $t = 5.58$, $p < .001$, while there was no association between open mindedness and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.003$, 95% CI [-.018, .012], $SE = .01$, $t = -.36$, $p = .719$.

When controlling for narcissism, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction remained significant, $b = .09$, 95% CI [.055, .122], $SE = .02$, $t = 5.18$, $p < .001$, while there was no significant association between narcissism and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.01$, 95% CI [-.031, .018], $SE = .01$, $t = -.50$, $p = .614$.

Exclusion Criteria in Study 3

Our initial sample included 196 couples, but we removed participants if they did not provide consent or responded that they are younger than 18 years of age. We also removed participants that did not respond on more than two of the items related to charisma, as this was

our key variable of interest. There were two attention checks embedded in the survey that asked participants to select a specific response to the question (e.g., “Please select number 3, this is not a trick question”). We also had an honesty check that asked participants to state how truthful they were in their responses (e.g., “How truthful or honest were you in reporting events for this week?”; 1 = *not at all truthful/honest*, 7 = *completely truthful/honest*). There was also a self-reported attention question that asked participants to specify the level of attention they paid while completing the survey (e.g., “How much attention did you pay to this questionnaire while you were completing it?”), which was measured on a 4-point scale (1 = *no attention*, 2 = *very little attention*, 3 = *moderate amount of attention*, 4 = *very close attention*). Couples were only included if both partners met the study’s inclusion criteria, passed at least one of the attention checks in the background survey, were at or above the midpoint for the honesty check, and indicated they paid moderate or very close attention as reported in the self-reported attention check. For our weekly analyses, we also only included participants who completed two or more weekly surveys since we were capturing within-person effects. The self-reported attention checks were also used at the weekly surveys, following the same criteria above to exclude inattentive participants. If a participant was removed for any of the above reasons, their partner was also removed from our analyses given our interest in dyadic effects.

In our sample, we removed one couple for not providing their age, given this was an inclusion criteria and two couples for failing both attention checks, leaving us with a sample of 193 couples at background. For our weekly analyses, we removed couples that failed both attention checks ($n = 1$) and couples that completed fewer than two weekly surveys ($n = 41$). Our final weekly sample consisted of 151 couples. For our follow-up analyses, we removed eight couples who reported less than the midpoint for our self-reported attention check, and we removed 29 couples for either partner having completed fewer than two weekly surveys and had completed the follow-up. Our final sample at follow-up was 114 couples.

Controlling for Covariates in Study 3

In Study 3, we only controlled for covariates that were significantly correlated with charisma at $r = .2$ or greater. Therefore, the only relevant covariates in this study were extraversion, agreeableness, negative emotionality, and openness to experience. When testing the association between being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, and relationship satisfaction with all covariates, the association between charisma and relationship satisfaction was no longer significant (see Table S11). Only a positive association between being agreeable, and a negative association with having a partner high in negative emotionality, remained significant in this model. Similar to Study 2, we also analyzed models with relationship satisfaction regressed on charisma and each covariate separately to better understand how charisma and these covariates impacted relationship satisfaction.

Table S11

Model of Background Relationship Satisfaction Regressed on Charisma and Covariates ($r > .2$) in Study 3

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Actor Charisma	-.01	-.43	.667	-.041	.026
Partner Charisma	.01	.76	.448	-.021	.047
Actor Extraversion	.03	1.19	.236	-.021	.084
Partner Extraversion	-.04	-1.28	.200	-.089	.019
Actor Agreeable	.05	2.04	.042	.002	.101
Partner Agreeable	.04	1.39	.165	.015	.087
Actor Negative Emotion	-.03	-1.67	.096	.069	.005
Partner Negative Emotion	-.06	-3.07	.002	.097	-.021
Actor Openness	.01	.54	.588	.031	.055
Partner Openness	.04	1.73	.084	.005	.081

Note. *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals.

When controlling for extraversion, the positive association between having a charismatic partner and relationship satisfaction remained significant, $b = .04$, 95% CI [.006, .069], $SE = .02$, $t = 2.35$, $p = .019$, and there was still no association of one's own charisma, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.021, .041], $SE = .02$, $t = .62$, $p = .538$. We also found there was no significant association between being extraverted, $b = -.03$, 95% CI [-.018, .086], $SE = .03$, $t = 1.27$, $p = .203$, or having an extraverted partner, $b = -.03$, 95% CI [-.085, .022], $SE = .03$, $t = -1.15$, $p = .250$, and relationship satisfaction. When controlling for agreeableness, there remained no significant association between being charismatic and relationship satisfaction, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.016, .039], $SE = .01$, $t = .83$, $p = .405$, and the association between having a charismatic partner and relationship satisfaction, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.009, .046], $SE = 1.31$, $t = 1.31$, $p = .192$, and was

reduced to non-significant. And there was a significant association between agreeableness, $b = .05$, 95% CI [.006, .103], $SE = .02$, $t = 2.18$, $p = .030$, and partner's agreeableness, $b = .06$, 95% CI [.006, .106], $SE = .03$, $t = 2.21$, $p = .028$, and relationship satisfaction. In models controlling for negative emotionality, there remained no association charisma and relationship satisfaction, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.013, .042], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.04$, $p = .300$, and the partner effect of charisma was reduced to non-significant, $b = .01$, 95% CI [-.014, .041], $SE = .01$, $t = .95$, $p = .343$. Having a partner higher in negative emotionality was marginally associated with lower relationship satisfaction, $b = -.03$, 95% CI [-.069, .005], $SE = .02$, $t = -1.70$, $p = .089$, but there was no association between own negative emotionality and relationship satisfaction, $b = -.10$, 95% CI [-.100, -.025], $SE = .02$, $t = -3.24$, $p = .001$. Controlling for open mindedness, there remained association between being charismatic, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.011, .044], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.20$, $p = .233$, and the association between partner charisma and relationship satisfaction was reduced to non-significant, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.006, .049], $SE = .01$, $t = 1.53$, $p = .128$. However, there was no association between being open minded, $b = .02$, 95% CI [-.025, .062], $SE = .02$, $t = .83$, $p = .406$, or having an openminded partner, $b = .04$, 95% CI [-.006, .081], $SE = .02$, $t = .169$, $p = .091$, and relationship satisfaction.

Table S12

Model of Follow-up Relationship Satisfaction Regressed on Charisma and Covariates ($r > .2$) in Study 3

Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Actor Charisma	.01	.85	.393	-.016	.041
Partner Charisma	.02	1.14	.257	-.012	.045
Actor Extraversion	.01	.31	.754	-.039	.054
Partner Extraversion	.01	.95	.344	-.024	.068
Actor Agreeable	-.02	-1.02	.306	-.064	.020
Partner Agreeable	-.02	-.80	.425	-.059	.025
Actor Negative Emotion	-.02	-.85	.398	-.056	.022
Partner Negative Emotion	-.02	-.98	.330	-.059	.020
Actor Openness	.02	1.05	.294	-.016	.054
Partner Openness	.02	.98	.327	-.018	.053

Note. *LL* and *UL* are the lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence intervals.

When testing the association between being charismatic, or having a charismatic partner, and relationship satisfaction at follow-up with all covariates, there were no significant associations between any predictor and relationship satisfaction (see Table S12). Furthermore, we looked at the effect of charisma on follow-up relationship satisfaction with each covariate separately. In models without any covariates, one's own charisma did not predict relationship satisfaction over time, and this remained true in all models controlling for covariates. Partner charisma was associated with higher relationship satisfaction over time, but this only remained significant when controlling for agreeableness, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.009, .054], $SE = .01$, $t = 2.75$, $p = .006$, and openness, $b = .03$, 95% CI [.005, .049], $SE = .01$, $t = 2.37$, $p = .018$. There was no significant association between own or partner level of the Big Five traits and relationship satisfaction.

Gender Analyses in Study 3

We tested for moderations by gender in our APIM model of charisma predicting relationship satisfaction at background, however there was no significant gender moderation of being charismatic, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[-.018, .039]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .72$, $p = .470$, or by having a charismatic partner, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.037, .018]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.67$, $p = .506$. Furthermore, the moderation of the association between conflict and relationship satisfaction by one's own charisma, $b = -.001$, 95% CI $[-.005, .002]$, $SE = .002$, $t = -.67$, $p = .501$, or a partner's charisma, $b = -.0004$, 95% CI $[-.004, .004]$, $SE = .002$, $t = -.19$, $p = .847$, did not differ by gender.

Conflict Resolution Styles in Study 3

In addition to testing the associations between charisma and weekly conflict resolution, we also tested these associations at background. We found that charisma was associated with the compromise strategy, $b = .03$, 95% CI $[.001, .051]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 2.06$, $p = .001$, but having a charismatic partner was not, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[-.006, .033]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 1.36$, $p = .173$. When considering the avoidance strategy, there was no association with being charismatic, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.025, .031]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .21$, $p = .836$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = -.001$, 95% CI $[-.029, .027]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.10$, $p = .919$. Moreover, being charismatic was not associated with the reactivity strategy, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[-.018, -.030]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .47$, $p = .640$, however having a charismatic partner was, $b = .03$, 95% CI $[.001, .050]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 2.04$, $p = .042$. There was no association between being charismatic, $b = -.0001$, 95% CI $[-.029, .029]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.01$, $p = .993$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.026, .032]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .19$, $p = .851$, and the separation strategy. When predicting the dominance strategy, there was no significant association with being charismatic, $b = -.02$, 95% CI $[-.044, .011]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.17$, $p = .242$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = .0001$, 95% CI $[-.027, .027]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .01$, $p = .994$. Lastly, when considering the submission strategy, there was no significant association with being charismatic, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.034, .016]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.73$, $p = .464$, however there was

a significant association with having a charismatic partner, $b = -.02$, 95% CI $[-.049, -.0002]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.98$, $p = .049$.

Furthermore, we also tested whether charisma was associated with the use of different conflict resolution strategies at the weekly level. We found that being charismatic was positively associated with using the compromise strategy, $b = .03$, 95% CI $[.001, .051]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 2.06$, $p = .041$, however having a charismatic partner was not, $b = .02$, 95% CI $[-.009, .040]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 1.22$, $p = .222$. When considering the avoidance strategy, there was no association with being charismatic, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.039, .017]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.76$, $p = .448$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[-.017, .038]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .74$, $p = .458$. Furthermore, being charismatic, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.016, .021]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .29$, $p = .773$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = .01$, 95% CI $[.001, .050]$, $SE = .01$, $t = 1.13$, $p = .258$, was not associated with the reactivity strategy. There was also no association between being charismatic, $b = .003$, 95% CI $[-.022, .028]$, $SE = .01$, $t = .21$, $p = .833$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = -.002$, 95% CI $[-.027, .022]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.19$, $p = .850$, and the separation strategy. When predicting the dominance strategy, there was no significant association with being charismatic, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.034, .016]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.69$, $p = .490$, or having a charismatic partner, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.036, .012]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -.96$, $p = .338$. Lastly, when considering the submission strategy, there was no significant association with being charismatic, $b = -.02$, 95% CI $[-.047, .002]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.79$, $p = .074$, however there was a significant association with having a charismatic partner, $b = -.01$, 95% CI $[-.036, -.011]$, $SE = .01$, $t = -1.05$, $p = .294$.

Mediation Analyses in Study 3

We tested whether charisma was indirectly associated with relationship satisfaction through the use of certain conflict resolution strategies at the weekly level. When testing whether being charismatic predicted relationship satisfaction through the person-mean centred daily mediator, we found an indirect effect of charisma on relationship satisfaction through a greater likelihood of compromise, $b = .001$, 95% CI $[.0001, .003]$, however there was no

significant association with any of the other conflict resolution strategies or by having a partner that endorsed any of the conflict resolution strategies. Additionally, we found a significant indirect effect of charisma on weekly relationship satisfaction through the between-person aggregate of the compromise, $b = .01$, 95% CI [.0004, .013], however there was no significant association by the other conflict resolution strategies or a partner's use of the conflict resolution strategies. In sum, people higher in charisma are more likely to compromise with a partner during conflict (both weekly and over the course of the 4-week study) and in turn, report higher relationship satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4

General Discussion

Although relationship and sexual satisfaction tend to decline over time (Aron et al., 2002; Hirschberger et al., 2009), this is not true for all couples (Acevedo & Aron, 2009; Anderson et al., 2010; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). The Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation (VSA) model posits that enduring vulnerabilities or strengths, such as individual differences, can play a role in how couples adapt to different stressors which subsequently predict their relationship quality (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Indeed, personality traits have been linked to sexual and relationship outcomes (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Kurpisz et al., 2016; Malouff et al., 2010; Weidmann et al., 2016), however, trait charisma, a desirable quality in romantic partners (Flegr et al., 2019) and that has benefits in other interpersonal relationships, such as with co-workers (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Philippe et al., 2010), had not been previously investigated in romantic relationships. In line with past work, our findings demonstrate that charisma is an enduring strength that members of a couple bring to their relationship and is associated with responsiveness to a partner's sexual needs and conflict management, and in turn, overall sexual and relationship quality (see Figure 1 for conceptual model).

In my first paper, I demonstrated that charisma is directly associated with sexual quality (e.g., sexual satisfaction, desire; Path A) and relationship quality (e.g., relationship satisfaction; Path C), which is consistent with past findings that suggest charisma is associated with higher relationship quality with colleagues (Philippe et al., 2010), and charismatic people express greater passion, and job and life satisfaction (Ho & Astakhova, 2020; Nassif et al., 2020; Vallerand, 2015). The model also suggests that charismatic people demonstrate responsiveness in the sexual domain through being more communal during sex, which is, in turn, associated with higher sexual satisfaction and desire (Path B). Past work suggests charismatic people may focus more strongly on the needs of others (House & Howell, 1992; Shamir et al., 1993) and have a greater concern for their colleagues' feelings and needs (Pillai et al., 2003; Podsakoff et al., 1990) compared to less charismatic people, and our findings suggest that this communal responsiveness extends to their romantic and sexual relationships. Past work has demonstrated

the unique benefits of sexual responsiveness in romantic relationships (Burke & Young, 2012; Muise & Impett, 2015; Muise et al., 2013), which here, is shown to be one route through which charismatic people report higher sexual desire for their partner allowing for a more satisfying sex life.

In the second paper, I provide some evidence that being charismatic, having a charismatic partner, or perceiving one's partner as charisma is associated with higher relationship satisfaction (Path C). I also provide evidence that charisma is negatively linked to experiences of conflict (Path D), however, more importantly when couples do experience conflict, perceiving one's partner as charismatic can attenuate the negative association between conflict and relationship satisfaction, such that experiencing more frequent conflict is less steeply associated with low relationship satisfaction for people who perceive their partner as higher in charisma (Path E). One reason why charismatic people are better able to maintain higher relationship satisfaction is that they use better conflict resolution strategies (e.g., positive problem solving, compromise; Path F). These findings are consistent with research that has found charismatic leaders promote cooperation (De Cremer, 2002; Zhang et al., 2011) and lower levels of aggression (Hepworth & Towler, 2004) in their colleagues. Taken together, the current work provides evidence that charisma is an enduring strength that is associated with important relationship outcomes (e.g., sexual and relationship satisfaction), through the use of various adaptive processes (e.g., sexual communal strength, positive conflict resolution).

The key effects of interest across studies ranged in size from small to large ($r_s = .06-.40$). The smallest effects were of partner's self-reported charisma, which is consistent with past research that suggests partner effects tend to be weaker than actor effects when predicting relationship outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment; Joel et al., 2020). The largest and most consistent effects across studies were of perceptions of a partner's charisma predicting sexual and relationship quality. Although we found that people tend to be accurate in their perceptions of their partner's charisma, and do not show a systematic over- or under-perception, these

perceptions likely involve some bias. People tend to project their own traits onto their partners (Fletcher, 2015) or have a tendency to see their partners with rose-coloured glasses in which they focus on the positive aspects (Murray et al., 1996). More work is needed to determine the extent to which people are accurate in their perceptions of their partner's charisma and if the accuracy of these perceptions, as opposed to these other biases, are driving the association between perceived partner charisma and sexual and relationship quality.

It is important to note that at times controlling for relevant covariates—namely extraversion and agreeableness—reduced the strength of the association between charisma and sexual and relationship quality. Although we were able to demonstrate that charisma is distinct from extraversion (the trait that charisma tends to be most highly correlated with), there seems to be some shared variance in the associations with sexual and relationship quality. There were also some inconsistencies across studies that might explain why at times charisma was uniquely associated with the outcomes of interest and at other times, it does not significantly predict key outcomes above and beyond other traits. In Study 3 of the second paper, our effects tend to be weaker overall and did not hold when controlling for the Big 5 personality measure. In this study we used the BFI-2 extra short, which has considerably less reliability and validity compared to the full BFI-2 used in the other studies (Soto & John, 2017b), but was used for brevity given the context of the study (the COVID-19 pandemic). The decreased reliability of the BFI-2 extra short could be a concern when conducting incremental validity tests, where false evidence of incremental validity could occur (Soto & John, 2017b; Westfall & Yarkoni, 2016). Although there was some overlap between charisma and the Big Five when predicting sexual and relationship quality directly, the effect of charisma on relationship processes (e.g., sexual communal strength, conflict resolution strategies) was consistently distinct. Nonetheless, future work should continue to consider how charisma and relevant personality traits are distinct and the unique pathways to relationship outcomes.

Taken together, the current collection of studies builds on our understanding of the associations between personality traits and sexual (Fisher & McNulty, 2008; Kurpysz et al., 2016) and relationship satisfaction (Dyrenforth et al., 2010; Malouff et al., 2010) in romantic relationships. By providing evidence that charisma is distinct from other frequently explored personality traits (e.g., Big Five) and in many cases, was uniquely associated with relationship quality, the current work integrates personality psychology and relationship science to demonstrate how (i.e., through what processes), trait charisma is associated with relationship quality. Including reports from both partners as well as perceptions of a partner's charisma provides additional insights into how charisma is expressed, perceived, and evaluated in romantic relationships (Schaffhuser et al., 2014; Vazire, 2006). The current work suggests that charisma is an enduring strength people bring to their relationships (Karney & Bradbury, 1995) that can underlie romantic relationship processes (e.g., sexual communal strength, conflict resolution) and relationship quality. The current findings highlight the importance of considering charisma, and other individual differences, when investigating how people can maintain satisfying romantic relationships. For example, partners' levels of charisma may be important to consider when developing interventions to help couples maintain satisfying relationships, as charismatic people might be more adaptable to the needs of their partner but may also be more comfortable leading and promoting change rather than taking direction.

Future Directions

Although our findings provide evidence for a link between being charismatic and sexual and romantic relationship satisfaction, our sample is limited to people in established romantic relationships. It is unclear how charisma impacts romantic relationships early on and develops over time. Given that charisma is stated as a desirable quality in potential partners (Flegr et al., 2019) and charismatic people are highly influential on others around them (Ho & Astakhova, 2020; Paulsen et al., 2009; Tskhay et al., 2018), charismatic people may be more successful in attracting partners and may also shape romantic relationship development. Future research

could investigate whether charismatic people are in fact, more desirable as dating partners by following single people as they date and initiate relationships, as well as by following people from earlier stages in their relationship to test whether charisma shapes the maintenance of or changes in desire and satisfaction over time.

Here, I focused primarily on positive relationship processes, but it is possible there is a darker side to charisma. Although there is evidence that charisma is associated with the confident and self-assured qualities of narcissism, but not the more negative aspects of narcissism (Rogoza & Fatfouta, 2020), it is unclear whether some charismatic people may possess qualities that have adverse effects for romantic relationships. For example, given that charismatic people are desirable partners, might they be less trustworthy or more likely to engage in infidelity? An additional novel direction for future work is to further explore the correspondence between partner's charisma. Across studies partners' level of charisma tended to have a small, positive correlation ($r_s = .11-.25$), but the current work does not provide insight on how different levels of charisma in each partner can interact and impact their relationship. It is possible that high levels of charisma in both partners could lead to increased disagreements, as both partners might have strong views, but these disagreements are more likely to be resolved positively.

Finally, future work could expand on the current set of studies by conducting studies using different samples and methodologies. The current set of studies uses samples of people who are primarily White and from Western countries. Past work exploring charisma in workplace contexts suggests that the qualities valued in a charismatic leader can differ depending on cultural context (Den Hartog et al., 1999; Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, & Gumusluoglu, 2013), and this might also be true for relationships. In addition, future research could move beyond self-report and test associations between charisma and relationship quality using behavioural and experimental methods. For example, future research could involve recording

couples as they interact and coding for responsiveness to determine if charismatic people display more responsiveness in conflict or other conversations.

Closing Remarks

To gain a better understanding of who is more likely to maintain relationship quality, across two papers using three different samples, I explored the role of charisma in predicting romantic relationship satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and desire, as well as the relational processes that underlie these associations. Notably, the results of the first paper suggest that charismatic people report greater sexual satisfaction and desire, and these associations can be explained by charismatic people being more communal during sex. In the second paper, I found that charismatic people report greater relationship satisfaction, which is due, in part, to charismatic people using better conflict resolution strategies. When experiencing conflict, perceiving a partner as highly charismatic buffered against the negative impact conflict has on relationship satisfaction. Overall, this work demonstrates the importance of trait charisma in predicting romantic relationship quality by highlighting some of the processes charismatic people may use to maintain a satisfying romantic and sexual relationship.

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