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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Exploring Relationship Dynamics in Polyamorous Families

by

Melody Anne Kaiser

A THESIS

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Abstract

The practice of polyamory appears to be increasing in North America. If so, the number of children being raised in polyamorous families will also rise. The construct of polyamory is still being formulated and more quantitative studies are needed to define, measure, and examine polyamory over time. This study compared 117 polyamorous and 193 monogamous parents on measures of relationship stability, relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles. A new measure that gauges monogamous and polyamorous propensities, the Monogamy Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire (MPSQ), was also examined for its use in future polyamory research. Analyses indicated that compared to monogamous parents, polyamorous parents reported (a) having healthier relationships with more social support, companionship, and less social distress from negative relationships; (b) using the constructive communication style of compromise more, and the destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination less; (c) higher relationship satisfaction; and (d) using the authoritative parenting style to a greater extent. Gender differences were only found on the MPSQ, with men scoring significantly higher than women. The MPSQ demonstrated psychometrics evidence of high reliability, good construct validity, and strong predictive validity. This study provides evidence that polyamorous families may be just as healthy, if not healthier than monogamous families. These findings have implications for counselling and health professionals, as well as for marriage and family law to ensure policies and practices do not discriminate against those who practice polyamory. Researchers may use the MPSQ to improve upon participant self-categorization and examine the stability of polyamory over time.

Acknowledgements

It is difficult to articulate the scale of gratitude I have for all the individuals who provided priceless support to me along the arduous journey of bringing this work to completion. I feel so lucky to have had Dr. Lorraine Radtke as my primary supervisor, and the statistical expertise of my secondary supervisor, Dr. Man-Wai Chu, to help me navigate such an ambitious quantitative study. I learned more about the academic process of bringing a thesis from conceptualization to tangible actualization than I ever imagined possible. Your encouragement, belief in me, and commitment to seeing me through to the end helped me keep going when I wanted to quit. Lorraine, thank you for your unwavering guidance as I worked to complete this thesis while also overcoming some difficult life experiences. Through it all, you showed me kindness, understanding, patience, and reassured me that I was not alone in this. I am also incredibly fortunate to receive continued mentorship from my past Honours supervisor, Dr. Jan Cioe, who was the first to help me discover my academic wings in psychology and show me that I could fly. Thank you for reminding me that I can always fly higher if I want to.

To my mom and step-dad, Barry, thank you for being my loudest cheerleaders. Barry, you always told me how strong I am. But it's only now, almost two years after you've passed and after learning how to carry on without you that I finally believe in myself, love myself, and feel strong. I can just imagine your chuckle, as you'd reply, "Well it's about time!" Thanks for being proud of me. To my best friends, Jennifer and Corinne, thank you for coming into my life at just the right time. It's as if the universe knew that we would need each other during this chapter of our lives. To my rave family, and the music of Neon Steve, the Funk Hunters, and Lazy Syrup Orchestra, thanks for all of the dance therapy that helped heal and rejuvenate me so that I could keep going. To my cats, Chief and Lola, thank you for being so soft and sweet.

This work is dedicated to anyone who's had their grad studies derailed due to a major loss or trauma. Grad school is not for the faint of heart. Even if everything goes smoothly and no additional curve balls are thrown your way, it is still an enormous feat. When life does happen, grad school can feel overwhelming and as if it will never end. So if you're struggling to find the motivation to finish, you are not alone. I believe in the tenacity of the human spirit, by which we are somehow able to show resilience through hardship and still accomplish great things. If I can do it, so can you.

List of Abbreviations

ASRS – Adult Social Relationship Scale

CM – committed monogamous

CNM – consensually non-monogamous

CSI – Couples Satisfaction Index

DFA – Discriminant Function Analysis

DW – Durbin-Watson

EFA – Exploratory Factor Analysis

GFI – Goodness of Fit Index

IRT – Item Response Theory

M – Mean

MAP – Minimum Average Partial

ML – Maximum Likelihood

MPSQ – Monogamy Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire

RPCS – Romantic Partner Conflict Scale

RMSR – Root Mean Square Residual

PPQ – Parenting Practices Questionnaire

Q-Q Plot – Quantile Quantile

SD – Standard Deviation

Sig – Statistical Significance, i.e., *p*-value

SP – Shapiro Wilks

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Table of Contents

Abstract ii

Acknowledgements iii

List of Abbreviations v

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 1
- Polyamory as a Relationship Type 2
- Problems, Controversies, and Gaps in the Literature 7
- Significance of the Research 10
- Aims and Objectives of the Thesis 11
- Chapter Summary and Thesis Structure 14

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW 15
- Explanations for Non-Monogamy 16
- Who Practices Polyamory? 22
- Modernizing the Constructs of "Marriage" and the "Family" 24
- Unknown Facets of Polyamory: Questions to be Addressed in This Thesis 26
- Summary of Variables, Research Questions, and Hypotheses of the Present Study 44

METHOD 47
- Rationale for Research Methodology 47
- Ethical Considerations 48
- Sampling Procedures and Data Collection 48
- Measures 50
- Analytic Procedures 65

RESULTS 71
- Participant Characteristics 71
- Analytic Results 74
- Mean Comparisons Between Groups: Research Questions 1-6 79
- Relationships Among the Subscales: Research Question 7 84

DISCUSSION 90
- Main Findings 90
- Confirming Past Research 91
- Deviations from Past Research 95
- Unique Contributions of this Study 97
- Implications: Counselling Practices, Family Law, and Theory 100
- Limitations and Challenges of This Study 103
- Future Polyamory Research Directions 104
- Conclusion 107

References 109
Appendix A 140
Appendix B 141
Appendix C 142
Appendix D 162
Appendix E 165
Appendix F 166

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Polyamory is an emerging relationship type that refers to consensual non-monogamous romantic relationship arrangements (Haritaworn, Lin, & Klesse, 2006). Although the prevalence of polyamory around the world is unknown, its practice appears to be on the rise in North America. In the United States, an estimated 9.8 million people are engaged in some form of consensual non-monogamy, and an estimated 1.4-2.4 million people practice polyamory (Sheff, 2014a). In Canada, the Canadian Polyamory Advocacy Association estimates that there are 1700 polyamorous families in Canada (Canadian Polyamory Advocacy Association, 2019), and a recent study demonstrated that 82% of Canadians believe the practice of polyamory is increasing (Boyd, 2017). There are as yet no statistics available through Statistics Canada however.

Similarly, there is a lack of population statistics for polyamorous families that include children. Although there is some evidence to suggest that people who practice polyamory express a lower desire to have children in their lifetime (Kaiser, Cioe, & O'Connor, 2016), within a large convenience sample of Canadians in polyamorous relationships, about one quarter of those practicing polyamory were full-time parents or caregivers to at least one dependent child and just under 9% were part-time parents or caregivers to a dependent child (Boyd, 2017). If the number of individuals practicing polyamory is indeed increasing, then it follows that the number of children being raised within polyamorous family arrangements will also increase. It is thus imperative for those who educate and work with children and families (e.g., teachers, child and family counselling psychologists, family doctors, etc.) to know what polyamory is and be aware of the relationship dynamics within polyamorous families. To this end, in this study, I examined the relational phenomena of relationship stability, relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles within polyamorous families. I

adopted a comparative approach to explore similarities and differences between polyamorous and monogamous families along these four relationship aspects, and assessed the claims of measurement validity of a recently developed questionnaire that distinguishes between self-identified polyamorous and monogamous individuals based on their thoughts and behaviours related to intimate relationships.

In this chapter, I first introduce polyamory, outlining what it is and what it is not. Specifically, I review (a) the motivations individuals offer for their practice of polyamory, (b) the different styles of practicing polyamory, and (c) how polyamory differs from polygamy and *cheating*. Next, I summarize some of the controversies and gaps in the polyamory literature, which informed the significance, aims, and objectives of this thesis. Finally, I situate myself in the research and explain how I first came to ask the questions about polyamory that led to this study.

Polyamory as a Relationship Type

Polyamory is a non-monogamous relationship style that prioritizes consent, open communication, autonomy, and respect between all partners involved. The Oxford Dictionary defines polyamory as "the practice of engaging in multiple sexual relationships with the consent of all the people involved" (Oxford University Press, 2019). The rules and boundaries that guide the sexual and emotional relationships among polyamorous partners (e.g., style of polyamory, dating together or separately, and number of partners) are negotiated and agreed to by the partners prior to engaging in them (Haritaworn et al., 2006; Veaux, 2015). Honest communication between partners, consent, and respecting/following the rules agreed upon are what lead some to refer to polyamory as *responsible, ethical, and consensual non-monogamy* (Anapol, 2010; Easton & Liszt, 1997).

Although polyamory is far from an accepted norm in Western society, it is sufficiently common to suggest that it meets the relationship needs of some individuals. Within Western society, however, romantic love and marriage are idealized and one's partner (singular) is expected to satisfy a number of interpersonal and emotional needs (DePaulo & Morris, 2005; Gillis, 1996). Cultural norms emphasize monogamy, thereby restricting the expected means of achieving fulfillment of romantic intimacy, sexual passion, and companionship to a single relationship (Drigotas & Rusbult, 1992). Social scientists though have questioned whether it is rational or even healthy to expect one person to satisfy all of one's interpersonal, emotional, intellectual, and sexual needs (Charles, 2002; DePaulo & Morris, 2005). For some individuals, practicing polyamory may allow them to achieve greater need fulfillment and/or improve overall relationship satisfaction levels compared to being restricted to monogamy (Cook, 2005; Sheff, 2006, 2011).

Past research has found that most polyamorous relationships involve three partners (Wosick-Carrea, 2010), but relationship arrangements may be *hierarchical* or *non-hierarchical*. In hierarchical polyamorous arrangements, there is a *primary* relationship, i.e., a partner with whom high levels of commitment and intimacy are shared (Cook, 2005; Klesse, 2006; Veaux, 2015); additional relationships and partners are then referred to as *secondary*. Such arrangements are referred to as *hierarchical,* because the primary partners' needs and power in decision making have a higher priority than those of secondary partners (Klesse, 2006; Veaux, 2011). It also is possible to have a polyamorous arrangement with multiple primary relationships (i.e., when two or more partners hold primary standing). *Swinging*, which is when couples or partners agree to share sexual experiences with other individuals or couples (Veaux, 2019a), may be categorized as constituting a form of hierarchical polyamory. Notably, although hierarchical

polyamory is the most commonly practiced style of polyamory (Wosick-Correa, 2010), some who practice polyamory interpret the term "primary" as disrespectful and explicitly reject the notion that any of their relationships should be held in higher regard than others (Boyd, 2017). *Nonhierarchical* polyamory is practiced when partners do not label, or emphasize, the primacy of any of their relationships. All partners are considered to be equal in terms of commitment and decision making power, regardless of relationship length or even parental status (Boyd, 2017).

Other variations include *closed* vs. *open* polyamorous arrangements (Veaux, 2019a). Closed polyamory involves three or more partners who practice *polyfidelity*, which is a monogamous type of commitment to restrict romantic or sexual activity to the partners within the closed arrangement. In other words, the partners in closed arrangements do not pursue or develop intimate relationships outside of their *polycule*. *Polycule* is a term that was coined by those practicing polyamory and refers to the polyamorous relationship arrangement between partners (Veaux, 2019a). Each polycule type can be visually represented to illustrate how such arrangements are structured (please see Figure 1 for several polycule examples).

Open polyamory on the other hand involves an agreement for at least one of the partners in a polycule to pursue and develop new relationships with prospective relationship partners outside of the original polycule (Veaux, 2019a). In an open arrangement, a polycule may change over time. Finally, *solo* polyamory is practiced when there is an emphasis on the autonomy to choose partners and have flexibility in relationship arrangements. Solo polyamory may also be referred to as *relationship anarchy*, which is the belief or practice that people are free to enter any relationships they desire (Veaux, 2019a). Relationship anarchy values spontaneity and freedom so that relationships are not restricted by duty or obligation. A person practicing solo polyamory or relationship anarchy may not live with any of their partner(s), regardless of how

valued or long-term their relationships are (Veaux, 2019a). Whatever the arrangement type, polyamorous relationships are characterized by consent, emotional intimacy, romance, commitment, and may not involve sex between all partners.

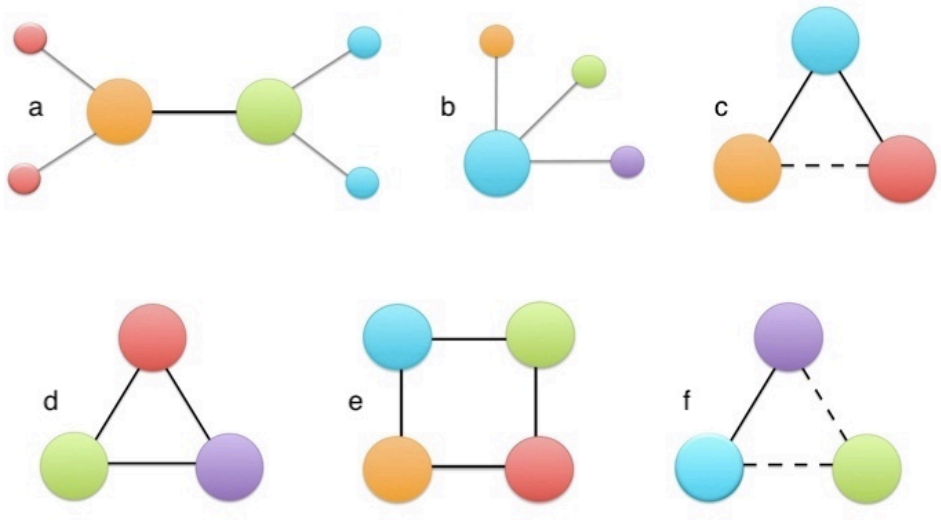

Figure 1. Polycule examples. a = Hierarchical (the larger circles represent a primary partnership, and the smaller circles represent secondary partners); b = Non-hierarchical (smaller circles represent partners that a polyamorist is equally committed to); c = Metamour (a broken line represents a lack of commitment between two partners who have a relationship with the same polyamorous partner; metamours may be monogamous or polyamorous); d = closed triad (three polyamorous partners who are romantically involved and committed to one another, but do not seek out romantic partners outside of their relationships with one another); e = Closed quad (three polyamorous partners who are romantically involved and committed to one another, but do not seek out romantic partners outside of their relationships with one another); f = Unicorn (the circle connected to both partners with broken lines represents a bisexual individual who is willing to be sexually involved with a committed couple).

Distinguishing polyamory from polygamy and cheating. Many mistake polyamory for polygamy, and hence, it is important to note the differences between these two non-monogamous relationship types. Polygamy is traditionally associated with patriarchal cultures that afford men

the freedom to take multiple wives, but deny women the same freedom (Hubbard, 2012). In polygamous marriages, women are not consulted and have no authority to question their husbands' decision to take another wife. This is markedly different from the modern practice of polyamory, which some argue embodies feminist values through emphasizing egalitarianism, communication, respect, and consent of all partners (Veaux, 2015).

Another common misjudgement occurs when people liken polyamory to cheating behaviour and detached promiscuity. To the contrary, polyamory is not a lifestyle choice or belief system that encourages cheating (The Polyamory Society, 2019a; Veaux, 2015), but as already noted, involves honesty and open communication about the polyamorous arrangement between consenting partners who are fully aware of the rules and boundaries in place (Boyd, 2017; The Polyamory Society, 2019b; Veaux, 2015). Behaviour typically associated with cheating and betrayal (e.g., lying or hiding truths, meeting in secret) is not supported and tempting others who are in monogamous relationships to cheat on their partners is not considered "poly" (Veaux, 2015).

Part of the reason for the mistaken association between polyamory and infidelity is that most studies on non-monogamy have been conducted within the context of cheating, in which non-monogamous, open-relationship behaviour is *not* consensual (Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011; Wiederman, 1997; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999). Due to a lack of empirical research on consensual non-monogamy, motivations and behaviours associated with polyamorous relationships are not well understood by many, including counselling psychologists and other health professionals (Berry & Barker, 2014; Klesse, 2018; Zimmerman, 2012). Applying insights from cheating studies to those practicing polyamory is highly problematic, because this assumes that polyamory is a result of negative relationship factors (e.g., lack of emotional connection or

communication) or individual personality deficits (e.g., narcissism, high impulsivity, or sex addiction; Graham, 2014; Zimmerman, 2012). Without a valid understanding of polyamory that is based on samples of participants who practice polyamory, serious misunderstandings of the motivations and behaviours involved in polyamorous relationships, and mistreatment of those who practice polyamory, will continue to occur in both professional and lay settings (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016).

Problems, Controversies, and Gaps in the Literature

In the past and to the present day, mental health professionals have pathologized polyamorous relationships (Graham, 2014; Zimmerman, 2012). This is largely a consequence of overgeneralizing the findings from studies on monogamous infidelity and disconnected promiscuity to polyamorous relationships; the result of this has been increased stigma towards polyamory as a relationship and lifestyle choice (Barnett, 2014; Riggs, 2010). Links to psychopathology based on studies of non-consensual non-monogamy are unhelpful in understanding polyamory because they are not supported by research on polyamorous motivations or behaviours (Blumberg, 2003; Klein, 2015). Specifically, studies on infidelity have found that individuals who engage in cheating behaviour do so impulsively (Mehrinejad & Shahabi, 2018), are detached from the relationship (Campbell & Foster, 2002; Ignat, 2018), and do not gain the consent of all relationship partners (Johnson, Sellbom, & Glenn, 2018). By contrast, those involved in polyamorous relationships strive to practice the opposite: *intentional, consensual, connected, romantic relationship arrangements* (Veaux, 2015). Practicing multiple relationships in such fundamentally different ways may have very different effects. To explore this, my research explored the quality of relationships in polyamorous families.

Traditional ideas about relationships, family, and marriage have also resulted in beliefs about polyamory based on the assumption that monogamy is more "natural" or qualitatively superior (Christensen, 1973). The presumed advantages of monogamous relationships include higher sexual and relationship satisfaction, less jealousy, and better adjustment among children; however, the literature does not provide empirical support for such claims (Conley, Ziegler, Moors, Matsick, & Valentine, 2013). Polyamorous parenting is further stigmatized by definitions of marriage and family that assume consensual non-monogamy is not only harmful to these institutions, but also harmful to children's psychological wellbeing (Klesse, 2018; Sheff, 2011). Once again, there is no evidence in the literature to support these claims. Hence, my study explored parenting practices within polyamorous families.

Assumptions that monogamous relationships are the healthiest form of intimate relationship and a lack of familiarity with polyamorous relationships contribute to negative counselling experiences between polyamorous clients and counselling professionals (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016). Individuals in polyamorous relationships or interested in exploring consensual non-monogamy have reported encountering uninformed health professionals when seeking out counselling services (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Weitzman, 2006). This lack of understanding, particularly when polyamory is equated with cheating and infidelity, results in frustrations for clients who feel negatively judged and misdiagnosed with a problem that does not exist (e.g., unmanageable sexual impulses; Graham, 2014; Zimmerman, 2012). In order to ensure that clients practicing polyamory receive the best care, some have called for regulated counselling bodies to ensure that practicing professionals are adequately educated on polyamory, wary of assuming that monogamy is the superior relationship type, and encouraged to reflect on how their assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes toward monogamy and polyamory fit with existing

knowledge (Blumberg, 2003; Klein, 2015). To accomplish this sufficiently, more research on polyamorous relationships is required. This need appears to have been formally acknowledged by the Society for the Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity within the American Psychological Association, which has very recently put together a Consensual Non-Monogamy Task Force (American Psychological Association, 2019). My study makes a contribution to the growing interest in the topic.

According to psychologists and researchers interested in marginalized sexualities, large sample polyamory studies are needed so that health professionals have relevant literature to refer to when working with polyamorous clients (Barker, 2005; Blumberg, 2003; Boyd, 2017; Graham, 2014; Haritaworn et al., 2006; Klesse, 2006 & 2014; Zimmerman, 2012). Large sample studies provide researchers and health professionals alike with a better understanding of the norms within the polyamorous community, as well as greater confidence in the generalizability of any conclusions based on the research. For this reason, I employed a large sample in my study.

Finally, although the polyamory community has defined polyamory and agreed upon the values that should be upheld in polyamorous relationships (Veaux, 2015, 2019a), the construct of polyamory has yet to be quantitatively defined, measured, and studied over time; and thus, is still being formulated by researchers. To date, all of the polyamory studies conducted have relied upon participants' self-identification to determine who practices polyamory. However, subjective categorization is not sufficient to define polyamory as a construct, as it is unclear whether or not participants' self-identifications match researchers' definitions of polyamory. Also, it does not allow for comparisons among people who practice polyamory and may differ somewhat in their thoughts and behaviours. Just as other psychological constructs require an objective means of

measurement to define them and quantify the extent to which individuals possess them (Coulacoglou & Saklofske, 2017), polyamory requires an objective means of measurement for the thoughts and behaviours associated with it. Such a measure would allow researchers to distinguish between individuals based on the degree to which their thoughts and behaviours conform to current understandings of polyamory. There is clearly a continuing need among health professionals and researchers for greater understanding of polyamory as a set of thoughts and behaviours, and the present study attempts to address this need.

Significance of the Research

Understanding the relationship dynamics within polyamorous family structures is necessary for at least three reasons. First, it ensures that counselling resources aimed at strengthening families (e.g., counselling services and courses on relationships and parenting for young parents) are well informed of polyamorous parents' and children's needs, relevant to polyamorous families, and effective (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Klesse, 2018; Weitzman, 2006). Second, societal institutions and decision makers (e.g., in family law, parental custody/rights, divorce, and asset separation) need to be informed on the changing demographics their policies must speak to (Boyd, 2017; Henrich & Trawinski, 2016). Third, it contributes to decreasing the harmful social stigma currently associated with the polyamory lifestyle and those who identify as polyamorous (Berry & Barker, 2013; Klesse, 2018).

Not only does polyamory potentially violate the assumed superiority and relationship health of monogamy (Conley, Perry, Gusakova, & Piemonte, 2019; Conley et al., 2013; Henrich & Trawinski, 2016), the practice of polyamory within family contexts challenges the normativity of society's traditional definition of the family (Klesse, 2018; Riggs, 2010). Negative attitudes toward polyamorous families are largely rooted in a culture that assumes polyamorous family

arrangements are inherently problematic for the partners involved, the children growing up within them, and the larger society (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Klesse, 2018; Riggs, 2010). As divorce and split family arrangements have become more commonplace, however, family structures seem to resemble the traditional nuclear family-ideal less and less. Rather than interpreting this as an indication that healthy families are relics of the past, polyamory researchers and family counselling psychologists believe that we may identify components of relational health through empirical research on today's emerging family arrangements, including polyamorous parents and families (Klesse, 2018; Pallotta-Chiarolli, Haydon, & Hunter, 2013; Sheff, 2011). We may then use this understanding to construct a new family ideal that is inclusive of non-nuclear families.

Aims and Objectives of the Thesis

This study seeks to add to knowledge about polyamorous relationships and families. My objectives are thus two-fold: (1) To explore the similarities and differences in relationship dynamics between polyamorous and monogamous families, and (2) To test the measurement validity claims of a questionnaire designed to distinguish between individuals practicing monogamy from individuals practicing polyamory based on their self-reported thoughts and behaviours. I compared polyamorous and monogamous families, as monogamous families are usually treated as the standard by health professionals and society more generally. Showing similarities and differences is therefore necessary to inform those who need to know about the relationship qualities of polyamorous relationships. It also contributes generally to the emerging picture of polyamory and could potentially lead to a re-consideration of what makes up a healthy family. The second objective was included because a polyamory measure is needed to understand what defines and differentiates polyamory from monogamy.

Situating myself in the research. I became interested in open relationships and learned about polyamory about ten years ago. As well, I practiced polyamory for about three years within a primary relationship of six years. When I voiced my interest in exploring polyamory during that time, I was the recipient of negative judgments by others, who often assumed that I suffered from mental or emotional health problems. Some female friends no longer trusted me around their partners as they feared that I would not respect the monogamous boundaries of their relationships. When my partner and I sought out counselling from a highly-regarded sex psychologist to help us navigate the rules and boundaries of an open relationship, we were told that, "according to the literature, open relationships don't work." This clinician would only work with us if we agreed to remain monogamous. I felt very discouraged and unsupported, which led me to seek out relevant knowledge in the literature. My literature review revealed just how unfounded the psychologist's claims had been—there were no studies that had found open or polyamorous relationships to be unsuccessful. In fact, there were hardly any studies on open relationships at all. Rather than finding out why open relationships do not work, I found a substantial research gap with less than a handful of quantitative studies on polyamory.

This questioning led me to complete an honours thesis on this topic in 2015. By comparing 345 people involved in monogamous relationships and 224 people involved in polyamorous relationships on variables predicted to influence their chosen relationship type, I identified some key factors that contribute to successful, long-term polyamorous relationships. Compared to individuals in committed, long-term monogamous relationships, people in committed, long-term polyamorous relationships (a) were much more likely to identify as bisexual, (b) experienced far lower levels of jealousy and control towards romantic partners, (c) expressed a lower desire to have children, and (d) endorsed non-monogamous thoughts/desires

and behaviours to a far greater extent. Furthermore, I found that participants' relationship type was unrelated to relationship length, secure and insecure attachment styles, or the personality facets of neuroticism and conscientiousness. Finally, the least favourable scores on four of the measures that are not aligned with a healthy relationship (i.e., high jealousy, insecure attachment, high neuroticism, and low conscientiousness) were obtained by those who were currently practicing a relationship type that was inconsistent with their endorsed thoughts/desires and behaviours (i.e., they had thoughts/desires and behaviours consistent with monogamy but were in a polyamorous relationship, or they had thoughts/desires and behaviours consistent with polyamory but were in a monogamous relationship). To summarize, the differences and similarities identified between people practicing polyamory and monogamy suggest that distinct motivations and life goals are associated with propensities to engage in consensual non-monogamy. Further, those scoring highest on qualities not conducive to a healthy relationship were involved in relationships at odds with the type of relationships they desired.

It has been four years since my Honours research, and although I no longer practice polyamory in my current relationship, I was motivated to conduct a further study in an effort to address the harmful impacts of the stigma associated with polyamorous relationships. My honours thesis research emerged from a personal desire to learn more about polyamory in the absence of much research and after experiencing stigmatizing treatment from an uninformed clinician. By contrast, this study does not stem from any personal questions. It seeks to fill some gaps in the literature and help inform counselling practices and social policies that will affect polyamorous families. In consideration of potential researcher bias, I am not attached to any specific outcomes of this study (e.g., I am not a parent and do not identify as polyamorous). My

use of quantitative methods has further helped to minimize any unconscious influence on the outcomes of the research.

Chapter Summary and Thesis Structure

In this chapter, I provided a basic overview of the practice of polyamory, the associated problems and gaps in the literature, and justification for more research. I briefly outlined the aims and objectives of my study and situated myself in the research. Chapter two expands on each of these areas with a review of the literature. I identify the variables of interest in my study related to polyamorous families and put forward my hypotheses. Chapter three outlines the methods of data collection, measurement, and analyses I have selected to test my hypotheses and explore unstudied aspects of polyamorous families. Chapter four presents the results. Finally, in Chapter five I (a) discuss the similarities and differences between my results and the literature, (b) highlight the unique contributions of this study, and (c) consider the implications of these findings for counselling practices and future directions for researchers. I conclude with a summary of the scope of this study, its findings, and limitations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on polyamory has grown over the last 15 years but remains primarily composed of first-person narratives (Barker, 2005; Barnett, 2014; Haritaworn et al., 2006; Zimmerman, 2012), case studies (Graham, 2014; Konopacki & Dei, 1988), and qualitative interviews of small samples (Aguilar, 2013; Blumberg, 2003; Klesse, 2006). Topics covered include studies on need fulfillment (Mitchell, Bartholomew, & Cobb, 2014); autonomy/agency (Wosick-Correa, 2010); negotiating non-monogamous agreements and rules (McLean, 2004; Wosick-Correa, 2010); values of equality, commitment, and privacy within swinging relationships (Vaillancourt & Few-Demo, 2014); gender and polyamory (Ritchie & Barker, 2007; Sheff, 2005, 2006); the emergence of a polyamorous vocabulary (Ritchie & Barker, 2006); and the construction of polyamorous identity and legality of a polyamorous sexual orientation (Klesse, 2014; Robinson, 2013; Tweedy, 2011); discriminatory criminalization in the *Criminal Code of Canada* (Barnett, 2014) and the need to expand the legal definitions of *parent, spouse, guardian,* etc., to include polyamorous arrangements so that such discrimination is eliminated from institutionalized policies and practices (Boyd, 2017); polyamorous and bisexual parenting (Moss, 2012; Pallotta et al., 2013); and polyamorous communal living (Aguilar, 2013).

Very few large-sample studies (i.e., $N \geq 100$) have been conducted with people in polyamorous relationships and even fewer with polyamorous families (Barker & Langdridge, 2010). Boyd's (2017) study is the only large, quantitative study with polyamorous families currently found in the literature. It focused on (a) identifying the values of people in polyamorous families, (b) exploring the structure of polyamorous families (e.g., number of partners, households), (c) the challenges people in polyamorous families face given the current legal definitions of marriage, family, and parental rights, and (d) suggestions for changes in

social policies and institutions to include people in polyamorous relationships and polyamorous families.

Despite the extensive grey literature on polyamory, throughout my review of the literature I have made every effort to cite academic peer-reviewed studies. I first present what is known about polyamory. Next, I identify the remaining research gaps in the polyamory literature. Finally, I present the research questions and variables utilized in the present study.

Explanations for Non-Monogamy

In *Patterns of Sexual Behavior*, a major publication of historical and cross-cultural anthropology research, Ford and Beach (1951) found that of 191 human societies studied, up to 40% have tolerated or approved of non-monogamy. The cultures examined included 57 from North America, 33 from Africa, 26 from South America, 28 from Eurasia, and 48 from Oceana (Ford & Beach, 1951). Other researchers looking at the sexual behaviours in mammalian primate species of both humans and animals have concluded that humans tend to practice social monogamy, but this should not be confused with sexual monogamy (Barash & Lipton, 2001). In socially monogamous societies, individuals live together in pairs, share resources, are sexually intimate, and raise children together (McKay, 2000). Although North American cultures often assume that social monogamy includes sexual monogamy, cheating/infidelity studies provide evidence that many individuals in fact fail to live up to monogamy standards within their monogamous relationships (Brand, Markey, Mills, & Hodges, 2007; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999). Additionally, it appears that sexual minorities are more comfortable openly practicing non-monogamy than heterosexuals (Adam, 2006; Barker, 2005; Klesse, 2006; Wosick-Correa, 2010). Various explanations have been put forward to explain this, including evolutionary theory, need fulfillment, and relationship satisfaction.

Evolution. Evolutionary theory contends that monogamy emerged to protect resource investment and increase biological survival (Campbell, 1972). It is presumed that non-monogamy poses a potential threat to the mutual exchange of sacrifices and benefits between partners who have biological investments to protect (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008), and therefore, mate-guarding behaviours (e.g., jealousy and control) emerged to promote monogamy by using aggression to deter potential competitors from stealing one's mate. This account suggests that there may be fundamental differences in feelings about non-monogamy between individuals (both men and women) who desire to have children and experience parenthood and those who do not. Those who want to have children may possess an increased concern for biological survival, leading to an instinctual preference for monogamy and tendencies to express mate-guarding behaviours. Likewise, those who do not want children may feel less threatened by polyamorous behaviour, because there are no children to protect.

Consistent with this explanation, men and women who practice polyamory report lower desires to have children and experience significantly less jealousy in their romantic relationships than people who practice monogamy (Kaiser et al., 2016). Further, individuals with a low desire to become parents report experiencing more non-monogamous thoughts and behaviours compared to people with a high desire to have children (Kaiser et al., 2016). Additionally, monogamous propensities are strongest in parents of newborns, weaken as children grow older, and are the weakest among individuals who have no children (Kaiser et al., 2016).

Motivations to practice consensual non-monogamy may also arise due to imbalances in partner availability and resources. Such explanations stem from economic principles that govern mate valuation, selection, and bonding (i.e., the Law of Supply and Demand applied to the mating market). For example, if there are fewer male partners with sufficient resources to

provide for female partners and offspring, then females may be inclined to share the males with more resources (Gould, Moav, & Simhon, 2008). Another example is demonstrated by the *alloparenting hypothesis*, whereby women are motivated to work together to share resources and caregiving responsibilities for their offspring to alleviate the individual workload of providing all resources and maternal caregiving effort alone. Researchers point to greater sexual fluidity in women (Kuhle & Radtke, 2013) as evidence of the alloparenting hypothesis, which states that women's desire and ability to form romantic attachments with other women provide adaptive value for rearing children to reproductive age through additional resources and caregiving attention (Fisher, Burch, & RI, 2017; Kenkel, Perkeybile, & Carter, 2017). By practicing alloparenting, women reduce both reproductive and physical childrearing effort by 14-29% (Bogin, Bragg, & Kuzawa, 2014), thus extending and improving women's quality of life (Kenkel et al., 2017). Consistent with this hypothesis, there is a greater likelihood for females who practice polyamory to identify as bisexual (Kaiser et al., 2016; Sheff, 2011).

Another prevalent argument from the evolutionary perspective explains male promiscuity and non-monogamous behaviour as arising from the need to have as many sexual partners as possible to increase the chances of having offspring (Buss, 2007; Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Men hold more permissive attitudes toward having more lifetime sexual partners and maintaining multiple sexual relationships at one time (Einon, 1994; Greeley, 1994; Hughes, Harrison, & Gallup, 2004; Wiederman, 1997; Vaillancourt & Few-Demo, 2014). My honours study found that men in both monogamous and polyamorous relationships endorsed non-monogamous thoughts, desires, and behaviours to a significantly greater extent than women practicing monogamy and polyamory, respectively (Kaiser et al., 2016). However, the popular belief that men are *far* more promiscuous than women may be exaggerated (Brand et al., 2007). Wiederman

and Hurd (1999), for example, found that 75% of men and 68% of women had engaged in extradyadic, i.e., “cheating” behaviour, while in a monogamous relationship. These findings suggest that non-monogamy is more widely practiced than popular opinion suggests, even among self-declared monogamous people.

Despite being used to account for monogamy and non-monogamy, evolutionary theory has been criticized, and one should be careful not to assume that either relationship type is simply natural, moral, or ‘best’ (Confer et al., 2010; Hamilton, 2008; Wilson, Dietrich & Clark, 2003). The phenomenon of rape is a salient example frequently used to illustrate concerns that based on evolutionary theory some have interpreted social problems to be natural or biological—although rape was believed to be ‘natural’ in the past, many human societies have now deemed it an unacceptable violation of bodily autonomy (United Nations, 1993). Evolutionary theory has also influenced social expectations, and these in turn shape the development of men’s and women’s sexual identities (Ismail, Martens, Landau, Greenberg, & Weise, 2012). For example, the idea that biological investments motivate human behaviour (Buss, 2007) has resulted in beliefs and expectations that create the sexual double standard, by which men are expected to be inherently promiscuous sexual conquerors and women are expected to be inherently monogamous, modest sexual gatekeepers (Emmerink, Vanwesenbeeck, van den Eijnden, & ter Bogt, 2016). Just as we cannot assume that non-monogamy is morally neutral because it is biologically driven, we also cannot assume that *all* non-monogamy is naturally occurring, because our sexual identities are influenced by social expectations. Whether or not monogamy and non-monogamy can be accounted for by human evolutionary history, there remains a need to understand the nature of the relationships with which they are associated.

Need fulfillment and relationship satisfaction. Alternative explanations for multiple romantic/sexual relationships focus on need fulfillment and relationship satisfaction. Need fulfillment covers a number of different relationship needs such as emotional intimacy, emotional support, freedom, intellectual stimulation, and sexual intimacy (Mitchell, et al., 2014). Relationship satisfaction is the extent to which an individual is happy or satisfied with the entirety of one's relationship (e.g., communication, time spent together, problem solving, etc.) (Hendrick, 1988). The *Additive Model* suggests that polyamory provides individuals with the opportunity to experience greater need fulfillment (e.g., emotional, sexual, and intellectual needs) than is possible with one monogamous partner (Cook, 2005; Sheff, 2006). Higher overall need fulfillment may then lead to higher relationship satisfaction due to the positive association between supportive relationships, psychological health (La Guardia, Ryan, Couchman, & Deci, 2000), and life satisfaction (Stinnett, Collins, & Montgomery, 1970). Consistent with this model, some people practicing polyamory report that new relationships can positively impact pre-existing relationships with increases in excitement and sexual satisfaction (Cook, 2005; Muise, Laughton, Moors, & Impett, 2019).

The *Compensation Model* posits that individuals may seek to compensate for lower relationship satisfaction and need fulfillment in one relationship by finding fulfillment and satisfaction in another (Mitchell et al., 2014). This model is based on the *Principle of Substitution* (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), which states that motivations to create new attachments emerge when the need to belong is not fulfilled in our current relationship(s). Additionally, the *Deficit Model* of infidelity suggests that extradyadic behaviour occurs when needs are unfulfilled in a primary relationship (Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006). Indeed, studies find that individuals who cheat commonly cite low relationship satisfaction (Mark et al.,

2011), as well as extradyadic relationships meeting sexual and/or emotional needs that a primary relationship does not (Allen et al., 2008).

When applied to the polyamorous context, these models suggest that people practicing polyamory may engage in multiple relationships to achieve greater need fulfillment and relationship satisfaction overall or to compensate for unfulfilled needs in each relationship, respectively (Balzarini et. al., 2017; Mitchell et al., 2014). If permitted to fulfill needs in other relationships, polyamory may even protect one's primary relationship from ending by buffering one's relationship satisfaction and commitment to a partner who does not completely fulfill one's needs. Interestingly, there is evidence to suggest that the additive model applies to both men and women, but the deficit model may hold more strongly for women. Muise et al., (2019) found that men report greater sexual satisfaction in a primary relationship when they are more sexually satisfied in a secondary relationship, while women appear to be more motivated to seek out additional partners when they experience lower sexual fulfillment with their primary partner. Although it is speculative to propose that people who cheat would be inclined to be openly polyamorous with their partners instead, Sheff (2011) argues that polyamory may be an ethical way of achieving complete need fulfillment by engaging in multiple relationships without cheating behaviours and their negative consequences (e.g., dishonesty, betrayal, and breaking up with a primary partner).

Summary. This section considered evolution, need fulfillment, and relationship satisfaction as possible explanations for why individuals engage in non-monogamy (both cheating and polyamorous behaviour in humans). Although polyamory is by no means a *solution* for troubled or unfulfilling relationships in which individuals' needs are not met and relationship satisfaction levels are low, it may provide some couples with a positive alternative to ending

relationships or engaging in infidelity when one partner does not meet *all* of one's relationship needs. Each of the explanations considered have gained some support in the literature. However, it is important to acknowledge that the research area is still relatively new, and more studies are needed to fully understand why some choose monogamy and others polyamory. With more research, we may be able to construct a comprehensive theory of polyamory that offers more than an explanation of why monogamy may not be sufficient for everyone. In the next two sections, I will review what is known about the characteristics of individuals who practice polyamory based on comparative and polyamory-specific studies and consider the sociocultural shifts that are occurring as a result of the increased prevalence of non-traditional relationship and family arrangements.

Who Practices Polyamory?

In comparative studies, participants who practice polyamory tend to be higher in socioeconomic status than participants who practice monogamy (Boyd, 2017; Kaiser et al., 2016). Specifically, people who practice polyamory tend to be highly educated (e.g., 20% more hold an undergraduate degree and 11% more hold post-graduate/professional degrees than those who practice monogamy) and earn higher salaries. Fewer individuals practicing polyamory (47%) reported an annual salary of less than $40,000 compared to the general population (60%), and more polyamorous individuals (31%) reported earning $60,000 or above than the general population (23%; Boyd, 2017). People who practice polyamory tend to have a lower desire to have children (Kaiser et al., 2016) and tend to identify with atheist or agnostic views rather than to subscribe to organized faith (Boyd, 2017). Further, polyamory is more prevalent among both male and female bisexuals (Barker, 2005; Klesse, 2006; Wosick-Correa, 2010). In my Honours thesis research, participants who identified as bisexual were 11.94 times more likely to be in a

polyamorous relationship than participants who identified as heterosexual (Kaiser et al., 2016). Interestingly, although gay men commonly practice consensual non-monogamy in a *two plus one* relationship arrangement, very few identify as polyamorous (Adam, 2006).

Research challenges have seriously limited our knowledge of polyamory. Everything that is known about people who practice polyamory to date has been obtained through research that used convenience samples and hence is subject to participant self-selection bias. In sex research, for example, those who opt to participate tend to hold more liberal, non-traditional, secular views on both human sexuality and politics (Bogaert, 1996; Strassberg & Lowe, 1995). Additionally, online survey research further limits the generalizability of polyamory studies to those who practice polyamory *and* have access to the Internet. Taken together, research challenges related to polyamorous participants' fears of stigma and social desirability bias (Allen, 2017; Fenton, Johnson, Mcmanus, & Erens, 2001; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999) make random sampling untenable. The recruitment methodology selected for this study takes these research challenges into consideration and is outlined in Chapter 3.

Another factor that limits our knowledge on polyamory is the lack of polyamory measures/instruments to assist researchers in quantifying, defining, and better understanding the construct of polyamory. To date, there is one published polyamory measure entitled the Attitudes Towards Polyamory scale (ATP), which is a brief seven-item measure that looks at people's attitudes towards polyamory (Johnson, Giuliano, Herselman, & Hutzler, 2015). Rather than capturing what polyamory actually is and means for those who practice it, the ATP tests whether individuals hold the negative beliefs and assumptions that contribute to stigma against polyamory (Johnson et al., 2015). Thus, a measure that effectively identifies the thoughts and behaviours associated with those who practice polyamory is still needed if researchers hope to

establish that polyamory is a relationship style distinguishable from other forms of non-monogamy, such as cheating and polygamy. The current study contributed to this project.

In this section, I reviewed what is known in the literature about who practices polyamory and the challenges that researchers face in collecting generalizable data on polyamory. Possessing a bisexual orientation is associated with practicing polyamory. As well, those practicing polyamory tend to be highly educated and have a lower desire to have children. That being said, the number of individuals practicing polyamory, and thus, the number of children being raised in polyamorous households is rising (Boyd, 2017). What is known about polyamory has been limited by convenience sampling methods and self-selection bias. The lack of random sampling means that conclusions drawn from polyamory studies may not be generalizable to the population. Finally, there is a need for instruments that assess polyamory as a practice.

Modernizing the Constructs of "Marriage" and the "Family"

The paramaters that define a family have evolved since *the family* was first introduced as a definable construct (L'Abate, 2013; L'Abate & Bagarozzi, 1993). This has been necessary, as family psychologists and researchers have found that the traditional sociological conceptions of marriage and the nuclear family unit are no longer accurate or relevant models to present day families (L'abate, 2013; Smith, 1993). Similarly, the traditional construct of marriage has been challenged and expanded with increased advocacy for social acceptance of sexual minority couples' right to marry (Parks, 2004). Nevertheless, many important institutions have been built with the nuclear family (i.e., having a female and male parent and two children) as the norm (Emens, 2004; Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Mint, 2006; Wilson, 1978). As pointed out by Boyd (2017), this is problematic for those who practice polyamory when it comes to legal family

matters, such as parental rights for more than two individuals, marriage to more than one spouse, and critical medical decisions.

One indication that the family construct is changing is the shift in terminology and definitions of family used in national census reports. The term nuclear family is no longer used to describe present day family arrangements. Instead, national census reports now refer to "intact families" to describe households in which children under the age of 18 years are raised by two parents who are married. Intact families include households with parents who are *not* biologically related to their children (e.g., step-parent families). Census data indicate that 63% of US children (Laughlin, 2014) and 70% of children in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017) live in intact families, while the remainder live in same-sex families, single parent families, grandparents' raising grandchildren families, and non-relative family arrangements. Two in 10 Canadian children live in single parent families, and one in 10 are in stepfamilies (Statistics Canada, 2017). The likelihood of children living in a single parent family, stepfamily, or without their parents increases with age, increasing from just under 21% when children are under one year old to just over 36% when they reach the ages of 10-14 years (Statistics Canada, 2017).

By contrast, the prevalence of children being raised in polyamorous families in both Canada and the US is still unknown. Boyd (2017) found that about one quarter of the people practicing polyamory who participated in his study were full-time parents/caregivers to at least one child and 9% were part-time parents/caregivers. Combining these percentages suggests that as many as one-third of people practicing polyamory may be parents/caregivers on a part-time or full-time basis. The *triad* polycule appears to be the most frequently practiced polyamorous family arrangement, with one married couple and one additional partner (Boyd, 2017; Sheff, 2014b). However, this finding is limited to one self-selected sample of polyamorists and one

researcher's private practice, and whether it will be confirmed by other research remains to be determined.

The conceptual definitions of marriage and family have evolved and continue to be modernized to accommodate sexual minority family arrangements, including polyamorous families. The nuclear family unit simply does not accurately reflect many North American families anymore. This shift has important implications for the social institutions and policies that speak to family matters. The increased prevalence of divorce, remarriage, single parents, adoption, and same sex couples have influenced the present-day family structure and required updated policies around parenting rights, marriage, and medical decisions. Similarly, the minority of polyamorous parents raising children within polycule arrangements necessitates corresponding family and marriage policy adjustments. Although the triad appears to be the most frequently practiced polycule arrangement for polyamorous families, future research on the prevalence of polyamorous families and polycule arrangements in the general population is needed to determine an accurate picture of polyamorous families.

For the present study, my overall research goals focused on exploring polyamorous relationship qualities using a comparative approach, and assessing the claims of measurement validity of a questionnaire developed to differentiate those who practice polyamory from those who practice monogamy.

Unknown Facets of Polyamory: Questions to be Addressed in This Thesis

In this section, I identify the gaps in the polyamory literature that have yet to be explored or require more research and outline my research questions. I also consider how exploring these areas will help us to better understand the relationship dynamics in polyamorous relationships. In

discussing what is not known about polyamory, I provide justification for my selection of the variables included in this study. Finally, I present my hypotheses.

Relationship stability. Although it is known that most people practicing polyamory have one primary partner and one additional relationship, the stability of polyamorous relationships (both primary and secondary) remains unknown. Relationship stability is typically measured in length of years of continuous commitment (Adams & Jones, 1999; Jose, O'Leary, Moyer, & Bueler, 2010; Ojukwu, 2014). Therefore, in this study, I chose to assess relationship length as a measure of participants' degree of relationship stability. As well, including this variable provided an opportunity to examine the merits of the overgeneralized conclusion from previous cheating studies that individuals in a consensual, non-monogamous relationship are incapable of making long-term commitments to relationship partners (Blumberg, 2003; Hutzler, Giuliano, Herselman, & Johnson, 2016).

My research question was: How does length of relationship with a primary partner in polyamorous relationships compare to relationship length in committed monogamous relationships? Because polyamorous relationships emphasize respecting partners' freedom and autonomy to explore additional romantic relationships within the rules and boundaries negotiated and agreed upon by all partners (Wosick-Correa, 2010; Veaux, 2019a), permission to pursue potentially more fulfilling relationship alternatives than one's primary relationship could increase the chances of terminating less satisfying primary partnerships. I therefore hypothesized that participants practicing polyamory will report shorter relationship lengths with their primary partners than participants practicing monogamy.

Relationship health. It is unknown whether polyamorous relationships are comparatively more or less healthy than monogamous relationships. Humans are social creatures

that depend on social attachments for survival from birth (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Green & Sholes, 2004; Maunder & Hunter, 2015). As well, studies have established the serious impacts of interpersonal relationships on physical and emotional health (Berkman & Glass, 2000; Cohen & Gottlieb, 2000; Suls & Wallston, 2003; Uchino, 2004). Furthermore, studies on loneliness have found it to be associated with: (a) increased likelihood and severity of depressive symptoms (Qualter, Brown, Munn, & Rotenberg, 2010), (b) sleep difficulties (Cacioppo et. al., 2002), (c) increased risk of cancer and mortality rates (Cacioppo et al., 2000; Fleisch Marcus, Illescas, Hohl, & Llanos, 2017), and (d) increases in systolic blood pressure and cardiovascular disease (Hawkley, Masi, Berry, & Cacioppo, 2006).

As relationship health is an important consideration in research on families, I included several variables reflecting different aspects of relationship health in my study. This permitted me to assess the degree to which people practicing polyamory are living in healthy relationships and how the health of their relationships compares to that of people living in monogamous relationships. Although research has shown some positive impacts associated with communal family arrangements in which there are more than two parents or caretakers present to help with child-rearing responsibilities (e.g., lower stress and more leisure time enjoyed by parents; Sheff, 2014b), relationship health has not yet been explored in the context of polyamory. In my study, I chose to use a scale developed by Cyranowski et al. (2013), which measures relationship health by capturing social support levels, companionship, and social distress from negative relationships. I have expanded on each of these constructs below.

Social support. One reason that interpersonal relationships may promote health is that they offer social support. Research has consistently shown that virtually all physical and mental health indicators significantly improve when people have access to, and utilize, strong social

support networks to navigate life's challenges (Berkman & Glass, 2000; Cohen, 2004; Cohen & Gottlieb, 2000; Kiecolt-Glaser, Gouin, & Hantsoo, 2010; Suls & Wallston, 2003; Uchino, 2004; Uchino, Cacioppo, & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1996). Social support is thought to provide a stress buffer when we encounter challenges (Cohen, 2004). According to Cohen (2004), the availability of various types of aid from those around us modifies our perceptions of our coping ability, thus changing the appraisal of difficulty in a situation and its resulting stress. Some research suggests that women tend to provide more social support in their relationships than men (Uchino et al., 1996).

Social support includes the emotional, informational, and instrumental resources available to individuals through their relationships (Cohen, 2004; House & Kahn, 1985). *Emotional support* originally referred to the availability of empathic, caring, and understanding relationships in which individuals may discuss problems; while *informational support* referred to the availability of relationships that allow us to receive helpful information or guidance (House & Kahn, 1985). However, when constructing the Adult Social Relationship Scale (ASRS) psychometric analysis of emotional and informational support items resulted in a single factor loading rather than two (Cyranowski et al., 2013). In other words, although earlier research identified three forms of social support, Cyranowski et al. (2013) provided evidence for two. Therefore, emotional support is now viewed as the availability of empathic, caring, and understanding relationships within which to receive helpful information and guidance. By contrast, *instrumental support* refers to the perceived availability of relationships that one can turn to for *practical help* with day-to-day challenges or tasks (e.g., grocery shopping, help when sick, etc.). Given the importance of social support to people's wellbeing and the significance of interpersonal relationships as sources of social support, I included it in my study and in using the

scale developed by Cyranowski et al. (2013) was able to compare polyamorous and monogamous families on emotional and informational support.

Companionship. Another reason interpersonal relationships may improve health is that they offer companionship. Companionship is related to social support, yet it is also a separate protective factor that improves health outcomes (Asher, Parkhurst, Hymel, & Williams, 1990; Bohren, Berger, Munthe-Kaas, & Tuncalp, 2019; Cacioppo et. al., 2000; Hawkley et al., 2006). Although companionship may seem conflated with emotional support, it is in fact distinguishable, because individuals may *feel* alone even when they know social support is available to them. Furthermore, mental health issues are exacerbated by isolative tendencies (Santini et al., 2016). Thus, when individuals report having a small network of friends, characterize themselves as being a "lone wolf," prefer to do most things alone, or express feelings of alienation and not being understood by others, they are at greater risk for developing mental health issues and have less success resolving them (Richardson, Elliot, & Roberts, 2017). The construct of companionship is thus made up of three factors: (a) friendship (i.e., the availability of relationship companions to spend time with, interact, and engage in activities together, (b) intimacy (i.e., the availability and degree of emotional closeness and feelings of connectedness within one's current relationships, and (c) the absence of loneliness (i.e., one's perception of being isolated and alone; Cyranowski et al., 2013). Some research suggests that companionship is more important to women than men in romantic relationships (Kwang, Crockett, Sanchez, & Swann, 2013). Given the importance of companionship to people's relationship health, which is related to individuals' mental health, I included it in my study, using the scale developed by Cyranowski et al. (2013) with the subscales of friendship, intimacy, and loneliness.

Social distress from negative relationships. The presence of negative relationships has serious implications for physical and mental health outcomes (Birditt, Newton, Crandford, & Ryan, 2016; Cyranowski et al., 2013; Krause, 1995; Krause & Thompson, 1997; Newsom, Rook, Nishishiba, Sorkin, & Mahan, 2005; Rauktis, Koeske, & Tereshenko, 1995; Schuster, Kessler, & Aseltine, 1990). Social distress refers to the perception of one's social interactions as being negative or distressing. Such interactions may involve negative interpersonal behaviours, such as hostility, criticism, insensitivity, neglect, ridicule, rejection, and intrusiveness (Cyranowski et al., 2013). Research indicates that in heterosexual relationships, women are more negatively impacted (both physiologically and psychologically) than men by marital conflict due to having less power in their relationships (Wanic & Kulic, 2011). Given the consequences of social distress on people's physical and mental health, I used the scale by Cyranowski et al. (2013) to examine social distress in my study.

My research question was: How does relationship health, in the form of social support, companionship, and the absence of social distress from negative relationships, compare between polyamorous and monogamous relationships? Given that people who practice polyamory are free to maintain more than one committed relationship at a time, the number of partners who are potential sources of social support, offer companionship, and counter isolation, will be larger than in the case of monogamous families. Therefore, I hypothesized that participants practicing polyamory will report greater relationship health, in the form of more social support, more companionship, and lower social distress from negative relationships, than participants in monogamous relationships.

Communication styles during conflict. Researchers have not yet studied communication styles within the polyamorous population and consequently have not compared

communication styles between individuals practicing polyamory versus those practicing monogamy. Experts on relationships stress the importance of communication to build and maintain fulfilling, long-term relationships of any kind (e.g., family, friend, romantic, professional, etc.; Domingue & Mollen, 2009; Gottman, 1994, 1999; Li et. al., 2018; Markman, Rhoades, Stanley, Ragan, & Whitton, 2010). Healthy communication is characterized by a number of relational skills (i.e., skills that foster and strengthen relationships), such as taking responsibility for one's emotions and expressing them appropriately, speaking for oneself, not blaming others, active listening, paraphrasing a partner's point of view, staying on topic, and engaging in mutual problem solving (Jacobson & Margolin, 1979; Kaiser, Hahlweg, Fehm-Wolfsdorf, & Groth, 1998; Timothy-Springer & Johnson, 2018). Strong communication is known to prevent conflicts (Carrère, Buehlman, Gottman, Coan, & Ruckstuhl, 2000; Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman & Levenson, 1992) and to lead to higher degrees of sexual and nonsexual satisfaction in romantic relationships (Byers & Demmons, 1999; Cupach & Comstock, 1990; Khoury & Findlay, 2014; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004). Since communication becomes more challenging when conflict arises (Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Gottman, 1999; Pietromonaco, Greenwood, & Barrett, 2004), how partners communicate with each other during arguments is critical to conflict resolution outcomes and safeguarding relationship stability (Gottman, 1994; Sillars, Coletti, Parry, & Rogers, 1982; Lisitsa & The Gottman Institute, 2013). Researchers have also found that communication is more important to women's marital commitment and happiness than to men's (Hou, Jiang, & Wang, 2019). Given the importance of communication to relationship health, I included this variable in my study by selecting a measure that identifies constructive and destructive communication styles used during conflict.

Fair fighting. Counselling psychologists often work with couples to help them learn how to *fight fairly* (Gottman & Gottman, 2015; Lisitsa & The Gottman Institute, 2013). This phrasing refers to one's ability to resolve conflict in productive ways: focusing on respectfully exploring and understanding differences of opinion and viewing one's partner as an ally rather than an enemy (Gottman, 1992). As allies, couples may work together towards constructing solutions that meet each other's needs. The ultimate goal is that through practicing fair fighting techniques (i.e., spending more time finding common ground on which to build solutions and less time/energy trying to prove one's view as superior to the other's), less damage is inflicted on both the relationship as a whole and the relationship partners as individuals (Feuerman & The Gottman Institute, 2017). Research indicates that men become more aggressive and hostile during marital/intimate relationship conflict (Margolin, John, & Gleberman, 1988; Schumacher & Leonard, 2005).

Constructive versus destructive behaviours during conflict. Relationship researchers have identified constructive and destructive communication strategies that couples use during conflict. The ability to compromise with one's partner has been identified as a constructive behaviour that contributes to relationship health (Feuerman & The Gottman Institite, 2017; Peterson, 1983). By contrast, the tendency to respond with negative emotional reactions, such as using aggression or verbal abuse/name calling, is associated with destructive behaviour that damages and weakens relationships (Yucel, 2016; Zacchilli, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 2009). Additionally, attempting to dominate one's partner by pressuring them to agree with one's views has also been linked with destructive relationship outcomes (Zacchilli et al., 2009). Other communication strategies are not exclusively associated with constructive or destructive relationship outcomes. For example, avoiding arguments with one's partner, taking time apart

during a conflict to "cool off," and submitting to a partner's wishes during a conflict are three behaviours that may be used in both constructive and destructive ways (Zacchilli et al., 2009). Consistent with research indicating higher levels of aggression and hostility in males during arguments, significant gender differences were found in the use of the destructive communication behaviours. Compared to women, men tend to use emotional reactivity and domination to a greater extent, but do not differ in their use of compromise, avoidance, and submission (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

My research question was: How does the use of constructive and destructive communication styles during conflict within polyamorous relationships compare to their use within monogamous relationships? Due to the emphasis that people practicing polyamory place on respect, open communication, and taking personal responsibility for processing and regulating individual feelings of jealousy in their relationships (Rubinsky, 2018a), I hypothesized that polyamorous participants will report more positive communication skills by endorsing the constructive communication style of compromise to a greater extent, and endorsing destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination to a lesser extent than monogamous participants.

Relationship Satisfaction. In polyamorous relationships, relationship satisfaction is an interesting construct to measure due to the presence of multiple relationships. However, this poses challenges for research design (e.g., participants must complete the same measures multiple times to assess multiple partners, which increases participation time, leading to increased participant dropout, and smaller sample sizes) and analytic procedures (e.g., a much larger sample size will be required to provide enough power for the number of comparisons, more time will be required for data cleaning, and analytic methods must accommodate unequal

sample sizes and compounded error as the number of comparisons increases; Wosick-Correa, 2010). It is likely due to these challenges that only one study analyzing participants' relationship satisfaction in concurrently held polyamorous relationships has been published. Balzarini et al. (2017) found that people practicing polyamory reported higher degrees of relationship satisfaction in their primary relationships than with secondary/additional partners. Other studies of people practicing polyamory appear to confirm what is already understood about relationship satisfaction from research with monogamous participants. For example, stronger communication is associated with greater relationship satisfaction in general (Arroyo & Harwood, 2011; Brimhall, Bonner, Tyndall, & Jensen, 2018; Sánchez Bravo & Watty Martínez, 2017), and this association holds in polyamorous relationships as well (Rubinsky, 2018b).

Jealousy impacts relationship satisfaction in different ways and to a different extent in polyamorous relationships compared to monogamous relationships (Deri, 2015; Rubinsky, 2018a). In polyamorous relationships, a partner's jealousy is viewed as representing insecurity, possessiveness, and unmet needs (Rubinsky, 2018a). Polyamorous individuals therefore communicate feelings about jealousy to elicit affirmation and validation from a partner, rather than to restrict or change a partner's involvement with others (Rubinsky, 2018a). Whereas in monogamous relationships, the presence of jealousy often leads to damaging arguments that undermine relationship satisfaction, communication about jealousy has been found to have a positive impact on relationship satisfaction in polyamorous relationships (Rubinsky, 2018b). Interestingly, the presence of jealousy in polyamorous relationships is much lower than in monogamous relationships (Kaiser et al., 2016). The polyamory concept of *compersion*, which refers to feelings of joy when a partner experiences pleasure from another romantic relationship (i.e., the opposite of jealousy; Veaux, 2019a) reflects this difference. Such a concept runs against

monogamous ideals of love, marriage, and commitment (Deri, 2015). Finally, just as identity gaps (i.e., Jung's important psychological concept of congruence; Jung & Hecht, 2004, 2008) have been found to impact relationship satisfaction in monogamous relationships (Kennedy-Lightsey, Martin, LaBelle, & Webber, 2015), inconsistencies between one's internal self-concept/identity and the external self/performance one presents to the world also impact the relationship satisfaction in polyamorous relationships (Rubinsky, 2018b).

There is a great deal of literature on relationship satisfaction that demonstrates its importance to relationship success and informs marital counselling practices. In non-polyamorous samples, relationship satisfaction is associated with more stable and longer lasting relationships (Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Behavioural predictors of higher relationship satisfaction include (a) strong communication (Ghanbari-Panah, Shariff, & Koochack-Entezar, 2011; Litzinger & Gordon, 2005), (b) positive dyadic coping (e.g., support, empathy, collaboration towards solutions, etc.) perceived in one's partner, as well as in the relationship overall (Falconier, Jackson, Hilpert, & Bodenmann, 2015; Kimmes, Edwards, Wetchler, & Bercik, 2014), (c) relationship self-regulation (i.e., successful change in one's own behaviour; Halford & Wilson, 2009), (d) emotional intelligence (Malouff, Schutte, & Thorsteinsson, 2014; Shahid & Kazmi, 2016), and (e) reciprocal exchange of resources and investments between partners (i.e., social support, parental caregiving efforts, material resources, etc.; Cook, 1986; Olderbak & Figueredo, 2010). Lower levels of relationship satisfaction are predicted by negative communication (e.g., criticism, negative solutions, justifying, negative body language, etc., by male partners in relationships; Halford & Wilson, 2009), negative dyadic coping (e.g., hostile responses, blaming one's partner, ambivalence, controlling, over-protective responses, etc.)

perceived in one's partner (Falconier et. al., 2015), low emotional intelligence (especially in men; Shahid & Kazmi, 2016), and unbalanced social exchanges between partners (Cook, 1986).

Past research has found that men report higher relationship satisfaction than women (Boerner, Jopp, Carr, Sosinsky, & Kim, 2014; Fowers, 1991). However, a meta-analysis indicated that the difference between men's and women's marital satisfaction, while statistically significant, has very small effect sizes (Jackson, Miller, Oka, & Henry, 2014). Although there have been many studies on relationship satisfaction, there is still much to learn about this construct in polyamorous individuals. Therefore, I included a measure of relationship satisfaction in my study to explore how it compares between polyamorous and monogamous relationships.

My research question was: How does relationship satisfaction compare between polyamorous and monogamous relationships? Because people practicing polyamory have more autonomy and flexibility to meet new partners and adjust their polycule to meet various relationship needs (i.e., the Additive and Compensation models), I hypothesized that people practicing polyamory will report higher relationship satisfaction levels than those practicing monogamy.

Parenting styles. Nothing is known about the parenting practices of polyamorous parents, so again, nothing is known about how they compare to the practices of monogamous parents. Parenting behaviours have been linked to healthy (i.e., safe, nurturing, trusting, stable, etc.) and dysfunctional (i.e., chaotic, hostile, distrusting, unstable, etc.) family environments (Baumrind, 1968; Turner et al., 2012), which in turn have positive and negative impacts on children's developmental wellbeing (Amato & Fowler, 2002; Baumrind, 1966; 1967; 1971a; 1971b; Lucassen et al., 2015; Segrin, Givertz, Swaitkowski, & Montgomery, 2015). Baumrind's (1971a) research has been particularly helpful in identifying the parenting behaviours associated

with four distinct styles of parenting: Authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive, and Uninvolved; and children's development of socio-behavioural competencies in responsibility and independence (Baumrind, 1966; 1967; 1971a; 1971b). Given the importance of parenting styles to the overall health of a family unit, as well as the development of children, I chose to include this variable in my study and selected a scale that was developed from Baumrind's theory to examine authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles (Robinson, Mandleco, Olsen, & Hart, 1995).

Authoritative parenting. Authoritative parenting is characterized by a combination of controlling, demanding behaviour balanced with emotional warmth, patience, rational reasoning, and receptiveness to child(ren)'s perspectives and communication (Baumrind, 1968). Authoritative parents hold high expectations for their children and implement consequences when clearly established rules are disobeyed. However, they also strongly encourage children to be autonomous (i.e., to develop a will of their own that independently strives towards goals) by affirming the child(ren)'s right to think for themselves and discussing the reasons behind rules with them. In a transnational study, this style of parenting was shown to elicit the healthiest development in children's competencies (Bradford et. al., 2004). Children of authoritative parents tend to be the most self-reliant, explorative, self-controlled, and content (Baumrind, 1971a; Bradford et. al., 2004). Research indicates that mothers are more likely to use authoritative parenting than fathers (Simons & Conger, 2007).

Authoritarian parenting. Authoritarian parenting is characterized by high levels of control and expectations of strict obedience and low levels of flexibility or consideration of child(ren)'s views (Baumrind, 1968). Authoritarian parents do *not* take the time to explain the reasons behind the rules they set. Rather, they expect children to obey rules simply because they

have been told to and should respect the parents' absolute authority/power. These parents tend to be more detached and controlling and less warm than other parents; the children of authoritarian parents tend to be more discontent, withdrawn, and distrustful than the children of parents who use other parenting styles. This style of parenting has been found to negatively impact the development of independence in girls and social responsibility in boys (Baumrind, 1971a). Research suggests that fathers use authoritarian parenting more than mothers (Simons & Conger, 2007).

Permissive parenting. Permissive parents tend to be non-controlling, non-demanding, and relatively warm (Baumrind, 1971a). Although they explain and discuss rules with their children, they tend not to implement consequences or discipline when disobedient behaviour has been displayed. This is because they are afraid of their child(ren)'s negative reactions, as well as the emotional rejection of not being liked by their child(ren). Instead of punishment, permissive parents show acceptance and affirmation of their child(ren)'s impulses and misbehaviours. This style of parenting is associated with children who possess the lowest levels of self-reliance, self-control, and exploration behaviours (Baumrind, 1971a).

Uninvolved parenting. Uninvolved parents are neither controlling or non-controlling (Baumrind, 1971a). They do not take the time to explain and discuss rules or consequences with children, implement consequences for misbehaviour, or affirm/encourage their children to think for themselves. They tend to parent with a "hands off" policy. Uninvolved parenting does not facilitate the development of social responsibility and independence in children. This is due to the complete lack of structure, guidance, and feedback around foundational social concepts such as what constitutes being right, good, and fair, versus what constitutes being wrong, bad, and

unjust. Thus, children of uninvolved parents tend to lack self-esteem, self-reliance, and self-control and are not as explorative (Baumrind, 1971a).

My research question was: How do parents in polyamorous relationships compare in their parenting styles to parents in monogamous relationships? As people who practice polyamory emphasize autonomy, respect, and honest communication in their relationships (Anapol, 2010; Easton & Liszt, 1997), I hypothesized that polyamorous participants will report healthy parenting practices by endorsing the authoritative parenting style to a greater extent than the other three parenting styles, as well as to a greater extent than participants in monogamous relationships.

Sex and gender. Although sex and gender were not a primary focus of this study, their significance could not be ignored. Sex and gender are imposed on us from birth, and impact individuals throughout the lifespan (Eckermann, 2014). Researchers continue to explore the differences between men's and women's experiences and behaviours across research domains (Ryan & Branscombe, 2013; Safdar & Kosakowska-Berezecka, 2015; Wood, 2018). In relation to this study, distinctions among family types are in part associated with sex/gender (i.e., the nuclear family is one man and one woman, polyamory extends this, same-sex marriage is two men or two women, etc.). Similarly, for parenting, the traditional norm is a mother and a father (although it has become more common for children to have two mothers or two fathers, and children may have multiple mothers and fathers when divorced parents remarry). In my review of the literature I noted that some significant gender differences were found in previous research using the variables of interest for this study. Therefore, I decided to include gender as a variable of interest to investigate whether these differences occur in a sample composed of roughly equal numbers of monogamous and polyamorous participants.

My research question was: Are there gender differences in relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, parenting styles, and on the monogamy-polyamory spectrum? Given the gender differences noted in the literature, I hypothesized that compared to women, men will (a) report experiencing more emotional support, more friendship, less loneliness, less perceived rejection, and less perceived hostility in their relationships, (b) have higher scores on the destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination, (c) report higher relationship satisfaction, (d) endorse the authoritative parenting style to a lesser extent and the authoritarian parenting style to a greater extent than mothers, and (e) have higher scores on the MPSQ.

Relationships between variables. Past research has found associations between several of the variables selected for this study. Specifically, positive correlations have been consistently identified between social support in the form of emotional support and instrumental support, companionship in the form of friendship, constructive communication, and relationship satisfaction (Cyranowski et al., 2013; Falconier et. al., 2015; Halford & Wilson, 2009). Although there have been many studies on these variables with married couples, these associations have not been studied within polyamorous relationships. Furthermore, the relationships between these variables and parenting styles have yet to be explored among polyamorous parents. Therefore, I decided to look at the strength and direction of relationships between each of these variables in my study.

My research question was: What is the relationship between the following variables: (a) relationship health aspects of social support (emotional support and instrumental support), companionship (friendship and loneliness), and social distress from negative relationships (perceived rejection and perceived hostility), (b) communication styles during conflict

(compromise, avoidance, emotional reactivity, separation, domination, submission), (c) relationship satisfaction, and (d) parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, submissive, warm and involved)? Consistent with the literature, I hypothesized that positive correlations would be found between the following subscales within both polyamorous and monogamous groups: emotional support, instrumental support, friendship, compromise, and relationship satisfaction. I also hypothesized that positive correlations would be found between the following subscales within both groups: loneliness, perceived rejection, perceived hostility, emotional reactivity.

Polyamory as a component of sexual identity. Within the literature, there is uncertainty and ongoing debate as to whether being polyamorous is a core component of sexual identity, similar to identifying as homosexual or bisexual. Qualitative interviews reveal that while some individuals consider their *polyamorousness* to be an integral and stable component of who they are (Barker, 2005), others describe polyamory as a relationship type that they freely choose to move in and out of, or work towards, depending on their current primary relationship (Anapol, 2010; Barker, 2005; Heckert, 2010), or are motivated to practice for political and social reasons (Robinson, 2013). To date, researchers have relied on participants' self-identification as polyamorous or monogamous to classify them as one or the other, but this may be problematic if engaging in polyamorous relationships is unstable over time. Moreover, it assumes that self-identifying as polyamorous or monogamous means that the individual shares the same thoughts, desires, and behaviours that have been associated with polyamorous and monogamous lifestyles, respectively.

It is necessary for researchers to establish the construct validity evidence of their measures in order to make meaningful claims about the phenomenon they are studying (Coulacoglou & Saklofske, 2017). A psychometric instrument that measures the thoughts,

desires, and behaviours associated with polyamory could be utilized to better categorize individuals as fitting a polyamorous or monogamous lifestyle and in longitudinal studies. This would allow researchers to assess the stability of polyamorous thoughts, desires, and behaviours over time, which would help researchers to define polyamory and determine the validity of a *polyamorous* identity. To this end, a secondary aim of this study was to examine the measurement validity claims of the Monogamy Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire (MPSQ; Kaiser, O'Connor, & Cioe, 2017), a new polyamory measure first developed during my honours thesis to improve the quantitative study of polyamory. By assessing the degree of monogamy and polyamory in participants (i.e., identifying where individuals fall along the monogamy-polyamory spectrum; from highly monogamous at one end to highly polyamorous at the other end), researchers may have more confidence that participants' thoughts, desires, and behaviours are consistent with polyamory or monogamy, or somewhere in between. To assess the claims of reliability and validity of the MPSQ as a measure of the monogamy-polyamory spectrum, I analyzed its psychometric properties (i.e., internal consistency, construct validity, and predictive validity).

My research question was: Does the MPSQ perform well as a psychometric instrument that reliably explains the variance between individuals' monogamous and polyamorous thoughts, desires, and behaviours; and accurately predicts one's relationship type as monogamous or polyamorous? Due to the results of the psychometric analyses conducted in my Honours study, I expected the MPSQ to demonstrate strong psychometric properties, indicated by: (a) good reliability in the form of high internal consistency, (b) construct validity—explaining a high proportion of variance in participants' scores with a single factor (the Monogamy-Polyamory

Spectrum), and (c) high classification accuracy and good predictive validity—accurately identifying those participants who self-identify as monogamous and polyamorous, respectively.

Summary of Variables, Research Questions, and Hypotheses of the Present Study

For the present study, I chose to explore constructs related to relationship stability, relationship health, communication, relationship satisfaction, and parenting behaviours in a comparative sample of self-identified monogamous and polyamorous individuals who were currently in committed relationships and raising at least one dependent child. My aim was to shed light on the similarities and differences between polyamorous families and monogamous families. The variables selected to assess these constructs were: (a) relationship length, (b) relationship health aspects of social support, companionship, and social distress from negative relationships (b) communication styles during conflict, (c) relationship satisfaction, and (d) parenting styles. Additionally, I decided to include gender as a variable of interest due to gender differences identified in my literature review on the variables selected for this study. Lastly, I included the MPSQ to examine its psychometric properties for purposes of assessing the claim that polyamory is a measurable behavioural construct. Because many of these variables have not been studied in polyamorous samples, my hypotheses are tentative and exploratory. I list the research questions and hypotheses below. Please note that only the alternative hypotheses are listed (the corresponding null hypotheses are that no differences will be found between groups on any of the variables, and that no relationship will be identified between the variables).

Research question 1: How does length of relationship with a primary partner in polyamorous relationships compare to relationship length in committed monogamous relationships?

Hypothesis 1: Participants practicing polyamory will report shorter relationship lengths with their primary partners than participants practicing monogamy.

Research question 2: How does relationship health, in the form of social support, companionship, and the absence of social distress from negative relationships, compare between polyamorous and monogamous relationships?

Hypothesis 2: Participants practicing polyamory will report greater relationship health, in the form of more social support, more companionship, and lower social distress from negative relationships, than participants in monogamous relationships.

Research question 3: How does the use of constructive and destructive communication styles during conflict within polyamorous relationships compare to their use within monogamous relationships?

Hypothesis 3: Polyamorous participants will report more positive communication skills by endorsing the constructive communication style of compromise to a greater extent, and endorsing destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination to a lesser extent than monogamous participants.

Research question 4: How does relationship satisfaction compare between polyamorous and monogamous relationships?

Hypothesis 4: People practicing polyamory will report higher relationship satisfaction levels than those practicing monogamy.

Research question 5: How do parents in polyamorous relationships compare in their parenting styles to parents in monogamous relationships?

Hypothesis 5: Polyamorous participants will report healthy parenting practices by endorsing the authoritative parenting style to a greater extent than the other three parenting styles, as well as to a greater extent than participants in monogamous relationships.

Research question 6: Are there gender differences in relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and on the monogamy-polyamory spectrum?

Hypothesis 6: Compared to women, men will (a) report experiencing more emotional support, more friendship, less loneliness, less perceived rejection, and less perceived hostility in their relationships, (b) have higher scores on the destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination, (c) report higher relationship satisfaction, (d) endorse the authoritative parenting style to a lesser extent, and the authoritarian parenting style to a greater extent than mothers, and (e) endorse non-monogamous thoughts and behaviours to a greater extent as indicated by higher scores on the MPSQ.

Research question 7: What is the relationship between the following variables: (a) relationship health aspects of social support (emotional support and instrumental support), companionship (friendship and loneliness), and social distress from negative relationships (perceived rejection and perceived hostility), (b) communication styles during conflict (compromise, avoidance, emotional reactivity, separation, domination, submission), (c) relationship satisfaction, and (d) parenting styles (authoritative, authoritarian, submissive, warm and involved)?

Hypothesis 7: Consistent with the literature, positive correlations will be found between the following subscales within both polyamorous and monogamous groups: emotional support, instrumental support, friendship, compromise, and relationship satisfaction. Positive correlations

will also be found between the following subscales within both groups: loneliness, perceived rejection, perceived hostility, emotional reactivity and domination.

Research question 8: Does the MPSQ perform well as a psychometric instrument that reliably explains the variance between individuals' monogamous and polyamorous thoughts, desires, and behaviours; and accurately predicts one's relationship type as monogamous or polyamorous?

METHOD

Rationale for Research Methodology

A quantitative research design was selected to address the call for more quantitative studies on polyamory in order to expand on first person narratives and qualitative perspectives within the literature. Although quantitative methods may not capture some of the unique, individual experiences explored in longer qualitative interviews, analyzing data on a larger sample permits increased understanding of the environmental norms and behavioural tendencies occurring within *most* polyamorous families, which then permit greater generalization of study results. Additionally, quantitative methods were selected because governing bodies that decide health protocols and social policies are informed by quantitative studies on large sample sizes.

Data collection was by online survey. Anonymous participation is frequently used in sex research to increase the likelihood of participation and participant honesty by lowering the risk of desirability bias (Allen, 2017; Fenton et al., 2001; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999). Online recruitment adds another aspect of safety and anonymity, as participants may access the survey from the privacy of their own homes. It is likely due to these assurances that anonymous online surveys have been the preferred data collection method used by polyamory researchers for quantitative studies (Balzarini et al., 2017; Boyd, 2017; Fleckenstein, Bergstrand, & Cox, 2012; Mitchell, et al., 2014; Rubinsky, 2018b). Although Wosick-Correa (2010)'s study demonstrated that it is possible to recruit a large sample without anonymous online participation, a much shorter 30-item survey was used, and participants were recruited over a span of two years. Both survey length and time limitations did not permit in-person data collection for this study.

Ethical Considerations

This was a minimal risk study, as the nature of the self-report questions did not put participants at any greater risk than they would otherwise encounter in day-to-day life. Additionally, participant identity was not required for participation, so there was no risk that participant answers could be linked to their identities by anyone with access to the data. I opted to assure participant anonymity because this study contained questions on sexual behaviour and propensities towards consensual non-monogamous behaviour, and because non-monogamy is highly stigmatized. Participants could refuse to answer any question(s) they were uncomfortable with and choose to stop participating at any time. My email was provided at the end of the survey, should participants want to be informed of the results of the study. I replied to participant emails to acknowledge receipt of their request to update them with the results of the study, and to thank them once again for participating in the study. No further contact or communication was made. The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board approved this research study (Ethics ID: REB16-1928).

Sampling Procedures and Data Collection

Participants were recruited in January-March 2019 through snowball and convenience sampling techniques. Thus, the study was limited to those who had access to a computer, were members of one of the online groups and internet forums (i.e., subreddits and facebook groups; please see Appendix A for a list) the survey was posted in, or had heard of the survey from a group member who came across the study. The recruitment advertisement (provided in Appendix B) included a brief description of the study, inclusion criteria, an assurance of anonymity, the study link, and a link to the security information for the Qualtrics online web survey system that was used to host the survey.

A total of 331 individuals completed the survey. Participants were excluded however for failing to meet inclusion criteria, having excessive missing data, or having a low score on the last question of the survey, which asked how honest they were in answering the questions. Inclusion criteria required participants to indicate that they were (a) at least 18 years of age, (b) currently within a committed monogamous (CM[1]; n = 193; 62%) or a committed and consensually non-monogamous (CNM; n = 117; 38%) relationship, and (c) caregivers of at least one dependent child, under the age of 18 (that is, they actively participated in parenting activities such as driving children to school, preparing meals, taking children to sports practice, etc.). Those who indicated a non-consensual non-monogamous (i.e., cheating) relationship were excluded from participating in the survey. Altogether, 310 participants were retained in the sample.

The study link brought participants to an informed consent page, which we assumed participants understood and agreed to if they selected the option to continue. Thus, completion of the survey was considered to also represent informed consent for each participant. Participants provided demographic information, responded to questions about their current relationships and families (e.g., number of partners, number of children, living arrangements, etc.), and completed five measures intended to capture the relationship dynamics within participants' families.

The single survey contained six sections: (a) background information (i.e., demographic, relationship, and family), (b) relationship health, (c) communication styles during conflict, (d) relationship satisfaction, (e) parenting styles, and (f) monogamous and polyamorous

[1] I use the acronyms CM and CNM only in reference to my data (i.e., when talking about the groups and individuals who participated in this study). When referring to monogamous individuals generally, it would not always be clear that they do not cheat. I specifically asked participants whether or not they were committed monogamous or consensually non-monogamous, and excluded "cheaters"). Therefore, when speaking about monogamous and polyamorous behaviour more generally, I retain the terms "polyamorous/polyamory" and "monogamous/monogamy."

propensities. In the sections that follow, I will discuss the details of the background variables and provide a description of the psychometric properties for each measure in the order listed above.

Measures

To ensure a reasonable survey length and prevent participant dropout, scales were shortened if redundant items were identified. I present the authors' original psychometric properties for each respective measure (e.g., previously reported Cronbach's alpha values for the original scale and subscales) in this chapter. However, I reanalyzed the internal consistency/reliability for all revised measures, and these new Cronbach's alpha reliabilities are presented in Table 3 of my results chapter.

Demographic variables. This survey section included items on age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, highest education level, total annual household income, current relationship type (see expanded description), length of time in relationship, number of additional romantic/sexual partners (for those who identified as non-monogamous), length of time with additional partner(s). See Appendix C, items 1-22 for background variables items.

The participant characteristics, age, gender, and ethnicity were gathered in order to describe the sample characteristics and determine limits on any claims of generalizability. Sexual orientation, highest education level, and total annual household income were included to establish representativeness of the polyamorous sample in this study with samples in previous studies.

Current relationship type. Participants were asked to classify their current relationship(s) as Committed Monogamous, Committed Non-Consensual Non-Monogamous, or as Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous (i.e., polyamorous). This item was used to screen out participants who were in neither a consensually monogamous nor a consensually non-

monogamous relationship (i.e., those who were engaging in "cheating" behaviour). The remaining participants, i.e., self-identified CM and CNM participants constituted the sample for all further analyses.

Relationship Stability. Participants were asked the number of years they had been with their committed monogamous or primary relationship partner, respectively. Recording the relationship length of self-identified CM and CNM participants allowed me to test Hypothesis 1 (Participants practicing polyamory will report shorter relationship lengths with their primary partners than participants practicing monogamy).

Relationship health. The *Adult Social Relationship Scale* (ASRS; Cyranowski, 2013) is a comprehensive measure of relationship health that evaluates three main relationship facets: social support, companionship, and social distress. Each relationship facet is represented by two subscales, yielding six subscales altogether: (a) Social Support is evaluated with subscales that capture Emotional Support and Instrumental Support; (b) Companionship is measured with subscales that capture Friendship and Loneliness; and (c) Social distress is identified using subscales that capture Perceived Rejection and Perceived Hostility. These six subscales contain a total of 45 positively worded items. Items are answered along a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from *Never* to *Almost Always*. Each subscale has demonstrated excellent reliability with Cronbach's alpha (α) values of .93 or above (Cyranowski et al., 2013). For this study, I eliminated five items (please see Appendix D; items l-p) by carefully reading through each subscale to identify items that exhibited redundancy in phrasing and content (redundant content is identified within the following paragraphs that correspond to each respective subscale). This was done to ensure a reasonable survey length and prevent participant dropout. Thus, the condensed ASRS consisted of 40 items (see Appendix C; items 23-62).

Emotional support. The Emotional Support Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .97; Cyranowski et al., 2013) designed to capture the availability of others to listen to one's problems and their willingness to show concern, care, and empathy. For the purposes of this study, all items were reworded to specifically target the emotional support participants receive from their partners (e.g., "I feel there are people I can talk to if I am upset." was reworded to read, "I feel I can talk to my partner when I am upset."). Six items (please see Appendix C; items 23-28) were retained, and two items were removed (see Appendix D; items a and b) due to content redundancy with the retained items 24-26 and 28, which ask participants about their ability to talk and feel listened to by their partners. Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate a greater degree of perceived empathy, care, and understanding from one's partner in times of need (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Instrumental support. The Instrumental Support Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .95; Cyranowski et al., 2013) designed to capture the availability and willingness of others to help with day-to-day tasks. For the purposes of this study, all items were reworded to specifically target the instrumental support participants receive from their partners (e.g., "I have someone to help me if I'm sick in bed." was reworded to read, "My partner helps me if I'm sick in bed."). Six items (please see Appendix C; items 29-34) were retained, and two items were removed (see Appendix D; items c and d) due to content redundancy with the retained items 30 and 34, which ask participants about their partners' willingness to help them when needed. Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate a greater degree of perceived practical helpfulness from one's partner in times of need (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Friendship. The Friendship Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .95; Cyranowski et al., 2013; please see Appendix C; items 35-42) and is designed to capture the availability and

willingness of others to interact and affiliate with participants in various activities. For the purposes of this study, all items were reworded to specifically target the quality of friendship participants have with their partners (e.g., "I get invited to go out and do things with other people." was reworded to read, "My partner invites me to go out and do things with other people."). Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate a greater degree/frequency of participating in various social activities with one's partner (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Loneliness. The Loneliness Subscale is composed of five items (α = .94; Cyranowski et al., 2013; please see Appendix C; items 43-47) and is designed to capture the perceived degree of loneliness or isolation from others one is experiencing. For the purposes of this study, three items were reworded to specifically target the quality of friendship participants have with their partners (e.g., "I feel that I am no longer close to anyone." was reworded to read, "I feel that I am no longer close to my partner."). Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate greater levels of loneliness and isolation within one's committed relationship (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Perceived Rejection. The Perceived Rejection Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .93; Cyranowski et al., 2013) and designed to capture the degree to which others are perceived to be rejecting, neglectful, and insensitive. For the purposes of this study, the instructions that preceded these items were reworded to specifically target the perceived hostility by one's partner within participants' committed relationships (e.g., "In the past month, please rate how often people in your life . . ." was reworded to "In the past month, please rate how often your partner . . . Acts like they don't have time for me." Seven items (see Appendix C; items 48-54) were retained, and one item was removed (see Appendix D; item e) due to content redundancy with

the retained items 49, 51, and 52, which ask participants about their partners' tendency to dismiss their problems as unimportant/not make time to speak about them. Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate a greater degree of perceived rejection, neglect, and insensitivity by one's partner (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Perceived Hostility. The Perceived Hostility Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .94; Cyranowski et al., 2013) and is designed to capture the degree to which others are perceived to express hostility, ridicule, and criticism. For the purposes of this study, the instructions that preceded these items were reworded to specifically target the perceived hostility by one's partner within participants' committed relationships (e.g., "In the past month, please rate how often people in your life . . ." was reworded to "In the past month, please rate how often your partner . . . Blames me when things go wrong." All of the original items were retained (see Appendix C; items 55-62). Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate a greater degree of perceived hostile, ridiculing, and criticizing behaviours by one's partner (Cyranowski et al., 2013).

Communication styles during conflict. The *Romantic Partner Conflict Scale* (RPCS; Zacchilli et al., 2009) was used to identify communication styles in the context of conflict. The RPCS identifies six conflict style(s) used within committed romantic relationships: compromise, avoidance, interactional reactivity, separation, domination, and submission. It consists of 39 positively worded items that are grouped into six subscales. Items are answered along a 5-point Likert scale that range from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree*. Each subscale has demonstrated sufficient test-retest reliability with Cronbach's alpha (α) values of .70 or above (Zacchilli et al., 2009). For this current study, I eliminated 11 items (please see Appendix D; items f-r) by carefully reading through each subscale to identify items that exhibited high

redundancy in phrasing and content (redundant content is identified within the following paragraphs that correspond to each respective subscale). This was done to ensure a reasonable survey length and prevent participant dropout. Thus, the condensed RPCS used in this study consisted of 28 items (see Appendix C; items 64-91).

Compromise. The Compromise Subscale is composed of 14 items (α = .82; Zacchilli et al., 2009) and is designed to capture the effort made during conflicts to search for a solution or middle ground that can be agreed upon by both partners (e.g., "When my partner(s) and I disagree, we consider both/all sides of the argument."). For the purposes of this study, eight items were retained (please see Appendix C; items 64-71), and six items were removed (see Appendix D; items f-k) due to content redundancy with the retained items 64, 69, and 70, which ask about negotiating mutually satisfying solutions with one's partner(s). Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate constructive behaviours within relationships (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

Avoidance. The Avoidance Subscale is composed of three items (α = .70; Zacchilli et al., 2009) designed to capture the behaviours of evading a discussion or denying that a conflict exists (e.g., "I avoid disagreements with my partner(s)."). Two items (see Appendix C; items 72-73) were retained, and one item was removed (see Appendix D; item l) due to content redundancy with item 72. Higher scores on this subscale suggest a stronger tendency to avoid discussing disagreements with one's partner(s) (i.e., more frequent conflict-avoidance behaviours). However, the scale developers note that scores do not necessarily indicate the presence of constructive or destructive behaviours within relationships (Zacchilli et al., 2009). Rather, avoiding arguments may at times strengthen a relationship (e.g., choosing not to argue over small

issues) and at times weaken a relationship (e.g., avoidance of discussing larger issues/disagreements resulting in lingering tension between partners).

Interactional reactivity. The Interactional Reactivity Subscale is composed of six items (α = .85; Zacchilli et al., 2009) designed to identify verbal aggressiveness, emotional unpredictability, and lack of trust between partners (e.g., "When my partner(s) and I disagree, we argue loudly."). Five items (see Appendix C; items 74-78) were retained, while one item (see Appendix D; item m) was removed due to content redundancy with item 76, which asks about the frequency of conflict with one's partner(s). Higher scores indicate the presence of destructive relationship behaviours (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

Separation. The Separation Subscale is composed of five items (α = .76; Zacchilli et al., 2009) designed to gauge the degree to which partners permit and/or value giving one another a "cooling off" period during arguments, with the intent to return to the conversation and attempt to resolve the conflict after the cooling off period. Four items (see Appendix C; items 79-82) were retained, and one item (see Appendix D; item n) was removed due to content redundancy with items 79 and 80, which ask about allowing a period of separation during an argument to consider all sides of the conflict and returning to a calmer discussion later. Higher scores suggest a stronger tendency to separate for a period of time before coming back to one's partner to resolve an argument; however, they do not necessarily indicate the presence of constructive or destructive relationship behaviours (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

Domination. The Domination Subscale is composed of six items (α = .85; Zacchilli et al., 2009), designed to identify efforts made to control or win an argument with one's partner(s) (e.g., "When we have conflict, I try to push my partner(s) into choosing the solution that I think

is best.”). All six of the original items were retained (see Appendix C; items 83-88). Higher scores suggest destructive behaviours in the relationship (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

Submission. The Submission Subscale is composed of five items (α = .72; Zacchilli et al., 2009) designed to identify the degree to which individuals give in to another partner’s wishes to end a conflict or please them (e.g., “Sometimes I agree with my partner(s) so the conflict will end.”). Three items (see Appendix C; items 89-91) were retained, and two items (see Appendix D; items o and p) were removed due to content redundancy with item 89, which asks about the tendency to submit to one’s partner(s) during a conflict. Higher scores suggest a stronger tendency to agree with one’s partner’s views and to focus on others’ needs in the hopes of ending a conflict earlier; however, they do not necessarily indicate the presence of constructive or destructive relationship behaviours (Zacchilli et al., 2009).

Relationship satisfaction. The *Couples Satisfaction Index* (CSI; Funk & Rogge, 2007) was used to measure the feelings of satisfaction towards participants’ primary/longest relationship. The CSI is composed of 32 self-report items (see Appendix C; items 93-124) that measure the degree of satisfaction individuals experience within their current relationship(s). The authors of the CSI used Item Response Theory (IRT) analysis to systematically assess the item-level performance of several well-validated and widely used relationship satisfaction measures (e.g., the two *most* widely used measures are the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), and the Marital Adjustment Test (Lock & Wallace, 1959). Based on IRT analysis (N = 5,315), the best performing items (i.e., those which successfully capture unique information across the latent trait spectrum) were retained for the creation of the CSI. Cohen’s d effect sizes, representing the latent trait information, precision, and resulting power for each measure, indicated that the CSI provides substantially more precision measurement power (i.e., a greater ability to detect

differences in relationship satisfaction) at every level of relationship satisfaction than the other measures included in the authors' IRT analysis. Additionally, high correlation scores between the CSI and the other measures demonstrated that there is strong evidence of CSI convergent and construct validity for the CSI (Funk & Rogge, 2007).

All items are answered along six- and seven-point Likert scales that vary slightly in response options to correspond appropriately to the items (e.g., item 93 asks participants to *indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, with your relationship by selecting the most fitting description,* and provides seven answer options that range from *Extremely unhappy* to *Perfect*; while items 94-96 ask participants to *indicate the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list,* and provides six answer options that range from *Always Disagree* to *Always Agree.* I did not find any items that displayed content redundancy; thus the entire measure was used in this study. A Distress Cut Score of 104.5 (i.e., scores that are lower than 104.5) indicates the point at which respondents feel concerned/distressed about the lack of satisfaction their relationships bring them across several life areas (Funk & Rogge, 2007).

Parenting styles. The Parenting Practices Questionnaire (PPQ; Robinson et al., 1995) consists of 62 items that identify three of Baumrind's (1971a) main parenting styles: authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive. Within the subscales, 11 sub-dimensions are captured (see Figure 1 in Appendix E for an illustration of the parenting styles and sub-dimensions). For the purposes of this study, the Warm and Involved sub-dimension of the Authoritative subscale was separated out and used to capture Baumrind's fourth main parenting style of uninvolved parenting practices (please see the section entitled *Warm and involved* presented later in this chapter for further explanation). Items are answered along a 5-point Likert

scale that range from *Never* to *Always*. Each subscale has demonstrated sufficient reliability with Cronbach's alpha (α) values of .75 or above (Robinson et al., 1995). I eliminated 12 items (please see Appendix D; items q-dd) by carefully reading through each subscale to identify items that exhibited redundancy in phrasing and content (redundant content is identified within the paragraph that corresponds to each respective subscale). This was done to ensure a reasonable survey length and prevent participant dropout. Thus, the condensed PPQ used in this study consisted of 50 items (see Appendix C; items 125-173).

Authoritative. The Authoritative Subscale is composed of 27 items (α = .91; Robinson et al., 1995) and is designed to capture authoritative parenting practices (e.g., clear explanations for rules, frequent communication, nurturing validation, etc.), which Baumrind posited to be the healthiest parenting style (Baumrind, 1971a). Authoritative subscale items are grouped into four sub-dimensions identified by the PPC authors. These are: Warm and Involved, Reasoning/Induction, Democratic Participation, and Good Natured/Easy Going. As previously noted, the Warm and Involved sub-dimension was used separately as a fourth subscale to represent uninvolved parenting (this is explained below in the section entitled *Warm and involved*). Thirteen items from the remaining three sub-dimensions were retained (please see Appendix C; items 125-137), and three items were removed (see Appendix D; items q-s) due to content redundancy with retained items 125, 128, 129, 134, and 136. Redundant content identified included: (a) being easy going and relaxed, (b) helping children understand why rules should be obeyed, (c) talking with children about actions and consequences, and (d) helping children understand how they feel about their good/bad behaviour. Using the 5-point Likert scale previously described, higher scores indicate greater tendencies to use authoritative parenting practices with children (Robinson et al., 1995).

Authoritarian. The Authoritarian Subscale is composed of 20 items (α = .86; Robinson et al., 1995) and is designed to capture authoritarian parenting practices (e.g., punishment without explanation, unclear rules, one-way communication from parent to child with little negotiation, etc.), which Baumrind (1971a) posited to be an unhealthy, harmful style of parenting. Authoritative subscale items are also grouped into four sub-dimensions identified by the PPC authors. These are: Verbal Hostility, Corporal Punishment, Non-Reasoning-Punitive Strategies, and Directiveness. For the purposes of this study, 14 items from these four sub-dimensions were retained (please see Appendix C; items 138-151), and six items were removed (see Appendix D; items u-z) due to content redundancy with the retained items 139, 140, 144, 146, 147, and 149. Redundant content identified included: (a) using physical punishment/spank to discipline children, (b) punishing without explanation, (c) arguing with children, and (d) scold or criticize when children's behaviour falls short of expectations. Additionally, item 140 was reworded from, "Punish by taking privileges away from them with little if any explanations" to: "Punish them with little if any explanations" (see Appendix D; item t). Higher scores indicate greater tendencies to use authoritarian parenting practices with children (Robinson et al., 1995).

Permissive. The Permissive Subscale is composed of 15 items (α = .75; Robinson et al., 1995) and is designed to capture permissive parenting practices (e.g., difficulties creating and enforcing rules, fear of disciplining children, minimal expectations, spoiling, etc.). These parenting practices constitute yet another unhealthy parenting style, but have not been considered as harmful as authoritarian practices (Baumrind, 1971a). The PPC authors identified three sub-dimensions in the permissive subscale items. These are: Lack of Follow Through, Ignoring Misbehaviour, and Self Confidence. For the purposes of this study, 12 items from these three sub-dimensions were retained (please see Appendix C; items 152-163), and three items were

removed (see Appendix D; items aa-cc) due to content redundancy with the retained items 157 and 158. Redundant content identified included (a) threatening punishment more than following through with it, and (b) ignoring children's misbehaviour. Higher scores indicate greater tendencies to use permissive parenting practices with children (Robinson et al., 1995).

Warm and involved. For the purposes of this study, the Warm and Involved sub-dimension items were removed from the Authoritative subscale, but retained as a separate subscale. Two justifications underlay this decision. First, if retained within the Authoritative Subscale, its item pool would be disproportionately larger than the other two subscales (23 Authoritative items, versus 14 Authoritarian items and 12 Permissive items, respectively). Second, low scores on the Warm and Involved sub-dimension theoretically capture Baumrind's (1971a) fourth parenting style: Uninvolved parenting. All items are positively worded so that higher endorsement represents the warm and involved parenting practices described by the items (e.g., "Have warm and intimate times together with them", "Am aware of problems or concerns about our child in school", etc.). Therefore, low endorsement represents parents who do not engage in the parenting practices described in the items (i.e., they do not take the time to speak, joke, and play with their child(ren); are not aware of problems/concerns their children are having at school, etc). Rather than subsume this dimension within the Authoritative total score, I chose to analyze Warm and Involved items separately to illuminate the degree of parental involvement participants engage in with their children. Doing so creates a measure that is more consistent with Baumrind's (1971a) theory of four parenting styles.

The Warm and Involved sub-dimension is composed of 11 items (α = .91; Robinson et al., 1995) and is designed to capture involved parenting practices (e.g., warmth, engagement, and interest in child(ren)'s activities, etc.). For the purposes of this study, 10 items were retained

(please see Appendix C; items 164-173), and one item was removed (see Appendix D; item dd) due to content redundancy with the retained item 168, which asks about giving children comfort and understanding when they are upset. Additionally, one item (see Appendix C; item 166) was reworded from "Give praise when they are good." to "Give praise when I am proud of their behaviour." Lower scores indicate uninvolved parenting tendencies, while higher scores indicate greater involvement in children's lives (Robinson et al., 1995).

Monogamous and polyamorous propensities. The *Monogamy-Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire* (Kaiser et al., 2017) is a brief measure that gauges the magnitude of how monogamous or non-monogamous an individual is, based on the degree of monogamous and non-monogamous thoughts/desires and behaviours that are endorsed. It also identifies whether one's thoughts and behaviours are congruent. When used to predict whether individuals self-identify as being in monogamous or polyamorous relationships, it demonstrates exceptional external validity evidence: 96% classification accuracy for those self-identifying as practicing monogamy, and 94% classification accuracy for those who self-identify as practicing polyamory. Cohen's kappa for the actual versus predicted group membership was .90 (Kaiser et al., 2017), representing strong agreement between MPSQ scores corresponding to participants who self-categorized their current relationship as monogamous and polyamorous, respectively (Mabmud, 2010); as well as evidence of strong predictive validity in correctly identifying individuals' current relationship type. The MPSQ is composed of 15 items (see Appendix C; items 175-190) and has two subscales: (a) Thoughts and (b) Behaviours. Items are answered along a 5-point Likert scale that range from *Not at all like me* to *Exactly like me*. The MPSQ is a unidimensional measure that captures where individuals fall along the monogamy-polyamory spectrum. However, the two subscales that separate out one's thoughts from one's behaviours may be

analyzed separately to identify areas of inconsistency within an individual, or between partners (Kaiser et al., 2017). All items of both subscales were included in this study.

As noted in the introduction, the MPSQ was developed as part of my Honours thesis. After item generation, the phrasings of the items were revised to increase generality and to remove potentially problematic terms. For example, *spouse* was removed because not all respondents will be married. The questionnaire was given to a pilot sample of 75 self-identified polyamorists who provided feedback and suggestions for improvement. The questionnaire was then posted to the /r/polyamory subreddit website, and redditor-feedback was incorporated. The most common feedback suggestion from self-identified polyamorous individuals was to remove the word *primary* from all questions in order to avoid alienating individuals practicing non-hierarchical polyamory.

Validity evidence was collected for the MPSQ on a sample of 529 participants. A variety of statistical methods were used to identify problematic items and many cycles through the data were conducted to refine the item pools, eventually arriving at the final Thoughts and Behaviours subscales. Analytic procedures included Polychoric correlations, Parallel analysis, Velicer's Minimum Average Partial (MAP) test, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR) coefficients, Principal Axis Factor Analysis, parametric Item Response Theory (IRT) analysis, Mokken scale anlaysis, Cronbach's alpha reliability, and Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA).

The Pearson correlation between the Thoughts and Behaviours subscales was .91. The eigenvalues from the matrix of polychoric correlations for the Total scale, based on all 15 items, were 10.87 and 0.83, indicating a single, dominant dimension. Parallel analyses and Velicer's MAP test both indicated just one factor. There were high levels of fit for a one-factor model, GFI

= .99, RMSR = .05. Mokken scale analyses revealed no violations of monotonicity, no second subscale in the pool of seven items, and a scale H coefficient of .67. The loadings of the items on the first factor in the principal axis factor analysis varied between .65 and .94. Cronbach's alpha for the 15 items was .96. The test information function from the IRT analysis revealed high levels of discrimination across the z = -1.6 to z = 2.0 portion of the latent trait continuum. The corresponding reliability function indicated reliability levels above .80 across the z = -1.6 to z = 2.0 portion of the latent trait continuum. The item information functions indicated useful levels of information being provided by the 15 items.

MPSQ Thoughts. The Thoughts Subscale is composed of eight items (α = .93; Kaiser et al., 2017), designed to identify the degree of monogamous to non-monogamous desires and beliefs individuals experience and hold (e.g., "Monogamy/sexual fidelity is an absolute expectation that should not be violated."). No items were removed from this subscale. Higher scores suggest a stronger tendency to experience/entertain thoughts of non-monogamy while in a committed relationship and hold positive attitudes towards non-monogamous behaviours (Kaiser et al., 2017). Please see Appendix C, items 175-182.

MPSQ Behaviours. The Behaviours Subscale is composed of seven items (α = .93; Kaiser et al., 2017), designed to identify the degree of monogamous to non-monogamous behaviours individuals engage in (e.g., "I have the capacity to fall in love with other romantic partners while still maintaining a strong commitment to my partner(s)."). No items were removed from this subscale. Higher scores suggest a stronger tendency to develop romantic feelings for others and practice non-monogamy while in committed relationships (Kaiser et al., 2017). Please see Appendix C, items 183-190.

Analytic Procedures

I used SPSS 22.0 (IBM Corp, 2013) for all of my analytic procedures. First, I conducted data cleaning procedures (e.g., renaming variables for clarity when running analysis and interpreting outputs). I looked for missing values and removed participants with excessive missing data. In the retained participant data, only 1% of data was missing (i.e., 1% of data was missing out of all the data for all of the participants). As this was less than the recommended 5-percent threshold for missing data (Schafer, 1999), I moved forward with analyses. I also reverse-coded variables as needed and created subscale mean variables by averaging the scores of the items in each subscale. Second, I conducted demographic analysis by generating the means and percentages for variables such as age, sex, and education. I then conducted Chi-Square tests and t-tests to determine significance on demographic differences between groups. Third, I conducted a reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha for each subscale and overall measure. This was done to examine the internal consistency of the MPSQ, i.e., to ensure that the reworded items were still correlating well within each respective scale. Fourth, I conducted two Hotelling's T parametric analyses and post hoc tests when appropriate to answer research questions 1-6: (a) identify similarities and differences between CM and CNM samples in relationship length and on the measures of relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles, and (b) test for gender differences. Fifth, I conducted correlational analysis to address research question 7. Finally, to address research question 8, I conducted a Reliability Analysis to establish internal consistency of the MPSQ, followed by an Exploratory Factor Analysis to determine the number of factors being measured and examine the evidence for its construct validity and a Logistic Regression Analysis to test the

claims of predictive validity of the MPSQ. A more detailed explanation of the analytic procedures is presented below.

Reliability. I conducted a series of reliability analyses to ensure that my subscales were reliably measuring one concept. Reliability is the degree of measurement consistency within a test (Cronbach, 1951). One form of reliability of a scale is determined by analyzing the correlations between items. When theoretically related items of a scale consistently correlate with one another, the scale is then said to have good reliability. This form of reliability is also known as internal consistency and can be represented by the Cronbach's alpha statistic. An acceptable Cronbach's alpha is typically $\alpha = .70$ or greater with higher values corresponding to stronger reliability up to $\alpha = .94$ (Cortina, 1993). Values of $\alpha \geq .95$ indicate some content redundancy between the items.

Hotelling's trace statistic. The Hotelling's trace statistic (used to address research questions 1-6) is a parametric test used to assess the difference between the means of two groups on multiple dependent variables (Brereton, 2016). The Hotelling's T is preferable to running multiple t-tests because it controls for Type I error and takes into account the relationship between variables. It is also an ideal procedure for unbalanced data because effect size estimates are based on Type III Sums of Squares[2], which are not dependent on the number of observations (Shaw & Mitchell-Olds, 1993). If the Hotelling's T was significant, multivariate post hoc tests were conducted on the measures with multiple subscales to determine the unique proportion of variance explained by each one, respectively (i.e., each subscale's contribution to the overall effect size of the measure). To account for compounding Type 1 error rates, a Bonferroni correction was made to the significance values used to conclude that a difference was statistically

[2] Type III Sums of Squares provides the sum of squares that would be obtained if each variable were entered into the model last (Shaw & Mitchell-Olds, 1993).

significant. Three assumptions were checked to ensure the appropriateness of running this procedure on the data: (a) underlying normal distributions (b) independence, and (c) equal variance-covariance matrices.

Assumptions. Even though some parametric procedures, and in this case the Hotelling's T, are robust to violations of normality and homogeneity of variance, researchers still test the assumptions. Hence, I assessed whether or not my data conformed to these assumptions.

Normality. The assumption of normality was checked to ensure that the data sets being compared are normally distributed. To establish normality for my dataset, I visually examined histograms, stem and leaf plots, and Q-Q (Quantile-Quantile) plots. I also conducted the Shapiro Wilks (SW) test of normality on all subscale means to determine the degree to which this assumption was violated (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). In a normal distribution, the skewness statistic (i.e., testing the symmetry of a dataset, or the frequency of scores that fall below/above the mean) and the kurtosis statistic (i.e., a measure of the combined weight of the tails in a distribution; the steepness/flatness of the bell-shaped distribution) values should be no greater than +/–2 (George & Mallery, 2010).

Homogeneity of variance. Non-homogenous, or unequal variance decreases statistical power, which increases the likelihood of Type 1 Error (Box, 1949). Type 1 Error occurs when one mistakenly rejects the null hypothesis and identifies a statistically significant difference between means when there is no real difference. The Box's M test statistic for equal covariance matrices and the Levene's test for equality variances evaluates whether the variances of the dependent variables are equal.

Independence. The assumption of independence refers to the independence of observations in a dataset. In other words, participants' scores should not be influenced by each

other. This assumption would be violated if participants completed a survey together, because then it is assumed that Person A could influence Person B's responses; which may result in less truthful answers, and thus threaten the integrity of the data (Field, Miles, & Field, 2012a). For example, when answering questions on relationship communication, Person A may answer more positively in the presence of Person B, when in reality this is not the case. I made the assumption that independence was achieved, as I did not have any reason to believe several of my participants were completing my questionnaire together. Additionally, I conducted the Durbin-Watson (DW) test statistic, which tests this assumption by analyzing and detecting autocorrelation in the residuals (i.e., variances). DW statistic values range from 0 to 4, with values closer to 0 indicating positive serial correlation between scores in the dataset, and values closer to 4 indicating negative serial correlation (Durbin & Watson, 1971). An appropriate DW statistic value should be close to 2, indicating non-autocorrelation (Durbin & Watson, 1971).

Correlational analyses. Correlations were conducted to address research question 7. Correlation statistics indicate the strength and direction of a relationship between two numeric continuous variables (Field et al., 2012b). This analytic method divides the covariance (i.e., the common/shared variance) of two variables by the product of their standard deviations (Field et al., 2012b). The Pearson correlation coefficient is a measure of the linear relationship between variables (Field et al., 2012b). Its value ranges from –1 to 1, whereby –1 is a perfect negative correlation (as one variable's value increases, another variable's value decreases by the same degree), 0 represents no linear correlation, and 1 represents a perfect positive correlation (as one variable's value increases, another variable's value increases by the same degree). According to Cohen's (1988) estimates of effect size, a correlation coefficient of .1 represents a small/weak correlation, .3 is a moderate association, and .5 is a strong association between variables.

Exploratory Factor Analysis. After examining the internal consistency of the MPSQ, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted to test the construct validity claims for the overall measure and each subscale. Construct validity is the degree to which a test measures what it claims to measure (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). EFA identifies the number of factors being measured based on the correlations between a scale's items (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999). The output of an EFA provides eigenvalues for the factors identified, as well as a screeplot, which is a visual representation of these factor eigenvalues. To conduct an EFA, a sample size of at least 300, or a minimum of 5-10 participants per variable is recommended (Kass & Tinsley, 1979; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

I conducted the EFA using a Maximum Likelihood (ML) extraction and a Direct Oblimin rotation. The ML extraction method was selected due to the assumption that the data came from a population with a normal multivariate distribution, and the residuals (unexplained error) of correlation coefficients are normally distributed around zero (i.e., the dataset is normal; Fabrigar et al., 1999). Based on this assumption, factor loadings are then iteratively calculated, along with their significance and confidence intervals. A Direct Oblimin rotation was selected because it was both theoretically expected and previously confirmed through correlational analysis (r = .91; Kaiser et al., 2017) that the Thoughts and Behaviours subscale items would be correlated and converge to represent a single factor (Russell, 2002).

Regression analysis. A Binomial Logistic Regression was conducted to examine evidence for the predictive validity of the MPSQ by accurately predicting whether participants' report practicing polyamory or monogamy. Regression analysis is used to understand the effect or influence that one or more variables (independent variable(s) have on another (dependent variable; Field et al., 2012c). When predicting the outcome for a categorical dependent variable

with only two options, a Binomial Logistic Regression is the appropriate analytic procedure because it transforms the dependent variable and applies Maximum Likelihood Estimation to estimate the paramaters (Field et al., 2012c). Therefore, to assess the evidence for predictive validity claims of the MPSQ, I conducted a Binomial Logistic Regression to estimate the effect that MPSQ scores have on predicting participants' self-categorization of being in a monogamous or polyamorous relationship. If the MPSQ has high accuracy in predicting the relationship type of participants, then there is support for the claim that self-identified CM and CNM individuals differ in terms of their thoughts and behaviours with respect to personal relationships.

RESULTS

Participant Characteristics

Of the total 310 participants (193 CM and 117 CNM), 81% self-identified as female (n = 251), 17% as male (n = 54), 1% (n = 4) as non-binary, transgender, or *genderqueer*, and 1% (n = 3) chose not to identify their gender. Seventy percent self-identified as heterosexual, 22% as bisexual, and a combined 8% as pansexual, gay or lesbian, and *asexual* or *questioning.* The average age of participants was 38 years, with a range from 24 to 60 years old. Most participants resided in North America, 33% in Canada and 52% in the United States; while 7% lived in Europe and 3.5% in Australia. The majority of participants self-identified as White/Caucasian (89%), while a combined 8% self-identified as Mixed, Native American/Indigenous Peoples/First Nations, Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, or Asian. A four-year undergraduate degree was the highest level of education most frequently reported by participants (39%), with the next most frequent level of education attained being some college (20%), master's/graduate studies (17%), a two-year diploma/certificate (15%), highschool diploma (5.5%), and doctoral/post-graduate studies (2%). Nearly half of participants reported a total annual household income of $100,000 or greater, with the next two most frequent total annual household incomes being between $81,000 and $90.000 (9%) and between $71,000 and $80,000 (9%). The average length of participants' committed relationships was 12 years, the mode was 13 years, and the range spanned from one year to 33 years. Participants most frequently reported being a caregiver/parent to one child only (46%) and two children (39%). Please see Tables 1 and 2 for a complete breakdown of participant characteristics and demographic means, percentages, and standard deviations by relationship type.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics by Relationship Type

	CM		CNM	
	N = 193		*N* = 117	
	n	**%**	***n***	**%**
Sex				
Male	18	9.4	36	30.8
Female	174	90.6	77	65.8
Other	0	0	4	3.4
Sexual Orientation				
Heterosexual	164	85	52	44.4
Gay or Lesbian	3	1.6	0	0
Bisexual	20	10.4	49	44.9
Pansexual	4	2.1	11	9.4
Other				
Education level				
Doctorate	5	2.6	2	1.7
Master's	29	15.0	25	21.4
Bachelor's	73	37.8	47	40.2
2-year Diploma	31	16.1	16	13.7
Some college	43	22.3	22	18.8
High school	12	6.2	5	4.3
Annual Household Income				
$0 – $20,000	6	3	0	0
$21,000 – $30,000	6	3	6	5
$31,000 – $40,000	7	4	9	8
$41,000 – $50,000	11	6	6	5
$51,000 – $60,000	12	6	10	9
$61,000 – $70,000	8	4	4	2
$71,000 – $80,000	16	8	11	9
$81,000 – $90,000	16	8	11	9
$91,000 – $100,000	13	7	7	6
Greater than $100,000	97	50	53	45
Ethnicity				
White/Caucasian	171	89	104	89

Black/African American	1	1	2	2
Native American/Indigenous	3	2	3	3
Asian	2	1	1	1
Hispanic/Latino	3	2	2	2
Mixed	7	4	5	4
Nationality				
Canada	73	38	29	25
United States	83	43	78	67
Europe	16	8	0	0
Australia	11	6	0	0
New Zealand	1	1	0	0
United Arab Emirates	1	1	0	0
Additional Partners				
None	–	–	11	9.5
One	–	–	48	41.4
Two	–	–	29	25
Three	–	–	28	24.1

Note. Additional Partners = the number of additional partners currently held by polyamorous participants. (–) = a non-applicable category for which data was not collected.

Table 2

Demographic Means and Standard Deviations by Relationship Type

	CM		**CNM**	
	N = 193		*N* = 117	
	M	***SD***	***M***	***SD***
Age	39.24	6.79	35.80	6.14
Children	1.67	0.85	1.87	1.01

The majority of CNM participants self-identified as polyamorous (84%), while 5% were in open relationships, 4% were in swinging arrangements, and 7% self-identified as a combination of polyamorous, open, swinger, relationship anarchy, or polyfidelity. Most CNM

participants indicated that they had one additional partner aside from their committed relationship partner (41%), while 25% had two additional partners, 24% had three or more additional partners, and 10% did not currently have any additional partners at the time of the survey.

Demographic group differences. More CM individuals ($N = 193$) participated than those in CNM relationships ($N = 117$). The groups significantly differed in sexual orientation, χ^2 (2, $N = 300$) = 57.51, $p < .000$ and age, t (308) = 4.47, $p < .000$, but did not significantly differ in education χ^2 (2, $N = 310$) = 1.96, $p > .05$, annual household income, χ^2 (2, $N = 309$) = .821, $p > .05$, or number of children t (306) = 1.88, $p > .05$.

The majority of CM participants self-identified as heterosexual (85%), compared to 44% of CNM participants. The CNM sample had a higher percentage of bisexual (42%) and pansexual (10%) participants, compared to the CM sample (10% bisexual and 2% pansexual). The odds likelihood ratio of the Chi-Square test indicated that CNM participants were 57.51 times more likely to self-identify as bisexual than CM participants. CNM participants were slightly younger (M = 36 years) than CM participants (M = 39 years). Please refer to Tables 1 and 2.

Analytic Results

In this section, I first present the reliability analyses that were conducted on each subscale and overall measure to ensure that all revised items and scales retained good internal consistency. Second, I provide the results of the tests conducted to examine the assumptions of normality, homogeneity of variance, and independence. Third, I detail the statistically significant differences between group means that were identified in the Hotelling's T and post hoc analyses,

as well as provide the means according to gender. Fourth, I provide the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis conducted on the MPSQ.

Reliability. The reliability analyses indicated acceptable to very high internal consistency for all of the measures and their subscales, ranging from $\alpha = .71$ (permissive parenting) to $\alpha = .98$ (relationship satisfaction). This indicated that the scales retained their integrity despite rewording to improve relevance or removing items due to content redundancy. Please see Table 3 for the Cronbach's alphas of each measure and its associated subscales.

Table 3

Reliabilities assessed with Cronbach's alpha

Measures and Subscales	Alpha α	Measures and Subscales	Alpha α
Relationship Health – ASRS (40)	0.93	**Communication Styles During Conflict – RPCS (28)**	0.95
Emotional Support (6)	0.94	Compromise (8)	0.92
Instrumental Support (6)	0.90	Avoidance (2)	0.74
Friendship (8)	0.92	Reactivity (5)	0.77
Loneliness (5)	0.88	Separation (4)	0.84
Rejection (7)	0.94	Domination (6)	0.88
Hostility (8)	0.93	Submission (3)	0.78
Parenting Styles – PPQ (49)	n/a	**Relationship Satisfaction – CSI (32)**	0.98
Authoritative (13)	0.85		
Authoritarian (14)	0.82	**Monogamous and Polyamorous Propensities – MPSQ (15)**	0.91
Permissive (12)	0.71	Thoughts/Desires (8)	0.81
Warm and Involved (10)	0.82	Behaviours (7)	0.91

Note. Cronbach's alpha values presented are based on the revised measures used in this study.

Assumptions. The Shapiro-Wilks test of normality was significant for all subscale means, $p = .000$, indicating that the assumption of normality was violated (i.e., the distribution of mean scores for each subscale was *not* normally distributed; see Table 4). However, with the exception of the hostility subscale, skewness and kurtosis values were within normal limits for

all subscales in both CM and CNM samples. Please see Figures 2-4 for a sample histogram, stem and leaf plot, and Q-Q plot, and Table 4 for normality test statistics.

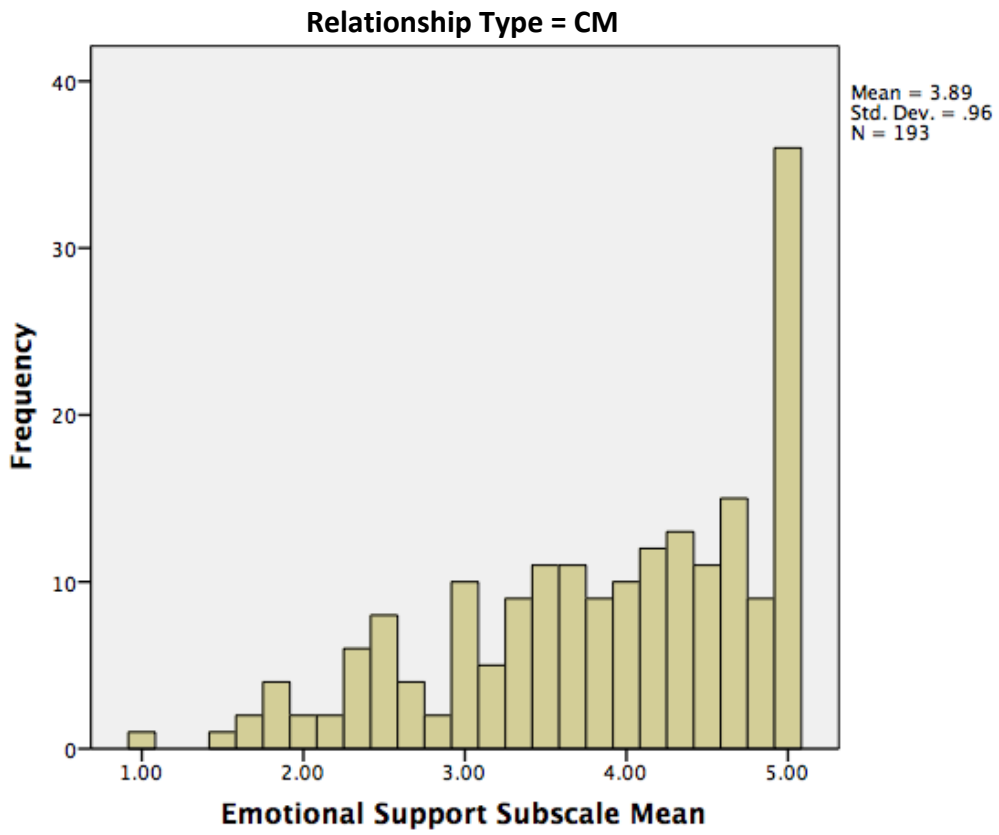

Figure 2. A histogram of the frequency distribution of scores on the Emotional Support Subscale for CM participants.

```
  1.00 Extremes    (=<2.7)
  1.00        2 .  8
  3.00        3 .  011
  3.00        3 .  333
  2.00        3 .  55
  6.00        3 .  666666
  6.00        3 .  888888
 13.00        4 .  0000000011111
  9.00        4 .  333333333
 12.00        4 .  555555555555
 17.00        4 .  66666666666666666
 15.00        4 .  888888888888888
 29.00        5 .  00000000000000000000000000000

Stem width:    1.00
Each leaf:     1 case(s)
```

Figure 3. Stem and leaf of the distribution of scores on the Emotional Support Subscale for CNM participants.

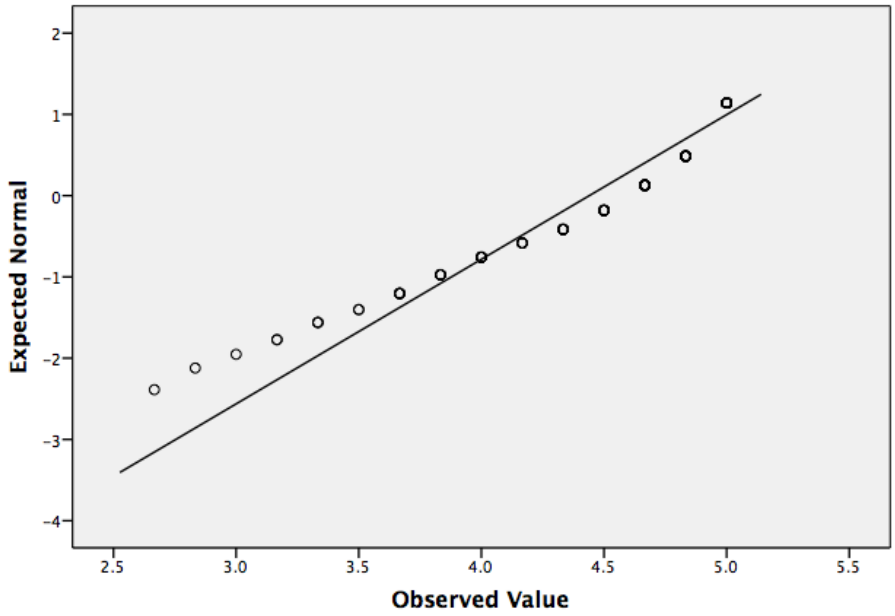

Figure 4. Q-Q plot of the distribution of scores on the Emotional Support Subscale for CNM participants. The observed data points deviating from the diagonal line at the higher and lower ends of many scales indicates that the data are not normally distributed.

Table 4

Normality and Homogeneity of Variance Test Statistics

Scales	SW *p*	Skewness	Kurtosis	Box's M	Levene's *p*	DW
Relationship Length	.000*	.373	–.565	–	.508	1.91
Relationship Health (40)	.000*	–1.32	1.31	.000*	.000*	1.86
Emotional Support (6)	.000*	–1.01	0.36	–	.000*	2.04
Instrumental Support (6)	.000*	–1.49	1.71	–	.000*	1.69
Friendship (8)	.000*	–1.31	1.53	–	.000*	1.93
Loneliness (5)	.000*	–1.05	0.97	–	.000*	1.97
Rejection (7)	.000*	–1.43	1.67	–	.000*	1.89
Hostility (8)	.000*	–1.36	2.32	–	.000*	1.78
Communication Styles During Conflict (28)	.200	–0.31	0.17	.001*	.002	2.27
Compromise (8)	.000*	–1.08	1.87	–	.003	2.03

Avoidance (2)	.000*	–0.08	–0.98	–	.091	2.18
Reactivity (5)	.000*	–0.10	0.66	–	.000*	2.14
Separation (4)	.000*	0.95	0.49	–	.273	2.11
Domination (6)	.000*	0.43	–0.48	–	.000*	1.96
Submission (3)	.000*	0.27	–0.49	–	.960	2.05
Relationship Satisfaction (32)	.000*	–1.03	0.03	.000*	.000	1.91
Parenting Styles (49)	.200	–0.22	–0.31	.000*	.104	2.12
Authoritative (13)	.000*	–0.94	3.08	–	.016	2.07
Authoritarian (14)	.000*	0.65	1.26	–	.274	2.07
Permissive (12)	.000*	0.66	0.86	–	.716	1.87
Warm and Involved (10)	.000*	–0.90	0.25	–	.103	2.18
MPSQ (15)	.000	0.26	–1.38	.139	.010	2.00
Thoughts/Desires (8)	.000*	0.17	–1.28	–	.009	2.05
Behaviours (7)	.000*	0.31	–1.32	–	.081	1.90

Note: * indicates statistical significance after applying the Bonferroni correction. (–) indicates that the particular test statistic was not applicable for the measure or subscale.

Homogeneity of variance. With the exception of Relationship Length and the MPSQ, the Levene's and Box's M test statistics were significant at $p = .000$, indicating that the homogeneity of variance assumption was violated. Please refer to Table 4 for Levene's and Box's M test statistics.

Independence. The Durbin-Watson statistics in my dataset were generally close to 2 (ranging between 1.78 and 2.27) for all scales and subscales, indicating no serial correlation and the assumption of independence was intact (please refer to Table 4).

It is important to note that it is very common for assumptions of normality to be violated in social science research datasets (Erceg-Hurn & Mirosevich, 2008). As all of the questionnaires used in this study required participants to self-report, one's particularly negative or positive view of oneself can result in a skewed or non-normal dataset. Neverthless, as the Hotelling's T procedure is robust against violations of normality and homogeneity of variance (Coombs,

Algina, & Oltman, 1996), I proceeded with the two Hotelling's T analyses—one to answer research questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (to compare the CNM and CM sample means on Relationship Length, Relationship Health, Communication Styles During Conflict, Relationship Satisfaction, and Parenting Styles), and a second to answer research question 6 (to test for gender differences on these variables).

Mean Comparisons Between Groups: Research Questions 1-6

After applying the Bonferroni correction[3] to account for compounding Type I Error (incorrectly rejecting the null hypothesis; Mittelhammer, Judge, & Miller, 2000), the first Hotelling's T indicated there were statistically significant differences with a large effect size[4] between the CM and CNM samples in Relationship Length, Relationship Health, Communication Styles During Conflict, Relationship Satisfaction, and the Authoritative and Authoritarian Parenting Styles, *Wilk's Λ* = 0.845, $F(300, 8) = 6.81$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = .155. Please see Table 5 for the overall sample means, group means, standard deviations, main effects, and both significant and non-significant between subjects effects of the scales and subscales. The second Hotelling's T indicated a statistically significant gender difference with a higher-end moderate effect size on the MPSQ, *Wilk's Λ* = .871, $F(300, 9) = 4.73$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = .129 (please see Table 6 for means and standard deviations according to gender). Next, I will explain these results in greater detail for each measure.

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[3] The alpha-level critical cut-point ($p < .05$) was divided by the number of comparisons made. In this case, the Bonferroni correction resulted in a new alpha level cut-point of $p < .025$ for Research Questions 1-6, and $p < .003$ for Research Question 7.

[4] Kirk (1996) defines the magnitudes of Partial eta squared effect sizes as: .01 = small, .06 = medium, and .14 = large.

Table 5

Means, Standard Deviations, and Effect Size by Relationship Type

Scales and Subscales	Overall Mean	CM Mean	CNM Mean	F Value	Sig	Effect Size
Relationship Length	12.08(6.80)	13.06(6.77)	10.47(6.57)	10.70	.001*	.034
Relationship Health (40)	4.18(0.84)	4.02(0.78)	4.46(0.38)	6.31	.000*	.114
Emotional Support (6)	4.10(0.87)	3.89(0.96)	4.44(0.56)	32.07	.000*	.094
Instrumental Support (6)	4.36(0.82)	4.20(0.91)	4.61(0.57)	18.80	.000*	.058
Friendship (8)	4.25(0.78)	4.05(0.87)	4.57(0.46)	34.96	.000*	.102
Loneliness (5)	2.05(0.84)	2.20(0.94)	1.78(0.55)	19.88	.000*	.061
Rejection (7)	1.74(0.82)	1.91(0.91)	1.45(0.55)	24.35	.000*	.073
Hostility (8)	1.83(0.72)	1.95(0.80)	1.61(0.50)	17.57	.000*	.054
Communication Styles During Conflict (28)	3.50(0.40)	3.46(0.43)	3.56(0.33)	11.05	.000*	.180
Compromise (8)	4.00(0.75)	3.84(0.78)	4.29(0.58)	28.59	.000*	.085
Avoidance (2)	3.26(1.06)	3.42(3.42)	3.00(1.00)	12.16	.001*	.038
Reactivity (5)	1.79(0.71)	1.92(0.76)	1.58(0.55)	17.60	.000*	.054
Separation (4)	3.03(0.89)	3.00(0.86)	3.09(0.93)	0.89	.347	.003
Domination (6)	2.17(0.82)	2.37(0.86)	1.86(0.65)	29.95	.000*	.089
Submission (3)	2.63(0.94)	2.77(0.92)	2.40(0.94)	11.93	.001*	.037
Relationship Satisfaction (32)	4.82(0.95)	4.63(1.07)	5.16(0.59)	25.68	.000*	.078
Parenting Styles (49)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Authoritative (13)	4.08(0.49)	4.02(0.53)	4.19(0.38)	8.76	.003*	.028
Authoritarian (14)	1.70(0.36)	1.74(0.37)	1.64(0.34)	6.32	.012*	.020
Permissive (12)	2.05(0.41)	2.08(0.40)	2.00(0.42)	2.72	.100	.009
Warmth / Involvement (10)	4.56(0.39)	4.55(0.41)	4.57(0.37)	0.29	.593	.001
MPSQ (15)	2.65(1.05)	1.96(0.60)	3.78(1.05)	421.57	.000*	.736
Thoughts/Desires (8)	2.78(0.98)	2.20(0.68)	3.72(0.57)	405.58	.000*	.572
Behaviours (7)	2.51(1.22)	1.69(0.64)	3.85(0.62)	841.51	.000*	.735

Note. * indicates statistically significant differences between group means after applying the Bonferroni correction ($p < .025$); n/a = not applicable.

Research question 1: How do the groups compare in relationship length? Hypothesis 1 was supported, i.e., CNM participants reported shorter relationship lengths with their primary partners (M = 10.47, SD = 6.57) than CM participants (M = 13.06, SD = 6.77). This difference was statistically significant with a small effect size, $F(300, 5) = 10.70$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.034 (see Table 5).

Research question 2: How do the groups compare in relationship health? CNM participants reported significantly higher overall Relationship Health scores (M = 4.46, SD = .38) than CM participants (M = 4.02, SD = 0.78), *Wilk's* $\Lambda = 0.889$, $F(303, 6) = 6.31$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.114 (this value indicated a higher-end moderate effect size; Kirk, 1996), and scored significantly higher on all subscales. Post hoc analyses, which indicate the unique variance explained by each subscale, identified moderate effect sizes associated with the group differences on the subscales of friendship, emotional support, rejection, and loneliness; and small effect sizes for instrumental support and hostility. All mean differences were in the predicted direction. Hypothesis 2 was supported, i.e., CNM participants reported greater relationship health, in the form of more social support, more companionship, and lower social distress from negative relationships than CM participants. Please see Table 5 for group differences on each social support subscale.

Research question 3: How do the groups compare in communication styles during conflict? Statistically significant differences between CM and CNM group means were found in Communication Styles During Conflict, *Wilk's* $\Lambda = .820$, $F(303, 6) = 11.05$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.180. Post hoc analyses indicated statistically significant group differences with moderate effect sizes for domination and compromise, and small effect sizes on reactivity, avoidance, and submission. The mean differences for compromise, reactivity, and domination

were in the direction predicted by Hypothesis 3, i.e., CNM participants reported more positive communication skills by endorsing the constructive communication style of compromise to a greater extent and endorsing destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination to a lesser extent than CM participants. Please refer to Table 5 for group differences on each communication style subscale.

Research question 4: How do the groups compare in relationship satisfaction? Statistically significantly differences were found in Relationship Satisfaction, $F(300, 5) = 25.68$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.078, with CNM participants (M = 5.16, SD = 0.59) reporting higher relationship satisfaction than CM participants (M = 4.63, SD = 1.07), thereby supporting Hypothesis 4 (see Table 5).

Research question 5: How do the groups compare in parenting styles? There was a significant group mean difference on the Authoritative parenting style, $F(304, 4) = 8.76$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.028, with CNM participants (M = 4.19, SD = 0.38) scoring higher than CM participants (M = 4.02, SD = 0.53). As well, for the CNM group, the authoritative parenting style mean was higher than the means for the other three parenting styles, as predicted. Altogether, these findings supported Hypothesis 5. Additionally, a significant group mean difference was present on the Authoritarian parenting style, $F(304, 4) = 6.32$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = 0.020, with CM participants (M = 1.74, SD = 0.37) scoring higher than CNM participants (M = 1.64, SD = 0.34). Please refer to Table 5 for group differences on each parenting style subscale.

Research Question 6: Are gender differences present on any of the variables? Although the Hotelling's T comparing women and men on the total scale and subscale means for relationship stability, relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship

satisfaction, parenting styles, and the monogamy-polyamory spectrum was statistically significant, post hoc tests for the scales and subscales included in Hypothesis 6 indicated that after applying the Bonferroni correction, significant gender differences were only present on the MPSQ, *Wilk's Λ* = .905, $F(300, 2) = 15.61$, $p < .025$, partial eta squared = .095 (indicating a moderate effect size). As predicted, men (M = 3.35, SD = 1.03) had significantly higher MPSQ scores than women (M = 2.44, SD = 1.15). Although the ratio of male to female participants was low, because the Hotelling's T uses Type III Sums of Squares, it is robust to unbalanced sample size and we may confidently conclude a meaningful difference is present when a Hotelling's T is significant (Shaw & Mitchell-Olds, 1993). However, the majority of gender differences outlined in hypothesis 6 were not supported, i.e., compared to women, men did not (a) report experiencing more emotional support, more friendship, and less loneliness in their relationships, (b) have higher scores on the destructive communication styles of emotional reactivity and domination, (c) report higher relationship satisfaction, or (d) endorse the authoritative parenting style to a lesser extent, and the authoritarian parenting style to a greater extent than mothers. Please see Table 6 for means and standard deviations according to gender (also, please see Table 11 in Appendix F for a breakdown of means and standards by gender and relationship type).

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations by Gender

Scales and Subscales	Men (N = 54)	Women (N = 251)	F Value	Sig	Effect Size
Relationship Health	4.23(.67)	4.17(.70)	2.29	.035	.044
Emotional Support	4.30(.77)	5.05(.89)	–	–	–
Instrumental Support	4.41(.72)	4.35(.84)	–	–	–
Friendship	4.40(.70)	4.22(.80)	–	–	–
Loneliness	1.93(.87)	2.06(.83)	–	–	–
Rejection	1.66(.83)	1.76(.83)	–	–	–
Hostility	1.92(.72)	1.80(.72)	–	–	–
Communication Styles During	3.52(.39)	3.50(.40)	.563	.760	.011

Conflict					
Compromise	4.15(.69)	3.98(.76)	–	–	–
Avoidance	3.30(1.05)	3.27(1.06)	–	–	–
Reactivity	1.72(.64)	1.80(.73)	–	–	–
Separation	2.93(.94)	3.05(.88)	–	–	–
Domination	2.11(.67)	2.19(.85)	–	–	–
Submission	2.62(.96)	2.64(.94)	–	–	–
Relationship Satisfaction	4.96(.88)	4.81(.96)	1.091	.297	.004
Parenting Styles	–	–	–	–	–
Authoritative	4.06(.55)	4.09(.47)	.035	.852	.000
Authoritarian	1.72(.28)	1.70(.38)	.011	.915	.000
Permissive	1.98(.37)	2.07(.42)	2.46	.118	.008
Warm and Involved	4.43(.43)	4.58(.38)	7.01	.009	.023
MPSQ	3.35(1.03)	2.44(1.15)	15.61	.000*	.095
Thoughts/Desires	3.47(.99)	2.53(1.19)	29.47	.000*	.089
Behaviours	3.27(1.12)	2.32(1.17)	29.52	.000*	.090

Note: * indicates a significant mean difference between males and females at $p < .025$; (–) indicates that the specified statistic was not applicable for the measure or subscale.

Relationships Among the Subscales: Research Question 7

Pearson correlation coefficients were generated and examined to uncover the relationship between the subscales of relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles. After applying the Bonferroni correction, these analyses indicated that the favourable subscales of emotional support, instrumental support, friendship, compromise, and relationship satisfaction were all strongly positively correlated with each other, ranging from $r = .51 – .85$, $p < .003$. The unfavourable subscales of loneliness, rejection, hostility, and emotional reactivity were also strongly correlated with each other, ranging from $r = .57 – .77$, $p < .003$. These results supported Hypothesis 7, i.e., consistent with the literature, positive correlations were found between the subscales of emotional support, instrumental support, friendship, compromise, and relationship satisfaction for both CNM and CM groups. Positive correlations were also found between the subscales of loneliness, perceived rejection,

perceived hostility, emotional reactivity and domination in both groups. Consistent with this finding, the favourable variables were negatively correlated with the unfavourable variables (r = -.38 – -.83, p < .003). Examining other correlations revealed weak to moderate positive and negative associations between parenting styles and the other variables, respectively. For example, the permissive parenting style was moderately positively correlated with loneliness, r = .30; had weak positive associations with rejection, hostility, emotional reactivity, domination, and submission (ranging from r = .19 – .29); was moderately negatively associated with relationship satisfaction, r = -.30; and had negative weak correlations with emotional support, instrumental support, and friendship (r = -.17 – -.28). Please see Table 7 for the correlations table.

Table 7

Correlations Between Subscales

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Emotional Support	–																
2. Instrumental Support	.63	–															
3. Friendship	.83	.64	–														
4. Loneliness	-.72	-.53	-.79	–													
5. Rejection	-.83	-.66	-.81	.77	–												
6. Hostility	-.65	-.53	-.59	.57	.73	–											
7. Compromise	.67	.51	.63	-.55	-.65	-.54	–										
8. Avoidance	-.05	-.10	-.11	.07	.05	-.06	.03	–									
9. Emotional Reactivity	-.61	-.38	-.58	.57	.62	.66	-.55	-.10	–								
10. Separation	.10	.02	.08	-.07	-.08	.02	.07	.05	-.02	–							
11. Domination	-.28	-.07	-.28	.21	.27	.26	-.32	-.04	.44	-.01	–						
12. Submission	-.35	-.35	-.41	.39	.41	.45	-.33	.28	.37	.00	.20	–					
13. Relationship Satisfaction	.84	.62	.85	-.79	-.84	-.65	.66	-.08	-.66	.07	-.26	-.41	–				
14. Authoritative Parenting	.22	.09	.12	-.06	-.13	-.19	.24	.03	-.22	.03	-.34	-.13	.16	–			
15. Authoritarian Parenting	-.12	-.10	-.13	.16	.17	.21	-.16	.01	.29	.00	.29	.17	-.16	-.38	–		

16. Permissive Parenting	**-.28**	**-.17**	**-.27**	**.30**	**.29**	**.26**	**-.25**	.06	**.22**	.01	**.19**	**.28**	**-.30**	**-.33**	**.28**	–	
17. Warm and Involved	**.19**	.08	**.18**	**-.18**	**-.18**	**-.14**	**.18**	.06	**-.14**	**.13**	**-.22**	-.09	**.16**	**.46**	**-.26**	**-.31**	–

Note: Correlations in bold are significant at $p < .003$. Blue values indicate moderate to strong positive correlations at $r \geq .3$; red values indicate moderate to strong negative correlations at $r \leq -.3$.

Psychometric Properties of the MPSQ: Research Question 8

I conducted a reliability analysis and EFA to examine the internal consistency and construct validity evidence of the MPSQ. My data satisfied the assumption of normality required for the ML extraction (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Correlational analysis also confirmed the expectation that the Thoughts and Behaviours subscales would be correlated ($r = .86$, $p < .003$), as required for the Direct Oblimin rotation (Russell, 2002; please see Table 8 for MPSQ subscale item correlations). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis KMO = .95 (excellent according to Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity, χ^2 (105) = 3979.56, $p < .003$, indicated that the correlations between items were sufficiently large. I then conducted Regression Analysis to examine the evidence for predictive validity of the MPSQ.

Table 8

Pearson Correlation Matrix for MPSQ Thoughts and Behaviours Subscale Items

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. T-1	–													
2. T-2	.77	–												
3. T-3	.65	.71	–											
4. T-4	.67	.57	.52	–										
5. T-5	.75	.77	.77	.63	–									
6. T-6	.43	.40	.44	.31	.45	–								
7. T-7	.74	.67	.60	.57	.71	.57	–							
8. T-8	.80	.72	.60	.57	.72	.41	.72	–						
9. B-1	.73	.72	.52	.48	.64	.25	.60	.69	–					

10. B-2	.51	.53	.49	.46	.54	.32	.48	.40	.45	–				
11. B-3	.72	.67	.50	.51	.64	.36	.66	.71	.70	.52	–			
12. B-4	.79	.69	.51	.52	.68	.32	.65	.70	.73	.50	.73	–		
13. B-5	.83	.75	.65	.61	.73	.41	.72	.88	.74	.42	.75	.77	–	
14. B-6	.63	.57	.47	.50	.54	.40	.60	.58	.57	.42	.52	.57	.63	–
15. B-7	.67	.60	.47	.72	.60	.31	.54	.62	.55	.43	.50	.55	.65	.45

Note: T = Thoughts items; B = Behaviours items. Correlations are all significant at $p < .003$. Blue values indicate the correlations between Thoughts items; red values indicate the correlations between Behaviours items; purple values indicate the correlations between Thoughts and Behaviours items.

Internal consistency and construct validity. Reliability analysis indicated strong internal consistency at $\alpha = .91$ (Streiner, 2003).[5] The EFA identified a single factor with an eigenvalue larger than Kaiser's (1974) criterion of 1. The eigenvalue was 9.36, and the single factor (the monogamy-polyamory spectrum) explained 62% of the variance in the MPSQ. Item factor loadings were all sufficiently large (> .4; Stevens, 2009), indicating that each item was strongly correlating with the factor identified. This demonstrates good construct validity evidence for the MPSQ. Please see Table 9 for the factor loadings of each item, and Figure 5 for the scree plot.

Table 9

Monogamy-Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire Item Loadings of Maximum Likelihood Extraction Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item	**Factor 1**
1. T-1 Monogamy/sexual fidelity is an absolute expectation that should not be violated. (R)	.914
2. T-2 I don't think about pursuing romantic connections with anyone else. (R)	.849
3. T-3 I fantasize about pursuing romantic connections with other people regardless of how wonderful my	.720

[5] Steiner (2003) states that $\alpha = .91$ is considered an ideal Cronbach's alpha value, indicating that each item is contributing unique information about the latent trait variable to the scale (e.g., capturing different levels of the latent trait across the latent trait spectrum of very low to very high).

current relationship partner is.	
4. T-4 I entertain thoughts/desires of my partner and I sharing/experiencing sexual connections with others together (e.g., a threesome with someone we both feel comfortable inviting).	.691
5. T-5 I entertain thoughts/desires of engaging in sexual connections with others, without my partner present.	.836
6. T-6 One of the downsides to committing to a serious relationship with someone is the expectation of monogamy.	.472
7. T-7 It is hard to fathom that one person could satisfy all of my emotional and sexual needs/desires.	.804
8. T-8 I think it's OK/normal to fall in love with multiple people at the same time.	.875
9. B-1 I never pursue romantic connections with other people. (R)	.807
10. B-2 I enjoy pursuing romantic sexual connections with other people for purely physical reasons.	.558
11. B-3 I enjoy pursuing romantic sexual encounters with other people that I feel a strong emotional connection with.	.800
12. B-4 My partner and I pursue sexual experiences with others separately (e.g., date other lovers on the side with each other's consent).	.831
13. B-5 I have the capacity to fall in love with other romantic partners while still maintaining a strong commitment to my partner(s).	.913
14. B-6 As hard as I try, and as much as I love(d) my significant other(s), I seem unable to be monogamous in my serious relationships.	.690
15. B-7 I would never agree to any type/form of shared sexual experiences with my partner(s) (e.g., a threesome or swinging experience that we participate in together). (R)	.704

Note: (R) = Reverse scored items.

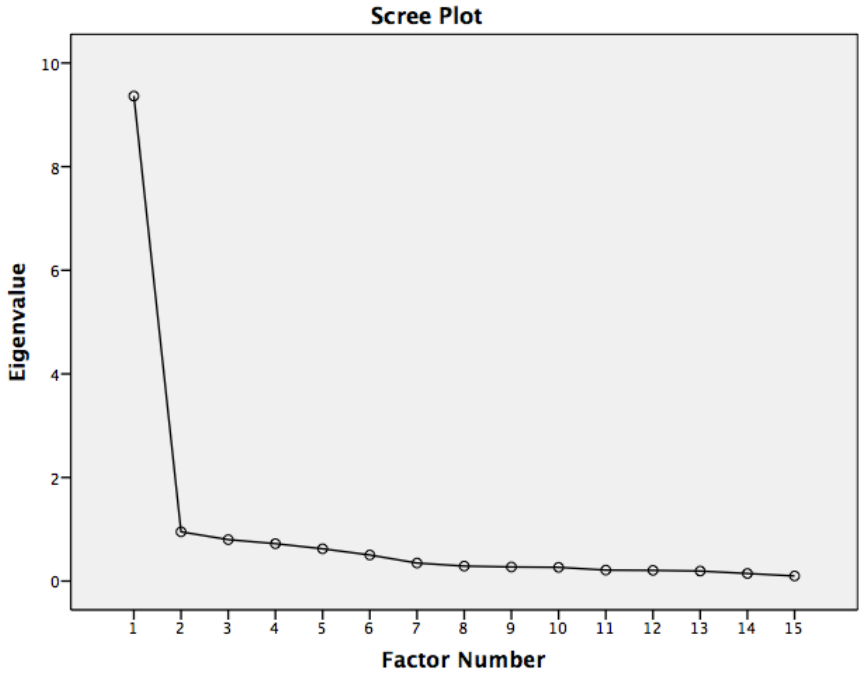

Figure 5. Monogamy-Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire eigenvalue scree plot

Predictive validity. Results of the regression analyses indicated the regression model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 296.01$, $p = .000$. The model explained 84% (Nagelkerke R^2) of the variance in self-identified relationship type and correctly classified 93% of participants. Using MPSQ scores to predict self-identified relationship type, the model had 94% classification accuracy for CM participants, and 90.5% classification accuracy for CNM participants. This provides evidence of strong predictive validity for the MPSQ. Please see Table 10 for the classification table.

Table 10
Classification Table

	Predicted		
Observed	**CM**	**CNM**	**Percentage**
CM (low MPSQ)	179	11	94.2
CNM (high MPSQ)	11	105	90.5
Overall Percentage			92.8

Note: Observed relationship type is based on participants' MPSQ scores; Predicted relationship type is based on participants' self-categorization.

DISCUSSION

In this chapter I will provide an in depth explanation of my study's findings and consider the potential implications of this research. First, I will highlight the main findings of this study that resulted from demographic analysis and testing of my hypotheses. Second, I will go over any findings that confirm what previous researchers have reported, describe any findings that deviate from the literature, and provide hypotheses or explanations for why this may be. Third, I will expand on the unique contributions of my study to the polyamory literature by reviewing the research questions and hypotheses my thesis tested. Fourth, I will discuss the practical implications my findings have for counsellors and health professionals working with polyamorous clients, considerations for marriage and family law as it relates to polyamorous families, as well as conceptual and theoretical implications for the construct of polyamory. Finally, I will outline my study's limitations and suggest future research areas and questions that should be explored to further improve our understanding of relationship dynamics in polyamorous families.

Main Findings

Demographic analysis indicated that participants who self-identified as bisexual made up a significantly higher proportion of the CNM sample than the CM sample, and that CNM participants tended to be statistically significantly younger than CM participants. However no other significant demographic group differences were present. The majority of participants in both CNM and CM samples were Caucasian, better educated and higher in socioeconomic status than the general population, and had between 1-2 children.

The Hotelling's T analysis identified significant mean differences between CNM and CM parents in relationship length, relationship health, communication, relationship satisfaction, and

authoritative parenting. Specifically, when compared to CM parents, CNM parents (a) are in stable yet shorter relationships, (b) experience more emotional support, instrumental support, and friendship, are less lonely, and experience less social distress from hostility and rejection; (c) use the constructive communication strategy of compromise more often, and use the destructive communication tactics of emotional reactivity and domination less often; (d) experience a greater degree of relationship satisfaction, and (e) practice authoritative parenting to a greater extent. Significant gender differences were only found on the MPSQ, while all other hypothesized gender differences were not supported.

Correlational analysis indicated that favourable relationship factors of social support, companionship, constructive communication, and relationship satisfaction were strongly associated with one another, and authoritative parenting positively correlated with emotional support and compromise. Similarly, the unfavourable subscales of loneliness, hostility, rejection, emotional reactivity, and domination were positively correlated; authoritarian parenting was associated with hostility, emotional reactivity, and domination; and the favourable subscales were negatively associated with the collection of unfavourable subscales.

Finally, psychometric analysis indicated the MPSQ demonstrated very good reliability in the form of high internal consistency; items loaded well onto the single factor of the monogamy-polyamory spectrum, indicating evidence of strong construct validity; and the scores effectively differentiated between self-identified monogamous and polyamorous participants, demonstrating evidence for strong predictive validity.

Confirming Past Research

As expected, sexual orientation was associated with relationship type. A far greater number of CNM participants self-identified as bisexual (45%) or pansexual (9%) compared to

CM participants (10% bisexual; 2% pansexual). By contrast, 85% of the CM sample identified as heterosexual compared to 44% of CNM participants. This supports the need fulfillment motivation models for the practice of polyamory, because when restricted to a monogamous relationship, bisexual individuals would theoretically be more prone to experience unfulfilled sexual desires/needs (Lahti, 2018). Thus, bisexual people may be less likely to enter into a monogamous relationship, and/or more likely to negotiate a non-monogamous relationship with their partners. The freedom to reject monogamy and construct a non-monogamous alternative was untenable for previous generations due to stigmatizing social consequences (Bartky, 1988; Borver, Gurevich, & Mathieson, 2001; Klesse, 2005). Yet with the rise of equal rights legislation that made discrimination based on one's sexual orientation illegal, and feminist discourses that challenge heteronormative beliefs around sexual identities, sexual minorities have felt more safe to openly practice their desired romantic lifestyles (Wandrei, 2019). For example, bisexual individuals have faced negative accusatory judgements and assumptions within the sexual minority community for *really* being gay or lesbian, but not courageous enough to claim their "true" identity (Bower et al., 2005; Wandrei, 2019). The replicated finding that polyamorous individuals have a higher tendency to self-identify as bisexual than gay or lesbian suggests that bisexuality is indeed a separate sexual identity that involves different relationship style choices than identifying as gay or lesbian.

Also in line with previous research, CNM participants in my study were predominately white (89%), and relatively high in socioeconomic status compared to both Canadian and US population statistics. In my study, 63% of CNM participants held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 22.5% of Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2017) and 16% of US citizens (United States Census Bureau, 2019); and 45% of CNM participants reported an annual household

income greater than $100,000), compared to 11% of Canadian family households (Statistics Canada, 2017) and 29% of individuals in the US (United States Census Bureau, 2018). This is consistent with past research that finds a strong association between polyamory and privilege, as the majority of individuals who both research and practice polyamory are Caucasian with middle- to high-socioeconomic backgrounds (Sheff & Hammers, 2011). Researchers have previously suggested that individuals are more likely to practice polyamory when they can afford to offset or compensate for the social consequences of stigma associated with it (Sheff & Hammers, 2011). However, an alternative explanation is that these demographics are commonly shared by those within the subreddits and Facebook groups sampling pool from which researchers (such as myself) recruited participants.

As hypothesized (Hypothesis 6), men scored significantly higher on the MPSQ than women. This confirms that men tend to be less monogamous than women (Hughes et al., 2004; Kaiser et al., 2016; Vaillancourt & Few-Demo, 2014), continue to hold more favourable attitudes towards promiscuity and non-monogamy, and engage in non-monogamy to a greater extent than women. It is still unclear whether the differences between men's and women's sexual behaviour may be attributed to the evolutionary motivation to protect biological investment (Nakonezny & Denton, 2008). Some studies suggest that women are more likely than men to develop strong relationship attachments to sexual partners (Birnbaum, Reis, Mikulincer, Gillath, & Orpaz, 2006; Haseltonu & Buss, 2001), which may influence women to have fewer sexual partners over their lifetime. Feminist scholars and social psychologists however have pointed to social norms that strongly enforce double standards emphasizing female modesty and police women's sexual freedoms (Farvid, Braun, & Rowney, 2017; Rudman, Fetterolf, & Sanchez, 2013). More research is needed to better understand the influences on men's and women's sexual behaviours.

Lastly, as expected and consistent with my previous study (Kaiser et al., 2017), the MPSQ demonstrated high reliability in the form of internal consistency, and evidence of strong construct validity. It also demonstrated evidence of very good predictive validity, with a high degree of accuracy when used to predict whether participants self-identified as polyamorous or monogamous. The EFA indicated a single factor and all of the items loaded well onto the factor. Correlational analysis also showed that the Thoughts and Desires subscale and Behaviours subscale were highly correlated, confirming that the MPSQ captures a single construct, and that the monogamy-polyamory spectrum is composed of thoughts, desires, and behaviours that range from highly monogamous to highly polyamorous.

A close examination of the factor loadings revealed key information about which thoughts, desires, and behaviours are most strongly associated with polyamory. For example, Thoughts item-1, "Monogamy/sexual fidelity is an absolute expectation that should not be violated" and Behaviours item-5, "I have the capacity to fall in love with other romantic partners while still maintaining a strong commitment to my partner(s)," were the strongest loading items. This suggests that polyamorous individuals (a) do *not* believe monogamy should be an absolute expectation in their committed relationships, and (b) possess the ability to both fall in love with, and be committed to, multiple partners. By contrast, the weakest loading items were Thoughts item-6, "One of the downsides to committing to a serious relationship with someone is the expectation of monogamy" and Behaviours item-2, "I enjoy pursuing romantic sexual connections with other people for purely physical reasons." This suggests that there is more to polyamory than simply the rejection of monogamous commitment in serious romantic relationships or the desire to enjoy sexual variety. Rather, polyamory appears to be driven by the desire to enjoy greater emotional connection through additional romantic sexual experiences

(Behaviours item-3), both with and separate from one's primary partner (Thoughts item-4 and -5; Behaviours item-7 and -12). All of these findings support the explanations of polyamory that are found in the grey literature (Veaux, 2015).

The logistic regression analysis indicated that the MPSQ effectively identifies those who currently practice polyamory or monogamy and self-identify as polyamorous or monogamous. CNM participants reported experiencing stronger and more frequent non-monogamous thoughts and desires, as well as acting out their non-monogamous desires to a greater extent, than CM participants. Prior to the construction of the MPSQ, no psychometric instrument existed to measure how monogamous or polyamorous a person may be. This analysis together with the psychometric analyses support the conclusion that the MPSQ has strong reliability, construct validity, and predictive validity and therefore may be confidently used by polyamory researchers in studies that seek to further define and understand polyamory as a type of sexual identity. The scale could be used to (a) classify individuals as polyamorous or monogamous instead of using self-identification, (b) examine the degree of monogamy and polyamory in different populations, and (c) explore the emergence and stability of polyamory in individuals across age groups and over the lifespan.

Deviations from Past Research

Contrary to the expected gender differences reported in past research on social support (Uchino et al., 1996), companionship (Kwang et al., 2013), marital conflict (Margolin et al., 1988; Schumacher & Leonard, 2005; Wanic & Kulic, 2011), communication (Hou et al., 2019; Zacchilli et al., 2009), relationship satisfaction (Jackson et al., 2014), and parenting styles (Simons & Conger, 2007) no statistically significant gender differences were identified on these variables within the present study. This finding suggests that mothers and fathers may not

experience meaningfully different levels of social support, companionship, communication, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles. However, the unexpected deviation from past research may be due to the disproportionate female-to-male ratio in my sample and the limited sample of male participants in my study. Both low sample size and unequal sample size may contribute to inadequate analytic power to identify statistically significant differences (Everitt, 2002). The more comparisons that are made and the smaller the difference between means, the greater the sample size that is needed to identify a statistically significant difference between groups; Cohen, 1988). Given the number of mean comparisons I conducted between my two samples, as well as the small differences in means between male and female participants, a larger and more equal sample of men may have been needed to properly analyze differences according to gender.

Another possible reason that my study did not replicate gender differences is that the Hotelling's T gender analysis was conducted on male and female participants irrespective of their relationship type, as the sample of male participants was too small to cross gender and relationship type. When examining the means of male and female participants in this study, the mean differences between men and women were smaller when the relationship groups were combined (i.e., within-group mean differences were larger). As well, mean differences in the expected direction between men and women were not always identified in both CM and CNM groups. For example, as expected in Hypothesis 6, CM men had higher emotional reactivity scores than CM women. However, this gender difference was reversed in the CNM sample, with women reporting higher emotional reactivity than men. All of these factors could have influenced the results of the gender analysis. Alternatively however, it may be that there were no meaningful differences on the variables in my study between the mothers and fathers who

participated. As already noted, the sample deviated from the general population in a number ways and thus may have differed from samples employed in research where gender differences have been reported.

Unique Contributions of this Study

This was the first quantitative study to compare CM and CNM parents on the variables of relationship health, communication styles during conflict, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles. As a result of testing and confirming Hypotheses 1-6, my findings contributed unique knowledge to the literature on CNM families by showing that compared to CM families, CNM families may be characterized by:

1. A shorter relationship length.
2. A higher degree of relationship health due to experiencing more emotional support, instrumental support, and companionship; and experiencing less loneliness, rejection, and hostility.
3. More frequent use of the constructive communication strategy of compromise during conflict, and less frequent use of the destructive communication strategies of emotional reactivity and domination.
4. A higher degree of relationship satisfaction.
5. More frequent use of the Authoritative parenting style, and less frequent use of the Authoritarian parenting style.

These findings suggest that, contrary to what might be expected by proponents of traditional family arrangements and monogamy, polyamorous parents may actually cultivate and experience better functioning relationships with healthier dynamics than monogamous parents.

The values and beliefs that guide polyamory are likely important elements that contribute to polyamorous individuals experiencing healthier relationships than self-identified monogamous individuals. First, polyamory is based on rejecting the notion that a single relationship partner should be responsible for meeting all of one's emotional, intellectual, and sexual connection needs (Cook, 2005; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006). Therefore, polyamorous individuals likely experience more freedom and self-permission to seek out healthier primary relationship partners if there are problems related to low social support, low companionship, and high social distress from negative relationships.

Second, the values of autonomy, respect, and honesty that characterize polyamory would likely promote the development of communication skills to work through conflict in constructive ways so that multiple partners' needs are respected. Those who practice polyamory are required to discuss relationship boundaries from the outset of every new partnership, and to elicit consent from all partners involved as relationships evolve and change over time (Haritaworn et al., 2006; Veaux, 2019a). Polyamorous relationship partners frequently navigate dilemmas and contexts that simply never arise within monogamous relationships. For example, the number of additional partners outside the primary relationship in hierarchical polyamory, the frequency that one's primary relationship partner goes on dates with another partner, whether one's primary partner comes home after a date or sleeps over at another partner's place, the time of day a primary partner comes home after staying at another partner's place, the extent of involvement that a primary partner will have in another partner's children's lives, etc. Additional topics to be discussed might include the extent that a primary-meta relationship partner is involved with other partners (e.g., a one-time introductory meeting, an ongoing friendship with multiple meetings, or remaining relatively insulated from one another). Alternatively, there may be helpful strategies

used in non-hierarchical polyamory to ensure partners feel valued while being conscientious not to elevate or prioritize one relationship over another. For example, an individual practicing non-hierarchical polyamory may need to uphold boundaries for autonomy and independence while still conveying love, support, and commitment to a partner who expresses a desire to move in together. These examples demonstrate that the range and complexity of relationship dilemmas for polyamorous partners to work through are innumerable and require communication skill development for polyamorous relationships to succeed and last in the long-term (Veaux, 2012).

Third, respecting autonomy and practicing open communication appears to extend past CNM partnerships to influence the relationship dynamics between CNM individuals and their children as well. As expected in Hypothesis 5, CNM parents in my study practiced the healthiest parenting style of authoritative parenting to a greater extent than any other parenting style, as well as to a greater extent than CM parents. This finding suggests that CNM parents prioritize having conversations with children to ensure they (a) understand the reasons behind the rules they are expected to follow (b) consider their thoughts and feelings towards their parents' rules and consequences, and (c) develop a sense of moral identity that is separately determined, yet still respected in relation to their parents' beliefs (Baumrind, 1971a). Authoritative parenting has the strongest association with positive childhood development outcomes in self-reliance, self-control, explorative behaviours, and contentment (Bradford et. al., 2004). It follows then, that children raised in polyamorous families likely develop competencies in these areas.

As proposed in Hypothesis 7, the means of CM and CNM participants demonstrated positive associations between the favourable subscales of relationship health (emotional support, instrumental support, and friendship), communication (compromise), and relationship satisfaction. Positive correlations were also found between the unfavourable subscales of

loneliness, rejection, hostility, emotional reactivity, and domination. While causality cannot be determined from these correlations, this finding suggests that regardless of the relationship type, the associations identified between these variables in past research (Falconier et al., 2015; Sánchez Bravo & Watty Martínez, 2017) hold true in CNM relationships as well. Whether CNM or CM, committed romantic relationships are more satisfying when there is more social support, companionship, and constructive communication. Furthermore, a unique exploratory finding was that authoritative parenting positively correlated with emotional support and compromise, and authoritarian parenting was associated with hostility, emotional reactivity, and domination. This finding suggests that regardless of relationship type, CM and CNM individuals who practice respectful communication and build relationships with more social support, companionship, and relationship satisfaction utilize their relationship and communications skills in their parenting behaviours as well.

Implications: Counselling Practices, Family Law, and Theory

The results of this study largely demonstrated that CNM parents are doing quite well in their partnerships and families. They engage in healthy relationship behaviours and parenting practices that are known to facilitate long-term emotional and physical health outcomes for themselves, their partners, and their children, and they experience a higher degree of relationship satisfaction compared to CM parents. The implications of this fall in line with previous literature that discourages heteronormative biases among counsellors, therapists, and other health professionals (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Klein, 2015). Consistent with conclusions drawn from qualitative research on CNM families (Bevacqua, 2018; Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Sheff, 2011), the assumptions that underlie negative views against polyamory were not substantiated. To the contrary, this study demonstrated that compared to CM parents, CNM parents may enjoy

significantly healthier relationships with more social support and companionship, and less social distress from negative relationships; they may practice more constructive communication by compromising more instead of trying to dominate during conflict by using aggression and verbal abuse; they may be happier and more satisfied overall in their relationships with primary partners; and they may practice healthy parenting behaviours more frequently. Polyamory is not a lifestyle choice that everyone desires or understands, and there are certainly challenges and complexities involved. However, counsellors and health professionals are advised to respect and understand that individuals who choose to practice polyamory are likely engaged in relationships that are just as healthy as, or perhaps even healthier than, monogamous relationships.

An additional implication for therapists and counsellors is to use the MPSQ with clients who are questioning their monogamous identities and/or exploring polyamory in both individual and couples counselling contexts. For example, after administering the MPSQ, therapists may go through clients' answers with them, using the MPSQ as a tool to increase clients' self-knowledge as well as broach self-reflective conversations and exercises that will improve clients' psychological and behavioural congruency (Jung & Hecht, 2004, 2008; Rubinsky, 2018b). Therapists might benefit from administering the MPSQ to clients who (a) feel conflicted between social norms of monogamy and their desire to practice polyamory, and/or (b) are struggling to practice monogamy in their CM relationships. It may also be used to help couples (a) identify incompatibilities between partners in sexual thoughts, desires, and behaviours (by examining clients' subscale scores); and/or (b) form rules and boundaries for a CNM relationship that is congruent with their thoughts, desires, and behaviours. Just as it is important to consider the compatibility between relationship partners in values, interests, and financial choices, it is

important to consider the compatibility between partners' monogamous-polyamorous propensities.

The findings of this study also hold implications for marriage and family law. Consistent with the call for eliminating stigma against polyamory among counsellors, therapists, and other health professionals (Henrich & Trawinski, 2016; Sheff, 2011), policy makers need to incorporate an understanding that polyamorous families are healthy, functioning, and not likely to be vastly different than monogamous families (Boyd, 2017). The present study suggests that if there are differences, they are more likely to be in positive directions that promote healthy outcomes and provide a supportive environment for child development, rather than to have negative, harmful impacts. Therefore, marriage and family law policies should move towards eliminating discrimination against polyamorous families. For example, policy makers might consider (a) extending marriage rights to polyamorous individuals when there are more than two partners who want to marry; (b) ensuring that polyamorous parents who are applying for adoption are not discriminated against for fear of children being raised in a less supportive family environment than prospective monogamous adoptive parents, and (c) ensuring it is possible to extend parental status and custody rights when there are more than two polyamorous parents who share primary caregiving responsibilities. Such rights and equal provisions will give polyamorous individuals the authority to make important healthcare decisions for their partners or child(ren) during emergencies, make decisions around the education of their child(ren) in partnership with their other partners, and permit non-biological polyamorous parents to travel with their children.

Limitations and Challenges of This Study

A major limitation of this study is the low rate of male participation. Unfortunately, this is typical of most survey research, with men being much less likely to participate (Saleh & Bista, 2017). Saleh and Bista (2017) found that the level of interest people have in online survey topics significantly impacts their participation, and men are more likely to participate when surveys are short and concise. Applying this finding to my study suggests that the gender disparity in my participants may be due to women finding the topic of polyamory more interesting than men. Alternatively, the length of my survey may have discouraged male participation. In any case, the result of this limitation is that while my study identified differences between CNM and CM parent samples, the differences in fact lie between mothers in CNM and CM relationships. Until these variables are examined within a larger sample of men, it remains unknown whether the differences identified in this study exist between CM and CNM fathers as well. Furthermore, although gender was not a primary focus of this study, it would have been helpful to analyze whether the experiences and behaviours of CNM fathers differ from CNM mothers (i.e., a larger male sample would have provided the statistical power needed to effectively analyze gender differences). This is especially important because the literature suggests that gender differences are likely to be found in the areas of relationship health, communication, and relationship satisfaction that were explored in this study.

As noted in my literature review, the self-selection bias that reduces the generalizability of sex research findings is a limiting factor in my study as well. Although sexual minorities tend to hold more liberal views in general, the polyamorous individuals who frequent the online reddit and Facebook forums I recruited from may hold different views and engage in different behaviours with regards to their relationships, communication styles, and parenting than a

representative sample of polyamorous parents in the general population. Self-selection bias may have also resulted in an overrepresentation of participants (both CM and CNM) who are largely happy in their relationships. Random sampling techniques might capture more individuals who are less satisfied in their relationships, which would contribute to a better understanding of negative polyamory experiences.

Finally, there are cultural limitations that must be considered. The demographics of my participants suggest that both CNM and CM samples come from privileged, Caucasian segments of North American society with higher socioeconomic statuses than the general population. This further limits my study's generalizability. In addition, the differences uncovered between the CM and CNM parents in this study may in fact be more pronounced for monogamous and polyamorous parents in the general population, as people who participate in online forums such as reddit tend to be more educated than those who are not (Kilgo, Ng, Riedl, & Lacasa-Mas, 2018). Due to the research challenges of using random sampling methods in sex research to recruit representative samples, in order to gain a complete picture of the relationship dynamics in polyamorous families, federal decision makers should make efforts to include questions directed to polyamorous individuals, parents, and families in our national censuses. Mandatory participation will eliminate the limitation of small male sample sizes and permit researchers to get a clearer picture of how polyamorous families are doing.

Future Polyamory Research Directions

The finding that CNM parents tended to have higher relationship satisfaction levels than CM parents is an area that would benefit from further research. This may be due to the permission polyamory affords individuals to acknowledge relationship needs that are not fulfilled in a primary relationship (the Compensation Model; Baumeister & Leary, 1995;

Mitchell et al., 2014), and permission to seek additional fulfillment of needs in other relationships (the Additive Model; Cook, 2005; Muise et al., 2019; Sheff, 2006). The unique proportion and contribution of factors (e.g., communication, companionship, respect of autonomy, intellectual stimulation, sexual chemistry, etc.) that increase the relationship satisfaction in polyamorous relationships may be different from one relationship to another (just as the motivations that lead individuals to practice polyamory may differ). Yet we may be able to determine the hierarchy of importance for factors that contribute to low relationship satisfaction, and their relation to different polyamory styles. For example, the Deficit and Compensation Models (when low need fulfillment in one's primary relationship leads to non-monogamy because individuals are motivated to compensate for unmet needs in another relationship; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2014) may be more relevant to relationship satisfaction in hierarchical polyamorous relationships, while the Additive Model (when polyamory increases the relationship satisfaction experienced in all of one's romantic relationships; Cook, 2005; Sheff, 2006) may be more applicable in non-hierarchical polyamory.

Better understanding the association between unfulfilled relationship needs (e.g., companionship and sexual compatibility), low relationship satisfaction levels (i.e., feeling that one's partner is not providing the optimum or ideal qualities that are typically sought in romantic relationships), and how these variables lead some individuals towards infidelity, while leading others towards exploring and negotiating a polyamorous relationship, would prove valuable to relationship counsellors and therapists who work with clients to navigate either of these contexts. Polyamory may be a positive relationship alternative to explore for some clients, while an unsuitable, incongruent suggestion for others. There are a number of client scenarios in which the appropriateness of polyamory might be assessed. For example, there may be clients who

want to build meaningful romantic relationships, yet feel unable to enter into a long-term commitment with any of their partners due to non-monogamous desires; or a couple who favours reconciliation to terminating their relationship despite ongoing issues of infidelity. Some couples want to explore polyamory when there has *not* been any infidelity. A counsellor may help clients decide on rules, boundaries, and preferences in regards to the best polyamory type that suits their needs. Many monogamous couples experiment with hierarchical, swinging arrangements in which they share sexual experiences with other couples, yet maintain and prioritize their commitment to each other as primary partners (Veaux, 2019b). However, a more in-depth discussion and negotiation of rules and boundaries would likely be helpful for couples who wish to move from dabbling with swinging on the rare occasion to investing more time and commitment to external romantic relationships (Veaux, 2015). As well, research is needed to explore negative experiences in polyamorous relationships. Although my study resulted in a sample of individuals who were largely happy in their CNM relationships, there are likely cases where practicing polyamory does not result in positive relationship dynamics.

Another area that would benefit from more study is the emergence and stability of polyamory as a component of people's sexual identity. The MPSQ may be useful in this regard to measure the strength of non-monogamous thoughts, desires, and behaviours in quantitative longitudinal studies. Such studies would help to reveal if the desire to be polyamorous is stable for some individuals, regardless of need fulfillment or relationship satisfaction levels; as well as the average age that individuals first begin to recognize propensities towards non-monogamy. If polyamory is found to be a stable aspect of sexual identity in addition to being a lifestyle choice that increases need fulfillment and relationship satisfaction, incorporating these findings into

sexual education curriculums may help to prevent internalized self-judgment, shame, or experiences of unnecessary distress for those who feel drawn to non-monogamy.

Lastly, researchers might explore whether gender differences are still present within today's family arrangements, to what degree they exist, and whether they are present in polyamorous relationships. Feminist discourses have increased awareness of the harmful and oppressive consequences that gender expectations can have on both women and men (Croft, Schmader, Block, & Baron, 2014; Ellemers, 2018), which may have contributed to shifts in gender norms and expectations within modern family arrangements (Mott, Schmidtt, & MacWilliams, 2019; Rosin, 2010). Gender differences may have decreased to become less pronounced in recent years, or alternatively, may have reversed in direction, or be more pronounced in certain relationship types for some variables. Counselling practices would benefit from having the knowledge of current gender differences in family relationship dynamics for monogamous and polyamorous families alike.

Conclusion

This study compared a sample of highly educated CNM and CM parents on a number of variables associated with relationship health. Consistent with the polyamory literature, individuals engaged in CNM relationships were more likely to identify as bisexual than those in CM relationships. Analyses indicated CNM parents have relationships that are just as healthy as CM relationships, if not healthier, characterized by more social support, companionship, and less social distress. They also tend to use constructive communication and Authoritative parenting to a greater extent than CM parents. Finally, CNM parents are more satisfied in their primary relationships than CM parents. The Monogamy Polyamory Spectrum Questionnaire performed well as an instrument in terms of its high reliability, evidence of good construct validity, and

strong predictive validity for gauging individuals' current monogamous and non-monogamous propensities. Its accuracy in differentiating between those who self-identify as monogamous or polyamorous confirms that these identities correspond to a distinctly different set of sexual thoughts and behaviours. Contrary to past studies, gender differences were not identified on the variables of social support, companionship, constructive communication, relationship satisfaction, and parenting styles. This may be due to insufficient male participation undermining statistical power, analyzing gender differences without controlling for relationship type, or be that the differences between men and women in my sample were not large enough to be meaningful and achieve statistical significance.

The main findings of this study support the removal of stigma from polyamory as a relationship and lifestyle choice. The practice of polyamory does not appear to have negative impacts on families' relationship dynamics in terms of experienced social support, companionship, constructive communication, relationship satisfaction, and healthy parenting. To the contrary, if there are differences between monogamous and polyamorous families along these variables, this study demonstrated they may actually be in a positive direction. Therefore, mental and health service professionals should provide unbiased support to polyamorous clients; and policy makers should extend equal marriage, custody, and parenting rights to polyamorous parents. More research is needed to better understand the stability of polyamory as a component that informs sexual identity, the potential link between unfulfilled needs in primary relationships, low relationship satisfaction, and polyamory style, and the limitations or appropriateness for exploring polyamory with clients across individual and relationship contexts. With the practice, prevalence, and visibility of polyamory on the rise in North America, increased conversations around the normalization of consensual non-monogamy may mean that individuals experiencing

non-monogamous thoughts and desires may first consider exploring polyamory before cheating occurs.

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Appendix A

List of subreddits and Facebook Groups the Survey for this Study was Posted in:

subreddits:

1. /r/samplesize
2. /r/Marriage
3. /r/polyamory
4. /r/polyfamilies
5. /r/Swingers

Facebook groups:

1. Polyamory Canada
2. Polyamory Discussion
3. Solo Polyamory

Appendix B

PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH

ANONYMOUS PARTICIPATION NEEDED

WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP DYNAMICS IN TODAY'S EMERGING FAMILY ARRANGEMENTS?

FRIENDSHIP MONEY COMMUNICATION
SPONTANEITY PARENTING STYLE
INTIMACY BOUNDARIES EDUCATION
LAUGHTER HONESTY PERSONALITY
POWER AUTONOMY RESPECT
SATISFACTION SEX CREATIVITY LOVE

ELIGIBILITY: Participants must be **at least 18 years old**, **currently** in a committed relationship, & a caregiver/parent to at least one dependent under the age of 18 who lives in your household at least 50% of the time. **LENGTH:** 20-25 minutes

PARTICIPATION DETAILS

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to answer questions about the current committed relationship(s) you are in, and the relationship dynamics within your household. This includes questions about your thoughts and behaviours as they contribute to the wellbeing of your partner(s) and family. Demographic information will be requested, including questions about your family arrangement (e.g, number of children, what age(s), split/blended family, etc.). At any point, you may choose to cease your participation in the study, or opt out of answering a particular question. **NO** personal identification information will be asked. Your participation is **anonymous.** This study has been approved by the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board.

QUALTRICS WEBSURVEY SYSTEM

Qualtrics is the online system used to collect data for this study. Response data are stored on servers located in the USA and subject to the *Patriot Act*, which allows authorities access to records of Internet service providers including IP addresses. If you choose to participate in this study, you understand that your responses will be stored and accessed in the USA. The security and privacy policy for Qualtrics can be found at the following link: http://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/

Study link: [_____]

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY – WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY
STUDY CONTACT: Melody Kaiser (Master's of Science in Counselling Psychology Student)
SUPERVISORS: Dr. Lorraine Radtke & Dr. Man-Wai Chu

Version 4.0 July, 2018

Appendix C

Full Questionnaire

Note: All questions marked with an asterisk * indicate reverse-scored items).

The following section will ask you to provide demographic information. No personal identification information will be asked.

1. What is your age?

❍ _____

2. What is your gender?

❍ Male

❍ Female

❍ Neither of these apply to me. I prefer to identify as _____

3. What is your sexual orientation?

❍ Heterosexual

❍ Homosexual

❍ Bisexual

❍ None of these apply to me. I prefer to identify as _____

4. What ethnicity do you most identify with or describe yourself as?

❍ White / Caucasian

❍ Black / African American

❍ Native American / Indigenous Peoples / First Nations

❍ Asian

❍ Hispanic / Latino

❍ None of these apply to me. I prefer to identify as _____

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

❍ High School Diploma / Equivalent

- ❍ Some College
- ❍ 2-Year Diploma or Certificate
- ❍ 4-Year Degree / Undergrad
- ❍ Master's Degree / Graduate Studies
- ❍ Doctorate / Post-Graduate Studies

6. What is your total annual household income?

- ❍ $0-$20,000
- ❍ $21,000-$40,000
- ❍ $41,000-$60,000
- ❍ $61,000-$80,000
- ❍ $81,000-$100,000
- ❍ Greater than $100,000

7. How would you describe your current committed relationship?

- ❍ Committed Monogamous
- ❍ Committed and Non-Consensually Non-Monogamous (e.g., infidelity, having an affair, cheating, etc.)
- ❍ Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous (e.g., polyamorous, open relationship, swinging arrangement, etc.)
- ❍ Other _____

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Non-Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this statement is displayed:

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this study. Unfortunately you do not meet the participation criteria to continue. Thank you.

8. How many years have you been with your spouse/primary partner?

- ❍ ___ years

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

9. Aside from your primary partner, how many additional romantic or sexual partners are you and/or your primary partner currently involved with?

❍ 1 additional partner

❍ 2 additional partners

❍ 3 or more additional partners

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

10. Please list the number of years, or length of time, you have been with each of your additional partners.

[Text box for participant's answer]

11. Are you a parent/caregiver to at least one child under the age of 18 years who lives in your household with you at least 50% of the time?

❍ Yes

❍ No

DISPLAY LOGIC: If Do you have at least one child under the age of 18 years OR are you a parent/caregiver in any capacity to at least one child under the age of 18 years (e.g., foster or co/step-parent, etc.)? No **Is Selected**, then this statement is displayed:

We appreciate your willingness to participate in this study. Unfortunately you do not meet the participation criteria to continue. Thank you.

12. What are the ages of these children? Please enter the number of children for whom you are a parent or caregiver at each age range.

❑ 1 year old or less

❑ 2 years old

- ❑ 3 years old
- ❑ 4 years old
- ❑ 5 years old
- ❑ 6 years old
- ❑ 7 years old
- ❑ 8 years old
- ❑ 9 years old
- ❑ 10 years old
- ❑ 11 years old
- ❑ 12 years old
- ❑ 13 years old
- ❑ 14 years old
- ❑ 15 years old
- ❑ 16 years old
- ❑ 17 years old
- ❑ 18 years or older

DISPLAY LOGIC: If Do you have any children or are you a parent/caregiver in any capacity (e.g., foster or step-parent)? Yes **Is Selected**, then the following questions are displayed:

13. What is the amount of caregiving that you provide for the children in your care? Select all that apply.

- ❍ For at least some of the children in my care, I care for them more than 50% of the time.
  - a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you provide care more than 50% of the time.** [Enter text]
- ❍ For at least some of the children in my care, I care for them 50% of the time.
  - a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you provide care 50% of the time.** [Enter text]
- ❍ For at least some of the children in my care, I care for them less than 50% of the time.
  - a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you provide care less than 50% of the time.** [Enter text]

14. What is your relationship to the children in your care? Select all the forms of parent that apply to you:

❍ I am a **biological parent** of at least some of the child(ren) in my care.

a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you are a biological parent.** [Enter text]

❍ I am an **adoptive parent** of at least some of the child(ren) in my care.

a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you are an adoptive parent.** [Enter text]

❍ I am a **step-parent** of at least some of the child(ren) in my care.

a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you are a step-parent.** [Enter text]

❍ I am a foster parent of at least some of the child(ren) in my care.

a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you are a foster parent.** [Enter text]

❍ None of these apply to me. My parenting role is _____

a) **Please enter the number and ages of children for whom you fill this parenting role.** [Enter text]

The next 12 questions ask you about your family living arrangements.

15. How many households do *you* currently live in?

❍ One

❍ More than one. **How many households?** [Enter text]

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How many households do you currently live in? **If** More than one **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

16. How many adults live in each household with you?

❍ [Enter text]

17. What is the relationship between the adults within each household in which you live? (e.g., common law partner, spouse, polyamorous partner, etc.)

- ❍ Household 1: [Enter text]
- ❍ Household 2: [Enter text]
- ❍ **Add another household**

18. What is the relationship between the *other* adults and the children within each household in you live? (e.g., biological parent, adoptive parent, step-parent, foster parent, etc.)

- ❍ Household 1:
  - a) Adult 1 – [Enter text] (e.g., biological mother to five year old)
  - **b) Add another adult**
- ❍ Household 2:
  - a) Adult 1 – [Enter text]
- ❍ **Add another household**

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How many households do you currently live in? More than one **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

19. How do you spread your time across the households?

- ❍ Spend an equal amount of time across the households
- ❍ Spend more time in one household than the other
  - a) Which household do you spend more time in? [Enter text]

20. How many households do *the children* currently live in?

- ❍ One
- ❍ More than one. **How many households?** [Enter text]

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How many households do *the children* currently live in? **If** More than one **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

21. How would you describe the amount of time the children spend across households?

- ❍ Spend an equal amount of time across households

- ❍ Spend more time in one household than the other
  a) Which household do they spend more time in? [Enter text]

22. Are you divorced/separated from at least one of your child(ren)'s mother or father?

- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

DISPLAY LOGIC: If Are you divorced/separated from at least one of your child(ren)'s mother or father? Yes **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

23. To what extent are you involved in making decisions about the children in your care? For example, about their education and health? Select all that apply:

- ❍ For at least some of the children, I am solely responsible in making decisions about them.
  a) Please enter the number and ages of the children for whom you are solely responsible for making decisions:
- ❍ For at least some of the children, I share decision-making with another parent/caregiver.
  a) Please enter the number and ages of the children for whom you share decision-making with another parent/caregiver:
- ❍ For at least some of the children in my care, I am not involved in making decision about them.
  a) Please enter the number and ages of the children for whom you are not involved in making decisions about:

24. If there is any additional information that would help us understand your family living arrangements, please describe it here:

- ❍ [Enter text]

Social Support Questions

Instructions to participant: *The following section asks you about the current long-term relationship(s) you are in. If you have more than one committed partnership, please respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with. If you spend equal amounts of time with*

your partners, please respond with the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.

Please read each statement and then decide how much each applies to you in the past month . . .

Likert Scale Used for items 23-62:

1 Never	2 Seldom	3 Sometimes	4 Often	5 Almost always

Emotional Support Items:

23. My partner understands my problems.

24. My partner listens to me when I need to talk.

25. I feel I can talk to my partner when I am upset.

26. I can trust my partner to talk with me about my problems.

27. I trust my partner to talk with me about my feelings.

28. I can get helpful advice from my partner when I'm dealing with a problem.

Instrumental Support Items:

29. My partner helps make meals if I am unable to make them myself.

30. My partner helps me out with errands when I need them to.

31. My partner helps me if I'm sick in bed.

32. My partner picks up medicine/prescriptions for me if I need them to.

33. My partner would take myself, or the children, to the doctor if needed.

34. My partner helps me when I need them to.

Friendship Items:

35. My partner invites me to go out and do things with other people.

36. My partner and I relax together.

37. My partner and I have fun together.

38. I can find a friend in my partner when I need one.

39. My partner is supportive of my friendships with others.

40. My partner will make plans with me when I ask.

41. I feel close to my partner.

42. I feel included when I'm with my partner and their friends.

Loneliness Items:

43. I feel alone and apart from my partner.

44. I feel left out when my partner makes plans.

45. I feel that I am no longer close to my partner.

46. I feel alone.

47. I feel lonely.

Perceived Rejection Items:

Please read each statement and then decide how much each applies to you in the past month. In the past month, please rate how often your partner . . . (If you have more than one partner, please respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with. If you spend equal amounts of time with your partners, please respond with the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.)

48. Doesn't listen when I ask for help.

49. Acts like my problems aren't that important.

50. Lets me down when I am counting on them.

51. Acts like they don't have time for me.

52. Acts like they don't want to hear about my problems.

53. Acts like they don't care about me.

54. Avoids talking to me.

Perceived Hostility Items:

55. Argues with me.

56. Acts in an angry way towards me.

57. Criticizes the way I do things.

58. Yells at me.

59. Gets mad at me.

60. Blames me when things go wrong.

61. Acts nasty to me.

62. Teases me in a mean way.

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

63. How would you compare the support you receive in your other polyamorous relationships with the support in your longest relationship, or with the partner you spend the most time with?

❍ [Enter text]

Communication Questions

Instructions to participant: *Think about how you handle conflict with your romantic partner(s). Specifically, think about a* ***significant*** *conflict issue that you and your partner have disagreed about recently. Using the scale below, fill in which response is most like how you handled conflict. If you have more than one partner, please respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with. If you spend equal amounts of time with your partners, please respond with the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.*

Likert scale used for items 64-91:

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Undecided	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

Compromise Items:

64. We try to find solutions that are acceptable to both/all of us.

65. We often resolve conflict by talking about the problem.

66. Our conflicts usually end when we reach a compromise.

67. When my partner(s) and I disagree, we consider both/all sides of the argument.

68. Compromise is the best way to resolve our disagreements.

69. My partner(s) and I negotiate to resolve our disagreements.

70. I try to meet my partner(s) halfway to resolve a disagreement.

71. My partner(s) and I collaborate to find a common ground to solve problems between us.

Avoidance Items:

72. My partner(s) and I try to avoid arguments.

73. I avoid disagreements with partner(s).

Interactional Reactivity Items:

74. When my partner(s) and I disagree, we argue loudly.

75. Our conflicts usually last quite awhile.

76. My partner(s) and I have frequent conflicts.

77. I become verbally abusive to my partner(s) when we have conflict.

78. My partner(s) and I often argue because I do not trust them.

Separation Items:

79. When we disagree, we try to separate for a while so we can consider both/all sides of the argument.

80. When we experience conflict, we let each other cool off before discussing it further.

81. When we have conflict, we separate but expect to deal with it later.

82. Separation for a period of time can work well to let our conflicts cool down.

Domination Items:

83. When we argue or fight, I try to win.

84. I try to take control when we argue.

85. I rarely let my partner(s) win an argument.

86. When we disagree, my goal is to convince my partner(s) that I am right.

87. When we argue, I let my partner(s) know I am in charge.

88. When we have conflict, I try to push my partner(s) into choosing the solution that I think is best.

Submission Items:

89. When we have conflict, I usually give in to my partner.

90. Sometimes I agree with my partner(s) so the conflict will end.

91. When we argue, I usually try to satisfy my partner's/partners' needs rather than my own.

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

92. How would you compare the communication in your other polyamorous relationships with the communication in your longest relationship, or with the partner you spend the most time with ?

❍ [Enter text]

Relationship Satisfaction Questions:

93. Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, with your relationship(s) by selecting the most fitting description. *If you have more than one partner, please use the letter "T" to respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with, and use the letter*

"L" to respond in relation to the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.

Extremely unhappy	**Fairly unhappy**	**A little unhappy**	**Happy**	**Very happy**	**Extremely happy**	**Perfect**

Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list. If you have more than one partner, please use the letter "T" to respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with, and use the letter "L" to respond in relation to the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.

Likert scale used for items 94-96:

Always disagree	**Almost always disagree**	**Frequently disagree**	**Occasionally disagree**	**Almost always agree**	**Always agree**

94. Amount of time spent together

95. Making major decisions

96. Demonstrations of affection

Likert scale items used for items 97-98:

Never	**Rarely**	**Occasionally**	**More often than not**	**Most of the time**	**All the time**

97. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

98. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in this relationship? *

Likert scale used for items 99-110:

Not at all	**A little**	**Somewhat**	**Mostly true**	**Almost**	**Completely**

true	**true**	**true**		**completely true**	**true**

99. I still feel a strong connection with my partner.

100. If I had my life to live over, I would pick my partner again.

101. Our relationship is strong.

102. I sometimes wonder if my partner and I are still compatible. *

103. My relationship with my partner makes me happy.

104. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner.

105. I can't imagine ending my relationship with my partner.

106. I feel that I can confide in my partner about virtually anything.

107. I have had second thoughts about this relationship recently. *

108. For me, my partner is the perfect romantic partner.

109. I really feel like part of a team with my partner.

110. I cannot imagine another person making me as happy as my partner does.

Likert scale used for items 111-113:

Not at all	**A little**	**Somewhat**	**Mostly**	**Almost completely**	**Completely**

111. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?

112. How well does your partner meet your needs?

113. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?

114. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

Scale used for item 115:

Worse than all others (extremely bad)					**Better than all others (extremely good)**

115. How good is your relationship compared to most?

Likert scale used for items 116-117:

Never	**Less than once a month**	**Once or twice a month**	**Once or twice a week**	**Once a day**	**More often**

116. Do you enjoy your partner's company?

117. How often do you and your partner have fun together?

For each of the following items, select the answer that best describes how you feel about your relationship. Base your responses on your first impressions and immediate feelings about the item. If you have more than one partner, please use the letter "T" to respond in relation to the partner you spend the most time with, and use the letter "L" to respond in relation to the partner you have been in a committed relationship with the longest.

	0	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
118. * Interesting							**Boring**
119. Bad							**Good**
120. * Full							**Empty**
121. Lonely							**Friendly**
122. * Sturdy							**Fragile**
123. Discouraging							**Hopeful**
124. * Enjoyable							**Miserable**

Parenting Styles and Involvement Questions:

The following section will ask you about your parenting practices. Please rate how often you exhibit this behaviour with your child or children.

Likert scale used for items 125-173:

1 Never	2 Once in a while	3 About half the time	4 Very often	5 Always

Authoritative Items:

125. Am easy going and relaxed with them.

126. Tell them our expectations regarding behaviour before they engage in an activity.

127. Allow them to give input into family rules.

128. Give them reasons why rules should be obeyed.

129. Help them to understand the impact of behaviour by encouraging them to talk about the consequences of their own actions.

130. Take their desires into account before asking them to do something.

131. Apologize to them after making a mistake in parenting.

132. Encourage them to freely express themself even when disagreeing with parents.

133. Show respect for their opinions by encouraging our child(ren) to express them.

134. Explain to our child(ren) how we feel about their good and bad behaviour.

135. Take into account their preferences in making plans for the family.

136. Explain the consequences of their behaviour.

137. Channel their misbehaviour into a more acceptable activity.

Authoritarian Items:

138. Guide them by punishment more than by reason.

139. Spank when they are disobedient.

140. Punish them with little if any explanations.

141. Yell or shout when they misbehave.

142. Grab them when they are being disobedient.

143. Appear to be more concerned with my own feelings than with their feelings.

144. Argue with them.

145. Explode in anger towards them.

146. Use physical punishment as a way of disciplining them.

147. Tell them what to do.

148. When our child(ren) is/are fighting, I discipline them first and ask questions later.

149. Scold or criticize when their behaviour doesn't meet our expectations.

150. Use threats as punishment with little or no justification.

151. When our child(ren) ask(s) why they have to conform, I state things like: "Because I said so," or "I am your parent and I want you to."

Permissive Items:

152. Find it difficult to discipline them.

153. Withhold scolding and/or criticism even when they act contrary to our wishes.

154. Spoil them.

155. Appear confident about parenting abilities.*

156. Am afraid that disciplining for misbehaviour will cause them to not like their parents.

157. Threaten them with punishment more often than actually giving it.

158. Ignore their misbehaviour.

159. Carry out discipline after they misbehave.*

160. Give in to them when they cause a commotion about something.

161. Bribe them with rewards to bring about compliance.

162. Set strict well-established rules for them.*

163. Appear unsure on how to solve their misbehaviour.

Warmth and Involvement Items:

164. Encourage them to talk about their troubles.

165. Know the names of their friends.

166. Give praise when I am proud of their behaviour.

167. Joke and play.

168. Give comfort and understanding when they are upset.

169. Am responsive to their feelings or needs.

170. Tell our child(ren) that we appreciate what they try or accomplish.

171. Am aware of problems or concerns about our child in school.

172. Express affection by hugging, kissing, and holding our child.

173. Have warm and intimate times together with them.

DISPLAY LOGIC: If How would you describe your current primary relationship? Committed and Consensually Non-Monogamous **Is Selected**, then this question is displayed:

174. How would you compare the parenting styles of any of your other partners who co-parent with you? Please indicate whether you are describing the parenting style of the partner you spend the most time with, the partner with whom you have the longest relationship, or another polyamorous partner.

❍ [Enter text]

Monogamy-Polyamory Questions:

The following questions pertain to what you desire when in a serious romantic relationship. By "serious" we mean a relationship characterized by high levels of commitment. By "romantic" we mean a relationship in which feelings of excitement, arousal, and intimacy exist.

When I am in a serious romantic relationship …

Likert scale used for items 175-190:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all like me	**Not like me**	**Neutral**	**Very much like me**	**Exactly like me**

Thoughts and Desires Items:

175. Monogamy/sexual fidelity is an absolute expectation that should not be violated. *

176. I don't think about pursuing romantic connections with someone else. *

177. I fantasize about pursuing romantic connections with other people regardless of how wonderful my current relationship partner is.

178. I entertain thoughts/desires of my partner and I sharing/experiencing sexual connections with others together (e.g., a threesome with someone we both feel comfortable inviting). *

179. I entertain thoughts/desires of engaging in sexual connections with others, without my partner present.

When I think about casual relationships vs. serious romantic relationships in general …

180. One of the downsides to committing to a serious relationship with someone is the expectation of monogamy.

181. It is hard to fathom that one person could satisfy all of my emotional and sexual needs/desires.

182. I think it's OK/normal to fall in love with multiple people at the same time.

Behaviours Items:

183. I never pursue romantic connections with other people. *

184. I enjoy pursuing romantic sexual connections with other people for purely physical reasons.

185. I enjoy pursuing romantic sexual encounters with other people that I feel a strong emotional connection with.

186. My partner and I pursue sexual experiences with others separately (e.g., date other lovers on the side with each other's consent).

187. I have the capacity to fall in love with other romantic partners while still maintaining a strong commitment to my partner(s).

188. As hard as I try, and as much as I love(d) my significant other(s), I seem unable to be monogamous in my serious relationships.

189. I would never agree to any type/form of shared sexual experiences with my partner(s) (e.g., a threesome or swinging experience that we participate in together). *

Honesty Question:

190. Is there anything else that you feel is important for us to know about the relationship dynamics or living arrangements in your family that was not asked? Please explain.
[Text box for participant's answer]

Appendix D

Excluded Items

Adult Relationship Social Support Scales

Emotional Support:

a. I have someone to talk with when I have a bad day

b. I have someone to turn to for suggestions about how to deal with a problem.

Instrumental Support:

c. I can find someone to drive me places if I need it.

d. I can get help cleaning up around my home if I need it.

Perceived Rejection:

e. Act like they can't be bothered by me or my problems

Romantic Partner Conflict Scale

Compromise:

f. In order to resolve conflicts, we try to reach a compromise.

g. The best way to resolve conflict between my partner(s) and I is to find a middle ground.

h. When we disagree, we try to find a resolution that satisfies both/all of us.

i. When my partner(s) and I have conflict, we collaborate so that we are both/all happy with our decision.

j. We collaborate to come up with the best solution for both/all of us when we have a problem.

k. We try to collaborate so that we can reach a joint solution to a conflict.

Avoidance:

l. I avoid conflict with my partner(s).

Interactional Reactivity:

m. I suffer a lot from conflict with my partner(s).

Separation:

n. When we have conflict, we withdraw from each other for a while for a "cooling off" period.

Submission:

o. I give in to my partner's/partners' wishes to settle arguments on their terms.

p. I surrender to my partner(s) when we disagree on an issue.

Parenting Practices Questionnaire

Authoritative:

q. Emphasize the reasons for rules.

r. Show patience with them.

s. Talk it over and reason with them when they misbehave.

Authoritarian:

t. Punish by taking privileges away from them with little if any explanations. → reworded as "Punish them with little if any explanations."

u. Scold and criticize to make them improve.

v. Punish by putting them off somewhere alone with little if any explanations.

w. Slap them when they misbehave.

x. Disagree with them.

y. Demand that our child(ren) does/do things.

z. Shove our child(ren) when they are disobedient.

Permissive:

aa. Allow them to annoy someone else.

bb. I state punishments to them and do not actually do them.

cc. Allow them to interrupt others.

Uninvolved:

dd. Show sympathy when they are hurt or frustrated.

Appendix E

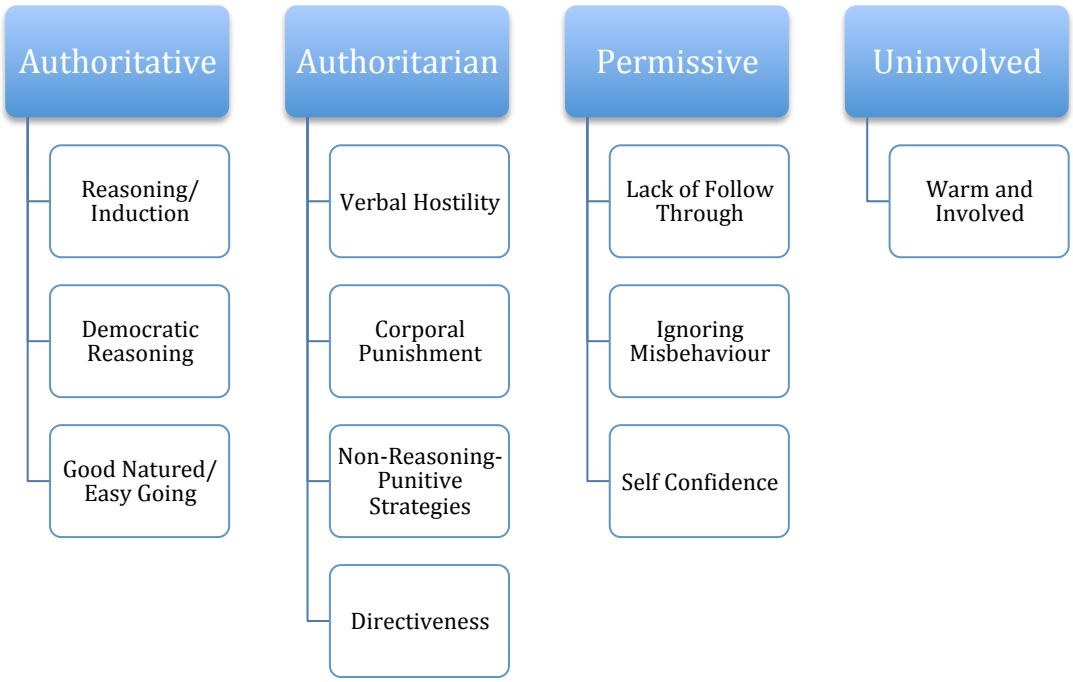

Figure 1. Parenting Practices Questionnaire Subscales and Subdimensions. Four parenting style subscales and eleven sub-dimensions are illustrated.

Appendix F

Table 11

Variable Means by Gender and Relationship Type

Measures and Subscales	**CM *M(SD)***		**CNM *M(SD)***	
	N = 193		*N* = 117	
	Men (n = 18)	**Women (n = 174)**	**Men (n = 36)**	**Women (n = 77)**
Relationship Health	3.77(0.90)	4.04(0.76)	4.50(0.28)	4.45(0.41)
Emotional Support	3.79(1.03)	3.91(0.95)	4.56(0.42)*	4.39(0.61)
Instrumental Support	4.19(0.86)	4.21(0.91)	4.52(0.62)	4.66(0.52)
Friendship	3.89(0.93)	4.08(0.86)	4.64(0.36)*	4.54(0.49)
Loneliness	2.60(1.16)	2.16(0.91)	1.59(0.40)*	1.84(0.57)
Rejection	2.22(1.14)	1.87(0.89)	1.37(0.39)*	1.50(0.62)
Hostility	2.43(0.80)*	1.89(0.78)	1.66(0.52)	1.57(0.48)
Communication Styles During Conflict	3.47(0.54)	4.36(0.42)	3.54(0.28)	3.56(0.35)
Compromise	3.69(0.92)	3.86(0.77)	4.37(0.39)	4.25(0.66)
Avoidance	3.72(0.91)	3.40(1.07)	3.08(1.06)	2.96(0.96)
Reactivity	2.12(0.78)*	1.89(0.76)	1.52(0.45)	1.60(0.59)
Separation	3.03(0.79)	3.00(0.87)	2.88(1.02)	3.16(0.89)
Domination	2.45(0.70)*	2.35(0.87)	1.94(0.60)*	1.83(0.67)
Submission	2.96(1.00)	2.75(0.91)	2.44(0.91)	2.39(0.96)
Relationship Satisfaction	4.30(1.14)	5.30(0.41)	4.67(1.05)	5.11(0.63)
Parenting Styles	–	–	–	–
Authoritative	3.80(0.70)*	4.05(0.51)	4.21(0.42)*	4.18(0.38)
Authoritarian	1.80(0.32)*	1.73(0.37)	1.66(0.26)*	1.63(0.38)
Permissive	1.99(0.45)	2.09(0.40)	1.96(0.33)	2.02(0.45)
Warm and Involved	4.33(0.50)	4.57(0.39)	4.48(0.39)	4.61(0.36
MPSQ	2.26(0.86)*	1.79(0.65)	3.94(0.50)*	3.86(0.59)
Thoughts/Desires	2.48(0.98)*	1.91(0.80)	3.97(0.51)*	3.90(0.64)
Behaviours	2.00(0.79)*	1.66(0.62)	3.91(0.59)*	3.80(0.62)

Note: * indicates a gender difference in the expected direction based on past research. (–) indicates a scale for which the mean and standard deviation was not calculated.