Introduction

- Sense of purpose is an individual difference beyond personality traits that is related to desirable social outcomes, such as:
  - Lower levels of loneliness (Bondevik & Stolstad, 2008)
  - Higher levels of belongingness (Lambert et al., 2016)
  - Higher sense of connectedness (Stavrakas & Luhmann, 2015)
- Sense of purpose may also relate to desirable relationship outcomes.
  - Sense of purpose may matter differently depending on one’s stage of life.
  - Development of one’s sense of purpose begins during adolescence and emerging adulthood (Burrow et al., 2018), so it could matter differently in a relationship based on where one is in the purpose development process.

Hypotheses
- Sense of purpose will be positively associated with relationship satisfaction, commitment, and perceived quality of alternatives.
- The relationship between sense of purpose and these relationship outcomes will be moderated by age.

Methods
- Participants
  - Survey overall: n = 1552; in relationships: n = 1001
  - Age: ranged from 18 – 86; M = 46.68, SD = 15.77
  - Gender: Female - 70.4%; Male - 29.1%; Race/Ethnicity: 81.8% Caucasian / White
- Procedures
  - Participants were collected through Qualtrics Panels to complete a single, online survey.
  - If participants reported being in a serious relationship, they were directed to the relationship outcomes questions.
- Measures
  - Sense of purpose: the Purpose in Life subscale (Ryff, 1989) evaluated perceptions of aims and direction in life.
  - Relationship satisfaction: the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1998) evaluated relationship satisfaction.
  - Relationship commitment: the Commitment subscale from the IMS (Rusbult et al., 1998) evaluated commitment.
  - Perceived quality of alternatives: the Quality of Alternatives subscale from the IMS (Rusbult et al., 1998) evaluated positive or negative attitudes toward having an alternative partner.
- Personality traits: the Big Five Inventory - 2 (Soto & John, 2017) evaluated the Big Five personality traits.

Tables & Figures

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<th>Table 1. Correlations between Age, Sense of Purpose, Personality Traits, Affect, and Relationship Outcomes.</th>
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Future Directions

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  - Longitudinal research is necessary to evaluate the possible mechanisms for these associations such as the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors sense of purpose promotes.
  - Dyadic research has found that personality trait similarities can be important for desirable relationship outcomes (van Schepingen et al., 2018); dyadic research should be conducted to understand the extent to which sense of purpose similarity matters for relationship outcomes.

Conclusion

- Sense of purpose was positively associated with more desirable relationship outcomes (Table 1).
  - When controlling for affective well-being and personality, the association between sense of purpose and relationship satisfaction was no longer significant, but the association between commitment and perceived quality of alternatives was (Table 2).
  - Neither age nor gender moderated the associations between sense of purpose and relationship satisfaction or commitment, but both moderated the association between sense of purpose and perceived quality of alternatives.
  - Sense of purpose is more strongly associated for younger adults in regard to considering alternative partners better than their own.
  - Sense of purpose is more strongly associated for men than women in regard to considering alternatives partners better than their own.

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