

Intergenerational relationships and intergenerational conflict: tendencies and perspectives

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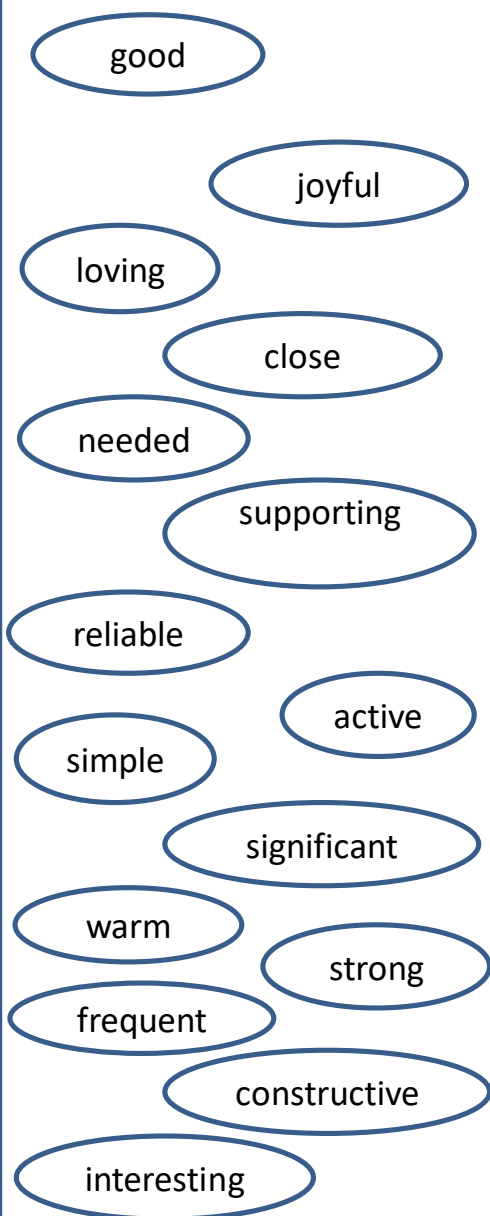
Background:

Modern society faced a challenge related to increase in life expectancy that leads to changes in composition of generations both within and out of family. In the last decades problem of intergenerational relationships, their mechanisms, factors and impact attracted more attention in the psychological science. Postnikova developed a model that reflects complicated structure of intergenerational relationships and shows their widespread affects that go far beyond family system. On the other hand, intergenerational relationships depend on one's personality and may impact one's well-being. Intergenerational relationships are associated with ambiguity and may cause tension and conflicts (Fingerman, Sechrist, Birditt). Thus we hypothesized that quality of intergenerational relationships can affect psychological well-being and this association could be mediated by personality traits.

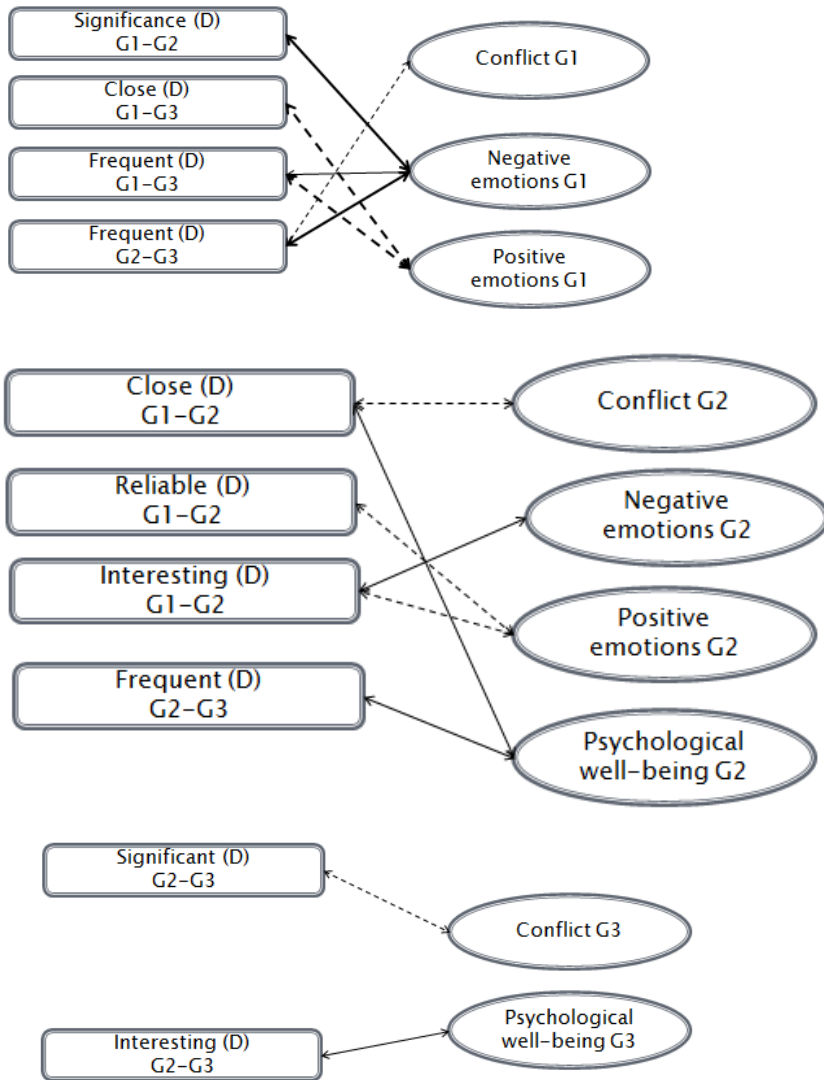
Design

Participants were 3 generations from 30 families (N=90): young adults (aged 18-22) – G3, middle adults (aged 38-45) – G2, older adults (aged 55-78) – G1. Methods were Semantic differential on intergenerational relationships (Montero-Lopez, Strizhitskaya), intergenerational conflict survey (Strizhitskaya), 16 PF personality test (Cattell), Scale of Psychological well-being (Ryff).

Semantic differential for intergenerational relationships (designed M. Montero, O.Strizhitskaya)



Results



Results showed that younger generation had close and open relationships with grandparents and these relationships affected psychological well-being of the oldest ($r=.32$). Middle generation had somewhat positive relationships with older and younger generations but the quality of these relations did not affect their well-being. Data revealed that more close relationships between the generations were associated with high scores on intergenerational conflict ($r=.29$). We assumed that intergenerational conflict can reflect the intensity of interaction and thus lack of such conflict can to some extent manifest one's isolation from communication with other generations.