Examining the Relationship between Need to Belong, Tolerance for Disagreement, Attachment Style and Life Satisfaction.

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Abstract

This study was conducted to assess possible relationships between tolerance for disagreement, need to belong, attachment styles and if the relate to life satisfaction in an adult sample. Participants were (N=114) in total with (N=67) females and (N=47) males. Participants were asked demographic gender question in order to test for gender differences and to confirm their age above 18 along with self-report measures. The Tolerance for Disagreement Scale (TFD) (Teven, Richmond & McCroskey, 1998) was used to measure the degree to which an individual can tolerate other people disagreeing with what the individual believes to be true. The Measure of Attachment Qualities (MAQ) (Carver, 1997) was used to measure adult attachment patterns The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS) (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell & Schreindorfer, 2006) was used to measure individuals need to belong. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) was used to measure subjective life satisfaction. Independent samples t-test found there to be gender differences in need to belong (M=-5.556, SE= 1.48, t(84.857)= -3.753, p < .0005) and in tolerance for disagreement (M= 4.08, 98% CI [.132, 8.039], t(112) = 2.047, p= .043). Spearman’s rho showed there was a negative correlation between need to belong and tolerance for disagreement (Rs (112) = -.534, p < .0005). A multiple regression showed it possible to predict life satisfaction from tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities secure, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger. (F (6,107) = 8.201, p < .005 adj. R² = .28). Spearman’s rho’s also showed correlations between attachment qualities and both need to belong and tolerance for disagreement, these and implications of findings are discussed in greater detail.
1. Introduction

Attachment holds a significant and influential position in psychology today. The formation of a child’s earliest emotional relationships is widely regarded as one of the most important achievements of childhood as it is seen as the foundation stone for security, trust and the quality of later social relationships. (Hayes, 2010) Attachment theory was first conceptualized by Bowlby (1969) and developed by Ainsworth (1979). Bowlby defined attachment as a "lasting psychological connectedness between human beings" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 194) Both Bowlby (1979) and Ainsworth (1989) recognised that these early bonds formed between children and their caregivers impact decisively upon future relationships and social interactions which span throughout a lifetime and failure to nurture and develop such attachment may result in emotional and behavioural difficulties reaching into adulthood.

Much research in the area has resulted in adult attachment styles being linked to a number of human behaviours such as conflict styles, jealousy, coping responses, parental drinking, sexual activity, neuroticism, depression, well-being and relationship satisfaction (Shaver and Hazan, 1993; Griffin and Bartholomew, 1994). It has even been suggested that adult attachment styles influence the individual’s well-being and that secure attachment determines one’s mental well-being (Simpson, 1990).

Humans have a fundamental need to belong, more precisely, that human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). According to Baumeister & Leary (1995) people experience a sense of well-being and enhanced functioning when the need to belong is fulfilled. When the individual from early childhood experiences a sense of belonging as an equal and contributing member of the family and later feels belonging to the wider community, the person actualizes the "need to belong" with striving to contribute to the
human community. The goal of contribution is strengthened when the individual feels belonging, and that goal is diminished when the person does not feel belonging (Ferguson, 2010). Whereas Maslow (1968) stated that in order for esteem and self-actualization belongingness needs must first be met. Research has shown multiple links between the need to belong and cognitive processes, emotional patterns, behavioural responses, and health and well-being (Ferguson, 2010).

Disagreement can be defined as a difference of opinions and if negotiated and communicated in a productive manner, can produce positive outcomes and helpful contributions. Disagreement does not have to lead to conflict which produces negative emotions and very little positive productivity. People with a low and a high tolerance for disagreement differ in that people with a low tolerance for disagreement are highly conflict prone whereas people with a high tolerance for disagreement are relatively conflict resistant (McCroskey, 1992). Therefore, people with a high tolerance for disagreement may not experience as much of the negative products of conflict and by more likely to communicate disagreement in a manner which produces positive outcomes for both themselves, their relationships with others and improve their ability to constructively contribute to the community.

The World Health Organization (2004) defines mental health as a state of wellbeing in which the individuals are able to work and provide a living, cope with everyday stressors, self-actualize and contribute to the community. Through this definition it can be concluded that a person’s well-being can relate to their ability to develop secure adult attachment. Whilst a person’s need to belong may motivate their contribution to the community, a person’s tolerance for disagreement may relate to their ability to positively contribute to the
community. Once a person’s needs to belong are satisfied, they may be able to achieve self-actualisation, which may lead to overall increased well-being.

1.1 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is accredited to the collective work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth (Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991). Drawing on concepts from ethology, cybernetics, information processing, developmental psychology, and psychoanalysts, John Bowlby formulated the basic outline of the theory (Bretherton, 1992). Whilst undergoing training at the British Psychoanalytic Institute Bowlby was exposed to Kleinian (Klein, 1932) ideas, being supervised by Klein herself later on in his studies. Although Bowlby was influenced by Klein (1932) it is important to note that he did not share the same beliefs, on the contrary Klein (1932) proposed emotional and behavioural discrepancies exhibited in a child are due to internal drives of aggression and of a libidinal nature rather than due to extrinsic factors influenced by the external world (Klein, 1932). Interestingly Bowlby was of the belief that attentions should lie with helping the parents and indirectly through this help the children. Bowlby (1940) suggested that mothers whom were experiencing parental difficulties could benefit from analytical treatment to examine her own childhood experiences and emotions thus allowing for the development of empathy and tolerance of similar manifestations in her child (Bowlby, 1940, p23). The origins of Bowlby’s (1969) Attachment theory is situated here in the acknowledgement of the importance of the convoluted bonds between caregiver and child.

Bowlby’s empirical research is grounded in his experiences working with maladjusted children, among whose cases Bowlby succeeded in identifying distinct patterns and consistencies between symptoms exhibited by the children and their histories of instability and depravation of parental bonds (Bowlby, 1949). The infant whose caregiver provides
closeness and is attentive will feel secure and confident to explore their environment and be sociable in the knowledge that their caregiver is usually available to tend to their needs. The infant with a negative sense of proximity or attentiveness from the attachment figure will experience anxiety, leading to proximity seeking behaviours. Bowlby (1958) identified attachment behaviours such as crying, suckling and clinging which infants displayed to avoid separation or regain proximity to a missing figure (caregiver) along with attachment behavioural systems that regulate the proximity of the infant to the primary attachment figure (Fraley, 2004). Bowlby throughout his works highlighted the importance of the development of a secure attachment between mother and child, noting that in order for the child to mature with good mental health “the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or permanent mother substitute) in which both find satisfaction and enjoyment” (Bowlby, 1951, p. 13).

Notably, Bowlby (1969) proposed that infants develop complex Behavioural systems from which they construct inner working models based on the environment and their interaction with it. It is in this way in which a child predicts future outcomes by applying their inner working models to the current situation, thusly a child’s inner working model of expectation of social interactions derived from their experiences of attachment to the mother or caregiver can hold a significant influence in the individual’s expectations of others in future interpersonal relationships.

1.2 Attachment Styles

Where Bowlby (1969) is accredited for developing the tenets of attachment theory, Mary Ainsworth is responsible for the identification of attachment styles in infants. (Ainsworth, 1989). Ainsworth (1989) further developed Bowlby’s (1979) work through her empirical research on infant attachment which she mainly conducted with the aid of an
experiment called the Strange Situation. Ainsworth (1989) identified three main behaviour patterns for infant attachment secure, insecure avoidant and insecure ambivalent. Securely attached children feel confident that the attachment figure will be available to meet their needs both physically and emotionally. They use the attachment figure as a safe base to explore the environment and seek the attachment figure in times of distress (Main, & Cassidy, 1988). According to Bowlby (1980) an individual who has experienced a secure attachment 'is likely to possess a representational model of attachment figures as being available, responsive, and helpful' (Bowlby, 1980, p. 242).

Insecure avoidant children are very independent of the attachment figure both physically and emotionally (Behrens, Hesse, & Main, 2007). Such children are likely to have a caregiver who is insensitive and rejecting of their needs (Ainsworth, 1979). The attachment figure may withdraw from helping during difficult tasks (Stevenson-Hinde, & Verschueren, 2002) and is often unavailable or during times of emotional distress or dismissive of the child’s distress. It is observable of insecure ambivalent attachment that the child fails to develop any feelings of security from the attachment figure. Accordingly they exhibit difficulty moving away from the attachment figure to explore novel surroundings. When distressed they are difficult to soothe and are not comforted by interaction with the attachment figure. This behaviour results from an inconsistent level of response to their needs from the primary caregiver (McLeod, 2008).

1.3 Adult Attachment

Both Bowlby (1982) and Ainsworth et al (1979) state that infants develop internal mental representations of the self-based on early experiences with figures of attachment which affect the infant’s social connections and behaviours throughout their lives. Attachment is now widely believed to be active throughout the individuals life as important relationships
between individuals in adulthood may take on the quality of attachment relationships to caregivers which was experienced in childhood (Ainsworth, 1991). According to Hazan and Shaver (1987) the emotional bond that develops between adult romantic partners is partly a function of the same motivational system--the attachment behavioural system--that gives rise to the emotional bond between infants and their caregivers.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) observed in adults who reported themselves as having a secure, avoidant, or ambivalent attachment to romantic partners, distinct differing patterns of their reported relationships to their parents as a child. It was Hazan and Shaver (1987) who pioneered the adaption of Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall’s (1978) infant attachment styles to that of adults. Hazan and Shaver (1987) demonstrated distinct parallels between infant attachment behaviour and attachment to romantic partners later on into adulthood.

The development of a measurement tool for adult attachment styles allowed for the further exploration of adult attachment and its ties to infancy (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). The Adult Attachment Style Measure (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) assesses three distinct attachment styles in adults, secure, avoidant and anxious, which directly relate to infant attachment styles as identified by Ainsworth et al (1978). Interestingly adult attachment styles have been found to relate to aspects of personality. Extraversion has been found to relate to secure attachment whilst avoidant attachment is linked to more reserved personality traits (Shaver & Brennan, 1992). In a study conducted by Hazan and Shaver (1987) participants with ambivalent styles reported higher anxiety than that of avoidant participants.

The measurement developed by Hazan and Shaver (1987) has its limitations however and in order to develop and examine further the individual differences in attachment styles a number of researchers have developed scales to address dimensions of variability corresponding to each of Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) prototypes (Carver, 1997). Simpson
(1990) developed a two dimensional measure of security and avoidance merging however later reverted to the original supported factors (Simpson, Rholes & Nelligan, 1992). Collins and Read (1990) developed a three factor measure however two of these factors were combinations of security and avoidance to reflect two aspects of avoidance and the final factor, anxiety reflected ambivalence. These two measures failed however to comprehensively expand each prototype of the Hazan and Shaver (1987) item into a dimension of variability (Carver, 1997). This was the premise for the development of the Measure of Attachment Qualities (MAQ) (Carver, 1997) which could more distinctly assess the qualities which were present in Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) measure. The MAQ (Carver, 1997) contained items to depict the sense of appreciating a safe haven and secure base to create an opportunity for security to emerge as a distinct quality as opposed to merging with other factors (Carver, 1997). The MAQ assesses four distinct attachment qualities, avoidance, security, ambivalence-worry pertaining to the more anxious attributes of the quality and ambivalence-merger addressing the merger aspects of ambivalent qualities (Carver, 1997).

1.4 Attachment Qualities and the Need to Belong

There is much empirical research on social exclusion and its effects on an individual (Buckley, Winkel & Leary, 2004; Williams, Cheung, Choi, 2000; Spielmann, MacDonald & Tackett, 2012). People who feel rejected or socially excluded often exhibit a number of physical, behavioural and emotional problems providing support for Baumeister and Leary’s (1995) theory that humans possess a fundamental need to belong which we strive to satisfy in our interpersonal relationships (Kurzban & Leary, 2001).

Maxwell, Spielmann, Joel and MacDonald (2013) set out to utilise attachment theory in order to explain for individual differences and the disperse reactions to social exclusion on the premise that an individual will perceive differently whether seeking proximity to an
attachment figure is a viable option to reduce feelings of emotional distress based on their own experiences of attachment and the availability of an attachment figure. People with avoidance attachment often try to avert feelings of distress in an attempt to evade attachment system activation as have found that proximity seeking behaviours have been unsuccessful in regulating their distress and so they strive to achieve independence and emotional distance from others (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Anxiously attached individuals who have often experienced inconsistency of attachment and proximity to caregivers often over activate their attachment systems in order to guarantee that they avail of proximity to others when available (Maxwell, Spielmann, Joel & MacDonald, 2013). Anxiously attached individuals are sensitive to the rejection of others and often come across as controlling or clingy (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). These behaviours exhibited by anxiously attached individuals is highly consistent with properties of a need to belong whilst avoidant attached individuals focus on independence, results in reports of indifference to the acceptance of others (Fraley & Davis, 1997). This however threatens the universal nature of the need to belong as excogitated by Baumeister and Leary (1995).

1.5 The Need to Belong

Baumeister & Leary (1995) stated that people so strongly motivated to have relationships because of a fundamental need to belong. They proposed the belongingness hypothesis stating that people have a basic psychological need to feel closely connected to others, and that caring, affectionate bonds from close relationships are a major part of human behaviour (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). It seems fair to conclude that human beings are fundamentally and pervasively motivated by a need to belong, that is, by a strong desire to form and maintain enduring interpersonal attachments. (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).
Baumeister and Leary (1995) developed their theory from the work of Adler (1931) who formulated that the fundamental motivation of human beings is the need to belong (Ferguson, 1989). It was Adler’s (1931) understanding that a well-developed "social interest" is the hallmark of mental health which led to his postulating that fundamentally humans all have a need to belong. When humans feel belonging, they function well. When they do not feel belonging, healthy functioning decreases (Ferguson, 1989). Adler (1931) believed that after experiencing rejection a person might act in a retaliatory fashion rather than exhibiting prosocial behaviour. Dreikurs, Cassel, and Ferguson (2004) described how children and adolescents who do not feel belonging often strive to be special rather than strive to contribute, in the mistaken belief that being special will bring a feeling of belonging, thus exhibiting that behaviours that might on the surface appear to be dismissive of inclusion and the acceptance of other may be motivated by an innate need to belong. In Maslow’s (1968) motivational hierarchy Maslow ranked "love and belongingness needs" next after physiological needs such as food and safety needs, that is belongingness needs do not emerge until food, hunger, safety, and other basic needs are satisfied, but that belongingness must be present in order for the individual to progress up the hierarchy to develop esteem and self-actualization.

In support of these theories Carvallo and Gabriel (2006) provided empirical evidence to support that although avoidant individuals claim to disregard inclusion by others this does not in fact represent a falsity in the universal nature of the need to belong. Carvallo and Gabriel (2006) proposed that due to neglect of the individuals belongingness needs in the past, avoidant attached individuals may appear to not be effected by social exclusion as a defence mechanism to their need to belong. However a lack of belongingness may result in a hypersensitivity to positive social feedback in such individuals (Carvallo & Gabriel, 2006).
1.6 The Need to belong and Conflict

Sherif et al. (1961) proposed the Realistic Conflict Theory accounting for group conflict, negative prejudices, and stereotypes as being the result of competition between groups for desired resources. Sherif et al. (1961) theory adopts basic premises of the rational choice approach in assuming that inter-group conflict originates in the perceptions of group members with regard to real competition for scarce resources, thus suggesting that hostility between group’s results from real or perceived conflicting goals because they generate inter-group competition (Sherif, et al. 1961). Although the realistic conflict theory is grounded in empirical evidence there is increasingly more evidence to suggest that the need to belong is a contributing factor in the motivation to enter into conflict (Brewer, 1991, Hornsey & Jetten, 2004, Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 1991) states that individuals seek out collectives or social groups in order to satisfy their need to belong and often exhibit behaviours to protect their social group in order to continue benefiting from social inclusion and the subsequent sense of belonging. The theory also proposes that individuals have a competing need for differentiation which may cause the individual to compare and differentiate themselves from others both within and outside their social groups (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). Both the protection of the group and individual identity can result in radical behaviours and conflict. Tajfel & Turners’ (1979) original Social Identity Theory in which the groups in society which people belonged to were an important source of pride and self-esteem. Groups give us a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world. In this theory people enhance the reputation of their own on-group in order to increase their self-image and to further achieve this they discriminate against the out-group thus dividing people into a ‘them and us’ social categorisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). The basic assumption is
that people strive for a positive social identity so when members of a person’s in-group do not enhance their self-esteem or through the discrimination and prejudice of the out-group conflict may arise (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

Maslow’s (1968) hierarchy may be able to illustrate how these theories portraying different motivations for conflict may arise. Conflict motivation in situations where physiological needs are not being met may be due to competition for desired resources (Sherif et al., 1961) whereas the need to belong may provide motivation to enter into conflict in situations where belongingness needs are not being satisfied (Tajfel & Turner, 1979: Brewer, 1991).

1.7 Conflict Behaviours and Attachment Qualities

Cann et al (2008) found that conflict styles and humour styles were mediators of the association of attachment style with relationship satisfaction. Lin (2003) conducted a study to examine whether adult attachment was predictive of conflict resolution behaviours and satisfaction in romantic relationships and found that both adult attachment dimensions Avoidance and Anxiety, were predictive of conflict resolution behaviours and relationship satisfaction. Although gender differences existed in conflict resolution behaviours, but they were not as strong a predictor as attachment characteristics of conflict resolution and relationship satisfaction (Lin, 2003).

1.8 Tolerance for Disagreement

Much of the research that has been carried out on the nature of conflict (Fisher, 1970; Watkins, 1974) failed to differentiate between conflict which resulted in negative interpersonal outcomes and purposeful disagreement which often leads to better decisions and other positive outcomes (Teven, Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). It is both possible and frequent that disagreement is constructive (Coser, 1956; Deutsch, 1978). Burgoon, Heston &
McCroskey (1974) distinguished between ‘good conflict’ and ‘bad conflict’. It is from this research that the concept of tolerance for disagreement emerged. McCroskey and Wheeless (1976) distinguished between disagreement seen as differences of opinions on issues and conflict which they saw as categorised as competition, hostility, suspicion, distrust and self-perpetuation. McCroskey and Wheeless (1976) maintained that conflict and disagreement are not the same thing and that disagreement does not necessarily lead to conflict. Teven, Richmond and McCroskey (1998) stated that individuals will differ in the extent to which they can tolerate disagreement, and so avoid entering into conflict. When disagreement is taken personally a conflict situation emerges. The difference between people with a low and a high tolerance for disagreement is that people with a high tolerance for disagreement are relatively conflict resistant whereas people with a low tolerance for disagreement are highly conflict prone (McCroskey, 1992, p172). Thus tolerance for disagreement has been defined as the amount of disagreement and individual can tolerate before he or she perceives the existence of conflict in a relationship. (McCroskey & Richmond, 1996).

1.9 Satisfaction with Life

Further to the research conducted on attachment styles, relationships and conflict behaviours, Attachment has also linked to the research of anxious and depressive disorders. Jinyao et al. (2012) found that insecure attachment styles serve as a vulnerability factor in the development of depressive and anxious symptoms in young adults, concluding that fostering the development of secure attachment in prevention and intervention programs may, ultimately, prevent the onset and maintenance of depressive and anxious disorders. Such disorders can impact negatively on a person’s wellbeing. Gnilka, Ashby and Noble (2013) found that increased levels of avoidant or anxious attachment related to lower levels of life satisfaction. Haddadi Koohsara & Bonab (2011) also found that life satisfaction can be
predicted from the attachment qualities of an individual. Their research found that participants with anxious attachment scored lower in life satisfaction than individuals with a secure attachment.

Steger and Kashdan (2009) documented a significant relationship between belonging and well-being, in turn signifying higher life satisfaction. In a report carried out on the First European Quality of Life Survey (2005) it was found that in countries where life satisfaction and happiness predominate, feelings of alienation or social exclusion are not widespread, indicating that peoples need to belong in these areas are generally being satisfied. Arslan, Hamarta and Uslu (2010) from their empirical research, stated that an individual who can confront in a conflict, express his emotions or opinions and disclose himself without causing high levels of distress is related to the fact that he has a more positive life satisfaction. If and individuals conditions and experiences in important aspects of life consist of more positive than negative connotations, the individual will often report a higher satisfaction with life (Diener, 2000). Life satisfaction is defined as one’s positive evaluation of his whole life according to the criteria determined by the individual himself (Diener et al., 1985). Life satisfaction relates directly to an individual’s well-being in terms of happiness and morale.
Purpose

The purpose of the study is to further investigate variables of interpersonal relationships and motivators that relate to how we interact with others, such as the universal theories of tolerance for disagreement, need to belong, and attachment qualities and how they impact upon life satisfaction. Where previous research has examined conflict styles and resolution this research aims to fill the gaps in research that has failed to examine tolerance of disagreement and focus on the positive aspect of a difference in opinions, which in itself ordinarily occurs before conflict so has often been over looked in conflict research. This study also aims to investigate the relationship between the need to belong and tolerance for disagreement whilst incorporating attachment qualities as a relevant factor in the inter play of these interpersonal relation variables. The majority of research on attachment styles has placed much of an emphasis on romantic relationships and satisfaction, this study aims to expand this to investigating how it relates to factors and attitudes in relationships in general not just strictly romantic. Gender differences of tolerance for disagreement and need to belong will also be investigated in this study. This study is conducted with the aspiration to enhance the existing knowledge and understanding in the field of psychology and consequentially bring understanding and assistance to those struggling in interpersonal relationships, which in its essence is a premise of the human condition.
Hypothesis

H_1  It is hypothesised that there will be a significant gender differences in tolerance for disagreement.

H_2  It is hypothesised that there will be significant gender differences in need to belong.

H_3  It is hypothesised that need to belong will significantly correlate with tolerance for disagreement.

H_4  It is hypothesised that attachment qualities will correlate significantly with tolerance for disagreement.

H_5  It is hypothesised that attachment qualities will correlate significantly with need to belong.

H_6  It is hypothesised that life satisfaction can be predicted by tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities.
2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

A convenience sample of 114 (n= 114) adults was used for this study, of this 58.8% (n= 67) were females and 41.2% (n=47) males. The (n= 114) participants ranged in age from 21 to 82 years (M= 34.57, SD= 15.72). Accesses to the sample was gained through social networking sites and with an element of snowball sampling. No incentives were offered so all participants were volunteers.

Inclusion criteria:

Male and females over the age of 18.

Exclusion criteria:

Males and females under the age of 18 and those whom refused to give informed consent.

2.2 Design

This will be a quantitative psychometric design correlational study. The researcher will use self-report measures to collect the relevant data. Participants will be assessed on their attachment qualities, need to belong, tolerance for disagreement and life satisfaction.

The Independent variables in this study will be Gender and attachment qualities treated as four continuous variables.

The dependent variables in this study will be reported need to belong and tolerance for disagreement.
The predictor variables in this study will be reported need to belong, tolerance for disagreement and the four attachment qualities (Security, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger).

The criterion variable will be reported life satisfaction.

2.3 Materials

Questionnaires were accessed through an online survey website link (http://www.google.ie/forms/about/) via social networking and email. This included four published questionnaires and one purpose-designed section for demographic variables such as gender and age. The Measure of Attachment Qualities (MAQ) (Carver, 1997) assessed adult attachment patterns. The Tolerance for Disagreement Scale (TFD) (Teven, Richmond & McCroskey, 1998) assessed the degree to which an individual can tolerate other people disagreeing with what the individual believes to be true. The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS) (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell & Schreindorfer, 2006) assessed individuals need to belong. The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) assessed subjective life satisfaction. After all questionnaires were collected, data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22) to conduct analysis.

2.3.1 The Measure of Attachment Qualities (MAQ)

The Measure of Attachment Qualities (MAQ) was developed by Charles S. Carver (1997) to measure adult attachment patterns. The MAQ is a self-report instrument based on Ainsworth’s (1989) model of attachment styles. The MAQ was compiled from several items adapted from the lists reported by Simpson (1990) and Collins and Read (1990) and supplemented by several newly written items. The MAQ is a 14 item scale questionnaire consisting of four sub-scales which uses theoretical framework but treats each of the four
attachment qualities subscales as their own continuous variables rather than a single categorical type. The four sub-scales of attachment style that are assessed by the MAQ are Secure, Ambivalent-Worry, Ambivalent-Merger and Avoidant. Participants use a 4 point Likert scale ranging from disagree a lot to agree a lot with no neutral point. Items from each sub-scale are added to determine sub-scale score with higher scores indicating higher levels of the retrospective attachment quality. Items 4, 8 and 9 are reverse coded. The reliability of the MAQ was evaluated using coefficient alphas and test-retest reliability (Carver, 1997). The alpha coefficients found were .72 for the secure sub-scale, .76 for the Avoidant sub-scale, .69 for the Ambivalent-worry sub-scale and .73 for the Ambivalent-merger sub-scale. The test retest reliabilities ranged from .61 on the Secure sub-scale to .80 on the Avoidant sub-scale. The observed internal consistency for the Secure attachment sub-scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .83 (Carver, 1997).

2.3.2 The Tolerance for Disagreement Scale (TFD)

The Tolerance for Disagreement Scale (TFD) was developed by Teven, Richmond and McCroskey (1998) to measure the degree to which an individual can tolerate other people disagreeing with what the individual believes to be true. The TFD conceptualization is similar to that of argumentativeness and has been developed through research in organisational and group communication contexts (Teven, Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). It is a self-report, 15 item scale questionnaire. Participants are asked to select the option which best reflects the degree to which they agree that the item relates to them from a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. To score the TFD, step 1 add the score from the positive items 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 14 and 15. Step 2 add the negative items 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. Step 3 fill into the following formula TFD = 48 + total of Step 1 - total of Step 2. Scores above 46 indicate High TFD. Scores below 32 indicate Low TFD. Scores between 32
and 46 indicate moderate TFD. The TDF was found to have an alpha reliability of .86 (Teven, Richmond & McCroskey, 1998).

2.3.3 The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS)

The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS) was developed by Leary, Kelly, Cottrell and Schreindorfer (2006) to measure individuals need to belong. The NTBS is a self-report instrument developed after Baumeister and Leary (1995) asserted the importance of the need to belong in understanding human behaviour. A 13-item version of this scale was first introduced by Schreindorfer and Leary (1996), but it was decided that the 10-item version (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell & Schreindorfer, 2006) is more psychometrically sound, however it correlates in excess of .90 with the 13-item measure (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell & Schreindorfer, 2013). The NTBS is a ten item self-report scale questionnaire. The scale is rated on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Items 1, 3 and 7 are revers scored and the sum of all items is added to give NTB score, with a higher score reflecting a greater need to belong. The NTBS was found to have a cronbach’s alpha of .84 (Leary, Kelly, Cottrell & Schreindorfer, 2013).

2.3.4 The Satisfaction with life Scale (SWLS)

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) was developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen and Griffin (1985) to measure subjective life satisfaction. The SWLS is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 5 items reported on a seven point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. To score the SWLS calculate the summed aggregate score. Scores from 5 to 9 indicate that an individual is extremely dissatisfied with life, from 10 to 14 dissatisfied with life, from 15 to 19 slightly dissatisfied with life, that a score of 20 indicates neutral life satisfaction, from 21 to 25 slight satisfaction with life, from 26 to 30 satisfaction with life, and from 31 to 35 extreme satisfaction with life. (Pavot & Diener,
Research into the reliability and validity of the SWLS has shown it to be both a reliable and valid measure of life satisfaction and has deemed it suitable for use across a wide range of age groups and applications (Pavot, Diener, Colvin, & Sandvik, 1991). The coefficient alpha for the scale has ranged from .79 to .89, indicating that the scale has high internal consistency. The scale was also found to have good test-retest correlations (.84, .80 over a month interval). (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985).

2.4 Procedure

A Survey was generated via an online survey tool, the link to the survey was then posted on social networking sites and sent via email to prospective participants. A brief introduction and outline of the research was provided on a cover page along with an expression of the voluntary and anonymous nature of the study. Informed consent was received via the participation and submission of the survey. It was also explained that due to the anonymous nature of the study participants would be unable to withdraw their responses after submission (see appendix A for full cover letter content). Upon completion of the survey questions (see appendix B-E) the survey tool would generate the debriefing page in which the participants are thanked for their time and provided with a number of resources should they feel affected by any of the questions asked (see appendix F).
3. Results

3.1 Descriptive statistics

All data collected for this research was analysed using SPSS Statistics 22. There was a total of (n= 114) participants. The descriptive statistics for the gender of participants showed that 58.8% of the participants were female (n= 67), and 41.2% were male (n= 47). The mean age of participants is (M= 34.57) with a range of 21 to 82 years.

Descriptive statistics were conducted to obtain the means, standard deviations and minimum and maximum scores for need to belong, tolerance for disagreement, life satisfaction and Secure, avoidant, ambivalent-worry and ambivalent-merger attachment styles. Results showed that need to belong (M= 33.20, SD= 7.95) had a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 50. Tolerance for disagreement (M= 45.54, SD= 10.63) had a minimum score of 25 and a maximum score of 69. Life satisfaction (M= 22.46, SD= 7.14) had a minimum score of 8 and a maximum score of 35. Males showed a slightly higher score (M= 23.91) than females (M=21.45). See Figure 1 below of mean scores.

![Satisfaction with Life](image)

**Figure 1. A pie chart illustrating mean satisfaction with life scores for males and females.**
Descriptive statistics carried out on the four attachment qualities assessed showed that secure attachment quality (M= 9.23, SD= 1.19) had a minimum score of 7 and a maximum score of 12.

Avoidance attachment quality (M= 9.82, SD= 3.21) had a minimum score of 5 and a maximum score of 19.

The attachment quality ambivalence-worry (M= 6.42, SD= 2.64) had a minimum score of 3 and a maximum score of 12.

Ambivalence-merger showed the lowest scores of the four attachment qualities (M= 5.77, SD= 1.86) with a minimum score of 3 and a maximum score of 10. See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. A bar chart representing mean scores of attachment qualities.
3.2 Inferential Statistics

An independent samples t-test was conducted to investigate gender differences in need to belong and tolerance for disagreement. Need to belong scores were normally distributed for both males (skewness of .37 (SE=.347) and kurtosis of -1.338 (SE=.681)) and females (skewness of -.579 (SE= 293) and kurtosis of .343 (SE= .578)) as was apparent by visual assessment of normal Q-Q plot and histograms. There were no extreme outliers in the data, as assessed by visual inspection of a boxplot. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by levene’s test for equality of variances (p=.005). Subsequent data was assessed by Welch t-test as equal variances was not assumed. Females (M= 35.49, SD= 6.76) scored higher than males (M= 29.94, SD= 8.43) whilst a t-test revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female scores on need to belong M=-5.556, SE= 1.48, t (84.857) = -3.753, p < .0005. We must therefore reject the null hypothesis. See Table 1.

Tolerance for disagreement scores were normally distributed for both males and females, as assessed by visual inspection of normal Q-Q plots and histograms. There were no outliers contained in the data, as assessed by inspection of a boxplot. There was a homogeneity of variances for tolerance for disagreement scores for male and female, assessed by Levene’s test for equality of variances (p= .464). A t-test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between male and female scores M= 4.08, 98% CI [.132, 8.039], t (112) = 2.047, p= .043. With males (M= 47.94, SD= 11.02) scoring higher than females (M= 43.85, SD= 10.095). As there was a significant difference found we must reject the null hypothesis. See Table 1.
Table 1. An independent sample t-test table displaying the differences between males and females for need to belong and tolerance for disagreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to belong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29.94</td>
<td>8.425</td>
<td>-3.753</td>
<td>84.857</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35.49</td>
<td>6.759</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance for disagreement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47.94</td>
<td>11.024</td>
<td>2.047</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>43.85</td>
<td>10.095</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between tolerance for disagreement and attachment qualities security, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger. Preliminary analysis showed the relationships to be monotonic, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot. The Spearman’s rho reported a moderate negative correlation between tolerance for disagreement and secure attachment quality $R_s(112) = -.419$, $p < .0005$. There was a moderate negative correlation reported between tolerance for disagreement and ambivalence-worry attachment quality $R_s(112) = .366$, $p < .0005$. The Spearman’s rho also found there to be a low negative correlation between tolerance for disagreement and ambivalence-merger $R_s(112) = -.243$, $p = .009$. There was no correlation found between tolerance for disagreement and avoidance attachment quality.
A Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between need to belong and attachment qualities security, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger. Preliminary analysis showed the relationships to be monotonic, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot. The Spearman’s rho reported a moderate to strong positive correlation between need to belong and secure attachment quality $R_s (112) = .535$, $p < .0005$. The Spearman’s rho reported a moderate to strong positive correlation between need to belong and ambivalence-worry $R_s (112) = .589$, $p < .005$. There was a low positive correlation between need to belong and ambivalence-merger $R_s (112) = .291$, $p = .002$. There was no correlation found between need to belong and avoidance attachment quality.

Table 2. Table displaying Spearman’s rho: tolerance for disagreement and attachment qualities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tolerance for disagreement</th>
<th>Secure</th>
<th>Avoidance</th>
<th>Ambivalence worry</th>
<th>Ambivalence merger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total tolerance for disagreement</td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>-.419**</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.903</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
A Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between need to belong and tolerance for disagreement. Preliminary analysis showed the relationship to be monotonic, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatterplot. There was a moderate to strong negative correlation between need to belong and tolerance for disagreement $R_s (112) = -.534, p < .0005$. Therefore we must reject the null hypothesis.

A multiple regression was conducted in order to predict life satisfaction from tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities secure, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger. The assumptions of linearity, independence of errors, homoscedasticity, unusual points and normality of residuals were met. These variables statistically significantly predicted life satisfaction $F (6,107) = 8.201, p < .005$ adj. $R^2 = .28$. This however accounted for a reasonably low percentile of variability at 28%. Variables tolerance for disagreement and ambivalence-worry added significantly to the prediction, $p < .05$. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 3 below.
Table 3: Regression coefficients and standard errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE&lt;sub&gt;B&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>51.998</td>
<td>7.382</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to belong</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>-.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance for disagreement</td>
<td>-.167</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>-.248*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>-1.15</td>
<td>.631</td>
<td>-.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>-.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence-worry</td>
<td>-1.288</td>
<td>.297</td>
<td>-.477*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambivalence-merger</td>
<td>-.478</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>-.124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p < .05; B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE<sub>B</sub> = Standard error of the coefficient; 6 = standardised coefficient
4. Discussion

The aim of this research was to investigate the relationship between need to belong, tolerance of disagreement, attachment qualities and life satisfaction. It was hypothesised that there would be a significant gender differences in tolerance for disagreement and that there would be significant gender differences in need to belong. It was also hypothesised that need to belong would significantly correlate with tolerance for disagreement. It was hypothesised that attachment qualities will correlate significantly with tolerance for disagreement and would also correlate significantly with need to belong. Finally it was hypothesised that life satisfaction can be predicted by tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities.

Results of the analysis has shown a significant difference between male and female scores on tolerance for disagreement and need to belong scores. A moderate to strong negative correlation was found between need to belong and tolerance for disagreement scores. Analysis showed significant negative correlations with tolerance for disagreement and all attachment qualities tested for apart from avoidance for which no correlation was found. Results of the analysis has also shown significant positive correlations with need to belong and all attachment qualities tested for apart from avoidance for which no correlation was found. It was found that attachment qualities, need to belong and tolerance for disagreement statistically significantly predicted life satisfaction accounted for a reasonably low percentile of variability at 28%.

H₁ hypothesised that there would be a gender difference in tolerance for disagreement. Results of the analysis has shown that there is a significant relationship with males showing a higher tolerance for disagreement than females. This is contradictory to studies on conflict management which suggest that females have a more cooperative attitude
to conflict handling than males (Rahim, 1983), whilst Beddell and Sistrunk (1973) suggested that females are more competitive, which would correspond to the conceptualization of tolerance for disagreement. Similarly Brewer et al. (2002) reported males adopting a dominating style and females an avoiding conflict-handling style leading one to predict that females may score higher in tolerance for disagreement. Other studies however have found there to be no significant difference in conflict attitudes between genders (Antonioni, 1998). The lack of research in the area of tolerance for disagreement specifically makes it difficult to make an adequate comparison of these results. Future research should highlight tolerance for disagreement in order to develop a better understanding.

H₂ hypothesised that there would be a gender difference in need to belong. The results of the analysis has shown there to be a significant difference in need to belong, with females scoring higher than males. Theories of belonging and the need to belong focus on the universal nature of need to belong and not the degree to which it is present (Adler, 1931; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). These significant results pose the question of the possibility of females having a higher need to belong. It must be noted however that as self-report measures are used this may have had an effect on the results. More research is needed with regard to gender differences in need to belong.

H₃ hypothesised that need to belong would significantly correlate with tolerance for disagreement. The results from the analysis has shown a significant negative correlation between the two variables. This is again hard to compare as little research has been carried out on tolerance for disagreement. It is slightly inconsistent with the theories and research which suggest the need to belong can influence and motivate people to enter into conflict (Brewer, 1991, Hornsey & Jetten, 2004, Tajfel & Turner, 1979). However theories and subsequent research into the need to belong would be more concurrent with this current
research findings, indicating that a high need to belong would increase your motivation to avoid exclusion from social interaction, therefore would have a higher tolerance for difference of opinions and not wish to enter into a conflict situation and risk jeopardising ones sense of belongingness (Buckley, Winkel & Leary, 2004; Williams, Cheung, Choi, 2000; Spielmann, MacDonald & Tackett, 2012). Further research is needed in this area to examine further the interaction between the need to belong and tolerance for disagreement.

H₄ hypothesised that attachment qualities would correlate significantly with tolerance for disagreement. A Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between tolerance for disagreement and attachment qualities security, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger and found there to be a significant negative correlation between secure, ambivalent-worry and ambivalent-merger, no correlation was found between avoidance attachment quality and tolerance for disagreement. These findings are concurrent to the research conducted by Lin (2003) in which adult attachment were predictive of conflict resolution behaviours. Again further research is needed in this area, possible utilizing different measures for attachment qualities or categorical measures of attachment styles to assess the relationship between adult attachment and tolerance for disagreement.

H₅ hypothesised that that attachment qualities would correlate significantly with need to belong. A Spearman’s rank-order correlation coefficient was conducted to investigate the relationship between need to belong and attachment qualities security, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger and found there to be a significant positive correlation between secure, ambivalent-worry and ambivalent-merger. No correlation was found between avoidance and need to belong. These findings are concurrent with need to belong theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and also to research carried out by Maxwell,
Spielmann, Joel and MacDonald (2013) whose data appeared to show little relationship to avoidance attachment styles, questioning the universal nature of the need to belong. As assessed by Carvallo and Gabriel (2006) this may due to neglect of the individuals belongingness needs in the past, avoidant attached individuals may appear to not be effected by social exclusion as a defence mechanism to their need to belong and may be reluctant to report it in a self-report measure due to their focus on independence. Future research should focus on the method for which to assess more accurate measures of report.

H₆ hypothesised that that life satisfaction could be predicted by tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities. A multiple regression was conducted in order to predict life satisfaction from tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment qualities secure, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger. These variables were found to statistically significantly predicted life satisfaction. This however accounted for a reasonably low percentile of variability at 28%. Variables tolerance for disagreement and ambivalence-worry added significantly to the prediction. This would lead one to believe that to satisfaction of an individuals need to belong may be more relevant to life satisfaction, future research should explore this further. Although the percentile of variance accounted for is low, a limitation of this was that the variable life satisfaction can be affected by many confounding variables. Considering this the percentile reflects the prevalence and influence of these examined variables on individuals.

**Limitations**

Some additional limitations, other than mentioned above apply to this research. Firstly all the measurements used were self-report measures so the accuracy of these cannot be fully guaranteed. Secondly the age range of this same was too diverse and contained too any extreme outliers to allow for use in investigation, although this was not a prevalent area for
investigation I this research it is an area which needs to be investigated further. Using attachment quality subsets as continuous variables may have restricted the analysis as attachment qualities were difficult to compare. Future research should consider categorical attachment styles for a more clear comparison. The measures used in this study all had expectable internal reliability within the sample apart from the ambivalence merger subscale which yielded a cronbach’s alpha of .63. The sample size for this study was also quite small in order to allow for generalization, future studies should consider a larger sample size to better reflect the population.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion this research has found that there is a relationship between tolerance for disagreement and need to belong. Gender differences were found in tolerance of disagreement with males reporting a higher level of tolerance for disagreement. Gender differences was also observed in need to belong with woman scoring higher than men. A significant negative correlation between secure, ambivalent-worry and ambivalent-merger and tolerance for disagreement was found indicating that securely attached people may feel more confident to discuss their opinions with others who disagree with them. This could be attributed to the presence of a secure base attachment relationship being present in their lives. This study also found that secure, ambivalent-worry and ambivalent-merger positively correlate with need to belong scores whilst no correlation was found between avoidance and attachment this highlights that self-reports may not be an appropriate method for investigating need to belong in avoidance attachment due to the independent focus of individuals possessing such attachment qualities. However all the measures used in this study are reviewed and reliably so it would be appropriate to consider the results found in this study as reliable and creditable. Tolerance for disagreement, need to belong and attachment
qualities secure, avoidance, ambivalence-worry and ambivalence-merger were found to statistically significantly predicted life satisfaction. This indicates the broad scope of these variables and their prevalence and influence on our life-satisfaction and over all wellbeing.

**References**


Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: on being the same and different at the same time. 


Appendix

Appendix 1: Cover letter

My Name is Aoibhin O’Gallagher and I am conducting research in the DBS Department of Psychology that explores the relationship between attachment style, the need to belong and how they relate tolerance of disagreement and life satisfaction among adults. This research is being conducted as part of my final year research project and will be submitted for examination and presented to peers, faculty and members of the PSI. I wish to invite you to take part in this study, participation involves completing the attached anonymous survey which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Participation is completely VOLUNTARY and so you are under no obligation to take part. Participation is ANONYMOUS and confidential. Thus responses cannot be attributed to any one participant. For this reason, it will not be possible to withdraw from participation after the questionnaire has been submitted. The data collected will be securely stored on an encrypted usb. Once the results have been analysed for the purpose of this study the data will then be destroyed.

It is important that you understand that by completing and submitting the questionnaire that you are consenting to participate in the study.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information at [contact information]. My supervisor Patricia Orr can be contacted at [contact information].

Kind Regards, Aoibhin O'Gallagher
Appendix B-E: Questionnaire pages from online survey.

What age are you?

What gender are you?
Male/Female

Please respond to each of the following statements by expressing how much you agree with it (if you do generally agree) or how much you disagree with it (if you generally disagree). Do not leave any items blank. Please be as accurate as you can be throughout, and try especially hard not to let your answer to any one item influence your answer to any other item. Treat each one as though it is completely unrelated to the others. There are no right or wrong answers, you are simply to express your own personal feelings and opinions.* Please answer from a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = I disagree with the statement a lot 2 = I disagree with the statement a little 3 = I agree with the statement a little 4 = I agree with the statement a lot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Disagree a lot</th>
<th>Disagree a little</th>
<th>Agree a little</th>
<th>Agree a lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When I'm close to someone, it gives me a sense of comfort about life in general.</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me.</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have trouble getting others to be as close as I want them to be.</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to be close to others.</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
<td>📏</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Disagree a lot</td>
<td>Disagree a little</td>
<td>Agree a little</td>
<td>Agree a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often worry my partner will not want to stay with me.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others want me to be more intimate than I feel comfortable being.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It feels relaxing and good to be close to someone.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am very comfortable being close to others.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t worry about others abandoning me.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My desire to merge sometimes scares people away.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer not to be too close to others.</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find others are reluctant to get as close as I would</td>
<td>❌</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree a lot</td>
<td>Disagree a little</td>
<td>Agree a little</td>
<td>Agree a lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get uncomfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone when</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wants to be very</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>close.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being close to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>someone gives me a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>source of strength</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for other activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Appendix C: Need to belong**

Please respond to each of the following statements by expressing how much you agree with it (if you do generally agree) or how much you disagree with it (if you generally disagree). Do not leave any items blank. Please be as accurate as you can be throughout, and try especially hard not to let your answer to any one item influence your answer to any other item. Treat each one as though it is completely unrelated to the others. There are no right or wrong answers, you are simply to express your own personal feelings and opinions.

Please choice from a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Moderately disagree 3 = Neither agree nor disagree 4 = Moderately agree 5 = Strongly agree

*Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Moderately disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Moderately agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If other people don't seem to accept me, I don't let it bother me.</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Symbol" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>. I try hard not to do things that will make other people avoid or reject me.</td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Symbol" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seldom worry about whether other people care about me.</td>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image13" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image14" alt="Symbol" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to feel that there are people I</td>
<td><img src="image16" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image17" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image18" alt="Symbol" /></td>
<td><img src="image19" alt="Symbol" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Moderately disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Moderately agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can turn to in times of need.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want other people to accept me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not like being alone.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being apart from my friends for long periods of time does not bother me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a strong need to belong.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It bothers me a great deal when I am not included in other people's plans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My feelings are easily hurt when I feel that others do not accept me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Tolerance for disagreement Scale

As this questionnaire involves people's feelings and orientations, there are no right or wrong answers. We just kindly ask you to indicate your reaction to each item. All responses are to reflect the degree to which you believe the item applies to you. Please use the following scale below.

5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Undecided, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree.

*Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is more fun to be involved in a discussion where there is a lot of disagreement.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoy talking to people with points of view different than mine.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't like to be in situations where people are in disagreement.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>I prefer being in groups where everyone's beliefs are the same as mine.</td>
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<td>![ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagreements are generally helpful.</td>
<td>![ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>I prefer to change the topic of discussion when disagreement occurs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I tend to create disagreements in conversations because it serves a useful purpose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoy arguing with other people about things on which we disagree.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would prefer to work independently rather than to work with other people and have disagreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would prefer joining a group where no disagreements occur.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't like to disagree with other people.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Given a choice, I would leave a conversation rather than continue a disagreement.</strong></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **I avoid talking with people who I think will disagree with me.** | C | C | C | C | C |

| **I enjoy disagreeing with others.** | C | C | C | C | C |

| **Disagreement stimulates a conversation and causes me to communicate more.** | C | C | C | C | C |
**Appendix E: Satisfaction with life scale.**

Nearly finished! Below are five statements that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1 - 7 scale below, please indicate your agreement with each item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

7 - Strongly agree 6 - Agree 5 - Slightly agree 4 - Neither agree nor disagree 3 - Slightly disagree 2 - Disagree 1 - Strongly disagree

*Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Slightly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In most ways my life is close to my ideal.</td>
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<td>The conditions of my life are excellent.</td>
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<td>I am satisfied with my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If I could live my life over, I would change almost</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly disagree</td>
<td>Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>Slightly agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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nothing.
Appendix F: Debriefing Sheet.

Your response has been recorded. Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey, it is greatly appreciated.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at [redacted]@mydbs.ie if you require any further information on the study.

If you have been affected by any of the questions raised in this survey, please contact any of the following Support Services:

Samaritans – Ireland (24 Hour)
Tel – 1850 60 90 90

Samaritans – Dublin Branch (24Hour)
Tel – 1850 60 90 90
Text – 087 2 60 90 90
Email – jo@samaritans.org

Aware (10 am – 10 pm)
1890 303 302

Counsellingdirectory.ie is Ireland’s largest independent directory of accredited counsellors and psychotherapists.