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Kevin Jacques Siffert

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A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODEL INVESTIGATING PARENTAL
RELATIONSHIPS AND GENDERED-FUNCTIONING AMONG MEN:
LINKS TO KOHUT'S SELF PSYCHOLOGY

A Dissertation Presented to the
Faculty at the College of Education
University of Houston

In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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(approval page)

Acknowledgement

I would like to first thank God for granting me the wisdom and the strength to have succeeded so far in life. To my wife and future son Gabriel, who have made and will make this journey we call life more enjoyable than when it began. To my parents who instilled in me that education is the richest of rewards. And lastly, to all of my mentors who were patient with me along the way.

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Abstract

Attachment theorists posit that if young boys do not have caregivers who are emotionally supportive of them, as young men they may develop unhealthy levels of autonomous functioning, and, in particular, and adopt unhealthy and restrictive masculine gender roles (i.e., gender-role conflicts; O'Neil, 1981; Shaver, 1996; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) or in Kohutian terminology, *problematic gendered-functioning* (Blazina, 2001). This study sought to extend previous investigations by: (a) explicitly examining the unique contribution of quality of attachment from each parent (PAQ; Kenny, 1987) to selfobject orientations and gendered-functioning and (b) testing the hypothesis that associations of parental relationship quality and gendered-functioning will be mediated by selfobject orientations in sample of college men.

Both Kohut's self psychology and Bowlby's attachment theory provide a comprehensive lens for understanding how early developmental experiences (i.e., attachment provisions and selfobject needs) lead men to construct an unhealthy sense of gendered-functioning. Toward this goal, this investigation will identify important areas of overlap between attachment theory, self psychology, and masculine gendered-functioning. Early portions of the opening chapter will explore concepts central to gender role conflict and developmental theory (*gender-role conflict* and *problematic gender-functioning* will be used interchangeably throughout this study). Following this, concepts central to Kohut's self psychology and gendered-functioning in men will be presented. Next, studies that have utilized attachment constructs towards an understanding of men's

GRC will be presented. Chapter 1 will conclude with a discussion of detailed research questions and hypotheses, drawn from this review and assessed in this study. Chapter 2 will then summarize and critique of key studies in the literature that have examined interrelationships among the theoretical constructs under study. Chapter 3 will provide a detailed review of the proposed methods and analyses for conducting this investigation, followed by findings from this study. Lastly, Chapter 4 will offer a critique of the current investigation, along with key findings and directions for future research.

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Chapter I

Introduction

A Review of Gender Role Conflict and Developmental Theories

Despite its slow start in the field of psychology, a substantial body of research on men's studies has been conducted over the past three decades (O'Neil, 2008). Cementing its place in the field of Psychology, the American Psychological Association established Division 51 to focus on theory and research that would advance the psychology of men and masculinity. A pivotal turn occurred in the field when Pleck (1981, 1995) asserted that harsh gender role socialization messages create *gender role strain* as they message promote the pursuit of unachievable and largely dysfunctional goals, and may thus create traumatic experiences for men (also referred to as the gender-role strain paradigm).

Pleck's *gender role strain paradigm* was a primary stimulus in the conceptualization of two measures developed to empirically assess gender role strain: gender role *stress* (Eisler & Blalock, 1991) and gender role *conflict* (O'Neil et al., 1986). Eisler and Blalock (1991) operationalized gender role stress as the degree to which boys and men internalize societal standards and messages of masculinity, ultimately affecting their levels of stress when these standards are not achieved. For purposes of this study, the second operationalization of gender role strain will be used to conceptualize problematic gendered-functioning as this seems to be the preferred method for assessing gender role strain (evidenced by over 230 studies in the past three decades; see O'Neil, 2008 for review) and contains subscales specifically related to key aspects of this study (e.g. men's ability to express emotions and conflicts that may exist in their family life).

O'Neil (1990) defined gender role conflict as "rigid, sexist, or restrictive gender roles, learned during socialization, result(ing) in personal restriction, devaluation, or violation of others or self" (p. 5). To empirically assess gender-role conflict, O'Neil and colleagues (1986) developed and initially validated the Gender Role Conflict Scale (GRCS) to measure the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems men experience as they try to conform to society's expectations of male gender roles. The GRCS includes four empirically supported subscales of traditional gender-role strain: success, power, and competition; restrictive emotionality, restrictive affectionate behavior between men; and conflict between work and family relations.

Findings have consistently indicated that gender role conflict is negatively associated with overall interpersonal functioning, attachment security with parents and with partners, fathering attitudes, marital satisfaction, family dynamics, and couples' GRC, men's intimacy, self-disclosure, and friendships, egalitarianism, homophobia, racial bias, stereotyping, attitudes toward women, and interpersonal and sexual violence toward women (O'Neil, 2008). However, the majority of these studies have relied on correlational methods thus precluding inferences regarding causal relationships between and among these variables. For example, empirical analyses have revealed negative bivariate relationships between men's insecure attachment styles and gender-role conflict (e.g., Schwartz, Waldo, & Higgins, 2004). However, it is not known if an insecure attachment style causes more problems with GRC or vice versa. In response to O'Neil's (2008) call for studies that will advance our understanding of how GRC develops in boys' lives and how it is experienced in adult life, this study will propose and test a

model utilizing constructs key to the developmental and gendered processes. A review of the theoretical frameworks supporting this model is presented next.

Developmental Perspectives

Psychoanalytic theory posits that young boys need to identify with the father or male object in order to navigate “the pitfalls of femininity” (Blazina, 2001). Psychoanalytic frameworks (e.g. Pollack, 1992, 1995) further suggest that boys may internalize these early gender role socialization messages, learning to become independent from their mothers. According to Greenson (1968), the young boy is encouraged to separate from his mother before he is psychologically ready to do so (Blazina, 2001). This premature emotional separation from mother may result in “developmental trauma” (Pollack, 1995). However, this pattern becomes complicated when boys seek out their father or other male figures (who themselves were prematurely separated from their mothers) and the fathers or father-figures are not physically or emotionally present to support the young boy. In other words, fathers may be unprepared to deal with their son’s need to connect with them as a result of their own harsh and rigid gendered experiences (Blazina, 2001). Consequently, boys may encounter masculinity-related “father wounds,” or deep pains from poor paternal relationships (Levant, 1995). According to this framework, both female and male caregivers are capable of impairing the young boy’s sense of masculine development when they impose harsh and restrictive gender norms on their son, deeming their actions necessary to raise a proper man (Pollack, 1998).

Linking psychoanalytic theory (Pollack, 1995) to gender-role conflict is the idea that *both* frameworks have a “psychological undercurrent...(that) includes the fear and

rejection of those qualities deemed feminine (Blazina, 2001, p. 51).” More specifically, the definition of what it means to be masculine in American society is largely defined by rejecting aspects of the feminine. In addition, the rejection of the feminine creates mandates that guide the development of “optimal” masculine gender roles by determining what is feminine and rebuffing these same characteristics and behaviors (Blazina & Watkins, 2000).

Drawing upon Heinz Kohut’s self psychology (Kohut, 1971), scholars have theoretically linked self psychology to men’s gender role conflict (Blazina, 2001). Merging these clinical conceptualizations, Blazina (2001) argued that the empathic failures of caregivers may lead to the development of problematic gendered-functioning in men. According to Kohut (1971), there are fundamental developmental experiences (outlined below) necessary for healthy and adaptive overall self-functioning. Blazina proposed that critical deficiencies on these provisions may also contribute to the emergence of problematic masculine gendered-functioning.

Key Constructs in Kohut’s Self-Psychology

Kohut’s “self psychology” provides a clinically sensitive developmental framework for understanding the emergence of adaptive self-regulation. As the central organizing construct in Kohut’s (1971) theory, the “self” is defined as a cognitive/mental framework that categorizes the individual’s subjective experiences into a hierarchy of developmental needs whose satisfaction is crucial for the emergence of adaptive self-regulation (Wolf, 1988). These needs are referred to as “selfobject needs” because their satisfaction is contingent upon the receipt of necessary provisions from early “selfobjects” (i.e., parental figures; Kohut, 1971). Kohut postulated that if these

selfobjects are appropriately satisfied a “cohesive self” capable of functional self-regulation is formed. These psychological needs are presumed to fall along three distinct developmental axes: (a) the grandiosity axis, (b) the idealization axis, and (c) the alter ego-connectedness axis (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984).

The individual develops along the grandiosity axis when the ability to sustain a positive, stable sense of self-esteem and to participate in tasks that have meaning to the self is formed. Normal development along this axis is characterized by the experience of personal competence, agency, and initiative (Kohut, 1978c). The individual develops along the idealization axis when the ability to generate steady goals is formed, enabling the pursuit of ideals and beliefs strongly valued by the self (Kohut, 1971). Development along the alter ego-connectedness axis reflects the individual’s increasing capacities to form significant and intimate interpersonal relationships and group associations. Normal development along this axis is characterized by goals and values that are honored by others and that provide a felt sense of “belongingness and connectedness” (Kohut, 1984, p. 2).

Kohut (1971) argued that “under optimal developmental conditions” (p. 27) the mirroring and idealization functions of parental caregivers enable the person to form an adequately integrated self structure that is progressively capable of autonomous self-regulation, a process he termed “transmuting internalization” (Kohut, 1971). However, the inadequate satisfaction of these early developmental needs by early caregivers is likely to place the adult at increased risk for developing disorders of the self typified by difficulties in interpersonal relationships and problems related to vulnerable self-esteem, a self-structure that either hungers for or avoids these “archaic” needs.

Progression Towards Healthy Autonomous Functioning

Kohut (1971, 1977, 1984) posited that the early satisfaction of three “cardinal” selfobject needs promote satisfactory progress along these three axes of self-development, leading to healthy levels of functioning. These needs are referred to as the needs for mirroring, idealization, and twinship. The need for mirroring is characterized by a strong desire to have one’s accomplishments admired. If this need is successfully met, the person is said to feel valued by others, thus contributing to healthy development along the “grandiosity” axis. The need for idealization is characterized by the motivation to identify with competent and powerful others. To the extent that early caregivers served as competent role models for the child’s idealizing projections, healthy development along the “idealization” axis is predicted. The selfobject need for twinship is characterized by a desire to feel close to significant others and to have meaningful relationships with them. Once again, to the extent that parental figures satisfied this need, healthy development along the twinship/alter-ego connectedness axis was forecasted and presumed to advance the acquisition of social skills, empathy, and a sense of connectedness with others (i.e., healthy functioning or “mature narcissism”; Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984).

According to self psychology, normal development along the grandiosity, idealization, and alter ego-connectedness axes results in the formation of a healthy and cohesive self-structure (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984). Self-cohesion is evident when the individual can sustain and follow through with the values, beliefs, and goals that are congruent with the individual, resulting in a positive, stable, and well-integrated belief system. This well-integrated configuration bolsters the formation of healthy functioning

(i.e., “healthy narcissism”) by providing the adult with a felt sense of inner security, calmness during times of tension, and the capacity to mend wounds to self-esteem during times of failure, rejection, and frustration (Kohut, 1984). Kohut argued that if “the child does not acquire the needed internal structure, his psyche remains fixated on an archaic self-object, and the personality will throughout life be dependent on certain objects in what seems to be an intense form of object hunger” (1971, p. 45). That is, developmental deficits create a self in search of self-cohesion which is believed to be a powerful motivational force driving human behavior (Fonagy & Target, 2003). Self psychology identifies two possible outcomes to adults who have experienced developmental deficits, those with powerful archaic selfobject needs or those who reject these needs (Kohut, 1971, 1977, 1984). More recently, Blazina (2001) integrated concepts central to self psychology and adapted them towards an understanding of the development of selfobject orientations and masculine self functioning in men.

Progression Towards Healthy Gendered-Functioning

A case example from one of Kohut's (1971) male clients illustrates how early experiences with fathers may negatively impact the appropriate satisfaction of the son's selfobject needs and possibly contribute to his unhealthy sense of gendered-functioning:

The father's personality, however, may... be of decisive influence with regard to the severity of the ensuing personality disturbance: if he too, because of his own narcissistic fixations, is unable to respond empathically to the child's needs, then he *compounds* (italics added) the damage... Since the patient had predominantly suffered a traumatic disappointment in the narcissistically invested aspects of the father imago

(the father's idealized power), no transmuting internalization of the idealized object had taken place, but a fixation on a ideal... figure (for whom the patient was forever in search) occurred... if however, his [father's] personality is a firmly demarcated one and if he is able, for example, to let himself first be idealized by the child and then to allow the child gradually to detect his realistic limitations without withdrawing from the child, then the child may turn toward his wholesome influence, form a team with him against the mother, and escape relatively unscathed (p. 66).

Drawing from previous arguments, scholars have suggested that one cause of the father's withdrawal from his son is due to the father's own harsh and rigid socialization process (Blazina, 2001; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Pollack, 1995). According to DeFranc and Mahalik (2002), fathers play a pivotal role in shaping the emerging boys masculinity as fathers serve as "powerful" role models who judge their son's gender-related behaviors. Thus, the role of the father deserves equal attention towards an understanding of how young boys' gendered-functioning develops and will be explicitly examined in the current study.

Drawing from Blazina's (2001) interpretation of the emerging male's selfobject needs, the above case example illustrates how the need for mirroring is inadequately satisfied when fathers fail to praise and admire their son's accomplishments. This missed opportunity to impart admiration and understanding in a mirroring fashion may lead the young male to internalize a feeling of being unvalued, possibly causing him to seek out external sources of validation (e.g., through success, power, and/or competition) to feel good about the self. Similarly, the need for idealization develops poorly when fathers

prohibit the opportunity for their son's to merge with a significant and powerful other through emotional distance. Consequently, this is said to prevent the young male from internalizing self-soothing mechanisms, which may lead him to feel lonely. Lastly, we can see how the need for twinship poorly develops when fathers are unable to provide a sense of kinship or similarity with their sons. This is said to prevent the son from making social connections to others, which may lead him to feel undesirable by others (Blazina, 2001). Consistent with GRC theory and Kohut's self psychology, it would make sense to argue that young men who were encouraged to maintain emotional distance would also experience difficulties making social connections. That is, these men are likely to encounter troubles experiencing and expressing their emotions (i.e., restrictive emotionality), in addition to understanding and communicating with others (e.g., work and family members) and specifically other men.

In sum, it is argued that these developmental experiences may lead young men to mimic the same patterns of emotional and physical neglect, perpetuating a cycle that prevents young boys from experiencing a male figure whom they can idealize and model healthy gendered-functioning after (Blazina, 2001; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002).

Attachment, Self Psychology, and Gendered- Functioning

Specifically referring to attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1991; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969/1982, 1973, 1980), DeFranc and Mahalik (2002) observed that "No relationship has received greater attention from the field of psychology than the parent-child relationship" (p. 51). According to Mikulincer and Shaver (2007), individuals whose early attachment needs were appropriately met, possess a "healthy, flexible, and reality-attuned regulatory processes that allow emotions to be experienced

and expressed without defense distortion” (p. 190). More specifically, healthy attachment relationships with early caregivers should promote a "secure base" that allows children to develop a sense of autonomy that promotes healthy coping strategies during times of distress and emotional connections to peers and intimate partners in adult life.

By contrast, insecurely attached children tend to deny and distort emotional occurrences, suppress possibly useful ones, dwell on anxious thoughts, and exhibit poor coping strategies (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). More specifically, unhealthy developmental experiences with early caregivers (which may even be viewed as traumatic from a gender-role strain paradigm; Pleck, 1995) may interfere with the young boy's ability to consciously process and update changes to his environment in an adaptive manner (Bretherton, 1992). That is, the young male may *defensively exclude* new information in order to protect the self from “unbearable mental pain, confusion, or conflict” (Bretherton, 1992, p. 773). When young children are motivated to defensively exclude information (due to harsh and/or traumatic parenting experiences) they may avoid or restrict their feelings (a characteristic of becoming insecurely attached, Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007) which may become internalized and carry over to adult functioning (Bowlby, 1980). Applied to the developing male, young boys who have adopted a personality that defensively excludes information may experience the restrictive emotionality that partially defines problematic gendered-functioning in men (i.e., gender role-conflict; O’Neil et al., 1986). Similar to Kohut’s (1971) conceptualization of a cohesive self, attachment theory views securely attached individuals as acquiring a healthy self-reliance that allows them to view distressful events in more manageable ways and thus achieve independence (Bowlby, 1988).

Therefore, integrating frameworks and constructs related to Kohut's self psychology and Bowlby's attachment theory may in fact provide a complementary and highly useful lens for assessing problematic gendered-functioning in men, as both theories emphasize flexibility and cohesiveness as central aspects of healthy gendered-functioning (e.g. Banai et al., 2005; Blazina, 2001; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007)

Statement of Problem

Although the utility of a Kohutian framework for working with men has been proposed (e.g. Blazina, 2001), to date no studies have explicitly examined the assumption that poor developmental experiences (i.e., poor paternal and maternal fostering of autonomy, emotional support, and affection) contribute to problematic functioning in men via their links with measures of selfobject orientations (SONI; Banai et al., 2005). Therefore, many questions remain. For example, do particular aspects of attachment to mother and father increase the son's risk for developing unhealthy selfobject orientations? Secondly, do particular aspects of attachment to mother and father increase the son's risk for developing problems with gendered-functioning? Lastly, do particular selfobject orientations (e.g., hunger for or avoidance of selfobject needs) increase young men's risk for developing problems with gendered-functioning?

Consistent with key aspects of self psychology, the experience of insufficient autonomy, emotional support, and affection from early caregivers are believed to produce defensive mechanisms that orient men towards anxiously seeking selfobject needs or rejecting selfobject needs, ultimately affecting their sense of gendered-functioning (Blazina, 2001; Fischer, 2007). Although emotional provisions from both the mother and father are believed to contribute to these processes, the role of the father has not been

equally emphasized in empirical analyses (Perrin, Baker, Romelus, Jones, & Keesacker, 2009). Interestingly, research has indicated that fathers' participation with their children has slowly increased over the past 30 years (O'Neil, 2008). Therefore the proposed study will respectively assess the quality of attachment relationships with each parent.

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this study is to propose and test a model of the developmental processes that contribute to problematic gendered-functioning in men. By drawing upon the conceptual frameworks and assessment tools within self-psychology and attachment theory, it is hoped that the findings of this study will refine clinical conceptualizations and treatments for men.

Chapter II

Literature Review

In order to establish support for the theorized links between and among the constructs used in this study, the following sections will focus on key studies that have examined the relationship between personality and measures of problematic gender functioning in men. Next, studies that have investigated attachment relationships with early caregivers to measures of problematic gendered-functioning in men will be presented. Lastly, this chapter will underscore the link between Kohut's (1971) selfobject needs and problematic gendered-functioning (i.e., gender-role conflict).

Personality and Masculine Gendered-Functioning

The relationship between gender roles and personality has gained attention in the gender-role strain literature. In one of the first studies to assess personality and gender related variables, Mahalik et al. (1998) found that GRC was related to men's use of more immature psychological defenses. These findings led the authors to conclude that gender role-conflicted men were more likely to use projection as a psychological defense mechanisms to protect the self from appearing feminine. Furthermore, these defensive configurations have also been found to have significant relationships with narcissism (Mahalik et al., 1998). A related, subsequent study found that men with higher levels of masculine role strain also scored higher on measures of entitlement, a core feature of narcissism (Hill & Fischer, 2001). Recall that narcissism is a central component of self psychology that is believed to contribute to either healthy or pathological functioning in the overall self, as well as the masculine self (Blazina, 2001). That is, from a Kohutian developmental framework, healthy personality functioning is dependent on early

caregivers ability to foster a sense of autonomy and emotional support in their child (Banai, et al., 2005; Blazina, 2001; Kohut, 1971).

In a study examining the mediating and moderating effects of narcissism to the relationship between GRC and body esteem in men (Schwartz & Tylka, 2008), findings revealed that conceptualizations of entitlement (i.e., self-assertive and narcissistic tendencies) moderated the relationships between two aspects of gender role conflict (i.e., success/power/competition and work-family conflict) and body esteem. Specifically, the better adjusted or healthy form of entitlement (i.e., self-assertion) served as a protective factor in these relationships whereas the more maladjusted or unhealthy form (i.e., narcissistic entitlement) functioned as a risk factor. This study also showed that narcissistic entitlement mediated the relationship between restricted affection between men and body esteem. In addition, adaptive entitlement mediated the relationships between restricted emotionality, work-family conflict, and body esteem in men.

Utilizing advanced methods (i.e., structural equation modeling [SEM]) to examine possible causal relationships, Fischer (2007) investigated the contributions of personality and parental relationship characteristics to the prediction of masculine gender-role strain. In her study, Fischer replicated previous findings (e.g., Blazina & Watkins, 2000; DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Fischer & Good 1998) through significant associations between quality of attachment to parents and masculine role strain (which was assessed by combining GRC and MGRS scores). In addition, this study provided initial evidence that the nature of these associations is mediated through individual differences in young men's Big Five core personality dimensions (i.e., neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness, etc.). Fischer (2007) found that parental attachment quality and global

personality traits made substantial contributions to the prediction of masculine role strain ($R^2 = .41$). More specifically, her study extended Bowlby's (1969/1982, 1973, 1980) and Kohut's (1971) argument that healthy gendered-functioning is related to early caregivers ability to provide emotional support and foster a sense of autonomy in their child.

Attachment styles. Early developmental experiences are believed to lead to the development of internal working models of adult relationships (i.e., adult attachment styles), mental representations that are carried with us throughout life (Bowlby, 1982). Linking the concept of internal working models and personality, Mikulincer and Shaver (2007) stated that as individuals progress through life, they "... practice, the entire system of representations (i.e., internal working models of self and others) and self-regulatory efforts become fully and seamlessly integrated into one's personality..." (p. 461). Adult attachment styles (i.e., internal working models of self and others) represent distinct patterns in regulating the intimacy-related demands of close relationships, and this construct has been moderately related to the quality of parental attachment in several studies (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Schwartz, Waldo, and Higgins (2004) conducted one of the only studies to date that examined the relationship of adult attachment styles and gender-role conflict. These investigators found that men with secure adult attachment styles had fewer problems with emotional expression (a subscale of the GRC) than did their insecure counterparts. Schwartz et al. (2004) also found that men with more secure attachment styles had lower scores regarding success, power, and competition than did their fearful counterparts. Drawing from the personality studies reviewed above, it may be reasonable to consider using more specific and theory-grounded constructs, such as recently developed measures of Kohut's (1971) selfobject orientations (reviewed in

subsequent sections), that have links to personality and may hold promise in advancing our understanding of the individual differences and developmental pathways that impact men's gendered-functioning.

Attachment and Gendered-Functioning

According to Kenny and Gallagher (2002), healthy developmental experiences with early caregivers may lead individuals to trust in others, be emotionally supportive, and to be more willing to share personal feelings with them. Recall that, in contrast to their secure counterparts, insecure individuals tend to deny and distort emotional occurrences, suppress possible useful ones, and dwell on anxious thoughts. Thus, according to attachment theory, if the child's proximity-seeking needs are ignored or rejected, the child becomes motivated to pursue either a primarily anxious or avoidant interpersonal orientation toward meeting security-related needs in future adult relationships (Fraley & Shaver, 2000). When the male's working model of the self is characterized by an insecure and avoidant attachment orientation (similar to an avoidant selfobject orientation; Banai et al., 2005) he may be left feeling alone and unwelcome, and his model of others leads him to reject and mistrust others (Lopez, 2009). Consistent with this model, studies have revealed that men who scored high on measures of gender role-conflict were at risk for making poor intimate connections with significant others (Cournoyer & Mahalik, 1995; Sharpe & Heppner, 1991) and used aggressive-projective psychological defense mechanisms (Mahalik et al., 1998).

When the male's working model of the self is characterized by an insecure and anxious attachment style (similar to those who develop an "archaic hunger" for selfobject needs orientation; Banai et al., 2005) he may harbor intense fears of rejection and

abandonment, express strong needs for affirmation from intimate partners, and view others as possible yet untrustworthy sources of support (DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002; Lopez, 2009).

Attachment scholars have also found that insecure attachment to parents may prevent the young child from successfully integrating healthy aspects of masculine and feminine traits (psychological androgyny), which may negatively impact gendered-functioning in men by disinhibiting their ability to adaptively cope with distressing events and emotionally connecting with others in their adult life (Blazina, 2001; Fischer, 2007; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; O'Neil, 2008).

Taken together, findings from individual and meta-analytic studies would seem to support Bowlby's (1973, 1980, 1982) and Blazina's (1997, 2001) idea that providing emotional support and fostering autonomy in young men allows them to freely explore their environments, promoting the integration of both feminine and masculine aspects into their personality while enabling them to trust others and to connect emotionally to them.

Attachment and connectedness to parents. Consistent with the links between attachment and masculine gender role strain, Fischer and Good (1998) found that men's perception of more secure, positive, and conflict-free relationships with both mothers and fathers were positively related to measures of masculine role stress and gender role conflict (recall that gender-role conflict and stress are believed to collectively account for Pleck's gender role strain paradigm). These authors used two instruments, with close ties to classic attachment theory (Ainsworth, et al, 1978; Bowlby, 1969/1982) to assess quality of parental attachment: the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (IPPA;

Armden & Greenberg, 1987), the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ; Kenny, 1987), along with the Psychological Separation Inventory (Hoffman, 1984). The latter measure, based on psychoanalytic theory, was used to assess emotional, attitudinal, relational, and conflictual processes affecting separation- individuation in young adults.

The IPPA was developed to assess adolescents' and young adults' relationships with their parents and the degree to which they serve as "sources of psychological security" (Armden & Greenberg, 1987, p, 1). The PAQ was developed to assess *overall* quality of attachment to parents. The Conflictual independence subscale of the Psychological Separation Inventory (Hoffman, 1984) was used to assess the "freedom from excessive guilt, anxiety, mistrust, responsibility, inhibition, resentment and anger in the relation to the mother and father" (Hoffman, 1984, pp. 171-172). Participants were also administered two instruments to assess masculine gender role strain: the (GRCS; O'Neil, 1986) and the masculine gender role stress scale (MGRS; Eisler & Blalock, 1991), which were described in previous sections. These measures are important to understand as various combinations of these constructs have been used in other men's studies (reviewed below) and in the current examination (i.e., the GRCS and the PAQ).

A closer examination of the Fischer and Good (1998) study revealed that men who experienced conflictual relations with their parents were more prone to experience women as dominating and threatening their sense of independence and competence. Regarding son's relationship to their fathers, results indicated that a more secure attachment to father was related to less emotional restriction and less worry over performance failure and intellectual inferiority.

Results from the Blazina and Watkins (2000) study were generally consistent with findings from the above study using the IPPA to assess attachment to mother and father. Their findings revealed that sons' who experienced both mother and father as poor sources of psychological security had higher scores on measures of restrictive emotionality (a subscale of the GRC). Furthermore, sons who experienced poor psychological separation from their parents had higher gender-role conflict scores.

Integrating key assumptions from social learning theory, psychoanalytic theory, and attachment theory, DeFranc and Mahalik (2002) conducted a follow up study wherein they hypothesized that a son's estimate of his father's gender role conflict and stress would be related to poorer attachment to mother (and especially father), increased psychological separation, and to the son's experience of his own gender role conflict and stress. Results of this study supported these hypotheses while replicating previously-observed associations between son's poor attachment to parents and their scores on measures of gender role conflict, gender role stress, and problematic psychological separation (Blazina & Watkins, 2000; Fischer & Good, 1998).

Day and Padilla-Walker (2009) conducted one of the few studies that examined the unique effects of each parent's connectedness and involvement towards adolescent behavior. Utilizing a scale designed to draw upon Kohut's alter-ego connectedness axis (Social Connectedness Scale; Lee et al. 2001), these investigators found that higher scores on the social connectedness and parental involvement scale, for both mother and father, were generally related to lower scores on internalizing and externalizing behaviors and increased prosocial behaviors. When viewing the unique results of mother and father scores, findings revealed that mothers' scores were more consistently related to

adolescents' prosocial behaviors and that father's scores were more consistently related to adolescents' problem behaviors.

More recently, findings from Land, Rochlen, and Vaughn (2011) suggest that the socialization pressures placed on male children (e.g., to distance the self from significant caregivers) may lead them to develop maladaptive strategies for modulating affect (Blazina, 1997, 2004), which may in turn negatively impact interpersonal functioning. Partially confirming their hypotheses, these authors found that only maternal bonding care predicted adult attachment avoidance among their sample of men.

The Development and Measurement of Key Kohutian Constructs

Despite the popularity of self-psychology in contemporary psychoanalytic circles and in men's literature (Blazina, 2001; Eagle, 1984; Mollon, 2001; Siegel, 1996; Strozier, 2001; Wolf, 1988), few studies have empirically tested Kohut's ideas regarding the contributions of specific selfobject needs to overall adaptive self-functioning (e.g., Banai et al., 2005) and none to gendered-functioning in men. However, there were some important initial attempts to examine Kohut's concepts of self-dimensions. Robbins and Patton (1985) developed a self-report scale designed to draw upon Kohut's (1971) self-dimensions of grandiosity and idealization. Through multiple studies, the Superiority and Goal Instability Scales (Robbins & Patton, 1985) indicated that high scores on these scales were significantly related to low self-esteem, narcissism, difficult interpersonal functioning, career immaturity, and problematic identity development (Robbins, 1989; Robbins & Dupont, 1992; Robbins, Lee, & Wan, 1994). Lapan and Patton (1986) subsequently developed a self-report scale designed to extend Kohut's theory to the assessment of autonomy-related difficulties during adolescence (e.g., pseudoautonomy

and peer group dependence measures). Using groups of psychiatrically hospitalized and non-hospitalized adolescents, these investigators found that these two measures were able to successfully distinguish the two groups of adolescents. Lee and Robbins (1995) developed measures of social connectedness and social assurance to assess variability in functioning along Kohut's alter-ego connectedness axis; these researchers found that high scores on the social connectedness scale were negatively related to appraised stress (Lee & Robbins, 1998). Lee, Draper, and Lee (2001) demonstrated that impaired interpersonal functioning mediated the relationship between social connectedness and psychological distress.

The Self Object Needs Inventory

Banai et al. (2005) developed an alternative instrument to measure Kohut's (1971) conceptualizations of selfobject needs. These researchers noted that previous attempts to define Kohut's self dimensions had only examined the assumption that disorders of the self are uniquely related to hunger for selfobject need satisfaction. In other words, previous measures of Kohutian constructs did not operationalize Kohut's assertion that deficits in development may also be expressed in the rejection or disavowal of selfobject needs. Using an Israeli student sample of both males and females, Banai et al. (2005) developed and validated the Self Object Needs Inventory (SONI) across a series of several studies in order to address this limitation. Contrasting prior attempts to conceptualize Kohut's selfobject needs, statistical analyses revealed that hunger for and avoidance of selfobject provisions (i.e., grandiosity, idealization, and alter ego connectedness) are distinct as are the three corresponding selfobject needs (i.e., mirroring, idealization, and twinship). A multistage process of scale development

indicated that this operationalization of Kohut's (1971) concepts worked well, resulting in five factor-analytically-derived subscales (i.e., need for mirroring, need for idealization, need for twinship, avoidance of mirroring, and avoidance of idealization/twinship).

Banai et al. (Study 1) examined the factor structure, test-retest reliability, of subscale scores, and bivariate relationships of subscale scores with various measures assessing constructs connected to Kohut's theory. Results indicated that the SONI subscale scores demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, high test-retest reliability, and modest intercorrelations indicating discriminant validity. As hypothesized, results from Study 2 indicated that scores indicative of a strong hunger for selfobject need gratification were positively correlated with a person's attachment anxiety and rejection sensitivity while avoidance of selfobject needs were positively associated with attachment avoidance and fear of intimacy, but not associated with rejection sensitivity measures. In study 3, findings indicated SONI scales were found to be positively associated with components of narcissistic personality assessed through the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (e.g., self-admiration, superiority, and exploitiveness; Raskin & Hall, 1979). The findings from studies 2 and 3 are noteworthy in supporting the current project's goals (i.e., towards using the SONI as a predictor/mediator of gendered-functioning) as research (see Attachment and Gendered-Functioning above) has indicated that attachment styles and personality (e.g., narcissism) are related to higher scores on measures of gender role strain. Study 4 tested Kohut's assertion that the individual's chronic pursuit or chronic avoidance of selfobject needs may lead to problems of the self. Results demonstrated that selfobject needs were positively associated with scores of

psychological well-being, depression, and anxiety, with negative associations to a global measure of self-esteem. Interestingly, the avoidance of selfobject needs was not negatively associated with self-esteem in contrast to Kohut's theory. Studies 5 and 6 revealed that selfobject needs were related to insufficient self-cohesion, with higher scores on needs for mirroring and twinship both negatively related to self-differentiation and self-complexity, while positively related to negative affect. These findings suggest that SONI needs are differentially related to distinct features of self-esteem.

In their final study, Banai et al. (2005, Study 7) tested Kohut's assertion that both pursuit and avoidance of selfobject needs would be related to affect regulation difficulties. A learned helplessness experiment was conducted in which failure feedback or no feedback preceded assessment of subject's emotions, cognitions, and task-related functioning. Results indicated that, after controlling for the feedback condition, participants with high scores on needs for mirroring and twinship experienced higher levels of task-extraneous thoughts, task-related doubts, and negative emotions. Findings also indicated that failure feedback condition interacted with participants' needs for mirroring in predicting task outcomes: more specifically, within the failure feedback condition, participants with high needs for mirroring demonstrated especially impaired task performances.

Consistent with the findings from the Banai et al., (2005) study, follow up studies also revealed that selfobject need scores were related to adult attachment orientation scores and to scores on measures of self-compassion (Lopez et al., 2009). Upon closer examination of the Lopez et al. (2010) study, findings from regression analyses indicated that selfobject needs and adult attachment orientations made unique contributions to

measures of cohesive self-functioning (i.e., self-judging and self-kindness) supporting the usefulness of Kohutian measures and frameworks.

Summary and Research Hypotheses

Kohut (1971, 1977, 1984) believed that three dimensions underlying the formation of the cohesive self (grandiosity, idealization, and alter-ego connectedness) begin developing at birth and extend through adulthood, specifically in the context of the person's relationship with their immediate caregiver and significant others. If the infant's early selfobject needs for autonomy and emotional support were successfully met by maternal and paternal caregivers, the internal structure regulating the development and integration of grandiosity, idealization, and alter ego-connectedness was strengthened. This progression is presumed to advance the development of a healthy, cohesive sense of self by promoting the person's capacity to self-regulate the pursuit of life goals and the maintenance of self-esteem instead of having these functions regulated by external others (Kohut, 1971). Similar to self psychology, attachment theory posits that the formation of the cohesive self is promoted by the availability and responsiveness of significant caregivers to provide emotional support and foster a sense of autonomy in their children.

In considering much of male identity and male gender-role theory, relationship issues emerge as potentially significant problems for men who subscribe to traditional gender-bound thinking. Drawing on psychoanalytic observations about maleness, such relationship issues can be viably operationalized as problems with attachment... (Blazina & Watkins, 2000, p. 127)

Specific to the current study and consistent with Kohut's self psychology, it is believed that "...men can develop a cohesive sense of masculine self through selfobject

experiences that include merging with an idealized other, being mirrored by a significant other, and developing a sense of twinship” to the extent that the mother and the father adequately meet these needs (Blazina, 2001, p. 50). When viewed in light of the above theoretical and empirical reviews, when maternal and paternal caregivers do not satisfy their male offspring’s attachment related needs of autonomy and emotional support (Blazina, 2001) these children may develop unhealthy selfobject orientations, which in turn may be linked to problematic gendered-functioning in adult life (see Figure 2).

Gaps in the literature

From the parental attachment and gender-role strain studies reviewed earlier, the PAQ has only been used once (DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002) to assess each parent separately; all other studies reviewed combined total scores for mother and father attachment quality to create an overall parental attachment score. Although Fischer (2007) employed structural equation modeling techniques (SEM) in her study, she did not fully utilize SEM to examine the unique contribution of paternal and maternal attachment scores to the prediction of masculine gender-role strain. Furthermore, the parental attachment and gender-role studies reviewed have yielded weak to moderate bivariate associations between measures of gender role strain and measures of maternal and paternal attachment, respectively (i.e., IPPA, PAQ; range of r s -.15 [Blazina & Watkins, 2000] to .35 [DeFranc & Mahalik, 2002]) indicating that there are other variables that may account for these relationships such as selfobject orientations.

In their recent meta-analytic review of the research literature on parental attachment security and college student adjustment, Mattanah, Lopez, and Govern (2011) found that the average effect size of the relationship, while statistically significant, was

modest ($ES = .23$) leading these investigators to conclude that parental attachment quality may function as a distal predictor of college student adjustment outcomes and that “other developmental processes not specifically examined...” may more proximally predict these outcomes. (p. 588). Thus, might the developmental process of forming (or failing to form) healthy selfobject orientations explain some of these findings? Research investigating the links between selfobject orientations, adult attachment orientations, indicators of self-functioning, and self-compassion (Lopez et al., 2010) confirmed the presence of moderate, bivariate associations among these constructs, consistent with theory and the authors’ hypotheses. However, because these relationships were assessed using measures of *overall* self-functioning, it remains unclear if selfobject orientations are associated with constructs assessing *gendered*- functioning (i.e., gender-role conflict) in men as Blazina (2001) predicts.

Research Hypotheses

Drawing from the theoretical and empirical literature reviewed in this study, and in response to O’Neil’s (2008) call for more research that will advance our understanding of how GRC develops in boys’ lives, this study aims to (a) explicitly examine the unique contribution of quality of attachment from each parent (PAQ; Kenny, 1987) to men’s selfobject orientations and gendered-functioning and (b) test the hypothesis that associations of parental relationship quality and gendered-functioning will be mediated by selfobject orientations in sample of college men (see Figure 2).

According to McAdams and Pals (2006, as cited in O’Neil, 2008, p. 400) “the recent reemergence of personality psychology and integrative principles to study personality may provide frameworks to examine how GRC contributes to personality,

development, and change...” In line with this view, the following research hypotheses will be examined in this study:

Hypotheses regarding the measurement portion of the model

1. The three subscales assessing quality of parental attachment will define the latent construct of *parental relationships* for mother and father separately.
2. The five subscales assessing selfobject orientations (see Instruments) will define the latent construct of *selfobject orientations*.
3. All four subscales of the gender-role conflict measure will define the latent construct of *problematic gendered-functioning* in men.

Hypotheses regarding the structural portion of the model

1. It is hypothesized that maternal and paternal relationship quality will each make unique contributions to selfobject orientations.
2. It is hypothesized that the contributions of maternal and paternal relationship quality to problematic gendered-functioning will be mediated by participants’ selfobject orientation scores.

Chapter III

Methodology

Participants and Procedures

Participants were male undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Houston. Participants were recruited in their classrooms and through SONA (a web-based human subject pool management software for universities) to sign up for an online survey session (via Survey Monkey) during which they completed informed consent materials and the research measures described below. Some partial course extra credit was given for students whose professors allowed for it. Alternate opportunities for extra credit were also available. Following suggestions from Kline (2005), a “large” sample size of 422 male participants was collected and 54 cases were deleted (for reasons described further below), resulting in a final $N=368$. This sample size exceeded the 10:1 ratio of subjects to free parameters that Kline suggests.

Of the participants, 11.4% were first year students, 22.0% were second year students, 37.8% were third year students, 28.0% were 4th year students, and .08% identified as graduate students. The majority of the participants identified as Caucasian (28%), Hispanic (15.5%), African American (12.2%), Other (9.8%), Mexican (6.5%), South Asian (6.5%), Indian (6.3%), Mixed race (5.7%), Chinese (4.3%), Filipino (2.4%), Korean (1.4%), American Indian (.05%), and Japanese (.03%), which is largely consistent with the ethnic distribution at the University of Houston. The mean age of students was 22.62 ($SD = 4.38$).

Instruments

Parental relationships. Sons' perspectives on their relationships were assessed using the three subscales from the Parental Attachment Questionnaire (PAQ; Kenny, 1987). Participants filled out forms for both mother and father. The PAQ assesses overall quality of attachment to parents and consists of 55 items rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). A sample item is, "In general, my mother/father has trust and confidence in me," with higher scores indicating more positive attachment to parents. Factor analysis revealed three distinct factors used to create the Affective Quality of Attachment subscale (27 items; AQA), the Parental Fostering of Autonomy subscale (14 items; PFA), and the Parental Role in Providing Emotional Support subscale (13 items; PES; Kenny, 1987). Internal consistency estimates in samples similar to the current one have been reported as .94 for the AQA subscale and .83 for both the PFA and the PES subscales (Fischer & Good, 1998). Fischer (2007) found alphas to be .94 for AQA, .81 for PFA, and .83 for PES. The PAQ allows for separate subscale scores to be created for participants' relationships with each parent. The current study intended to examine the unique impact of each parent (by using subscales created for each parent) and found alphas to be .92 AQA mother and Father, .81 PFA mother, .80 PFA Father, .82 PES mother, and .84 PES Father. However, following suggestions by Meyers et al., (2006) when there is high collinearity (e.g. .7s or higher) between two or more predictor variables, scores should be combined together. Thus, due to high collinearity between mother and father PAQ subscales (see Table 1) scores were combined to create total subscale scores (i.e. mother and Father AQA scores were combined to create a new total AQA score, etc; see also Figure 3). Alphas were found to be .95 for AQA, .89 for PFA,

and .91 for PES, which were higher than what Fischer (2007) found. Construct validity has been demonstrated through correlations with college adjustment (Kenny, 1987), alienation, egocentricity, loneliness, and lack of social self-confidence (Heiss et al., 1996). Sessa and Holmbeck (1989) computed total PAQ scores for students' relationships with each parent and reported that mother and father PAQ scores were significantly correlated. Consistent findings (Kenny, 1987, 1990; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991) indicating relationships between the PAQ and measures of psychological well-being lend support for the construct validity of the PAQ. Using confirmatory factor analysis, Holtzen, Kenny, and Mahalik (1995) also demonstrated that the factor structure of the PAQ fit when rating both fathers and mothers.

Self-Object Needs Inventory. The latent variable of selfobject orientations was assessed using the five factor-analytically-derived subscales found in the Banai et al, (2005) study. The SONI assessed the following self-object dimensions which consists of 6 items for the Need for Mirroring subscale (i.e., "I feel hurt when my achievements are not sufficiently admired"), 7 items for the Need for Idealization subscale (i.e., "I am attracted to successful people"), 8 items for the Need for Twinship subscale (i.e., "It is important for me to feel that a close friend and I are 'in the same boat'"), 6 items for the Avoidance of Mirroring subscale (i.e., "I do not really care what others think about me"), and 11 items for the Avoidance of Idealization/Twinship subscale (i.e., "I would rather not belong to a group of people whose lifestyle is similar to mine"). Participants indicated how well each item describes them by using a 7-point scale (1= not at all, 7= very much). Item ratings on each subscale are summed to provide a total subscale score, with higher scores indicating stronger endorsement of that selfobject dimension. The current study

found alphas to be .82 for Need for Twinship, .87 for Avoidance of Idealization and Twinship, .68 for Need for Idealization, .74 for Need for Mirroring, and .61 for Avoidance of Mirroring. Banai et al. (2005) observed that hunger for mirroring, idealization, and twinship were significantly associated with attachment anxiety and rejection sensitivity. That is, the higher a person's attachment anxiety and the higher his or her rejection sensitivity are, the stronger is his or her hunger for mirroring, idealization, and twinship. Pearson correlations also revealed significant positive associations between avoidance of selfobject needs, for both mirroring and idealization/twinship, and scores on attachment avoidance and fear of intimacy. The higher a person's attachment avoidance and the higher his or her fear of intimacy are, the stronger was the avoidant orientation toward selfobject needs.

Problematic Gendered-functioning. The latent variable of problematic gendered-functioning was measured using the four subscales from the gender-role conflict scale (GRCS; O'Neil et al., 1986). The GRCS assesses the amount of conflict or difficulty men experience because of the internalization of "rigid, sexist, or restrictive gender roles" (O'Neil et al., 1986). Men reported their agreement with 37 statements, using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate greater gender-role conflict. The instrument uses four factor-analytically derived subscales and consists of 13 items for the Success Power and Competition subscale (i.e., "I worry about failing and how it affects my doing well as a man" [SPC]), 10 items for the Restrictive Emotionality subscale (i.e., "I have difficulty expressing my tender feelings" [RE]), 8 items for the Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men subscale (i.e., "Affection with other men makes me tense" [RABM]), and 6 items for the Conflict

Between Work and Family Relations subscale (i.e., "My work or school often disrupts other parts of my life: home, health, or leisure" [CBWF]). The current study used each subscale as manifest indicators. Prior analysis from an oblique rotation revealed that the four factors were internally consistent (O'Neil et al., 1986). Previous research has resulted in alphas of .75 for Conflict Between Work and Family Relations, .82 for Restrictive Emotionality, .83 for Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men, and .85 for Success, Power, and Competition (O'Neil et al., 1986). The current study found alphas to be .87 for SPC, .87 for RE, .85 for RABM, and .79 for CBWF. Adequate test-retest reliability over a 4-week period had also been demonstrated. Reliabilities were .72 for Conflict Between Work and Family Relations, .76 for Restrictive Emotionality, .86 for Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men, and .84 for Success, Power, and Competition (O'Neil et al., 1986). The findings of Good, Robertson, Fitzgerald, Stevens, and Bartels (1996) support the scale's construct validity, such that higher GRCS scores correlated as predicted with endorsement of traditional masculine role norms.

Chapter IV

Results

Data Screening and Descriptive Statistics

Following procedures outlined by Meyers et al. (2006), conservative imputation procedures were used (i.e. subscale-mean substitution) for 12 cases that had at least 95% complete data on a given subscale. Next, cases that had more than 5% data missing on any subscale and cases that failed basic validity checks (e.g., cases with many consecutive questionnaire items filled in with the same response or number, such as a very long string of uninterrupted 1s or 3s) were deleted. Data were then screened for any problematic outliers. This process resulted in the deletion of 14 univariate outliers and 40 multivariate outliers, leaving a final N of 368, which well exceeds the suggested samples size for SEM (Kline, 2005). The variable distributions did not show any severe departures from the normality assumption as all skewness and kurtosis values were within the acceptable range of limits (i.e., all values were within the range of +/- 1.00; Meyers et al. 2006).

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics and correlations among all variables. Even after PAQ subscales were combined to create a new composite measure (due to high collinearity; see *Instruments* above), the intercorrelations of scores on the Parental Fostering of Autonomy scale and the Affective Quality of Attachment scale reached the threshold of what is considered an acceptable range of collinearity ($r = .70$; Meyers et al., 2006). In addition, the intercorrelations of scores on the Parents as Sources of Emotional Support scale and the Affective Quality of Attachment scale approached an unacceptable

amount of collinearity ($r = .62$) as did the intercorrelations of Restrictive Emotionality and Restrictive Behavior Between Men subscale scores on the GRC ($r = .65$).

A general pattern of significant negative correlations (p values $<.05$ and $.01$) appeared between PAQ subscales and GRC subscales and PAQ and two SONI subscales (Avoidance of Idealization/Twinship and Need for Mirroring), as was expected. However, there were some significant correlations that were not in the expected directions. That is, there were significant positive relationships between PES and SPC, and between PES and the Need for Twinship and Idealization, which are further investigated in the Discussion section below.

Hypothesis Testing with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

This study utilized SEM because of its ability to model and control for measurement error. This method sought to extend prior studies as most statistical methods used in the GRC literature (e.g. correlational and regression; see O'Neil, 2008 for review) do not account for measurement error. In addition, the use of latent variables allowed for constructs to be accessed via multiple manifest (directly observed) variables to capture the constructs of interest, whereas GRC studies that used correlation and regression methods typically have relied on single indicators of key constructs.

The current examination used the two-step approach to SEM as suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1998). Following this approach, the respecified measurement model (see Figure 3) was first estimated by specifying the latent variables' structure through use of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in SEM. Second, if the CFA model had shown good fit statistics, the next step would have examined the fit of the full structural regression model depicted in Figure 2 to the data. Two step modeling is used to

identify possible model misspecification within the measurement component separately from that within the structural component, which is not possible when both model components are analyzed together in a single step.

Amos Graphics 18.0 was used to conduct the described two-step approach to latent variable modeling (SPSS, Inc.). For both the measurement and structural models, the Comparative Fit Index, (CFI), the Normed Fit Index (NFI), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was used, as well as the model chi-square and degrees of freedom. Cutoff scores for these criteria indices are based on Schumacker and Lomax's (2004) suggestions of a minimum for well-fitting models of $>.95$ for the CFI, $>.95$ for the NFI, $<.05$ for the RMSEA with the left 90% confidence interval $=.00$ and the upper confidence interval $<.10$, and the p-value of the model chi-square statistic being $>.05$. In addition, results were screened for improper parameter estimates ("Heywood cases"), and modification indices and standardized residuals were examined to identify potential areas of local model misfit. All latent variable models were estimated using the maximum likelihood estimation method.

The aim of step 1 (see Figure 3) was to delineate which variables would be used to identify the latent constructs of interest. For the parental-relationship-quality latent variable, the three new indicators were used (i.e., Parental PAQ, Parental AQA, and Parental PES; see *Instruments*). For the problematic gendered-functioning latent variable, the four gender-role conflict subscales (GRC; O'Neil et al., 1986) were used as manifest indicators. For the selfobject orientations latent variable, five subscales from the Selfobject Needs Inventory subscales (SONI; Banai et al., 2005) were used as manifest indicators. The initial measurement model contained these three latent constructs, along

with their corresponding manifest indicators (see Figure 3). This model's fit to the data was poor ($\chi^2 = 454.962$, $df = 51$, CFI = .73, NFI = .71, RMSEA = .15, 90% C.I. Lower bound = .14, upper bound = .16) indicating that the hypothesized measurement model was not supported for this sample of men. As Byrne (2001) indicates, "...once an hypothesized CFA model, for example, has been rejected, this spells the end of the confirmatory factor-analytic approach, in its truest sense. Although CFA procedures continue to be used in any respecification and reestimation of the model, these analyses are exploratory in the sense that they focus on the detection of misfitting patterns in the originally hypothesized model" (p. 91).

Returning to the CFA results, the AMOS output revealed the presence of a Heywood case (i.e., the standardized factor loading of the AQA manifest indicator was 1.11 and thus out of the acceptable range of ± 1.00 ; see Table 3). According to Joreskog (1999), a standardized loading greater than 1.0 can be a cause of high collinearity in the data, which was found to be true in this case (see Table 1). Exacerbating matters, a Heywood case can serve as a "dumping ground for the...misfit of the model" (Kolenikov & Bollen, 2007, p. 29). Upon further inspection of the data, some of the measures selected appeared to have little systematic variance in common (as indexed by relatively low standardized loadings on corresponding latent factors and low correlations between latent constructs; see Tables 3 & 4). For example, results of CFA outputs revealed that the Avoidance of Mirroring was did not load significantly on the selfobject orientations latent construct and, therefore, it was dropped in all further exploratory CFA analyses. Even when indicators with factors loadings below .50 were dropped from their corresponding constructs, goodness of fit indicators still revealed a poor-fitting model.

Separate single-factor CFA models for each of the three latent constructs were analyzed in order to determine if one of the constructs was contributing to the poor overall fit of the measurement model. Inspection of goodness of fit indicators for each separate single-factor CFA model revealed a poor fit for all three latent constructs. In addition, some of the error terms and indicators were allowed to be freely estimated, based on the Modification Indices that AMOS revealed would substantially improve model fit (i.e., Modification Index values greater than 3.84). Results of these respecified models continued to reveal poor model fit.

Further exploratory analyses revealed that when collapsing the PAQ across the three subscales to create a total PAQ score for mother and father (see Figure 4), there were no Heywood cases, but this respecified measurement model showed still a poor fit to the data. Lastly, drawing from the previously mentioned technique, exploratory analyses also revealed that when two manifest indicators were created for the selfobject orientation construct (see Figure 5), there remained no Heywood cases, but the model continued to show a poor fit to the data. However, there was an interesting finding as the correlation between the selfobject orientation latent construct and the problematic gendered-functioning latent construct increased from .60 to .70, when compared to the aforementioned model.

Summarizing, because step one of the described two-step modeling strategy did not lead to measurement model that was supported by the data, analysis concluded at this point and did not advance to the second modeling step.

Chapter V

Discussion

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The purpose of this investigation was to advance the understanding of the developmental processes believed to impact young men's sense of gendered-functioning. It was hypothesized that when maternal and paternal caregivers do not foster attachment related needs of autonomy and emotional support in developing boys, these children may develop unhealthy selfobject orientations and (as young men) experience difficulties with gendered-functioning (see Figure 2). However, results from the measurement model revealed poor fit indices and did not support these hypotheses, which in turn prohibited examination of the full structural model. In addition, high collinearity between mother and father PAQ subscales precluded this investigation from examining how unique aspects of attachment (i.e., AQA, PFA, PES from mother and AQA, PFA, and PES from father) impact the development of selfobject orientations and problematic gendered-functioning among this sample of men.

Although findings from this study did not support Blazina's theoretical argument that early attachments to parents would influence selfobject orientations and gendered-functioning among a sample of men, perhaps the quality of early attachments to parents did not influence these developmental processes among this sample of men. However, it is also possible that other study-related limitations prevented these processes from being detected.

Although there were no significant differences between ethnicity and SONI subscale scores in this study, the SONI was validated on a homogenous sample of male

and female Israeli undergraduates, whereas the sample in the present was ethnically diverse and consisted only of men. Thus, it remains unclear and untested whether the SONI factor structure reported by Banai et al. (2005) generalizes to samples such as the one in the present study or to more representative U.S. college student samples. Future research should thus conduct research with the SONI in order to determine its generalizability to a diverse sample of men. In addition, it should be noted that specific gender expectations develop from particular cultural contexts (e.g., see Kimmel, 2000) as men from culturally diverse backgrounds are socialized within a particular culture, with values, norms, and practices that they are compelled to abide by (Liu, 2005). Echoing Land Rochlen, and Vaughn's (2011) suggestions, future research should also examine how cultural differences influence attachment to parents, GRC, adult attachment, and specifically selfobject orientations among a diverse sample of men.

Second, this study used self-reports allowing for only the conscious appraisal and reports of participants to be assessed. Future studies would benefit from use of more experimental methods (see Schlegel et al. 2009, for review) that are believed to access subconscious awareness in participants' reports on key measures and thus would allow for deeper causal inferences to be made. In particular, Schlegel et al. (2009) explored the cognitive accessibility and role of the true self (authenticity) in impacting psychological health. Drawing from object relations and psychodynamic theories in their study, future studies would advance the literature by assessing the cognitive accessibility of the selfobject needs by testing its relation with recent measures of individual authenticity (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliouis & Joseph, 2008) and relational authenticity (Lopez & Rice, 2006) to the prediction of gendered-functioning in men.

Third, generalizability of the results was limited due to the convenience sample of college students used in this study. Future investigators should replicate this investigation with a more clinical sample of men with the hope of obtaining a more accurate picture of how gendered-functioning is experienced among men in therapy. In addition, research should be extended beyond college-age participants to determine if associations among measures are relevant to older men as well as exploring age as a moderator variable. Furthermore, the marital status of participants' parents was not assessed in this study. Past studies have found that parental conflict was a negative predictor of relationship satisfaction among their children (see Land et al., 2011 for further review). Thus, future studies would do well to utilize measures of parental conflict and/or divorce in determining how these forces influence GRC, adult attachment, and selfobject orientations among diverse samples of men.

Fourth, there were statistical limitations that likely impacted the ability of AMOS to detect adequate indices of fit among the various measurement models tested. That is, there was collinearity between PAQ subscales, a Heywood case with a positive standardized loading, and low standardized loadings on the latent constructs of interest. More specifically, the Avoidance of Mirroring indicator did not significantly load on the selfobject orientations construct contrary to what was found in the original study (Banai et al., 2005). Given this finding and the fact that the SONI is a relatively new instrument, the SONI may further benefit from research that more sensitively inspects its internal factor structure among a U.S. sample of men, as the original 2005 SONI study was an all Israeli male and female sample.

Despite the poor fit of the measurement and exploratory models, results from the AMOS outputs revealed a noteworthy range of moderate and significant correlations between the selfobject orientations and problematic gendered-functioning latent constructs (range of r_s from .60 [Respecified Measurement Model] to .70 [Exploratory Model 2]), which may prove to be valuable information for future investigators. In addition, bivariate correlations between SONI and GRC subscales showed significant, positive correlations. Taken together, these findings provide some modest empirical evidence to support this study's earlier claim that maladaptive selfobject orientations (i.e., unhealthy need for or avoidance of particular selfobject provisions) may be associated with problematic gendered-functioning. However, research needs to assess more sensitively how and why men develop unhealthy selfobject orientations. In addition, research should replicate this study to see if high SONI subscale scores are associated with high GRC subscale scores in other samples of men.

Based on the theoretical and empirical reviews above, it was expected that men who reported more positive attachments to parents would correspondingly report lower levels of both selfobject needs (indicative of more adaptive selfobject orientations) and lower GRC scores (indicative of more adaptive gendered-functioning). However, study findings revealed that the parental PES scores were weakly albeit significantly related in *positive* directions with scores on the Need for Idealization, Twinship, and SPC. This finding suggests that when men perceived their parents as sources of emotional support, they also reported with a Need for Twinship and Idealization, Success, Power and Competition. Previous GRC studies have indicated that older men report significantly lower scores on SPC than college age men (see O'Neil, 2008 for further review).

Although this study found no significant differences between age and SPC scores, mean SPC scores were generally higher for younger men. This finding raises a few questions that should be addressed in future research. First, at what point does a male's desire for selfobject needs, success, power, and competition become adaptive or maladaptive? Second, in light of these findings, what is unique about perceiving one's parents as sources of emotional support, when compared to other aspects of parental attachment examined in this study (i.e., AQR and PFA)?

Conclusion

In conclusion, it was hoped that the results of this study would clarify the impact parenting roles have towards the development of selfobject orientations and gendered-functioning among a sample of college men. However, due to a poor-fitting measurement model, the impact of parenting roles could not be examined in this study. Future researchers should also evaluate whether other measures of attachment (e.g., Experiences in Close Relationships [ECR], Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; or the IPPA, Armden & Greenberg, 1987) might produce different results when trying to assess the impact of parental and peer attachments on measures of gendered-functioning and selfobject orientations.

If researchers do not continue to examine the nature of parents' roles and the significance of parent-son relationships to the healthy development of the son's selfobject needs and gendered-functioning, practitioners who work with men will not be able to empirically identify how these particular processes are associated or how they develop. Furthermore, without continued research, practitioners who develop treatments for men with problematic gendered-functioning are without empirically based data to

help guide their decision making process towards clinical interventions, increasing treatment adherence, and enhancing the working relationship.

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PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Appendix A

Demographic Questionnaire

Demographic Questionnaire

Instructions: Please answer following questions about yourself by typing your answer or placing an X beside the appropriate response.

1. Your current age:
2. Your ethnic and racial background
 - A. African-American, Black
 - B. Chinese
 - C. Filipino
 - D. Indian
 - E. Japanese
 - F. Korean
 - G. Southeast Asian
 - H. White Caucasian – Non Hispanic
 - I. Hispanic or Latino
 - J. Mexican
 - K. American Indian, Alaskan Native
 - L. More than one race
 - M. Unknown or not reported

3. Please indicate your current educational level (check one)

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

4. Please indicate your parents' current marital status:

Divorced

Separated

Still Married

5. Please indicate with whom you had the better relationship with growing up:

mother

Father

Both

6. I wish I had a better relationship with my mother growing up:

1 2... 7

7. I wish I had a better relationship with my father growing up:

1 2... 7

PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Appendix B

List of Tables

Table 1*Intercorrelations of PAQ subscales, Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach Alphas*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	M	SD	α
1. AQA-mother	----	.79**	.69**	.57**	.61**	.49**	103.23	17.12	.92
2. AQA-Father		----	.58**	.67**	.55**	.64**	99.09	18.32	.92
3. PFA-mother			----	.81**	.36**	.29**	52.31	8.50	.81
4. PFA-Father				----	.30**	.30**	52.80	8.52	.80
5. PES-mother					----	.89**	42.63	8.54	.82
6. PES-Father						----	41.54	9.17	.84

Note: AQA = Affective Quality of Attachment; PFA = Parents as Facilitators of Independence, PES =

Parental Role in Providing Emotional Support

N = 368; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 2
Intercorrelations of Scores on Key Measures, Means, Standard Deviations, and Cronbach Alphas

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α
1. Need for Twinship	---	.05	.52**	.40**	.02	.36**	.12*	.08	.26**	.04	.23	.08	34.94	8.33	.82
2. Avoidance Idealization/Twinship		---	.25**	.51**	.26**	.10*	.45**	.40**	.15**	-.36**	.09	-.34**	31.31	11.62	.87
3. Need for Idealization			----	.35**	.08	.46**	.20**	.23**	.20**	-.04	.17**	.008	28.26	6.74	.68
4. Need for Mirroring				---	-.09	.28**	.30**	.28**	.30**	-.28**	.06	-.22**	21.28	6.34	.74
5. Avoidance of Mirroring					----	-.08	.04	.08	-.05	.02	-.02	-.005	22.30	5.40	.61
6. Success Power/Competition						---	.39**	.42**	.44**	-.08	.11*	-.02	51.90	11.98	.87
7. Restrictive Emotionality							---	.65**	.39**	-.29**	-.12*	-.25**	35.46	11.08	.87
8. Restrictive Behavior Between Men								---	.30**	-.29**	-.07	-.22**	28.29	9.69	.85
9. Conflict Between Work and Family									--	-.13*	-.07	-.15**	24.32	7.05	.79
10. Parental Fostering of Autonomy										--	.34**	.70**	42.08	8.60	.95
11. Parents as Sources of Emotional Support											--	.62**	52.56	8.09	.89
12. Affective Quality of Attachment												-----	101.16	16.78	.91

Note: $N = 368$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 3

Factor Loading for the Hypothesized Measurement Model

Measured Variable	Unstandardized Factor		Standardized
	Loadings	SE	Factor Loadings
Parental Attachment			
Parental Fostering of Autonomy	1.00	--	.63
Parental Emotional Support	.98	.09	.56***
Affective Quality of Attachment	3.66	.36	1.11***
Selfobject Orientations			
Need for Twinship	1.00	---	.44
Need for Idealization	.93	.15	.51***
Need for Mirroring	1.31	.19	.76***
Avoidance of Idealization/Twinship	2.00	.29	.63***
Avoidance of Mirroring	.10	.09	.07
Problematic Gendered-functioning			
Success Power and Competition	1.00	--	.55
Restrictive Emotionality	1.35	.14	.80***
Restrictive Behavior Between Men	1.12	.12	.77***
Conflict Between Work and Family	.53	.07	.50***

Note: *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Correlations Among Latent Variables for the Measurement Model

	1	2	3
1. Parental Attachment	-----	-.25***	-.21***
2. Selfobject Orientations		-----	.60***
3. Problematic Gendered Functioning			-----

Note: $N=368$, *** $p<.001$

Table 5

Goodness-of-Fit Indicators for the Respecified Measurement Model

Model	<i>df</i>	χ^2	χ^2/df	CFI	NFI	RMSEA [90% CI]
Respecified Measurement Model	51	454.962***	8.92	.73	.71	.15 [.14, .16]

Note: $N = 368$. χ^2/df = Normed Chi-square; CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker-

Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root-Mean Square Error of Approximation; 90% CI = 90%

Confidence Interval for the RMSEA.

*** $p < .001$,

PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

Appendix C

List of Figures

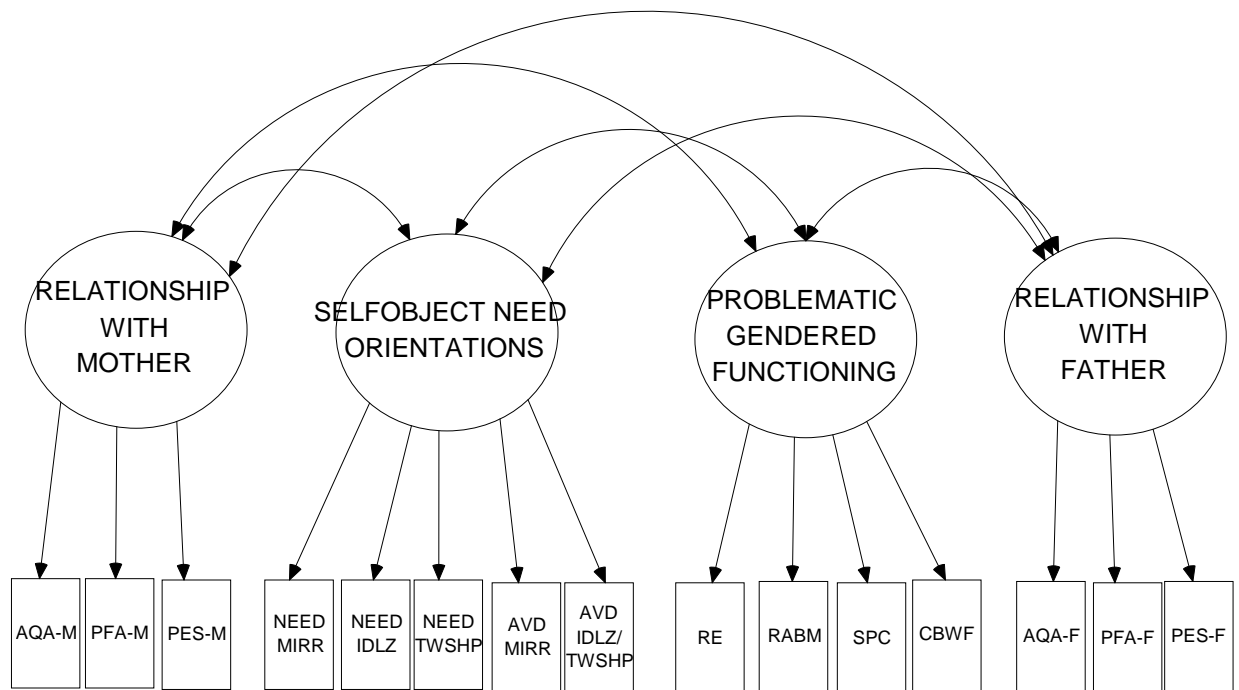


Figure 1. Hypothesized Measurement Model

Note: AQA = Affective quality of attachment; PFA = Parental Fostering of Autonomy; PES = Parental Role in Providing Emotional Support; NEED TWSHP = Need for Twinship; NEED MIRR = Need for Mirroring; NEED IDLZ = Need for Idealization; AVD MIRR = Avoidance of Mirroring; AVD IDLZ/MIRR = Avoidance of Idealization and Twinship; RE = Restrictive Emotionality; SPC = Success Power and Competition; RABM = Restrictive Affectionate Behavior Between Men; CBWF = Conflict Between Work and Family

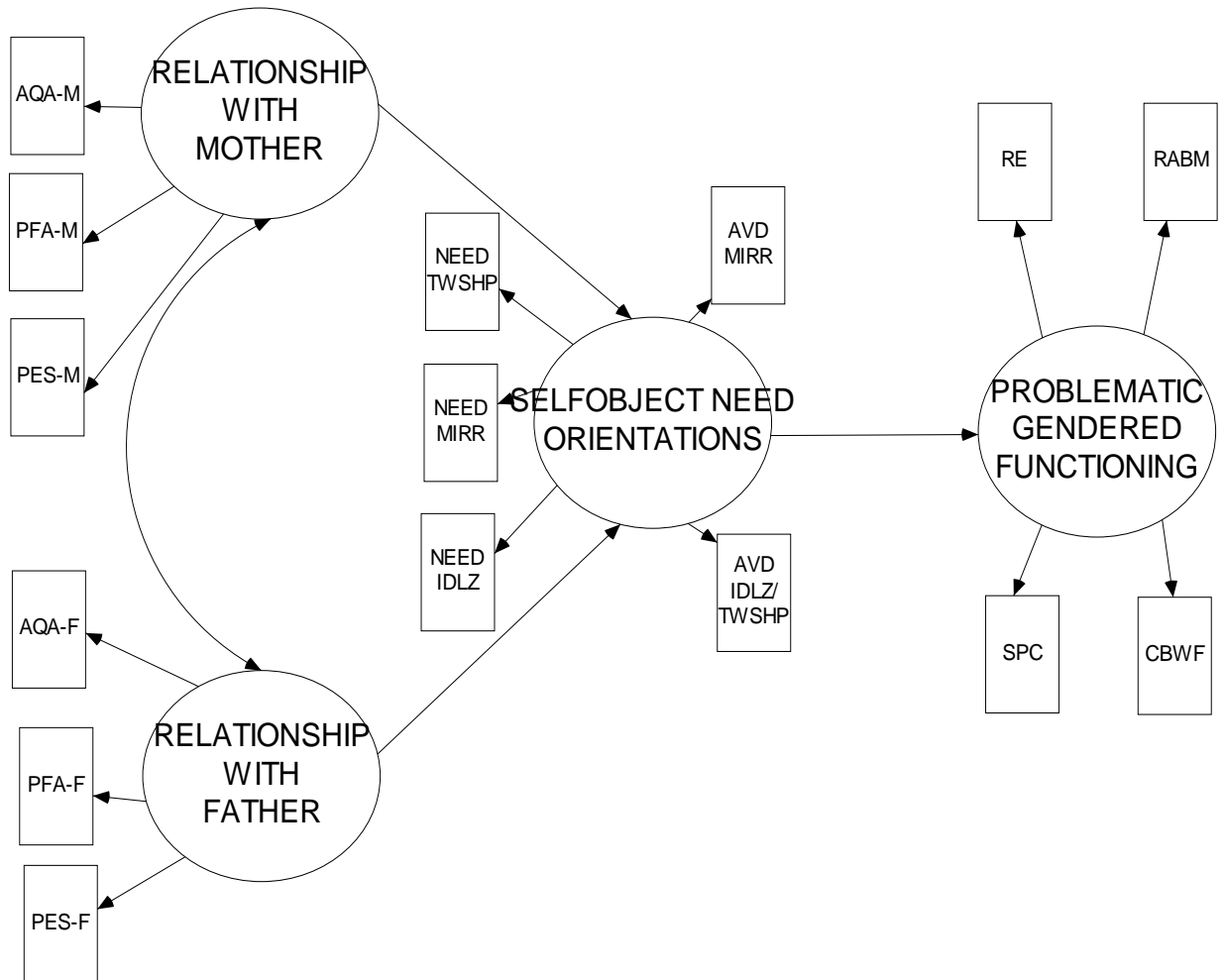


Figure 2. Hypothesized Structural Model (which was not tested due to a poor-fitting measurement model).

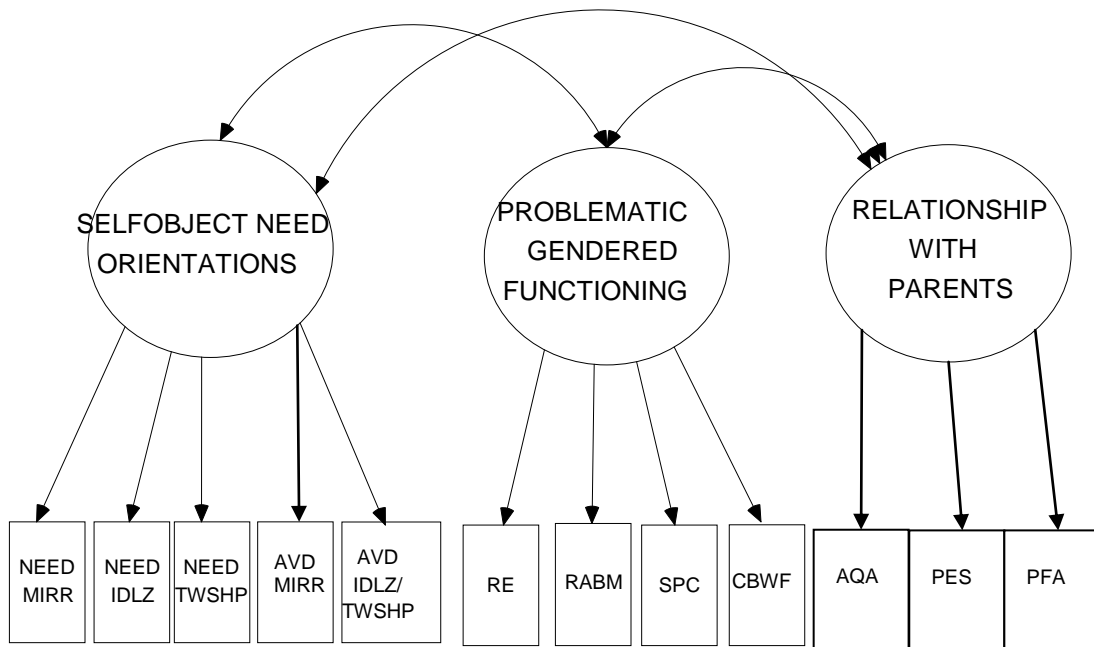


Figure 3. Respecified Measurement Model illustrating the new Relationship with Parents latent construct, which was created by merging the PAQ subscales across mother and father.

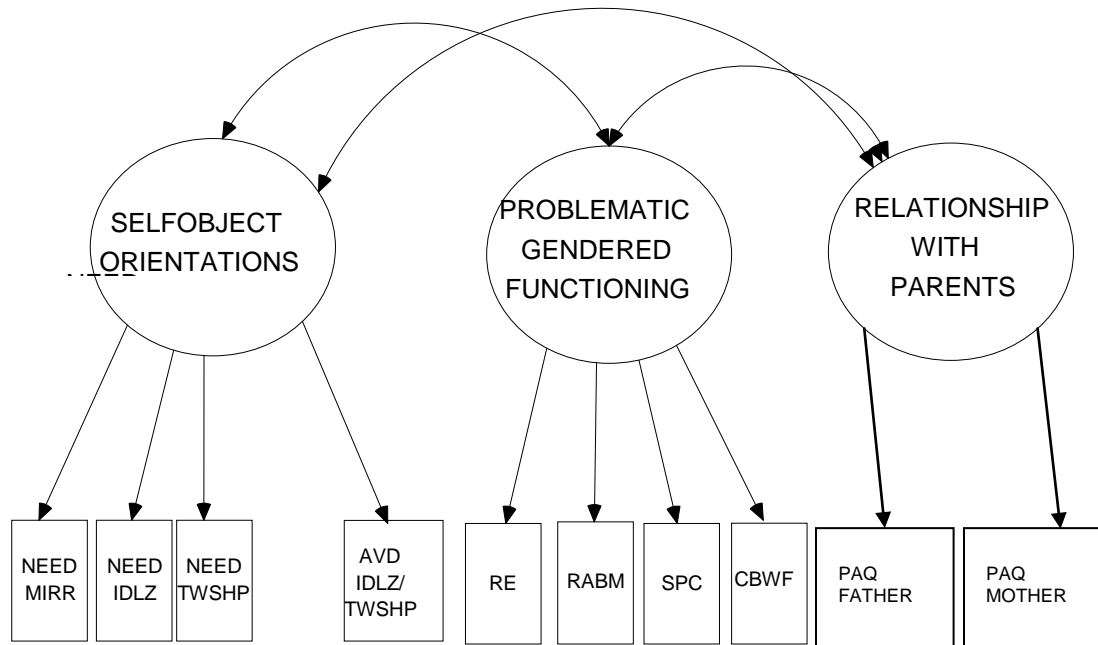


Figure 4. Exploratory Model 1 illustrating the new Relationship with Parents indicators, which was created by merging PAQ subscales to create a total PAQ score for each parent. Also the Avoidance of Mirroring subscale was removed (due to non-significant loadings) on the Selfobject Orientations latent construct

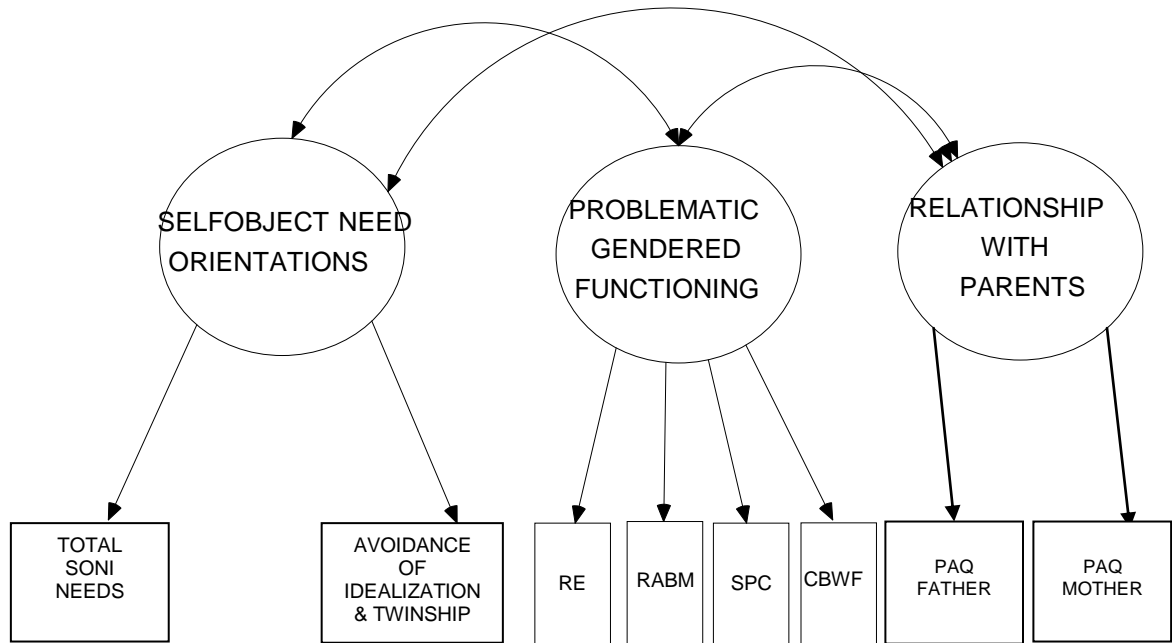


Figure 5. Exploratory Model 2 illustrating the creation of two new manifest indicators for the Selfobject Orientations latent construct.