

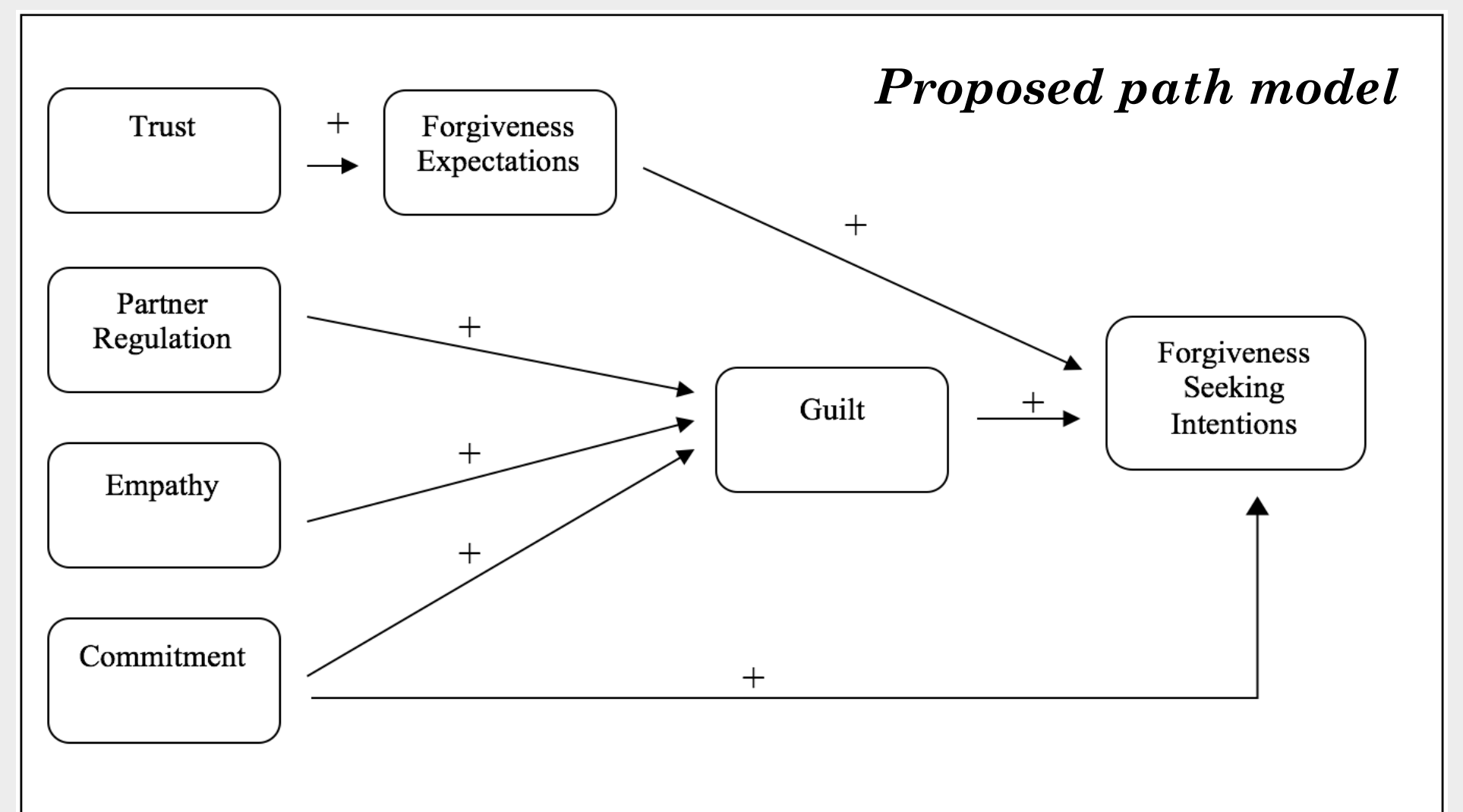
Forgiveness Seeking and Conflict Resolution in Romantic Relationships

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Project Thesis

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of trust and other factors on forgiveness seeking among romantic partners by utilizing a longitudinal format where relationship factors were assessed before a transgression occurred. Our proposed hypotheses are mapped out on the path model to the right.



Background

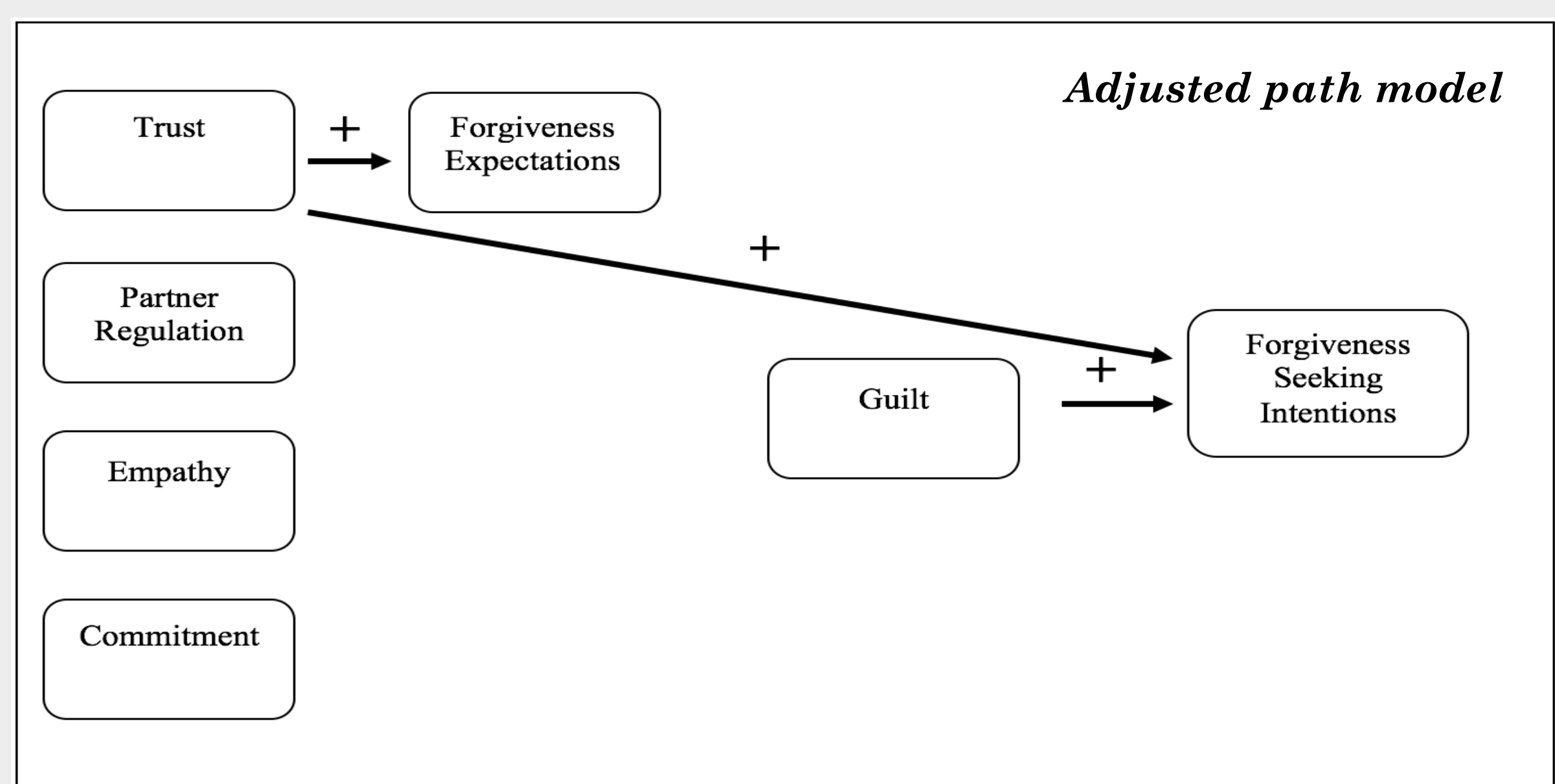
Past research has demonstrated that forgiveness granting increases relationship satisfaction with a romantic partner (Braithwaite, Selby, & Fincham, 2011) and that trust and guilt are positively correlated with forgiveness-seeking behaviors (Riek, Luna, & Schnabelrauch, 2014; Wieselquist, 2009).

Methods

We conducted a longitudinal study with two time points. At the first measurement, participants rated a current romantic relationship on factors such as commitment, partner trust, and empathy. One month later, participants were asked to describe a conflict with their romantic partner in the past month, as well as reporting levels of guilt, shame, forgiveness seeking behaviors, and other current relationship factors. A multiple regression was used to examine the degree to which these factors predicted forgiveness seeking.

Key Findings (or Conclusions)

We found that participants who reported higher levels of faith (one of three subscales of trust) before a transgression and guilt following the transgression were more likely to seek forgiveness from their partner. Trust (all three subscales) also predicted forgiveness expectations. In light of these discoveries, we propose an adjusted path model as shown on the right.



Sources and Acknowledgements

Braithwaite, S.R., Selby, E.D., & Fincham, F.D. (2011). Forgiveness and relationship satisfaction: Mediating mechanisms. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 25(4), 551–559.
Riek, B.M., Root Luna, L.M., & Schnabelrauch, C.A. (2014). Transgressors' guilt and shame: A longitudinal examination of forgiveness seeking. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 31(6), 751–772.
Wieselquist, J. (2009). Interpersonal forgiveness, trust, and the investment model of commitment. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 26(4), 531–548.

Many thanks to Professor Riek for his endless support with data entry and statistical analyses, Professor Tellinghuisen for his guidance throughout the entire research process, my parents for answering several panicked phone calls, and Stovetop Coffee for keeping me caffeinated.

