

## Abstract SOEP conference 2016

Happily ever after or future break-up? – The effect of personality congruence and constellations on relationship satisfaction and stability

Elisabeth Hahn<sup>1</sup>, Juliana Gottschling<sup>1</sup>, Felix Schönbrodt<sup>2</sup>, Beatrice Rammstedt<sup>3,4</sup> & Frank M. Spinath<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Saarland University, Saarbrücken

<sup>2</sup>Ludwig-Maximilians-University München, München

<sup>3</sup>GESIS – Leibniz-Institut for Social Science, Mannheim

<sup>4</sup>University of Mannheim, Mannheim

Forming and maintaining a long-duration relationship is considered as one of the major life-goals (Buss, 1995). So far, it still remains unclear whether congruencies or complementarities of partner's personality traits and attitudes are successful predictors of relationship longevity. Previous studies postulated a positive effect of partner similarity in certain Big Five personality traits. However, neither combinations of specific personality factors, nor the function of similarity patterns in relation to the individual manifestation of personality were investigated in more detail. In the present study, we examined the effect of personality congruencies and constellations on relationship satisfaction and stability using representative longitudinal data from the German Socio-economic Panel study (SOEP) of about 6.000 couples. By applying different methodological approaches (multidimensional cluster-analyses, response surface analyses), we identified several individual patterns of personality characteristics in females and males as well as pair-constellations. Moreover, we analyzed the relation between patterns of personalities and relationship satisfaction. To further examine causes of relationship stability, couples that split up in the time period under study (n=312), were analyzed in comparison to a matched group of couples that stayed together. Implications and interpretations of the identified patterns of congruencies and complementarities were discussed.

Buss, D.M. (1995). Evolutionary Psychology: A new paradigm for psychological science. *Psychological Inquiry*, 6 (1), 1-30.