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Antecedents of Jealousy in Communication

У статті аналізується низка чинників: стать, світогляд, соціальний стан, культура мовця, які взаємодіють та впливають на вербалізацію ревнощів.

The article focuses on six antecedent factors of jealousy in communication. These factors interact with one another, and influence all aspects of jealousy experience and expression.

Biblical writers, Renaissance playwrights, contemporary historians and social scientists have all portrayed jealousy as powerful emotion that has consequences for personal relationships and society at large. In the *Song of Solomon* (8:6), jealousy was pronounced to be "as cruel as the grave," and in *Proverbs* (27:4) jealousy was described as more overwhelming and debilitating than angry rage. In *Othello,* Shakespeare depicted jealousy as "green-eyed monster." These vivid comparisons to death, rage, monsters illustrate that jealousy has captured the imagination of poets and playwrights, and the scholarly attention of social scientists [1; 3; 4; 5].

A more scientific definition of jealousy was provided by White and Mullen [6, 72], who conceptualized romantic jealousy as *a complex of thoughts, emotions, and actions that follows loss of or threat to self-esteem and/or the existence of quality of the romantic relationship. The perceived loss or threat is generated the perception of a real or potential romantic attraction one's partner and a (perhaps imaginary) rival.*

This definition has important implications for the study of communication about jealousy. First, it implies that jealous is situated within interpersonal relationships, making it likely that communication. Second, jealousy is situated within interpersonal relationships, making it likely that communication (or lack of communication) between members of the "love triangle" can clarify, repair, or exacerbate jealous feelings. Third, although it is the perception of a rival relationship that leads to jealousy, such perceptions are rooted in real or imaginary social interaction. For example, individuals who notice that their partners are paying extra attention to someone else are likely to feel neglected and jealous. Thus, jealousy is an interpersonal phenomenon.

To illustrate how these factors of jealousy experience and expression may work together, we present a componential model. This model stresses components of the jealous person's emotional experience and expression. This focus emphasizes separate chains of jealous cognition, emotion, and communication, rather than examining patterns of mutual influence between all three members of the romantic triangle.

The model is framed by six antecedent factors. These factors probably interact with one another, can influence all aspects of jealousy experience and expression, including a person's initial perception of jealousy threat [5, 81].

Antecedent Factors:
1. Biology
2. Culture
3. Personality
4. Relational Factors
5. Situational Factors
6. Strategic Moves

It is likely that jealous emotion and cognition, along with the antecedent factors that frame jealousy experience, contribute to the goals that guide individuals' communicative responses to jealousy. For example, people who feel intense fear at the possibility of losing their partners are likely to strive to maintain their relationships. Such individuals should engage in specific communication strategies (e.g., being especially nice to the partner) designed to facilitate this goal. However, emotion can also have a direct effect on communicative responses to jealousy. This contention is based on theory showing that high levels of arousal or emotional intensity can circumvent cognitive processing and goal

formation, which leads to automatic or habitual behavioral responses [4]. For instance, jealous individuals who find their partners in a compromising position may be so angry that they begin yelling and cursing at their partners without thinking about the relational consequences. Similarly, someone who is overwhelmed with fear over losing their partner may desperately "cling" to the relationship without realizing that such action drives the partner further away. Thus, communicative responses to jealousy, in addition to jealousy experience factors, are likely to influence relational consequences.

Sociobiological Factors

Scholars have argued that although the conditions that lead to jealousy as an appraisal of threat vary interculturally, the experience of jealousy is a ubiquitous, cross-cultural phenomena [1; 2; 4]. Moreover, sociobiologists argue that biological issues of paternal uncertainty and mate retention make jealousy and possessiveness biologically based and culturally universal [3]. The central premise of this perspective is that humans are motivated to reproduce and to ensure the survival of offspring through instinctive processes via natural selection, sexual selection, and mate protection.

D.Buss [3, 294] provided some support for the contention that sociobiological forces shape the ways in which jealous men and women attempt to retain their mates. He found that males used the following tactics more than women: (a) *resource display,* which includes spending money on gifts or flowers for the partner; (b) *mate concealment,* which focuses on restricting the partner's access to rivals; (c) *submission and debasement,* which included promising to "change to please the partner" and giving into the partner's wishes; (d) *intrasexual threats,* which focus on sending threatening messages to potential rivals, such as giving the rival a hostile stare or threatening to hit the rival; and" (e) *violence,* which *involves actually* engaging in violent acts toward the rival's person or property. In contrast, Buss (1988) found that women use the tactics of *enhancing appearance* and *fidelity threats* (e.g., flirting with others to make the partner jealous) more than men.

Moreover, jealous instincts are likely to operate at an unconscious level. Finally, cultural and individual factors may prevent certain instinctual behaviors from being predominant.

Cultural and Historical Factors

Historical and cultural factors seem to have created the necessary conditions for jealousy and probably fostered it as well. In patriarchal societies, jealousy seems to have been an emotional state designed for the protection of male property. For women, jealousy was part of the emotional fabric that held the family together. Despite a man's affairs, the longing for security and emotional bonds that jealousy inspired reaffirmed a woman's desire to maintain and nurture her marriage and the family.

Anthropologists have found evidence of jealousy in all cultures, though it vanes in intensity and consequences as well as in the situations which elicit it. In highly masculine cultures, sexual freedom for women is virtually nonexistent and jealousy is more prevalent [1, 108]. Similarly, Whitehurst [7] argued that jealousy is most prevalent in cultures with rigid sex roles, and he found that male jealousy was most likely in cultures where marriage and property ownership were important for social status, and sex outside marriage was socially condemned. In such cultures, jealous behavior has been used as a tool to inhibit sexual promiscuity, particularly for women. This moral code also affected communication about jealousy. Women in such cultures were advised to "look the other way' when their spouses had affairs, yet men had a right to be morally outraged and to vent anger at their wives. Of course, cultures low in jealousy also exist. Hupka [5, 64] stated that cultures that place little emphasis on marriage, discourage individual property rights, view sexual experiences and intimate relationships as readily available, and do *not* foster a need to have genetic offspring, tend to exhibit lower levels of jealousy.

Personality Factors

Scholars have argued that insecurity and low self-esteem are key personality characteristics predicting jealousy because they make people more vulnerable to third-party threats [2; 7].

Individual differences in self-esteem and security levels lead to different ways of coping with jealousy. Jealous individuals who reported low self-esteem indicated using more indirect coping behaviors (e.g., giving their partners the silent treatment) as opposed to direct behaviors (e.g., confronting their partners). Those who lack confidence tended to use active distancing (e.g., ignoring the partner), surveillance behavior, and negative affect expression when coping with jealous threat. All three of these strategies, and particularly the first two, are indirect ways of communicating jealousy.

Research has also shown that jealousy experience and expression vary based upon one's love type or attachment style. Individuals with *preoccupied* attachment styles (sometimes referred to as "anxious ambivalence") experience high levels of jealousy, whereas individuals with *dismissive* styles experience low levels of jealousy. *Preoccupieds* have negative models of themselves and positive models of others. Thus, they tend to rely on their relational partners for rewards. *Dismissives* hold positive models of themselves, negative models of others, and are so independent that they may be unconcerned about relational

commitment and less prone to jealousy. Preoccupieds appear to dwell on jealousy, to focus on feelings of sadness, fear, inferiority, self-blame, and envy, and to engage in behaviors such as spying on the partner, expressing negative affect to the partner, and clinging to the relationship. In contrast dismissives are *less* likely to dwell on jealousy and to experience jealousy-related fear or sadness, but are *more* likely to direct blame and anger toward the rival, engage in avoidant coping strategies such as denying jealous feelings, and handle jealousy alone rather than seeking social support [4, 112].

Relational Factors

Emotional dependency is the relative extent to which people rely on their rela-tionships to provide them with rewards and happiness, as compared to their reliance on other aspects of their lives [3, 295]. Emotional dependency is strongest when individuals have put significant in-vestment (i.e., time and effort) into the relationship, have a low comparison level of alternatives (i.e., potential alternative relationships are unappealing), and are highly committed to the relationship.

A jealous individual who has poor alternatives and has made sizable, unrecoverable relational investments is likely to cling to the relation-ship and engage in maintenance behaviors (e.g., being especially attentive and affectionate) to try to "win back" the partner. In contrast, a jealous individual who has good alternatives might engage in fidelity testing, display relational anger, and/or terminate the relationship.

Situational Factors

The situation is a critical factor in events that may promote jealousy. Evi-dently, contextual or situational factors such as the attractiveness of the partner, the distance from home, the invitation to have sex, and the presence of drugs or alco-hol have an impact on one's decision to have such relations.

The situation is also likely to affect what forms of communication are socially ap-propriate. Most, though not all, displays of violence occur in private. Displays of neg-ative affect, such as crying or anger, may be inhibited by public situations. Also, dif-ferent behavioral strategies are available in different situations. For example, one common jealousy-response strategy is to make the offending partner jealous as well. This strategy, which is especially like to occur in social situations such as parties or at nightclubs where it is easy to find potential targets of flirtation, can precipitate jealousy.

Strategic Factors

Individuals are rarely aware of the sociobiological or cultural factors that precipitate certain behaviors. They may not even fully appreciate the dispositional, rela-tional, or situational factors that promote a particular communication behavior. However, people do behave strategically and are often conscious of their strategies. They recognize that certain actions, such as jealousy inductions through third-party involvements, or feigned jealousy, may affect their partner's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Jealousy is often created deliberately as a strategic at-tempt to glean relational information, improve a relationship, or get revenge on a partner. Communication can be a means to induce jealousy as well as to respond to it.

As we see numerous factors affect the experience and expression of romantic jealousy. Six suggested antecedent factors – biology, culture, personality, relationships, situations, and strategic (partner-initiated) maneuvers – provide a backdrop for the study of romantic jealousy. These six factors work together to influence the type and intensity of affective responses, the extent of jealous cognition, and ultimately, the ways that members of the

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