



# Under Pressure? The Relationship between Reciprocity, Intimacy, and Obligation in Self-Disclosure

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This work has been supported in part by the University of Dayton Office for Graduate Academic Affairs through the Graduate Student Summer Fellowship Program

## Introduction

- What is self-disclosure?
  - Personal information presented to another
- Why self-disclose?
  - Facilitate relationships, increase trust, identify similarities with others, health
- Factors influencing the effects of self-disclosure on liking
  - Content
  - Relationship closeness
  - Reciprocity?

## Empirical Discrepancies

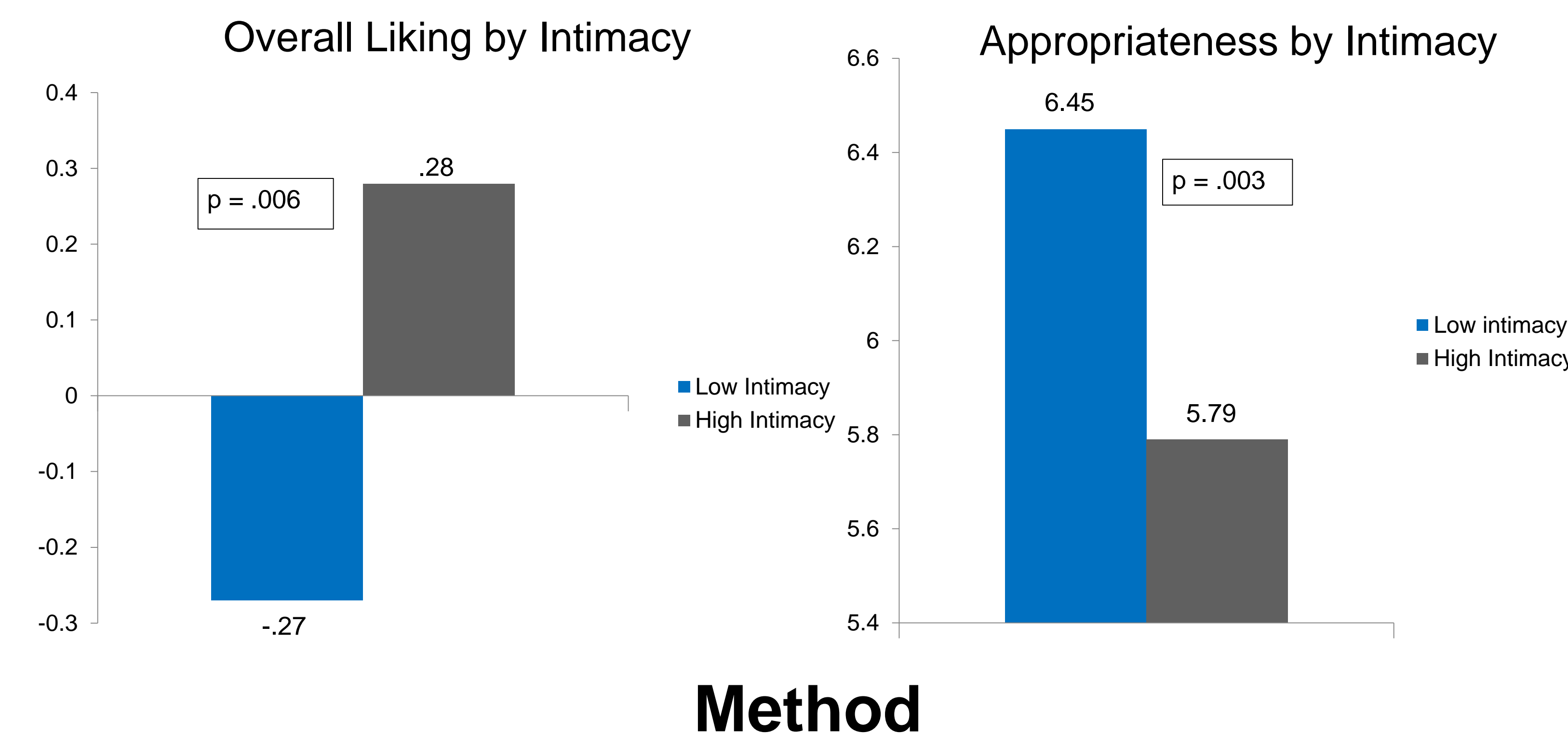
- Lab Studies: When expected to respond, they like those who disclose intimate information
- Field Studies: When not expected to respond, they like those who do not disclose intimately

## Theory

- Norm of Reciprocity
  - Equal exchange of benefits
    - Equal in topic/content of disclosure
    - Equal in amount of intimate detail

## Hypotheses

- **H1:** Liking varies by intimacy and expected role
- **H2:** Involved role condition: liking increases with high intimacy vs. low
- **H3:** Uninvolved role condition: liking increases with low intimacy vs. high



- **Participants**
  - 80 undergraduates
  - Avg. age: 19 years old
  - 81% female; 90% Non-Hispanic White
- **Procedure**
  - 2 (role: involved, uninvolved) x 2 (intimacy: high, low) between-subjects design
  - Manipulation directions
    - Involved: expect to respond
    - Uninvolved: will not respond
  - Participants receive a message from another participant (either high or low intimacy)
  - Post-interaction evaluation questionnaires
- **Measures**
  - Likability Scale (Reysen, 2005)
  - Social Attraction Scale (subscale of Measure of Interpersonal Attraction; McCroskey & McCain, 1974)
  - Manipulation and Vignette Questions
    - Question 1 assessed intimacy
    - Questions 6, 7, and 8 assessed appropriateness

## Results

- **H1:** The amount of overall reported liking did not significantly vary by the interaction of intimacy by expected role,  $F(1,76) = .10$ ,  $p = .74$
- **H2 and H3:** These simple effects were not qualified by the interaction.
- **Main effects for intimacy**
  - The amount of overall liking significantly varies by intimacy level, such that high intimacy vignettes are better liked compared to low intimacy vignettes,  $F(1,76) = 7.84$ ,  $p = .006$
  - The appropriateness significantly varies by intimacy level, such that low intimacy vignettes are more appropriate than high intimacy vignettes,  $F(1,76) = 9.19$ ,  $p = .003$

## Discussion

- Intimacy level influences reported liking, whereas role of reciprocity does not
- **Future Research**
  - Should more clearly define the roles of (un)expected reciprocity – better manipulate obligation
  - Further examine the association of appropriateness and liking