Current Mesoamerican Couples: Cultural Heritage; Families in Transition; Sustainable Relationships

Rolando Diaz Loving[1]
National Autonomous University of Mexico

Abstract

In order to describe the development and status of couples of any region, the historic, psychological and socio-cultural ecosystem in which they unfold must be specified. For this paper, the roots of Mesoamerican-Hispanic couples are described with emphasis on the norms and values that underlie the beliefs and behavioral patterns of contemporary males and females of this vast region. In a second section, the effects of modernization and female and child empowerment on traditional roles and couple relationships is covered. A third section is devoted to the analysis of the impact on family function and structure due to migration and acculturation of Mexicans and Central Americans who move north. As a corollary, an extensive description of research on the variables conducive to relationship maintenance with Mexican males and females is presented.

Key Words: Couple relationships, Culture, Family, Attachment, Conflict, Closeness, Interaction.

Parejas Mesoamericanas Contemporáneas: Herencia Cultural; Familias en Transición; Relaciones Sustentables

Resumen

Con el afán de describir el desarrollo y estatus actual de las relaciones de pareja en cualquier territorio, es necesario especificar en amplitud y con rigor el ecosistema histórico, psicológico y socio-cultural en que estas se escenifican. En éste artículo se describen en primera instancia las raíces de las parejas que surgen del crisolo indígena e hispano de la región mesoamericana, con énfasis en la descripción de las normas y valores que subyacen las creencias y patrones conductuales contemporáneos de hombres y mujeres de esta vasta región. Una segunda sección se enfoca en el análisis de de los efectos de los procesos de modernización como son el apoderamiento por parte de las mujeres y el desarrollo personal de los niños, sobre los roles tradicionales y las formas de interacción de las parejas. Como derivación de esta sección, se presentan los cambios sufridos en la estructura y funciones de la familia debido a los procesos de aculturación vividos por familias e individuos al migrar hacia el norte. Como corolario, se hace una extensa descripción de los datos que se han generado en la Unidad de Investigaciones Psicosociales en torno a las variables que conducen al mantenimiento de relaciones sustentables en hombres y mujeres mexicanos.

Palabras clave: Relaciones de pareja. Cultura, Familia, Apego, Conflicto, Cercanía, Interacción.

---

[1] Dirigir correspondencia al autor al correo electrónico rdiazl@servidor.unam.mx

Effects of culture on behavior

Aronson (1988) clearly states the undeniable and deeply rooted social character of the human race. Following his argument, basic to the survival of the species are security, reproduction and nutritional needs, which can only be achieved thru the protection and guidance, provided by social groups. It is no wonder, that the most important biological characteristic of human evolution is our socially based capacity to create and communicate culture. Once created, for norms and values to serve their leading role in the determination of the human way of life, it is necessary to insure the transmission and understanding of thoughts, customs and feelings. The process necessarily implies the use of heuristics to sift thru the information and the use of generalization, integration, discrimination, deletion, accommodation, assimilation, and completion strategies (Triandis, 1994). These allow human beings to subsist thru the creation of expectancies, beliefs, norms, roles, status, traits, values and attitudes about self and others, which provide meaning, stability and predictability to their worlds (Diaz-Loving & Draguns, 1999). In this process, culture sets the norms, traditions and expectancies for perceiving, interpreting and acting out social behavior (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992). In other words, culture is present in the establishment of how people perceive, how they construct themselves (self-concept and personality), how they perceive others, and subsequently in the way they are perceived by others (stereotypes and prototypes).

Culture is thus derived from the experience of peoples who inhabit a common geographic and cultural ecosystem. In the case of Mesoamericans, their character and identity stems to the combined heritage which is derived from the cultural groups which inhabited Mesoamerica – literally, "middle America" in Greek –first used by the German ethnologist Paul Kirchhoff (1943), who noted that similarities existed among the various pre-Columbian cultures within the region that included southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, western Honduras, and the Pacific lowlands of Nicaragua and northwestern Costa Rica. In the tradition of cultural-history, the prevalent archaeological theory of the early to middle 20th century, Kirchhoff defined this zone as a culture area based on a suite of interrelated cultural similarities brought about by millennia of inter- and intra-regional interaction (i.e., diffusion). Mesoamerica has also been shown to be a linguistic area defined by a number of grammatical traits that have spread through the area by diffusion. The second source of influence came when the Spanish arrived in the region in 1492, over three centuries the Spanish Empire expanded from early small settlements in the Caribbean to include Central America, most of South America, Mexico, what today is Southwestern United States, the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of North America, reaching Alaska. The cultural and counter-cultural movements of the Mesoamerican and Hispanic integration developed the norms, values, habits and behavioral systems of the current "Mestizos" which is a Spanish term that was formerly used in the Spanish Empire and continues to be used today in Latin America, Guam, and the Philippines to refer to people of mixed European (most often Spanish) and local indigenous ancestry of each of the former colonies. The importance of this mixed heritage is the formation of specific belief

systems, social norms and values that guide appropriate behavior for this particular ecosystem and culture.

The study of the norms which regulate the behavior within the Mesoamerican Hispanic region, have been described by Diaz-Guerrero (1982, 1986), who specifies that the socio-culture in which individuals grow and develop delineates the norms and rules of accepted and desirable social behavior and interaction. In other words, interpersonal behavior is directed and determined by the extent to which each subject addresses and believes the cultural dictates. In order to understand today's families and their culture, a historic ecosystem contextualization is necessary.

Heritage of Current Mesoamerican Couples: the roots of commitment

With the arrival of the Spaniards to Mesoamerica, the indigenous family structure was uprooted and profoundly modified. Monogamy and extended families became prevalent and special emphasis was placed on loyalty and cohesion. The centuries that followed the Spanish conquest saw marriage fall into the arms of the Catholic Church, which principal objective was "decency". Under these conditions, family honor was a must and sex was basically territory of marriage, with virginity until marriage becoming a must. The Church also sanctioned marriage and indicated the appropriate behaviors and roles to be played by the family members. In a patriarchal arrangement, the father was to be the provider and head of the family; the mother was expected to give tenderness, caring, education and protection to the children; the sons and daughters were supposed to return love and show respect and obedience to their parents. Marriage was arranged by the social groups and families, and separation was not acceptable. As a matter of fact, it was almost impossible, given the moral codes, the prohibition voiced by the Catholic Church, and the functional reliance of the family on the fathers. As a result, marriage was conceived throughout the 19th and a good part of the 20th century as a stable union destined for procreation. In this format, the place of the female was the home and her role was motherhood, giving her ample veneration, admiration and respect. On the other hand, males were to love and respect their spouses. The combination of roles and expectations for males and females within the family creates women who are supposed to be adaptable, obedient and in need of protection and security. However, at the same time several historians and sociologists indicate that she is the one that really holds the power in the house, in fact, they have described the family as a place of an absent father, a mother that governs, many children, and little sex (Díaz-Guerrero, 1994).

The transition of the families in the region has witnessed many changes, which become faster and profound when education, migration and acculturation processes are factored in. As Central American and Mexican people obtain higher education or they migrate to more individualistic settings, more and more people are marrying based on their own free will and they are doing so into uncharted relationships. Furthermore, they are selecting their spouses and they are increasingly doing so even without the consent from their parents. In addition,

couples initiate their relationship based on love, a sign of individual commitment, while in legal terms, in Mexico, people can divorce as many times as they wish, provided they wait for a year before getting married again. Some effects of the changes can be seen in data from the Mexican Institute of Geography and Information for the year 2000, showing one out of every two urban marriages will end up in divorce, with a much smaller percentage for rural areas, going as low as 1 to 3 % in some traditional states. In addition, females file over 60% of divorces and families provided for by fathers were down to 53.3% of families; both parents shared being the main provider in 16.9% of the cases and females appeared as the main provider in 8% of the families; while males who dedicate themselves exclusively to house chores have increased to .7%. However, it has also dragged with it many monolithical structures from the past. Social sanctions against divorce are as strong as ever and as recently as 1990, in Mexico, 82% of marriages were performed in churches; 93.3% of Mexicans live within an extended or nuclear family; the groom's parents ask for the bride's hand, and females invariably take on the husband's family name.

Something to keep in mind in the description of these families is that their geographic distribution is only paralleled by the social diversity of this ethnic group. In this regard, we should stress that there is a variety of families in this vast ecosystem. In fact, Leñero (1982) was able to identify 20 categories and 53 family types, depending on the social context (degree of urban or rural development and social class), the structure (nuclear or extended; exogenous or endogamous), the power dynamics (patriarchal, matriarchal or single parent), and the stage of the relationship (courtship, newlyweds), which have a definite effect on the family interaction and composition. Although nuclear families are becoming more common, extended families continue to exist, especially in lower socioeconomic levels and in rural areas. However, even in these cases of housing independence, there are strong economic ties to the families of origin which transcends to the grandchildren. In fact, these clans of affiliative and functional support re-emerge and are transformed with economic difficulties and migration.

The study of the family values and norms which regulate the thoughts, feelings and behaviors within the Mexican culture have been deeply researched and described by Diaz-Guerrero (1982; 1994). If we were to depict the Mexican family, its past and its future, a good way to synthesize would be to focus on the family roles, values and functions. Generalizing, the father has been the perennial official head of the family who is supposed to command respect and scold the children. Without hesitation, we can affirm that the mother is still the most sacred and important element of the family. The mother, whose unquestioned place is the home, is the affectionate intermediary between the father and the children. At the same time, nowadays women are more than compromising good mothers; women are developing personally outside of the home sphere and do not only live to take care of a husband and children. More and more, Mesoamerican Hispanic women choose to go to school, select a carrier, work outside the home, and decide when to get married and when to have children. This process of differentiation of traditional roles among women is accelerated when they migrate to individualistic oriented cultures and as they have more years of school.

Derived from this dialectic historic socio cultural process, Diaz-Guerrero (1994) derives three basic propositions that emerge and engulf the description of the traditional Mexican family: the power, supremacy and protection responsibility of the father; the love and absolute and necessary sacrifice of the mother; and the indisputable obedience of children towards their parents, for which they get love and protection in return. These norms show the central position that fathers, mothers and children have within this culture, indicating that the most important and defining social group for Mexicans is the family. Psychometric analyses of the responses to statements in the study yield a central traditionalism factor called Affiliative Obedience vs. Active Self-Affirmation, stressing that, "children and people in general should always obey their parents", and that "everyone should love their mother and respect their father." This ultimately means children should never disobey parents and should show respect in exchange for security and love from them.

The traditionalism factor is complemented by the gender dimension "machismo vs. virginity-abnegation," which refers to the degree of agreement with statements such as "men are more intelligent than women," "docile women are better," "the father should always be the head of the home" and "women should remain virgins until marriage." Interestingly, abnegation reflects that both men and women believe that it is important to first satisfy the needs of others and then of self; that is to say that self modification is preferred over self affirmation as a coping style in relationships. Finally, the importance of family status quo and cultural rigidity in relation to the roles played by men and women in the family appears in statements like "women always have to be faithful to their husbands," "most girls would prefer to be like their mothers," "women should always be protected," "married women should be faithful to the relationship," "young women should not be out alone at night" and "when parents are strict, children grow up correctly."

In summary, cultural norms, values and beliefs are essential to understanding the families of different ethnic groups and their dynamics. Specifically, the traditional premises established for Hispanics have a determinant effect on the relationships between Mexican males and females, and adults and children, and should thus be considered for interpretation, intervention and evaluation in any field. According to Diaz-Guerrero (1986; 1994), the primary rule is that the family's well being and maintenance has precedence over any individual need (*familismo*). This paramount notion is built on the emphasis on traditional roles which indicate males are superior and are responsible for protecting and providing for the family (benevolent *machismo*), while females should remain virgins until marriage, be abnegate mothers and faithful wives (*marianismo*). Additionally, children should always obey their parents from whom they receive love and protection in return (affiliation obedience). In general, this particular form of collectivism protects the family unit and promotes health and security in its members; however the same premises could stunt children's and female's personal growth and also may disguise violence (Diaz-Loving, 2004).

Culture in transition: The effects of education and women's and children's empowerment on relationships

There is a long standing debt of traditional cultures with the power and personal growth of women and children. Equity, the possibility of personal development and the eradication of violence from the home are definite and imperative social goals (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2011). The road to suppressing poverty, dependency, violence and neglect stresses education and work opportunities for women and their children. The expectation is that with female emancipation, there will also be an emergence of better life conditions. However, it is also producing a shift in traditional premises on which the family is built leading to family dissolution and economic peril, as well as confusion and frustration in those who had already committed to the values and norms of their heritage.

In the recent epidemiological National Mexican Survey of Violence against Women (Olaiz, Rojas, Valdez, Franco & Palma, 2006), 26, 042 women between the ages of 15 and 92 years were interviewed related to violence in relationships. Physical violence during childhood was reported at 42.2 %. Only 7.8% of the respondents reported general violence in their marriage, but 21.5% reported having suffered some form of violence in the last year. The most frequent violence (19.6%) was psychological. Of those with pregnancy in their history, 14.1% indicated receiving some form of violence. Sexual violence was suffered by 17.3% of the respondents, and half of these suffered it before the age of 15. Violence is more prevalent among women with lower education, those who do not live in their own home and those who live in crowded environments.

There is an additional consideration derived from the National Survey. When women have more education, violence is attenuated, but this effect seems to be currently correlated with increases in family breakup and abortion. In other words, the positive lessening of violence in the household is tied to weaker traditional family relationships. Among other effects, there is a diminished acceptance of males' responsibilities toward providing, and females' seem less inclined toward offering support and affection to the family; while with less affiliation obedience instilled in the children, they grow to neglect their duties as caretakers of the elderly. In summary, recent statistics show that with increasing education and work indices for females, also come increases in abortions, divorce and child neglect (National Mexican Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information, Spanish acronym is *INEGI*)

Summing up, there is a definite transition from some of the traditional norms and values of the Mexican culture, including the negative aspects of machismo, towards a position that enhances the empowerment of females and children. This in turn is related to higher education for females, more work opportunities and the reduction of violence in the home, especially when the male is equally educated (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2006). This may be in part because self-sufficient females are choosing less violent partners or are starting to leave violent partners. At the same time, the transition reduces females' interest in self-modifying and sacrificing for the family, as their individual desires become more important than

family needs. Unfortunately, this has been coupled with a minimal movement of males toward more home-oriented activities or attitudes which could compensate for females emancipation.

Among the impacts of cultural changes, a void is being created where neither Mexican females nor males are taking full responsibility for children and family. In essence, the changes toward androgynous (presence of both positive masculine traits like responsible and provider, and positive feminine traits like tender and caring in each individual), and gender-equitable positions is growing much faster in females than males (Diaz-Loving, Rocha-Sanchez & Rivera-Aragon, 2007). As males hold on to their traditional gender roles and do not move toward androgyny, an empty space surfaces that is tied into increases in loneliness, depression and anxiety at the individual level and drug use and generalized violence at the social level. Ultimately, more research is needed to fully understand the complexities of these phenomena.

Effects of migration and acculturation of family relationships

Latinos are the fastest growing socio-demographic group in the U.S. While the U.S. population grew by 13% between 1990 and 2000, the Latino population increased by 58% during the same period (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). As the growth trends of Hispanics in the U.S. continues over the next 40 years, they will constitute one fourth the overall U.S. population (Negy, Snyder & Diaz-Loving, 2004). In addition to the population changes and the migration and acculturation forces involved, even before Latinos come to the US, a constant movement away from traditional family premises (Diaz-Guerrero, 2003) and into transitional more individualistic premises is present (Garcia-Mendez, Rivera-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2007). The movement goes from a socio-centric perspective and philosophy of life to an ego-centric position. Among the main shifts are increases in personal growth, individualism and egalitarian relationships which are especially beneficial to females and children. These trends have two immediate implications: 1) With the transition more individuals have the opportunity to select their own paths and concentrate on their economic and personal growth; while lees attention is placed on maintaining the more traditional capacities to carry on the positive relationships prevalent when the self-modifying, amiable, and serene forms of relating to others are present (Diaz-Loving & Draguns, 1999). 2) As females transition towards modernism and productivity and creativity, no one seems to be held responsible for the tenderness, caring and support previously offered by females (Diaz-Loving et al., 2007).

The historical movement away from traditional premises, norms, values and beliefs in Latin-American countries is accelerated after individuals migrate to the United States where they face diverse acculturation processes (Cuellar, Arnold & Maldonado, 1995) which carry additional negative effects of acculturation stress on the Hispanic families (Padilla & Borrego, 2006). There are several phenomena occurring among Mesoamerican-Hispanics living in the U.S. which need to be further researched. For example, there appear to be increases in abortion rates,

family breakups, teenage pregnancy, unwanted births, and family conflict as these groups acculturate into the U.S. One of the problems appears to be that the path from traditional collective norms to more individualistic ideals can create confusion and distress (Padilla & Borrego, 2006). Basically, it seems that transit from traditional socio-centric values which stress social responsibility and the well being of others, towards unchecked emphasis on the self and the solution of personal needs, paired with little knowledge of individual rights and rules, make people think of getting ahead regardless of the means or the damage their behavior inflicts on others.

Additionally, traditional cultural premises are tied to language. As children learn English faster than their parents, they question traditional values producing an additional stress on family relationships. Further extensive research is still needed to determine the rate to which these changes contribute to increased drug use, low tolerance to frustration, diminished resiliency, violence and the break up of the family unit. This research should include gender issues, cultural premises, acculturation, couple relationships and how to incorporate findings into public policy, intervention programs as well as the evaluations of such programs. As the Hispanic population continues to grow in the U.S. there is an even more pressing need to determine how to best assist them in the transition to a new culture. Research on multiculturalism suggests that an ideal move would accommodate the values of a collectivistic culture that stresses the emotional and relational well being of people while also encouraging personal and economic growth, achievement, and productivity present in U.S. values and norms. Ultimately, this requires including the process of transformation in values, norms, habits and believes to understand their effects on acculturation stress and changes in gender roles. Knowledge of the perils of migration and acculturation would enhance educational programs and interventions directed at increasing Latinos capacity to constructively cope with more individualistic and egalitarian relationships perspective which helps them in the economic arena; while at the same time maintaining a collectivistic social responsibility orientation which favors family well-being.

Models of sustainable relationships; lessons from research with Mexican couples: Meshing universal theory with indigenous empiricism

As was stressed in the opening remarks of this paper, human behavior is a collage that emerges form the constant interaction of universal human needs, the parameters set by specific ecosystems and by the norms and values derived from the idiosyncratic historical and cultural heritage of every social group. One way of considering cultural phenomena is to take theoretical constructs from main stream social and behavioral sciences and integrate them into a broad multi-method qualitative-quantitative approach that will allow for the cultural manifestations to emerge. Once this is achieved, any nuances that spring out of the process can be added to the theoretical and research models. In the following section, research conducted with Mexican samples using an inclusive approach that incorporates

universal theoretical constructs with idiosyncratic ethno-psychological variables, as well as a multi-method approach that allowed studies to go from concepts, to indigenous operationalizations, to research, and to culturally sensitive interpretations is presented.

The field of positive psychology has introduced fundamental changes in the way that human well-being is understood. First, a new definition of health surfaced which promotes the presence of a positive state over the simple absence of discomfort (Stone, 1979). Following this definition, the new vision has focused on the encouragement of educational processes and preventions directed at persuading people to alter there practices to increase the possibility of a healthy and satisfactory lives (Reynoso-Erazo & Seligson-Nisenbaum, 2002). From an evolutionary position, the importance of company to the survival of the species is well documented, from the socio-cultural perspective of Hispanics; families guide these substantive functions for coping with life. At the same time, as part of the Latino family, a couple can be a fountain of protection to the children, satisfaction, well-being and development, as well as a protective agent against poverty, insecurity and neglect. Yet, to building constructive families requires identifying the individual characteristics, and those from the ecosystem, that predict the development of abilities that allow constructive individuals, relationships and societies to foster.

Given the diversity, the importance and the influence of intimate relationships on survival, evolution, and well-being for human beings, a theoretical and empirical approximation that permits the scrutiny of their significance, dynamics and functionality from a perspective that incorporates multiple aspects as well as facets of the family, and that unites them in all of their complexity is needed. In fact, there are an endless number of proposals, empirical findings and theoretical concepts that unfortunately have displayed inconsistency, partiality and certain contradictions. This is especially true when the research does not consider some of the cultural values and norms of the sample from which the data were extracted. In response to the challenge, a systematic, rigorous, structural and functional historic-bio-psycho-socio-cultural model, that allows the definition, categorization, diagnosis, and therefore indicates the relationship and temporality of a series of variables related to human relationships has been advanced by Diaz-Loving and Sanchez-Aragon (2002; see Figures 1 and 2).

According to the model, the necessities of affection, attachment, care, interdependence, companionship and love are basic genetic conditions that are determinant for the survival of the species (Harlow & Harlow, 1962). Such that through evolution the genetic composition of humans have been molded by specific ecosystems to insure appropriate mating, reproductive and security behavioral patterns (Fisher, 2004). Likewise, the establishment and management of early emotional and social interactions guides learning about the normative and expected behavioral and emotional patterns necessary for the coexistence and development of human beings (Bowlby, 1969).

Figure 1. Schematic depiction of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural couple´s relationship model
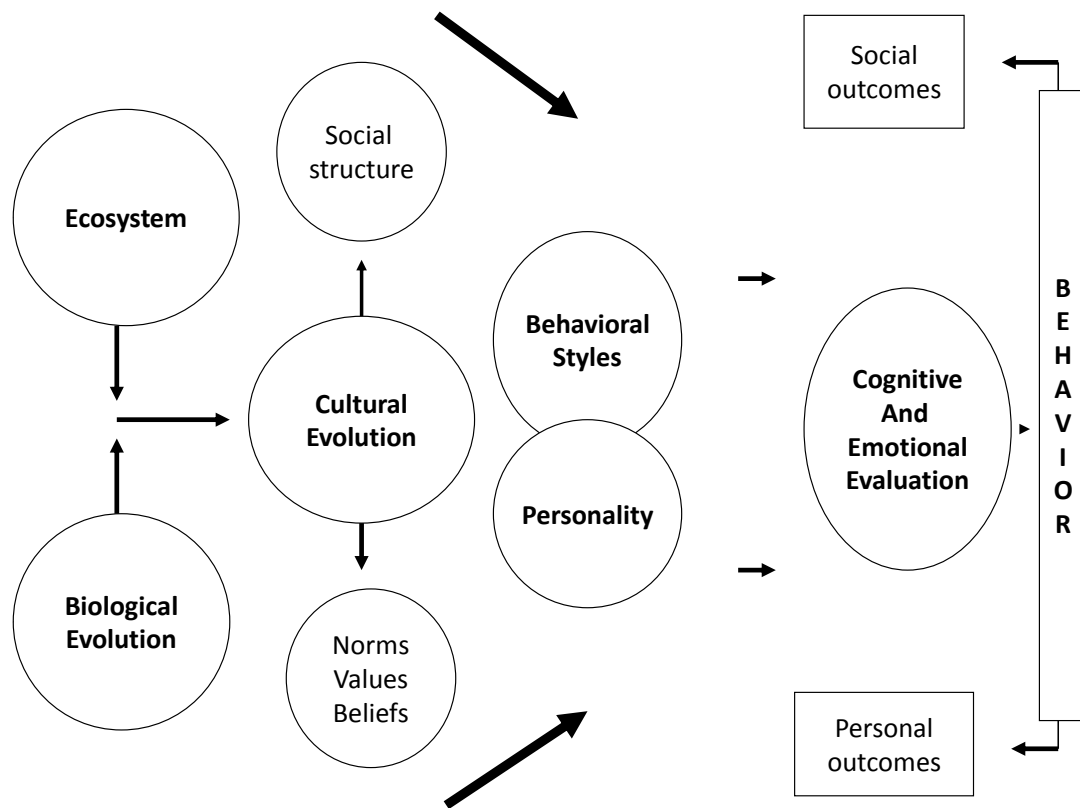

Figure 1. Bio-psycho-socio-cultural model of behavior in couples. The model is pertinent to the dialectic relationship between evolution and environment as the precursors of the cultural evolution in which individual characteristics including personality, behavioral styles, cognitive and emotional perception processes are construed from norms, values, believes and social structure. In summary the model predicts and explains the presences of particular behavioral patterns.

One basic principal of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980) is that infants require the support of a caregiver and that these early relationships mark interactions throughout their life. If a care giver offers support that is contingent upon the infants needs, they develop a feeling of security that indicates that the love object is permanent and trustworthy. Conversely, when an infant requires assistance which is nonexistent or arrives too late, they acquire a feeling of lack of control, insecurity and anxiety in the presence, as well as in the absence of the object of love. Finally, when an infant is hurt early on, he or she will build a protective armor that inhibits future social interaction. In general, it can be said that the presence/absence and quality of infant-parent interaction is crucial in delimiting a life of growth and well being or one of stress, anxiety and low-self esteem.

Early interaction also affects the exploration and social support behavioral systems (Mikulincer, 2006). Those who have safe constructive interactions during

infancy grow into a secure attachment style that allows them to explore their environment and learn new abilities; while at the same time they develop an inclination to give support and help to those who require it.

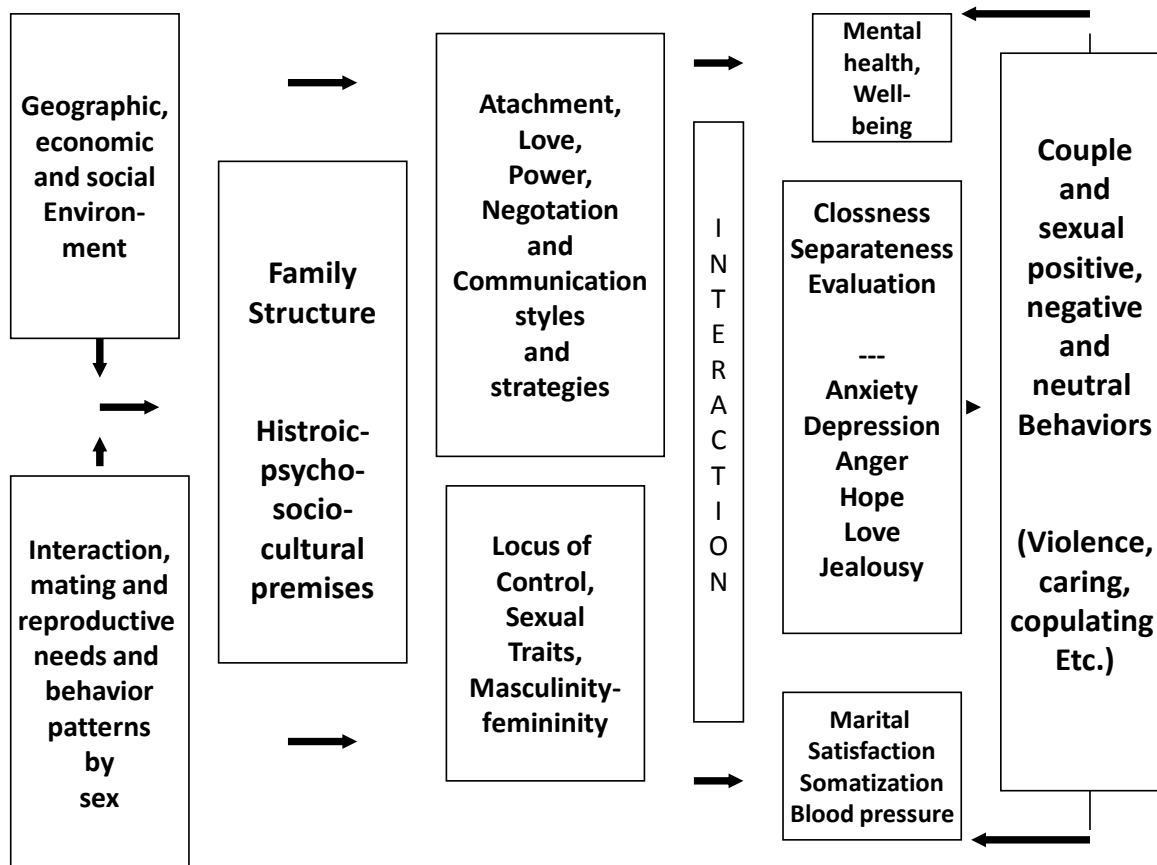Figure 2. Psychological expression of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural couple´s relationship theory

Figure 2. Proposed model of the biological, environmental, historical, cultural and structural variables that provide the context for human development and the creation of the structural and functional aspects that give rise to the psychological characteristics that individuals carry to the relationships. The model implies a dialectical process in which the above mentioned variables impact on the behavior patterns in couples which in turn impact the quality of the relationship which at the same time has an effect on previous components of the model

On the other hand, those with anxious and insecure attachment styles live fearful in the absence of the object of love, and as a coping strategy follow it obsessively when it is gone, and monopolizes it with the same eagerness when it is present. Insecure attachment inhibits any movement towards autonomy and does not allow the space or time to explore or grow. In addition, the anxiety felt by the anxious individual interferes with the perception of needs of others and detracts

from being able to help or give support to others when they need it. As far as the avoiders go, they seem content to dwell in their own selves and live in solitude, and are not willing to waste energy strengthening emotional bonds. Not paying attention to others allows the avoiding style time and energy to turn to the physical world for excellence and the development of their individual potential. They are additionally uninterested and unequipped to form close relationships and are aloof to the requests for support from others. When relating early experiences, it is clear that the different styles directly influence intimacy, support and solidarity behaviors, problem solving, listening and making constructive decisions. For example, secure attachment is a precursor to behaviors linked with harmony and well, which appears to be directly related to the development of abilities necessary to promote behaviors congruent with the construction of healthier interpersonal relationships (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

The pattern of findings with Mexicans (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002) clearly reveals the affect that style of attachment has on the development of abilities to become close to and support others. Fearful avoiders and rejecters simply do not want, or cannot, foster intimacy and are not willing to provide support to others. This calls attention to the contrasting pattern displayed by anxious ambivalent men and women. While Mexican women display their ambivalence to their partner by offering minimal support and having tense intimacy which extends and wanes, Mexican men are completely devoted to appearing affectionate and ready to offer support in every moment. For the women, it appears that maintaining a state of uncertainty with her partner by her pattern of erratic affection and assistance will assure her constant attention by her partner. For the men, it appears that their preoccupation with abandonment drives them to go to indescribable lengths for their partner. As final confirmation, it is obvious that, independent of the distance between those who are fearful and those who are rejecters, neither are willing nor interested in forming close relationships or offering their services for the well being of others.

As previously mentioned, a fast pace of change from traditional norms to transitional premises is present as higher education and migration into individualistic cultures is undertaken which occurs at a faster pace among females and children who's families originated in Central America and Mexico and who are now living in the U.S.. Among other dilemmas, this acculturation process poses a question as to the effects that this has on the consolidation of different attachment styles within a couple relationship among Mesoamerican Hispanics in the United States. It can be speculated that movement toward a more individualistic approach to life should move them from insecure and secure attachment styles towards avoiding and secure styles. This movement would be triggered by less need of intimacy and higher degrees of acculturation stress.

Within the socio-cultural component of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural model we find fixed rules for the appropriate initiation, interaction, maintenance, and possible breakup of relationships—which are specified by norms based on premises of socio-cultural behavior (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). The specific norms, rules and roles of human interaction, idiosyncratic of each cultural group, form part of what Triandis (1994) designates Subjective Culture. Among other

things, Subjective Culture is charged with regulating the manner in which intimate interactions are developed. In an attempt to obtain a socio-cultural basis for the behaviors of Mexican couples, young adults were asked what they considered to be the most appropriate form of interaction during different stages of a relationship. In general, it can be said that the dimensions evaluated reflect the internalized norms about the development (Attraction, Passion, Romance-Sadness, Companionship Love), maintenance (Compromise-Maintenance, Companionship Love) and dissolution of a relationship (Dislike-Separation, Tragic Love), as well as traditional aspects that reflect more antiquated beliefs (Culture) in the Mexican socio-culture.

It can be indicated that two groups of Mexican family norms exists. One emphasizes the traditional view of male superiority and female abnegation. The other refers to the importance of equity in relationships and the feasibility of leaving a partner whenever the interaction is intolerable. The results show, that more educated men and women in Mexico actually believe that couple relationships should be satisfactory and equitable. Furthermore, they indicate that couples should resolve problems and communicate to make the relationship work. Also, the women demonstrate a strong disagreement with rules that limit their personal growth (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). What is undeniable from the findings is the gradual yet constant movement of women in search of more equitable relationships (Diaz-Loving et al., 2007). Without a doubt this has an effect on the struggle for power in the relationship requiring men to change by recognizing the potential of their partner in the traditional areas of affection and in the postmodern fields of production and personal development (Rivera-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2002). The path to the promotion of today's constructive relationships crosses with the fertile field of androgynous men and with strong trends to promote the emancipation of women (Rocha-Sanchez & Diaz-Loving, 2006).

For those who grew up with the traditional catholic epistle in which the male projects an image of lacking nothing in the home, and the female receives the signal that he will protect her, these levels of freedom and searching for personal development in women's behavior, like the lack of a clear line of power in the home, could appear almost offensive. For modern women and men with more years of secular education, the pattern could appear more normal and healthy. Extracted from this diversity is the convincing fact that these values, beliefs and rules are normative. That is to say, they suggest a response in a moment of history and in a particular ecosystem and are perpetuated over time under the umbrella of good customs.

Adopting specific values, beliefs, attitudes and abilities utilized in relationships are determined by a combination of individual personality traits that fulfill a central role in shaping the couple experience for the individuals (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002). The research executed about the impact of these personality characteristics on marital satisfaction among Mexicans (Diaz-Loving, 1999a). show a clear pattern in which both sexes report being happier in their relationship when each individual has both positive masculine attributes (responsible, hard working, provider) and positive feminine attributes (friendly, caring, attentive to the needs of others). In the same way, the measurement of the impact of these personality

characteristics on marital satisfaction shows, a clear pattern in which both sexes report being happier in their relationship when each individual has as many positive masculine characteristics as feminine (androgynous). Furthermore, positive feminine characteristics improve marital satisfaction, particularly when found in males; while positive masculine attributes increase the probability of having constructive relationships, but only in those cases where the other member of the couple has high positive female characteristics (Alvarado-Hernandez, Ojeda-Garcia, Rivera-Aragón & Diaz-Loving, 1996).

The psychological literature also summarizes behavioral styles related to couple relationships. These cognitive and motivational mechanisms represent the memory of behavior strategies developed from past experiences in similar situations which evoke automatic responses to particular stimuli. Some of the most cited behavior types are confrontation styles, love styles, negotiation styles, and communication styles. Confrontation styles are behavior strategies derived from past experiences or situations. When a situation is familiar, an automatic response is generated. However, when new situations are encountered, the cognitive and affective systems, joined with personal history determine the best confrontation style from one's repertoire and create a new behavioral response (Lazarus & Folkman, 1986).

When operationalizing negotiation strategies, which indicate a person's reaction to a typical problematic situation with his/her partner, the following styles can be found: Avoidance, Collaboration, Accommodation and Rivalry (Levinger & Pietromonaco, 1989). A culturally sensitive measure of these styles was developed and psychometrically validated for Mexican people (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002). Avoidance is a style characterized by low preoccupation for oneself and the other. When confronted by a conflict, avoiders simply postpone any action; they remove themselves or allow the other person to take responsibility for solving the problem. Collaboration is a technique utilized to increase harmony by creating solutions where everyone wins. When confronted with a problem, collaborators integrate the needs of each member in the solution to maximize the interests of both. Accommodation implies the adjustment of certain behaviors and the sacrifice of personal goals to satisfy the needs and decisions of the couple. Finally, repression is a self-affirmative and imposing solution to interpersonal relationships. In this style, people intend to maximize personal advantages even if this means high costs for others. Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon (2002) also report that in Mexican subjects, those who utilize collaboration or accommodation create better interpersonal relationships while those who are inclined to compete or avoid reduce the satisfaction and viability of their relationships. An exception should be made for relationships where only one member of the couple accommodates, in these cases it is important that the partner at least appreciates the support and wants to try to reciprocate in the future; when there is no reciprocity, one could be taken advantage of and will destroy the relationship in the long run. It should be remembered that people with a secure attachment style, who know how to support and explore, will tend to help and yield--characteristics needed to conduct constructive relationships. On the other hand, people who have insecure attachment are interested only in the resolution of their needs for

attention, collaborate only when they see that they can benefit themselves and impose their needs on the partner the majority of the time. With respect to those with avoidant attachment, they constantly look to resolve conflicts by ignoring or escaping them. In general, as a rule with in the Mexican culture, both males and females tend to self-modify looking to make others happy, which is especially true in the case of the mother role who actually is expected to abnegate to the family needs (Diaz-Guerrero, 1994).

A central component of any relationship is communication. This element which includes a content component has been widely shown to increase the intimacy and commitment to relationships (Diaz-Loving & Nina-Estrella, 1982). An additional component is the various communication styles people use to communicate which on the positive side include: Positive, Constructive and Romantic. The positive styles include an open strategy where the information is expressed in a direct, sincere, and clear manner. The constructive style is exemplified by one person listening to the other and trying to understand by being accessible, polite and appeasing. Finally the romantic style is associated with being friendly, caring and affectionate (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 2003). A constant finding with Mexican samples is the improvement in couple relationships by using positive communication styles and the general importance of style over content. This is to say that for Mesoamerican-Hispanic populations it's more important how you say things and less what you actually are saying when it comes to predicting couple satisfaction (Armenta-Hurtarte & Diaz-Loving, 2008).

Additional behavioral styles pertinent to couple relationships are common in the psychological literature. Within the area of couple relationships, Lee (1977) studied the styles that people use to affectionately link themselves together. This author set forth love styles whose philosophical foundation is based on the descriptions of the way that people display love for their partner. This theory indicates that people can exhibit different styles of love at the same time depending on their partner and the unique situational factors in every relationship. The principle love styles are erotic, friendly, playful, unstable, pursuant, jealous, practical, functional, and altruistic. Diaz-Loving (2002) reports for Mexican populations a presence of behaviors, positive perception and evaluation of the couple relationship when men and women use practical, friendly, erotic and altruistic styles. Basically, the person who is habitually interested in the well-being of others and has abilities to support, leans toward communication, trust and intimacy and is passionate yet affectionate will have happier partners, will value their relationship and will feel generally more satisfied with their interaction.

Going to an additional set of variables addressed in the couple relationship literature are does studies which refer to the interaction of cognition with behavior. When relationships are formed, people need to know how to interpret and understand the behavior of others (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). The process of the perception, interpretation and exchange of feelings allows the members to express why, when and how they are emotionally involved in a relationship. The diagnosis points to the requirements of the relationship, the stage which it's at, the behavioral route to take and the interpretation and possible future consequences from the interaction. The creation of interaction schemes,

based on what one thinks and feels in response to social stimuli, brings forth the creation of expectations and decisions regarding what type of relationship one is having. Taking into account that this cognitive and affective evaluation is a continuous process, it specifies what works not only with first impressions, but permeates something every moment throughout the history of a relationship. Finally, the constant diagnosis of a relationship is dictated, supervised and distinct depending on who the personal stimulus is his/her characteristics, the situation where the interactions occur, the history perceived, his/her state of being and the stage of the relationship.

Relationships imply interaction (true or imaginary) across time. According to this, before any generalization is made about the processes underlying the systems of cognitive and affective evaluation, the stages through which the individuals in a relationship pass should be specified chronologically as well as psychologically. In order to provide the psychological stages which individuals may experience in the evolution of a relationship, a psychological pattern of closeness and separateness is proposed which gives context to the establishment, development, maintenance, and dissolution of interpersonal relationships (Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving, 1999). Every stage describes an estimation of closeness or separation in the relationship, as well as the type of relationship and the information each member chooses to emphasize in order to describe the relationship The theoretical proposal for the pattern of Closeness-Separateness of the couple permits the establishment and categorization of the type of relationship and information that the members of a couple are processing—from perception to the interpretation of another stimulus Diaz-Loving and Sanchez-Aragon (2002).

The empirical results described by Sanchez-Aragon & Diaz-Loving (1999) for Mexican couples show how the pattern specifies a stranger as the most distant or least intimate stage; intimacy grows through friendship, attraction, passion, romance and commitment. It is solidified by maintenance and can become weakened by conflict which, if frequent and intense, fosters stages like loss and separation. Of particular importance to the functioning of relationships is the maintenance stage. With respect to the components that make up this dimension, it is interesting to observe the attention given to remembering positive moments in the relationship which, for couples with problems, is not a common practice. Given that survival requires constant reinforcement (feeding, care, etc.), which could be habitually produced, it appears necessary to constantly remind couples of the good times which initially united them. On the other hand, punishment marks an organism for a long time because it is related to death. Remembering negative moments in the relationship is much easier because these moments are distinct and probably more accessible in the memory. This reinforces the importance of thinking twice about actions and comments which will affect the relationship. The findings indicate that for a couple to be moderately satisfied with the relationship 10 reinforcements are required for every punishment, making the remembrance of positive aspects and the avoidance of punishment even more important.

The second aspect of maintenance is the importance given to negotiation in romantic relationships, confronting and solving problems, and coming to equitable agreements. Various theorists have accentuated the emancipation and

empowerment of women as a previous requirement for couple relationships in the twentieth century. This is evident in the proportionate role of constructive negotiation within adequately functioning relationships. Finally, in order for a couple to grow, it is also necessary for the partners to grow in intimacy, trust and friendship. As previously noted regarding the socio-cultural premises evidencing a movement toward more egalitarian rules for couples, the fact that the forms of maintenance with most success include equitable negotiation strategies shows the cultural affect on the way that couples evaluate their relationships.

Mesoamerican-Hispanic cultural statements specify that love is action, not good intentions. At the end of the bio-psycho-socio-cultural model, each member of the couple must decide what line of action is possible, and most convenient (Diaz-Loving, 1999b). In this stage of the process, the individuals refer to their styles and personal habits of behavior as guides for the evaluation of actual behaviors and as precursors to future actions. The final component of the model is centered on the emission of behaviors. The open manifestation of behaviors in a relationship includes the totality of internal and external actions of the organism in its interactions with the physical and social environment. The behavior promotes the initiation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships as well as its problems and dissolution. Every open behavior toward other produces social consequences (interpersonal and personal) which alternately disable and bring forth the evaluation of the relationship and the subsequent behaviors. Included in the particular case of couple interaction, are instrumental, affectionate and companionship behaviors. Positive behaviors can be supportive (giving support, laughing together), expressive (kissing, telling the other that you love them, recognizing their qualities) and instrumental behaviors of company (distributing money, dividing responsibilities).

The exhibition of positive, physical-affiliative behaviors obtained from focus groups and in depth interviews with Mexican men include: kissing, caressing, hugging, and securing a relationship. They would also have a positive profile for communicating themselves (open, romantic and positive) and confront disagreement with their partner by collaborating in the search of a satisfactory solution for both. The relationship would be described in stages of closeness, and above all with respect to maintenance, romance, attraction and passion and would display positive feminine characteristics like being affectionate, caring, expressive and having a secure attachment style (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

Another characteristic of behaviors promoting health for the Mexican individual and the couple is the practical (analytic) male's search for the well-being of his partner despite himself. This requires self-modification and methods of negotiation that include collaboration and accommodation in order to maintain the friendly relationship for the long run. It also includes making use of supportive behaviors like encouragement, listening and solving problems. A man of this style coexists intimately and closely with his partner (resting, traveling or dividing responsibilities) and bestows special importance on sex. Evaluating the relationship, he is perceived as highly committed with ample abilities in the maintenance of the relationship and with positive androgynous attributes like being

hardworking, responsible, affectionate and tender. He also holds socio-cultural principles of equity in relationships and displays a secure attachment style.

Congruent with the Mesoamerican-Hispanic socio-cultural expectation of women as an axis and stabilizer of relationships utilizing romantic and open styles (Diaz-Guerrero, 1994), they think of their partner as the love of their life and modify themselves in search of tranquility in their relationship. Mexican women indicate high level responses for the stages of friendship, maintenance and attraction and are affectionate and tender. Similar to the men, the second profile reflects women whose positive behaviors flow into their relationship by caressing, kissing, conversing, recognizing qualities of the other, caring for and satisfying their needs- such as intensely supporting the daily experience with their partner. These women highlight the romantic and passionate stages of the relationship; they are highly affectionate and caring, slightly defensive, openly believe in the need for closeness and have a secure attachment style. As a complement, some of these women are altruistic and look for the best for their partner, adapting themselves to what the relationship requires and avoiding situations of conflict. The combination of behaviors and characteristics contained in these women is clearly related to relationship satisfaction with the couple and the well-being of each member (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

Other Mexican women emphasize the functional part of relationships and with this the behaviors of dividing resources and responsibilities. These pragmatic women create a profile where planning the relationship is fundamental. They find themselves in the stages of commitment and maintenance in the closeness-separateness cycle and display predominately positive masculine characteristics like being hardworking, punctual and organized. They also show an instrumental internal locus of control and have an attachment style aimed at avoidance. The pattern of these women foretells difficulty in the formation of relationships because of the high expectations and criteria they have to evaluate the functionality of the interaction. However, if they find a man that affectionately complements them, they can develop stable and pleasant relationships. In the event that they unite with men like them, they normally create very organized relationships with clearly defined limits and great economic success however, with little intimacy and affectionate closeness (Diaz-Loving & Sanchez-Aragon, 2002).

In general, the data obtained with Mesoamerican Hispanic couples described in this article points toward the fact that the positive behaviors (support, affection, companionship) increase when individuals have secure attachment, believe in and follow norms of equality in relationships, are responsible, hard working, caring and affectionate, are in the relationship stages of friendship, attraction, romance, passion, commitment and maintenance, and have developed collaborative negotiation styles and open, caring and friendly forms of communication. The data advanced regarding the life of these couples seems to point towards an integral evaluation involving a historic-bio-psycho-socio-cultural approach to its study. It looks like in order to understand couple relationships theory and research should be constructed an integral holistic approach that starts from evolution and biology, which offer the parameters of possible human behavior and thus would yield hypothesis which are universally applicable. Biology in turn interacts with

ecosystems and depending on the ecosystem, couple relationship patterns arise that include monogamy (*"forever, for better or for worse, in sickness and health…"*) when family and security are necessary for survival, matriarchal polygamy when it is necessary to control population growth, patriarchal polygamy when faced with accumulating possessions and serial monogamy when equity is emphasized and conditions exist for the care of future generations. From the dialectic and perennial interaction between biology and ecosystems, appropriate cultural norms and values, are developed that through history and human development interact with individual temperament from which arise the individual characteristics and the interaction styles that each member of the couple puts into practice in each stage of interaction. In this process, the couple will observe information about their thinking and feelings for every moment of the relationship, clearly distinguishing that the same behavior does not have the same significance or value in distinct periods of the relationship. The fearful "I love you" in the beginning can become passionate with sexuality, and even depressed by daily living. Based on their previous experiences (either good or bad), and the evaluation of stimuli that the couple understands, each member prods at his/her essence and acts with a style that is congruent with how he/she feels. This act represents his/her contribution for the moment to the growth, maintenance, or dissolution of the life of the couple relationship.

Finally, the contribution on each member, on the couple and on their social surroundings can be fleeting, lethal, saving, transcendent, unforgettable, unbearable, divine, natural, passionate, sweet, or violent. Francios Mauriac is quoted as saying, *"We are modeled and remodeled by those who have loved us; and although love may pass, we are its work, for good or for bad"*. In other words, the couple relationships of today and those of the next generation are built by every human and his/her companion. The biology is already put forth its part through evolution, what remains is for us to incorporate some promising practices which would include a direct a cultural revolution geared to: Formation of socio-cultural norms that promote individual development encapsulated in social responsibility; the encouragement of secure interaction and attachment in infancy; strengthening the development of communication, negotiation, love and positive power interaction styles; urging combining positive characteristics of production and affection; and forming empathetic abilities to appreciate the other, his/her acts and his/her essence; encourage habits and behavior patterns prone solidify and improve the daily hustle and bustle of the couple's daily life. All of this and more is inserted into the human potential. The only thing lacking is the patience and creativity to implement it.

References

Alvarado Hernández, V. I., Ojeda García, A., Rivera Aragón, S. y Díaz Loving, R. (1996). Rasgos de Masculinidad-Feminidad: Efectos sobre la Satisfacción Marital en hombres y mujeres. *La Psicología Social en México, VI*, 268-274. México: Ed. AMEPSO.

Armenta Hurtarte, C. y Díaz Loving, R. (2008). Comunicación y satisfacción: analizando la interacción de pareja. Revista Psicología Iberoamericana 16(1) 23-27.

Aronson, E. (1988). *The social animal.* New York: Freeman.

Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y., Segall, M. & Dasen, P. (1992). *Cross-cultural Psychology.* New York: Cambridge Press.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and Loss: Attachment (Vol.1)*, New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Separation, Anxiety and Anger (Vol. 2).* New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Sadness and Depression (Vol. 3).* New York: Basic Books

Cuellar, I., Arnold, B., & Maldonado, R. (1995). Acculturation ratings scale for Mexican Americans-II. A revision of the original ARSMA scale. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 17,* 275-304.

Diaz-Guerrero, R. (1982). The Psychology of the Historic-Sociocultural Premises. *Spanish Language Psychology, 2,* 383-410.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1986). Historio-Sociocultura y Personalidad. Definición y características de los factores en la familia mexicana. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad, 2* (1), 15-42.

Díaz-Guerrero, R. (1994). *Psicología del Mexicano: Descubrimiento de la Etnopsicología.* México: Trillas.

Díaz-Loving, R & Draguns, J. (1999). Socioculture. Meaning and Personality in Mexico and in the United States. In Y. T Lee, C. McCauley y J. Draguns. (Eds.) *Personality and Person Perception Across Cultures.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers: New Jersey, London.

Díaz-Loving, R. (1999a). Una Teoría bio-psico-socio-cultural de la relación de pareja. En R. Díaz-Loving (Ed.). *Antología psico-social de la pareja.* México: Porrúa, UNAM, AMEPSO. 11-34, ISBN 968-842-942-2.

Diaz-Loving, R. (2002). A bio-psychosocial-cultural approach to couple relationships. In C. Von Hofsten & L. Backman (Eds.) *Psychology at the turn of the millennium, 2:* Social, Developmental and Clinical Perspectives, 361-392. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis Group: Psychology Press.

Díaz-Loving, R. (2004) Una aproximación Bio-Psico-Socio-Cultural a la procuración de conductas sanas y al alejamiento de conductas nocivas en la relación de pareja *Revista Mexicana de psicología, 21*(2)*,* 157-165.

Díaz-Loving, R. & Nina Estrella, R. (1982). Factores que influyen en la reciprocidad de auto-divulgación. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología Social, 2* (2), 91-109.

Díaz-Loving, R. & Sánchez-Aragón, R. (2002). *La psicología del amor: Una visión integral de la relación de pareja.* Ciudad de México: Editorial Miguel Ángel Porrúa. ISBN 970-701-216-1 (ISBN968-36-9274-5).

Díaz-Loving, R., Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Rivera-Aragón, S. (2007). *La instrumentalidad y la expresividad desde una perspectiva psico-socio-cultural.* México: Miguel Ángel Porrúa. ISBN 978-970-701-942-3.

Fisher, H. (2004). *Why we love: The Nature and Chemistry of Romantic Love.* New York: Henry Holt. ISBN: 0-8050-6913-3.

García-Méndez, M., Rivera-Aragón, S. & Diaz-Loving, R. (2007). Diferencias del funcionamiento familiar y las premisas histórico-socio-culturales en hombres y mujeres. Paper presented *at XXXI Congreso Interamericano de Psicología*. Del 1 al 5 de Julio del 2007. Ciudad de México.

Harlow, H. & Harlow, M. K. (1962). The effects of rearing conditions on behavior. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 26,* 213-224.

Kirchhoff, P. (1943). Mesoamérica: sus límites geograficos, composición étnica y caracteres culturales. *Acta Americana 1,* 92.

Lazarus, R.S. & Folkman, S. (1986). *Estrés y procesos cognitivos.* Barcelona: Martínez Roca.

Lee, J. A. (1977). A typology of styles of loving. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 3,* 173-182.

Leñero, O.L. (1982). *El niño y la familia.* México: SCPEIN.

Levinger, G. & Pietromonaco, P. (1989). *Conflict style inventory.* Manuscrito no publicado. Universidad de Massachusetts, Amherst.

Mikulincer, M. (2006). Attachment, caregiving, and sex within romantic relationships: A behavioral systems perspective. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodman (Eds.), *Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex* (pp. 23-44). New York: Guilford Press.

Negy, C., Snyder, D. K., y Díaz-Loving, R. (2004). A cross nacional comparison of Mexican and Mexican American Couples using the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (Spanish). *Assessment, 11,* 1, 49-56

Olaiz, G., Rojas, R., Franco, A. & Palma, O. (2006). Prevalencia de diferentes tipos de violencia en usuarios del sector salud en México. *Salud Pública de México, 48, 2*, 232-238.

Padilla, A.M., & Borrego, N.E. (2006). The effects of acculturative stress on the Hispanic family. In P.T.P. Wong & L.C.J. Wong (Eds.) *Handbook of Multicultural Perspectives on Stress and Coping* (pp.299-317). New York: Springer.

Reynoso-Erazo, L. y Seligson-Nisenbaum, I. (2002). Psicología y Salud en México. En L. Reynoso Erazo e I. Seligson-Nisenbaum (Coords.). *Psicología y Salud.* México: Facultad de Psicología UNAM y CONACyT.

Rivera-Aragón, S. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2002). *La Cultura del poder en la pareja.* Miguel Ángel Porrúa, UNAM. ISBN 970-701-290-0.

Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2006). Predictores del rol instrumental vs. el rol expresivo en la pareja y el hogar. *La Psicología Social en México, XI,* 818-825. AMEPSO. ISBN: 9685411115.

Rocha-Sánchez, T. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2011). *Identidades de género.* México: Editorial Trillas.

Sánchez-Aragón, R. y Díaz-Loving, R. (1999). Evaluación del ciclo de acercamiento alejamiento. En R. Díaz-Loving (Ed.). *Antología psico-social de la pareja.* México: Porrúa, UNAM, AMEPSO. 35-88.

Sánchez-Aragón, R. y Díaz-Loving, R. (2003). Patrones Y Estilos De Comunicación De La Pareja: Diseño De Un Inventario. *Anales de Psicología 19* (2), 257-277.

Stone, G.C. (1979). Health and the health system: A historical view and conceptual framework. En G.C. Stone, F. Cohen y N.E. Adler (Eds.). *Health Psychology –A Handbook.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Triandis, H. C. (1994). *Culture and Social Behavior.* USA: McGraw-Hill.