

## **Is This Seat Taken? The Importance of Context During the Initiation of Romantic Communication**

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### **Abstract**

*The current study, with a sample of 697 adults, examined individual differences in the communication of romantic interest with a specific focus on the relationships between flirting styles and the context in which the flirting interaction takes place. It also investigated gender differences in the use of flirting behaviors in a range of environments. A series of behavioral descriptors based upon five styles of communicating romantic interest was used to investigate individual differences in flirting behaviors utilized in eight different environments. Our results indicated relationships between the five flirting styles and their behavioral descriptors and provided evidence of the repertoire of behaviors utilized to communicate romantic interest in a variety of areas. Some gender differences were elaborated*

**Key Words:** courtship; flirting; relationship initiation; interpersonal communication

### ***1. Introduction***

Over the past three decades scholarly interest in relationships, courtship rituals and flirting behaviors has grown tremendously. During this time research has examined many issues such as the verbal and nonverbal behaviors used to flirt (Moore, 1995), the communication and miscommunication of flirtatious intent (Frazier, Cochran & Olsen, 1995; Hecht, DeVito & Guerrero, 1999) and more recently, the motivation to flirt (Henningesen, 2004; Henningesen, Braz & Davies, 2008). Research has also explored the behaviors people use to indicate interest in, and to promote contact with others (deWeerth & Kalma, 1995; Grammer, Honda, Juette, & Schmitt, 1999; Grammer, Kruck, Juette, & Fink, 2000; Moore, 1985, 1995; Moore & Butler, 1989; Muehlenhard, Miller, & Burdick, 1983; Walsh & Hewitt, 1985), behaviors used to promote a sexual encounter (e.g., Greer & Buss, 1994; Jesser, 1978; Simpson, Gangestad & Biek, 1993), and behaviors which do not necessarily lead to sexual contact (Abrahams, 1994).

Individual differences in the communication of romantic intent have also been the subject of investigation. For instance it has been suggested that individual behavior during courtship is influenced by factors such as gender and race (Jackson, Kleiner, Geist, & Cebulko, 2011), physical attractiveness (White, 1980; van Straaten, Holland, Finkenauer, Hollenstein, & Engels, 2010; Gueguen, 2007), cultural-driven goals and inspirations (Fisman, Iyengar, Kamenica, & Simonson, 2008; Uskul, Lalonde, & Cheng, 2007), linguistics (del-Teso-Craviotto, 2006) and body language (Grammer, Kruck, Juette, & Fink, 2000). More recently, research investigating individual differences in the communication of romantic intent was conducted by Hall, Carter, Cody & Albright (2010). The results of their research suggested evidence for the existence of five styles of relationship initiation (traditional, physical, sincere, playful, and polite) and indicated that individual difference in these styles correspond predictably with personality traits and relationship success. With the relatively recent identification of individual flirting styles has come the need to further articulate the way that these styles impact upon the process of flirting and to contextualise their use in a variety of behavioral settings. It is this aspect of the research that the current study will address.

## 1.1 Flirting Styles

The five flirting styles which were largely developed to provide a typology of the communication of attraction, embraced previous research on courtship initiation, gender roles, goals, strategies, and motivations which underpin the act of flirting. The typology was tested in 2010, when Hall, Carter, Cody and Albright surveyed more than 5,000 actively dating adults on eHarmony regarding their methods of communicating romantic interest.

According to Hall et al., (2010) and Hall (2013) the traditional style of flirting maintains the conventional gender expectations of each sex, with men being expected to make the first move when initiating relationships. Traditional flirts are generally somewhat introverted and are uncomfortable with the process of flirting and playing a social role. Polite flirts demonstrate a more cautious style of flirting which encapsulates a rule-governed basis for communicating romantic interest. Those who engage this style of flirting report interest in fewer potential partners, favour the use of proper manners and nonsexual communication (inappropriate or overtly sexual behavior is generally avoided) and tend to seek an emotional and secure connection. For the sincere flirts developing an emotional connection and showing a sincere interest is central to initiating romantic communication. Those who ascribe to this style are more likely to approach a potential partner, regard flirtatious advances as flattering, and believe that others are continually flirting with them. They report more success in developing relationships, greater levels of confidence and a greater likelihood of establishing relationship potential. This style is associated with the development of strong emotional connections, sexual chemistry and important and meaningful relationships.

Physical flirts are more competent and comfortable expressing their desires physically, they are more likely to seek an emotional connection and have a playful manner when initiating romantic contact. Individuals who score high on this style are likely to have little difficulty in conveying their interest and are eager to engage in personal and private conversations; quickly forming an attraction with the other person. The playful style of flirting is viewed as fun and not necessarily tied to the development of a relationship. People who engage this style are not particularly concerned about how others interpret their behavior. The underlying goal of a playful flirt is to have fun. The development of a long-lasting relationship is not deemed as important with this style of flirting; in fact those scoring high in playfulness rarely foster in-depth relationships (Hall et al., 2010; Hall, 2013). Having articulated a typology to encapsulate individual differences in the communication of romantic interest, Hall et al., (2010) suggested future research attempt to identify contexts which may be germane to each of the flirting styles and it is to this aspect of the research that we now focus.

## 1.2 The context of romantic initiation

Although research which considers the context in which flirting interactions occur is quite scarce, there were some notable exceptions. Research conducted by Fox (2004) suggested that people are more likely to flirt in places which combine three specific elements – sociability (ease of initiating conversation with another), alcohol and shared interest (environments where like-minded people gather). Using a British sample ( $N = 1000$ , aged 18-40) her research suggested flirting was most likely to happen at parties, drinking venues (pubs, bars, clubs), the workplace, educational settings (universities, schools etc), sporting and recreational venues (race tracks, football games, tennis etc), singles events and dating agencies, cyberspace and a cluster of environments referred to as ‘*no go areas*’ which includes supermarkets, public transport, gyms, art galleries etc. Although Fox admits that some of these places don’t contain all three elements, her results indicated that if an environment fails on all three it is unlikely to be a successful place to engage the process of flirting.

Research which illustrated the impact that context may have upon flirting interactions, was conducted by Kleinke, Meeker and Staneski (1986). Seeking to elaborate the opening lines which are commonly used to initiate romantic communication, their research suggested the use of three types of opening lines (cute, flippant, direct and innocuous) which varied according to the environment in which they were used (general situations, supermarkets, bars, restaurants, laundromats and beaches). Further, research conducted by Moore (1985) found that women in ‘*mate relevant*’ environments where non-verbal solicitation was expected to occur (such as a singles’ bar) emit a greater number of non-verbal cues when compared to women in environments where solicitation was not expected (such as snack bars, library and women’s group meetings). Their findings indicated that the number of non-verbal, flirtatious displays used by women was far greater in number and the approaches made by men in response to those displays were more frequent in a single’s bar than a snack bar, library or women’s group meeting. Thus the context certainly appears to be providing some form of cue from which an individual determines a course of action.

### 1.3 Research Aims

The current study was designed to further investigate individual differences in the communication of romantic intent with a specific focus on the relationships between flirting styles, and the context in which the flirting interaction takes place. It also considered gender differences in the use of flirting behaviors in a range of environments.

## 2. Method

### 2.1 Participants

The sample of 697 consisted of 206 male and 491 female participants, ranging in age from 18 to 73 years ( $M = 23.7$  years,  $SD = 8.9$  years). Of this sample 43.5% identified as being single, 34% single but in a relationship, and 22.5% married/defacto. The sample was split relatively evenly between university students (52%) and members of the general public (48%).

### 2.2 Measures

The following measures were used in an online survey to assess individual differences in strategies used to communicate romantic intent and to examine their use in a range of environments in which that interaction is likely to occur.

#### Flirting Styles Inventory (FSI)

The 26 item Flirting Styles Inventory (FSI; Hall et al., 2010) was used to measure individual differences in the communication of romantic interest. This measure consists of five subscales that describe an interpersonal method of romantic communication: traditional (e.g., “I wish we could go back to a time where formal dating was the norm”), physical (e.g., “I always let the opposite sex know when I am sexually interested in them”), playful (e.g., “The primary reason I flirt is because it makes me feel good about myself”), sincere (e.g., “I really look for an emotional connection with someone I’m interested in”), and polite (e.g., “It is important not to say something overly sexual when showing interest”). A seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) was utilized. This relatively new scale shows adequate internal consistencies with alphas ranging from  $\alpha = .68$  (polite) to  $\alpha = .87$  (physical) (Hall et al., 2010).

#### Flirting Behavior in Context Questionnaire (FBCQ)

To assess the context of flirting interactions we formulated a brief measure which consisted of short behavioral descriptions of the flirting styles provided by Hall et al. (2010). Participants were asked to rate each of the behavioral descriptions according to how likely they would be to use them in a series of eight specific environments (bar, party, work, educational setting, gym, supermarket, speed date, bus or train). The environments chosen represented a similar cross section of environments to the Fox (2004) research. The following descriptors were used: the traditional style - “I would prefer to go back to a time where formal dating is the norm; I am not really comfortable flirting and would prefer someone to introduce me”; the physical style - “I would make good use of body language such as smiling and making good eye contact to show my interest”; the playful style - “I would start to flirt just for the fun of it”; the sincere style - “I would engage in conversation to show I have a sincere interest in that person”; and the polite style - “It is important not to say anything overly sexual when you flirt and being physically forward can be a turnoff so I would be cautious in letting the other person know I am interested”. A seven-point Likert scale ranging from definitely not (1) to definitely (7) was utilized. Participants were also asked to choose the single style they were likely to use most often.

Demographics relating to age, gender, and marital status were also collected.

### 2.3 Procedure

All participants were invited to complete an electronic questionnaire containing a brief demographic section followed by the two measures. Both scales were randomized and the study was prefaced by a statement of informed consent. Participation was restricted to adults aged 18 and over and took approximately twenty minutes to complete.

## 3. Results

Descriptive statistics for the two scales are shown in Table 1. Reliability for the FSI demonstrated a similar range to previous research (Hall et al., 2010) with one notable exception – the traditional flirting style ( $\alpha = .43$ ).

Further analysis suggested that the removal of items 18 and 23 improved reliability to  $\alpha = .81$  so all analyses were conducted based upon the reduced scale. Reliability for each of the scales in the newly developed *FBCQ* was strong ranging from  $\alpha = .88$  (traditional and sincere) to  $\alpha = .92$  (polite). When asked to choose a single style that was most representative of their approach to flirting in general 40% chose the physical style, 43% sincere, 7% playful, 7% traditional and 3% polite.

### **3.1 Flirting styles in context**

A series of Pearson correlations were calculated between respondents' scores on the flirting styles inventory and their scores on each of the behavioral descriptors for each of the eight environments (Table 2). What is interesting about the results are the consistencies of association between each of the flirting styles and the behavioral descriptors which are used, and the contrasts between the flirting styles and the repertoire of behaviors used in each environment. Significant positive correlations (as indicated by bold text on the diagonal in each environment) were found between each of the flirting styles and their respective behavioral descriptor for each of the eight environments, indicating consistency in the style of communication which underpins the flirting sequence. The only exception to this was the use of the traditional style and its behavioral descriptor for interactions in a supermarket - although the correlation was positive it was not significant.

Our results also indicate individual differences in the strategies used to initiate the communication of romantic intent depending upon the situation in which the opportunity presents itself. For instance, it appears that at a party those who ascribe to a traditional style prefer to be introduced to a person who they are interested in (traditional), they are likely to be cautious in their approach (polite), but they will use body language to signal their interest (physical).

Conversely those who are physical flirts make good use of body language (physical) and flirt for fun (playful) though they are cautious (polite) and sincere in their approach. A similar approach is used by the playful flirts though they are unlikely to be cautious in their approach (polite). Sincere flirts are likely to engage in sincere conversation, they are cautious in their approach (polite) and although they tend to prefer an introduction (traditional), they will make use of body language (physical) to signal their interest. The polite flirts are ever respectful; they are unlikely to use body language (physical) or to flirt for the fun of it (playful), preferring instead to be sincere in their interest and cautious in their approaches (polite). Similar trends were found for bars though the playful flirts appear to throw caution (polite) and the use of displays which allude to sincere interest to the wind in these situations preferring instead to use body language (physical) in their pursuit of flirting for fun (playful).

Looking at the overall trends of the data, our results indicate that traditional flirts are not generally in favor of a physical or playful approach to flirting although they will flirt for fun at work, in an educational setting and at the gym. Physical flirts are generally quite polite and cautious in their approaches to flirting though for some reason this changes when they flirt at the supermarket where the use of a polite or cautious strategy shows a significant inverse relationship. Playful flirts are unlikely to show sincere interest in a person when they are at the supermarket or on public transport but they will favor this approach when they are speed dating. Sincere and polite flirts share many of the same strategies though the polite flirts will utilize a traditional approach on more occasions than a sincere flirt and they generally steer away from physical and playful approaches – the only notable exception is an educational setting where they will make use of body language to show interest.

### **3.2 Gender based differences in flirting styles and the context in which flirting takes place**

In contrast to the findings of Hall et al, (2010) gender based comparisons suggested significant differences for only three of the flirting styles with females ( $M = 4.34$ ) more likely than men ( $M = 3.93$ ) to use the traditional ( $t = -4.24$  (695),  $p = .000$ ), sincere (Females,  $M = 5.91$ ; Males,  $M = 5.67$ ;  $t = -3.70$  (695),  $p = .000$ ) and polite (Females,  $M = 4.94$ ; Males,  $M = 4.79$ ;  $t = -2.23$  (695),  $p = .026$ ) flirting styles. No significant gender differences were found for the physical or playful styles.

A series of independent samples t-tests were performed to investigate gender differences in flirting behaviors used for each of the eight environments. Due to the number of analyses that were performed our alpha level was set to .001 to attenuate type 1 error. Our results indicated gender differences in four environments.

Men ( $M = 2.95$ ) were more likely than women ( $M = 2.47$ ) to use the playful approach in a work environment ( $t = 4.50$  (695),  $p = .000$ , equal variances assumed), in an educational setting (Males,  $M = 3.30$ ; Females,  $M = 2.87$ ;  $t = 3.87$  (695),  $p = .000$ , equal variances assumed) in a supermarket (Males,  $M = 2.91$ ; Females,  $M = 2.42$ ;  $t = 4.75$  (695),  $p = .000$ , equal variances assumed) and when using public transport (Males,  $M = 3.01$ ; Females,  $M = 2.35$ ;  $t = 6.12$  (695),  $p = .000$  equal variance assumed).

Men were more likely to use the sincere approach in a supermarket (Males,  $M = 4.02$ ; Females,  $M = 3.64$ ;  $t = 3.38$  (695),  $p = .001$  equal variance not assumed) and when using public transport (Males,  $M = 4.13$ ; Females,  $M = 3.56$ ;  $t = 4.97$  (695),  $p = .000$  equal variance not assumed). They were also more inclined to engage the physical style of flirting (Males,  $M = 3.81$ ; Females,  $M = 3.42$ ;  $t = 3.25$  (695),  $p = .001$  equal variance not assumed) when using public transport and the traditional approach (Males,  $M = 2.92$ ; Females,  $M = 2.58$ ;  $t = 3.26$  (695),  $p = .001$  equal variance assumed) at the supermarket.

### 3.3 Factor Structure of the Flirting Behavior in Context Questionnaire (FBCQ)

The data was first assessed for its suitability for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly significant ( $p < .001$ ) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy value of .89 supported the factorability of the matrix. Principal Components Analysis (PCA) revealed the presence of nine eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 73.7% of the variance. Only the first seven factors exceeded the criterion value obtained from parallel analysis of a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (40 variables x 697 respondents). Inspection of the scree plot however supported a four factor solution so analyses were run on both. Given that previous research on the flirting styles indicated five unique factors we also ran a five factor solution. The results of our correlation analyses suggested significant relationships between the variables of interest so we chose an oblimin rotation. Both the five and seven factor solutions failed to converge hence the four factor solution was retained and is reported in Table 3. The four factors explained 56.7% of the total variance (24.8%, 14.5%, 11.2% and 6.2% respectively).

The rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure with all components showing strong loadings and all variables loading substantially on only one component. The first factor contains items relevant to the physical and sincere behavioral descriptors for each environment, factor 2 contained the playful descriptors, factor 3 the traditional descriptors and factor 4 the polite descriptors. There were weak positive correlations between the four factors. The internal consistency for each of the factors was high: Factor 1  $\alpha = .92$ ; Factor 2  $\alpha = .91$ ; Factor 3  $\alpha = .88$ ; and Factor 4  $\alpha = .92$ . These results are in contrast to the research conducted by Hall et al., (2010) which suggested evidence of five unique factors.

## 4. Discussion

The aim of the current study was to investigate relationships between the way that people communicate romantic intent and the environment in which the interaction takes place. We developed and tested a new measure (based upon the Flirting Styles Inventory developed by Hall et al., 2010) designed to elaborate individual contextual differences in flirting behaviors based upon the five established flirting styles. The items contained in the questionnaire formed five scales which were directly related to the five flirting styles and each of these scales demonstrated very high internal consistency. Further examination of the new measure using principle components analysis however suggested evidence of only four unique factors – each of which had high internal reliability. Three of our factors were similar to those reported by Hall et al., (playful, traditional and polite) the other represented a combination of two of their factors – the physical and sincere styles.

These two styles were by far the most popular choices in the forced option component of the *FSI*, with 43% and 40% of the sample suggesting that these styles were the ones they use most often. It is possible that the discrepancy may be explained by the inability of the descriptors for these two factors to pick up on the subtle distinctions between the behavioral representation of the two styles so further research should consider adjustments to the wording utilized to form the basis of both descriptors.

Our results indicated consistency between the flirting styles established by the *FSI* and the behavioral descriptors of those styles which formed the basis of the *FBCQ*. This indicates that although people may engage a repertoire of behaviors that they use to signal romantic interest in each environment there is evidence of consistency in the underlying ethos which underpins the flirting sequence.

As far as the context of the flirting interaction is concerned our findings elaborated individual differences in the repertoire of behaviors used to signal romantic interest in each environment which were consistent with the flirting styles that our participants identified with.

#### **4.1 The Traditional Style**

Research conducted by Hall et al., (2010) and Hall (2013) documented a profile for this style which suggested the traditional flirt is somewhat introverted; they are not really open to new experiences, nor are they comfortable playing a social role. They would be more likely to be found in clubs than in bars as relationships developed in a bar would not be considered conducive to the formation of a committed relationship. Women of the traditional style are less likely to communicate romantic attraction thus they also take longer to experience romantic attraction; they lack confidence, find it difficult to identify relationship potential, are unlikely to have a private and personal conversation with someone who they are romantically interested in and are therefore unlikely to experience an emotional connection. Men ascribing to this approach are more likely to get to know a person before they approach them in a romantic manner. The previous research also suggested evidence of a positive relationship between this style and the polite flirting style and a negative relationship with the playful style in the case of women.

Our findings are consistent with this profile. Firstly our results indicated positive correlations between the traditional flirts and the traditional and polite behavioral descriptors in each environment tested (though correlations for three of these environments failed to reach significance). Consistent with the suggestion that this type of flirt is not really open to new experiences our results indicated that those scoring high on this style exhibit similar patterns of behavior across a variety of environments. For all environments tested in this study the traditional flirts would prefer to be introduced to someone they are interested in, and are unlikely to use body language to signal romantic interest. When flirting at a party, in a bar, at work, and in an education setting they prefer to be cautious and polite. If they find themselves involved in speed dating a traditional flirt is unlikely to use body language to signal their interest or to engage in conversation designed to express a sincere interest, preferring instead to err on the side of a cautionary approach. You are unlikely to find the traditional flirt showing interest at a supermarket however, no significant correlations were found linking the traditional flirt to the use of any particular method in this environment. The only gender difference we found for this style was with interactions at a supermarket where men were more likely to use this type of approach.

#### **4.2 Physical Style**

According to Hall et al., (2010) and Hall (2013) the physical flirt is confident, extraverted and open to new experiences. They are direct and confident in their communication of romantic intent; they quickly develop an attraction to a person and engage in personal and private conversations – an approach which they deem to be successful. More women than men ascribe to this style which has been linked to the sincere and playful styles. It appears that the confidence to display romantic interest in a physical manner is related to not only flirting for fun but also to an interest in forming an emotional connection. Hall's research (2013) also suggested that this type of flirt would be most comfortable in a bar, reporting that over half the men surveyed and a third of the women who had met their previous partner in a bar or club recorded high scores on the physical style. In support of previous research, our results indicated that those who are physical flirts will make good use of body language (physical) no matter where they engage the flirting sequence. They will flirt for fun (playful) at parties, bars, education settings, at the gym, in a supermarket and when they are speed dating. They are more likely to start a conversation with someone they are interested in (sincere) across all of the environments we tested.

In contrast to the previous research however our results indicated that they are also likely to be polite or cautious in their approach in all environments other than the supermarket (there was a strong and significant negative correlation here) and when using public transport (which did not reach significance). Interestingly the highest correlation between the physical flirts and the use of the polite approach was in a bar which is in direct contrast to Hall's (2013) assertion that the physical flirt is most comfortable communicating romantic interest in a bar. Our results indicated no gender difference in the *FSI* scores for this style and only one environment where gender difference was apparent in relation to the behavioral descriptor with men more likely to engage this style when using public transport than women. These differences may be due to the sample population of the current research in comparison to that which preceded it.

The Hall et al., (2010) research was based upon a large sample recruited from an online dating website with a motivated dating sample thus it is possible that respondent bias was evident. In comparison, our sample contained a large portion of people who were either single or dating, and half were university students. Further research is needed to validate the use of both scales and to further investigate gender differences.

### **4.3 Playful Style**

Hall et al, (2010) and Hall (2013) regard the playful style as a fun, self-esteem enhancing style of flirting which is unlikely to lead to long term relationships. The playful flirt is extraverted and outgoing, they have a lack of concern for others, and they are physical and generally not very polite or cautious in their approach to flirting. Our results indicated agreement, suggesting that the playful flirts will flirt for fun in any environment, making good use of body language to signal their interest – certainly for those environments that formed part of this study. They are unlikely however to be cautious in their approach at a party or at work and would be unlikely to engage in conversation designed to show sincere interest when flirting at a supermarket or on public transport. They would however engage in conversation designed to convey sincerity when speed dating. Our results also suggested that men were more likely than women to engage a playful approach in a work environment, in an educational setting, when using public transport and at the supermarket.

### **4.4 Sincere Style**

The profile suggested by Hall et al, (2010) and Hall (2013) portrays sincere flirts showing a sincere interest in others and striving to develop an emotional connection. As a result of their ability to strike up a private and personal conversation the sincere flirts are generally successful and confident with their ability to establish romantic potential. The sincere flirt is extraverted, has an outgoing nature; this is a style more likely to be advocated by women. This style is generally unrelated to the playful and traditional styles but positively related to the polite and physical styles. Our results indicated strong correspondence between the sincere style and polite behavioral descriptors - the sincere flirts were generally cautious in their approach, preferring to engage in conversation which conveys a sincere interest in all environments tested in this study. We did however find instances where a sincere flirt would use the playful and traditional styles. At a party they would prefer to be introduced to a person (traditional) but they will make use of body language (physical) to signal interest. The use of body language (physical) is also employed at the gym. With regards to gender differences – our results indicated that women favor this style more than men, though men are more likely to utilize this strategy in a supermarket or when using public transport.

### **4.5 Polite Style**

Hall et al., (2010) and Hall (2013) have suggested that this style reflects a cautious and rule governed approach to courtship, embracing the use of non-sexual communication and less forward behavioral strategies. Their research indicated positive relationships between this style and the traditional and sincere styles and negative relationships with the playful style, thus polite flirts seek an emotional and sincere connection with potential partners. Our findings largely concurred with this profile, suggesting that polite flirts are ever cautious in their approach in all environments and they generally prefer to engage in conversation with someone as opposed to using body language to signal interest or flirting for the fun of it, though they will make use of body language (the physical approach) when flirting in an educational setting. Overall, women were more likely than men to favor this approach though there were no gender differences in the use of this approach in any of the environments tested.

## **5. Summary**

Our results provided support for the notion of a relationship between flirting styles and the context in which the initiation of romantic interest occurs. Moreover our findings suggested consistency between the flirting styles and the behavioral descriptors of those styles across environments, and demonstrated evidence of individual differences in the types of flirting behaviors each of those styles are likely to engage. There were however some notable limitations of the research which should be recognized. Firstly, there was a large proportion of our sample aged under 25 (80%) and the majority of these were single (78% in total) thus limiting the generalizability of the results. We did not consider relationship history or relationship duration nor did we seek information on where our participants generally choose to go to flirt and how successful they feel these locations have been for them in initiating communication. These are all variables which could impact on the flirting sequence and therefore our findings.

In relation to the new measure, although the reliability of the overall measure and the reliability of the five scales contained within it were strong our principle components analysis failed to demonstrate evidence of five unique factors which previous research has suggested. Further testing of the measure should incorporate changes to the wording of the behavioral descriptors to improve the ability to differentiate the physical and sincere approaches to flirting. Other possible directions for future research would be to consider cultural and regional differences (urban vs rural) in flirting styles and the locations in which the flirting sequence is enacted.

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**Table 1: Mean and standard deviations for the Flirting Styles Inventory and the Flirting Behavior in Context Scale**

Rating Scale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Flirting Styles (FSI)			
Traditional ( $\alpha = .81$ )	4.21	1.17	1-7
Polite ( $\alpha = .64$ )	4.90	0.84	1-7
Sincere ( $\alpha = .75$ )	5.83	0.78	1-7
Physical ( $\alpha = .82$ )	4.30	1.22	1-7
Playful ( $\alpha = .71$ )	4.09	1.14	1-7
Flirting Behavior in Context Scale (FBCS)			
Physical ( $\alpha = .90$ )			
Party	4.48	1.09	1-7
Bar	4.35	1.22	1-7
Work	3.91	1.39	1-7
Educational setting	4.15	1.26	1-7
Gym	3.80	1.50	1-7
Supermarket	3.66	1.44	1-7
Speed Date	4.55	1.25	1-7
Public Transport	3.54	1.52	1-7
Playful ( $\alpha = .91$ )			
Party	3.42	1.26	1-7
Bar	3.51	1.39	1-7
Work	2.62	1.29	1-7
Educational setting	3.00	1.35	1-7
Gym	2.82	1.36	1-7
Supermarket	2.57	1.27	1-7
Speed Date	3.90	1.46	1-7
Public Transport	2.54	1.32	1-7
Traditional ( $\alpha = .88$ )			
Party	3.52	1.17	1-7
Bar	3.30	1.22	1-7
Work	3.00	1.27	1-7
Educational setting	3.44	1.26	1-7
Gym	3.06	1.30	1-7
Supermarket	2.69	1.28	1-7
Speed Date	2.78	1.32	1-7
Public Transport	2.56	1.23	1-7
Polite ( $\alpha = .92$ )			
Party	4.15	1.23	1-7
Bar	3.94	1.35	1-7
Work	4.46	1.56	1-7
Educational setting	4.33	1.40	1-7
Gym	4.20	1.47	1-7
Supermarket	4.25	1.54	1-7
Speed Date	3.98	1.44	1-7
Public Transport	4.15	1.61	1-7
Sincere ( $\alpha = .88$ )			
Party	4.58	0.98	1-7
Bar	4.31	1.18	1-7
Work	4.48	1.27	1-7
Educational setting	4.61	1.22	1-7
Gym	3.98	1.44	1-7
Supermarket	3.75	1.44	1-7
Speed Date	4.70	1.26	1-7
Public Transport	3.73	1.48	1-7

(N = 697)

**Table 2: Correlations between Flirting strategies, attachment styles, love styles and relationship components**

Context	Flirting strategy				
	Traditional	Physical	Playful	Sincere	Polite
<b>Party</b>					
Traditional	<b>.19**</b>	-.05	-.03	.24**	.04
Physical	-.22**	<b>.35**</b>	.39**	.07*	-.19**
Playful	-.00	.14**	<b>.57**</b>	-.05	-.97**
Sincere	-.01	.34**	.02	<b>.37**</b>	.16**
Polite	.12**	.08*	-.07*	.37**	<b>.36**</b>
<b>Bar</b>					
Traditional	<b>.17**</b>	-.01	.04	.02	.23**
Physical	-.15**	<b>.33**</b>	.37**	.04	-.16**
Playful	-.02	.21**	<b>.55**</b>	-.01	-.11
Sincere	-.02	.28**	.06	<b>.30**</b>	.15**
Polite	.11**	.88**	-.01	.18**	<b>.34**</b>
<b>Work</b>					
Traditional	<b>.16**</b>	.02	-.01	.04	.04
Physical	-.06*	<b>.15**</b>	.28**	.02	-.10*
Playful	.12**	.06	<b>.35**</b>	.01	-.04
Sincere	-.03	.23**	-.06	<b>.35**</b>	.25**
Polite	.11**	.07*	-.11**	.16**	<b>.21**</b>
<b>Education Setting</b>					
Traditional	<b>.12**</b>	-.01	.01	-.01	.11**
Physical	-.10**	<b>.22**</b>	.30**	.03	.11**
Playful	.07*	.11**	<b>.46**</b>	-.03	-.08*
Sincere	.03	.26**	.01	<b>.38**</b>	.20**
Polite	.09**	.08*	-.03	.18**	<b>.27**</b>
<b>Gym</b>					
Traditional	<b>.07*</b>	.02	.05	.02	.09**
Physical	-.01	<b>.22**</b>	.32**	.08*	-.10**
Playful	.06*	.10**	<b>.39**</b>	-.06	-.08*
Sincere	.02	.20**	.02	<b>.26**</b>	.18**
Polite	.06	.09*	-.01	.21**	<b>.25**</b>
<b>Supermarket</b>					
Traditional	<b>.04</b>	-.02	.01	-.00	.09**
Physical	-.03	<b>.15**</b>	.28**	-.03	-.04
Playful	.05	.10**	<b>.38**</b>	-.01	-.11
Sincere	-.04	.20**	-.09*	<b>.24**</b>	.18**
Polite	.03	-.84*	.03	.18**	<b>.24**</b>
<b>Speed Dating</b>					
Traditional	<b>.13**</b>	-.00	.00	.00	.19**
Physical	-.10**	<b>.17**</b>	.20**	.03	-.12*
Playful	.04	.11**	<b>.36**</b>	.02	-.08*
Sincere	-.13**	.33**	.16**	<b>.32**</b>	.08**
Polite	.06*	.12**	.03	.17**	<b>.29**</b>
<b>Public Transport</b>					
Traditional	<b>.07*</b>	-.03	.02	-.02	.10**
Physical	-.03	<b>.12**</b>	.23**	.06	-.11**
Playful	.02	.02	<b>.33**</b>	-.05	-.07*
Sincere	-.05	.14**	-.09*	<b>.20**</b>	.20**
Polite	.00	.07	-.06	.09**	<b>.20**</b>

Note: \*p < .05; \*\*p < .01(1 tailed). N = 697

**Table 3: Factor loadings and communalities based on a principle components analysis with oblimin rotation of items contained in the FBCQ**

FBCS Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Communalities
	Physical/Sincere	Playful	Traditional	Polite	
<b>Physical</b>					
Bus	.67	.37			.56
Gym	.67				.59
Supermarket	.66				.58
Work	.61				.49
Education	.60	.31			.58
Bar	.51				.58
Speed Date	.50				.49
Party	.50				.49
<b>Sincere</b>					
Gym	.79				.61
Bus	.76				.56
Supermarket	.75				.56
Work	.66				.53
Education	.66				.55
Bar	.60				.42
Speed Date	.58				.46
Party	.54				.43
<b>Playful</b>					
Party		.87			.70
Bar		.85			.68
Education		.80			.67
Gym		.71			.62
Supermarket		.70			.61
Work		.69			.53
Speed Date		.69			.52
Bus		.66			.59
<b>Traditional</b>					
Supermarket			.77		.61
Bus			.76		.60
Gym			.70		.58
Bar			.69		.52
Work			.67		.51
Education			.66		.53
Speed Date			.66		.44
Party			.65		.49
<b>Polite</b>					
Education				.85	.74
Supermarket				.83	.74
Gym				.83	.73
Work				.79	.67
Bus				.77	.67
Speed Date				.70	.49
Party				.69	.50
Bar				.63	.49
Factor	1	2	3	4	
<b>Intercorrelations</b>					
Factor 1	1.00				
Factor 2	.30	1.00			
Factor 3	.05	.09	1.00		
Factor 4	.34	-.10	.12	1.00	

Note: Factor loadings < .3 were suppressed.  $N = 697$