

Communication and the Maintenance of Relationships During The COVID-19 Pandemic

Christina Doan¹, Jordan Graber¹, Kirsten Hutt¹, Baila Lovejoy², Alyssa Nerland¹

Abstract

Communication is foundational to relationship maintenance. Humans have long relied on the body as a source of communicative interaction, and now must adhere to new ways of being due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This research focuses on the impacts on communication put in place by new pandemic-related restrictions, in addition to adaptive measures utilized by participants within peer and romantic relationships. 75 McMaster students completed an online, anonymous survey outlining communicative processes before and after the pandemic, newfound methods of communication, and any associated influences on the individual. The research finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted styles of communication, and despite finding new ways to remain connected, participants still experienced significant levels of social disconnectedness. This research may be used to further the understanding of how negative circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, may impact relationship quality and inform any future intervention strategies that could mitigate these effects.

¹ Class of 2021, Honours Social Psychology Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

² Level 5 Undergraduate Student, Honours Social Psychology Program, Faculty of Social Sciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada