

THE TRANSITION TO EXTENDED FAMILY: EXAMINING THE LINKS BETWEEN  
TURBULENCE AND CHILDREN-IN-LAWS' GOALS, TOPIC AVOIDANCE, AND  
RELATIONAL OUTCOMES

BY

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DISSERTATION

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## Abstract

The transition to extended family is one of the most challenging and consequential periods of flux during the family life-span. How in-laws communicate (or avoid communicating) during this transition can impact not only the in-law relationship, but the parent-child dyad, and marital duo for years to come. Previous research has speculated that forming in-law relationships is wrought with ambiguity and communication challenges, both of which may preclude in-laws from developing satisfying relationships with one another. Current scholarship, however, did not explicitly examine the direct links between in-law uncertainty, communication, and relational outcomes or the process through which these questions were linked to communication behaviors and subsequent relational consequences. By integrating two robust theoretical perspective—the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective—the current study sought to uncover how the experience of uncertainty during the transition to extended family was linked to interaction goals, topic avoidance, and relationship satisfaction. In addition, the present investigation aimed to illuminate why in-law’s grappling with uncertainty did or did not engage in topic avoidance by examining how in-law’s interaction goals mediated the association between uncertainty and topic avoidance. Responses from children-in-law ( $N = 204$ ) transitioning to extended family were examined. Results revealed that, in general, uncertainty shaped children-in-law’s interaction goals, was positively associated with their use of topic avoidance, and inversely related to their relationship satisfaction within the in-law dyad. Findings also indicated that several interaction goals significantly mediated the link between uncertainty and topic avoidance and uncertainty and satisfaction. Theoretically, results support the integration of the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective by highlighting the role goals play in shaping communicative and relational reactions to turmoil.

Practically, findings from the current study suggest avenues of support that mental health practitioners and clergy can offer couples and families as they integrate and assimilate into a new family in-law.

*For Mom.*

*To the moon, back, and all around.*

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

Families are not static; rather, families are fluid and dynamic entities that must adapt. Throughout the family life cycle, families face a variety of transitions, defined as periods of flux that hold the potential for change (Boss, 2002; Solomon, Weber, & Steuber, 2010). Families face both normative transitions such as marriage, child birth and launching children, and non-normative transitions including divorce, illness, and unanticipated death (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005). During times of transition, families often experience turbulence as they are required to alter longstanding boundaries, behaviors, relationships, and identities (Prentice, 2008; Solomon & Theiss, 2011). Having to renegotiate aspects of family relationships and interaction patterns probably makes salient the need to balance multiple (and sometimes conflicting) communication goals that are inherent in interpersonal communication (Berger, 2005; Clark & Delia, 1979). How families traverse times of transition has important implications for family functioning and well-being (Boss, 2002). Families who manage well may gain a better understanding of one another, affirm commitment to one another, and establish more satisfying relationships with one another (Boss, 2002; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002a). Families that cope with transitions poorly can experience increased conflict, anxiety, and stress (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005; Lavee, McCubbin, & Olson, 1987). In extreme cases, families may become immobilized and plummet into crisis (Boss, 2002). Therefore, understanding how families experience and negotiate periods of change is critical for helping families maintain successful relationships throughout family life cycle transitions.

One context in which this is especially true is the extended family. Approximately two million individuals marry each year (National Center for Health Statistics, 2009), and most of these persons gain new in-law relationships along with the marriage, making the transition to a

more extended family a normative life cycle event. Despite the expected nature of this transition, it has the potential to create numerous challenges within the newly formed in-law dyad, including uncertainty, interference, and conflicting and competing goals (Berger, 2005; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Solomon & Theiss, 2011). These challenges may result in communication and relationship difficulties (Goldsmith, 2001, 2004; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Theiss & Solomon, 2006). How in-laws communicate, especially during the transition to extended family (Cotterill, 1989), is crucial for future relational well-being, including satisfaction with the family, the extent to which in-laws feel like a family, and the closeness among all members of the in-law triad (Golish, 2000; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz, Hosmer, Ballard, & Griffin, 2009). For instance, Merrill (2007) found that negative communication that occurred while in-laws were forming their relationship often derailed the development of satisfying in-law relationships, either temporarily or, in some cases, permanently.

In-law communication and relational quality also affects adult children and children-in-law's marital success and satisfaction. In-law conflict, for instance, is inversely associated with children-in-law's marital success (Bryant et al., 2001), and positive disclosures from in-laws are positively linked to children-in-law's marital satisfaction (Morr Serewicz et al., 2009). Moreover, perceived in-law interference affects marital satisfaction and stability (Norwood & Webb, 2006; Veroff, Douvan, & Hatchett, 1995).

Although in-law relationships are often portrayed negatively, in-laws can be a tremendous source of support and love (Goetting, 1990). Goetting (1990), for example, found that parents- and children-in-law provide mutual support, including emotional, financial, and instrumental support. Contrary to popular belief, several studies revealed that when asked about

their in-law relationships, children-in-law often describe their relationship in positive rather than negative terms (Duvall, 1959; Fischer, 1986; Merrill, 2007). Taken together, these findings highlight the impact in-law relationships have, both positive and negative, on the entire family system, making it imperative to understand the mechanisms that help facilitate the development of satisfying in-law relationships.

Although current research highlights the challenges of in-law relationships (Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009; Turner, Young, & Black, 2006), no research to date has examined the mechanisms of turbulence (i.e., uncertainty and interdependence processes) during the transition to extended family, including how uncertainty and negotiating interdependence affects in-laws' goals and communication during this period, and the relational implications of their communication choices. This dissertation addresses these gaps and examines turbulence during the transition to extended family. The present study merges two conceptually rich theoretical perspectives—relational turbulence and multiple goals—to create a hybrid model that illuminates the mechanisms that underlie difficulties during the transition to extended family. Chapter 2 contains a review of relevant literature, the theoretical rationale that guided the study, and specific hypotheses and research questions shaped by the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective. In Chapter 3, the methods used to conduct the study are detailed, and in Chapter 4 the results of the present study are outlined. Finally, in Chapter 5 the findings of the present study are summarized, along with the contributions and limitations of this research.

## **Chapter Two: Theoretical Rationale, Research Questions, and Hypotheses**

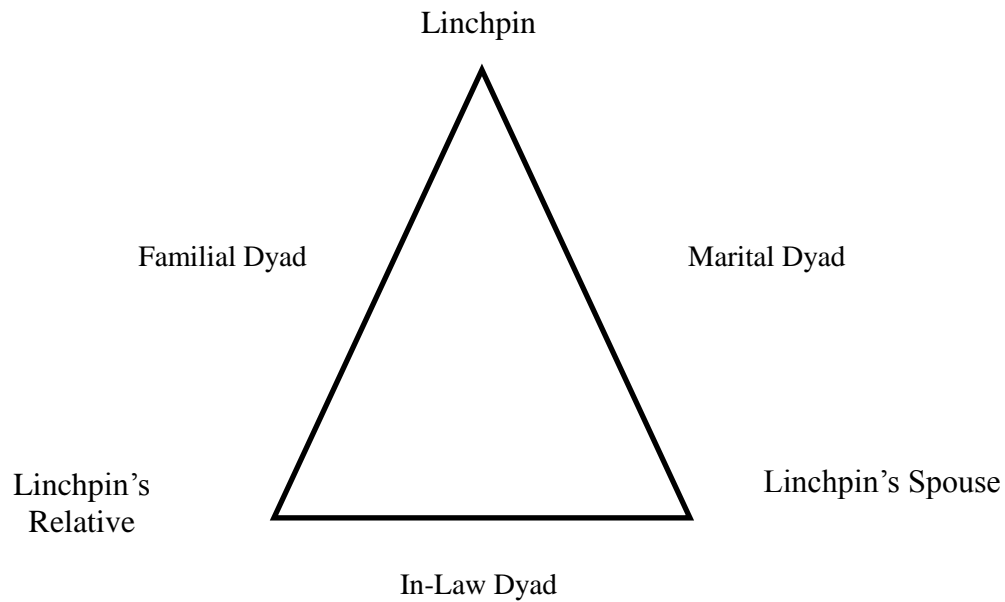
Similar to other life cycle transitions, such as the transition to marriage and parenthood (Holmberg & Veroff, 1996; Huston & Vangelisti, 1995; Surra, Batchelder, & Hughes, 1995), the transition to extended family carries important implications. In fact, becoming an extended family has repercussions that extend far beyond the in-law dyad. For children-in-law, the tenor of the in-law relationship is associated with marital quality and success (Bryant, Conger, & Meehan, 1992, Morr Serewicz et al., 2008), making establishing satisfying in-law relationships of paramount importance. Unfortunately, unlike other family relationships, in-law relationships lack clear relational scripts (Morr Serewicz, 2006). Thus, children-in-law may grapple with doubts regarding interaction norms and goals as they attempt to establish a relationship with their parents-in-law (Morr Serewicz, 2006b; Yoshimura, 2006). As a result, the transition to extended family can be a rather turbulent period fueled by the experience of uncertainty, interference, and conflicting goals, which may affect children-in-law's communication tendencies and have lasting effects on the quality of the in-law relationship (Cotterill, 1994; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Morr Serewicz et al., 2009).

In this chapter, a theoretical rationale connecting two rich research perspectives—the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals framework—is articulated to examine how the mechanisms of turbulence and multiple goals affects in-law communication, specifically topic avoidance and relational outcomes during the transition to extended family. First, I outline complexities inherent in the in-law relationship, which serves as a backdrop to understanding how turbulence, goals, and communication function within the in-law context. Second, the relational turbulence model is outlined and adapted to the in-law context. Third, a multiple goals framework is articulated to demonstrate the links between goals and communication. Finally, a

conceptual model linking turbulence, multiple goals, communication behaviors, and relational outcomes is presented.

### **The Complexity of In-Law Relationships**

Structural complexities inherent within in-law relationships often make negotiating the transition to extended family a complicated enterprise (Morr Serewicz, 2008). According to Morr Serewicz (2008), in-law relationships are defined by their triadic and non-voluntary nature. Morr Serewicz's (2008) triangular theory of in-law relationships states that in their simplest form in-law relationships form a triangle consisting of the linchpin, the linchpin's relative (parent-in-law), and the linchpin's spouse (child-in-law) (see Figure 1). Thus, the relative and spouse are brought together through their primary link with the linchpin (Duck, Foley, & Kirkpatrick, 2006; Morr Serewicz), rather than through a genuine desire to begin an independent relationship with one another. In addition, Morr Serewicz (2006b) suggested that the triadic nature of in-law relationships prevents parents- and children-in-law from "forming a truly dyadic relationship" (p. 104). As a result, the presence of the linchpin likely affects, for better or worse, how in-laws negotiate the transition to extended family. It is the combination of these two factors—the non-voluntary and triadic nature—that makes in-law relationships so challenging (Morr Serewicz, 2006a).



*Figure 1.* The in-law triad.

First, the involuntary nature of in-law relationships affects how in-laws relate. The in-law troika consists of three dyads: the marital dyad (linchpin and spouse), the in-law dyad (spouse and relative), and the familial dyad (linchpin and relative) (see Figure 1). Typically, both parents- and children-in-law privilege their relationship with the linchpin over their relationship with one another (Morr Serewicz, 2008). Both the relative and spouse are deeply committed to the familial and marital relationship, respectively, and only committed to the in-law relationship by default. As a result, unlike voluntary relationships such as romantic relationships and friendships, it is increasingly difficult to dissolve the in-law relationship due to the costs involved with such a decision (Morr Serewicz, 2006a, 2008; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). If children-in-law, for example, choose to dissolve their relationship with their parents-in-law, they

may effectively damage their marital relationship and sever intergenerational ties. Most children-in-law attempt to maintain a relationship with their parent-in-law due to their commitment to their spouse and to maintain intergenerational relationships (Morr Serewicz, 2006a). In addition, the involuntary relationship between children- and parents-in-law forces them, potentially, to endure more costs than individuals with voluntary ties (Morr Serewicz, 2008; Thibaut & Kelley).

Second, due to the triadic nature of the in-law relationship, the communication and behaviors of members of the in-law triangle are inextricably linked. More specifically, communication within the in-law dyad has repercussions for the entire in-law trio (Morr Serewicz, 2008). Conflict within the in-law dyad, for instance, is negatively linked to marital success (Bryant et al., 2001). Relational uncertainty and topic avoidance within the in-law dyad is connected to doubts and avoidant communication within the familial dyad (Mikucki, 2009). Viewed as a set, these results highlight the mutual influence among members of the in-law triad. Broadly, the structural complexity of in-law relationships presents challenges for in-law relating and communicating. These features likely shape how children-in-law experience the transition to extended family, including their experience of uncertainty, interference from in-laws, facilitation from in-laws, goals, and communication. The unique contributions of these challenges are discussed throughout the following sections.

### **Normative Transitions and Relational Turbulence**

The transition to extended family is defined as a normative transition (Carter & McGoldrick, 2005). In other words, marriage is an anticipated event. Despite the expected nature of marriage, most children-in-law do not anticipate the potential stress and difficulty of accepting a new family member and assimilating into a new family system (McGoldrick, 2005;

Prentice, 2008). The transition to extended family necessitates change and “previously functional ways of thinking and patterns of behavior must be revised to fit the new circumstances” (Solomon & Theiss, 2011, p. 199). Children-in-law must alter existing patterns of behavior in an effort to assimilate their parents-in-law into their lives and find their place in their new family-in-law. The lack of scripts available to guide children-in-law through this period of flux, however, may complicate the transition to extended family (Morr Serewicz, 2006). Although romantic relationships, both dating and marital relationships, are largely influenced by schemas that help guide behavior through relational scripts (Honeycutt & Cantrill, 2001; Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Greene, 1989), in-law relationships are rather abstract and absent of clear schemas to make sense of roles and expectations (Morr Serewicz, 2006). As a result, children-in-law may struggle as they attempt to develop interaction scripts to guide role and behavioral expectations and norms within the in-law dyad (Morr Serewicz, 2006).

The need to create interaction patterns or scripts implies important sources of uncertainty and turbulence for people in in-law relationships. Children-in-law, for example, may be unsure what to call their new parents-in-law or how to cultivate the in-law relationship (Jorgensen, 1994; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2011). In addition, children-in-law may have a variety of goals for the in-law relationship, which guide their communication tendencies within the relationship. For instance, children-in-law may want to cultivate a close relationship with their parents-in-law while simultaneously creating boundaries. Thus, children-in-law may be inclined to use avoidant behaviors to facilitate autonomy, yet these actions may prevent them from achieving their goal of a kin-like relationship. Doubts, interference, and conflicting and competing goals may mar the in-law relationship, sometimes permanently. When transitions are not successfully negotiated, problems may linger and create a distant or problematic in-law

relationship (Cotterill, 1989). Conversely, the ability to overcome obstacles presented during periods of transition may bolster closeness and provide an opportunity to discuss expectations for the in-law relationship (Solomon & Thiess, 2011). Although the manner in which in-laws traverse transitions and the relational outcomes that follow vary by family, one thing is consistent: the transition to extended family can be a turbulent experience.

In the following section, I review the first theoretical framework that informs the present investigation—the relational turbulence model.

### **Relational Turbulence Model**

The relational turbulence model (Solomon & Knobloch, 2001) was first advanced to examine the origins and outcomes of *turbulence*, defined as “the instability and chaos” (Solomon & Thiess, 2011, p. 200) that individuals experience during times of transition. During periods of turbulence, individuals experience “heightened emotional, cognitive, and communicative reactivity to relationship circumstances” (Theiss, Knobloch, Checton, & Magasmen-Conrad, 2009, p. 589). Originally applied to examine the transition from casual to serious dating (Knobloch, 2007; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001, 2004), the relational turbulence model has been extended to examine turbulence during other transitions within more established romantic relationships such as marriage (Knobloch, 2008; Knobloch, Miller, Bond, & Mannone, 2007), including the experience of breast cancer (Weber & Solomon, 2008) and infertility (Steuber & Solomon, 2008).

No research to date, however, has examined turbulence within the in-law context; given the change in familial level roles, rules, and boundaries necessitated by a child’s marriage, the transition to extended family is a context ripe for turmoil. Therefore, the present investigation extends the relational turbulence model to examine how turbulence may be one factor that affects

children-in-law's communication and, in turn, relational outcomes within the in-law dyad during this tenuous transitory period.

Solomon and Knobloch (2004) identified two key mechanisms that may contribute to the experience of relational turbulence during times of transition: relational uncertainty and interdependence. In the following sections, I review the current conceptualizations of these two turbulence-eliciting factors and present adapted articulations of uncertainty and interdependence that reflect salient concerns within the in-law context.

**Relational uncertainty.** *Relational uncertainty* is defined as “the degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within interpersonal relationships” (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999, p. 264). Relational uncertainty addresses intrapersonal doubts and concerns that intimate partners grapple with in ongoing relationships such as dating relationships (Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999), marriage (Knobloch, 2008a), and family relationships (Bevan, Stetzenbach, Batson, & Bullo, 2006). Relational uncertainty encompasses questions and doubts that arise from three discrete, yet interrelated, sources: self, partner, and relationship. *Self uncertainty* refers to people's doubts about their own participation within the relationship (Knobloch & Solomon, 2002b). *Partner uncertainty* refers to people's questions or doubts about their partner's involvement within the relationship (Knobloch & Solomon, 2002b). *Relationship uncertainty* focuses on the dyad as a unit and refers to doubts people have regarding the nature or future of the relationship (Knobloch & Solomon, 2002a).

In addition to the sources of relational uncertainty, which cut across a variety of relational domains (Berger & Bradac, 1982; Knobloch, 2008a), Knobloch (2008a) suggested that scholars should examine context specific themes of relational uncertainty in an effort to accurately capture experiences of doubt that are salient to the relational domain under examination.

Knobloch’s (2008a) examination of relational uncertainty within marriage illuminated 12 themes of relational uncertainty experienced by spouses, including commitment, finances, sex life, and childbearing/childrearing. Only one of these themes, commitment, reflected concerns espoused by dating dyads, emphasizing the importance of elucidating themes of relational uncertainty that reflect the context under investigation.

Following Knobloch’s (2008) recommendation, Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour (2012) conducted a qualitative investigation to illuminate themes of relational uncertainty experienced by children-in-law during the transition to extended family. Children-in-law (see Table 2.1) reported a variety of issues that they experienced uncertainty about regarding the in-law dyad. Children-in-law, for instance, doubted how much their parents-in-law approved of them and if their differences in values and beliefs would cause problems within the in-law relationship (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012).

Table 2.1

*Description and Exemplars of the Content of Children-in-law’s Relational and Family Uncertainty*

Level of uncertainty	Thematic category description	Exemplar
Relational uncertainty	<i>Approval and acceptance:</i> doubts regarding parents-in-law’s acceptance of approval of the child-in-law as an individual, spouse, and family member.	“Whether she approves of me for her son.” “If I will ever be fully accepted into their family.”
	<i>Communication with parents-in-law:</i> concerns regarding expectations for and interpretation of verbal and nonverbal communication.	“How to interact with them. Should I call them mom and dad, give them hugs.” “Their sarcastic sense of humor. I never know when they are joking.”

(table continues)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Level of uncertainty	Thematic category description	Exemplar
Family uncertainty	<i>Differences</i> : concerns regarding how differences between parents- and children-in-law are perceived and how they affect the in-law relationship.	“How we can get along with very different religious beliefs.”
	<i>Liking</i> : questions about parents-in-law’s degree of liking and feelings for the child-in-law.	“How their extreme religious belief will affect our relationship.”
		“How they feel about me?”
	<i>Relational quality</i> : concerns regarding the quality of the in-law relationship, including desire and expectations.	“If they like me?”
		“The nature of our relationship in general.”
	<i>Balancing family membership</i> : doubt regarding how to manage both sets of parents/families.	“How I feel about letting this man into my life?”
“Splitting the amount of time between my family and my in-laws.”		
“Managing holidays with both our families.”		
<i>Extended family relationships</i> : concern regarding how families will get along.		“How our families will get along.”
	“How they will feel about my family.”	
<i>Family expectations</i> : doubts about duties and commitments children-in-law are expected to fulfill.	“Expectations surrounding family involvement and responsibility.”	
	“Expected time commitment with in-laws.”	

(table continues)

Table 2.1 (continued)

Level of uncertainty	Thematic category description	Exemplar
	<i>Grandparent involvement</i> : doubts regarding the in-law's involvement, influence, and role as a grandparent.	"How involved and responsible she will be as a grandparent to our future children."
		"How comfortable I feel leaving my future children in their care."
	<i>Meddling</i> : concern regarding parents-in-law obtrusive behavior.	"How much they will try to interfere in the relationship."
		"MIL getting too involved in our life."
	<i>Parenting input</i> : concerns about in-law's unsolicited input regarding childbearing and childrearing decisions	"Their 'requirements' for how we raise our kids when we have them."
		"Them telling us how to raise our children."
	<i>Proximity</i> : concerns regarding in-law's reactions to geographical decisions and how geographical distance will impact the in-law triad.	"How will his relationship with his parents change after we move."
		"How far away we'll live."
	<i>Relationship support</i> : doubts regarding parents-in-law's feelings, and opinions about and approval of the couple.	"How much my in-laws accept this relationship."
		"Happiness of us getting married."

(table continues)

Table 2.1 (*continued*)

Level of uncertainty	Thematic category description	Exemplar
In-law uncertainty	<i>Triadic influence</i> : concern about how the triadic nature of the in-law relationship will impact members of the in-law triad.	<p>“How fights between them and I would affect my relationship with my spouse.”</p> <p>“My fiancé and future father-in-laws strained relationship adding stress to my relationship with them.”</p>
	<i>Gossip</i> : concerns about the extended family’s level of gossip about the child-in-law.	<p>“Whether my future mother in-law gossips about me.”</p> <p>“What they say about me when I’m not around.”</p>
	<i>In-law as individual</i> : doubts regarding the parent-in-law’s character, actions, and health.	<p>“MILs ability to take financial care of herself.”</p> <p>“Her health.”</p>

Although several themes of in-law uncertainty are conceptually similar to the content of relational uncertainty with both dating and marital dyads (e.g., *liking* and *religion/spirituality*; Knobloch, 2008; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999), the majority of children-in-law’s uncertainties were distinct from the content of uncertainty prevalent in romantic relationship. In addition, further examination of the data suggests that uncertainty within the in-law relationship is not confined to concerns about involvement within the parent- and child-in-law relationship

(Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). In fact, children-in-law reported experiencing doubts about one another's character and concerns about how the in-law would impact other familial relationships. For instance, children-in-law expressed concerns regarding the relationship between their family-of-origin and new family-in-law (e.g., "What will my parents-in-law think of my parents") and how their in-law relationship would affect the marital relationship (e.g., "Will fights between her [mother-in-law] and I affect my relationship with my spouse"). In addition, children-in-law reported doubts about the parent-in-law as an individual. Children-in-law questioned the parent-in-law's behaviors, such as gossip (e.g., "What does my mother-in-law say about me when I'm not around"), and the parent-in-law's values and beliefs (e.g., "Unsure about what's important to her in life"). These broader levels of doubt reflect the triadic nature of the in-law relationship by demonstrating that uncertainty within the in-law dyad also sparks doubts about larger family system relationships and the in-law as an individual.

The interconnectedness of in-law uncertainty appears to be similar to the concept of uncertainty chains (Babrow & Matthias, 2009), specifically *chaining across foci*. Babrow and Matthias noted that when the experience of uncertainty regarding one issue (e.g., meddling behaviors) transforms or "chains" into uncertainty about additional, related issues, such as how the parent-in-law will affect the marital relationship (i.e., triadic influence), chaining across foci has occurred. The broadened scope of uncertainty within the in-law context appears to extend the parameters set forth by the definition of relational uncertainty. As a result, throughout this paper I employ the term *family uncertainty* to refer to questions about other family constellations that stem from ambiguity within the in-law relationship, and *in-law uncertainty* to refer to concerns regarding the in-law as an individual, including partner attributes and behaviors (Berger & Calabrese, 1975).

On the surface, it may appear that certain themes of family and parent-in-law uncertainty are conceptually similar to sources of relational uncertainty. Doubts about in-laws' character and actions, for instance, appear to mirror partner uncertainty. However, partner uncertainty centers on doubts about the partners' involvement in the relationship (e.g., "How certain am I about my partner's commitment to this relationship?" or "How certain am I about my partner's goals for this relationship?"; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999, 2002a), whereas in-law uncertainty about the partner stems from questions about the in-law as a person rather their involvement within the in-law relationship, echoing the sentiments of uncertainty reduction theory (Berger, 1979). Thus, the constructs of family and in-law uncertainty encapsulate questions that do not stem from queries about participation in the parent- and child-in-law dyad, but rather focus on doubts about the other and how the other will affect the family system.

Although the experience of relational uncertainty may be beneficial to relationships by preventing relational ennui (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Livingston, 1980) and inhibiting communication that may cause embarrassment or relational damage (Knobloch, 2007a), in general, empirical evidence suggests that relational uncertainty is detrimental to interpersonal relationships. The experience of relational uncertainty heightens sensitivity during times of transition, making individuals more reactive to events and interactions (Solomon & Theiss, 2011). Moreover, relational uncertainty tends to elicit cognitive, emotional, and communicative turmoil (Theiss et al., 2009). Within romantic relationships, relational uncertainty is linked to the experience of negative emotions, such as jealousy anger, fear, sadness, and hurt (W.A. Afifi & Reichert, 1996; Knobloch, Miller, & Carpenter, 2007; Theiss et al., 2009). Dating partners experiencing relational uncertainty also tend to appraise partners' irritating behaviors as more negative and threatening to the relationship (Solomon & Knobloch, 2004; Theiss & Knobloch,

2009), and perceive less support from social network members (Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006). Furthermore, relational uncertainty is inversely related with relational well-being (Knobloch, 2008a; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). In addition to cognitive, emotional, and relational outcomes, relational uncertainty is associated with a variety of communication behaviors, including topic avoidance (Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Knobloch & Satterlee, 2009).

Relational uncertainty is correlated with a variety of message production and message processing behaviors. In regard to message production, evidence suggests that under conditions of relational uncertainty individuals tend to engage in topic avoidance (Bevan et al., 2006; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004) and produce less fluent messages (Knobloch, 2006). In fact, Knobloch (2006) found that individuals experiencing relational uncertainty produced less effective, less fluent, and less relationship centered messages when requesting a date.

Furthermore, under conditions of relational uncertainty, romantic partners tend to avoid discussing feelings of jealousy (Theiss & Solomon, 2006a) and partner irritations (Theiss & Solomon, 2006b). Relational uncertainty also presents challenges for message processing (Knobloch & Satterlee, 2009). When partners experience relational uncertainty, they tend to have difficulty drawing accurate conclusions from messages (Knobloch & Solomon, 2005), lack confidence in their own communication abilities (Knobloch, 2006), and perceive their partners' behavior more negatively or pessimistically (Knobloch, Miller, Bond, & Mannone, 2007).

Within the in-law domain, relational and family uncertainty appears to produce similar, negative outcomes. More specifically, mothers-in-law's relational uncertainty is positively associated with their jealousy toward their daughters-in-law (Mikucki, 2009). In addition, parents-in-law's (both mothers- and fathers-in-law) relational, family, and in-law uncertainty is inversely related to family-in-group status, such that in-laws experiencing uncertainty are less

likely to consider their in-law to be genuine family members (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Furthermore, parents-in-law experiencing relational and family uncertainty tend to employ avoidant communication within the in-law dyad (Mikucki-Enyart). Viewed as a set, relational, family, and individual uncertainty appears to intensify emotional, cognitive, and communicative reactivity. Given that the transition to extended family elicits doubts and ambiguity regarding multiple family relationships (e.g., in-law, parent-child, spousal), relational uncertainty and family uncertainty likely create turmoil during times of change. The mechanisms of turbulence may serve as a potential impediment to effective in-law communication and relationship development.

**Interdependence processes.** A second mechanism that may contribute to the experience of turbulence during relational transitions is the two-pronged process of negotiating interdependence, which allows partners to “perform activities and meet their everyday goals” (Solomon & Theiss, 2011, p. 204). Establishing interdependence within a relationship is often a process of trial and error marked by failure and success, or in relational turbulence parlance interference and facilitation. *Interference from partners* occurs when a “partner’s involvement makes an action more difficult to perform or prevents a desired outcome” (Solomon & Theiss, 2011, p. 205). Conversely, *facilitation from partners* occurs when a relational partner aides in goal attainment and enhances task performance (Solomon & Theiss). Whereas interference from partners may engender polarized emotions, cognition, and communication, due to frustration over goal disruptions (Berschied, 1983; Solomon & Knobloch, 2004; Theiss et al., 2009), facilitation from partners tends to attenuate these experiences by assisting in the achievement of goals. Both interference and facilitation from partners, however, are only relevant to the extent partners exert *influence*, which is defined as the “ability to participate in and affect the

performance of an activity” (Solomon & Theiss, p. 205) over one another’s daily routines.

Similar to relational uncertainty, interference from partners appears to heighten reactivity to relational events during periods of change. Interference has been linked to negative evaluations of the state of the relationship. High partner interference, for instance, is associated with more severe appraisals of partner irritations, perceptions that partner irritations are more relationally threatening (Solomon & Knobloch, 2004; Theiss & Knobloch, 2009), and perceptions that hurtful messages are more intentional and detrimental to the relationship (Theiss et al., 2009). In addition, under conditions of interference, romantic partners perceive their social networks as hindering their relationship development (Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006), and they experience jealousy (Knobloch, Solomon, & Cruz, 2001; Theiss & Solomon, 2006a) and negative emotions more intensely (Knobloch, Miller, & Carpenter, 2007) than when interference is low. Interference from partners also heightens communicative responses, engendering more direct communication regarding irritations (Knobloch, 2008; Theiss & Solomon, 2006b).

Although it is associated with developing interdependence, few empirical studies have examined the role of facilitation from partners. Of the studies that have, results indicate that facilitation is inversely associated with negative emotions (Knobloch, Miller, & Carpenter, 2007; McLaren, Solomon, & Priem, 2011). Thus, whereas interference from partners may make individuals susceptible to polarized cognition, emotional, and communication reactions, facilitation from partners may assuage these responses.

Traditionally, researchers employing the relational turbulence model have used the labels *interference from partners* and *facilitation from partners*, as noted above, to refer to the process of establishing interdependence. The majority of this work, however, has focused on

interdependence within romantic relationships. As a result, the referent of “partner” in the label has become associated with a romantic partner. To distinguish interdependence processes within the in-law dyad from negotiating interdependence within romantic dyads, the labels *interference from in-laws* and *facilitation from in-laws* will be used throughout the remainder of this paper.

***Interdependence processes within the in-law context.*** Similar to romantic relationships, the process of establishing interdependence within the in-law dyad is marked by highs and lows. In addition, the triadic and non-voluntary nature of in-law relationships likely affects the process of negotiating interdependence. Indirect evidence from the in-law literature suggests that children-in-law may be concerned about their parent-in-law’s ability to thwart goal and task attainment (Cotterill, 1994; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2011, 2012). Some children-in-law, for example, may perceive that their in-laws interfere with their ability to establish an independent family unit, create new family rituals and traditions, and instill their own beliefs and values (Cotterill; Merrill; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2011, 2012). In other words, similar to romantic partners, in-laws have the ability to interfere in one another’s lives.

Despite this general similarity, negotiating interdependence within the in-law context is distinct in several ways, partly due to the triadic and non-voluntary nature of in-law ties (Morr Serewicz, 2008). First, the behaviors children-in-law perceive as interference are distinct from interference within romantic relationships. In her seminal study on in-law relationships, Duvall (1954) noted that parent-in-law interference included meddling behaviors and intrusions on privacy. Cotterill (1994) defined in-law interference as any restraint an in-law imposes on one another, including “action and non-action, advice-giving, and verbal criticism” (p. 81). In addition, Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour’s (2012) study revealed that children-in-law defined

interference as attempts to influence the marital couple's decisions or behavior and provide unsolicited advice or opinions (e.g., "Always telling us what we need to do," and "How they will try to be involved in us making decisions in the future"). Although goal and task interruptions are at the heart of many of these issues, these results suggest the conceptualization of interference within the in-law context is distinct from interference within the romantic domain.

Second, in-laws have the ability to affect different goals and tasks than dating partners. Solomon and colleagues' (2001, 2004, 2011) examinations of interdependence tend to focus on interference or facilitation at a local level. Solomon and Knobloch (2001) stated that "interdependence begins when an individual grants a partner influence in everyday activities" (p. 808). Research suggests that in-laws do, to some extent, exert influence on one another's day-to-day activities. Parents-in-law, for instance, may prevent the newly married couple from enjoying their leisure time. Children-in-law in Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour's (2012) study noted that their parents-in-law would regularly "show up at our house and walk-in unannounced and uninvited," making it impossible to utilize their free time effectively or as desired. Still, daily interference and facilitation is likely not as salient for in-laws due to cultural prescriptions that encourage the younger generation to establish boundaries between their family-of-origin and their newly established family (Merrill, 2007). In fact, very few in-laws have daily contact with one another (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill). In one study, Rittenour and Soliz (2009) reported that only 23.2% of daughters-in-law ( $N = 190$ ) had either daily or weekly contact with their mothers-in-law. The majority of participants interacted with their in-laws much less frequently: monthly (32.6%), every six months (22.6%), yearly (8.4%), and less than yearly (12.6). As a result, children-in-law are more likely to feel the effect of interdependence processes on broader, family level issues rather than daily tasks.

Children-in-law's own definitions and exemplars of interference demonstrate how interference operates at a family level. Children-in-law, for example, define interference in terms of how parents-in-law impede family goals, such as the development of the independent family or the establishment of new family traditions (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). One participant in Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour's study noted that her mother-in-law's interference made it difficult to exert autonomy because her mother-in-law was "manipulative and has expressed how she believes we should live our lives, raise our kids, etc." Taken together, evidence suggests that in-laws experience *daily interference*, impeding lower order goal accomplishment such as socializing and time management, and *family interference*, which impedes higher order objective attainment including maintaining intergenerational ties, exerting autonomy, and passing down traditions, rituals, and beliefs. Interestingly, daily and family interference appear to be inextricably linked such that instances of daily interference are often perceived as family interference as well. Parents-in-law's unannounced visits, for example, not only disrupt the marital couple's ability to enjoy their leisure time, but also undermine the younger generation's ability to establish boundaries and create an autonomous family unit.

Although portrayals of in-laws, especially parents-in-law, as meddling and intrusive dominate cultural mythology (Cotterill, 1994; Duval, 1954), in-laws can also help facilitate aspirations and ventures through the provision of mutual aid and support (Goetting, 1990). Similar to interference, facilitation occurs at both a daily and family level. *Daily facilitation* allows in-laws to provide one another with a variety of aid to help accomplish everyday tasks and goals (Solomon & Knobloch, 2001), such as household maintenance/chores or child-care (Cotterill; 1994; Goetting, 1990). Several daughters-in-law in Cotterill's (1994) study, for example, described receiving assistance from their mothers-in-law after childbirth, including

help with cooking, laundry, and childcare. These daughters-in-law were grateful for assistance, as it allowed them to adjust to motherhood without the stress of worrying about everyday tasks, such as household maintenance. In addition, children-in-law often provide direct caregiving support to aging parents-in-law (Globerman, 1996), which helps parents-in-law and frees other family members to accomplish their daily goals and tasks.

In addition to assistance with such daily activities, *family facilitation* allows in-laws to help facilitate higher order family goals and tasks. For instance, children-in-law often play a critical role in facilitating the maintenance of familial bonds (Cotterill, 1994; Prentice, 2008; Turner et al., 2006). Daughters-in-law, for instance, often serve as kin-keepers between husbands and mothers (in-law) as well as help repair relational damage (Cotterill). A mother-in-law interviewed by Turner et al. stated that her daughter-in-law helped repair her strained relationship with her son. Moreover, Prentice (2008) found that linchpins often facilitated the in-law relationship by mediating conflict or difficult discussions and encouraging relational development. Overall, in-law interference and facilitation from in-laws appears to include a wide-array of behaviors that occur at both a daily and family level.

A third deviation between interdependence within romantic relationships versus in-law relationships is the focus of interference and facilitation. Romantic partners are often concerned with how their relational partner impedes or promotes *individual* goal and task accomplishment (e.g., “My partner interferes with things I need to do each day”; Knobloch & Solomon, 2004, p. 805). Interdependence processes within the in-law context tend to center on how the parent-in-law helps or thwarts goal and task achievement at a *dyadic level* or higher (e.g., “How she will interfere in our life [marital dyad] after marriage,” Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). Morr Serewicz (2006b) argued that due to the triadic nature of the in-law relationships, members of the

in-law triad have the ability to either interfere with or facilitate the development of relationships within the in-law triangle. Data from a study of 118 affianced adults supports this assertion (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour (2012) found that children-in-law expressed concern over the extent to which their parents-in-law would interfere in their lives. Interestingly, participants did not couch their worries in terms that were exclusive to their individual behavior (e.g., “My in-law interferes with *my* daily routines”). Instead, children-in-law described interference in triadic terms “how will my in-laws influence *our* [marital dyad] decision making?” and “How much will they interfere in our [marital dyad] relationship.” Thus, interdependence within the in-law context appears to be shaped by the triadic nature of the in-law relationship.

Finally, although interference appears to be germane to romantic relationship development and occurs during the natural progression from casual to serious dating (Knobloch & Solomon, 2004; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001), within the in-law context interference is one of the strongest taboos, with many parents- and children-in-law highly attuned to its potentially destructive nature (Cotterill, 1994). Moreover, facilitation within the in-law context has two sides. When assistance is welcomed, it is often viewed as facilitation; when it is unwelcomed or unsolicited, the same behaviors may be perceived as interference (Cotterill, 1994). Thus, the very nature of in-law interdependence is precarious. Furthermore, as noted earlier, children-in-law may tolerate more undesirable behaviors, such as interference from parents-in-law, due to the costs involved with dissolving the in-law tie (Morr Serewicz; Thiabaut & Kelley, 1959).

Despite the complex nature of negotiating interdependence within in-law relationships, the outcomes probably are similar to those in romantic relationships. More precisely, interference from in-laws heightens, and facilitation from in-laws attenuates, reactivity. Mutual

facilitation appears to benefit the entire family triad and larger family system (Morr Serewicz, 2006a). Exchanges of rewards between in-laws helps make the relationship seem valuable and facilitate relational growth (Argyle & Henderson, 1985). Interference, however, results in a host of negative outcomes for all members of the in-law triad. Veroff, Douvan, and Hatchett (1995) found that interference from family members predicted marital instability for both White and Black couples during the early years of marriage (years 2 through 4). Fischer (1983) found that when mothers-in-law appeared to interfere after the birth of a child, conflict between sons and their mothers increased. In addition, interference appears to be the root of many conflicts, either expressed or not, between mothers- and daughters-in-law (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007). Daughters-in-law in Merrill's study reported mixed-reactions to interference. Whereas some daughters-in-law "let it go" in an effort to avoid conflict and confrontation, others took their mothers-in-law head on. Thus, interference appears to engender heightened communicative reactions from both parents- and children-in-law.

Although the in-law relationship is involuntary and in-laws are more or less "stuck" with each another, it should be acknowledged that some children-in-law may have no desire to establish interdependence with their parents-in-law, either due to situational or relational factors. Parents-in-law that live greater distances from their children-in-law, for example, may not have an opportunity to interfere with or help facilitate tasks and goals. Furthermore, some in-laws may be only weakly tied to the triad (Morr Serewicz, 2006a) or lack a desire to establish a strong relationship with the in-law or marital and/or familial dyad. For instance, if linchpins have a tenuous relationship with their parents and the marital dyad does not rely on the paternal in-laws for support, then the tie between parent- and child-in-law may be relatively weak. Therefore, opportunities for interference and facilitation may be remote. However, most adults share a

strong relationship with their parents well into adulthood (Fingerman & Hay, 2002); therefore, it is likely that children-in-law have to negotiate interdependence with their parents-in-law, to some extent.

## **Summary**

The transition to extended family appears to be a turbulent experience fueled by uncertainty (i.e., relational and family) and interdependence negotiation (i.e., interference and facilitation). The mechanisms of turbulence may elicit extreme reactions, including communicative reactions (Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Knobloch, Miller, Bond et al., 2007). Research suggests that communication in the early stages of the in-law relationship may set the stage for subsequent communication and relating (Merrill, 2007). Therefore, understanding how turbulence impacts children-in-law's communication during the transition to extended family is crucial to helping in-laws traverse this period of change successfully.

Although turbulence is undoubtedly associated with more reactive in-law communication tendencies, the mechanisms of turbulence may not solely account for these reactions. As implied by evidence that children-in-law vary in how they respond to interference from parents-in-law, turbulence involves an inherently complicated period in relationships, but different individuals may have different objectives within such situations, and this would influence the outcomes of that turbulence.

Scholars agree that communication is strategic or goal-oriented (Caughlin, 2010; Jacobson, 2002), and individuals engage in communication to pursue specific aims, such as providing advice (Goldsmith & Fitch, 1997), exerting influence (Dillard, 1990; Dillard, Anderson, & Knobloch, 2002), or maintaining the relationship (Clark & Delia, 1979). Even when individuals experience turbulence their reactions are likely shaped by their specific

interaction goals. In other words, the mechanisms of turbulence likely influence the way individuals perceive the relational context of a new in-law relationship, meaning turbulence would shape individuals' communicative goals during interactions with in-laws. In the following section, I review the second theoretical framework that informs the present investigation—a multiple goals approach.

### **A Multiple Goals Approach**

Caughlin (2010) employed the term *multiple goals theories* to refer to a constellation of interpersonal communication theories that examine the role that goals play in communication. Broadly speaking, goals are defined as “end states for which individuals strive” (Berger, 2007, p. 50). In any given interaction, individuals must manage multiple and often conflicting goals concurrently (Berger, 2005; Dillard, 2008; Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989). More specifically, individuals must attend to instrumental, identity, and relational goals simultaneously, forcing them to, at times, prioritize certain goals over others (Samp & Monahan, 2011; Samp & Solomon, 1999; Wilson, 2002). When parents-in-law, for instance, wish to give children-in-law advice (instrumental goal), they may risk seeming intrusive or casting their children-in-law as incompetent (identity goal).

The attainment and management of goals involves taking actions. Multiple goals theories suggest that goals serve as an impetus for *action*, the behaviors that are employed to facilitate goal attainment (Dillard, 2008). In other words, goals activate communication strategies (Tracy, 1991; Wilson, 2002). In addition to helping scholars understand message production, a multiple goals approach allows scholars to understand message processing. Not only do goals motivate behavior, they also help explain it (Tracy, 1991; Wilson, 2002). Goals allow interlocutors to understand or make inferences about their cointerlocutors' objective(s) (Berger, 2007).

Moreover, interpretations of goals not only shape the meaning of the interaction, but also influence outcomes (Caughlin, 2010; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010).

Much research employing a multiple goals perspective has focused on micro-level exchanges (Sabee & Wilson, 2005; Samp & Monahan, 2011; Samp & Solomon, 1999), however, scholars are beginning to note the importance of examining the role of goals (and perceptions of goals) across interactions and how they link to global perceptions of communication and relational outcomes (Caughlin, 2010; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Given that in-laws likely pursue goals over multiple interactions, the strategies they employ to achieve their aims may result in a global assessment of their communication behavior (Caughlin, 2010). Global assessments or attributions for in-laws' communication behaviors are linked to relational outcomes and behavioral intentions within a variety of relational domains, including the in-law context (e.g., Rittenour & Soliz, 2009).

Research on in-law communication has looked at how communication behaviors, such as disclosure or avoidance, relate to in-law satisfaction, marital satisfaction, family in-group status, and caregiving intentions (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Morr Serewicz et al., 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). Although illuminating, these studies do not provide insight as to *why* in-laws employ specific communication strategies, how they *interpret* one another's communicative intent, and the *outcomes* of goal-directed communication (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010; Tracy, 1991; Wilson, 2002). Understanding motives for and outcomes of in-law communication is critical because in-law communication patterns have relational implications for the in-law dyad, marital dyad, and familial dyad (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz et al., 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). Hence, a multiple goals approach has the potential to help researchers understand and explain the complexities of in-law

communication.

Before arguments regarding the link between in-laws' goals, communication, and outcomes can be advanced, it is necessary to delineate social goals that are germane to all relational contexts and goals that are unique to the in-law experience. Although no study, to my knowledge, has examined in-laws' communication goals explicitly, data from qualitative studies of in-law relationships (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki, 2007a) along with existing goals literature (Clark & Delia, 1979; Dillard, 1989; Guerrero & Afifi, 1999) provide guidance for conceptualizing relevant in-law goals.

### **Relevant In-Law Goals**

As noted above, Clark and Delia (1979) suggested that three broad categories of goals—*instrumental*, *identity*, and *relational*—compete for attention during all interpersonal interactions. Instrumental goals refer to the objective of the interaction, such as reducing uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) or asking for a favor (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Identity goals, or individuals' efforts to maintain their own and their partner's self-image (Goffman, 1967), are salient as individuals attempt to achieve their instrumental goals. Finally, relational goals refer to individuals' desire to establish or maintain a valued relationship.

Although these three overarching goal classes are salient across relational domains, the in-law literature suggests that a variety of micro-level goals are subsumed under these broad classes (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Pfeifer, 1989). In addition, children-in-law's goals do not appear to be mutually exclusive or confined to the in-law dyad due to the triadic nature of in-law relationships. In other words, certain children-in-law goals may be simultaneously employed to achieve both instrumental and relationship goals. Some children-in-law's goals may focus on ambitions within relationships outside the in-law dyad, including the in-law triad and the larger

extended family. Given the specific qualities of interaction goals in this context, in the following subsections I define six goal classes that likely are particularly salient for children-in-law.

**Boundary management.** Managing boundaries also appears to be a salient goal for children-in-law (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Within the in-law context, boundaries are used to establish and maintain relationships, create rules for interaction, and demarcate who is and who is not considered a bona fide family member (Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Petronio, 2002). In addition, children-in-law often use boundaries to accomplish the central task of establishing an autonomous family unit (Merrill, 2007). In order to do this, children-in-law, along with their spouses, must erect boundaries around their nuclear families as they attempt to gain independence from their respective families-of-origin (Lopata, 1999; McGoldrick, 2005). At the same time, however, children-in-law have a strong desire to be included in their extended family's boundaries. As Merrill (2007) noted, children-in-law want to "be part of the overall in-law family while also wanting to isolate and protect their own nuclear family" (Merrill, 2007, p. 35). Although research suggests that children-in-law are primarily concerned with creating boundaries and gaining access to their in-laws' boundaries, given that in-law relationships can be a large source of support, children-in-law may also wish to grant access to their boundaries and include their parents-in-law in their lives (Merrill; Turner et al., 2006).

Children-in-law must manage both physical and metaphorical boundaries (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2008; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). For example, children-in-law often wish to maintain physical boundaries around their home. Children-in-law often do not appreciate when in-laws make unannounced visits, especially when parents-in-law enter into the home without knocking or ringing the doorbell (Cotterill; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). In addition,

children-in-law in Cotterill's (1994) study reported that mothers-in-law often came into the marital home and began rearranging decorations, cleaning, and taking over in a manner that conveyed disregard for the younger generation's physical boundaries.

Children-in-law also maintain metaphorical boundaries to demarcate who is and who is not a member of the family system. Children-in-law may wish to manage privacy boundaries by attempting to regulate the dissemination of private information (Petronio, 2002). In-laws manage both personal boundaries, which include information about the in-law, and collective boundaries, which include private information about the family system, (Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). Sharing private information is seen as confirmation of family status, whereas withholding information is generally viewed as denial into the family boundary (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz & Canary; Petronio). Children-in-law can grant or deny access, with varying success, to both personal and collective boundaries. Information held within the personal boundary is owned and controlled solely by the in-law. Therefore, the child-in-law can unilaterally decide whether to reveal or conceal personal information (Petronio, 2002). Private information within the collective boundary, however, is co-owned by multiple family members (Petronio). As a result, in-laws can often link into a boundary system through third-party revelations. Within the in-law triad, for example, parents-in-law may be linked to the collective boundary through the linchpin not the child-in-law. Despite this, children-in-law may still attempt to restrict collectively held information as a way of denying their parent-in-law family membership (Petronio). More broadly, managing both physical and metaphorical boundaries is germane to the in-law experience.

**Cultivate the desired in-law relationship.** As noted earlier, children-in-law undoubtedly need to maintain some relationship with their parents-in-law, yet the closeness of

the desired relationship varies greatly (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Pfeifer, 1989). Several typologies characterizing in-law relationships exist, and despite varying labels data reveals that in-laws develop relationships that typically fall into one of three categories: associate, friend, and family (Fischer, 1986; Merrill; Pfeifer). An *associate relationship* is characterized by its obligatory nature. In-laws in these relationships believe that their sole connection is the linchpin and rely on the linchpin to play a primary role in the in-law relationship (Pfeifer). In-laws in this relationship do not make independent efforts to contact one another or cultivate the relationship.

A *friend relationship* is defined by their peer-like nature (Pfeifer). In-laws who view each other as friends typically share mutual interests, engage in activities independent of the linchpin, and encourage open communication (Fischer; Merrill; Pfeifer). Finally, a family relationship is characterized by intimacy and closeness. Within these relationships, in-laws typically draw on parent-child norms to guide interaction, typically leading to hierarchical status differences (Morr Serewicz, 2006b; Pfeifer). In-law as family relationships, however, do not replace family of origin relationships. Both parents- and children-in-law agree that no matter how hard they try there is still something “different” about the in-law relationship, such as lack of unconditional love or a shared family history that makes them distinct from family of origin ties (Merrill; Pfeifer).

Unfortunately, in-laws’ relational definitions do not always converge (Morr Serewicz, 2006b; Pfeifer, 1989). Children-in-law, for instance, may want a peer-like relationship with their parents-in-law, while parents-in-law prefer a more familial tie. These relational expectations undoubtedly motivate specific communication strategies, and when in-laws’ goals clash, conflict, disappointment, and misinterpretation of communication behaviors likely ensue.

**Establish a positive in-law identity.** Similar to Clark and Delia’s (1979) definition,

children-in-law are often concerned with establishing and maintaining a desired identity. Identity goals refer to children-in-law's desire to *establish a positive in-law identity*. Children-in-law cultivate ideas of a positive in-law identity from a variety of sources, including popular culture or their parents' relationship with their in-laws (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007). Although children-in-law may hold multiple identities over time as the in-law relationship develops and changes (Merrill, 2007), findings from several studies suggest that children-in-law, especially in the early years of marriage, want to establish an identity as a suitable spouse and extended family member (Merrill; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). For example, a son-in-law in Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour's (2012) study questioned whether his in-laws thought he was a "good match" for their daughter. In addition, children-in-law also wish to establish an identity as a married couple and family (Merrill), a notion that is often supported, at least in theory, by parents-in-law. One mother-in-law in Merrill's study noted, "You have to honor their family and realize that they are a family, a separate entity from you" (p. 139). The ability of parents-in-law to support the development of the marital dyad's new family identity has significant positive relational implications for the in-law triad (Arnstein, 1987; Merrill).

**Maintain family relationships.** Another interaction goal of children-in-law is the ability to maintain relationships in light of establishing boundaries, which highlights the often conflicting nature of goals (Berger, 2005; Dillard, 2008; Dillard et al., 1989). Unlike relational goals articulated by Clark and Delia (1979), children-in-law's desire to establish and maintain the relationship does not always solely focus on the dyadic relationship between parents- and children-in-law. The triadic nature of in-law relationships results in children-in-law having relational goals that concern all members of the in-law triad and beyond. Accomplishing these goals, however, may be facilitated through the in-law relationship. In other words, in-law

relationships are not always the end, but often, a means to an end, especially when it comes to relational maintenance. Research suggests that children-in-law are likely concerned about maintaining three distinct relationships: the in-law relationship, the intergenerational relationship, and the linchpin relationship (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007).

Due to the triadic and non-voluntary nature of in-law relationships, these three seemingly independent relationships are also inextricably linked such that accomplishing one goal pertaining to one helps facilitate additional relational goals. The ability to *maintain the in-law relationship*, for instance, may help children-in-law *maintain the linchpin relationship* (the relationship between the linchpin and spouse) and *maintain intergenerational relationships* (relationships between the triad members and extended family, including grandchildren, grandparents). For example, children-in-law may encounter negative consequences and difficulty attaining other relational goals if they do not maintain a relationship with their parents-in-law. Negative in-law relationships are linked to an increased risk of divorce and reduced marital success (Bryant et al., 2001; Timmer & Veroff, 2000). Additionally, although in-law relationships are often portrayed in a negative light, in-laws can be a tremendous source of emotional, financial, and instrumental support for children-in-law and grandchildren (Goetting, 1990). Daughters-in-law across several studies noted that they had positive relationships with their in-laws (Merrill, 2007; Pfeifer, 1989) and felt obligated to help in-laws maintain relationships with their spouses and grandchildren (Merrill). Furthermore, recent research emphasizes the importance of intergenerational ties. Findings suggest that grandparents help transmit family heritage and traditions, promote skill development, and serve as a source of friendship and support (Tyszkowa, 1991). More broadly, children-in-law may have a vested interest in maintaining in-law relationships as it may aid their ability to maintain their

relationship with the spouse and retain strong ties between their children and their grandparents.

**Manage uncertainty.** An abundance of literature suggests that in-law relationships are difficult to negotiate due to their ambiguous nature (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz, 2006b). Mikucki-Enyart and colleagues (2011; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012) found that children-in-law grapple with a variety of doubts at both the dyadic and family level. Given that uncertainty appears to preclude in-laws from establishing satisfying relationships (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011), it is likely that children-in-law may be motivated, to some extent, to manage uncertainty. How children-in-law manage their uncertainty, however, likely varies. Some children-in-law may wish to establish appropriate norms for interaction or may want to know how to interpret their parent-in-law's behavior; for instance, is a parent-in-law's use of sarcasm a demonstration of affection or disdain (Prentice, 2009)? As a result, these children-in-law may be motivated to reduce their uncertainty and engage in behaviors that facilitate this goal (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Other children-in-law may wish to maintain their current level of ambiguity in an effort to protect themselves from undesired information or to remain optimistic about the circumstances (Brashers, 2001). For example, children-in-law may avoid discussions regarding their parent-in-law's feeling about their relationship because they prefer not to know what their parent-in-law truly thinks of them. In addition, as outlined earlier, children-in-law likely have three different types of uncertainty to manage—family uncertainty, in-law uncertainty, and relational uncertainty—which they may manage similarly or differently. Children-in-law may employ divergent management strategies based on whether the uncertainty pertains to the in-law dyad or the larger family system. Regardless on the strategy employed, children-in-law appear to have a desire to manage uncertainty.

**Provide support.** Research suggests that in-laws often engage in patterns of mutual

support and aid (Goetting, 1990). As parents-in-law age, children and children-in-law are likely to provide parents-in-law with instrumental aid in the form of helping with household tasks and caregiving duties (Cotterill). However, negative relationships between parents- and children-in-law are negatively linked with children-in-law's caregiving intentions (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). Although some children-in-law may not have a desire to provide the in-laws with support, they view supportive behaviors as an expectation of marriage and in-law relationships (Lee, Spitze, & Logan, 2003) and as a way to support their spouse (Goetting, 1990). Despite the sensitive nature of providing support, research suggests that the provision of aid is a salient in-law goal.

Overall, children-in-law appear to have a variety of goals ranging from maintaining a desired identity to accomplishing concrete objectives, such as managing uncertainty. In addition, in-laws often must attend to multiple and conflicting goals, simultaneously (Berger, 2005; Dillard, 2008; Dillard et al., 1989). Children-in-law, for example, may wish to establish boundaries with their parents-in-law, but may simultaneously rely on them for financial support, making it harder to, in essence, bite the hand that feeds them. As a result, in-laws must make communication decisions regarding which goals to pursue and by what means.

### **Children-in-Law's Communication, Goals, and Relational Outcomes**

As noted earlier, a multiple goals perspective is useful for understanding motivations for children-in-law's communication (Tracy, 1991; Wilson, 2002). Multiple goals scholars suggest that goals engender communication behaviors (Tracy, 1991; Wilson, 2002). These behaviors or actions are aimed at achieving individuals' goals (Dillard, 2008). In other words, individuals' objectives motivate specific behaviors.

Structural features of the in-law relationship, however, may influence the relationship between goals and communication. Morr Serewicz (2006a, 2006b) suggested that in-laws never

form a truly dyadic relationship. Instead, the in-law relationship is always mediated, implicitly or explicitly, by the linchpin. As a result, in-laws must consider goals that extend beyond the in-law dyad when making communicative decisions. A daughter-in-law in Cotterill's (1994) study, for example, wanted to confront her mother-in-law but thought about the potential damage it would do to her marriage and how she would feel if her husband instigated a conflict with her mother. Although the daughter-in-law's primary goal was to confront her mother-in-law, her secondary goal of maintaining a harmonious marriage constrained her from achieving her primary goal. Thus, the triadic context in which in-law relationships are embedded appear to influence how goals shape communication behaviors. In the following sections I outline the links between in-laws' goals, communication, and relational outcomes. I begin by defining one particular communication behavior that is known to be salient in in-law relationships—topic avoidance (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011).

**Topic avoidance.** *Topic avoidance* occurs when individuals intentionally evade certain topics or purposefully decide “*not* to disclose information on a particular topic to another person” (W. A. Afifi & Guerrero, 2000, p. 166). In general, family members tend to avoid discussions revolving around five major topics (Caughlin & Golish, 2002): (a) relationship issues, (b) dating experience, (c) negative life experiences, (d) friendships, and (e) sexual experiences (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995a, 1995b). In addition to these general categories, scholars have found other topics of avoidance that appear to be context specific. Golish and Caughlin (2002), for example, found that stepchildren reported avoiding six additional topics within their stepfamilies including money (e.g., child support issues), conversations about their own personal life or beliefs, and religion (for full review see Golish & Caughlin, 2002). In addition, Mikucki-Enyart and Rittenour (2012) found that children-in-law often avoided discussing their education and careers,

family-of-origin, and child bearing and rearing with their parents-in-law. Thus, although family members may engage in avoidance around the “big five”, other topics of avoidance may be context specific.

In addition, scholars have cataloged a variety of reasons for avoidance including protection (e.g., other and relationship), communication standards and norms, maintaining uncertainty, and privacy (Brashers, 2001; Guerrero & W. A. Afifi, 1995a; Petronio, 2004). Within the in-law context, children-in-law tend to avoid discussions with their parents-in-law due to a lack of closeness, lack of self-efficacy, and wanting to avoid unsolicited opinions/advice (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). Although the reasons for avoidance are classified into discrete categories, in actuality the categories are not mutually exclusive. In fact, current theorizing and research on privacy management suggests that individuals often have multiple purposes for engaging in avoidance (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 2009). Caughlin, Mikucki-Enyart, Middleton, Stone, and Brown (2011), for example, found that adult children often avoided discussing their feelings regarding their parents’ terminal cancer for a variety of reasons including other protection, self protection, and maintaining idiosyncratic family standards. More broadly, individuals appear to have multiple rather than singular aims that motivate communicative decisions about avoidance.

**Turbulence, topic avoidance, and goals.** Both turbulence and goals appear to be linked to children-in-law’s use of topic avoidance. First, across relational domains the mechanisms of turbulence, specifically uncertainty, is positively associated with topic avoidance (Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Second, specific interactions goals, such as maintaining uncertainty and maintaining privacy tend to share a positive association with topic avoidance (Brashers, 2001; Petronio, 2004). Although both

turbulence and goals are directly linked to topic avoidance, research suggests that turbulence and goals may be jointly associated with topic avoidance.

Knobloch (2006), for example, suggested that the use of topic avoidance in response to relational uncertainty may protect people from embarrassment or damaging their relationship (Knobloch, 2006). Engaging in topic avoidance may thwart the discovery of information that may be potentially damaging to the relationship (Baxter & Wilmot, 1985; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002a) or evade the discussion of topics that may challenge or question the status of an existing relationship (Baxter & Wilmot, 1985). In other words, individual's use of topic avoidance in response to the mechanisms of turbulence may be motivated by the specific aims.

A child-in-law who experiences relational uncertainty, for example, may be motivated to reduce his/her uncertainty or maintain his/her uncertainty. The salient interaction goal will likely play a role in the child-in-law's decision about whether or not to engage in topic avoidance. The child-in-law who wishes to maintain uncertainty may engage in topic avoidance, whereas the child-in-law who wishes to reduce uncertainty may forgo avoidance in favor of more direct communication, such as information-seeking. Children-in-law experiencing parent-in-law interference may wish to engage in topic avoidance to prevent further boundaries infractions. However, engaging in topic avoidance with parents-in-law may cause tension within the marital relationship. Thus, children-in-law's desire to maintain the linchpin relationship may factor in to children-in-law's decision to engage in topic avoidance under conditions of interference. More broadly, although turbulence and interaction goals are directly associated with topic avoidance, children-in-law's interaction goals may also mediate the relationship between turbulence and avoidance.

**Topic avoidance, goals, and relational outcomes.** Scholars suggest that across relational domains topic avoidance may, at times, be functional rather than dysfunctional (Afifi et al., 2007; Caughlin et al., 2011). However, existing research continues to demonstrate an inverse association between topic avoidance and satisfaction in both romantic and family relationships, including the in-law context (Caughlin & Golish, 2002; Golish, 2000; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). In-law topic avoidance is negatively associated with *in-law satisfaction*, the extent to which in-laws find their relationship with one another pleasurable (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). Thus, topic avoidance may impede the development of satisfying in-law relationships. Unfortunately, topic avoidance is a common response to turbulence (Knobloch, 2006; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). In addition, children-in-law likely use topic avoidance to achieve specific interaction goals (e.g., maintain uncertainty, maintain boundaries). Although the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction is, in general, negative, the goals children-in-law are striving to obtain by engaging in topic avoidance may moderate the negative relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction.

Although communication is directly linked to relational outcomes, goals appear to influence this link (Caughlin, 2010). Scholars suggest that goals provide a framework from which to infer intent (Dillard, 1990; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Individuals rely on goals to derive meaning from an interaction and meanings (or perceptions of meaning) shape individuals' interpretations of the communication behavior (Caughlin, 2010). Thus, children-in-law's goals likely shape their interpretation of avoidant communication (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Donovan-Kicken and Caughlin (2010), for example, found that breast cancer survivors' own topic avoidance was more negatively related to their relational

satisfaction when they reported engaging in topic avoidance because talk was futile versus other reported reasons, such as protecting their spouse. In other words, individuals' goals moderated the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction.

## **Summary**

As evidenced above, children-in-law have multiple objectives that they attempt to pursue through communication. Children-in-law may have varying degrees of success based on their use of topic avoidance and the interpretation of that behavior (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010; Goldsmith, 2004). Although scholars have examined goals on a micro-level extensively by examining specific interaction episodes (e.g., Samp & Monahan, 2011; Samp & Solomon, 1999; Wilson, 2002), scholars are beginning to note the importance of understanding how goals contribute to global perceptions of communication patterns (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Research suggests that communication in the early stages of the in-law relationship often sets the tone for the relationship (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007). In-laws may aggregate their perception of their goals during initial interactions to develop macro-level relational attributes (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Understanding the role of topic avoidance in pursuing goals can help children-in-law achieve (or attempt to achieve) their objectives in a manner that helps foster positive, rather than negative, impressions of one another, which may help lay the foundation for a satisfying in-law relationship.

Although goals may activate avoidant communication behaviors, deciding which goals to pursue or ignore is likely, at least in part, a product of the relational climate. Given that the transition to extended family is purported to be a turbulent period marked by uncertainty and the negotiation of interdependence, the degree to which children-in-law experience turmoil may contribute to their goals and how they pursue these goals. In the following section, I present a

conceptual model to yoke the relational turbulence model and multiple goals perspective to the problem of understanding children-in-law's communication and relational outcomes during the transition to extended family.

### **An Integrated Approach to Understanding the Transition to Extended Family**

Research utilizing the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective has, independently, yielded robust results regarding message production, message processing, and relational outcomes (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010; Knobloch, Miller, Bond et al., 2007; Knobloch & Solomon, 2005). To date, scholars have yet to examine how turbulence and goals work in tandem to activate communication tendencies, such as topic avoidance, and shape meaning and outcomes. Figure 2 presents the conceptual model that integrates the relational turbulence model with a multiple goals approach in an effort to understand how individuals, specifically children-in-law, manage and pursue goals during times of transition. Merging both approaches appears to present several benefits for understanding relationships and communication during times of transition.

First, combining these two approaches has the potential to elucidate the relationship between turbulence and goals. The mechanisms of turbulence may set the tenor of the in-law relationship, which, in turn, dictates what goals children-in-law pursue. In-law research suggests that the ambiguity that undergirds the in-law relationship presents challenges for knowing what kind of behavior to enact or what kind of relationship to cultivate (Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz, 2006b). Implicit in this notion is the fact that ambiguity makes it difficult for children-in-law to know what the desired end state is, or what goals to pursue. Similarly, other mechanisms that contribute to turbulence may shape children-in-law's goals. An in-law relationship that is marked by perceived interference may call for the establishment of

boundaries, whereas an in-law dyad in which perceived facilitation is prominent may generate the goal of cultivating a family or friend relationship.

Second, utilizing the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals lens in concert may provide new insight into the links among turbulence, goals, and message production, specifically topic avoidance. To date, research has demonstrated a direct link between turbulence and topic avoidance (e.g., Knobloch, 2006; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2003; Theiss & Solomon, 2006b). Studies examining the link between turbulence and message production are insightful, but do not focus on the role goals play in this process. Scholars utilizing a multiple goals approach agree that communication is a goal-directed enterprise (Berger, 2008; Tracy, 1991). Individuals, typically, do not engage in topic avoidance meaninglessly, but rather to attain particular goals, even if these aims are outside of their conscious awareness (Clark, 1994; Jacobson, 2002). Examining goals under conditions of turbulence may provide a robust explanation of communicative and relational reactions to turmoil by highlighting use of topic avoidance as a reaction to turbulence is shaped by their goals.

To this point, I have articulated the need for integrating the relational turbulence model with a multiple goals approach. In general, the hypothesized model suggests that the mechanisms of turbulence (i.e., uncertainty, interference from in-laws, and facilitation from in-laws) predict children-in-law's use of topic avoidance. However, this relationship is likely partially mediated through in-laws' goals. Moreover, the mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance directly influence children-in-law's relational satisfaction. In the following sections, I delineate hypotheses and research questions based on reasoning articulated throughout this paper and the hypothesized model presented in Figure 2.

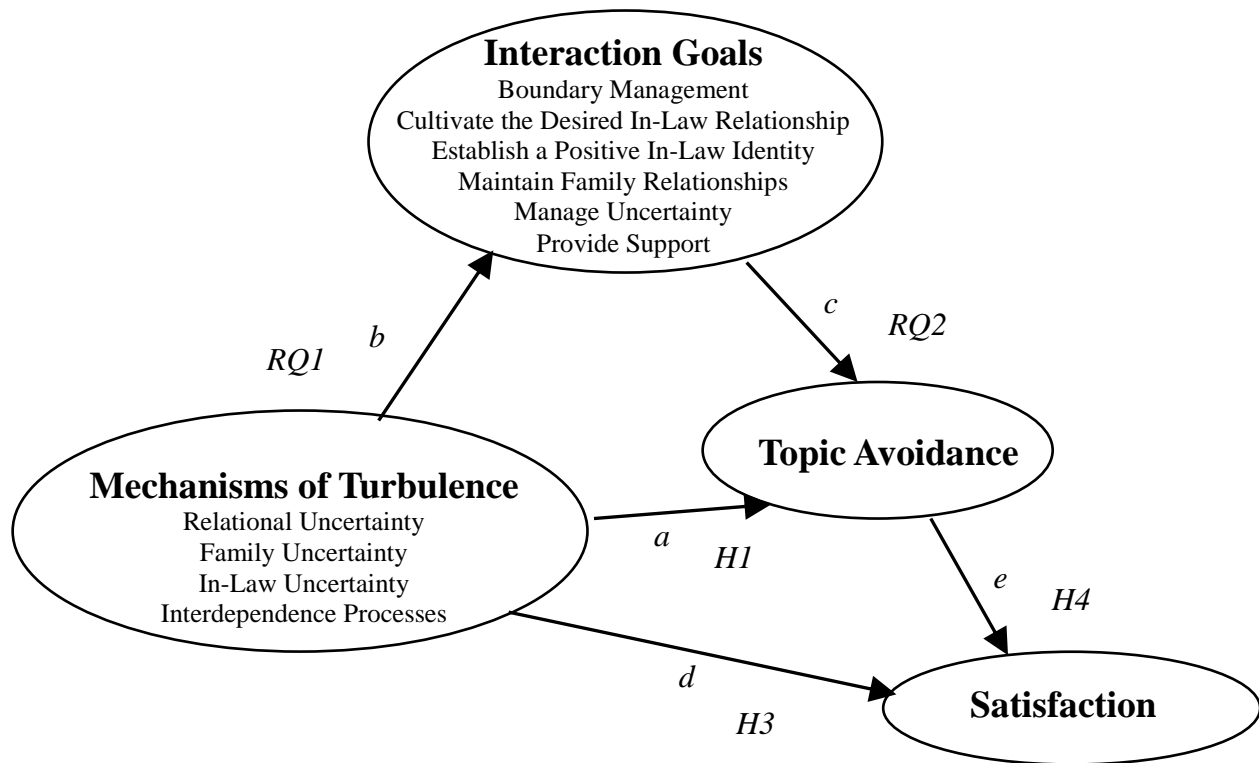


Figure 2. The Hypothesized Model.

### The Theoretical Model: Turbulence, Goals, Communication, and Satisfaction

The primary aim of the present investigation is to examine the mediating role of goals on the relationship between children-in-law's use of topic avoidance as a communicative response

to turmoil and the relational impact of turbulence and topic avoidance. A secondary purpose is to understand the direct links between (a) the mechanisms of turbulence and children-in-law's goals, and (b) children-in-law's goals and topic avoidance. Figure 2 presents the conceptual model, which hypothesizes that mechanisms of turbulence are directly linked to topic avoidance (Path *a*) and this relationship is partially mediated by interaction goals (Paths *b* and *c*). Specifically, turbulence likely directly influences children-in-law's goals (Path *b*), which in turn may predict children-in-law's use of topic avoidance (Path *c*). Moreover, both turbulence (Path *d*) and topic avoidance (Path *e*) should be inversely related to children-in-law's relationship satisfaction. In the paragraphs below, I delineate specific hypotheses and research questions that reflect the logic underlying the predicted model presented in Figure 2.

### **Hypotheses and Research Questions**

Research employing the relational turbulence model has demonstrated that the mechanisms that give rise to turmoil are associated with more reactive communication behaviors, such as avoidant communication (i.e., topic avoidance; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Theiss & Solomon, 2006b). Thus, the mechanisms of turbulence should be associated with children-in-law's use of topic avoidance (this association is depicted in Figure 2, Path *a*). More specifically, the sources and themes of relational uncertainty (*H1a*), themes of family uncertainty (*H1b*), and the themes of in-law uncertainty should be positively associated with children-in-law's use of topic avoidance (*H1c*). In addition, interdependence processes should be linked to topic avoidance. Due to the negative implications of interference, interference should be positively linked to topic avoidance (*H1d.1*). However, given that facilitation attenuates reactivity and is linked to more positive emotions (Berscheid, 1983) and less negative emotions and turmoil (Knobloch, Miller, & Carpenter, 2007; McClaren

et al., 2011), facilitation may promote inclusive rather than exclusive communicative responses (i.e., topic avoidance; Merrill, 2007; Petronio, 2002). Thus, facilitation likely is negatively associated with children-in-law’s use of topic avoidance (*H1d.2*).

The hypotheses delineated above reflect general ideas about association between the broad mechanisms of turbulence. However, the general mechanisms of turbulence (e.g., sources of relational uncertainty, themes of family uncertainty) are comprised of more specific sources/themes of uncertainty (e.g., self uncertainty, relationship support uncertainty). Thus, precise hypotheses regarding the links between specific mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

*Hypotheses Regarding the Association between the Mechanisms of Turbulence and Topic Avoidance (H1)*

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
Relational uncertainty ( <i>H1a</i> )	
Self	Self uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1a.1</i> )
Partner	Partner uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1a.2</i> )
Relationship	Relationship uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1a.3</i> )
( <i>table continues</i> )	

Table 2.2 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
Approval	Approval uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.4)
Communication	Communication uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.5)
Differences	Differences uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.6)
Family uncertainty (H1b)	
Balancing family membership	Balancing family membership uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.1)
Extended family relationships	Extended family relationships uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.2)
Family expectations	Family expectation uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.3)
Grandparent involvement	Grandparent involvement uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.4)
Meddling	Meddling uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.5)
Parenting input	Parenting input is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.6)
Proximity	Proximity uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.7)
Relationship support	Relationship support uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.8)

(table continues)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
Triadic influence In-law uncertainty ( <i>H1c</i> )	Triadic influence uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1b.9</i> )
Gossip	Gossip uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1c.1</i> )
In-law as individual Interdependence processes ( <i>H1d</i> )	In-law as individual uncertainty is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1c.2</i> )
Interference from partners	Interference is positively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1d.1</i> )
Facilitation from partners	Facilitation is negatively associated with topic avoidance ( <i>H1d.2</i> )

Although the mechanisms of turbulence are directly linked to topic avoidance, a multiple goals perspective asserts that communication is goal-oriented (Berger, 2002). Thus, as illustrated by Paths *b* and *c* in Figure 2, the link between children-in-law's experience of uncertainty and negotiating interdependence and topic avoidance is likely filtered, at least partially, through their interaction goals. More precisely, the link between relational uncertainty (i.e., sources and themes; *H2a*), family uncertainty (*H2b*), in-law uncertainty (*H2c*), interference (*H2d*), and facilitation (*H2e*) and topic avoidance is partially mediated through interaction goals. Detailed hypotheses are presented in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

*Hypotheses for the Mediating Effects of Goals on the Relationship between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Topic Avoidance (H2)*

Mechanism of Turbulence (H)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
Relational uncertainty		
Self (H2a)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries (H2a.1) and the goal to maintain privacy (H2a.2)
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate (H2a.3), a friend (H2a.4), and a family relationship (H2a.5).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (H2a.6).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (H2a.7), the intergenerational relationship (H2a.8), and the linchpin relationship (H2a.9).

*(table continues)*

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
Partner ( <i>H2b</i> )	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association relationship between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2a.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2a.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2a.12</i> ).
	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2b.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2b.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2b.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2b.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2b.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2b.6</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2b.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2b.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2b.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2a.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2b.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2b.12</i> ).
	Relationship ( <i>H2c</i> ) Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2c.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2c.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2c.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2c.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2c.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2c.6</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2c.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2c.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2c.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2c.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2c.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2c.12</i> ).
	Approval ( <i>H2d</i> )	
	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2d.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2d.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2d.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2d.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2d.5</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (H)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (H2d.6).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (H2d.7), the intergenerational relationship (H2d.8), and the linchpin relationship (H2d.9).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty (H2d.10) and reduce uncertainty (H2d.11).
	Provide support	The association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support (H2d.12).
Communication (H2e)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries (H2e.1) and the goal to maintain privacy (H2e.2)

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2e.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2e.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2e.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2e.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2e.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2e.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2e.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2e.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2e.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2e.12</i> ).
Differences ( <i>H2f</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2f.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2f.2</i> )

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2f.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2f.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2f.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2f.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2f.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2f.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2f.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2f.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2f.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2f.12</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (H)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
Family uncertainty		
Balancing family membership (H2g)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries (H2g.1) and the goal to maintain privacy. (H2g.2)
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate (H2g.3), a friend (H2g.4), and a family relationship (H2g.5).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (H2g.6).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (H2g.7), the intergenerational relationship (H2g.8), and the linchpin relationship (H2g.9).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty (H2g.10) and reduce uncertainty (H2g.11).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
Extended family relationships ( <i>H2h</i> )	Provide support	The association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2g.12</i> ).
	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2h.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2h.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2h.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2h.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2h.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2h.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2h.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2h.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2h.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2h.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2h.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2h.12</i> ).
Family expectations ( <i>H2i</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2i.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2i.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2i.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2i.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2i.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2i.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2i.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2i.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2i.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2i.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2i.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2i.12</i> ).
Grandparent involvement ( <i>H2j</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2j.1</i> ) and the goal to reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2j.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2j.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2j.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2j.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2j.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2j.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2j.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2j.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2j.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2j.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2j.12</i> ).
Meddling ( <i>H2k</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2k.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2k.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2k.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2k.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2k.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2k.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2k.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2k.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2k.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
Parenting input ( <i>H2l</i> )	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2k.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2k.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2k.12</i> ).
	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2l.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2l.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2l.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2l.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2l.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2l.6</i> ).
Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2l.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2l.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2l.9</i> ).	

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2l.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2l.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2l.12</i> ).
Proximity ( <i>H2m</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2m.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2m.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2m.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2m.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2m.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2m.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2m.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2m.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2m.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2m.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2m.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2m.12</i> ).
Relationship support ( <i>H2n</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2n.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2n.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2n.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2n.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2n.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2n.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2n.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2n.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2n.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2n.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2n.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2n.12</i> ).
Triadic influence ( <i>H2o</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2o.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2o.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2o.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2o.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2o.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2o.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2o.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2o.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2o.9</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2o.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2o.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2o.12</i> ).
In-law uncertainty		
Gossip ( <i>H2p</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2p.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2p.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2p.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2p.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2p.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The relationship between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2p.6</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
In-law as individual ( <i>H2q</i> )	Maintain family associations In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2p.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2p.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2p.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2p.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2p.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2p.12</i> ).
	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2q.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2q.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2q.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2q.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2q.5</i> ).
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2q.6</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2q.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2q.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2q.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2q.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2q.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2q.12</i> ).
Interdependence processes		
Interference from in-laws ( <i>H2r</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2r.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2r.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2r.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2r.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2r.5</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2r.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2r.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2r.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2r.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2r.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2r.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The relationship between interference and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2r.12</i> ).
Facilitation from in-laws ( <i>H2s</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>H2s.1</i> ) and the goal to maintain privacy ( <i>H2s.2</i> )
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate ( <i>H2s.3</i> ), a friend ( <i>H2s.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>H2s.5</i> ).

(table continues)

Table 2.3 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>H</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Hypothesis
	Establish the positive in-law identity	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>H2s.6</i> ).
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>H2s.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>H2s.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>H2s.9</i> ).
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>H2s.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>H2s.11</i> ).
	Provide support	The association between facilitation and topic avoidance is partially mediated by the goal to provide support ( <i>H2s.12</i> ).

In addition to the mediating role goals play in the relationship between turbulence and topic avoidance, goals should share direct associations with both the mechanisms of turmoil and topic avoidance. More specifically, the mechanisms of turbulence should shape the goals children-in-law decide to pursue (Figure 2, Path *b*). In turn, these goals should be related to children-in-law's use of topic avoidance (Figure 2, Path *c*). However, given the lack of research linking the mechanisms of turbulence to interaction goals, and the multiple pathways in which goals can be enacted, the nature of the association between the specific variables under each construct is less clear. As a result, two general research questions are advanced regarding the relationship between (a) the mechanisms of turbulence and interaction goals (see Figure 2, Path *b*) and (b) interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Figure 2, Path *c*).

*RQ1:* What is the nature of the association between the mechanisms of turbulence and interaction goals?

*RQ2:* What is the nature of the association between interaction goals and topic avoidance?

A series of specific research questions regarding the links among each precise mechanism of turbulence and specific interaction goal (see Figure 2, Path *b*) are presented in Table 2.4. In addition, detailed research questions inquiring about the association between interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Figure 2, Path *c*) are delineated in Table 2.5.

Table 2.4

*Research Questions Regarding the Association between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Interaction Goals (RQ1)*

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Relational uncertainty Self (RQ1a)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1a.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1a.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1a.3), a friend relationship (RQ1a.4), and a family relationship (RQ1a.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1a.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1a.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1a.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1a.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1a.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1a.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between self uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1a.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Partner (RQ1b)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1b.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1b.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1b.3), a friend relationship (RQ1b.4), and a family relationship (RQ1b.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1b.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1b.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1b.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1b.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1b.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1b.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between partner uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1b.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Relationship (RQ1c)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1c.1) maintain privacy (RQ1c.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1c.3), a friend relationship (RQ1c.4), and a family relationship (RQ1c.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1c.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1c.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1c.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1c.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1c.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1c.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between relationship uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1c.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Approval (RQ1d)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1d.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1d.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1d.3), a friend relationship (RQ1d.4), and a family relationship (RQ1d.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1d.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1d.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1d.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1d.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1d.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1d.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between approval uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1d.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Communication (RQ1e)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1e.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1e.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1e.3), a friend relationship (RQ1e.4), and a family relationship (RQ1e.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1e.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1e.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1e.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1e.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1e.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1e.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1f.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Differences (RQ1f)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1f.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1f.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1f.3), a friend relationship (RQ1f.4), and a family relationship (RQ1f.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1f.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1f.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1f.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1f.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1f.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1f.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between differences uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1e.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Communication (RQIf)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQIf.1) and maintain privacy (RQIf.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQIf.3), a friend relationship (RQIf.4), and a family relationship (RQIf.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQIf.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQIf.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQIf.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQIf.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQIf.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQIf.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between communication uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQIf.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>RQ</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Family uncertainty Balancing family membership ( <i>RQ1g</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>RQ1g.1</i> ) and maintain privacy ( <i>RQ1g.2</i> )?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship ( <i>RQ1g.3</i> ), a friend relationship ( <i>RQ1g.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>RQ1g.5</i> )?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>RQ1g.6</i> )?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>RQ1g.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>RQ1g.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>RQ1g.9</i> )?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>RQ1g.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>RQ1g.11</i> )?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to provide support ( <i>RQ1g.12</i> )?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>RQ</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Extended family relationships ( <i>RQ1h</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>RQ1h.1</i> ) and maintain privacy ( <i>RQ1h.2</i> )?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship ( <i>RQ1h.3</i> ), a friend relationship ( <i>RQ1h.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>RQ1h.5</i> )?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>RQ1h.6</i> )?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>RQ1h.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>RQ1h.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>RQ1h.9</i> )?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>RQ1h.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>RQ1h.11</i> )?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to provide support ( <i>RQ1h.12</i> )?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Family expectations (RQ1i)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1i.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1i.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1i.3), a friend relationship (RQ1i.4), and a family relationship (RQ1i.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1i.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1i.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1i.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1i.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1i.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1i.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between family expectations uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1i.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Grandparent involvement (RQ1j)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1j.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1j.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1j.3), a friend relationship (RQ1j.4), and a family relationship (RQ1j.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1j.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1j.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1j.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1j.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1j.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1j.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1j.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Meddling (RQ1k)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1k.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1k.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1k.3), a friend relationship (RQ1k.4), and a family relationship (RQ1k.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1k.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1k.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1k.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1k.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1k.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1k.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between meddling uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1k.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Parenting input (RQ11)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ11.1) and maintain privacy (RQ11.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ11.3), a friend relationship (RQ11.4), and a family relationship (RQ11.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ11.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ11.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ11.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ11.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ11.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ11.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between parenting input uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ11.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Proximity (RQ1m)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1m.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1m.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1m.3), a friend relationship (RQ1m.4), and a family relationship (RQ1m.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1m.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1m.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1m.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1m.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1m.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1m.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between proximity uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1m.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Relationship support (RQ1n)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1n.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1n.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1n.3), a friend relationship (RQ1n.4), and a family relationship (RQ1n.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1n.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1n.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1n.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1n.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1n.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1n.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between relationship support uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1n.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Triadic influence (RQ1o)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1o.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1o.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1o.3), a friend relationship (RQ1o.4), and a family relationship (RQ1o.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1o.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1o.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1o.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1o.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1o.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1o.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1o.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
In-law uncertainty Gossip (RQ1p)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1p.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1p.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1p.3), a friend relationship (RQ1p.4), and a family relationship (RQ1p.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1p.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1p.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1p.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1p.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1p.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1p.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between gossip uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1p.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
In-law as individual (RQ1q)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1q.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1q.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1q.3), a friend relationship (RQ1q.4), and a family relationship (RQ1q.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1q.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1q.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1q.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1q.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1q.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1q.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to provide support (RQ1q.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence (RQ)	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Interdependence processes Interference from in-laws (RQ1r)	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to maintain boundaries (RQ1r.1) and maintain privacy (RQ1r.2)?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1r.3), a friend relationship (RQ1r.4), and a family relationship (RQ1r.5)?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity (RQ1r.6)?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1r.7), the intergenerational relationship (RQ1r.8), and the linchpin relationship (RQ1r.9)?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to maintain uncertainty (RQ1r.10) and reduce uncertainty (RQ1r.11)?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between interference from in-laws and the goal to provide support (RQ1r.12)?

(table continues)

Table 2.4 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence ( <i>RQ</i> )	Interaction Goal Category (Sub-Goals)	Research Question
Facilitation from in-laws ( <i>RQIs</i> )	Boundary management Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between facilitation from in-laws and the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>RQIs.1</i> ) and maintain privacy ( <i>RQIs.2</i> )?
	Cultivate the desired in-law relationship Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between facilitation from in-laws and the goal to cultivate an associate relationship ( <i>RQIs.3</i> ), a friend relationship ( <i>RQIs.4</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>RQIs.5</i> )?
	Establish the positive in-law identity	What is the nature of the association between facilitation partners and the goal to establish a positive in-law identity ( <i>RQIs.6</i> )?
	Maintain family relationships In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between facilitation from in-laws and the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>RQIs.7</i> ), the intergenerational relationship ( <i>RQIs.8</i> ), and the linchpin relationship ( <i>RQIs.9</i> )?
	Manage uncertainty Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between facilitation from in-laws and the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>RQIs.10</i> ) and reduce uncertainty ( <i>RQIs.11</i> )?
	Provide support	What is the nature of the association between facilitation from in-laws and the goal to provide support ( <i>RQIs.12</i> )?

Table 2.5

*Research Questions Regarding the Association between Interaction Goals and Topic Avoidance (RQ2)*

Interaction Goal	Research Question
Boundary Management ( <i>RQ2a</i> ) Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	What is the nature of the association between the goal to maintain boundaries and topic avoidance ( <i>RQ2a.1</i> ), and maintain privacy ( <i>RQ2a.2</i> ) and topic avoidance?
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship ( <i>RQ2b</i> ) Associate Friend Family	What is the nature of the association between the goal to cultivate an associate relationship ( <i>RQ2b.1</i> ), a friend relationship ( <i>RQ2b.2</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>RQ2b.3</i> ) and topic avoidance?
Establish the positive in-law identity ( <i>RQ2c</i> )	What is the nature of the association between the goal to establish a positive in-law identity and topic avoidance? ( <i>RQ2c</i> )
Maintain family relationships ( <i>RQ2d</i> ) In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	What is the nature of the association between the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>RQ2d.1</i> ), intergenerational relationship ( <i>RQ2d.2</i> ), and linchpin relationship ( <i>RQ2d.3</i> ), and topic avoidance?
Manage uncertainty ( <i>RQ2e</i> ) Maintain Reduce	What is the nature of the association between the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>RQ2e.1</i> ), and reduce uncertainty ( <i>RQ2e.2</i> ) and topic avoidance?
Provide support ( <i>RQ2f</i> )	What is the nature of the association between the goal to provide support and topic avoidance? ( <i>RQ2f</i> )

In addition to the links among turbulence, goals, and communication, research suggests that the mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance are directly linked to relationship

satisfaction (Knobloch, 2008; Caughlin & Golish, 2002). In fact, across relational contexts uncertainty and avoidant communication are negatively associated with satisfaction (Afifi, Caughlin, & Afifi, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). Thus, the experience of relational uncertainty (i.e., sources and themes; *H3a*), family uncertainty (*H3b*), and in-law uncertainty (*H3c*) are likely negative predictors of relationship satisfaction (see Figure 2, Path *d*). Moreover, the processes of negotiating interdependence likely influence relationship satisfaction. Specifically, interference is likely inversely associated with satisfaction (*H3d.1*), whereas facilitation likely shares a positive association relationship satisfaction (*H3d.2*). Again, given that multiple sources and themes of uncertainty are subsumed under the broad mechanisms of turbulence, a series of specific hypotheses are articulated in Table 2.6. Moreover, topic avoidance should be negatively associated with relationship satisfaction (*H4*; Figure 2, Path *e*).

Table 2.6

*Hypotheses Regarding the Association between the Mechanisms of Turbulence and Satisfaction (H3)*

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
Relational uncertainty ( <i>H3a</i> )	
Self	Self uncertainty is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction ( <i>H3a.1</i> )
Partner	Partner uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3a.2</i> )
Relationship	Relationship uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3a.3</i> )
<i>(table continues)</i>	

Table 2.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
Approval	Approval uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3a.4</i> )
Communication	Communication uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3a.5</i> )
Differences	Differences uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3a.6</i> )
Family uncertainty ( <i>H3b</i> ) Balancing family membership	Balancing family membership uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.1</i> )
Extended family relationships	Extended family relationships uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.2</i> )
Family expectations	Family expectation uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.3</i> )
Grandparent involvement	Grandparent involvement uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.4</i> )
Meddling	Meddling uncertainty is positively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.5</i> )
Parenting input	Parenting input uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.6</i> )
Proximity	Proximity uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.7</i> )
Relationship support	Relationship support uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.8</i> )
Triadic influence	Triadic influence uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3b.9</i> )

(table continues)

Table 2.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence	Hypothesis
In-Law uncertainty ( <i>H3c</i> ) Gossip	Gossip uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3c.1</i> )
In-law as individual	In-law as individual uncertainty is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3c.2</i> )
Interdependence processes ( <i>H3d</i> ) Interference from in-laws	Interference from in-laws is negatively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3d.1</i> )
Facilitation from in-laws	Facilitation from in-laws is positively associated with satisfaction ( <i>H3d.2</i> )

Finally, as noted earlier, topic avoidance is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). However, a multiple goals approach suggests that this relationship is likely moderated by goals (Caughlin, 2010). Multiple goals scholars assert that goals help explain interaction and shape meaning (Wilson, 2002). That is, individuals not only react to what they say (or don't say), but what they were trying to accomplish with their behavior (Caughlin, 2010). As a result, goal inferences about messages not only shape the meaning of messages but the relational outcomes of messages as well (Caughlin).

Individuals in romantic relationships, for instance, are often less dissatisfied with their relationships when they engage in topic avoidance for prosocial means, such as relationship protection (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004), or when they believe that the use of topic avoidance is

elective rather than mandated (Donovan-Kicken, 2010). Thus, children-in-law’s goals likely influence the extent to which their use of topic avoidance is linked to their satisfaction with the parent- and child-in-law relationship. Consequently, a final research question explores this possibility:

*RQ3: How (if at all) is the association between topic avoidance and relationship satisfaction moderated by interaction goals?*

Table 2.7

*Research Questions Regarding the Association between Topic Avoidance and Satisfaction Moderated by Interaction Goals (RQ3)*

Interaction Goal	Research Question
Boundary Management ( <i>RQ3a</i> ) Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to maintain boundaries ( <i>RQ3a.1</i> ), and maintain privacy ( <i>RQ3a.2</i> )?
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship ( <i>RQ3b</i> ) Associate Friend Family	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship ( <i>RQ3b.1</i> ), a friend relationship ( <i>RQ3b.2</i> ), and a family relationship ( <i>RQ3b.3</i> ) and topic avoidance?
Establish the positive in-law identity ( <i>RQ3c</i> )	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to establish a positive in-law identity and topic avoidance? ( <i>RQ3c</i> )
Maintain family relationships ( <i>RQ3d</i> ) In-law Intergenerational Linchpin	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship ( <i>RQ3d.1</i> ), intergenerational relationship ( <i>RQ3d.2</i> ), and linchpin relationship ( <i>RQ3d.3</i> ), and topic avoidance?

*(table continues)*

Table 2.7 (continued)

Interaction Goal	Research Question
Manage uncertainty ( <i>RQ3e</i> ) Maintain Reduce	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to maintain uncertainty ( <i>RQ3e.1</i> ), and reduce uncertainty ( <i>RQ3e.2</i> ) and topic avoidance?
Provide support ( <i>RQ3f</i> )	How, if at all, is the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction moderated by the goal to provide support and topic avoidance? ( <i>RQ3f</i> )

## Chapter Three: Method

The present study sought to understand how turbulence and goals shaped children-in-law's use of topic avoidance and relationship satisfaction during the transition to extended family. This chapter outlines the study's research design, including participants, procedures, and the measures.

### Design

The present study employed a self-report design that asked participants to complete a self-guided, close-ended questionnaire. Self-report data are useful for understanding individuals' own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Charnia & Ickes, 2006; Metts, Sprecher, & Cupach, 1991). Self-report questionnaires are advantageous especially when assessing accounts of subjective phenomena, such as uncertainty or satisfaction (Clark & Reiss, 1988) or behaviors like topic avoidance that are difficult to measure through other means (Metts et al, 1991; Noller & Feeney, 2004).

### Participants

Children-in-law and future children-in-law ( $N = 203$ ) responded to an online, self-administered survey. This yielded a sample of 171 (84.2%) females and 30 (15.0%) males, with two participants electing not to report their sex (percentages do not always add to 100% due to rounding). Participants ranged in age from 19 to 53 years-of-age with a mean age of 27.46 years ( $SD = 5.63$ ). The majority of respondents identified as White, Non-Hispanic ( $n = 173$ , 85.2%), followed by African-American ( $n = 12$ , 5.9%), Asian ( $n = 10$ , 4.9%), Hispanic ( $n = 5$ , 2.5%), and other ( $n = 2$ , 1.0%). One participant (.5%) elected not to report ethnicity. The sample was highly educated with a majority of participants holding undergraduate ( $n = 77$ , 37.9%) or graduate degrees ( $n = 74$ , 36.4%). The remaining participants reported a range of educational

backgrounds, including some high school ( $n = 1$ , .5%), high school graduate ( $n = 8$ , 3.9%), some college ( $n = 34$ , 16.7%), and other ( $n = 8$ , 3.9%), with one participant (.5%) declining to respond.

Of the 203 participants, 115 (56.7%) were newly married and 88 (43.3%) were engaged-to-be married. Over half of married participants were reporting on their first marriage ( $n = 97$ , 84.3%), followed by second marriage ( $n = 13$ , 11.3%), third marriage ( $n = 3$ , 2.6%), and other ( $n = 2$ , 1.8%). The average length of marriage was 16.93 months ( $range = 1$  to 50 months;  $SD = 12.56$  months). For the engaged participants, the majority of participants were reporting on their first engagement ( $n = 83$ , 94.3%) followed by several participants reporting on their second engagement ( $n = 4$ , 4.5%), with one participant declining to respond ( $n = 1$ , 1.1%). The average length of engagement was 8.25 months ( $range = 1$  to 46 months;  $SD = 8.25$  months).

Almost a quarter of participants had children (i.e., biological, step, or adopted) with their significant other ( $n = 44$ , 21.6%), while the remaining majority of participants did not ( $n = 158$ , 77.8%). One participant ( $n = 1$ , .5%) declined to respond. Of the participants who did have children, 20 (45.4%) had one child, 10 (23.0%) had two children, six (13.6%) had three children, four (9.0%) had four children, and three (6.8%) had five or more children, with one participant (2.2%) declining to respond.

On average, participants' significant others (PSO) were 29.07 years-of-age ( $range = 20$  to 58 years,  $SD = 6.54$ ). PSOs were White, non-Hispanic ( $n = 162$ , 79.8%), African-American ( $n = 17$ , 8.4%), Asian ( $n = 11$ , 5.4%), and Hispanic ( $n = 8$ , 4.0%), with five participants (2.4%) declining to respond. The educational background of PSOs was diverse, including some high school ( $n = 1$ , .5%), high school graduate ( $n = 12$ , 6.0%), some college ( $n = 42$ , 20.6%), college graduate ( $n = 87$ , 42.8%), graduate degree ( $n = 53$ , 26.1%), and other ( $n = 7$ , 3.4%), with one participant (.5%) declining to respond.

The majority of participants reported on their relationship with their mother-in-law ( $n = 154, 75.9\%$ ) and approximately a quarter of participants reported on their relationship with their father-in-law ( $n = 47, 23.1\%$ ), with two participants (1.0%) declining to respond. Participants had known their parent-in-law for, on average, 57.11 months ( $range = 4$  to 288 months,  $SD = 42.30$  months). The reported frequencies of conversations with their parent-in-law were: daily ( $n = 11, 5.4\%$ ), weekly ( $n = 58, 28.6\%$ ), several times per month ( $n = 57, 28.1\%$ ), once a month ( $n = 38, 18.7\%$ ), several times per year ( $n = 37, 18.2\%$ ), with two participants declining to respond (1.0%). Generally speaking, these conversations took place face-to-face ( $n = 109, 53.7\%$ ), whereas others talked to their parents-in-law via other channels, including the phone ( $n = 55, 27.1\%$ ), email ( $n = 13, 6.4\%$ ), skype ( $n = 18, 8.9\%$ ), online chat (e.g., g-chat;  $n = 2, 1.0\%$ ), and other ( $n = 4, 1.9\%$ ), with two participants (1.0%) declining to respond.

On average, parents-in-law were 57 years-of-age ( $range = 39$  to 82,  $SD = 7.54$ ). Parents-in-law were White, non-Hispanic ( $n = 165, 81.3\%$ ), African-American ( $n = 14, 6.9\%$ ), Asian ( $n = 11, 5.4\%$ ), and Hispanic ( $n = 8, 3.9\%$ ), and other ( $n = 3, 1.5\%$ ), with two participants (1.0%) declining to respond. The educational background of parents-in-law was diverse, including some high school ( $n = 9, 4.4\%$ ), high school graduate ( $n = 47, 23.1\%$ ), some college ( $n = 34, 16.7\%$ ), college graduate ( $n = 82, 40.4\%$ ), graduate degree ( $n = 26, 12.8\%$ ), and other ( $n = 3, 1.5\%$ ), with two participants (1.0%) declining to respond.

## **Procedure**

After securing approval from the University of Illinois' Institutional Review Board, participants were recruited through several methods: (a) snowball sampling of the author's personal and professional network, including previous study participants who had given permission to be contacted for participation in future studies, (b) online solicitation (e.g.,

craigslist, relational forums), (c) flyers throughout the local community (e.g., public bulletin boards and private businesses), and (d) advertisements in an email newsletter that is distributed to university faculty and staff. When applicable, permission was obtained before posting advertisements online or throughout the community. All recruitment materials outlined the purpose of the study (e.g., examine the transition to extended family), the procedures of the study (e.g., completing a self-administered, online questionnaire), and a participation incentive (e.g., enter a raffle to win one of ten, fifty-dollar visa check cards). Participants were given the author's contact information (e.g., email address and telephone number) and a link to the anonymous online survey. Examples of the recruitment materials appear in Appendix A.

Participants completed a secured, online questionnaire at a location of their choosing. To ensure anonymity, participants were not asked to provide any identifying information. As an added layer of protection, the online survey tool did not collect participants' IP addresses, ensuring total confidentiality. If participants chose to enter the incentive raffle, they were directed to a separate survey with its own webpage and link to enter contact information. Thus, identifying information was not linked to the survey data.

Informed consent was obtained in accordance with the university's guidelines on human subjects research. Due to the online nature of the survey, consent documentation was waived. The informed consent page outlined participants' rights, including the anonymity of their response, the potential risks and benefits of the study, and the voluntary nature of the study. Participants were provided with links to a toll-free counseling hotline in the event that thinking about their in-law relationship caused lingering discomfort (see Appendix B).

In the following section I outline the measures that were used in the questionnaire. Scales items within instruments were randomized to reduce order effects; however, the

appendices provide the instruments with scales and subscales labeled and intact for ease of reading.

## Measures

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted to assess the unidimensionality of all multi-item measures (Hunter & Gerberg, 1982). Three goodness-of-fit indices were used to assess the fit of each model: (a) The  $\chi^2/df$  ratio, (b) The Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and (c) the Root Mean Square of Approximation (RMSEA). Following recommendations outlined by Brown and Cudek (1993) and Kline (1998) criteria for model fit were set at  $\chi^2/df < 3.00$ , CFI  $> .90$ , and RMSEA  $< .10$ . Any items that did not load strongly on their respective factors ( $\beta \leq .40$ ) were eliminated iteratively. After confirming the unidimensionality of the factors, the average of responses to items were used to create composite scores for each measure.

In all but one case (i.e., relationship satisfaction) error term correlations were set to zero. For relationship satisfaction several error terms were allowed to be correlated. Although some scholars argue that correlated within measure error terms obfuscate an alternative factor structure (Gerbing & Anderson, 1984), others argue, that correlated error terms may occur when items are similarly worded or adjacent to one another (Bollen & Lennox, 1991), in these cases setting error term covariance to zero is not advised. Correlated error term items within the relationship satisfaction scale were items that had been reverse scored (e.g., “miserable” and “boring”).

Due to the fact that topic avoidance is considered a causal indicators model (Bollen & Lennox, 1991), such that the indicators determine the latent variable not the other way around, a CFA was not conducted on the topic avoidance measure. CFA is based on the assumptions of an effect indicator model (Bollen & Lennox). The effect indicator model assumes that items are dependent on the latent construct. In other words, the latent construct determines the scores on

the items such that a response in one item is correlated with individual's responses to other items on the unidimensional scale. These assumptions do not fit the construct of topic avoidance. There is no construct of general avoidance that has the effect of making all the responses to the items covary. The items on a topic avoidance scale cannot be thought of as indicating an effect of an unobserved construct called topic avoidance. Thus, a CFA was not conducted on the topic avoidance measure.

**Demographic information.** Participants began the questionnaire by reporting demographic information about themselves, their parent-in-law, and their fiancé/spouse. See Appendix D for the demographic questions.

**Sources of relational uncertainty.** An adapted version of Knobloch and Solomon's (1999; 2002a) relational uncertainty scale assessed the *sources of relational uncertainty*. Items that were romantic in nature (e.g., "how much are you romantically interested in your partner?") and that implied that the in-law relationship was voluntary (e.g., "whether or not you want this relationship to last") were eliminated from the scale. The remaining 27 items were revised to reflect the in-law relationship. Respondents were asked "How certain are you about..." and responses were measured on a 6-point scale, 1 = *completely or absolutely uncertain*, 6 = *completely or absolutely certain*. Responses were reverse scored to reflect participants' degree of uncertainty.

Eight items measured *self uncertainty* (e.g., "how much you like your parent-in-law") and *partner uncertainty* (e.g. "how much your parent-in-law likes you"). Ten items measured *relationship uncertainty* (e.g. "whether or not you and your parent-in-law feel the same way about each other"). Consistent with previous research, the three sources of relational uncertainty formed reliable, unidimensional scales (Knobloch, 2008; Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006;

Knobloch, Miller, Bond et al., 2007; see Table 3.1 for descriptive statistics and goodness-of-fit indices). The full measure is available in Appendix C.

**Themes of uncertainty.** Consistent with the theoretical typology of children-in-law's uncertainties outlined earlier in the paper (see Table 2.1), separate scales were constructed to measure the themes subsumed under the three broad content areas of children-in-law' uncertainty: relational, family, and in-law. Directions and response choices were identical to those employed to measure sources of relational uncertainty (see Appendix C for the full scale). Descriptive statistics and goodness-of-fit statistics for children-in-law's themes of uncertainty are outlined in Table 3.1.

Based on previous research (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012), nine scales were created to assess the themes of uncertainty. Four items measured each theme of relational uncertainty: *approval* (e.g., "whether or not your parent-in-law approves of you"), *communication* (e.g., "how to effectively communicate with your parent-in-law"), and *differences* (e.g., "whether or not your differences will affect your relationship with your parent-in-law"). Liking and relational quality were omitted because they were conceptually redundant with sources of relational uncertainty, specifically partner and relationship uncertainty (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). Results of a confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the three themes of children-in-law's relational uncertainty formed unidimensional and reliable measures (see Table 3.1).

Several subscales assessed the themes of children-in-law's family uncertainty. Four items measured uncertainty about *balancing family membership* (e.g., "how to give each family equal time with you and your spouse"), *meddling* (e.g., "how much input your parent-in-law expects to have in your life"), and *proximity* (e.g., "whether or not your parent-in-law expects you to live

close to him/her”). Three items measured children-in-law’s uncertainty regarding *expectations and obligations* (e.g., “how involved you are expected to be in your extended family”), *parenting input* (e.g., “whether or not your parent-in-law will provide unsolicited parenting advice”), and *relationship support* (“whether or not your parent-in-law supports your marital relationship”). Finally, two items measured children-in-law’s questions about *extended family relationships* (e.g., “whether or not your parents and parent-in-law will get along”), *grandparent involvement* (e.g., “how involved your parent-in-law wants to be in your children or future children’s life”), and *triadic influence* (e.g., “how your relationship with your parent-in-law will affect your marital relationship”). A confirmatory factor analyses demonstrated that the themes of children-in-law’s family uncertainty were unidimensional (see Table 3.1).

Finally, two scales were created to assess children-in-law’s experience of parent-in-law uncertainty. Four items measured uncertainty about the *in-law as the individual* (e.g., “your parent-in-law’s values”) and *gossip* (e.g., “what your parent-in-law says about you when you are not present”). Results of a confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated a good fit with the data, verifying the unidimensionality of the parent-in-law uncertainty scales (see Table 3.1).

**Interdependence processes.** Eight items measured *interference*. Participants were presented with the stem, “My parent-in-law...” and responses were rated on 6-point scale, 1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*. Solomon and colleagues’ (2001; Knobloch & Solomon, 2004) four item scale measured *daily interference* (e.g., “disrupts my daily routine”; Knobloch & Solomon, 2004; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001). Based on a review of the in-law literature (see Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012), four items were created to measure *family interference* (e.g., “interferes with my ability to maintain my relationship with other family members”).

Given the conceptual distinction between daily and family interference a CFA was conducted with a two-factor model. Results of the CFA revealed that the two-factor model was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2/df = 3.23$ , CFI = .97, and RMSEA = .11. In addition, the two factors were highly correlated ( $r = .87$ ). Thus, a CFA was conducted with a one-factor model of interference that included all eight items. The unidimensional factor proved to be a good fit with the data,  $\chi^2/df = 2.61$ , CFI = .98, and RMSEA = .08. The eight items measuring both daily and family interference items were averaged to create a composite interference score, with higher scores indicating greater perceived interference ( $M = 1.98$ ,  $SD = .97$ ,  $\alpha = .88$ ). See Appendix C for full measure.

Eight items measured *facilitation*. Participants were presented with the stem, “My parent-in-law...” and responses were rated on 6-point scale, 1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*. Four items measured *daily facilitation* (e.g., “assists me in my daily routine”; Knobloch & Solomon, 2004; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001). Four items, based on the in-law literature (see Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007), were created to measure *family facilitation* (e.g., “helps me accomplish the goals I set for my family”). CFA procedures similar to those used for the interference scales were employed to determine the unidimensionality of the interference scales. Results revealed the eight-items of facilitation formed a unidimensional scale,  $\chi^2/df = 2.28$ , CFI = .98, and RMSEA = .08. Scale items were averaged to create a composite facilitation score, with higher scores indicating greater perceived facilitation ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ,  $\alpha = .91$ ). Appendix C contains the full the facilitation measure.

Table 3.1

*Descriptive Statistics and Goodness-of-fit Statistics for Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Children-in-law's Sources and Themes of Uncertainty*

Source/Theme of Uncertainty	$\alpha$	$M$	$SD$	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	RMSEA
Sources of relational uncertainty				2.19	.92	.07
Self	.93	1.62	.538			
Partner	.93	1.75	.575			
Relationship	.93	1.81	.539			
Themes of relational uncertainty				2.77	.91	.09
Approval	.85	1.22	.44			
Communication	.69	1.43	.47			
Differences	.83	1.38	.53			
Themes of family uncertainty				2.11	.91	.07
Balancing family membership	.86	1.87	.571			
Extended family relationships	.73	1.41	.572			
Expectations and obligations	.81	1.41	.551			
Grandparent involvement	.74	1.44	.610			
Meddling	.79	1.86	.528			
Parenting input	.85	1.44	.610			
Proximity	.81	1.36	.517			

*(table continues)*

Table 3.1 (continued)

Source/Theme of Uncertainty	$\alpha$	$M$	$SD$	$\chi^2/df$	CFI	RMSEA
Relationship support	.92	1.19	.475			
Triadic influence	.77	1.28	.512			
Themes of in-law uncertainty				1.95	.97	.07
In-law as individual	.73	1.38	.478			
Gossip	.89	1.54	.633			

**Interaction goals.** Based on a review of the in-law and multiple goals literature, scales were created to measure children-in-law's interaction goals. Six categories reflected the children-in-law's interaction goals: boundary management, cultivate the desired in-law relationship, establish a positive in-law identity, maintain family relationships, manage uncertainty, and provide support. Several broad categories were comprised of more specific goal constructs. More specifically, the broad goal class of cultivating the desired in-law relationship and maintain family relationships contained three precise goals and the broad goal of managing uncertainty was comprised of two specific uncertainty management goals. The broad goal classes along with specific sub-goals resulted in development of 11 interaction goal scales.

A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the unidimensionality of children-in-law's interaction goals. Results revealed that the four items assessing the goal of managing boundaries did not form a unidimensional factor. Modification indices suggested a two-item, two factor solution: maintain boundaries and maintain privacy, which was theoretically tenable. Thus, the broad goal of boundary management was split into two separate scales, resulting in a

total of 12 interaction goals. After making this modification, results from the CFA indicated that the 12 interaction goals were unidimensional factors ( $\chi^2/df = 2.07$ , CFI = .91, and RMSEA = .07). Composite scores were calculated for each goal. Table 3.2 provides the means, standard deviations, and reliability statistics for children-in-law's goals.

The following stem preceded the scale, "When talking to my parent-in-law I try to..." Responses were measured on a 6-point Likert-type scale, 1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*. Higher scores on each scale indicate higher goal importance. The full interaction goals measure is presented in Appendix C.

Table 3.2

*Descriptive Statistics for Interaction Goals*

	$\alpha$	$M$	$SD$
Boundary management			
Maintain boundaries	.66	4.50	1.29
Maintain privacy	.78	3.05	1.45
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship			
Associate	.84	2.77	1.50
Friend	.92	5.00	1.46
Family	.85	4.70	1.54
Establish the positive in-law identity	.86	5.78	1.43
Maintain family relationships			
In-law	.88	5.59	1.18
Intergenerational	.85	5.47	1.37

*(table continues)*

Table 3.2 (continued)

	$\alpha$	$M$	$SD$
Linchpin	.90	5.71	1.29
Manage uncertainty			
Maintain uncertainty	.64	3.46	1.22
Reduce uncertainty	.76	4.16	1.19
Provide support	.95	5.76	1.33

**Boundary management.** Based on existing in-law and privacy management literature (see Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012; Petronio, 2002) two items measured children-in-law's desire to *maintain boundaries* (e.g., "establish boundaries with my parent-in-law"). The second subscale assessed children-in-law's goal to *maintain privacy* consisted of two items that focused on privacy management (e.g., "prevent my parent-in-law from discovering personal information").

**Cultivate the desired in-law relationship.** Based on typologies of in-law relationships outlined by Merrill (2007) and Pfeifer (1989), seven items assessed the type of in-law relationship children-in-law desired with their parent-in-law. Three items assessed the desire to *establish a family-like relationship* (e.g., "create a parent/child-like relationship with my parent-in-law"), and two items assessed children-in-law's wish to *establish a peer-like relationship* (e.g., "be a good friend to my parent-in-law"), and (c) *establish an associate-like relationship* (e.g., "try to keep my relationship with my parent-in-law very casual").

**Establish a positive in-law identity.** Four items derived from a review of the in-law literature (see Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Turner et al., 2006) were created to assess the goal

of *establishing a positive in-law identity* (e.g., “have my parent-in-law view me as a ‘good’ child-in-law”).

***Maintain family relationships.*** Eight items measured participants’ desire to maintain family relationships, with items modeled after questions used in previous research to assess the goal of maintaining relationships (Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989; Samp & Solomon, 1998). Three items measured in-laws desire to *maintain the in-law relationship* (e.g., “protect my relationship with my parent-in-law”), *maintain the linchpin relationship* (e.g., “preserve my relationship with my fiancé/spouse”), and *maintain the intergenerational relationship* (e.g., “avoid damaging my child’s (or future child’s) relationship with his or her grandparent”).

***Manage uncertainty.*** Based on reasoning from uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1979) and scale items employed by Mongeau, Morr Serewicz, and Ficara Therrin (2004) four items assessed in-law’s desire to *reduce uncertainty* (e.g., “get answers to questions I have about my parent-in-law”). Following the logic outlined by uncertainty management theory (Brashers, 2001), three items were created to examine in-law’s desire to *maintain uncertainty* (e.g., “avoid discovering undesirable information about my parent-in-law”). Items on each subscale were averaged to create a composite score for *maintaining uncertainty*. The descriptive statistics for these two scales are presented in Table 3.2.

***Provide support.*** Based on research by Pfifer (1989) four items assessed children-in-law’s support goal (e.g., “communicate my willingness to help my parent-in-law”). A composite score was calculated based on the average of the four scale items (see Table 3.2).

***Topic avoidance.*** Twenty-eight items measured children-in-law’s use of topic avoidance with their parent-in-law/future parent-in-law. The scale was based on a modified version of Golish and Caughlin’s (2002) stepfamily topic avoidance scale, which was adapted from

Guerrero and Afifi's (1995b) original scale. This scale has demonstrated strong reliability in a variety of familial contexts, including stepfamily and in-law relationships (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Golish & Caughlin, 2002; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011).

This scale was augmented with items that reflected situationally relevant topics of children-in-law avoidance (Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). Two items measured each of the following topics of avoidance: *children* (e.g., "talking about my having children with my parent-in-law"), *child-in-law's family* (e.g., "discussing my family relationships with my parent-in-law"), *couple's decision-making* (e.g., "telling my parent-in-law about decisions my fiancé/spouse and I make"), *everything* (e.g., "discussing most topics with my parent-in-law"), *living arrangements* (e.g., "discussing where my fiancé/spouse and I see ourselves living in the future"), and *work/school* (e.g., "talking to my parent-in-law about career issues").

Scale items were prefaced by the stem "I avoid..." and responses were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale, 1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*. As noted above, a CFA was not conducted on topic avoidance. Given that the scale has indicated strong reliability in previous research as well as the current study ( $\alpha = .96$ ), a composite topic avoidance score was obtained by averaging participants' responses to all items ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ), with higher scores indicating greater avoidance.

**Relationship satisfaction.** A modified version of Huston, McHale, and Crouter's (1986) Marital Opinion Questionnaire (MOQ) measured participants' relational satisfaction with their parent-in-law. The MOQ does not confound relational satisfaction with communication behaviors (Norton, 1983; Vangelisti, et al., 2005) and has been used in numerous studies to ascertain satisfaction levels in a variety of family relationships (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Morr Serewicz, 2008; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). The original scale contains eight 7-point

semantic differential scales (e.g., rewarding, disappointing) and a global item that assesses overall satisfaction with a scale ranging from 1 (*completely dissatisfied*) to 7 (*completely satisfied*). Due to the online nature of the survey, the semantic differential format was modified. Eight anchor terms (e.g., rewarding, empty) were selected and participants were asked to report the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each item (1 = *strongly disagree*, 6 = *strongly agree*). Negatively valenced (e.g., miserable) items were reverse scored.

After confirming the unidimensionality of the scale ( $\chi^2/df = 2.52$ , CFI = .97, and RMSEA = .08), procedures outlined by Huston et al. (1986) were used to create a composite relationship satisfaction score. Specifically, the final, global item of the MOQ (1 = *completely dissatisfied*, 7 = *completely satisfied*) was averaged with the mean score of the first eight items to create an overall in-law satisfaction score with higher scores indicating greater levels of in-law satisfaction ( $M = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). Following procedure outlined by Huston et al. (1986) and employed by Morr Serewicz and Canary (2008), reliability for the scale was calculated by computing the inter-item consistency for the first eight items and then correlating the average of those items with the final, global satisfaction measure. The scale demonstrated strong reliability ( $\alpha = .93$ ,  $r = .95$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Appendix C contains the full MOQ.

## Chapter Four: Results

### Preliminary Analyses and Data Analysis Plan

Bivariate correlations between both independent and dependent variables are presented in Table 4.1. Structural equation modeling (AMOS 20) using maximum likelihood estimation was used to estimate all models and account for multivariate nonnormality (Fan & Wang, 1989; Muthen & Kaplan, 1985). As evidenced by results from the CFAs, all individual items evidenced strong loadings on their corresponding latent factors. Therefore, composite variables were formed to assist in the construction of a latent-composite model (see Stephenson & Holbert, 2003). Latent-composite models are advantageous because they recognize both systematic and random error (Stephenson & Holbert). As such, error variance for all latent variables was set to  $(1-\alpha) * \text{the variance of the indicator}$  (see Bollen, 1989; Stephenson & Holbert).

Existing research suggests that despite turbulent beginnings, most in-laws eventually form satisfying relationships with one another (Merrill, 2007), but this does not happen immediately. Thus, relationship length may impact how children-in-law manage the transition to extended family. In addition, although the present investigation aimed to assess the experience of both engaged and newly married children-in-law, given that some in-laws view the wedding as a significant turning point in the in-law relationship, it is possible that children-in-law's relationship status (i.e., married or engaged) may impact their experience of turmoil, goals, topic avoidance, and relationship satisfaction. Finally, previous findings suggest that the presence of children/grandchildren may affect the parent- and child-in-law relationship (Fischer, 1983). Consequently, these variables were examined as covariates in each model and allowed to directly associate with the mechanism of turbulence, interaction goal, topic avoidance, and satisfaction variables in the model. Consistent with prior research, these covariates did not have a significant

impact on turbulence, topic avoidance, and satisfaction (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011) and were excluded from the final analyses.

Table 4.1

*Correlations among the Study's Independent and Dependent Variables*

Variables	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10
Relational uncertainty										
1. Self	--									
2. Partner	.59**	--								
3. Relationship	.68**	.74**	--							
4. Approval	.49**	.43**	.48**	--						
5. Communication	.52**	.47**	.49**	.68**	--					
6. Differences	.40**	.39**	.49**	.84**	.61**	--				
Family uncertainty										
7. Balancing family membership	.38**	.38**	.49**	.31**	.29**	.26**	--			
8. Family expectations	.44**	.38**	.42**	.69**	.70**	.61**	.31**	--		
9. Extended family relationships	.40**	.31**	.39**	.56**	.46**	.46**	.22**	.57**	--	
10. Grandparent Involvement	.39**	.41**	.37**	.61**	.55**	.48**	.25**	.51**	.49**	--
11. Meddling	.36**	.57**	.56**	.44**	.34**	.39**	.50**	.29**	.25**	.34**
12. Parenting input	.34**	.36**	.39**	.78**	.38**	.57**	.28**	.48**	.37**	.51**
13. Proximity	.33**	.30**	.31**	.81**	.59**	.58**	.22**	.61**	.51**	.53**
14. Relationship support	.36**	.27**	.25**	.61**	.52**	.48**	.11	.58**	.49**	.48**
15. Triadic influence	.30**	.31**	.29**	.75**	.52**	.63**	.23**	.60**	.40**	.63**
In-Law uncertainty										
16. Gossip	.40**	.41**	.50**	.56**	.47**	.47**	.34**	.45**	.49**	.48**
17. In-law uncertainty	.44**	.35**	.44**	.54**	.58**	.42**	.25**	.53**	.42**	.48**
Interdependence processes										
18. Interference from in-laws	.37**	.21**	.29**	.25**	.28**	.19**	.21**	.30**	.28**	.22**
19. Facilitation from in-laws	-.42**	-.32**	-.40**	-.30**	-.40**	-.23**	-.09	-.40**	-.37**	-.32**

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variables	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10
<b>Goals</b>										
20. Cultivate associate relationship	.41**	.30**	.33**	.23**	.34**	.15*	.20**	.25**	.21**	.22**
21. Cultivate family relationship	-.28**	-.19**	-.24**	-.18**	-.34**	-.11	-.03	-.33**	-.25**	-.30**
22. Cultivate friend relationship	-.26**	.15*	-.26**	-.23**	-.26**	-.17*	-.01	-.26**	-.26**	-.29**
23. Establish positive in-law identity	-.16*	-.08	-.07	-.13	-.12	-.04	.12	-.13	-.10	-.20**
24. Maintain grandparent relationship	-.03	.01	.04	-.07	-.02	-.01	.12	-.04	.05	-.12
25. Maintain in-law relationship	-.13	-.05	-.08	-.15*	-.15*	-.06	.09	-.13	-.12	-.21**
26. Maintain linchpin relationship	.02	.04	.08	-.09	.03	-.09	.10	-.03	-.01	-.05
27. Manage boundaries	.01	-.01	.06	-.04	-.07	-.08	.15*	-.01	-.04	-.06
28. Manage privacy	.34**	.22**	.25**	.20**	.27**	.11	.21**	.20**	.18**	.13
29. Maintain uncertainty	.33**	.30**	.32**	.27**	.25**	.22**	.27**	.23**	.24**	.21**
30. Reduce uncertainty	-.10	.03	-.03	-.06	-.14	-.09	.14*	-.13	-.08	-.18**
31. Provide support	-.30**	-.14*	-.23**	-.20**	-.27**	-.11	-.03	-.23**	-.28**	-.26**
<b>Dependent Variables</b>										
32. Topic avoidance	.39**	.25**	.33**	.23**	.34**	.17*	.13	.26**	.20**	.21**
33. Relationship satisfaction	-.43**	-.27**	-.33**	-.25**	-.39**	-.18**	-.07	-.36**	-.35**	-.31**

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variables	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20
Relational uncertainty										
1. Self										
2. Partner										
3. Relationship										
4. Approval										
5. Communication										
6. Differences										
Family Uncertainty										
7. Balancing family membership										
8. Family expectations										
9. Extended family relationships										
10. Grandparent involvement										
11. Meddling	--									
12. Parenting input	.36**	--								
13. Proximity	.31**	.56**	--							
14. Relationship support	.22**	.33**	.52**	--						
15. Triadic influence	.31**	.61**	.69**	.50**	--					
In-Law Uncertainty										
16. Gossip	.39**	.47**	.48**	.35**	.41**	--				
17. In-law uncertainty	.26**	.46**	.50**	.42**	.46**	.42**	--			
Interdependence processes										
18. Interference from in-laws	.15*	.09	.26**	.34**	.21**	.21**	.29**	--		
19. Facilitation from in-laws	-.11	-.21**	-.25**	-.27**	-.18*	-.30**	-.44**	-.42**	--	
Goals										
20. Cultivate associate relationship	.15*	.09	.13	.22**	.14*	.19**	.32**	.36**	-.49**	--

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variables	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20
21. Cultivate family relationship	-.04	-.08	-.16*	-.26**	-.13	-.19**	-.33**	-.31**	.69**	-.48**
22. Cultivate friend relationship	-.10	-.18**	-.18**	-.26**	-.16*	-.25**	-.28**	-.22**	.51**	-.37**
23. Establish positive in-law identity	.04	-.03	-.15*	-.29**	-.12	-.06	-.17*	-.15*	.37**	-.25**
24. Maintain intergenerational relationship	-.00	.02	-.08	-.24**	-.12	.01	.02	-.11	.13	-.09
25. Maintain in-law relationship	-.03	-.02	-.17*	-.31**	-.16*	-.04	-.17*	-.28**	.43**	-.34**
26. Maintain linchpin relationship	.08	-.04	-.10	-.17*	-.12	.08	-.01	.00	.13	.01
27. Manage boundaries	.07	.03	-.04	-.11	-.04	.04	.03	.08	.06	.09
28. Manage privacy	.19**	.10	.12	.16*	.10	.18*	.23**	.36**	-.35**	.65**
29. Maintain uncertainty	.29**	.17*	.21**	.12	.16*	.18*	.28**	.25**	-.21**	.48**
30. Reduce uncertainty	.06	-.00	.01	-.15*	-.05	-.06	-.18**	-.15*	.35**	-.19**
31. Provide support	-.07	-.06	-.16*	-.32**	-.15	-.18**	-.27**	-.37**	.61**	-.57**
Dependent Variables										
32. Topic Avoidance	.17*	.13	.20**	.14*	.12	.22**	.32**	.46**	-.61**	.54**
33. Relationship Satisfaction	-.07	-.11	-.22**	-.34**	-.21**	-.30**	-.40**	-.52**	.80**	-.63**

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variables	V21	V22	V23	V24	V25	V26	V27	V28	V29	V30	V31
Relational Uncertainty											
1. Self											
2. Partner											
3. Relationship											
4. Approval											
5. Communication											
6. Differences											
Family Uncertainty											
7. Balancing family membership											
8. Family expectation											
9. Extended family relationships											
10. Grandparent involvement											
11. Meddling											
12. Parenting input											
13. Proximity											
14. Relationship support											
15. Triadic influence											
In-Law Uncertainty											
16. Gossip											
17. In-Law uncertainty											
Interdependence processes											
18. Interference from in-laws											
19. Facilitation from in-laws											
Goals											
20. Cultivate associate relationship											
21. Cultivate family relationship	--										

Table 4.1 (continued)

Variables	V21	V22	V23	V24	V25	V26	V27	V28	V29	V30	V31	V32
22. Cultivate friend relationship	.70**	--										
23. Establish positive in-law identity	.57**	.55**	--									
24. Maintain intergenerational relationship	.32**	.28**	.57**	--								
25. Maintain in-law relationship	.56**	.49**	.75**	.63**	--							
26. Maintain linchpin relationship	.29**	.26**	.57**	.61**	.57**	--						
27. Maintain boundaries	.23**	.14*	.31**	.35**	.32**	.35**	--					
28. Maintain privacy	-.36**	-.26**	-.07	.11	-.11	.10	.20**	--				
29. Maintain uncertainty	-.12	-.07	.17*	.19**	.07	.18**	.30**	.61**	--			
30. Reduce uncertainty	.54**	.42**	.53*	.38**	.48**	.35**	.60**	-.07	.12	--		
31. Provide support	.68**	.63**	.71**	.43**	.71**	.33**	.23**	-.35**	-.15*	.52**	--	
Dependent Variables												
32. Topic Avoidance	-.50**	-.45**	-.24**	.01	-.33**	-.01	-.02	.50**	-.27**	-.32**	-.47**	--
33. Relationship Satisfaction	.70	.55**	.43**	.14*	.49**	.09	.05	-.45**	-.23**	.35**	.68**	-.66**

## Main Analyses

A series of structural equation models was run to examine the hypothesized model for each individual mechanism of turbulence (e.g., self uncertainty, approval uncertainty) and goal (e.g., reducing uncertainty, providing support; see Figure 2). Model fit was assessed using the  $\chi^2$  statistic as well as two other goodness-of-fit indices, the comparative fit index (CFI) and root mean square of approximation (RMSEA; Bentler, 1990; Brown & Cudeck, 1993; Kline, 2011). Similar to guidelines for CFA fit, a priori criteria for model fit were such that CFI should exceed .90 and RMSEA should be less than .10. However, in models with small degrees of freedom, the RMSEA often exceeds the cut-off point of .10, even in models that are correctly specified (Kenny, Kaniskan, McCoach, 2012). Thus, for these models, the RMSEA is not necessarily diagnostic. Therefore, if other fit indices met the a priori criteria, the model was deemed an adequate fit. Additionally, in cases in which the overall  $\chi^2$  statistic was significant ( $p < .05$ ) but other fit indices met a priori guidelines (i.e.,  $CFI > .90$ ), I followed recommendations by Kenny et al. to examine the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI). When the overall fit resulted in a significant  $\chi^2$  and the LMI suggested adding a path, the appropriate path was added, even though this often meant that the model became a saturated one, eliminating the need to assess the RMSEA. Because the main goal of using SEM in this case was to examine the associations among the constructs, having a saturated model did not interfere with the purposes of the main analyses.

To examine the proposed mediated relationships, bootstrapping was employed (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008a). Bootstrapping is an intensive, “nonparametric resampling procedure” (Preacher & Hayes, 2008b, p. 880) that resamples the data multiple times and estimates indirect effects from each set of the resampled data. The process is repeated no less than 1,000 times and

the distribution of these values provides a confidence interval for the indirect effect (Preacher & Hayes, 2008a, 2008b).

Following recommendations by Hayes (2009), 5,000 samples were generated to test the size and significance indirect effect of goals. The indirect effects' significance was determined by examining the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI), which allows for asymmetry (Efron & Tibshirani, 1998). If zero was not within the confidence interval, then it is reasonable to claim that the indirect effect is different from zero (Preacher & Hayes, 2008b, p. 26), meaning that the variable is a statistically significant mediator. Unlike more common means for testing mediation and mediation significance, such as Baron and Kenny's (1986) *causal step strategy* or the Sobel Test (Sobel, 1982), bootstrapping allows "for an indirect path to be detectably different from zero even though one of its constituent paths is not" (Hayes, 2009, p. 410-411), does not assume a normality or symmetry of the normal distribution of the indirect effects, has higher power, and reduces instances of Type I errors (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, & Sheets, 2002; Preacher & Hayes, 2008a, 2008b). Such qualities make bootstrapping the preferred method, especially when using small to moderately sized samples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008a).

In the subsections below I outline results from each model by mechanism of turbulence and goal.

**Sources and themes of relational uncertainty.** The hypothesized model predicted that the sources and themes of relational uncertainty would be positively associated with children-in-law's use of topic avoidance (Figure 2, Path *a*) and this relationship would be partially mediated by goals (Figure 2, Path *b* and *c*). In addition, both the sources and themes of relational uncertainty (Figure 2, Path *d*) and topic avoidance (Figure 2, Path *e*) would be negatively

associated with relationship satisfaction. Furthermore, research questions were advanced to examine the direction of the associations between the sources and themes of relational uncertainty and goals (Figure 2, Path *b*) along with the link between goals and topic avoidance (Figure 2, Path *c*) under conditions of relational uncertainty. Results regarding the sources and themes of relational uncertainty are presented below.

***Self uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among self uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .58, p = .44, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.2. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between self uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals is presented in Table 4.3. For all mediation analyses, only the statistically significant indirect effects are presented in the tables. Statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. The total indirect effect of the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) is presented in Table 4.4.

As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). However, the goal to maintain boundaries did not significantly mediate the relationship between self uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2a.1*). Research question one asked about the direct links among turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance. Results indicated that self uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1a.1*), and the goal to maintain boundaries was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). However, as

hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Finally, self uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and self uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.2

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Self Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.51***	-.02	.07	-.38***	-.47***
Maintain privacy	.33***	.44***	.41***	-.38***	-.47***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.30***	.59***	.36***	-.24***	-.36***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.42***	-.37***	-.25***	-.32***	-.40***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.37***	-.41***	-.34***	-.27***	-.27***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.49***	-.27***	-.04	-.32***	-.46***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.48***	-.29***	-.08	-.33***	-.45***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.2 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.51***	-.07	-.08	-.38***	-.46***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.51***	-.00	.02	-.38***	-.47***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.42***	.43***	.21*	-.38***	-.47***
Reduce uncertainty	.46***	-.22**	-.19**	-.38***	-.47**
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.42***	-.48***	-.18*	-.25***	-.40***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.32^{***}$ ; b.  $.24^{***}$ ; c.  $.51^{***}$ ; d.  $.23^{***}$ ; e.  $.20^{***}$ , f.  $.34^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet the a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.21, p = .04$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .13. Examination of the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) did not suggest any additional modifications. However, all predicated paths were statistically significant. As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). In addition, self uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1a.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2a.2*; see Table 4.3). Consistent with hypotheses, both self

uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction.

Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Overall, self uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .40$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., self uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.3

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Self Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Self uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.18	.09, .30
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Self uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.21	.09, .37
Self uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .18
Self uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.14	.07, .24
<b>Provide support</b>		
Self uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.09	.02, .19

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.4

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Self Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.17
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.17
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.37	-.49, -.28
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.29	-.39, -.21
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.35	-.45, -.25
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.29	-.39, -.22
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.29	-.39, -.21

*(table continues)*

Table 4.4 (*continues*)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.17
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.17
Manage uncertainty		
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.17
Self uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.32, -.17
Provide support		
Self Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.37	-.47, -.29

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations between self uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 15.43, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .27$ . Examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) suggested adding a path from goal to satisfaction, which was theoretically plausible (Kline, 2011); thus the path was added to the model, which resulted in a saturated model (see Figure 3, Path *f*). Overall model fit cannot be assessed for just-identified models due to the meaningless nature of goodness-of-fit indices. For example, within a saturated model the CFI is typically 1.0, while the RMSEA cannot be computed (Schumaker & Lomax, 2004). Instead, only the individual parameters can be meaningfully interpreted (Klein, 2011). Since the main goal of employing SEM was to assess the associations among constructs within a single model, saturated models were retained and their parameters were interpreted.

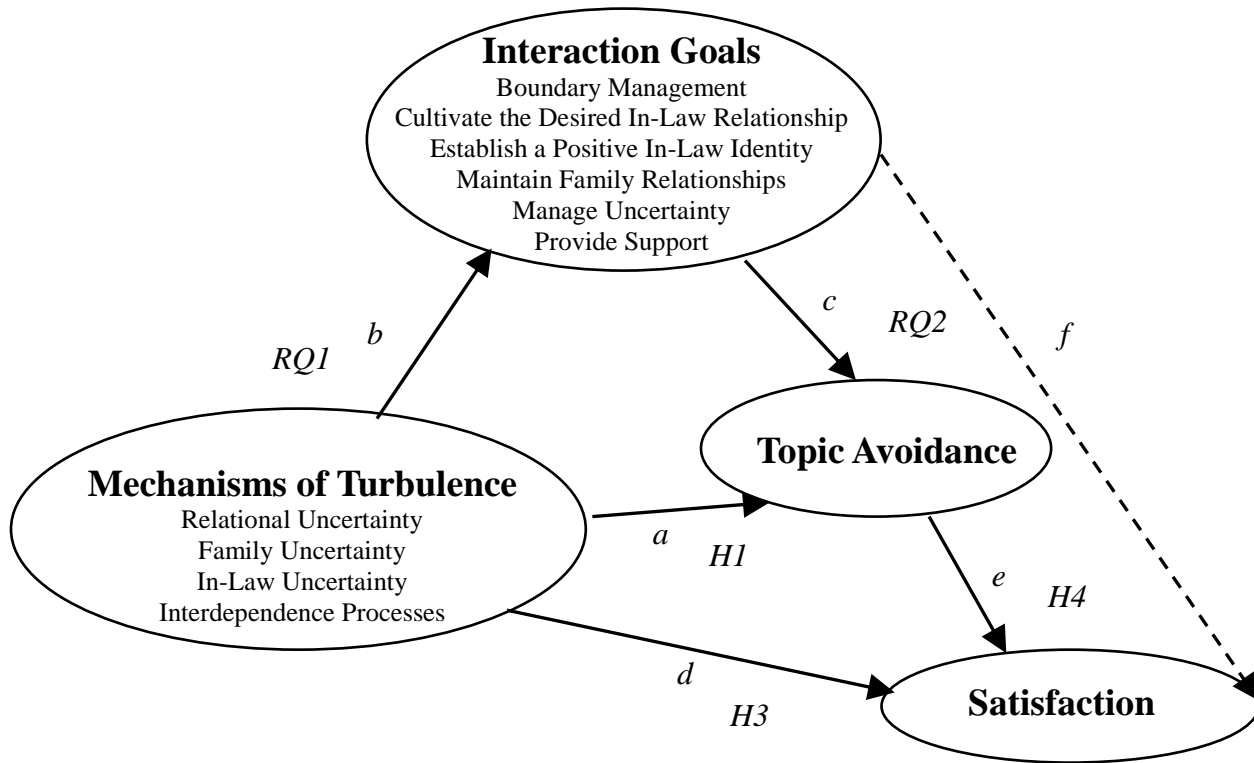


Figure 3. The Saturated Model.

As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship (*H2a.3*; see Table 4.2). In addition, self uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an association relationship (*RQ1a.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). As hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Overall, self uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 15.13, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .27$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a saturated model (see Figure 3). As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2a.4*; see Table 4.3). In addition, self uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1a.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4a.4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was

positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Self uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 58.76, p < .001, CFI = .79, RMSEA = .54$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a family relationship (*H2a.5*; see Table 4.3). Self uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1a.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Consistent with predictions, self uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Topic avoidance was also inversely related to satisfaction (*H4a*). The goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Overall, self uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .35$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .73$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 14.14, p < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .25$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). However, this relationship was not significantly mediated by the goal establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2a.6*). In addition, self uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to

establish a proper identity (*RQ1a.6*); conversely this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). As hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Self uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among self uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 7.22, p < .001$ , CFI = .93, RMSEA = .17. The Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) recommended adding a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction. This modification was theoretically tenable (Kline, 2011); thus, the path was added, which resulted in a just-identified model. As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). However, this relationship was not significantly mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2a.7*). In addition, self uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1a.7*); however, this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4a.7*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). In addition, the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Overall, self uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the

variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.42, p = .23, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05$ . As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by the goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2a.8*). Research questions one and two pertained to the direct links among turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance. The results indicated that self uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1a.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). As hypothesized, self uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). In addition, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Self uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the self uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .83, p = .36, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). This relationship was not mediated by the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2a.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that self uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1a.9*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). However, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4a*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction

was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Overall, self uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and self uncertainty and topic avoidance combined accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among self uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was an excellent fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .27, p = .61, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.2. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between self uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.3., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.4.

As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between self uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2a.10*). Results indicated that self uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1a.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain uncertainty and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Self uncertainty and the interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables combined accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for self uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.47, p = .11, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08$ . As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*) and this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2a.11*, see Table 4.3). Results indicated that self uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal to reduce uncertainty (*RQ1a.11*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Consistent with hypotheses, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The association between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to reduce uncertainty and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). Overall, self uncertainty and the interaction goal accounted for nearly a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictors accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 28.34, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .37$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, self uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2a.12*; see Table 4.3). In addition, self uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1a.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses, both self uncertainty (*H3a.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The link between self uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.4). In addition, the goal of providing support shared a positive association with

satisfaction (see Table 4.2). Self uncertainty and the goal of providing support accounted for almost a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .63$ ).

***Partner uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models examined the links among partner uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for partner uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .51, p = .4, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.5. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.6. The total indirect effects of the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.7.

As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). The goal to maintain boundaries, however, did not significantly mediate the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2b.1*). Moreover, results indicated that partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1b.1*), and the goal to maintain boundaries was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Overall, partner uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and partner uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Table 4.5

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Partner Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.35***	-.06	.08	-.23***	-.58***
Maintain privacy	.20**	.30***	.20***	-.23***	-.58***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.13	.46***	.48***	-.11	-.41***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.26***	-.25***	-.34***	-.19**	-.48***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.22***	-.31***	-.42**	-.15**	-.34***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.33***	-.18*	-.12	-.19**	-.54***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>c</sup>	.32***	-.19**	-.16*	-.20**	-.54***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.35***	-.02	.05	-.23***	-.58***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.35***	.01	.02	-.23***	-.58***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.5 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.23**	.39***	.30**	-.23***	-.58***
Reduce uncertainty	.34***	-.04	-.28***	-.23***	-.58***
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.25***	-.29***	-.31***	-.16**	-.45***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.38^{***}$ ; b.  $.28^{***}$ ; c.  $.54^{***}$ ; d.  $.26^{***}$ ; e.  $.24^{***}$ ; f.  $.39^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for partner uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet the a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.21, p = .04$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .13. However, the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) did not suggest any modifications that were tenable (Kline, 2011). As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2b.2*; see Table 4.6). In addition, partner uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1b.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Partner uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a

third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., partner uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

Table 4.6

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Partner Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Partner uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.14	.06, .25
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Partner uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.22	.13, .34
Partner uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.08	.03, .17
Partner uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.13	.06, .22
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Partner uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.12	.04, .24
<b>Provide support</b>		
Partner uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.09	.05, .16

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.7

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Partner Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.32	-.44, -.21
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.14
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.28	-.41, -.16
Establish a positive in-law identity		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.13
Maintain family relationships		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.24	-.34, -.13

Table 4.7 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Partner Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Partner Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Manage uncertainty		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Provide support		
Partner uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.38, -.16

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among partner uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 22.98, p < .001, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .33$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. Contrary to what was predicted, partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). However, partner uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1b.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). Moreover, the goal to cultivate an associate relationship significantly mediated the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2b.3*; see Table 4.6). In contrast to what was hypothesized, partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (*H3a.2*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.5). Overall, partner uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 19.28, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .30$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2b.4*; see Table 4.6). In addition, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate

a friend relationship (*RQ1b.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.2*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Furthermore, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.5). Partner uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .23$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 61.75, p < .001, CFI = .74, RMSEA = .55$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with hypotheses, results revealed that partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*; see Table 4.5). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a family relationship (*H2b.5*; see Table 4.6). In addition, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1b.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Consistent with what was hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Also, the goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.5). Overall, partner uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for close to a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .70$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 18.45, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*; see Table 4.5). Examination of the BC CI revealed that the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship (*H2b.6*). Research questions one and two inquired about the links among turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance. Results revealed that partner uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1b.6*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Consistent with hypotheses, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Results indicated that the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.5). Partner uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among partner uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 14.42, p < .001, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .26$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). All the predicted paths were statistically significant. As

predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). However, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining the in-law relationship (*H2b.7*). In addition, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1b.7*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.2*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Topic avoidance was also negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 3.5). Partner uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for partner uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.46, p = .12, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08$ . As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). However, the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2b.8*). Results indicated that partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1b.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Partner uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic

avoidance ( $R^2 = .12$ ), and the partner uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model for partner uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .94, p = .33, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). However, the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship was not a significant mediator (*H2b.9*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1b.9*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4a*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Partner uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .12$ ), and partner uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Two models examined the associations among partner uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for partner uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .88, p = .35, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.5. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.6, and the total indirect effects of the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through

interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.7.

As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between partner uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2a.10*; see Table 4.6). Moreover, results for the two research questions revealed that partner uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1b.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Partner uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., partner uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

The model containing partner uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.53, p = .03, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .13$ . Examination of the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), however, did not offer any theoretically tenable modifications. Given that the use of SEM was to examine the associations among constructs, it was acceptable to examine the path parameters even though the model was not a good fit to the data. As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*). This relationship, however, was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2b.11*). In addition, partner uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1b.11*). However, this goal

was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). As hypothesized, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4a*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between partner uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.7). Overall, partner uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and partner uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 40.42, p < .001, CFI = .81, RMSEA = .45$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, partner uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.2*), and the goal of providing support significantly mediated this relationship (*H2b.12*; see Table 4.6). In addition, partner uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1b.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). As predicted, both partner uncertainty (*H3a.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4a*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of providing support and topic avoidance significantly mediated the association between turbulence and satisfaction (see Table 4.7). The goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.5). Partner uncertainty accounted for over a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .21$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for just over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

***Relationship uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models examined the associations among relationship uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .97$ ,  $p = .33$ , CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00. The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.8. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals is presented in Table 4.9. The total indirect effects of the relationship between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction (mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.10.

As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*), and the goal to maintain boundaries significantly mediated this association (*H2c.1*; see Table 4.9). In addition, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1c.1*), and the goal to maintain boundaries was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Relationship uncertainty accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Table 4.8

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Relationship Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.32***	.41***	.26**	-.23***	.56***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.31***	.29***	.40***	-.22***	-.48***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.23**	.46***	.43***	-.12	-.40***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.32***	-.35***	-.29***	-.17**	-.48***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.29***	-.34***	-.39***	-.15**	-.33***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.41***	-.15 <sup>†</sup>	-.11	-.21***	-.52***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.52***	-.30***	-.02	-.29***	-.47***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.42***	.03	.03	-.23***	-.56***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.53***	-.02	.09	-.36***	-.48***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.32***	.41***	.26**	-.23***	-.56***
Reduce uncertainty <sup>g</sup>	.34***	-.04	-.36***	-.14*	-.58***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.8 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>h</sup>	.32***	-.36***	-.27***	-.14*	-.45***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path f). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.17^{**}$ ; b.  $-.39^{***}$ ; c.  $.27^{***}$ ; d.  $.53, ***$ ; e.  $.27^{***}$ ; f.  $.23^{***}$ ; g.  $.20^{**}$ ; h.  $.39^{***}$ . <sup>†</sup>  $p = .05$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet the a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.91, p < .01$ , CFI = .97, RMSEA = .17. Examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) suggested adding a path from goal to satisfaction, which was theoretically plausible (Kline, 2011); thus the path was added to the model. As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2c.2*; see Table 4.9). In addition, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1c.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.3*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Topic avoidance was also negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*), as well as the goal of maintaining privacy (see Table 4.8). Overall, relationship uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .32$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship uncertainty,

interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.9

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Relationship Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Relationship uncertainty → Boundaries → Topic avoidance	.11	.02, .23
Relationship uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.11	.06, .19
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Relationship uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.20	.11, .33
Relationship uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.10	.04, .19
Relationship uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.13	.07, .23
Manage uncertainty		
Relationship uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.11	.02, .23
Provide support		
Relationship uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.09	.04, .17

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.10

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Relationship Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Relationship uncertainty → Maintain boundaries → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.24	-.33, -.16
Relationship uncertainty → Maintain privacy → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.25	-.34, -.18
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Relationship uncertainty → Associate relationship → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.35	-.46, -.25
Relationship uncertainty → Friend relationship → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.30	-.41, -.21
Relationship uncertainty → Family relationship → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.32	-.45, -.21
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
Relationship uncertainty → Identity → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.26	-.37, -.16
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Relationship uncertainty → In-law relationship → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.32	-.40, -.25

Table 4.10 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Relationship Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.33, -.16
Relationship Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.25	-.35, -.17
Manage uncertainty		
Relationship uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.33, -.16
Relationship uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.32, -.11
Provide support		
Relationship uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.33	-.44, -.22

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models examined the associations among relationship uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 22.24, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .34$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As anticipated, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). In addition, the goal to cultivate an associate relationship significantly mediated the association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2b.3*; see Table 4.9). Results revealed that relationship uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1c.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). In contrast to what was hypothesized, relationship uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (*H3a.3*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.8), and the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Altogether, relationship uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 16.83, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .28$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*), and the goal to cultivate a friend relationship was a significant mediator (*H2b.4*; see Table 4.9). In

addition, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1c.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.8), and the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Overall, relationship uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 61.93, p < .001, CFI = .76, RMSEA = .55$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a family relationship (*H2c.5*; see Table 4.9). In addition, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1c.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Consistent with hypotheses, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, although not predicted, the goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.8), and the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Relationship uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .32$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost three-quarters of the

variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .70$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 19.54, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .31$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). However, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2c.6*). In addition, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1c.6*). Furthermore, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). However, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Interestingly, the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.10), and the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.8). Overall, relationship uncertainty accounted for nearly a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Three models examined the associations among relationship uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 12.81, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .25$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). This relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2c.7*). In addition, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with the

desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1c.7*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.8). Relationship uncertainty accounted for close to a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.15, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). The goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2c.8*). Moreover, results indicated that relationship uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1c.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Overall, relationship uncertainty accounted for close to a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .10, p = .75, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ .

Relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.3), but the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (H2c.9).

Furthermore, results indicated that relationship uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (RQ1c.9), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (RQ2d.3). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (H3a.3) and topic avoidance (H4) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Altogether, relationship uncertainty accounted for nearly a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among relationship uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .97, p = .33, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.8. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.9., and the total indirect effects of the link between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.10.

Results revealed that relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.3). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (H2c.10; see Table 4.9). Furthermore, relationship uncertainty

was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1c.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the link between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Relationship uncertainty and the goal to maintain uncertainty accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.57, p = .03, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .19$ . Examination of the LMI indicated adding a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction. Because this modification was theoretically tenable (Kline, 2011), the path was added, resulting in a just-identified model. Relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*). However, this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2c.11*). In addition, results revealed that relationship uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1c.11*). This goal, however, was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). As predicted, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, although not hypothesized, the goal of reducing uncertainty was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.8), and the relationship between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.10). Overall, relationship uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables

accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 38.37, p < .001, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .43$ . The LMI suggested adding a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction. Within the saturated model all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As predicted, relationship uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.3*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2c.12*; see Table 4.9). In addition, relationship uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1c.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). As hypothesized, both relationship uncertainty (*H3a.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The association between relationship uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.10), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.8). Relationship uncertainty and the interaction goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

***Approval uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models examined the associations among approval uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for approval uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .12, p = .73, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.11. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.12. The total indirect effects of the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction (with

significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.13.

As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2d.1*; see Table 4.12). In addition, approval uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1d.1*), and the goal to maintain boundaries positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As hypothesized, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.4*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain boundaries and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Topic avoidance was also negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Overall, approval uncertainty and the goal to maintain boundaries accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., approval uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .47$ ).

Table 4.11

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Approval Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.18*	.27**	.42***	-.19**	-.60***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.17*	.26**	.50***	-.17**	-.49***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.14	.33***	.49***	-.11	-.41***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.19**	-.32***	-.34***	-.13*	-.51***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.18*	-.27***	-.44***	-.12*	-.36***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.27***	-.22**	-.11	-.14*	-.57***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.30***	-.32***	-.05	-.15*	-.58***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.31***	-.11	.07	-.19**	-.60***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.38***	-.14	.15*	-.25***	-.59***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.18*	.36***	.32***	-.19**	-.60***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.11 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Reduce uncertainty	.33***	-.15	-.18*	-.25***	-.58***
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.19**	-.32***	-.33***	-.10	-.47***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.22^{**}$ ; b.  $-.41^{***}$ ; c.  $.27^{***}$ ; d.  $.54^{***}$ ; e.  $.26^{***}$ ; f.  $.24^{***}$ ; g.  $.40^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for approval uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 7.03, p = .008, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .17$ . Examination of LMI suggested adding a path from goal to satisfaction. Within the final model, all predicated paths were significant. Consistent with predictions, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2d.2*; see Table 4.12). In addition, approval uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1d.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Consistent with hypotheses, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of maintaining privacy was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.11), and the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Approval uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in

topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., approval uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.12

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Approval Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Approval uncertainty → Boundaries → Topic avoidance	.11	.06, .19
Approval uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.13	.06, .23
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Approval uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.16	.09, .28
Approval uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.11	.05, .19
Approval uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.12	.06, .20
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Approval uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.12	.03, .24
<b>Provide support</b>		
Approval uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.10	.05, .18

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.13

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Approval Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.25, -.12
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.13
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.26	-.35, -.17
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.33, -.16
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.25	-.35, -.15
Establish a positive in-law identity		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.32, -.15
Maintain family relationships		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.26	-.37, -.18

Table 4.13 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Approval Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.26, -.11
Approval Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.28, -.15
Manage uncertainty		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.26, -.11
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.28, -.15
Provide support		
Approval uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.37, -.18

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models examined the associations among approval uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 26.98, p < .001$ , CFI = .87, RMSEA = .36. Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Contrary to what was predicted, approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Instead, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2d.3*; see Table 4.12). In addition, results revealed that approval uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1d.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). In contrast to what was hypothesized, approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (*H3a.4*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.11), and the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Overall, approval uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.31, p < .001$ , CFI = .90, RMSEA = .28. Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2d.4*; see Table 4.12). In addition, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to

cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1c.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.11), and the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Approval uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 62.49, p < .001, CFI = .73, RMSEA = .56$ . A path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model based on the LMI (see Figure 3); all the predicted paths were statistically significant. Consistent with predictions, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a family relationship (*H2d.5*; see Table 4.12). In addition, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1d.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, although not predicted, the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.11). Moreover, the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Overall, approval uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .27$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2$

= .69).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.49, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). However, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2d.6*). Research questions one and two inquired about the direct links among turbulence, goals, and communication. Results revealed that approval uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1d.6*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.13), and the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.11). Approval uncertainty accounted for nearly a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Three models examined the associations among approval uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 12.83, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .25$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Contrary to what was predicted, the relationship between approval

uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2d.7*). Furthermore, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1d.7*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.13), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.11). Approval uncertainty accounted for 10% the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .10$ ), and the three predictor variables combined accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.72, p = .19, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between relationship uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2d.8*). Furthermore, results indicated that approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1d.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Approval uncertainty accounted for almost 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and approval uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in

satisfaction ( $R^2 = .47$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .00, p = .99$ , CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00. As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Furthermore, the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship significantly mediated the relationship between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2d.9*; see Table 4.12). Results indicated that approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1d.9*); however, this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Overall, approval uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and approval uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

Two models examined the associations among approval uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for approval uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.24, p = .26$ , CFI = .99, RMSEA = .03. The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.11. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.12, and the total indirect effects of the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.13.

As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between approval uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2d.10*; see Table 4.12). In addition, results indicated that approval uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1d.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, both approval uncertainty (*H3a.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13). Overall, approval uncertainty accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., approval uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over a third of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .41$ ).

The model for approval uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.49, p = .11, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .08$ . As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*). Examination of the bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) indicated that the goal to reduce uncertainty did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2d.11*; see Table 4.12). Approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1d.11*). However, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). As hypothesized, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.4*), and topic avoidance significantly mediated this relationship (see Table 4.13). In addition, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Approval uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for

over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 39.27, p < .001, CFI = .80, RMSEA = .44$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, approval uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.4*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2d.12*; see Table 4.12). In addition, approval uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1d.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Moreover, approval uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (*H3a.4*), but topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between approval uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.13), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.12). Overall, approval uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

***Communication uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models examined the associations between communication uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.03, p = .15, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .07$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.14. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction

goals are presented in Table 4.15. The total indirect effects of the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.16.

As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2e.1*). Communication uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1e.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). However, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Overall, communication uncertainty accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and communication uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.14

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Communication Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.49***	-.13	.13	-.37***	-.48***
Maintain privacy	.30***	.42***	.43***	-.39***	-.48***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.27**	.52***	.39***	-.26**	-.36***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.38***	-.38***	-.26***	-.32***	-.41***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.31***	-.52***	-.33***	-.19**	-.33***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.46***	-.23*	-.07	-.33***	-.46***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.45***	-.30***	-.08	-.33***	-.46***
Maintain intergenerational relationship <sup>f</sup>	.41***	-.02	-.01	-.23**	-.61***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.41***	.01	-.02	-.23**	-.61***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.39***	.38***	.24*	-.38***	-.48***
Reduce uncertainty ( <i>table continues</i> )	.43***	-.27**	-.17*	-.38***	-.48***

Table 4.14 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.38***	-.46***	-.21**	-.25***	-.41***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.33^{**}$ ; b.  $.24^{***}$ ; c.  $.24^{***}$ ; d.  $.54^{***}$ ; e.  $.19^{**}$ ; f.  $.15^{**}$ ; g.  $.34^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.78, p = .05, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .14$ . As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*), and examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the goal of maintaining privacy significantly mediated this relationship (*H2e.2*; see Table 4.15). In addition, communication uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1e.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Communication uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .40$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., communication uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Table 4.15

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Communication Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Communication uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.18	.07, .29
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Communication uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.20	.10, .36
Communication uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .19
Communication uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.17	.06, .31
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Communication uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.09	.02, .21
<b>Provide support</b>		
Communication uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.10	.01, .20

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.16

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Communication Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.30, -.18
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.30, -.17
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.34	-.48, -.25
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.29	-.40, -.21
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.41	-.53, -.32
Establish a positive in-law identity		
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.38, -.20
Maintain family relationships		
Communication uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.28	-.39, -.20

Table 4.16 (*continues*)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Communication uncertainty → Intergenerational → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.25	-.33, -.19
Communication Uncertainty → Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.25	-.32, -.19
Manage uncertainty		
Communication uncertainty → Maintain uncertainty → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.23	-.31, -.16
Communication uncertainty → Reduce uncertainty → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.23	-.32, -.16
Provide support		
Communication uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.35	-.45, -.28

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among communication uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 16.58, p < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .28$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). Furthermore, the goal to cultivate an associate relationship significantly mediated the relationship between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2e.3*; see Table 4.15). Moreover, communication uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1e.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). In addition, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.14), and the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Overall, communication uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 12.83, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .24$ . Based the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2e.4*; see Table 4.15). In addition, communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to

cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1e.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.14), and the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Communication uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 42.42, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .46$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*), and the goal to cultivate a family relationship significantly mediated this relationship (*H2e.5*; see Table 4.15). In addition, communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1e.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Moreover, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, although not predicted, the goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.14), and the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Communication uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in

satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 15.19, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .27$ . The LMI suggested adding a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction (see Figure 3). As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2e.6*). In addition, communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1e.6*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.16), and the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.14). Communication uncertainty accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .23$ ), and communication uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

Three models examined the associations among communication uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 9.48, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .21$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with what was hypothesized, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). Contrary to what was predicted, however, this

relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2e.7*). Communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1e.7*); but, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.16), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.14). Finally, communication uncertainty accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .23$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.72, p = .19, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). Examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2e.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that communication uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1e.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.14), and the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Finally, communication uncertainty

accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., communication uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.40, p = .06, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .11$ . As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). However, the relationship between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2e.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that communication uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1e.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Overall, communication uncertainty accounted for nearly a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and communication uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Two models examined the associations among communication uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .63, p = .43, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.14. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.15., and the total indirect effects of

the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.16.

As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between communication uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2e.10*; see Table 4.15). In addition, results indicated that communication uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1e.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, communication uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.5*), and children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance significantly mediated this relationship (see Table 4.16). Also topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Communication uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., communication uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.46, p = .23, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05$ . As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.5*). The BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2e.11*). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1e.11*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). As hypothesized, both communication uncertainty (*H3a.5*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were

negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16). Overall, communication uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 26.42, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .36$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, communication uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (H1a.5), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (H2e.12; see Table 4.15). In addition, communication uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (RQ1e.12), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (RQ2f). Moreover, both communication uncertainty (H3a.5) and topic avoidance (H4) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between communication uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.16), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.15). Communication uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .63$ ).

***Differences uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among differences uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for differences uncertainty and the goal to *maintain*

*boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .33$ ,  $p = .57$ , CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00. The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.17. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.18. The total indirect effects of the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.19.

As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected (BC CI) revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2f.1*). In addition, differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1f.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). However, as hypothesized, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.6*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Overall, differences uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and differences uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Table 4.17

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Differences Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.36***	-.17	.12	-.20**	-.60***
Maintain privacy	.11	.14	.56***	-.07	-.69***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.20**	.28**	.48***	-.16*	-.36***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.24**	-.31***	-.30***	-.16*	-.53***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.23**	-.28**	-.37***	-.13*	-.40***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.32***	-.09	-.13	-.18**	-.55***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.31***	-.19*	-.13	-.16*	-.56***
Maintain intergenerational relationship <sup>f</sup>	.19**	-.02	-.01	-.06	-.69***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.25**	-.12	.05	-.13*	-.63***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.14	.31**	.35***	-.14*	-.63***
Reduce uncertainty ( <i>table continues</i> )	.20**	-.17	-.26**	-.13*	-.63***

Table 4.17 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.25**	-.27***	-.31***	-.14*	-.47***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.42^{**}$ ; b.  $.23^{***}$ ; c.  $.50^{***}$ ; d.  $.31^{***}$ ; e.  $.28^{**}$ ; f.  $.15^{**}$ ; g.  $.40^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for differences uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model approached, but did not meet, the a priori criteria for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.93, p = .03, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .14$ . However, the LMI did not suggest any additional modification. Contrary to what was predicted, differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2f.4*). In addition, differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1f.2*); however, the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, differences uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3a.6*), but consistent with the hypothesis topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Finally, children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and the interaction goal of maintaining privacy and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.18

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Differences in Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.14	.05, .24
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .18
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.10	.05, .20
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.11	.04, .23
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.04	.01, .26
<b>Provide support</b>		
Differences uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.08	.03, .17

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.19

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Differences Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Differences uncertainty → Boundaries → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.13
Differences uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.13	-.22, -.05
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Differences uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.25	-.35, -.14
Differences uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.25	-.34, -.17
Differences uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.27	-.38, -.16
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
Differences uncertainty → Identity → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.22	-.32, -.12
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Differences uncertainty → In-law → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.24	-.35, -.15

Table 4.19 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Differences uncertainty → Intergenerational → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.14	-.23, -.04
Differences Uncertainty → Linchpin → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.15	-.24, -.08
Manage uncertainty		
Differences uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.15	-.24, -.08
Differences uncertainty → Reduce → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.15	-.55, -.17
Provide support		
Differences uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.26	-.36, -.18

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations between differences uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 27.45, p < .001, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .37$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Furthermore, the goal to cultivate an associate relationship significantly mediated the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2f.3*; see Table 4.18). Moreover, differences uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1f.3*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). Both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.17), and the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Overall, differences uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 10.89, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .23$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2f.4*; see

Table 4.18). Research questions one and two asked about the direct links among turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance. Results indicated that differences uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1f.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). As hypothesized, both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.17), and the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Differences uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 49.67, p < .001, CFI = .75, RMSEA = .51$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3); all the predicted paths statistically significant. As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). This relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a family relationship (*H2f.5*; see Table 4.18). In addition, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1f.5*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Moreover, both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, although not predicted, the goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.17), and the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the interaction goal and topic

avoidance (see Table 4.19). Overall, differences uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over a third of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .68$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 23.36, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .35$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2f.6*). In addition, differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1f.6*). Furthermore, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Yet, as hypothesized, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.6*), and this relationship was mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.18). Topic avoidance was also negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*), but the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.19). Differences uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and differences uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

Three models examined the associations among differences uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.23, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3).

As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Contrary to what was predicted, the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2f.7*). Furthermore, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1f.7*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). As hypothesized both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.19), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.17). Overall, differences uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and uncertainty, topic avoidance, and goals accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for differences uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.83, p < .001$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .17. Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2f.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that communication uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1f.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Contrary to what was hypothesized, differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) was not associated with topic

avoidance; however, topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.17), and the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Differences uncertainty accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and differences uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

The model for relationship uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .44, p = .51, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). However, the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2f.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1f.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). As hypothesized, both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Differences uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and communication uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .45$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among differences uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for differences uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a

good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.89, p = .17, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .07$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.17. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.18., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.19.

Contrary to what was hypothesized, differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). However, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between differences uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2f.10*; see Table 4.18). In addition, results indicated that differences uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1f.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). As hypothesized, both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). The goal of maintaining uncertainty accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., differences uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .45$ ).

The model for differences uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.70, p = .10, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .09$ . As predicted, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*). Examination of the bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) indicated that this relationship

was significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2f.11*; see Table 4.18). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that differences uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1e.11*). However, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). As hypothesized, both differences uncertainty (*H3a.6*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between differences uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Overall, differences uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for just over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .45$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 37.89, p < .001, CFI = .79, RMSEA = .44$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with what was hypothesized, differences uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1a.6*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2f.12*; see Table 4.18). In addition, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1f.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Moreover, differences uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3a.6*), and this association was mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.19). Topic avoidance also shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Differences uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ )

**Themes of family uncertainty.** A series of models were run to examine the unique relationships among the themes of family uncertainty (see Table 2.1), goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. Procedures used to assess model fit were identical to the protocol used to evaluate model fit for the models containing the themes and sources of self uncertainty delineated above.

***Balancing family membership uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.***

Two models were run to examine the associations among balancing family membership uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .10, p = .75, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.20. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.21. The total indirect effects of the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.22.

Consistent with predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2g.1*). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1g.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Moreover, balancing family membership uncertainty (*H3b.1*) was not associated with satisfaction. Yet, topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively correlated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between balancing

family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.22). Balancing family membership uncertainty accounted for less than 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

Table 4.20

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Balancing Family Membership Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.20***	.15	.03	-.06	-.65***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.06	.27**	.53***	-.02	-.53**
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.03	.33***	.52***	.04	-.43***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.17*	-.08	-.40***	-.05	-.52***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.16*	-.11	-.47***	-.05	-.37***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.22**	.07	-.19*	.09	-.59***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.33***	-.06	-.17*	-.10	-.58***
Maintain intergenerational relationship <sup>g</sup>	.14	.14	-.03	-.01	-.70***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.21**	.07	.01	-.06	-.65***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.07	.35***	.36***	-.06	-.65***
Reduce uncertainty	.25***	.13	-.33***	-.05	-.65***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.20 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>h</sup>	.15*	-.15*	-.37***	-.02	-.49***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.24^{**}$ ; b.  $-.43^{***}$ ; c.  $.31^{***}$ ; d.  $.56^{***}$ ; e.  $.30^{**}$ ; f.  $.30^{***}$ ; g.  $.15^{**}$ ; h.  $.42^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 7.74, p = .005$ , CFI = .96, RMSEA = .18. A path was added from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction based on the LMI (see Figure 3). Contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). Examination of the BC CI revealed that the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2g.2*; see Table 4.21). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1g.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). However, contrary to what was hypothesized, balancing family membership uncertainty (*H3b.1*) was not associated with satisfaction. Instead, only topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the desire to maintain privacy was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.20), and the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.22). Overall, balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic

avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., balancing family membership uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .47$ ).

Table 4.21

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Balancing Family Membership Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.15	.06, .26
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.17	.09, .29
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.13	.05, .25

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.22

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Balancing Family Membership Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.13	-.24, -.02
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.29, -.06
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.36, -.11
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.13	-.25, -.01
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.32, -.11
Balancing family membership uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.13	-.24, -.02

*(table continues)*

Table 4.22 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Manage uncertainty		
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.13	-.24, -.02
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Reduce <sup>ns</sup> → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.13	-.24, -.02
Provide support		
Balancing family membership uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance → Satisfaction	-.16	-.29, -.03

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among balancing family membership uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 30.70, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .38$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2g.3*; see Table 4.21). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1g.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Contrary to what was hypothesized, balancing family membership uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*). Instead, only topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.22), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.20). Balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., balancing family membership uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 66.27, p < .001, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .57$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2g.4*; see Table 4.21). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1g.4*). However, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). Moreover, contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*). Yet, consistent with predictions, topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.20). Also, the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.22). Overall, balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for close to a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 42.42, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .46$ . A path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, based on the LMI (see Figure 3). As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). However, the goal to cultivate a family relationship did not significantly mediate this

relationship (H2g.5). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (RQ1g.5), but this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (RQ2b.3). Contrary to expectations, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with satisfaction (H3b.1). Yet, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (H4). In addition, the goal of cultivating a family relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.20). Balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .68$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 22.17, p < .001, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .33$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (H1b.1). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (H2g.6). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (RQ1g.6); however, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (RQ2c). However, contrary to predictions, balancing family membership was not associated with satisfaction (H3b.1). Yet, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (H4). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.20). Overall, balancing family membership uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and balancing family membership

uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among balancing family membership uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 19.85, p < .001, CFI = .85, RMSEA = .32$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified mode (see Figure 3). As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). Contrary to what was predicted, the goal to maintain the in-law relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2g.7*). Furthermore, balancing family membership was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1g.7*); however, this goal was significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Balancing family membership uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*), but topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.22), and goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.21). Balancing family membership uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.79, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .17$ . Examination of the LMI suggested adding a path from interaction goal to satisfaction. Contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). Examination of the

BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2g.8*). With regard to the two research questions, results indicated that balancing family membership was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1g.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*), yet topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .99, p = .32, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*); this relationship, however, was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2g.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1g.9*), but this goal was significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Contrary to predictions, family membership uncertainty was not linked to satisfaction (*H3b.1*); yet, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.22). Overall, balancing family membership uncertainty accounted for less than 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among balancing family membership uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.43, p = .12, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.20. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.21., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.22.

Contrary to what was expected, balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*). However, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2g.10*; see Table 4.21). In addition, results indicated that balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1g.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). However, contrary to predictions, balancing family membership uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*). Yet, topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.22). In the current model, balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the

three predictor variables (i.e., balancing family membership uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model for balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.01, p = .05, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .12$ . As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*); however, the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2g.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that balancing family membership uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1g.11*); however, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Although balancing family membership uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.1*), topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance significantly mediated the link between turbulence and satisfaction (see Table 4.22). Overall, balancing family membership uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 45.07, p < .001, CFI = .75, RMSEA = .47$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2g.12*; see Table 3.21). In addition, balancing family membership uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support

(*RQ1g.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Balancing family membership uncertainty (*H3b.1*) was not associated with satisfaction. Yet, topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between balancing family membership uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.22), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.21). Balancing family membership uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

***Extended family relationships uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.***

Two models were run to examine the associations among extended family relationships uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .91, p = .34, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.23. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.24. The total indirect effects of the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.25.

Consistent with predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*), and the goal to maintain boundaries did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2h.1*). In addition, extended family relationships uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1h.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction, and the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Overall, extended family relationships uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and balancing family membership uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Table 4.23

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Extended Family Relationships Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.27***	-.07	.08	-.34***	-.57***
Maintain privacy	.10	.24**	.55***	-.27***	-.64***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.17*	.28**	.49***	-.27***	-.36***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup> ( <i>table continues</i> )	.22*	-.31***	-.31***	-.28***	-.51***

Table 4.23 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Cultivate family relationship	.17*	.23**	.43***	-.34***	-.57***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>c</sup>	.29***	-.19*	-.10	-.27***	-.54***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>d</sup>	.23**	-.21*	-.17*	-.31***	-.53***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.31***	-.02	.11	-.32***	-.57***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.24**	.04	-.03	-.27***	-.64***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.13	.34***	.31**	-.27***	-.64***
Reduce uncertainty	.22**	-.17 <sup>†</sup>	-.25**	-.35***	-.57***
Provide support <sup>e</sup>	.19*	-.37***	-.31***	-.22**	-.46***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.40***$ ; b.  $.20**$ ; c.  $.28***$ ; d.  $.21***$ ; e.  $.36***$ . <sup>†</sup> $p = .05$ , \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.37, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . Contrary to predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). Examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2h.2*; see Table 4.24). In addition, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1h.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Altogether, extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., extended family relationships uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

Table 4.24

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Extended Family Relationships Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.13	.05, .25
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.14	.05, .25
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .18
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.10	.03, .19
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.10	.03, .22
<b>Provide support</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.12	.06, .21

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.25

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Extended Family Relationships Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.22, -.08
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.23, -.07
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.32, -.13
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.14
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.24, -.08
<b>Establish positive in-law identity</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.13

*(table continues)*

Table 4.25 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.27, -.12
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.26, -.18
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.23, -.07
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.23, -.07
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.22, -.08
<b>Provide support</b>		
Extended family relationships uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.37, -.19

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among extended family relationships uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 25.75, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .36$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Consistent with predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). In addition, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that this association was significantly mediated through children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2h.3*; see Table 4.24). Extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1h.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Furthermore, both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25), and goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.23). Overall, extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .32$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., extended family relationships uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .65$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.65, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .20$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. In the just-identified model, all the

predicted paths were statistically significant. As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate a friend relationship (*H2h.4*; see Table 4.24). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that extended family relationships uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1h.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, consistent with predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.23). The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for nearly a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .35, p = .55, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Consistent with predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*), and the goal to cultivate a family relationship significantly mediated this relationship (*H2h.5*; see Table 4.22). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1h.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that this goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). In addition, extended

family relationships uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (H3b.2), and this relationship was significantly mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). *H4* was supported as results revealed that topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction. In the final model, extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 19.11, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .00$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2h.6*). In addition, extended family relationships uncertainty was inversely associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1h.6*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Consistent with predictions, balancing family membership (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.23). Furthermore, the link between extended family relationships and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Extended family relationships uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .11$ ), and extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among extended family relationships uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 11.81, p < .01, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .23$ . After examining the LMI a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model, (see Figure 3). As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). Moreover, the relationship between extended family relationships and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2h.7*). Extended family relationships uncertainty was inversely related with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1h.7*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.23). Overall, extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for a tenth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .10$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.04, p = .15, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .07$ . Consistent with predictions, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). The

goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship, however, did not significantly mediate this association (*H2h.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that extended family relationships uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1h.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal significantly mediated the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.25). Extended family relationships accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .11$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.08, p = .04, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .12$ . However, the LMI did not suggest any model modifications. As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). However, the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2h.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that extended family relationships uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1h.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with predictions, both balancing family membership uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Extended family relationships uncertainty

accounted for just over 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

Two models examined the associations among extended family relationships uncertainty, the goal of *uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .13, p = .72, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.23. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.24., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.25.

Contrary to what was expected, extended family relationships uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*). However, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between extended family relationships uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2h.10*; see Table 4.24). In addition, results indicated that extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1h.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Moreover, both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's

interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Overall, extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., extended family relationships uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.16, p = .14, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .07$ . As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*), and this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2h.11*; see Table 4.24). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that extended family relationships uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1h.11*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25). Extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 28.81, p < .001, CFI = .85, RMSEA = .39$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, extended family relationships uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.2*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of

providing support (*H2h.12*; see Table 4.24). In addition, extended family relationships uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1h.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Both extended family relationships uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between extended family relationships uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.25), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.23). Extended family relationships uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .64$ ).

***Family expectations uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations between family expectations uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for family expectations uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .64, p = .42, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.26. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals is presented in Table 4.27. The total indirect effects of the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance is presented in Table 4.28.

Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2i.1*). In

addition, family expectations uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (RQ1i.1), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (RQ2a.1). However, both family expectations uncertainty (H3b.3) and topic avoidance (H4) were negatively correlated with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Finally, family expectations uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.26

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Family Expectations Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.36***	-.04	.08	-.34***	-.54***
Maintain privacy	.22**	.30***	.49***	-.34***	-.54***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.19*	.38***	.47***	-.26***	-.37***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.38***	-.40***	-.22**	-.37***	-.43***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.17*	-.47***	-.41***	-.17**	-.35***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.26 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.34***	-.22**	-.09	-.29***	-.51***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>c</sup>	.33***	-.26**	-.13	-.29***	-.51***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.37***	-.09	.07	-.34***	-.54***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.29***	-.04	-.00	-.22***	-.64***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.26**	.32***	.30**	-.34***	-.54***
Reduce uncertainty <sup>f</sup>	.24**	-.18*	-.34***	-.22***	-.58***
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.25**	-.38***	-.29***	-.24***	-.44***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.36^{***}$ ; b.  $.16^*$ ; c.  $.49^{***}$ ; d.  $.24^{***}$ ; e.  $.21^{***}$ ; f.  $.16^*$ ; g.  $.35^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for family expectations uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet the a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.75, p < .01, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .17$ . However, the LMI did not offer any theoretically tenable modifications. Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2i.2*; see Table 4.27). In addition, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1i.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .35$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., family expectations uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.27

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Family Expectations Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Family expectations uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.14	.07, .25
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Family expectations uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.17	.09, .30
Family expectations uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.08	.01, .18
Family expectations uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.19	.10, .31
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Family expectations uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.10	.03, .22
Family expectations uncertainty → Reduce → Topic avoidance	.06	.01, .14
<b>Provide support</b>		
Family expectations uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.11	.05, .19

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.28

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Family Expectations Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.27, -.13
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.28, -.13
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.37, -.19
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.37, -.18
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.36	-.47, -.27
Establish positive in-law identity		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.32, -.15
Maintain family relationships		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.24	-.33, -.16

Table 4.28 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.27, -.13
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.27, -.11
Manage uncertainty		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.27, -.13
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.20	-.29, -.12
Provide support		
Family expectations uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.29	-.38, -.20

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among family expectations uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 23.52, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .34$ . After examining the LMI a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2i.3*; see Table 4.27). In addition, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1i.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.1*). Both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.26). Family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for more than a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .32$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., family expectations uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 5.90, p < .01, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .26$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As predicted, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance

(*H1b.3*), and this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2i.4*; see Table 4.27). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that family expectations uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1i.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.27), and the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Overall, family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 47.20, p < .001, CFI = .82, RMSEA = .48$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added, resulting in a saturated model (see Figure 3). As predicted, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship significantly mediated this association (*H2i.5*; see Table 4.27). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that family expectations uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1i.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that this goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Family expectations uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3b.3*), and this

relationship was significantly mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). *H4* was supported as topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.26). Overall, family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .70$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 15.66, p < .001, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .27$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2i.6*). In addition, family expectations uncertainty was inversely associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1i.6*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.26). Furthermore, the link between family expectations and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Family expectations uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

Three models examined the associations among family expectations uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 11.02, p < .01, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .22$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2i.7*). Furthermore, family expectations uncertainty was inversely related with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1i.7*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). In regard to the final two hypotheses, both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.26). Overall, family expectations uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model for communication uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.41, p = .23, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05$ . Consistent with predictions, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between family expectations and topic avoidance (*H2i.8*). In regard to

the two research questions, results indicated that family expectations uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1i.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, as predicted, both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal significantly mediated the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.28). Family expectations uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .14$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for family expectations uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.44, p = .12$ , CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08. Family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*), but the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2i.9*). Results indicated that family expectations uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1i.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with predictions, both family expectations (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). In the final model, family expectations uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among family expectations uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .89, p = .34, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.26. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.27 and the total indirect effects of the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.28.

Consistent with expectations, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). In addition, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between family expectations uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2i.10*; see Table 4.27). Results indicated that family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1i.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). The final two hypotheses were supported as both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Interestingly, the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Overall, family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for just over a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .21$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., family expectations uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance)

accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for family expectations uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.34, p < .05, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .16$ . Based on the LMI, a path was added from interaction goal to satisfaction (see Figure 3). As predicted, family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*). Examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2i.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that family expectations uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1i.11*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28). Family expectations uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 32.29, p < .001, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .40$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Family expectations uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.3*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2i.12*; see Table 4.27). In addition, family expectations uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1i.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Both family expectations uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were

negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between family expectations uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.28), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 3.27). Overall, family expectations uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .63$ ).

***Grandparent involvement uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among grandparent involvement uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .88, p = .35, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.29. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.30. The total indirect effects of the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.31.

Consistent with predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2j.1*). In addition, grandparent involvement uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1j.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with

satisfaction (*H3b.4*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). In addition, topic avoidance was negatively correlated with satisfaction (*H4*). Overall, grandparent involvement uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

Table 4.29

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Grandparent Involvement Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.29***	-.10	.09	-.27***	-.58***
Maintain privacy	.16*	.17	.55**	-.21***	-.65***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.16*	.35***	.48***	-.25***	-.37***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.15	-.39***	-.35***	-.21**	-.51***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.09	-.42***	-.45***	-.12	-.37***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.25**	-.31***	-.09	-.21**	-.56***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.29 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>c</sup>	.24**	-.33***	-.14	-.22**	-.55***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.30***	-.17*	.09	-.28***	-.58***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.29***	-.08	.05	-.28***	-.58***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.18*	.31**	.33***	-.28***	-.58***
Reduce uncertainty	.21*	-.30**	-.23**	-.28***	-.58***
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.15	-.39***	-.33***	-.16*	-.47***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.38^{***}$ ; b.  $.24^*$ ; c.  $.52^{***}$ ; d.  $.23^{***}$ ; e.  $.20^{**}$ ; f.  $.36^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 5.07, p = .02, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .14$ . The LMI, however, did not offer any modifications. Consistent with predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2j.2*; see Table 4.30). In addition,

grandparent involvement uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1j.2*), but the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .35$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., grandparent involvement uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.30

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Grandparent Involvement Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.01, .20
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.17	.07, .31
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.14	.06, .24
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.19	.11, .30

*(table continues)*

Table 4.30 (*continued*)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.10	.03, .22
Grandparent involvement uncertainty → Reduce → Topic avoidance	.07	.01, .15
<b>Provide support</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.13	.06, .22

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.31

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Grandparent Involvement Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.01
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.09
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.26	-.37, -.17
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.33, -.16
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.32	-.45, -.22
<b>Establish positive in-law identity</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.33, -.15
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.32, -.14

*(table continues)*

Table 4.31 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.10
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.10
Manage uncertainty		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.10
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.10
Provide support		
Grandparent involvement uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.27	-.37, -.189

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among grandparent involvement uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 22.46, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .34$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2j.3*; see Table 4.30). In addition, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1j.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Furthermore, both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31), and this goal was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.29). In the modified model, grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .32$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., grandparent involvement uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .64$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 12.25, p < .01, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .24$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As

predicted, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*), and this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2j.4*; see Table 4.30). With regard to the two research questions, results revealed that grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1j.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, consistent with predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.29). Also, the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 49.97, p < .001, CFI = .79, RMSEA = .49$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*); rather, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2j.5*; see Table 4.30). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1j.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that this goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic

avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). In addition, grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) was not associated with satisfaction; but topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.30). Altogether, grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .69$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 12.95, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .25$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. As predicted, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2j.6*). In addition, grandparent involvement uncertainty was inversely associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1j.6*); however, this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Consistent with hypotheses, grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H3b.4*) with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Topic avoidance also shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). In the final model, grandparent involvement uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among extended family relationships uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 9.24, p < .01, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .20$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). However, the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2j.7*). Furthermore, grandparent involvement uncertainty was inversely related with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1j.7*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.29). Overall, grandparent involvement uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .50, p = .36, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Consistent with predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly

mediate the relationship between grandparent involvement and topic avoidance (*H2j.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1j.8*), but this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, as predicted, both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.3*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.31). Grandparent involvement uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model for grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .31, p = .57, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*), but the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship did not mediate this association (*H2j.9*). Results indicated that grandparent involvement uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1j.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with predictions, both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Grandparent involvement uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among grandparent involvement uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for extended family relationships uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was an excellent fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.07, p = .30, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .02$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.29. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.30., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.31.

Consistent with expectations, grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*), and examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that this was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2j.10*; see Table 4.30). In addition, results indicated that grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1j.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Moreover, both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Altogether, grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., grandparent involvement uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for just over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model for grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .96, p = .33, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Grandparent involvement uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*), and the goal to reduce uncertainty significantly mediated this association (*H2j.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1j.11*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31). Overall, grandparent involvement uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .13$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 31.85, p < .001, CFI = .85, RMSEA = .39$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Contrary to predictions, grandparent involvement uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.4*). However, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between grandparent involvement uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2j.12*; see Table 3.30). In addition, grandparent involvement uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1j.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Both grandparent involvement uncertainty (*H3b.4*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with

satisfaction. The relationship between grandparent involvement uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.31), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.29). Grandparent involvement uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost nearly a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

***Meddling uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among meddling uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .18, p = .67, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.32. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.33. The total indirect effects of the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.34.

Consistent with predictions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*), but the goal to maintain boundaries did not significantly mediate this association (*H2k.1*). Meddling uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1k.1*), and this goal was not significantly correlated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Moreover, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance was inversely related to satisfaction (*H4*). Interestingly, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic

avoidance (see Table 4.34). Overall, meddling uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

Table 4.32

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Meddling Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.24**	.04	.05	.01	-.66***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.11	.26**	.52***	.04	-.53***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.12	.24**	.51***	.06	-.44***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.18*	-.16*	-.37***	.03	-.54***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.20**	-.09	-.47***	-.01	-.38***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.24**	-.02	-.17*	.00	-.61***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.32 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.22**	-.11	-.19*	.02	-.61***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.24**	-.02	.04	.01	-.66***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.19*	.09	-.04	.06	-.71***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.11	.38***	.35***	.00	-.66***
Reduce uncertainty	.26***	.04	-.31***	.01	-.66***
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.18*	-.16*	-.36***	.04	-.50***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.25^{**}$ ; b.  $-.44^{***}$ ; c.  $.31^{***}$ ; d.  $.56^{***}$ ; e.  $.29^{**}$ ; f.  $.26^{***}$ ; g.  $.42^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.65, p < .01$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .19. After examining the LMI a path from interaction goal to satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Contrary to predictions, meddling uncertainty was not associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). Instead, the association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance was indirect through the goal of maintaining privacy (*H2k.2*; see Table 3.33). In regard to the two research questions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1k.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively

associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance was inversely related with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to maintain privacy and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). Overall, meddling uncertainty and children-in-law’s goal accounted for just over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., meddling uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Table 4.33

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Meddling Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Meddling uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.13	.04, .25
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Meddling uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.12	.03, .23
Manage uncertainty		
Meddling uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.13	.05, .28
Provide support		
Meddling uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.06	.01, .12

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ . The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.34

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Meddling Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.27, -.04
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.32, -.06
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.35, -.07
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.32, -.04
Establish positive in-law identity		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.29, -.01
Maintain family relationships		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.32, -.03
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.27, -.04

*(table continues)*

Table 4.34 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.14	-.26, -.01
Manage uncertainty		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.27, -.04
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.27, -.04
Provide support		
Meddling uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.35, -.04

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models examined the associations between meddling uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 32.25, p < .001, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .39$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. Contrary to predictions, meddling uncertainty was not associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2k.3*; see Table 4.33). In addition, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1k.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Furthermore, although meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.32). Meddling uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., meddling uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 22.18, p < .001, CFI = .36, RMSEA = .33$ . After examining the LMI a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*), but this relationship was not

significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2k.4*). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that meddling uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1k.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, although meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.32). Also, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). Overall, meddling uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 65.94, p < .001, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .57$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). However, this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2k.5*). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that meddling uncertainty was not associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1k.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Contrary to expectations, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*). But, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Although not predicted, the

relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). In the final model, meddling uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .28$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .68$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* did not fit,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 199) = 20.85, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .32$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2k.6*). Meddling uncertainty was not associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1k.6*); however, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Contrary to what was predicted, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.32), and the link between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). Meddling uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among meddling uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 199) = 16.88, p < .01, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .28$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from

interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with predictions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). However, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2k.7*). Although meddling uncertainty was not associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1k.7*), this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Furthermore, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.32). Altogether, meddling uncertainty accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.75, p = .09$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .09. Consistent with predictions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*), but examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship was not a significant mediator (*H2k.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that meddling uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1k.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance shared an inverse association with

satisfaction (H4). Topic avoidance also significantly mediated the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.34). Overall, meddling uncertainty accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over a third of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.41, p = .12, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .08$ . Meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*); however, the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship was not a significant mediator (*H2k.9*). Results indicated that meddling uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1k.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Contrary to predictions, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*); however, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). In the final model, meddling uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among meddling uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.04, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.32. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between meddling uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.33, and the total

indirect effects of the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) is presented in Table 4.34.

Meddling uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*); instead, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association was indirect through children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2k.10*; see Table 4.33). Results indicated that meddling uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1k.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Although, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). Overall, meddling uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., meddling uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model for meddling uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.26, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . As predicted, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2k.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that meddling uncertainty was not associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1k.11*); however, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship

between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34). Meddling uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 46.13, p < .001$ , CFI = .74, RMSEA = .47. After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with predictions, meddling uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.5*). In addition, the goal of providing support significantly mediated this link (*H2k.12*; see Table 4.33). Meddling uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1k.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Contrary to the hypothesis, meddling uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.5*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Further, the relationship between meddling uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.34), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.32). Meddling uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

***Parenting input uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among parenting input uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was an excellent fit to the

data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .52, p = .47, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.35. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.36. The total indirect effects of the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.36.

Parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2l.1*). Parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1l.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). In addition, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*). Consistent with what was hypothesized, topic avoidance was negatively correlated with satisfaction (*H4*). Overall, parenting input uncertainty accounted for less than 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .02$ ), and parenting input and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.35

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Parenting Input Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.14 <sup>†</sup>	.05	-.04	.14	-.70***
Maintain privacy	.08	.11	.56***	-.03	-.70***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.10	.17*	.52***	-.05	-.42***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.09	-.27***	-.38***	-.02	-.53***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.12	-.15	-.47***	-.05	-.38***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.18*	-.08	-.16*	-.06	-.60***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.17*	-.11	-.20**	-.06	-.59***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.19*	.00	.04	-.08	-.64***
Maintain linchpin relationship	-.08*	-.07	.04	-.08	-.64***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.11	.24*	.37***	-.08	-.65***
Reduce uncertainty	.17*	-.06	-.28***	-.08	-.65***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.35 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.14 <sup>†</sup>	-.15 <sup>†</sup>	-.37***	-.05	-.49***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.42^{***}$ ; b.  $.30^{***}$ ; c.  $.56^{***}$ ; d.  $.28^{***}$ ; e.  $.26^{***}$ ; f.  $.42^{***}$ . <sup>†</sup>  $p = .05$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.99, p = .05, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .14$ . Contrary to predictions, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*); instead this relationship was indirect through children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2l.2*; see Table 4.36). Parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1l.2*), but the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance was inversely related to satisfaction (*H4*). Children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.36

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Parenting Input Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.01, .19
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.10	.04, .19
Manage uncertainty		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.02, .19

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.37

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Parenting Input Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.25, -.06
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.28, -.10
Establish positive in-law identity		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.14	-.23, -.05
Maintain family relationships		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.14	-.23, -.06
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.12	-.20, -.05
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.12	-.20, -.05

*(table continues)*

Table 4.37 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Manage uncertainty		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.12	-.20, -.05
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.13	-.21, -.05
Provide support		
Parenting input uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.26, -.06

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations between parenting input uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 30.90, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .39$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Parenting input uncertainty was not directly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*), instead this relationship was indirect through children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2l.3*; see Table 4.36). Parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1l.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Although parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.35). Parenting input uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., parenting input uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 20.29, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .31$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). Instead, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of

cultivating a friend relationship (*H2l.4*; see Table 4.36). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that parenting input uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1l.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, although parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.35), and the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37). Overall, parenting input uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for nearly a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 65.28, p < .001, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .57$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Parenting input uncertainty was not directly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*), instead this relationship was indirect through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2l.5*). With respect to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that parenting input uncertainty was not associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1l.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Contrary to expectations, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*). But, topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Although not the focus of the present investigation, the goal to

cultivate a family relationship was significantly associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.35). Overall, children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and interaction goals and topic avoidance accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .68$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 20.45, p < .001, CFI = .84, RMSEA = .31$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2l.6*). In addition, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1l.6*), but this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Contrary to what was predicted, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.35), and the link between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37). Parenting input uncertainty and the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among parenting input uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 16.21,$

$p < .01$ , CFI = .88, RMSEA = .28. Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). However, the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2l.7*). Parenting input uncertainty was not associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1l.7*), but this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). In addition, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.35). In the final model, parenting input uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .07$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., parenting input uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.73, p = .10$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .09. Parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal (*H2l.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1l.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Contrary

to predictions, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.37). Parenting input uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .70, p = .40, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). However, the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2l.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1l.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Contrary to predictions, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.37). Altogether, parenting input uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among parenting input uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was

a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.48, p = .11, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .08$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.35. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.36., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.37.

Contrary to predictions, parenting input uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). Instead, this association was indirect through children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2l.10*; see Table 4.36). Results indicated that parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1l.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*); instead this association was indirect through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37). As hypothesized, topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Overall, parenting input uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., parenting input uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.29, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . As predicted, parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*), but this association was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2l.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that parenting input uncertainty was not associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1l.11*); however, this

goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.37). Finally, parenting input uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .12$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .44$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 44.75, p < .001$ , CFI = .75, RMSEA = .47. Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with predictions, parenting input uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.6*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between parenting input uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2l.12*; see Table 4.36). Parenting input uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1l.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Contrary to the hypothesis, parenting input uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.6*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between parenting input uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.37), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.35). Overall, parenting input uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

***Proximity uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models examined the associations among proximity uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for proximity input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .45, p = .50, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.38. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.39. The total indirect effects of the relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.40.

Proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2m.1*). In addition, proximity uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1m.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). Proximity uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .07$ ), and parenting input and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .46$ ).

Table 4.38

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Proximity Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.27***	-.08	.08	-.17*	-.62***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.18*	.16	.52***	-.16*	-.49***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.16*	.21*	.50***	-.14*	-.40***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.17*	-.26**	-.36***	-.12	-.51***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.15*	-.24**	-.45***	-.10	-.36***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.24**	-.24**	-.12	-.11	-.58***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.22**	-.29***	-.16 <sup>†</sup>	-.11	-.58***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.27***	-.14	.08	-.17**	-.61***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.27***	-.15	.06	-.17**	-.61***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.16*	.28**	.34***	-.17**	-.62***
Reduce uncertainty <sup>f</sup> ( <i>table continues</i> )	.24**	-.07	-.28***	-.17*	-.62***

Table 4.38 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.17*	-.27***	-.34***	-.10	-.48***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.24^{**}$ ; b.  $-.41^{***}$ ; c.  $.54^{***}$ ; d.  $.26^{***}$ ; e.  $.21^{***}$ ; f.  $.23^{***}$ ; g.  $.35^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for proximity uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.42, p < .01$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .19. Examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) recommended adding a path from goal to satisfaction. Consistent with predictions, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). In addition, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2m.2*; see Table 4.39). Furthermore, proximity uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1m.2*), but the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. Proximity uncertainty and interaction goals accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .50$ ).

Table 4.39

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Proximity Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.08	.01, .18
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.11	.03, .22
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.04, .19
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.11	.04, .20
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.10	.03, .22
<b>Provide support</b>		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .18

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.40

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Proximity Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.08
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.08
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.30, -.09
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.21	-.30, -.12
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.33, -.11
Establish positive in-law identity		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.30, -.12
Maintain family relationships		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.22	-.32, -.12

Table 4.40 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.08
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.08
Manage uncertainty		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.08
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.25, -.08
Provide support		
Proximity uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.33, -.13

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations between parenting input uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 30.39, p < .001, CFI = .85, RMSEA = .38$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2m.3*; see Table 4.39). In addition, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1m.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.40), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.38). In the final model, proximity uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., proximity uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 18.57, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .30$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), and this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship

(*H2m.4*; see Table 4.39). With regards to the two research questions, results revealed that proximity uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1m.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). Although proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) was not associated with satisfaction, topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.38), and the relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). Overall, proximity uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 62.82, p < .001, CFI = .71, RMSEA = .56$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with what hypothesized, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), and this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2m.5*; see Table 4.39). With regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that proximity uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1m.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Contrary to expectations, proximity uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.7*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Proximity uncertainty and

children-in-law's goal accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., proximity uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .69$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.15, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As predicted, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). The relationship between uncertainty and topic avoidance, however, was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2m.6*). In addition, proximity uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1m.6*); however, this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Contrary to what was predicted, proximity uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.7*); instead this link was indirect through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). Topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.38). Overall, proximity uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations between parenting input uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.72, p < .001, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .24$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which

resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). However, the relationship between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2m.7*). Furthermore, proximity uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1m.7*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) was not associated with satisfaction, but topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 3.40). In addition, the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.38). Proximity uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for just under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., proximity uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

The model for proximity uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.67, p = .19, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . Proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), but the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2m.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that proximity uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1m.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Consistent with predictions, both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the

relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.40). Altogether, proximity uncertainty accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .07$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .46$ ).

The model for proximity uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .25, p = .61, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), but this association was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2m.9*). Furthermore, results indicated that proximity uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1m.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). In addition, both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). Overall, proximity uncertainty accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .07$ ), and proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .46$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among proximity uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for parenting input uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.79, p = .18, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.38. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.39., and the total indirect

effects of the relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.40.

As hypothesized, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*), and this association was partially mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2m.10*; see Table 4.39). In addition, results indicated that proximity uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1m.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). Proximity uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., proximity uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .46$ ).

The model for proximity uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.56, p = .06, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .11$ . As predicted, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2m.11*). With regards to the two research questions, results revealed that proximity uncertainty was not associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1m.11*); however, this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, both proximity uncertainty (*H3b.7*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.40). In the current model,

proximity uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .46$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 40.92, p < .001, CFI = .78, RMSEA = .45$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Consistent with predictions, proximity uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.7*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between proximity uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2m.12*; see Table 4.39). Proximity uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1m.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Contrary to the hypothesis proximity uncertainty was not associated with satisfaction (*H3b.7*), but topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). The relationship between proximity uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.40), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 3.38). Proximity uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

***Relationship support uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among relationship support uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.50, p = .22, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.41. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.42. The total indirect effects of the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.43.

Relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2n.1*). In addition, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1n.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As predicted, both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction, and the association between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table. 4.43). Overall, relationship support uncertainty accounted for less than 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .03$ ), and parenting input and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

Table 4.41

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Relationship Support Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.17*	-.16	.09	-.30***	-.61***
Maintain privacy	.05	.20*	.54***	-.30***	-.61***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.02	.26***	.53***	-.24***	-.42***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.05	-.29***	-.39***	-.25***	-.52***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.01	-.31***	-.48***	-.18***	-.38***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.11	-.38***	-.13	-.23***	-.59***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>c</sup>	.08	-.40***	-.18*	-.24***	-.58***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.19*	-.27***	-.09	-.30***	-.61***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.17*	-.22**	.06	-.30***	-.61***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.10	.17 <sup>†</sup>	.37***	-.30***	-.61***
Reduce uncertainty	.10	-.21**	-.27***	-.30***	-.61***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.41 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.01	-.39***	-.38***	-.18***	-.49***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.37^{***}$ ; b.  $.24^{***}$ ; c.  $.51^{***}$ ; d.  $.21^{**}$ ; e.  $.17^{**}$ ; f.  $.35^{***}$ . <sup>†</sup>  $p = .05$ , \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.27$ ,  $p < .05$ , CFI = .97, RMSEA = .16. However, the LMI did not provide any recommendations for model modifications. Contrary to predictions, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*); instead, this relationship was indirect through children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2n.2*; see Table 4.42). Relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1n.2*), and the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. Furthermore, the association between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). In the final model, relationship support uncertainty and interaction goals accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship support uncertainty, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

Table 4.42

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Relationship Support Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Relationship support uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.11	.04, .20
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Relationship support uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.14	.06, .25
Relationship support uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.11	.05, .22
Relationship support uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.15	.08, .24
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Relationship support uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.06	.01, .15
Relationship support uncertainty → Reduce → Topic avoidance	.06	.01, .14
<b>Provide support</b>		
Relationship support uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.15	.08, .25

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.43

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Relationship Support Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.09	-.16, -.04
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.10	-.16, -.04
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.23, -.09
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.30, -.13
Establish positive in-law identity		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.26, -.10
Maintain family relationships		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.16	-.25, -.09

Table 4.43 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.10	-.16, -.04
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.10	-.16, -.04
Manage uncertainty		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.10	-.16, -.04
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.10	-.16, -.04
Provide support		
Relationship support uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.30, -.14

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among relationship support uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 25.08, p < .001, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .35$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). Results revealed that this association was indirect through children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2n.3*; see Table 4.42). Furthermore, relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1n.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both relationship support uncertainty was inversely related to satisfaction (*H3b.8*), and this association was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*), as well as the goal of cultivating an associate relationship (see Table 4.41). Overall, relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for almost a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship support uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 13.96, p < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .26$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to what was hypothesized, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly

associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). However, examination of the BC CI revealed that this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2n.4*; see Table 4.42). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1n.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). Both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.41), and the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .57$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 54.94, p < .001, CFI = .77, RMSEA = .52$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to what was expected, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). This relationship, however, was indirect through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2n.5*; see Table 4.42). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1n.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were

negatively associated with satisfaction. In the current model, relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for about a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., relationship support uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .71$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 10.10, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .21$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Contrary to expectations, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance ( $H1b.8$ ). In addition, the association between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity ( $H2n.6$ ). Relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity ( $RQ1n.6$ ); however, this goal was not associated with topic avoidance ( $RQ2c$ ). Both relationship support uncertainty ( $H3b.8$ ) and topic avoidance ( $H4$ ) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.41). Furthermore, the link between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Overall, relationship support uncertainty accounted for just under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and all three predictors accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among relationship support uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,

$\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.58, p < .001, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .17$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). In contrast to what was predicted, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*), and this relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2n.7*). In regard to the two research questions, relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1n.7*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Furthermore, the link between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.41). In the current model, relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .05$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship support uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .11, p = .74, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Consistent with predictions, relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2n.8*).

In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1n.8*), but this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Consistent with predictions, both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.43). Relationship support uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .03$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .03, p = .86, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*), and the goal to maintain the linchpin relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2n.9*). Results indicated that relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1n.9*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). In addition, both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Overall, relationship support uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .03$ ), and relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among relationship support uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model

for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.91, p = .16, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .07$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.41. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the link between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.42., and the total indirect effects of the association between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.43.

Contrary to predictions, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*). Instead, uncertainty and topic avoidance were indirectly linked through children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2n.10*; see Table 4.42). Results indicated that relationship support uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1n.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction, and the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., relationship support uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model for relationship support uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.28, p = .25, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .04$ . Relationship support uncertainty did not share a significant, direct association with topic

avoidance (*H1b.8*); instead, this link was indirect through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2n.11*; see Table 4.42). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1n.11*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43). Relationship support uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .09$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .53$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 29.73, p < .001, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .38$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). Contrary to predictions, relationship support uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.8*); however, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between relationship support uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2n.12*; see Table 4.42).

Relationship support uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1n.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses both relationship support uncertainty (*H3b.8*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.43), and the goal of providing support shared a positive

association with satisfaction (see Table 4.41). In the final model, relationship support uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ ).

***Triadic influence uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among triadic influence uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .48, p = .49, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.44. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.45. The total indirect effects of the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.46.

Triadic influence uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2o.1*). Triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1o.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As predicted, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction. Furthermore, results revealed that the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). Altogether, triadic influence uncertainty accounted for less than 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and triadic influence uncertainty and topic

avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .47$ ).

Table 4.44

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Family Triadic Influence Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.18*	-.08	.08	-.20**	-.63***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.10	.13	.53***	-.19**	-.50***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.06	.21*	.52***	-.15*	-.42***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.09	-.22**	-.38***	-.15*	-.52***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.08	-.20*	-.47***	-.14*	-.37***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.15	-.19*	-.15	-.16*	-.58***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.12	-.27**	-.18*	-.14*	-.58***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.19*	-.17*	.07	-.20**	-.63***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.18*	-.18*	.06	-.20**	-.62***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.44 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.08	.24*	.37***	-.20**	-.63***
Reduce uncertainty	.15	-.10	-.28***	-.20**	-.63***
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.08	-.25**	-.37***	-.13*	-.48***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.23^{**}$ ; b.  $-.40^{***}$ ; c.  $.28^{***}$ ; d.  $.54^{***}$ ; e.  $.26^{**}$ ; f.  $.23^{***}$ ; g.  $.39^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.10, p < .01, CFI = .96, RMSEA = .19$ . After examining the LMI, a path from the interaction goal to satisfaction was added. Contrary to predictions, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*), and this association was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2o.2*). Triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1o.2*), but the goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. Moreover, results revealed that the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.46), and the goal to maintain privacy was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.44). In the final model, children-in-law's interaction goals accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three

predictor variables (i.e., triadic influence uncertainty, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .51$ ).

Table 4.45

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Triadic Influence Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Triadic influence uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.11	.03, .21
Triadic influence uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .17
Triadic influence uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.09	.02, .19
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Triadic influence uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.09	.02, .20
Triadic influence uncertainty → Reduce → Topic avoidance		
<b>Provide support</b>		
Triadic influence uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .17

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.46

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Triadic Influence Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.11	-.07, -.03
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.12	-.10, -.02
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.16	-.27, -.05
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.24, -.07
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.28, -.06
Establish positive in-law identity		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.15	-.26, -.06
Maintain family relationships		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.16	-.27, -.07

Table 4.46 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.11	-.19, -.02
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.11	-.19, -.02
Manage uncertainty		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.11	-.19, -.03
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.11	-.20, -.03
Provide support		
Triadic influence uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.18	-.28, -.09

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models examined the associations among triadic influence uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 28.48, p < .001$ , CFI = .85, RMSEA = .37. Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2o.3*; see Table 4.45). Triadic influence uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1o.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.44). Triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for close to a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., triadic influence uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for just under two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 18.06, p < .001$ , CFI = .89, RMSEA = .29. After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to what was hypothesized, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance

(*H1b.9*); instead, this association was indirect through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2o.4*; see Table 4.45). Regarding the two research questions, results revealed that triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ10.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.44), and the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). Overall, triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .17$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 62.24, p < .001, CFI = .72, RMSEA = .56$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). Triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*), but this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2o.5*; see Table 4.45). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1o.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). In addition, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the link between triadic influence uncertainty and

satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). Overall, triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., triadic influence uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .69$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 17.27, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to expectations, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). In addition, the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2o.6*). Triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1o.6*); however, this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.35), and the link between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). Triadic influence uncertainty accounted for 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .05$ ), and all three predictors accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations between triadic influence uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 11.86, p <$

.001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .23. Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added. In contrast to what was predicted, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). However, the association between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2o.7*; see Table 4.45). Triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1o.7*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. In addition, the link between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.44). Altogether, triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for just over 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .06$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., triadic influence uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.27, p = .26, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .04$ . Consistent with predictions, triadic influence uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*), but the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2o.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1o.8*), but this goal

was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, consistent with predictions, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction, and topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.46). Overall, triadic influence uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .04$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .12, p = .73, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, triadic influence uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). However, the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2o.9*). Results indicated that triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1o.9*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with hypotheses, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). In the final model, triadic influence uncertainty accounted for under 5% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .03$ ), and triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among triadic influence uncertainty, the goal of *uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model

was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.73, p = .18, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.44. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.45., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.46.

Contrary to predictions, triadic influence uncertainty did not share a significant, direct association with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*); instead, this link was indirect through children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2o.10*; see Table 3.43). In addition, results indicated that triadic influence uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1o.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction, and the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). Triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., triadic influence uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .48$ ).

The model for triadic influence uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was an adequate fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.03, p = .08, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . Contrary to predictions, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). In addition, examination of the BC CI indicated that

this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2o.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1o.11*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). The goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for just over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .11$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .47$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 39.43, p < .001, CFI = .78, RMSEA = .44$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Contrary to predictions, triadic influence uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*H1b.9*). However, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between triadic influence uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2o.12*; see Table 4.45). Triadic influence uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1o.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses, both triadic influence uncertainty (*H3b.9*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between triadic influence uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.46). In addition, the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.44). In the final model, triadic influence uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the

variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .16$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

**In-law uncertainty.** A series of models were run to examine the unique relationships among the themes of in-law uncertainty (see Table 2.1), goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. Procedures used to assess model fit were identical to the protocol used to evaluate model fit and parameters for models containing relational and family uncertainty delineated above.

**Gossip uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.** Two models examined the associations among gossip uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .16, p = .69, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.47. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.48. The total indirect effects of the relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.49.

Consistent with predictions, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). Examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2p.1*). In addition, gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1p.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction, and the relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). Overall, gossip uncertainty accounted for less than 10% of the

variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

Table 4.47

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Gossip Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.29***	.03	.06	-.24***	-.59***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.17*	.24**	.51***	-.22***	-.48***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.15*	.28***	.49***	-.19**	-.39***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.17*	-.33***	-.34***	-.18**	-.50***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.17*	-.27***	-.44***	-.17**	-.35***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>e</sup>	.27***	-.12	-.14	-.22***	-.55***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.47 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>f</sup>	.27***	-.12	-.19*	-.23***	-.54***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.29***	.00	.04	-.24***	-.59***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.29***	.08	-.00	-.24***	-.59***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.21**	.25**	.34***	-.24***	-.59***
Reduce uncertainty	.25***	-.14	-.26**	-.24***	-.59***
Provide support <sup>g</sup>	.19**	-.29***	-.33***	-.16**	-.46***

Note.  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.22^{***}$ ; b.  $-.39^{***}$ ; c.  $.26^{***}$ ; d.  $.53^{***}$ ; e.  $.27^{***}$ ; f.  $.25^{***}$ ; g.  $.38^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 7.11, p < .01, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .18$ . Examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) recommended adding a path from interaction goal to satisfaction. Consistent with predictions, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2p.2*; see Table 4.48). Gossip uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1p.2*), and this goal was positively associated

with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of maintaining privacy was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.47), and the association between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). In the final model, children-in-law's interaction goals accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., gossip uncertainty, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .52$ ).

Table 4.48

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Gossip Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain boundaries</b>		
Gossip uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.12	.04, .24
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Gossip uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.14	.06, .26
Gossip uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.11	.05, .21
Gossip uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.12	.06, .22
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Gossip uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.08	.02, .19

*(table continues)*

Table 4.48 (*continued*)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Provide support		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.04, .18

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.49

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Gossip Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.28, -.10
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.34, -.12
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.23	-.32, -.15
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.25	-.36, -.13
Establish a positive in-law identity		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.19	-.28, -.10
Maintain family relationships		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.18	-.27, -.10

Table 4.49 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Gossip Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Manage uncertainty		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.17	-.25, -.09
Provide support		
Gossip uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.25	-.35, -.14

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among gossip uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 27.94, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .37$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As hypothesized, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2p.3*; see Table 4.48). Furthermore, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1p.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.49), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.47). Gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., gossip uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* did not fit the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 15.71, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .27$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As hypothesized, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and this link was partially

mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2p.4*; see Table 4.48). With regard to the two research questions, results revealed that gossip uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1p.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.47). The relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). Overall, gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just under a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 61.92, p < .001, CFI = .74, RMSEA = .56$ . Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model (see Figure 3). As expected, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2p.5*; see Table 4.48). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that gossip uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1p.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The link between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic

avoidance (see Table 4.49), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 3.47). Gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for just over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., gossip uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .70$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 20.17, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .31$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2p.6*). Gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1p.6*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). As hypothesized, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.47), and the link between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). In the final model, gossip uncertainty accounted for 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .10$ ), and all three predictors accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .56$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations among gossip uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 16.38, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .28$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to

relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), but the goal to maintain the in-law relationship did not significantly mediate this association (*H2p.7*). Gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1p.7*), but this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The link between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.49), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.47). Overall, gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .12$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., gossip uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.88, p = .26, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .09$ . Gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), but the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2p.8*). With regard to the two research questions, results indicated that gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1p.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). Both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. In addition, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between relationship support uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.49). Gossip uncertainty accounted

for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for nearly half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.64, p = .19, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . As predicted, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, the relationship between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2p.9*). Results indicated that gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1p.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with hypotheses, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction, and the relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). Gossip uncertainty accounted for under 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .08$ ), and gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for close to half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

Two models were run to examine the associations among gossip uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.79, p = .18, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.47. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.48., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through

interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.49.

As predicted, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2p.10*; see Table 4.48). Results indicated that gossip uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1p.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Consistent with hypotheses, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). In the current model, gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., gossip uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

The model for gossip uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.83, p = .09, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .09$ . As predicted, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2p.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that gossip uncertainty was not significantly associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1p.11*), but this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.49). Overall, gossip uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for over 10% of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .15$ ), and the

three predictor variables accounted for almost half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .49$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 38.90, p < .001, CFI = .81, RMSEA = .44$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As predicted, gossip uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between gossip uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2p.12*; see Table 4.48). Gossip uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1p.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses, both gossip uncertainty (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between gossip uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.48), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.47). Gossip uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .18$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .61$ ).

***In-law as individual uncertainty, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among in-law as individual uncertainty, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit the data well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .25, p = .62, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.50. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant

mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.51. The total indirect effects of the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.52.

Consistent with predictions, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2q.1*). In addition, in-law as individual uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1q.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction, and the relationship between uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). Overall, in-law as individual uncertainty accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Table 4.50

*Standardized Path Coefficients for In-law as Individual Uncertainty Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.43***	.02	.05	-.37***	-.50***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	.28***	.33***	.45***	-.35***	-.40***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	.23**	.47***	.43***	-.27***	-.36***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>c</sup>	.33***	-.39***	-.27***	-.31***	-.43***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>d</sup>	.26**	-.48***	-.36***	-.21***	-.33***
Establish positive in-law identity	.35***	.22***	.39***	-.37***	-.50***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.40***	-.30***	-.09	-.32***	-.48***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.44***	-.01	.05	-.37***	-.50***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.44***	-.06	.05	-.37***	-.50***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.33***	.41***	.25**	-.37***	-.50***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.50 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Reduce uncertainty	.38***	-.33***	-.17*	-.37***	-.49***
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.33***	-.43***	-.25***	-.26***	-.41***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a. .19\*; b. -.34\*\*\*; c. .23\*\*\*; d. .49\*\*\*; e. .19\*\*; f. .34\*\*\*. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.16$ ,  $p < .01$ , CFI = .97, RMSEA = .16. Examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) recommended adding a path from interaction goal to satisfaction. Consistent with predictions, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*), and this association was significantly mediated through children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy (*H2q.2*; see Table 4.51). In-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1q.2*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. Moreover, the goal of maintaining privacy was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.50), and the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). In the final model, children-in-law's interaction goal of maintaining privacy accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictor

variables (i.e., in-law as individual uncertainty, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for close to two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

Table 4.51

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between In-law as Individual Uncertainty and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain boundaries</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty → Privacy → Topic avoidance	.15	.06, .27
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty → Associate → Topic avoidance	.20	.10, .35
In-law as individual uncertainty → Friend → Topic avoidance	.11	.04, .21
In-law as individual uncertainty → Family → Topic avoidance	.18	.09, .30
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty → Identity → Topic avoidance	.08	.02, .17
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty → Maintain → Topic avoidance	.10	.01, .23
<b>Provide support</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty → Provide support → Topic avoidance	.11	.04, .21

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ . The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.52

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between In-law as Individual Uncertainty and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.15
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.17
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.32	-.43, -.23
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.28	-.38, -.19
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.38	-.49, -.29
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.15

*(table continues)*

Table 4.52 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.26	-.38, -.19
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.15
In-law as individual Uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.31, -.15
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.22	-.310, -.148
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.26	-.311, -.148
<b>Provide support</b>		
In-law as individual uncertainty $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.33	-.439, -.247

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among in-law as individual uncertainty, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 18.40, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .29$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As hypothesized, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). In addition, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2q.3*; see Table 4.51). In-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1q.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.51). In-law as individual uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .33$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., in-law as individual uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 11.87, p < .001, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .23$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the

model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As hypothesized, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2q.4*; see Table 4.51). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that in-law as individual uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1q.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). Both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.51), and the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). In the final model, in-law as individual uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .59$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was not a good fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 44.25, p < .001, CFI = .83, RMSEA = .47$ . After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As expected, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). In addition, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2q.5*; see Table 4.51). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that in-law as individual uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1q.5*). Research question two examined about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of

cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). In addition, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the link between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.50). Overall, in-law as individual uncertainty and children-in-law's goal accounted for almost a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., in-law as individual uncertainty, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for almost three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .71$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .00, p < .001, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . Consistent with predictions, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). In addition, the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2q.6*; see Table 4.51). In-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1q.6*), and this goal was positively with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the link between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). In-law as individual uncertainty and the goal of establishing a proper identity accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .34$ ), and all three predictors accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Three models were run to examine the associations between in-law as individual uncertainty, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 9.21, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .20$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). However, the association between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2q.7*). In-law as individual uncertainty was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1q.7*), but this goal was not related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Furthermore, the link between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.50). Finally, in-law as individual uncertainty accounted for a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .20$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., in-law as individual uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 2.83, p = .09, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .09$ . Consistent with predictions, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). However, examination of the

BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance (*H2q.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that in-law as individual uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1q.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, consistent with predictions, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction (see Table 4.52). Altogether, in-law as individual uncertainty accounted for close to a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and uncertainty and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .34, p = .26$ , CFI = .99, RMSEA = .06. As predicted, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*), but this relationship was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2q.9*). Results indicated that in-law as individual uncertainty was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1q.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with hypotheses, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). In-law as individual uncertainty accounted for almost a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .19$ ), and in-law as individual uncertainty and topic

avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Two models examined the associations among in-law as individual uncertainty, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .26, p = .61, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.50. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.51., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.52.

As predicted, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*), and the goal of maintaining uncertainty significantly mediated this relationship (*H2q.10*; see Table 4.51). Results indicated that in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1q.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Moreover, the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). Altogether, in-law as individual uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., in-law as individual uncertainty, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model for in-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .63, p = .43$ , CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00. As predicted, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2q.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that in-law as individual uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1q.11*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Moreover, both in-law as individual uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Moreover, although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52). In-law as individual uncertainty and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for just over a fifth of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .21$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 27.55, p < .001$ , CFI = .88, RMSEA = .36. After examining the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, in-law as individual uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.2*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between in-law as individual uncertainty and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2q.12*; see Table 4.51). Furthermore, in-law as individual uncertainty was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1q.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses, both in-law as individual

uncertainty (*H3c.2*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The relationship between in-law as individual uncertainty and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.52), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.50). In-law as individual uncertainty and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for almost a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .24$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .64$ ).

**Interdependence processes.** A series of models were run to examine the unique relationships among interference and facilitation, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. Procedures used to assess model fit were identical to the protocol used to evaluate model fit and parameters for models containing relational and family uncertainty delineated above.

***Interference from in-laws, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among interference from in-laws, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .01, p = .95, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.53. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.54. The total indirect effects of the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction (with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance) are presented in Table 4.55.

Consistent with predictions, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship

was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2p.1*). In addition, interference from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1p.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). Both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively correlated with satisfaction. Furthermore, results revealed that the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through topic avoidance (see Table 3.55). Overall, interference from in-laws accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and interference from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Table 4.53

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Interference from In-Laws Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	.50***	.10	.01	-.37***	-.47***
Maintain privacy	.32***	.44***	.41***	-.38***	-.47***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.53 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>a</sup>	.34***	.41***	.40***	-.31***	-.31***
Cultivate friend relationship <sup>b</sup>	.44***	-.20**	-.31***	-.38***	-.34***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	.38***	-.34***	-.36***	-.31***	-.25***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	.49***	-.23**	-.06	-.33***	-.45***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship <sup>e</sup>	.48***	-.30***	-.07	-.33***	-.45***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.51***	-.09	.09	-.38***	-.47***
Maintain linchpin relationship	.51***	-.07	.06	-.38***	-.47***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	.42***	.32***	.25**	-.38***	-.47***
Reduce uncertainty	.46***	-.18*	-.21**	-.38***	-.47***
Provide support <sup>f</sup>	.42***	-.41***	-.22**	-.27***	-.38***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.37^{***}$ ; b.  $.30^{***}$ ; c.  $.52^{***}$ ; d.  $.24^{***}$ ; e.  $.20^{**}$ ; f.  $.35^{***}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.45, p < .05$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .13. However, examination of Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) did not reveal and model modifications. Consistent with predictions, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and goal of maintaining privacy significantly mediated this association (*H2p.2*; see Table 4.54). Interference from in-laws was positively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1p.2*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Moreover, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were inversely related with satisfaction. Although not a focus of the present investigation, results revealed that the association between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55). Children-in-law's interaction goals accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .39$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., interference from in-laws, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .55$ ).

Table 4.54

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Interference from in-laws and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain boundaries</b>		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.18	.07, .35
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.16	.07, .30
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.06	.01, .14
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.12	.06, .21
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.08	.01, .20
<b>Provide support</b>		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance	.09	.03, .19

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.55

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Interference from in-laws and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Boundary management		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.31	-.40, -.22
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Friend $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.15
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.31	-.42, -.19
Establish a positive in-law identity		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.28	-.40, -.20
Maintain family relationships		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ In-law $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	-.29	-.40, -.20

Table 4.55 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Manage uncertainty		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.24	-.34, -.16
Provide support		
Interference from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	-.34	-.47, -.25

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models were run to examine the associations among interference from in-laws, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 25.65, p < .001, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .35$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As hypothesized, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and this relationship was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (*H2p.3*; see Table 4.53). Interference from in-laws was positively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ1p.3*), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). Both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.53). Overall, interference from in-laws and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .39$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., interference from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .64$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* was also a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 25.94, p < .001, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .35$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. In the just-identified model, all the predicted paths were statistically significant. As hypothesized, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*).

In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2p.4*; see Table 4.54). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1p.4*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the goal of cultivating a friend relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.53). Also, the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.54). Interference from in-laws and children-in-law's goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .35$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for more than two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .62$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 65.32, p < .001, CFI = .77, RMSEA = .57$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As expected, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, this relationship was significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2p.5*; see Table 4.54). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1p.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). In addition, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively

associated with satisfaction. The link between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.54). In the final model, interference from in-laws and children-in-law's goal accounted for more than a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., interference from in-laws, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 16.25, p < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .28$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, the relationship between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2p.6*). Results revealed that interference from in-laws negatively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1p.6*), but this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Moreover, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.53), and the link between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55). Altogether, interference from in-laws accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and all three predictors accounted for two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .60$ ).

Three models examined the associations among interference from in-laws, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was not a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 10.33, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .22$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, the association between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (*H2p.7*). Interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (*RQ1p.7*), but this goal was not related to topic avoidance (*RQ2d.1*). Consistent with predictions, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Furthermore, the link between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55), and the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.53). Interference from in-laws accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., interference from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for nearly two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .58$ ).

The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.09, p = .29, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .02$ . Consistent with predictions, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship

between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance (*H2p.8*). In regard to the two research questions, results indicated that interference from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (*RQ1p.8*), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.2*). In addition, consistent with predictions, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. Moreover, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction (see Table 4.55). In the final model, interference from in-laws accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .26$ ), and interference from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .21, p = .64, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, the relationship between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2p.9*). Results indicated that interference from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1p.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). Consistent with hypotheses, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.55). Overall, interference from in-laws accounted for a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .25$ ), and interference from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

Two models examined the associations among interference from in-laws, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.46, p = .23, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.53. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.54., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.55.

As predicted, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2p.10*; see Table 4.54). Furthermore, results indicated that interference from in-laws was positively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1p.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Moreover, both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) shared an inverse association with satisfaction. The relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55). Interference from in-laws and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .31$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., interference from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for more than half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model for interference from in-laws and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.24, p = .07, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .10$ . As predicted, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2p.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1p.11*), and this goal was inversely related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. In addition, the relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55). Overall, interference from in-laws and the goal to reduce uncertainty accounted for a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .30$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over half of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .54$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 32.80, p < .001, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .40$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). In addition, examination of the BC CI revealed that the link between interference from in-laws and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by the goal of providing support (*H2p.12*; see Table 4.54). Furthermore, interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1p.12*), and this goal was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses both interference from in-laws (*H3c.1*) and topic avoidance (*H4*) were negatively associated with satisfaction. The

relationship between interference from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.55), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.53). Overall, interference from in-laws and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for nearly a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .29$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over two-thirds of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .64$ ).

***Facilitation from in-laws, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction.*** Two models were run to examine the associations among facilitation from in-laws from partners, the goal of boundary management, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *maintain boundaries* revealed that the hypothesized model fit well,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .56, p = .46, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.56. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects in the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.57. The total indirect effects of the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.58.

Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the 95% BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to maintain boundaries (*H2p.1*). In addition, facilitation from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain boundaries (*RQ1p.1*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.1*). As expected, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), and topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively correlated with satisfaction. Overall, facilitation from in-laws

accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ) and facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

Table 4.56

*Standardized Path Coefficients for Facilitation from In-Laws Models*

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Boundary management					
Maintain boundaries	-.60***	-.03	.05	.71***	-.23***
Maintain privacy <sup>a</sup>	-.45***	-.41***	.36***	.68***	-.15***
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship					
Cultivate associate relationship <sup>b</sup>	-.45***	-.50***	.31***	.63***	-.13*
Cultivate friend relationship	-.54***	.51***	-.13	.71***	-.23***
Cultivate family relationship <sup>c</sup>	-.54***	.75***	-.08	.53***	-.22***
Establish positive in-law identity <sup>d</sup>	-.62***	.35***	.04	.66***	-.24***
Maintain family relationships					
Maintain in-law relationship	-.61***	.38***	.01	.71***	-.23***
Maintain intergenerational relationship	-.61***	.08	.09	.71***	-.23***

*(table continues)*

Table 4.56 (continued)

<u>Interaction Goal</u>	<u>Paths Depicted in Figure 2</u>				
	<i>a</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Maintain linchpin relationship	-.61***	.09	.08	.71***	-.23***
Manage uncertainty					
Maintain uncertainty	-.54***	-.34***	.21**	.71***	-.23***
Reduce uncertainty	-.57***	.34***	-.09	.71***	-.23***
Provide support <sup>e</sup>	-.57***	.58***	-.05	.61***	-.22***

*Note.*  $N = 199$ . Goals with superscripts indicate that a path was added from goal to satisfaction (Figure 3, Path *f*). The size standardized estimates for the added paths are as follows: a.  $-.16^{**}$ ; b.  $-.27^{***}$ ; c.  $.24^{**}$ ; d.  $.13^*$ ; e.  $.16^{**}$ . \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *maintain privacy* revealed that the hypothesized model did not meet a priori guidelines for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 6.70, p < .01$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .17. Examination of the LMI recommended adding a path from interaction goal to satisfaction. Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), and the goal of maintaining privacy significantly mediated this link (*H2p.2*; see Table 4.56). Furthermore, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with the desire to maintain privacy (*RQ1p.2*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2a.2*). As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws (*H3c.1*) was positively associated with satisfaction and topic avoidance (*H4*) was inversely related with satisfaction. In addition, the goal of maintaining privacy was negatively associated with

satisfaction (see Table 4.56), and the association between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). Children-in-law's interaction goals accounted for almost half of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .48$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., facilitation from in-laws, children-in-law's interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .77$ ).

Table 4.57

*Summary of the Significant Indirect Effects of Goals on the Association between Facilitation from in-laws and Topic Avoidance*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Maintain boundaries</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws → Privacy → Topic avoidance	-.15	-.27, -.06
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws → Associate → Topic avoidance	-.15	-.30, -.06
<b>Manage uncertainty</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws → Maintain → Topic avoidance	-.07	-.18, -.01

*Note.* BC CI = Bias-corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically significant are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request.

Table 4.58

*Summary of Significant Indirect Effects of Goal and/or Topic Avoidance on the Association between Facilitation from in-laws and Satisfaction*

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
<b>Boundary management</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain boundaries <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.07, .23
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain privacy $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.16	.09, .25
<b>Cultivate the desired in-law relationship</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Associate $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.22	.14, .30
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Friend <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.06, .23
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Family $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.32	.17, .47
<b>Establish a positive in-law identity</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Identity $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.19	.10, .29
<b>Maintain family relationships</b>		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ In-law <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction ( <i>table continues</i> )	.14	.06, .23

Table 4.58 (continued)

	$\beta$	95% BC CI (lower, upper)
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Intergenerational <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.06, .23
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Linchpin <sup>ns</sup> $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.06, .23
Manage uncertainty		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Maintain $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.06, .23
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Reduce $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.14	.06, .23
Provide support		
Facilitation from in-laws $\rightarrow$ Provide support $\rightarrow$ Topic avoidance $\rightarrow$ Satisfaction	.23	.11, .35

*Note.* BC CI = Bias corrected confidence interval. Only the indirect effects that were statistically are displayed above. All indirect effects are significant at  $p < .05$ , BC CI does not include zero. The precise statistics for the indirect effects that were not statistically significant are available upon request. *ns* = non-significant mediator.

Three models examined the associations among facilitation from in-laws, the aim to *cultivate the desired in-law relationship*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal of *cultivating an associate relationship* was a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 19.83, p < .001, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .31$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model.

As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (H1c.1), and this association was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of cultivating an associate relationship (H2p.3; see Table 4.57). Facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with the desire to cultivate an associate relationship (RQ1p.3), but the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance (RQ2a.2). As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws (H3c.1) was positively associated with satisfaction, and topic avoidance (H4) was negatively associated with satisfaction. Furthermore, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by the goal to cultivate an associate relationship and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58), and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship was negatively associated with satisfaction (see Table 4.56). Overall, facilitation from in-laws and children-in-law's goal accounted for almost half of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .44$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., facilitation from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .80$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a friend relationship* approached, but did not meet a priori criteria for model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 4.05, p = .04, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .12$ . However, the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI) did not suggest any additional modifications. As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (H1c.1).

Examination of the BC CI revealed that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a friend relationship (*H2p.4*). In regard to the two research questions, results revealed that facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the desire to cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ1p.4*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.2*). In addition, as predicted, facilitation from in-laws (*H3c.1*) was positively associated with satisfaction, and topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. Also, although not a focus of the present investigation, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). In the final model, facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .38$ ), and the facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .76$ ).

The model containing the goal of *cultivating a family relationship* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.43, p < .001, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .19$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. As expected, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal of cultivating a family relationship (*H2p.5*). In regard to research question one, which asked about the link between turbulence and goals, results revealed that facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the desire to cultivate a family relationship (*RQ1p.5*). Research question two inquired about the links between goals and topic avoidance. Results indicated that the goal of cultivating a family relationship was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2b.3*). Consistent with expectations, facilitation from in-laws (*H3c.1*) was positively associated with satisfaction, and topic avoidance (*H4*) was negatively associated with satisfaction. The link between facilitation from in-laws and

satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58), and the goal of cultivating a family relationship was positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 3.). Overall, facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictors (i.e., facilitation from in-laws, interaction goals, and topic avoidance) accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .78$ ).

The model containing the goal of *establishing a positive in-law identity* was a poor fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 5.65, p < .01, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .15$ . Based on the Lagrange Multiplier Index (LMI), a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model. Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity (*H2p.6*). Furthermore, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the goal of establishing a proper identity (*RQ1p.6*), but this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2c*). Facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), and topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). In addition, the goal of establishing a positive in-law identity shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.56), and the link between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was mediated through children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). Facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and all three predictors accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .78$ ).

Three models examined the associations among facilitation from in-laws, the aim to *maintain family relationships*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model containing the goal

of *maintaining the in-law relationship* was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 3.23, p = .07$ , CFI = .99, RMSEA = .10. As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (H1c.1). However, the association between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the in-law relationship (H2p.7). Facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship (RQ1p.7), but this goal was not related to topic avoidance (RQ2d.1). Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (H3c.1), and topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (H4). In addition, the link between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). Facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., facilitation from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .76$ ).

The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *maintain the intergenerational relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .33, p = .56$ , CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00. Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (H1c.1). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship did not significantly mediate the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance (H2p.8). With regard to the two research questions, results indicated that facilitation from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (RQ1p.8), and this goal was not associated with topic avoidance (RQ2d.2). Consistent with predictions, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (H3c.1), and topic avoidance shared an

inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Also, topic avoidance significantly mediated the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction (see Table 4.58). Facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a quarter of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .38$ ), and facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *maintain the linchpin relationship* revealed that the hypothesized model fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .18, p = .67, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), but this association was not significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal to maintain the linchpin relationship (*H2p.9*). Results indicated that facilitation from in-laws was not significantly associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship (*RQ1p.9*), and this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2d.3*). In addition, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), and topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). In the final model, facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

Two models examined the associations among facilitation from in-laws, the *goal of uncertainty management*, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *maintain uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 1.11, p = .29, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .02$ . The standardized estimates and significance levels are presented in Table 4.56. A summary of the tests of the indirect effects

in the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance with significant mediation through interaction goals are presented in Table 4.57., and the total indirect effects of the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction with significant mediation through interaction goals and topic avoidance are presented in Table 4.58.

As predicted, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*); examination of the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval (BC CI) revealed that the association between facilitation from in-laws and topic avoidance was significantly mediated by children-in-law's goal of maintaining uncertainty (*H2p.10*; see Table 4.57). Furthermore, results indicated that facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty (*RQ1p.10*), and this goal was positively associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2e.1*). Consistent with hypotheses, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), and topic avoidance shared an inverse association with satisfaction (*H4*). Also, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated by children-in-law's interaction goal and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). Facilitation from in-laws and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for more than a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .40$ ), and the three predictor variables (i.e., facilitation from in-laws, interaction goal, and topic avoidance) accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

The model for facilitation from in-laws and the goal to *reduce uncertainty* revealed that the hypothesized model was a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = .01, p = .93, CFI = 1.0, RMSEA = .00$ . As predicted, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*). However, examination of the BC CI indicated that this relationship was not significantly mediated through the goal to reduce uncertainty (*H2p.11*). In regards to the two research questions, results revealed that facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with

the goal of reducing uncertainty (*RQ1p.11*), but this goal was not significantly related to topic avoidance (*RQ2e.2*). Facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), whereas topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Moreover, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through interaction goals and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58). Finally, facilitation from in-laws accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .75$ ).

The model containing the goal of *providing support* did not fit,  $\chi^2(1, N = 199) = 8.08, p < .05$ , CFI = .98, RMSEA = .19. Based on the LMI, a path from interaction goal to relationship satisfaction was added to the model, which resulted in a just-identified model (see Figure 3). As hypothesized, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1c.1*), but the goal of providing support did not significantly mediate this relationship (*H2p.12*). Facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the goal of providing support (*RQ1p.12*), but this goal was not significantly associated with topic avoidance (*RQ2f*). Consistent with hypotheses, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction (*H3c.1*), and topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Furthermore, the relationship between facilitation from in-laws and satisfaction was significantly mediated through the goal of providing support and topic avoidance (see Table 4.58), and the goal of providing support shared a positive association with satisfaction (see Table 4.56). Altogether, facilitation from in-laws and children-in-law's interaction goal accounted for over a third of the variance in topic avoidance ( $R^2 = .37$ ), and the three predictor variables accounted for over three-quarters of the variance in satisfaction ( $R^2 = .77$ ).

## The Moderating Effect of Goals

The final research question asked about the relationship between communication, relational outcomes, and goals. A series of moderating tests were conducted to examine if children-in-law's goals moderated the relationship between satisfaction and topic avoidance. In each regression analysis, the first step included topic avoidance and the potential moderator, an interaction goal (see Table 2.8). The second step included the interaction term of topic avoidance and an interaction goal. All variables were centered before being entered into the regression analysis. An interaction term was deemed significant if it contributed a significant effect while controlling for the main effects of the independent variable and moderator.

Several findings demonstrated that children-in-law's interaction goals moderated the relationship between satisfaction and topic avoidance. More specifically, the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction was moderated by three of the children-in-law's interaction goals: cultivate an associate relationship (*RQ3b.1*), cultivate a friend relationship (*RQ3b.2*), and cultivate a family relationship (*RQ3b.3*). Table 4.59 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), standard errors (SE B), standardized regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), and *R*-squared and *R*-squared change statistics for the statistically significant moderations tests.

Table 4.59

*Summary of Significant Interactions between Children-in-law's Topic Avoidance and Interaction Goals in Regressions on Relationship Satisfaction*

	B	SE B	$\beta$	$R^2$	$R^2 \Delta$
Step 1				.44***	
Topic avoidance	-.67***	.05	-.65***		
Maintain boundaries	.04	.05	.02		
Step 2				.45	.00
Interaction term	.04	.03	.06		
Step 1				.46***	
Topic avoidance	-.60***	.06	-.59***		
Maintain privacy	-.12*	.05	-.14*		
Step 2				.46	.00
Interaction term	-.02	.03	-.05		
Step 1				.55	
Topic avoidance	-.47***	.06	-.45***		
Cultivate associate relationship	-.33***	.06	-.39***		
Step 2				.56	.01*
Interaction term	-.05*	.03	-.10*		
Step 1				.52	
Topic avoidance	-.54***	.06	-.52***		
Cultivate friend relationship	.27***	.05	.32***		
Step 2				.53	.02**
Interaction term	.07**	.03	.34**		
Step 1				.62	
Topic Avoidance	-.43***	.05	-.42***		
Cultivate family relationship	.40***	.04	.50***		
Step 2				.64	.01**
Interaction term	.07**	.02	.13**		

(table continues)

Table 4.59 (table continued)

	B	SE B	$\beta$	$R^2$	$R^2 \Delta$
Step 1				.52	
Topic avoidance	-.61***	.05	-.59***		
Establish positive in-law identity	.32***	.06	.28***		
Step 2				.52	.00
Interaction term	.01	.03	.01		
Step 1				.53	
Topic avoidance	-.73***	.17	-.71***		
Maintain in-law relationship	.30***	.06	.28***		
Step 2				.53	.00
Interaction term	.03	.03	.15		
Step 1				.46	
Topic avoidance	-.87***	.17	-.85***		
Maintain intergenerational relationship	.12*	.05	.13*		
Step 2				.46	.00
Interaction term	.04	.03	.20		
Step 1				.45	
Topic avoidance	-.85***	.18	-.85***		
Maintain linchpin relationship	.08	.05	.08		
Step 2				.45	.00
Interaction term	.03	.03	.17		
Step 1				.44***	
Topic avoidance	-.67***	.06	-.65***		
Maintain uncertainty	-.05	.06	-.05		
Step 2				.44	.00
Interaction term	.00	.04	.00		

(table continues)

Table 4.59 (continued)

	B	SE B	$\beta$	$R^2$	$R^2 \Delta$
Step 1				.46***	
Topic avoidance	-.61***	.06	-.59***		
Reduce uncertainty	.16**	.06	.15***		
				.47	.01
Step 2					
Interaction term	.06	.04	.09		
Step 1				.60***	
Topic avoidance	-.47***	.05	-.45***		
Provide support	.44***	.06	.45***		
				.60	.00
Step 2					
Interaction	.00	.03	.00		

Note. \* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

To understand the significant interactions, results were graphed using procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991). More specifically, the slopes of the association between topic avoidance (independent variable) and satisfaction (dependent variable) were plotted at low (one standard deviation below the mean), moderate (the mean), and high levels (one standard deviation above the mean) of the interaction goal (moderating variable).

As shown in Figure 4, at all levels of cultivating an associate relationship, the slope of the regression line was negative. However, the goal of cultivating an associate relationship changed the strength of the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction. More specifically, at low levels of cultivating an associate relationship, the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction was less negative compared to moderate or high levels of this interaction goal.

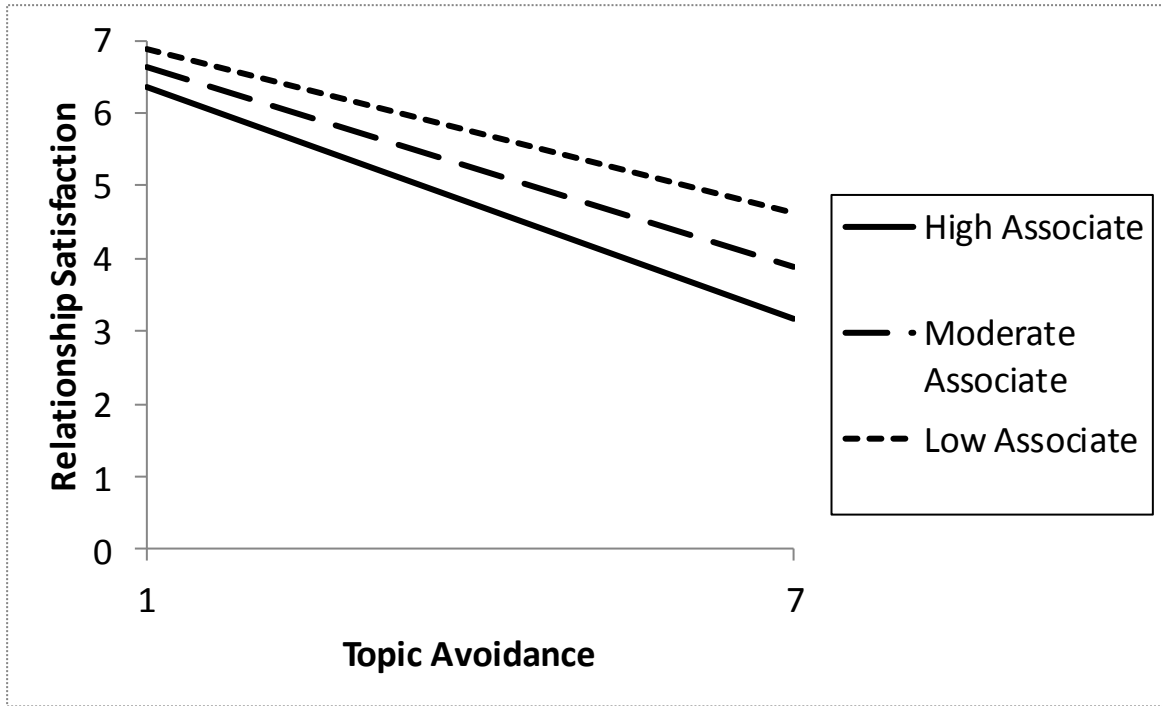


Figure 4. Interaction between children-in-law’s topic avoidance and the goal of cultivating an associate relationship.

Figure 5 displays the interaction between the goal of cultivating a friend relationship and children-in-law’s topic avoidance and satisfaction. Results indicate that the negative association between topic avoidance and satisfaction intensifies when the desire to cultivate a friend relationship is low. In other words, the less that children-in-law aimed to establish a friendship-like relationship with their parent-in-law, the more negatively their topic avoidance was associated with their relationship satisfaction.

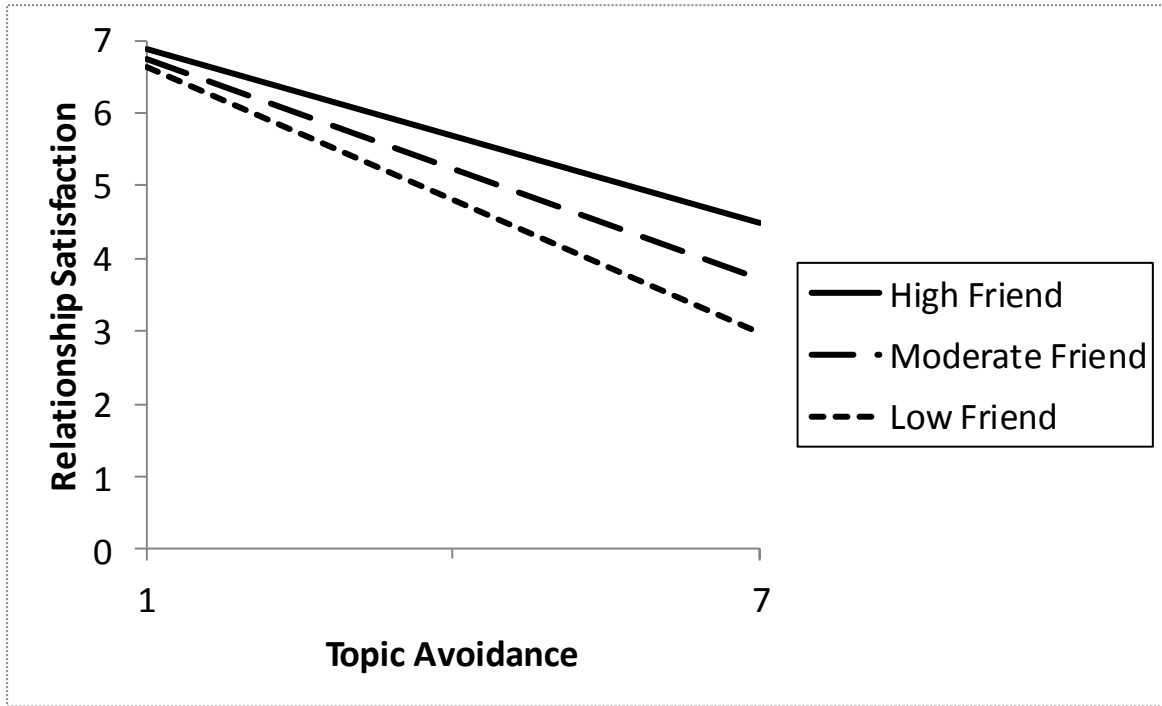


Figure 5. Interaction between children-in-law's topic avoidance and the goal of cultivating a friend relationship.

Finally, Figure 6 displays the interaction between the goal of cultivating a family relationship and children-in-law's topic avoidance and satisfaction. A similar pattern to cultivating a friend relationship emerged, with the negative association between topic avoidance and satisfaction becoming stronger at lower levels of desiring to cultivate a family relationship. The less children-in-law desired establishing a family bond with their parent-in-law, the more negatively their topic avoidance was related to their satisfaction.

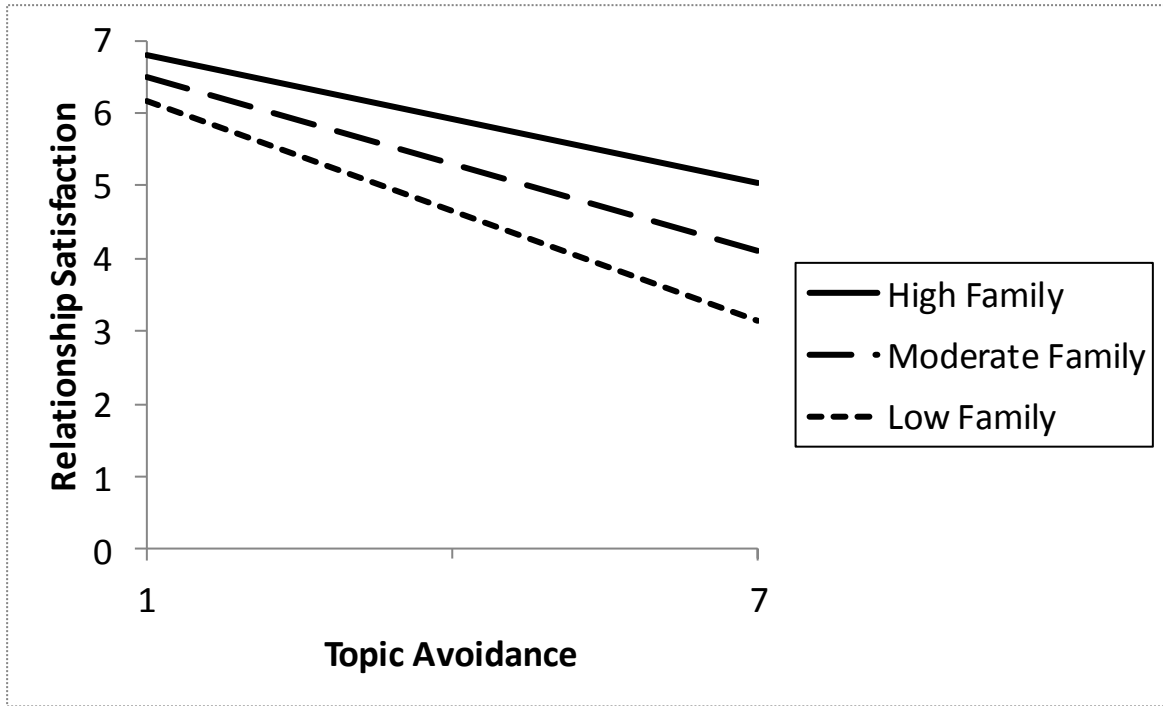


Figure 6. Interaction between children-in-law's topic avoidance and the goal of cultivating a family relationship.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion**

The present investigation was designed to understand the transition to extended family. The transition to extended family can be a difficult time as new family members grapple with uncertainty and attempt to coordinate interdependence (Morr Serewicz, 2006; Solomon & Knobloch, 2003). As a result, children-in-law may use more reactive communication strategies, such as topic avoidance to cope with these potential challenges. The use of topic avoidance during the early, formative years of the in-law relationship may result in long-term negative outcomes, such as decreased in-law and marital satisfaction (Bryant et al., 1999; Merrill, 2007; Morr Serewicz et al., 2008). Although the mechanisms of turbulence may result in more reactive communication behaviors, research from a multiple goals perspective suggests that all communication is goal-oriented (Wilson, 2002). Thus, children-in-law's enactment of topic avoidance is likely strategic and employed to achieve specific aims, rather than simply an automatic response to turbulence. The foundation for the present investigation was formed by integrating two theoretical perspectives—(a) the relational turbulence model, and (b) a multiple goals approach—to understand how relational turbulence and interaction goals work in tandem to shape children-in-law's use of topic avoidance and their relational satisfaction during the transition to extended family.

The research questions and hypotheses sought to examine both the direct and indirect effects among turbulence, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. More specifically, hypotheses were advanced to examine the direct links among turbulence, topic avoidance, and satisfaction. Consistent with a multiple goals perspective, additional hypotheses and research questions were advanced to examine the role that goals played in the associations between turbulence and topic avoidance and topic avoidance and satisfaction. Combining the relational turbulence model with

a multiple goals perspective allowed for a robust investigation of children-in-law's goals and communication under conditions of turbulence during the transition to extended family.

In this chapter, the results of the study are summarized and discussed in terms of current theory and research on relational turbulence, multiple goals, and extended family relationships. Next, the theoretical and practical contributions of the study are discussed. Finally, limitations of the present results are outlined along with the potential avenues for future research.

### **Discussion of Results**

The conceptual model that guided the study is reproduced in Figure 7. Although not included in the original model, results revealed a direct association between several interaction goals and satisfaction. Thus, Path *f* was added to the model to demonstrate this relationship. Several notable patterns emerged from the current study. These patterns are delineated in the following sections and are also summarized in Tables 5.1, 5.2, 5.3., 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6. I begin by discussing the first two hypotheses, which predicted that there would be a direct association between turbulence and topic avoidance (*H1*) and that this relationship would be partially mediated through children-in-law's interaction goals (*H2*). Next, I discuss the patterns that emerged regarding the first two research questions, which pertained to the direct links between (a) turbulence and goals (*RQ1*), and (b) goals and topic avoidance (*RQ2*). I also discuss findings regarding the relationship between turbulence and satisfaction (*H3*), topic avoidance and satisfaction (*H4*), and if, and how, children-in-law's interaction goals moderated this relationship (*RQ3*). Finally, although it was not initially a focus of the study, the significant direct associations between interaction goals and satisfaction (path *f* in Figure 7) are also discussed.

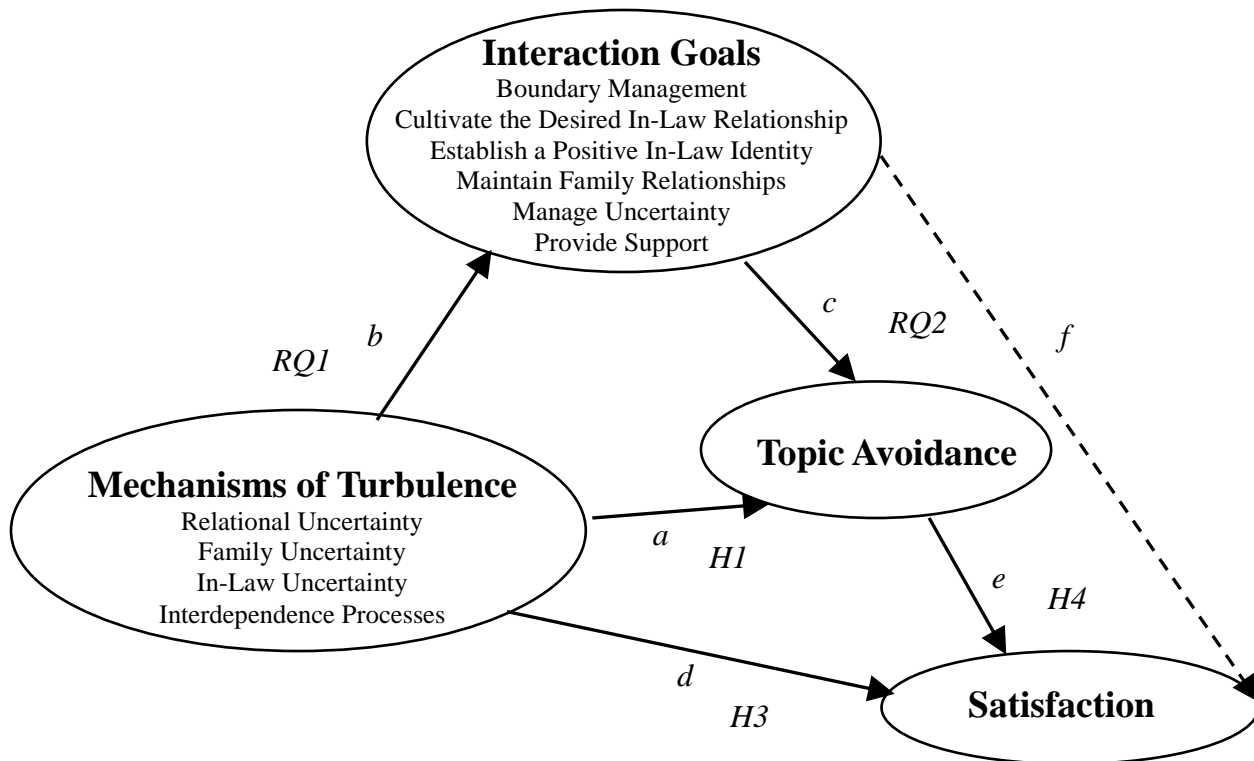


Figure 7. The revised conceptual model.

### The Associations between the Mechanisms of Turbulence, Topic Avoidance, and Goals

The first series of hypotheses predicted that the experience of relational uncertainty, family uncertainty, in-law uncertainty, and interference from in-laws would be positively associated with topic avoidance, whereas facilitation from in-laws would be negatively associated with topic avoidance (*H1*). The second set of hypotheses predicted that these relationships would be partially mediated through children-in-law’s goals (*H2*). The direct and indirect effects of the relationship between turbulence and topic avoidance through goals are summarized in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 and outlined in the following paragraphs.

Table 5.1

*Summary of Associations between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Topic Avoidance Across all Models Containing Children-in-law's Interaction Goals*

	<u>Topic Avoidance</u>												
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>			<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support	
Relational uncertainty													
Self	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Partner	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Relationship	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Approval	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Communication	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Differences	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	
Family uncertainty													
Balancing family membership	+			+	+	+	+		+		+	+	
Extended family relationships	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	
Family expectations	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
<i>(table continues)</i>													

Table 5.1 (continued)

	<u>Topic Avoidance</u>											
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>	<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>			<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Grandparent involvement	+	+	+			+	+	+	+	+	+	
Meddling	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+
Parenting input	+					+	+	+	-		+	+
Proximity	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Relationship support	+							+	+			
Triadic influence	+							+	+			
In-law uncertainty												
Gossip	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
In-law as individual	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

(table continues)

Table 5.1 (continued)

	<u>Topic Avoidance</u>											
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>	<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>	<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>			<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>	
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Interdependence processes												
Interference from in-laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Facilitation from in-laws	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

*Note.* “+” indicates a significant, positive association. “-“ indicates a significant, negative association. Spaces that have been left blank indicate a non-significant relationship.

**Direct effects.** In general, the mechanisms of turbulence, specifically uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and in-law) and interference from in-laws were positively associated with topic avoidance (see Table 5.1). These results add to the growing body of literature demonstrating an increased use of topic avoidance under conditions of turbulence (Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). When experiencing turmoil, children-in-law may employ topic avoidance as a way to protect themselves or their parent-in-law from vulnerability and embarrassment as well as prevent damaging the in-law relationship (Afifi & Guerrero, 1995a, 1995b; Knobloch, 2006; Knobloch & Solomon, 2002a). In other words, when experiencing uncertainty, children-in-law may prefer to avoid potentially precarious discussions.

Although uncertainty and interference from in-laws was positively associated with topic avoidance, facilitation shared an inverse association with topic avoidance. Research regarding the relational turbulence model has explored the link between facilitation and emotions (Knobloch et al., 2007; McLaren et al., 2011), but has not focused extensively on the link between facilitation and partners' message production (or message avoidance). Results from the present investigation shed light onto the links between facilitation and communication, and suggest that facilitation from in-laws is related to less reactive communication behaviors, such as topic avoidance. Instead, perhaps due to the positive emotions that facilitation from in-laws tends to elicit (Le & Agnew, 2001), individuals are more prone to employ communication behaviors that will enable the development of a close in-law relationship or that will encourage continued goal facilitation.

There were instances, however, when turbulence did not share a direct link with topic avoidance (see Table 5.1). In the majority of these cases, when the direct association between the

mechanism of turbulence and topic avoidance was not significant in the model, the analogous Pearson correlation was significant (see Table 4.1). This pattern of results suggests substantial mediation in which the goals mediate the association between the mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance. This possibility is examined more formally in the discussion of the bootstrapping tests of mediation.

In three cases, however, the mechanism of turbulence was not significantly associated with topic avoidance in the model or at the zero-order level. Contrary to what was predicted, balancing family membership uncertainty, parenting input uncertainty, and triadic influence uncertainty were not significantly associated with children-in-law's use of topic avoidance. Unlike other issues of uncertainty, children-in-law may use different communication strategies when tackling these particular questions. Children-in-law, for example, may engage in tacit avoidance by asking their spouse to speak to his or her parents about these issues. Employing the linchpin as a mediator allows children-in-law to, potentially, gain answers to their questions, while simultaneously protecting the in-law relationship from relational damage that may result from direct communication (Prentice, 2008). Conversely, based on the content of these issues of uncertainty, children-in-law may directly communicate with their parents-in-law when facing these uncertainties. Children-in-law may be particularly protective of their time with their family-of-origin or defensive regarding parenting issues and unnecessary in-law meddling. As such, children-in-law may prefer to engage in direct communication with their in-laws when these questions arise.

Table 5.2

*Summary of Interaction Goals that Mediated the Association between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Topic Avoidance*

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Interaction Goal →	Topic Avoidance
Relational uncertainty		
Self	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Provide support	
Partner	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
Relationship	Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
Approval	Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
Communication	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	

*(table continues)*

Table 5.2 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Interaction Goal →	Topic Avoidance
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	
Family uncertainty		
Balancing family membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	
Extended family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	
Family expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	
Grandparent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	
Meddling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> </ul>	

(table continues)

Table 5.2 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Interaction Goal →	Topic Avoidance
Parenting input	Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Maintain uncertainty	
Proximity	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
Relationship support	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support	
Triadic influence	Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
In-law uncertainty Gossip	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
In-law as individual	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish a positive in-law identity Maintain uncertainty Provide support	

(table continues)

Table 5.2 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Interaction Goal →	Topic Avoidance
Interdependence processes		
Interference from in-laws	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support	
Facilitation from in-laws	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Maintain uncertainty	

**Indirect effects.** Scholars have argued that individuals enact topic avoidance when experiencing turbulence to prevent embarrassment or relational damage, protect their own and their partner’s identity, and to circumvent having to discuss sensitive topics (Golish & Caughlin, 2002; Guerrero & Afifi, 1995a, 1995b). The present findings expand scholars’ understanding of topic avoidance as a response to uncertainty by highlighting the role of interaction goals. More specifically, examining the mediating role of interaction goals provides insight into the process underlying children-in-law’s decision to engage in topic avoidance when they experience turbulence.

Several interaction goals appeared to consistently mediate the relationship between a particular mechanism of turbulence and children-in-law’s interaction goals: maintain privacy, cultivate an associate relationship, cultivate a friend relationship, cultivate a family relationship, maintain uncertainty, and provide support. In several instances, the goal to maintain boundaries, reduce uncertainty, and cultivate a positive in-law identity mediated the association between a

mechanism of turbulence and topic avoidance. Table 5.2 displays the interaction goals that served as significant mediators between specific mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance.

Generally speaking, the experience of uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and in-law) or interference from in-laws was related to a greater desire to maintain privacy, maintain uncertainty, and cultivate an associate relationship, which in turn was positively associated with topic avoidance. Facilitation from in-laws, however, was inversely related to a desire to maintain privacy, cultivate an associate relationship, and maintain uncertainty, which were inversely related to topic avoidance. Conversely, the experience of uncertainty and interference from in-laws was inversely related to children-in-law's desire to cultivate a friend relationship, cultivate a family relationship, and provide support with their parent-in-law, and the less salient these goals were the more children-in-law relied on topic avoidance. There was one exception to this overall pattern; the experience of extended family uncertainty was positively associated with children-in-law's desire to cultivate a family relationship, which in turn was linked to greater topic avoidance.

In several instances, the goal to reduce uncertainty, maintain boundaries, and establish a positive in-law identity mediated the association between uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and in-law) and topic avoidance. More specifically, the experience of uncertainty was positively associated with children-in-law's desire to maintain boundaries and establish a positive in-law identity: the more salient these goals were, the more children-in-law employed topic avoidance. Conversely, when children-in-law experienced uncertainty, they were less likely to want to reduce their uncertainty, which in turn was positively related to enacted topic avoidance.

Considering the overall pattern of results summarized above, some broader conclusions appear warranted. First, the goal to maintain privacy mediated the relationship between

mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance in 16 out of 19 models (see Table 5.2). The experience of uncertainty and interference from in-laws was positively related to the goal of maintaining privacy, and the more salient this goal, the more topic avoidance children-in-law enacted. Children-in-law's questions about their in-law's desire to be involved in the in-law relationship (partner uncertainty) or concerns about what is expected of them as a child-in-law (family expectations), for example, may elicit a desire to prevent their parent-in-law from discovering unfavorable information to protect their own face and to prevent relational damage. As a result, children-in-law may engage in topic avoidance, which is a common strategy that individuals use when attempting to prevent private information from being exposed (CPM; Petronio, 2002). In addition, these results support previous research regarding in-laws' use of topic avoidance as a privacy management strategy. Mikucki-Enyart (2011), for example, argued that parents-in-law employed topic avoidance under conditions of uncertainty as a way to maintain collective and individual privacy boundaries. By explicitly assessing children-in-law's interaction goals, the current findings support this assertion, demonstrating that the goal to maintain privacy appears to mediate the connection between uncertainty and in-laws' use of topic avoidance.

Second, the goal to cultivate the desired in-law relationship (i.e., associate, friend, and family) demonstrated consistent evidence of mediation. More precisely, the mechanisms of turbulence were positively associated with children-in-law's desire to cultivate an associate relationship, which in turn was linked to greater topic avoidance. In contrast, uncertainty and interference from in-laws shared an inverse association with children-in-law's wish to foster a family or friend relationship, and the less salient these goals were, the more topic avoidance children-in-law enacted. Although uncertainty may prompt children-in-law to engage in topic

avoidance, these results suggest that the experience of uncertainty and interference from in-laws tends to curtail children-in-law's desire to cultivate an in-law relationship that is marked by the closeness implicit in labels like friendship and family relationships . When children-in-law wish to create distant relationships (i.e., associate ones), they rely on topic avoidance more than if they want to establish close ones (i.e., friendships or family ties). Children-in-law who experience relational uncertainty during the transition to extended family may wish to gain some distance from their parent-in-law as they grapple with questions about their own desire for the in-law relationship, their parent-in-law's desire for the relationship, and relational norms. In addition, the experience of uncertainty tends to be associated with less intimacy and liking (Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006; Solomon & Knobloch, 2001). As a result, children-in-law's uncertainties may diminish intimacy and liking for the parent-in-law, resulting in a desire to cultivate a distant rather than friendly or familial relationship with their parent-in-law. Children-in-law appear to enact topic avoidance as a way to facilitate relational distance between themselves and their parents-in-law.

A third trend is that the goal to maintain uncertainty was a significant mediator between the mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance. More specifically, the more turbulence children-in-law experienced, the more they wanted to maintain uncertainty, and the more they wanted to maintain uncertainty, the more they engaged in topic avoidance. This pattern suggests that during the transition to extended family, some children-in-law may view uncertainty as an opportunity to protect them against potentially unpleasant news (e.g., a lack of approval or relationship support) or as a way to remain optimistic about the future in-law relationship (Brashers, 2001). In addition, when children-in-law perceive interference from in-laws, they may fear that this pattern of behavior will continue. As a result, children-in-law may wish to prevent

finding out with certainty if this behavior will persist. Thus, children-in-law may engage in buffering strategies, such as topic avoidance to maintain uncertainty (Brashers, 2001).

In the models containing family expectations uncertainty and grandparent involvement uncertainty, the goal to reduce uncertainty significantly mediated the association between uncertainty and topic avoidance. In these instances greater uncertainty was inversely associated with the desire to reduce uncertainty; the less relevant this goal was, the more topic avoidance children-in-law enacted. However, as noted above, these forms of uncertainty were positively associated with children-in-law's desire to maintain uncertainty. Thus, when some children-in-law grapple with questions about a variety of expectations, such as their role in their new family or their in-law's involvement with grandchildren, they may wish to maintain—rather than reduce—uncertainty. This aim may be motivated by children-in-law's desire to remain optimistic about the potential reality of their situation.

Finally, the goal to provide support significantly mediated the relationship between 16 out of 19 mechanisms of turbulence and topic avoidance. For example, the more children-in-law experienced uncertainty and interference from in-laws, the less they desired to communicate their intentions to provide support to their parent-in-law, which in turn was linked to greater topic avoidance. The goal to provide support was operationalized as children-in-law's intention to communicate their willingness to provide support to their parent-in-law (e.g. "let my parent-in-law know I am here to help if they need it"). Two possible explanations may provide insight into this pattern of findings. First, when experiencing uncertainty, children-in-law may not know if support is desired or needed. Thus, they may not express their willingness to help as to not overstep boundaries or make incorrect assumptions about their parent-in-law's need or desire for assistance. Second, research suggests that non-accommodative behaviors, which make explicit

the distinction between in-group and out-group members, preclude daughters-in-law from establishing a shared family identity, which in turn diminishes their intentions of providing care to aging or ailing mothers-in-law (Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). Similar to exclusive communication behaviors, the experience of turmoil may prevent children-in-law from establishing a shared family identity with their in-laws (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011), which in turn may diminish their willingness to provide support or continue contact with their in-laws.

Overall, the results suggest that in several instances, children-in-law's interaction goals influence whether they engage in topic avoidance. More specifically, the goals of maintaining privacy, cultivating the desired in-law relationship, maintaining uncertainty, and providing support were particularly salient mediators. Broadly, these findings support the need for integrating the relational turbulence model with a multiple goals perspective, by demonstrating that understanding interaction goals helps provide a robust understanding of children-in-law's topic avoidance when they are experiencing uncertainty during the transition to extended family.

### **The Associations between the Mechanisms of Turbulence and Interaction Goals**

The experience of turmoil may set the tone for in-law relationships. As a result, the specific mechanisms of turbulence may shape the goals that children-in-law wish to pursue (*RQ1*). Results from the present study suggest that the mechanisms of turbulence are, indeed, associated with children-in-law's interaction goals. Table 5.3 displays a summary of the links between the mechanisms of turbulence and children-in-law's interaction goals.

Table 5.3

*Summary of Associations between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Children-in-law's Interaction Goals*

	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>		<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>		<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>	
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Relational uncertainty												
Self		+	+	-	-	-	-			+	-	-
Partner		+	+	-	-	-	-			+		-
Relationship	+	+	+	-	-	-	-			+		-
Approval	+	+	+	-	-	-	-			+		-
Communication		+	+	-	-	-	-			+	-	-
Differences			+	-	-		-			+		-
Family uncertainty												
Balancing family membership		+	+							+		-
Extended family relationships		+	+	-	+	-	-			+	-	-
Family expectations		+	+	-	-	-	-			+	-	-

*(table continues)*

Table 5.3 (continued)

	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>	<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>			<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Grandparent involvement			+	-	-	-	-	-		+	-	-
Meddling		+	+	-						+		-
Parenting input			+	-						+		-
Proximity			+	-	-	-	-			+		-
Relationship support		+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Triadic influence			+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+		-
In-law uncertainty Gossip		+	+	-	-					+		-
In-law as individual		+	+	-	-	+	-			+	-	-

(table continues)

Table 5.3 (continued)

	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>		<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Interdependence processes												
Interference from in-laws		+	+	-	-	-	-			+	-	-
Facilitation from In-laws		-	-	+	+	+	+			-	+	+

*Note.* “+” indicates a significant, positive association. “-“ indicates a significant, negative association. Spaces that have been left blank indicate a non-significant relationship.

In general, results suggest that uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and individual) and perceived interference from in-laws is negatively associated with prosocial goals, such as cultivating close ties with parents-in-law, maintaining the in-law relationship, and providing support to parents-in-law. In addition, the findings from the present study suggest that when children-in-law experience all forms of turmoil, they tend to prefer maintaining rather than reducing their uncertainty. The relationship between facilitation from in-laws and interaction goals displayed a different pattern: Facilitation from in-laws was positively linked to prosocial goals and the desire to reduce rather than maintain uncertainty. Broadly, results from the present study highlight the role that turbulence plays in shaping interaction goals.

In the paragraphs below, I outline the meaningful patterns of links between turbulence and goals by interaction goal type, as well as their implications for scholars' understanding of in-law relationships and interaction goals under conditions of turbulence.

**Boundary management goals.** The two boundary management goals—maintain boundaries and maintain privacy—were associated with the mechanisms of turbulence. Results indicated that only relational uncertainty was significantly associated with the goal of maintaining boundaries. More specifically, only one source of relational uncertainty (i.e., relationship uncertainty) and one theme of relational uncertainty (i.e., approval uncertainty) were significantly associated with this goal. All other mechanisms of turbulence were not significantly associated with this interaction goal (see Table 5.3). One possible explanation for these findings is that when children-in-law experience doubts about the in-law relationship at a dyadic level, such as doubts about interaction norms or mutual commitment to the relationship (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999), they may wish to establish explicit boundaries with their parent-in-law to prevent themselves or their parent-in-law from behaving in ways that could violate implicit

expectations and elicit vulnerability or embarrassment. In addition, when children-in-law perceive a lack of support from their social network (i.e., approval uncertainty; Bryant & Conger, 1999; Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006; Sprecher & Felmler, 1992, 2000), they may wish to create boundaries to buffer themselves and their relationship from the potentially negative outcomes, such as decreased satisfaction, relationship success, or low social network support of the romantic relationship (Bryant & Conger; Sprecher & Felmler, 1992, 2000).

Findings regarding the positive association between turbulence and the goal of maintaining privacy corroborate previous in-law research that suggests experiencing relational and family uncertainty may preclude in-laws from perceiving one another as genuine family members (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). According to communication privacy management theory, when individuals do not view relational partners as “insiders,” they restrict access to private information as a way to deny insider status, such as family membership (Petronio, 2002). Thus, when experiencing turbulence, children-in-law may wish to maintain their privacy due to a lack of feeling a family connection with their parent-in-law (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011).

**Cultivate the desired in-law relationship.** The mechanisms of turbulence were directly related to the type of relationship that children-in-law wished to cultivate with their parent-in-law. In fact, all the mechanisms of turbulence, except facilitation, were positively related with children-in-law’s desire to cultivate an associate relationship and negatively associated with children-in-law’s aim to cultivate a friend or family type relationship with their parent-in-law. In other words, uncertainty and interference were linked with the goal of cultivating a distant, rather than close-knit relationship.

These results are not surprising in light of research on the relational turbulence model and in-law relationships. Relational uncertainty and interference tend to “darken a person’s

relational worldview” (Solomon & Theiss, 2011, p. 203). As a result, children-in-law experiencing turbulence may be more reactive and use distance as a way to manage the negative thoughts and emotions that relational uncertainty and interference typically elicit (Morr Serewicz & Hosmer, 2011; Solomon & Theiss, 2011). Moreover, cultivating a more distant or formal in-law relationship may be a way to achieve other goals, such as maintaining boundaries and maintaining privacy.

Once again, facilitation displayed the opposite pattern. More specifically, facilitation was negatively associated with the goal of cultivating an associate relationship and positively related with the desire to develop a friend and family relationship with parents-in-law. Research suggests that facilitation from partners is linked to more positive and less negative emotions (Knobloch, Miller et al. 2007; Le & Agnew, 2001). These feelings may engender a positive relational climate, which may encourage children-in-law to cultivate a close-knit relationship, perhaps in hopes of encouraging continued facilitation from in-laws.

**Establish a positive in-law identity.** Overall, the experience of uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and in-law) and interference was negatively associated with children-in-law’s desire to establish a positive in-law identity (e.g., “have my parent-in-law see me as a ‘good’ child-in-law;” see Table 5.3). Two possible explanations may account for this pattern. First, when experiencing turbulence (i.e., uncertainty and interference), children-in-law may be “out of face” (Goffman, 1967). In other words, children-in-law may not know what a positive in-law identity entails and/or how to enact it. For instance, when children-in-law are unclear about family expectations, they may not know what their identity should be; thus, they would have a reduced desire to cultivate an acceptable identity due to their uncertainty about knowing what that identity should be. Second, if children-in-law are uncertain about the degree to which their

parent-in-law approves of them (approval uncertainty) or supports their relationship (relationship support uncertainty), they may be less invested in establishing a positive in-law identity due to perceptions that their parent-in-law does not like or support them. That is, they may be less concerned with establishing an identity as a good child-in-law or competent family member if they believe it will not change their parent-in-law's perceptions of them.

**Maintain family relationships.** In general, the experience of uncertainty and interference was negatively associated with the desire to maintain the in-law relationship. Given that uncertainty often causes relational partners to view their relationships in a more negative light (Solomon & Theiss, 2011), it is no surprise that questions about the in-law relationship are inversely related to children-in-law's desire to maintain the in-law relationship. Although previous research has examined the associations between relational turbulence and relational outcomes (i.e., satisfaction; Knobloch, 2008; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011), the present results suggest that relational turbulence affects individuals' desire to actively maintain relationships. In fact, findings from the present study hint that the experience of uncertainty may be a significant barrier when attempting to establish the in-law relationship. Although children-in-law may lack a desire to maintain the in-law relationship, they most likely will have to maintain the relationship, to some extent, due to the triadic and non-voluntary nature of the in-law relationship. (Morr Serewicz, 2008).

Results also revealed that, in general, turbulence within the in-law relationship was not significantly associated with children-in-law's desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship or the linchpin relationship. Although it is important not to infer too much from null findings, such findings could be explained if despite the experience uncertainty and interference within the in-law relationship, children-in-law have a desire to maintain other family

relationships. One possible explanation for this pattern of results is that children-in-law may not view turbulence within the in-law relationship as relevant to their desire to maintain other familial ties. Children-in-law's experience of relational uncertainty, for example, may not have any bearing on their desire to maintain their romantic relationship.

Although most of the results pertaining to the desire to maintain intergenerational relationships were not significant, three forms of family uncertainty—grandparent involvement uncertainty, relationship support uncertainty, and triadic influence uncertainty—were negatively associated with the desire to maintain the intergenerational relationship (see Table 5.3). In addition, two themes of family uncertainty—relationship support uncertainty and triadic influence uncertainty—were negatively associated with the desire to maintain the linchpin relationship. In other words, the extent to which children-in-law had questions about how much their parent-in-law's supported their relationship and how the triadic nature of the in-law relationship would affect dyadic relationships within the in-law dyad (e.g., “will my relationship with my mother-in-law lead to conflict in my marital relationship”) was inversely related to their desire to maintain their romantic relationship and help maintain the intergenerational relationship.

These findings extend research on perceived network involvement and relational outcomes. Research suggests that perceived hindrance (Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006), such as a lack of social network support, is associated with negative relational outcomes, including relationship termination, low satisfaction, and low commitment (Bryant & Conger, 1999; Sprecher & Felmler, 1992, 2000). Present findings indicate that a perceived lack of relationship support from in-laws is inversely associated with the desire to maintain the in-law and intergenerational relationship. These results hint that social network involvement has the

ability to affect relational outcomes within a multitude of familial relationships, particularly relational commitment.

In addition, whereas Knobloch and Donovan-Kicken's (2006) study examined how relational turbulence within the romantic dyad colored romantic partners' perceptions about social network approval, the present findings suggest an association in the other direction between romantic relationships and social networks. More specifically, experiences of hindrance, specifically relational support uncertainty and triadic influence uncertainty, appear to be inversely associated with children-in-law's desire to maintain the linchpin relationship. This logic is consistent with research by Sprecher and Felmelee (1992), which found that a lack of relationship support by social network members appears to pull relational partners apart, rather than bring them together. In other words, children-in-law do not exhibit a Romeo and Juliet effect and band together with their spouse when they experience opposition from their social network (Sprecher & Felmelee). Instead, when children-in-law perceive a lack of support from their social network, their desire to maintain their connection with their partner is not particularly salient. Given that social network approval is associated with relational success and stability (Bryant & Conger, 1999; Sprecher & Felmelee), perhaps children-in-law feel that vying for their relationship is a losing battle in light of parent-in-law disapproval. Or, children-in-law who do not have a strong linchpin relationship may perceive less support and more triadic influence from their in-laws.

**Manage uncertainty.** All of the sources and themes of uncertainty, along with interference, were positively associated with children-in-law's desire to maintain uncertainty; facilitation, however, was negatively associated with the desire to maintain uncertainty. In addition, only eight mechanisms of turbulence and interdependence processes were significantly

associated with the goal to reduce uncertainty (see Table 5.3). Of these associations, the experience of uncertainty (i.e., relational, family, and in-law as individual) and interference from in-laws was negatively associated with the goal to reduce uncertainty, whereas facilitation was positively related to the goal of reducing uncertainty.

This pattern of results contributes to a growing body of literature that suggests that individuals are not always compelled to decrease their uncertainty, but rather preserve it (Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Brashers, 2001; Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004). Contrary to the rationale of uncertainty reduction theory (URT), which argues that individuals are motivated to reduce uncertainty, especially when the likelihood of future interaction is great or an individual has control over another's costs and rewards (Berger, 1979; Berger & Bradac, 1982; Berger & Calabrese, 1975), children-in-law in the present study were not compelled to reduce their uncertainty during the transition to extended family. Instead, findings are consistent with assumptions of Brasher's (2001) uncertainty management theory (UMT). UMT argues that, at times, uncertainty may be desired and viewed as an opportunity to cultivate optimism or hope, particularly in the wake of potentially damaging news. Evidence from the present study suggests that children-in-law may view uncertainty as an opportunity and thus, wish to foster rather than diminish uncertainty. Children-in-law appear to appreciate uncertainty over the certainty of potentially negative news, such as their parents-in-law's unfiltered opinion of them (approval uncertainty) or their relationship (relationship support).

Interestingly, facilitation from in-laws was negatively associated with the goal to maintain uncertainty and positively associated with the goal to reduce uncertainty. One explanation for this finding comes from predicted outcomes value theory (POV; Sunnafrank, 1986; 1990). POV argues that individuals are not compelled to reduce uncertainty, but rather

gain rewards. As a result, they only engage in uncertainty reduction strategies in an effort to assess the potential benefits afforded by a partner. Thus, when children-in-law perceive that their parents-in-law help them achieve their daily and family level goals, they are more likely to reduce rather than maintain their uncertainty as a way of forecasting their in-laws' ability to provide continued resources. Together, these results contribute to a broader understanding of uncertainty within intimate relationships.

**Provide support.** Results revealed that the experiences of uncertainty and interference from in-laws were negatively associated with the goal of providing support to parents-in-law, whereas facilitation was positively associated with the desire to provide support. These findings are consistent with results from Rittenour and Soliz's (2009) study, which found that negativity within the in-law relationship was inversely associated with daughters-in-law's caregiving intentions. Thus, it appears that experiences that elicit reactivity and negative emotions, such as uncertainty and interference from in-laws, may reduce children-in-law's willingness to provide support. Again, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with the prosocial goal of providing support. The perception that parents-in-law help children-in-law achieve their family and daily goals may foster a positive relational climate, which is linked to children-in-law's willingness to provide support to their children-in-law.

Overall, results for research question one suggests that the mechanisms of turbulence may set the tone of the in-law relationship. The tenor of the relationship, in turn, shapes the goals that children-in-law wish to pursue. In general, experiences of uncertainty and interference from in-laws appear to diminish children-in-law's desire to pursue prosocial goals, such as relationship maintenance and providing support. However, facilitation from in-laws appears to foster a positive relational climate that engenders the pursuit of relationally enhancing goals,

including providing support and cultivating a close in-law relationship.

### **The Associations among Goals and Topic Avoidance**

The second research question (*RQ2*) was advanced to examine the association between goals and topic avoidance. In other words, how do children-in-law achieve their goals through the use of topic avoidance? In general, several children-in-law's interaction goals were significantly associated with their use of topic avoidance. These findings are detailed in the following paragraphs and are summarized in Table 5.4.

**Boundary management goals.** Overall, the goal to maintain boundaries was not significantly associated with children-in-law's use of topic avoidance. Maintaining boundaries (e.g., "Have my parent-in-law respect my boundaries"), for example, may call for more direct strategies, such as explicitly setting boundaries with parents-in-law (Merrill, 2007). Additionally, children-in-law may be unclear as to how to maintain boundaries with their parents-in-law and, as a result, take no action at all (Cotterill, 1994).

Consistent with communication privacy management theory (CPM; Petronio, 2002), children-in-law's goal of maintaining privacy was positively associated with topic avoidance. Engaging in topic avoidance allows children-in-law to actively and, strategically, restrict their in-law's access to private and personal information. The present findings complement current in-law research demonstrating that parents-in-law engage in topic avoidance when tackling questions about their children-in-law (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Taken together, these current results and previous research demonstrate that in some families both children-and parents-in-law desire to maintain their privacy, and topic avoidance appears to be aimed at that goal.

Table 5.4

*Summary of Associations between Interaction Goals and Topic Avoidance Across all Models Containing Mechanisms of Turbulence*

Interaction Goal	<u>Topic Avoidance</u>																			
	SU	PU	RU	AU	CU	DU	<u>Mechanisms of Turbulence</u>													F
							BFMU	EFRU	FEU	GIU	MU	PIU	PU	RSU	TIU	GU	IIU	I		
Boundary management																				
Maintain boundaries			+	+																
Maintain privacy	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Cultivate the desired in-law relationship																				
Cultivate associate relationship	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Cultivate friend relationship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cultivate family relationship	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Establish positive in-law identity							-				-	-			-			+		

*(table continues)*

Table 5.4 (continued)

Interaction Goal	Topic Avoidance																		
	Mechanisms of Turbulence																		
	SU	PU	RU	AU	CU	DU	BFMU	EFRU	FEU	GIU	MU	PIU	PU	RSU	TIU	GIU	IIU	I	F
Maintain family relationships																			
Maintain in-law relationship		-					-	-			-	-	-	-	-	-			
Maintain intergenerational relationship																			
Maintain linchpin relationship					+														
Manage uncertainty																			
Maintain uncertainty	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Reduce uncertainty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provide support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note. “+” indicates a positive association. “-“ indicates a negative association. Spaces that have been left blank indicate a non-significant relationship. “SU” = self uncertainty; “PU” = partner uncertainty; “RU” = relationship uncertainty; “AU” = approval uncertainty; “CU” = communication uncertainty; “DU” = differences uncertainty; “BFMU” = balancing family membership uncertainty; “EFRU” extended family relationships uncertainty; “FEU” = family expectations uncertainty; “GIU” = grandparent involvement uncertainty; “MU” = meddling uncertainty; “PIU” = parenting input uncertainty; “PU” = proximity uncertainty; “RSU” = relationship support uncertainty; “TIU” = triadic influence uncertainty; “GIU” = grandparent involvement uncertainty; “IIU” = in-law as individual uncertainty; “I” = interference from in-laws; “F” = facilitation from in-laws.

**Cultivate the desired in-law relationship.** In all models, the goal to cultivate an associate relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance. Conversely, the goal to cultivate a family and friend relationship was, overall, negatively associated with topic avoidance. When attempting to cultivate a distant in-law relationship (associate relationship), children-in-law may rely on topic avoidance as a way to create relational distance. However, even when attempting to cultivate close relationships (friend and family relationship), children-in-law appear to employ topic avoidance, albeit to a lesser extent. Recent research suggests that unfettered openness is not always preferred in intimate relationships and that topic avoidance is often desired and functional in a variety of interpersonal relationships (Afifi, Caughlin, & Afifi, 2007; Caughlin et al., 2011). Specific qualities of the in-law relationship, including a lack of scripts (Morr Serewicz, 2006), differing communication standards (Caughlin, 2003; Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Rittenour, 2012), and communicative interdependence among triad members (Morr Serewicz, 2008) may motivate children-in-law to use some topic avoidance, even when attempting to cultivate a close relationship, as a way of respecting and upholding implicit communication rules and standards.

In three models, however, a different pattern emerged. For the model containing extended family relationships, the association between cultivating a family relationship and topic avoidance was positive rather than negative. These results suggest that when children-in-law have questions about how their family-of-origin and family-in-law will get along and they have a desire to cultivate a family relationship with the in-law, then topic avoidance may be enacted to achieve this aim. This evidence supports recent ideas about the benefits of topic avoidance. Despite the dominant cultural ideology that open communication is best, scholars argue that topic avoidance may be rather functional in close relationships (Afifi et al., 2007; Caughlin et al.,

2011). In this instance, engaging in topic avoidance may allow children-in-law to foster a close relationship with their in-law, while simultaneously preventing their in-law from uncovering undesirable information about the family-of-origin, which could hinder the development of a relationship between the two families.

Additionally, when facilitation from in-laws was controlled for in the model the link between children-in-law's goal (i.e., cultivating a friend relationship and family relationship) and topic avoidance was not significant. In these cases, it appears that facilitation accounts for much of the same variance in children-in-law's topic avoidance as do children-in-law's goals (see Table 3.56).

**Establish a positive in-law identity.** The goal of establishing a positive in-law identity was significantly associated with topic avoidance in only 4 of the 19 models (see Table 5. 4). In the analogous Pearson correlations, however, this association was significant (see Table 4.1). These results suggest that children-in-law may have multiple reasons for wanting to establish a positive in-law identity. One reason may be questions about whether or not a parent-in-law will meddle within the marriage or offer unsolicited parenting advice. Children-in-law may want to avoid when grappling with these uncertainties, but they may also not want to engage in avoidance due to their desire for establishing a positive identity. However, controlling for meddling uncertainty and parenting input uncertainty in the models, revealed an inverse association between the desire to establish a positive identity and topic avoidance. That is, when attempting to foster a positive identity, children-in-law rely on topic avoidance to a lesser extent.

Uncertainty about meddling and parenting input, although conceptually and empirically distinct, appear to reflect concerns that may be especially identity threatening. Parenting input and meddling uncertainty, for example, call into question children-in-law's ability to be a good

parent and a good spouse, thus potentially necessitating parent-in-law input. When children-in-law wish to establish a positive identity, they may rely on avoidance to a lesser extent so they can actively cultivate a positive identity through other means, such as self-disclosure, or behavioral strategies, such as engaging in activities that help cultivate the desired image (Merrill, 2007).

Interestingly, when controlling for uncertainty about the in-law as the individual, the association between the goal of establishing a positive identity and topic avoidance was positive. Perhaps when children-in-law experience questions about their in-laws' values, beliefs, and lifestyle, they tend to avoid discussing information about themselves to prevent unknowingly offending the parent-in-law or expressing a viewpoint that is in direct opposition to one held by their in-law.

**Maintain family relationships.** When children-in-law experience questions within the in-law relationship, they may wish to engage in topic avoidance to evade these uncertainties, but they may also not want to engage in avoidance because they desire to maintain the in-law relationship. Results revealed that when controlling for nine themes of uncertainty—partner, balancing family membership, extended family relationships, gossip, meddling, parenting input, relationship support, and triadic influence—the goal of maintaining the in-law relationship was negatively associated with topic avoidance.

Across all models, the goal to maintain the intergenerational relationship was not significantly associated with topic avoidance. Additionally, the parallel bivariate correlations indicated a non-significant relationship between this goal and children-in-law's use of topic avoidance. A similar pattern emerged for the goal of maintaining the linchpin relationship, with one notable exception. When controlling for approval uncertainty, the association between the

goal of maintaining the linchpin relationship and topic avoidance was positive.

The finding when controlling for approval uncertainty, children-in-law's desire to maintain the linchpin relationship was positively associated with topic avoidance is an interesting one because it suggests a condition in which topic avoidance may be used while trying to maintain a relationship, which is contrary to the usual pattern of results (see Knapp, 1984; Stafford & Canary, 1991). Research suggests that a lack of social network support is associated with relationship conflict and relationship dissolution (Bryant & Conger, 1999; Sprecher & Felmlee, 1992, 2000). As a result, when children-in-law wish to maintain a relationship with their in-law, they may simultaneously wish to protect themselves from any negative effects that their in-law might have on their romantic relationship. Avoiding certain topics could serve that purpose by attempting to prevent their in-laws from uncovering damaging information that would increase disapproval or reduce relationship support, which in turn may lead to negative pressures on their relationship with their partner.

**Manage uncertainty.** In almost all of the models, the goal to maintain uncertainty was positively associated with topic avoidance. One exception was facilitation from in-laws, which was negatively associated with the desire to maintain uncertainty. These findings are consistent with uncertainty management theory (Brashers, 2001), which asserts that when individuals wish to maintain uncertainty they engage in buffering strategies, such as topic avoidance. In addition, the goal to reduce uncertainty was negatively associated with topic avoidance when controlling for all mechanisms of turbulence, except facilitation from in-laws. Uncertainty reduction theory posits that the goal to reduce uncertainty is often associated with information-seeking rather than information avoiding behaviors (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Thus, although the present study did not examine children-in-law's information-seeking strategies, results suggest that when

children-in-law wish to reduce ambiguity, they rely on topic avoidance to a lesser extent than when they wish to maintain uncertainty. When controlling for facilitation from in-laws, however, the goal of reducing uncertainty was not significantly associated with topic avoidance. Given that facilitation from in-laws appears to foster a positive relational climate, when children-in-law experience facilitation from in-laws, they may be more inclined to directly address rather than avoid issues of uncertainty.

**Provide support.** The goal of providing support was negatively associated with topic avoidance in all models. However, when children-in-law experienced facilitation from in-laws, the goal of providing support was not significantly associated with topic avoidance. Within the present study, children-in-law's goal of providing support was assessed as the degree to which they communicated their willingness to help their parents-in-law, if needed or desired. In other words, the very notion of providing support is communicative in nature; thus children-in-law must limit their use of avoidance to make their intention clear.

In general, these results highlight the role interaction goals play in children-in-law's decision to avoid or not avoid when confronting numerous issues of uncertainty. Broadly, these findings allow for a deeper understanding of topic avoidance, by elucidating which goals are the most important predictors of topic avoidance.

### **Associations between Turbulence, Goals, Topic Avoidance and Satisfaction**

The final series of hypotheses and research questions examined the associations among the mechanisms of turbulence, topic avoidance, goals, and satisfaction. More specifically, *H3* predicted that the mechanisms of turbulence, specifically uncertainty and interference from in-laws would be negatively associated with satisfaction, whereas facilitation from in-laws would be positively associated with satisfaction (see Table 5.5). In addition, *RQ4* asked if, and how,

children-in-law's interaction goals moderated this relationship. The last hypothesis stated that topic avoidance would be negatively associated with satisfaction (*H4*). Finally, although not a focus of the present investigation, results revealed that the link between turbulence and satisfaction was mediated by interaction goals and topic avoidance. These findings are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Table 5.5

*Summary of Associations between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Satisfaction Across all Models Containing Children-in-law's Interaction Goals*

	<u>Satisfaction</u>												
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>			<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support	
Relational uncertainty													
Self	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Partner	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Relationship	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Approval	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Communication	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Differences	-		-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	
Family uncertainty													
Balancing family membership													
Extended family relationships	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Family expectations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

*(table continues)*

Table 5.5 (continued)

	<u>Satisfaction</u>											
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>		<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>		<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>	
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Grandparent involvement	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meddling												
Parenting input												
Proximity	-	-	-					-	-	-	-	-
Relationship support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Triadic influence	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In-law uncertainty												
Gossip	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
In-law as individual	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

(table continues)

Table 5.5 (continued)

	<u>Satisfaction</u>											
	<u>Boundary Management Goal</u>		<u>Cultivate the Desired Relationship Goal</u>			<u>Establish Positive Identity Goal</u>		<u>Maintain Family Relationships Goal</u>		<u>Manage Uncertainty Goal</u>		<u>Provide Support Goal</u>
	Boundaries	Privacy	Assoc.	Friend	Family	Identity	In-law	Intergen.	Linchpin	Maintain	Reduce	Support
Interdependence processes												
Interference from in-laws	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Facilitation from in-laws	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

*Note.* “+” indicates a significant, positive association. “-“ indicates a significant, negative association. Spaces that have been left blank indicate a non-significant relationship.

## **Turbulence and Satisfaction**

Hypothesis three predicted that the mechanisms of turbulence would be associated with children-in-law's satisfaction within the in-law relationship. Results revealed that, in general, turbulence was directly related to children-in-law's satisfaction. Unexpectedly, findings also indicated that interaction goals and topic avoidance tend to mediate this association. These direct and indirect relationships are discussed below.

**Direct effects.** In general, the mechanisms of turbulence were directly linked to satisfaction (see Table 5.5). Consistent with previous findings, it appears that the experience of uncertainty and interference from in-laws is associated with dissatisfaction within the in-law relationship (Knobloch, 2008; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). One possible explanation is that the experience of uncertainty prevents smooth, effective, and open communication, making relating more difficult and less satisfying (Afifi & Burgoon, 1998; Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Knobloch, 2006). Furthermore, examining the sources and themes of uncertainty linked to dissatisfaction suggests that the more children-in-law are unclear how to operate within the in-law relationship (e.g., relationship uncertainty) and larger family-in-law relationships (e.g., family expectations), or have questions about their parent-in-law's approval and support for their marital relationship, the more dissatisfied they may become.

Across studies, children-in-law report a desire for autonomy from their parents-in-law; however, they also have a strong need for inclusion. In fact, children-in-law often describe inclusive behaviors, such as explicitly communicating inclusion or approval, as characteristics of satisfying in-law relationships (Merrill, 2007; Prentice, 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009). The experience of uncertainty may color children-in-law's perceptions of parent-in-law behaviors as exclusive rather than inclusive. For example, children-in-law's questions about their in-law's

desire for the in-law relationship (partner uncertainty), or concerns that in-law's gossip about them may be interpreted as exclusionary; children-in-law who feel excluded by their in-laws may be less satisfied than children-in-law who feel included in their new family-in-law.

Conversely, facilitation from in-laws was positively associated with satisfaction. When children-in-law felt that their parents-in-law helped them achieve both familial and daily goals, they tended to be satisfied with their relationship. The positive emotions that facilitation from in-laws elicits (Le & Agnew, 2001) may create a more satisfying in-law relationship than one marked by uncertainty or interference. In addition, facilitation from in-laws may be viewed as support for children-in-law's new marital family or reflect respect of their values and cultural orientations, both characteristics that children-in-law believe typify a satisfying in-law relationship (Merrill, 2007; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009).

Across several models, the direct association between themes of uncertainty (e.g., partner uncertainty, differences uncertainty, balancing family membership uncertainty; see Table 5.5) and satisfaction was not significant when controlling for certain goals and topic avoidance; however, the parallel bivariate correlations were significant (see Table 4.1). This pattern of results suggests substantial mediation in which the goals and/or topic avoidance mediate the association between the mechanisms of turbulence and satisfaction. This unanticipated finding is examined more formally in the following section.

Unexpectedly, children-in-law's interaction goals were significantly associated with satisfaction across numerous models (see Path *f* in Figure 7) and in the parallel Pearson correlations (see Table 4.1). Although not predicted, these results make sense in light of recent scholarship that highlights the role that goals play in shaping general relationship attributions (Caughlin, 2010; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Caughlin (2010) argued that satisfaction

with communication is a function of both what happens during an interaction episode and people's beliefs about what goals they and their partner are attempting to pursue during the episode. That is, children-in-law's perception of their own goals when interacting with their in-law likely influences their communication satisfaction within a given interaction.

Given that communication satisfaction and relational satisfaction are closely related constructs (Vangelisti & Huston, 1994), Caughlin argued that perceptions of goals are likely also linked to relationship satisfaction. Results from the present study provide the first empirical evidence to support this assumption. More specifically, it appears that the pursuit of prosocial goals, such as cultivating a close-knit in-law relationship or providing support, is positively linked to relational satisfaction; whereas attempting to cultivate a distant in-law relationship or maintain privacy is inversely related to satisfaction. That is, when children-in-law feel motivated to establish a strong bond with their in-laws or proffer support, the more satisfied they are with the in-law relationship. The association between children-in-law's aims and satisfaction also suggests that the link between goals and relational outcomes extends beyond specific interactions to global perceptions of the relationship (Caughlin, 2010; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010).

**Indirect effects.** Although there was a direct association between turbulence and satisfaction, results also indicated a significant indirect effect. Three themes of family uncertainty—balancing family membership, meddling, and parenting input— did not share a direct association with satisfaction in any of the models or the analogous Pearson correlation. Instead, the link between these themes of uncertainty and satisfaction was indirect through interaction goals and topic avoidance. Meddling uncertainty, for example, was not directly linked to satisfaction, suggesting that the overall association was too distal or weak. However, the more meddling uncertainty children-in-law experience, the less inclined they were to cultivate a friend

relationship, and the less salient this goal was, the more children-in-law enacted topic avoidance, which was in turn inversely related to satisfaction. It appears that the goals that certain themes of uncertainty motivate, along with the association between these goals and topic avoidance, indirectly link meddling uncertainty to satisfaction.

Table 5.6

*Summary of Mediated Relationships between Mechanisms of Turbulence and Satisfaction*

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Relational uncertainty		
Self	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
Partner	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
Relationship	Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	

*(table continues)*

Table 5.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Approval	Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
Communication	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
Differences	Maintain boundaries Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain intergenerational Maintain linchpin Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	

(table continues)

Table 5.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Family uncertainty		
Balancing family membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Extended family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Family expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Grandparent involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	

(table continues)

Table 5.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Meddling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Parenting input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Proximity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain intergenerational relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	
Relationship support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain privacy</li> <li>Cultivate associate relationship</li> <li>Cultivate friend relationship</li> <li>Cultivate family relationship</li> <li>Establish positive in-law identity</li> <li>Maintain in-law relationship</li> <li>Maintain uncertainty</li> <li>Reduce uncertainty</li> <li>Provide support</li> <li>Topic avoidance</li> </ul>	

(table continues)

Table 5.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Triadic influence	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
In-law uncertainty Gossip	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
In-law as individual	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	

(table continues)

Table 5.6 (continued)

Mechanism of Turbulence →	Mediators →	Satisfaction
Interdependence processes		
Interference from in-laws	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate friend relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain in-law relationship Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	
Facilitation from in-laws	Maintain privacy Cultivate associate relationship Cultivate family relationship Establish positive in-law identity Maintain uncertainty Reduce uncertainty Provide support Topic avoidance	

Additionally, in numerous models, some times even with mediation, the direct path between the mechanism of turbulence and satisfaction remained significant, but a significant amount of the association was indirect through goals and topic avoidance. Broadly, these results suggest that turbulence influences satisfaction both directly and indirectly, which provides new insight into the processes through which turmoil is linked to relational outcomes. Specifically, both goals and topic avoidance play a critical role in shaping relational outcomes in light of uncertainty, interference from in-laws, and facilitation from in-laws.

## **Topic Avoidance and Satisfaction**

With regards to the final hypothesis, results revealed that topic avoidance was negatively associated with satisfaction, which is consistent with previous research (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010; Golish, 2000; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Despite theoretical arguments and qualitative evidence that topic avoidance may be beneficial to relationships (Afifi et al., 2007; Caughlin et al., 2011; Petronio, 2002), the present findings suggest that topic avoidance is usually dissatisfying for children-in-law in their in-law relationships. One possible explanation for this findings is that, in general, individuals subscribe to an “ideology of openness” (Afifi et al.) and believe that close personal relationship should be marked by open not avoidant communication (Parks, 1982). A second possible explanation reflects scholars’ assumptions that the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction is likely bi-directional (Afifi & Joseph, 2009); that is, individuals who are less satisfied in their relationship may rely on avoidant communication rather than topic avoidance predicting satisfaction. Children-in-law experiencing uncertainty or interference from in-laws may be particularly dissatisfied with their in-law relationship; thus, their use of topic avoidance may reflect rather than determine their degree of satisfaction.

**Interaction goals as moderator.** Research has demonstrated that individuals’ reasons or goals for avoiding tend to moderate the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). In the present study, three out of 12 interaction goals moderated the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction (see Table 4.59). The goal of cultivating an associate relationship, a friend relationship, and a family relationship were significant moderators. The nature of the relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction at different levels of the interaction goal, however, was surprising. For example,

when children-in-law aimed to cultivate an associate relationship, the inverse relationship between topic avoidance and satisfaction was amplified, compared to children-in-law who had a low desire to cultivate an associate relationship. The opposite pattern was present when children-in-law wanted to cultivate a friend or family relationship. A lack of desire to cultivate a family or friend relationship intensified the inverse association between topic avoidance and satisfaction.

What could account for these findings? The desire to cultivate either a close or distant in-law relationship may reflect children-in-law's current level of satisfaction. Children-in-law with a strong wish to cultivate an associate relationship with their parent-in-law, for example, may be more dissatisfied than children-in-law with a low to moderate desire to distance in the in-law relationship. As a result, they may engage in more topic avoidance to achieve their goal. Similarly, when children-in-law lack a strong desire to cultivate a friend or family relationship, the amplified inverse association may reflect their dissatisfaction with the in-law relationship, and in increased reliance on topic avoidance. Conversely, children-in-law with a strong desire to cultivate a friend or family relationship may be less dissatisfied in their relationships and thus engage in less topic avoidance with their parents-in-law. Taken together, these results may reflect the bi-directional nature of the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction (Afifi & Joseph, 2009).

In contrast, children-in-law with a strong desire to cultivate a friend or family relationship, may be less dissatisfied with the use of topic avoidance due to the belief that topic avoidance may be natural and, at times, beneficial to relationships (Afifi et al., 2007; Caughlin et al., 2011). For example, even children-in-law who have self-described "close" relationships with their in-laws still express a desire to keep some information private in an effort to establish boundaries around the new marital family, maintain privacy, and eschew parent-in-law judgment

(Cotterill, 1994; Mikucki-Enyart & Rittenour, 2012; Prentice, 2008). Thus, although the association between topic avoidance and satisfaction is still negative when children-in-law desire a friend or family relationship, it may be less extreme when topic avoidance is viewed as a way to establish a relationship with parents-in-law, while still maintaining boundaries and privacy.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The present study sought to integrate the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective to understand children-in-law's use of topic avoidance under conditions of turbulence, and how turbulence and goals shape relational outcomes. Results from the present study support several fundamental assumptions of both theoretical perspectives, as well as extend them in several important ways. In the paragraphs below, I outline the theoretical contributions that findings from the present study make to the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective.

**The relational turbulence model.** Findings from the current study extend the relational turbulence model (RTM) in several new directions. First, previous research employing the RTM has examined the direct links between turmoil and communication, including topic avoidance (Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004). However, RTM scholars have urged researchers to examine the processes linking the mechanisms of turbulence to more amplified reactions, such as topic avoidance (Solomon et al., 2010). Evidence from the current study suggests that interaction goals may be one mechanism that explains why turbulence influences topic avoidance. That is, present findings are consistent with the notion that turbulence shapes goals, which in turn influences whether or not children-in-law engage in topic avoidance. These findings extend traditional thinking about the relationship between turbulence and communication by demonstrating why some individuals may engage in topic avoidance when they experience

uncertainty. The use of topic avoidance may be strategic based on its utility at helping children-in-law achieve particular aims. In other words, reactions to turbulence appear to be, at times, filtered through individuals' goals.

Second, although research employing the RTM has examined turmoil in various contexts, such as infertility, breast cancer, and depression, these studies have focused solely on the experience of turmoil within romantic dyads (Knobloch & Delaney, 2012; Steuber & Solomon, 2008; Weber & Solomon, 2008). The present study extends the focus of the RTM by demonstrating that turbulence is salient during family transitions and is not just confined to romantic pairs. In addition, RTM scholars have encouraged researchers to examine the content of uncertainty in particular contexts, which may help extend scholars' theoretical understanding of uncertainty (Knobloch, 2008; Knobloch & Delaney). The current investigation not only explored the sources of relational uncertainty, but the themes of uncertainty that are salient within the in-law context. Within the present study, the sources and themes of uncertainty related differently to several key variables. Whereas none of the sources of relational uncertainty (i.e., self, partner, relationship), were associated with children-in-law's goal of maintaining the in-law relationship, several themes of children-in-law uncertainty (e.g., parenting input, relationship support, and triadic influence) were inversely related to this aim. Additionally, the three sources of relational uncertainty and almost all the themes of uncertainty were positively associated with topic avoidance. As evidenced by the present findings, examining the sources of relational uncertainty, along with context specific themes of uncertainty, allows scholars to compare the experience of uncertainty across relational domains while simultaneously gaining an intimate understanding of how in-law specific questions uniquely shape children-in-law's goals and communication during the transition to extended family.

Third, studies within the RTM tradition have extensively examined the links among uncertainty, interference, and amplified reactions (Knobloch & Carpenter-Theune, 2004; Knobloch & Donovan-Kicken, 2006; Solomon & Knobloch, 2004). Less attention has been paid to the role of facilitation within the RTM. Results from the current study add to a growing body of literature that explicitly examines facilitation from in-laws (Knobloch, Miller et al., 2007; McLaren et al., 2011). Present findings suggest that facilitation from in-laws encourages the pursuit of prosocial goals, attenuates reliance on reactive communication strategies (i.e., topic avoidance), and promotes relational satisfaction. Although speculative, these findings resonate with research on in-law relationships, which suggests that inclusive behaviors such as appreciating differences and, in this case, facilitating daily and family level goals, promote the establishment of satisfying in-law relationships (Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008; Prentice, 2008; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009).

**A multiple goals approach.** The present study integrated a multiple goals approach with the relational turbulence model in an attempt to understand the underlying process of children-in-law's use of topic avoidance when experiencing turbulence. Findings from the current investigation extend the multiple goals literature in three important ways. First, this is the first study, to my knowledge, that has examined how the mechanisms of turbulence shape interaction goals. Although the present investigation only examined goals that were relevant to in-laws, the general pattern of findings suggests that turbulence is likely linked to goal salience across a variety of other relationships. For example, the experience of uncertainty and interference may color the extent to which romantic partners pursue relationship goals, or the extent to which individuals pursue instrumental goals within the work place. Given that turbulence is a salient experience across a variety of relational domains, including romantic relationships, family

interactions, and health-care contexts (Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Brashers, 2001; Knobloch & Solomon, 1999; Knobloch, 2008; Mikucki-Enyart, 2011), understanding the links between turbulence and goals can help scholars better appreciate the process of communication within these varying situations.

Second, results from the present study add to a burgeoning body of literature that explicitly links interaction goals to topic avoidance (Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). Topic avoidance is not merely the absence of disclosure or communication (Caughlin, 2010). Instead, topic avoidance is a purposeful decision to withhold information (Afifi et al., 2007). Evidence from the current study suggests that topic avoidance is not only a strategic behavior used to pursue goals, but also that certain experiences of turbulence can shape the goals that people wish to pursue. Given that there are multiple avenues for goal pursuit, future research should explore other communication behaviors besides topic avoidance that may be relevant to goal pursuit when individuals are experiencing turbulence.

Third, present findings advance scholars' understanding of the complex association between conversational goals and relational outcomes, such as satisfaction. The majority of multiple goals research has focused on goals during specific interactions, such as communicating about relationship problems while under the influence of alcohol (Samp & Monahan, 2011) or when making requests (Meyer, 2002). Such studies focus on particular encounters, making it difficult to understand the links between goals and relational outcomes. The current findings, in contrast, reflect global assessments of goal tendencies in relationships, allowing for an understanding of the relationship between conversational goals and broad, enduring evaluations of the relationship (Caughlin, 2010). In addition, there is compelling evidence in the current study to suggest that goals impact relationship satisfaction both directly and indirectly.

Consistent with previous research, individuals' own goals appear to moderate the link between topic avoidance and satisfaction (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). That is, what people believe they are trying to accomplish with their topic avoidance tends to shape the meaning and outcomes associated with their behavior. In addition, results indicate that goals share a direct association with satisfaction outside of topic avoidance. Although it is possible that these results are due to not measuring every possible communication behavior that might be related to satisfaction, they do suggest that goals may not only activate communication behaviors, which are in turn linked to relational to outcomes, but the goals themselves may shape perceptions of the relational climate apart from the specific communication behaviors enacted.

### **Practical Implications**

Despite research that demonstrates a clear link between the quality of in-law relationships and well-being (Bryant et al., 2001; Morr Serewicz et al., 2008; Sabatelli & Bartle-Haring, 2003), in-law relationships are often overlooked in premarital counseling sessions with both certified therapists and clergy (Horsley, 1997; Meyerstein, 1996). Given evidence that the early stages of the in-law relationship often predict the quality of subsequent in-law relating (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007), it appears that understanding the processes through which in-laws establish satisfying relationships would be useful as children-in-law transition to marriage and extended family. Evidence from the current investigation provides some preliminary suggestions that may be helpful for children-in-law, couples, and extended families as they negotiate the transition to marriage and extended family.

First, despite cultural stereotypes indicating that children-in-law expect the worst for their in-law relationships, research suggests that they still desire, on some level, to be accepted and welcomed into their family-in-law with open arms (Cotterill, 1994; Merrill, 2007; Prentice,

2008). The current study is useful in that it undermines the stereotype about in-law relationships in the sense that there were meaningful variations in them, and these variations were systematically related to turbulence processes and relational goals in largely predictable or understandable ways. That is, in-law relationships, despite their many unique features, appear to have structures and processes that are similar to other relationships that we know more about. This implies that it is possible to enhance such relationships just as it is possible to enhance other relationships.

Second, the present study assessed perceptions of turmoil and goals at a global level. When experiencing turmoil, it appears that children-in-law make negative attributions about the in-law relationships, such as perceiving the relationship to be more dissatisfying, which encourages them to pursue more relationally distancing goals (e.g., cultivate an association relationship). Research suggests that uncertainty itself is not negative; instead, how individuals appraise uncertainty determines the valence of the uncertainty experience (Brashers, 2001). Although evidence from the present study suggests that children-in-law may sometimes view uncertainty as a way to maintain optimism and buffer themselves from confirming potentially bad news (e.g., “my parent-in-law does not approve of me”), given the inverse association between turmoil and satisfaction, it appears that turbulence is not a welcome experience. Clinicians, however, can work with soon-to-be wed or newlywed individuals to help them reappraise their experience of uncertainty. Research, for example, demonstrates that parents-in-law also experience doubt about their children-in-law’s desire for the in-law relationship (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011), and the experience of uncertainty can provide opportunities for relational partners to reaffirm their commitments to one another or reinforce closeness (Knobloch, 2007). By emphasizing the common nature of turmoil in this context, framing the

transition to extended family as a time of flux for all members, and highlighting the potentially positive outcomes that uncertainty can furnish, practitioners may be able to help children-in-law view turbulence as relationally enhancing rather than always relationally damaging.

Third, topic avoidance appears to be one strategy children-in-law employ to pursue certain goals (e.g., maintain privacy, maintain uncertainty), yet it was consistently linked to dissatisfaction within the in-law relationship. However, just because topic avoidance is negatively associated with satisfaction, practitioners should not assume that openness is always a better alternative. Results from the present study demonstrate that topic avoidance is often rooted in negative experiences or expectations (i.e., uncertainty and interference from in-laws) that children-in-law have for the in-law relationship, which in turn shape the goals children-in-law attempt to pursue. That is, topic avoidance is a response to perceived unfavorable relational conditions, and it is important to address the precursors of topic avoidance rather than simply encourage children-in-law to stop avoiding. Given that children-in-law often engage in topic avoidance for reason, there are potential dangers associated with stopping that behavior. Telling children-in-law who believe their in-laws frequently interfere with their relationship to avoid less often, for example, could lead to open hostilities that might be even worse than the topic avoidance. Thus, counselors should also address concerns children-in-law have regarding potential consequences of altering or halting their avoidant behaviors.

Finally, whereas uncertainty (e.g., relational, family, and individual) and interference from in-laws were inversely associated with prosocial goals and satisfaction, facilitation from in-laws had the opposite effect. In some cases, it may be appropriate for counselors to help newlywed or affianced children-in-law reappraise interference from in-laws as facilitation. In fact, research suggests that there is a fine line between children-in-law's perceptions of

interference and facilitation. Children-in-law often view the same behaviors from their own parents as facilitation, but as interference from parents-in-law (Fischer, 1982; Merrill, 2007; Turner et al., 2006). Counselors can work with children-in-law to make positive rather than negative attributions regarding parents-in-law's behavior. In addition, practitioners can proffer suggestions to parents-in-law as they assimilate a new member into their family system. Parents-in-law should be advised to help their children-in-law facilitate their goals, such as encouraging them to develop their own family traditions, or being willing to help with household or child care tasks when asked. It is important to note, however, that some of these behaviors might be viewed by children-in-law as inappropriate or interference. Whereas help with or advice about child care may be viewed as facilitation or loving advice coming from children-in-law's own parents, the very same behavior may be viewed as inappropriate and attempted interference when given by parents-in-law. Parents-in-law should attempt to determine these boundaries and engage in communicative work to help frame certain acts in ways that seem to facilitate rather than interfere with goal attainment.

Although the present results do not provide insight as to whether or not openly talking about turbulence is beneficial for relationships or what strategies may be best at achieving goals, evidence does suggest that turmoil is linked to the pursuit of relationally distancing goals and avoidant communication, and that goals play an important role in the association between turmoil and topic avoidance.

### **Limitations and Future Directions for Research**

The findings from the present investigation, although compelling, should be interpreted in light of the limitations of the study. In the following paragraphs these limitations are discussed along with possible avenues for future research. First, due to the cross-sectional nature of the

study, conclusions about causality cannot be made. It is unclear from these findings if turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance cause satisfaction or if (dis)satisfaction shapes children-in-law's turmoil, aims, and communication. Although a corpus of research has provided evidence demonstrating that uncertainty often elicits negative relational outcomes (Knobloch et al., 2001; Knobloch et al., 2007; Solomon & Knobloch, 2004), it is possible that feeling dissatisfied or engaging in topic avoidance within the in-law relationship may engender questions or concerns about the relational dyad. In addition, children-in-law's level of (dis)satisfaction may determine whether parent-in-law behaviors are interpreted as interference or facilitation. Results also indicated that in some instances children-in-law's goals were directly linked to satisfaction. It may be the case that children-in-law's experience of satisfaction motivates their goals. Daughters-in-law, for example, in satisfying in-law relationships often classify their in-law relationships as a peer of kin relationship (Merrill, 2007). These responses suggest that children-in-law satisfaction may shape their desire to cultivate a close in-law relationship, and not the other way around.

Future research should use longitudinal designs examine the causal ordering suggested in the models in the present study. If turbulence is linked to the pursuit of relational distancing goals, a greater reliance on topic avoidance, and relational dissatisfaction, the practical import of counselors helping children-in-law cope with their experiences of turmoil by reappraising the situation may be particularly relevant. Reappraisal alone, however, may not be the key to helping children-in-law cope with the mechanisms of turbulence. Future research could examine the means through which children-in-law prefer to manage their experience of turmoil, especially in light of findings that suggest children-in-law sometimes wish to maintain rather than reduce uncertainty.

Moreover, a longitudinal design would not only help untangle questions about causal pathways, but pinpoint fluctuations in turmoil, goals, topic avoidance, and satisfaction over time. Understanding the long-term implications and process of in-law relationship development seems especially important given contradictory arguments within the in-law literature, which suggest that (a) the tenor of the in-law relationship during the early years sets the tone for subsequent relating (Cotterill, 1994), and (b) in-laws eventually form satisfying relationships with one another over time (Merrill, 2007). Illuminating the process and pathways through which in-law relationships become satisfying or dissatisfying would enhance scholars' theoretical understanding of family transitions and provide practical suggestions for helping in-laws develop stable and satisfying relationships.

Second, limitations of self-report design, such as participant error and measurement error, may circumscribe the results of the present study. Self-report bias, a form of participant error, may have influenced participants to respond to questions in a manner that they deemed socially appropriate (Metts et al., 1991; Noller & Feeney, 2004). Given the implied negativity reflected in some interaction goals (e.g., cultivate an associate relationship), children-in-law may have been hesitant to respond honestly to these aims and been inclined to report engaging in more socially appropriate aims, such as providing support or maintaining the in-law relationship. Furthermore, U.S. Western culture is dominated by the ideology that healthy intimate relationships are marked by open rather than avoidant communication (Afifi et al., 2007; Parks, 1982). Thus, participants may have rated their behaviors more favorably or responded in ways that reflected cultural ideologies about relationships.

In addition, the present study examined goals, turbulence, and communication on a global level. As noted above, measuring goals at a global level made it possible to make links to larger

relational outcomes, but assessing at the global level may have been a limitation. Relying on human memory and recollection of behavior may present challenges, especially when asking participants to recall incidents that happened more than several months ago (Metts et al., 1991). Future research may want to ask participants to recall incidents from their short-term rather than long-term memory (Metts et al., 1991) and ask specific rather than general questions about turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance (Watt & van den Berg, 1995).

Furthermore, the homogeneity of the present sample may have precluded an understanding of how diversity, including differences related to participants' and parents-in-law's sex, educational background, ethnicity, and socio-economic status (SES), impacts the in-law relationship. Children-in-law who do not share similar ethnic or SES backgrounds with their parents-in-law, for example, may experience uncertainty to a greater extent than in-laws with similar experiences (Cotterill, 1994). Furthermore, children-in-law may perceive interference from in-laws to a greater extent with mothers-in-law than father-in-law, which may result in children-in-law pursuing different goals and enacting different communication behaviors with mothers- and fathers-in-law. Future research should examine the role diversity plays in the development of in-laws relationships.

Self-report measures are also susceptible to measurement error. Typically, the creation of standardized questionnaires forces researchers to construct rather inflexible questions that are appropriate and general enough to capture the experiences of all participants. Standardization, however, may result in inapplicable or irrelevant questions. In an attempt to offset this limitation, numerous measures, such as the themes of uncertainty and topics children-in-law avoided discussing with their parent-in-law were derived from children-in-law's open-ended responses regarding their experience of uncertainty during the transition to extended family (Mikucki-

Enyart & Rittenour, 2012). Thus, the questions attempted to have applicability to the child-in-law experience. Unfortunately, measures assessing interaction goals were derived from the in-law and multiple goals literature. As a result, these measures may have suffered from standardization issues as well as reliability issues. In fact, although the majority of these scales demonstrated strong reliability, several scales had reliability coefficients that were on the lower-end of an acceptable range. Future research employing qualitative methods may be useful in illuminating a situated understanding of children-in-law's goals in an effort to refine the measures assessing children-in-law's interaction goals.

Third, the present study only examined reports of children-in-law's own perceptions of their goals and topic avoidance. Results revealed that these self-perceived goals and avoidant communication were linked to general impressions of in-law satisfaction. A corpus of research, however, has demonstrated that individuals' perceptions of not only their own goals but their partner's goals shape how they interpret and ascribe meaning to topic avoidance (Afifi & Caughlin, 2002; Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Donovan-Kicken & Caughlin, 2010). In fact, research by Caughlin and Golish (2002) suggests that perceptions of partner's topic avoidance were a stronger predictor of satisfaction than partner's own topic avoidance. Future research that examines children-in-law's perceptions of their parent-in-law's goals and topic avoidance will complement the current findings by illuminating how perceptual processes further contribute to the development of in-law relationships. In addition, future research should examine these processes from the parent-in-law perspective. Current in-law scholarship suggests that parent-in-law uncertainty is inversely associated with topic avoidance and satisfaction (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011). Examining parent-in-law's goals may provide a more robust understanding of the transition to extended family by revealing the similarities and differences between parents- and

children-in-law's experiences during this period of change.

Fourth, although results from the current investigation provide one possible explanation into the process through which turbulence associates with avoidant communication, these results do not suggest why turbulence is linked to specific interaction goals. For example, although all sources and themes of uncertainty were positively associated with children-in-law's desire to create a distant in-law relationship, it is unclear as to why these questions motivated this goal. A corpus of research has revealed that the experience of relational uncertainty and interference from in-laws is linked to more negative emotions (Knobloch et al., 2007), negative appraisals of partner's irritating behaviors (Solomon & Knobloch, 2004; Theiss & Solomon, 2006b), and perceptions of relationship instability (Knobloch, 2007). Understanding the cognitive and emotional outcomes of turbulence that children-in-law experience may provide a more precise understanding of the associations among turbulence, goals, and communication. Future research should explore how emotional and cognitive outcomes of uncertainty shape children-in-law's goals.

Finally, this study contributes to the goals literature by focusing exclusively on the link among relational turbulence, goals, and topic avoidance. This precise attention, however, is also a limitation of the present study. It is highly likely that children-in-law may use communication behaviors other than topic avoidance to achieve their aims. For instance, qualitative research reveals that children-in-law often use the linchpin to mediate communication with their parents-in-law (Merrill, 2007; Prentice, 2008). Thus, linchpin mediated communication may be employed to achieve goals such as maintaining privacy or cultivating an associate relationship. In addition, children-in-law may directly discuss their uncertainty, especially when they wish to cultivate a close relationship with their parent-in-law. Future research should examine how

additional communication strategies help children-in-law achieve their aims and develop satisfying in-law relationships in an effort to advance recommendations regarding better or worse ways of communicating while attempting to develop the in-law relationship.

## **Conclusion**

Previous research on in-law relationships has assumed that the transition to extended family is a turbulent experience marked by ambiguity and perceived interference, which may be linked to dissatisfaction and avoidant communication (Mikucki-Enyart, 2011; Morr Serewicz, 2006; Rittenour & Soliz, 2008; Turner et al., 2006). The present study integrated two previously unlinked theoretical perspectives—the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective—to understand how turbulence and goals work in tandem to shape children-in-law's use of topic avoidance and satisfaction within the in-law relationship. Findings provide compelling evidence to suggest that the mechanisms of turbulence shapes the goals that children-in-law are motivated to pursue within the in-law relationship. In turn, these goals often shape children-in-law's enacted topic avoidance. Results also indicate that although turbulence is directly linked to topic avoidance, this relationship is often mediated through children-in-law's goals. Finally, turmoil, goals, and topic avoidance affect the relational climate of the in-law relationship.

Interpreted in light of the relational turbulence model and a multiple goals perspective, results provide insight into how turbulence not only shapes avoidant communication behaviors and relational outcomes, but interaction goals as well. Moreover, integrating these two theoretical perspectives demonstrates that seemingly polarizing reactions to turmoil, such as topic avoidance, may be more strategic than originally thought. Although only an initial step into understanding this complex relational transition, the current investigation underscores the value

of integrating and applying both a relational transition and communication perspective to research on developing in-law relationships.

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## Appendix A: Study Materials

### Recruitment Materials

#### Email Recruitment Message

Hello,

If you are engaged to be married or newly married (married since January 2008) you are invited to participate in a research study on extended family relationships.

The study explores how in-laws negotiate the transition of becoming a family. More specifically, we want to understand the questions parents- and children-in-law have as they negotiate the transition from engagement to marriage and how they communicate with family members during this time.

We are inviting *men and women, 18 years of age and older, who are currently engaged to be married or newly married (since January 2008)* to participate in an online survey that will take approximately 35-40 minutes. Participation is completely voluntary and responses are anonymous.

You may access the survey at: [www.mikucki-enyart.com](http://www.mikucki-enyart.com)

In addition, if you know other individuals who may like to participate, including your spouse or friends, please feel free to forward this message to them. Also, if you have questions, please contact me at [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu).

Finally, in appreciation of your participation, at the end of the survey you will be invited to enter a raffle for a *chance to win 1 of 10 \$50.00 gift cards*. You may choose whether to provide identifying information to enter the raffle or not. If you choose to provide identifying information, your identity will in no way be linked to your responses to the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your time. Your participation will help advance our understanding of this important family relationship and is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, M.S.

Department of Communication

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## Online Advertisement

### In-laws Needed for Study on Extended Family Relationships!

Men and women, 18 years of age or older, who are currently engaged to be married or newly married (married since January 2008) are invited to participate in a study on extended family relationships. Participation involves completing an online questionnaire, which should take approx. 35-40 minutes. Participation is voluntary and responses are anonymous. Win 1 of 10 \$50.00 gift cards.

Access the survey at: [www.mikucki-enyart.com](http://www.mikucki-enyart.com)

Questions? Contact Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu).

## E-week Text

### Study on extended family relationships

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Individuals who are engaged to be married or are newly married are needed for a study on in-law relationships. Participation involves completing an online questionnaire. Win a \$50.00 gift card. Questions? Contact Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu).

URL: [www.mikucki-enyart.com](http://www.mikucki-enyart.com)

John P. Caughlin, [caughlin@illinois.edu](mailto:caughlin@illinois.edu)

Department of Communication



**ILLINOIS**  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

**Seeking engaged or newly married individuals for a study on extended family relationships.**

Researchers in the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois are conducting a study about how in-laws become a family. Participation involves completing an online questionnaire.

To participate, you must be at least 18 years old and either (a) engaged or (b) newly married (since January 2008). Participants will have a chance to win a \$50.00 gift card.

If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more, please visit:

[www.mikucki-enyart.com](http://www.mikucki-enyart.com)

or contact

**Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart**  
**mikucki2@illinois.edu**

\*There will be tear off tags that contain the weblink

## Student Recruitment Letter

Dear Student,

You are invited to help recruit participants for a study on the *Transition to Extended Family* conducted by Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart (doctoral student), under the supervision of Professor John Caughlin.

If you know someone who is engaged to be married or newly married (since January 2008) they are eligible for participation. For example, your sibling(s) may be eligible to participate.

If you know someone who meets the eligibility requirements outlined above please have them email Kelly McAninch at [mcaninc2@illinois.edu](mailto:mcaninc2@illinois.edu) to request a link to the survey. If a hard copy is preferred, please have the participant note this in his/her email. The participant will be asked to *provide your name and the communication course you would like to receive potential extra credit for in the comment box*. You will only receive extra credit once (even if you recruit multiple participants) and can only receive credit in one course.

If you do not know anyone who meets the participation criteria you can still participate by summarizing a brief article on in-law relationships. If this opportunity interests you, please email Katerina Georgiagentis at [kgeorgi2@illinois.edu](mailto:kgeorgi2@illinois.edu) to receive the alternate assignment.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, at [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu)

**In-law Relationships: Fact vs. Fiction**

**1. All in-law relationships are filled with conflict and tension, just like in the movies.**

*Fiction!* Despite what we see on the big screen, in-law relationships can be a huge source of love and support. In fact, parents-in-law provide financial, emotional, and instrumental support to marital couples, especially in the early years of marriage. In addition, children-in-law also return the favor and help their parents-in-law in instrumental ways, such as helping with household duties and providing caregiving to ill and aging parents.

**2. Mothers-in-law/fathers-in-law dislike their children-in-law because they are “stealing” their sons or daughters from them.**

*Fiction!* Again, although the media likes to perpetuate this stereotype, research finds that most parents-in-law report positive relationships with their children-in-law. However, a child’s marriage is a big transition for the entire family system. As a result, parents often wonder how their relationship with their child will change as a result of his/her marriage or the impact the new child-in-law will have on the family system. Thus, although parents-in-law may be uncertain about a few issues, but they most likely do not dislike their children-in-law.

**3. In-law relationships affect the marital relationship and the parent-child relationship.**

*Fact!* It’s true, you don’t just marry the man/woman, you marry their family too. Research shows that in-law relationships affect marital relationships. In addition, they also affect the parent-child relationship. In other words, if you don’t get along with your mother-in-law, chances are it will have an impact on your marital relationship. And, if your parents don’t approve of your spouse, it will likely affect the closeness between you and mom or dad. Although these results sound scary, they emphasize the need for studying this crucial relationship so researchers can find ways to help in-laws establish satisfying relationships, which help create a happy family system.

**4. Communication helps in-laws make the transition to extended family.**

*Fact!* Communication is crucial for establishing and maintaining any personal relationship. Current research suggests that certain disclosures, such as acceptance and sharing family history, are linked to satisfying in-law relationships, whereas topic avoidance is associated with less satisfying relationships. My dissertation research will examine *why* certain behaviors are more or less successful. So stay tuned!

If you would like more information about in-law relationships, including my research findings, please visit: [www.mikucki-enyart.com](http://www.mikucki-enyart.com) or email me at [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu)

## **Appendix B: Informed Consent Document**

### **Becoming an Extended Family: The In-Law Relationship**

**Who is conducting this research study?** This project is being conducted by Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, a PhD student in the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This research is being supervised by Dr. John Caughlin, an associate professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Illinois.

**What is this study about?** The purpose of this study is to learn about the experiences of in-laws as they become an extended family, including the questions they have, the goals they have, and how they communicate with one another.

**What will I be asked to do if I choose to participate?** If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. The questionnaire should take approximately 35-40 minutes. During that time you will be asked about your doubts, goals, communication, and satisfaction with your future parent-in-law/parent-in-law.

**Your participation in this study is voluntary.** You may choose whether you want to participate in this study. If you begin the project, you may choose to stop participating at any time, which means that you may choose to stop the survey at any time and you may choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer on the questionnaire. Your decision to participate or not to participate will have no effect on any future relations you may have with the University of Illinois. You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

**Your participation in this study is confidential.** Your individual information will be kept confidential and your responses are anonymous. To ensure confidentiality, the online questionnaire is SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) encrypted, which allows for secure transmission of data over the internet. In addition, the link you have used to access the survey blocks information regarding the IP address of the computer you are using. Once you submit your responses, there is no way we can identify who completed a particular survey. Your completed questionnaire will be stored on a password-protected computer. If you provide contact information so you can participate in the raffle (see below), this information will be kept separate from your responses so that nobody can connect your identity to your responses. I will collect responses from a larger number of people and calculate scores for the group; your individual responses will not be analyzed on their own or identifiable. The data collected from this study will be presented to other researchers and written up for publication.

**Are there any risks to being part of this study?** The risks of participating in this study are likely to be minimal, but you may experience some discomfort when thinking about your relationship with your parent-in-law. If thinking about your relationship with your future parent-

in-law/parent-in-law makes you uncomfortable or causes you distress, free assistance is available to you through the National Alliance on Mental Illness (1-800-950-6264).

**Are there any benefits to being part of this study?** You may not benefit from this study personally, but the study will benefit the scholarly community by helping us to better understand in-law relationships, which could lead to recommendations to in-laws about what might be helpful when becoming an extended family.

**What will I receive if I choose to participate?** Everyone who participates by DATE will be invited to enter a raffle to win 1 of 10 \$50 gift cards.

**Who do I contact if I have questions or concerns?** If you have any questions at a later time, you may contact me, Sylvia L. Mikucki-Enyart, at [mikucki2@illinois.edu](mailto:mikucki2@illinois.edu) or (708) 650-6548 or my advisor, Dr. John Caughlin, at [caughlin@illinois.edu](mailto:caughlin@illinois.edu) or (217) 333-4340. If you have questions about the rights of research participants, you may contact the University's Institutional Review Board at [irb@illinois.edu](mailto:irb@illinois.edu) or (217) 333-2670. If you are calling from outside the Champaign-Urbana area, you may call any of these numbers collect and identify yourself as a research participant.

**Agreement:** I understand this consent form and the meaning of this information. I understand what I am being asked to do and my rights as a study participant. I understand that I may stop my participation at any time.

By clicking [here](#) and continuing on with the questionnaire, I express my consent to participate.

## Appendix C: Measures

### Sources of Relational Uncertainty

Marriage (or impending marriage) often sparks a variety of questions. It's normal for you to have questions about your relationship with your parent-in-law. You may question *your own* thoughts, feelings, and behaviors regarding the parent- and child-in-law relationship. You may have questions about *your parent-in-law's* thoughts, feelings, and behaviors about the relationship. You may also be unsure about the *nature of the parent- and child-in-law relationship*.

In this section, I have listed a number of statements addressing different facets of involvement in the parent- and child-in-law relationship. I would like you to rate how CERTAIN you are about the degree of involvement that you have in your relationship with your parent-in-law.

1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>completely or almost completely uncertain</i>					<i>completely or almost completely certain</i>

In this section I would like to know how certain you are about YOUR OWN INVOLVEMENT in your relationship with your parent-in-law.

#### *HOW CERTAIN ARE YOU ABOUT...*

1. how much you like your parent-in-law?
2. how important this relationship is to you?
3. whether or not you want to maintain your relationship?
4. your feelings for your parent-in-law?
5. how committed you are to your relationship?
6. your goals for the future of your relationship?
7. your view of this relationship?
8. how you feel about the relationship?

In this section I would like to know how certain you are about YOUR PARENT-IN-LAW'S INVOLVEMENT in your relationship.

#### *HOW CERTAIN ARE YOU ABOUT...*

1. your parent-in-law's goals for the future of the relationship?
2. your parent-in-law's feelings for you?
3. how much your parent-in-law likes you?
4. how committed your parent-in-law is to the relationship?
5. how your parent-in-law feels about the relationship?
6. your parent-in-law's views of this relationship?
7. how important this relationship is to your parent-in-law?
8. whether or not your parent-in-law wants to maintain your relationship?

In this section I would like to know how certain you are about YOUR RELTIONSHIP with your parent-in-law, in general.

*HOW CERTAIN ARE YOU ABOUT....*

1. the norms for this relationship?
2. the future of the relationship?
3. the definition of the relationship?
4. how you can or cannot behave around your parent-in-law?
5. how you and your parent-in-law would describe this relationship?
6. the state of the relationship at this time?
7. whether or not you and your parent-in-law feel the same way about each other?
8. the boundaries for appropriate and/or inappropriate behavior in this relationship?
9. whether or not your parent-in-law likes you as much as you like him or her?
10. how you and your parent-in-law view this relationship?

*Scoring.* The mean score for each subscale—self uncertainty, partner uncertainty, and relationship uncertainty—was calculated. Items were reverse scored to reflect relational uncertainty. Higher scores indicate greater uncertainty.

### **The Content of Uncertainty**

As previously noted, it's normal for children-in-law to have questions about the *parent-and child-in-law relationship* as a result of their marriage (or impending marriage). You may have questions about your parent-in-law, your relationship with your parent-in-law, and how you will fit in with your extended family.

I would like you to rate how CERTAIN you are about each of the following facets in your relationship with your child-in-law.

1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>completely or almost completely uncertain</i>					<i>completely or almost completely certain</i>

*HOW CERTAIN ARE YOU ABOUT...*

Approval

1. whether or not your parent-in-law approves of you?
2. whether or not your parent-in-law thinks you're good enough for his/her child?
3. whether or not your parent-in-law accepts you for who you are?
4. whether or not your parent-in-law accepts you as a family member?

Communication

5. what to call your parent-in-law?

6. what you can or cannot discuss with your parent-in-law?
7. how to effectively communicate with your parent-in-law?
8. how frequently you should talk to your parent-in-law?

#### Differences

9. whether or not your differences will affect your relationship with your parent-in-law?
10. whether or not your relationship with your parent-in-law will be impacted by your differing beliefs?
11. whether or not your conflicting opinions will be an obstacle in your relationship?
12. whether or not differing beliefs and values will impact your relationship with your parent-in-law?

#### Relationship support

13. whether or not your parent-in-law approves of your relationship with your fiancé/spouse?
14. whether or not your parent-in-law supports your marital relationship?
15. whether or not your parent-in-law thinks you and your fiancé/spouse are a “good match”?
16. how happy your parent-in-law is about your relationship with your fiancé/spouse?

#### Meddling

17. whether or not your parent-in-law will attempt to influence your decisions?
18. how much input your parent-in-law expects to have in your life?
19. whether or not your parent-in-law believes s/he should be involved in the decisions you and your fiancé/spouse make?
20. how much control your parent-in-law wants to have in your life?

#### Family expectations

21. your role in your extended family?
22. the expectations your parent-in-law has for you?
23. how involved you are expected to be in your extended family?
24. what family events you are required to attend?

#### Triadic influence

25. how your relationship with your parent-in-law will affect your marital relationship?
26. the influence your parent-in-law will have on you and your spouse’s relationship?
27. whether or not your spouse’s relationship with his parent (your parent-in-law) will impact your relationship with your parent-in-law?
28. the affect your relationship with your spouse will have on your relationship with your parent-in-law?

### Balancing family membership

29. how you will share the holidays with you and your spouse's family?
30. how to split time between your spouse's family and your own?
31. how you and your spouse will divide time between your two families during the holidays?
32. how to give each family equal time with you and your spouse?

### Extended family relationships

33. whether or not your parent-in-law likes your family?
34. whether or not your parents like your parent-in-law?
35. whether or not your parents and parent-in-law will get along?
46. how your parent-in-law feels about your family?

### Gossip

37. whether or not your parent-in-law talks about you when you are not around?
38. whether or not your parent-in-law says negative things about you to other members of the family?
39. what your parent-in-law says about you when you are not present?
40. what your parent-in-law says about you to other people?

### Grandparent involvement

41. how involved your parent-in-law wants to be in your children or future children's life?
42. how involved you want your parent-in-law to be in your children or future children's life?
43. your parent-in-law's ability to be a "good" grandparent?
44. how much you want your parent-in-law to be part of your children or future children's life?

### Parenting input

45. whether or not your parent-in-law will provide unsolicited parenting advice?
46. whether or not your parent-in-law wants to be involved in your parenting decisions?
47. your parent-in-law's desire to provide advice regarding your parenting?
48. your parent-in-law's opinion about how you should raise your children or future children?

### In-law as individual

49. your parent-in-law's health?
50. what is important in life to your parent-in-law?
51. your parent-in-law's values?
52. your parent-in-law's financial security?

### Proximity

53. whether or not your parent-in-law expects you to live close to them?





12. let my parent-in-law know she is part of my family.
13. prevent my parent-in-law from discovering personal information.
14. stop my private-in-law from learning private information about my family.
15. respect my parent-in-law's boundaries.

### Maintain family relationships

#### *In-law*

16. avoid damaging my relationship with my parent-in-law.
17. preserve my relationship with my parent-in-law.
18. protect my relationship with my parent-in-law.

#### *Linchpin*

19. avoid damaging my relationship with my fiancé/spouse.
20. preserve my relationship with my fiancé/spouse.
21. protect my relationship with my fiancé/spouse.

#### *Intergenerational*

22. avoid damaging my child's (or future child's) relationship with his grandparent (my parent-in-law).
23. preserve my child's (or future child's) relationship with his grandparent (my parent-in-law).
24. protect my child's (or future child's) relationship with his grandparent (my parent-in-law).

### Cultivate the desired in-law relationship

#### *Family*

25. create a close-knit relationship with my parent-in-law.
26. create a parent/child-like relationship with my parent-in-law.
27. let my parent-in-law that I think of him or her as a parent.

#### *Friend*

28. create a peer-like relationship with my parent-in-law.
29. be a good friend to my parent-in-law.
30. talk to my parent-in-law like a friend.

#### *Associate*

31. keep my distance from my parent-in-law.
32. not to get too close to my parent-in-law.
33. try to keep my relationship with my parent-in-law very casual.





- 3. Interesting
- 4. Boring+
- 5. Rewarding
- 6. Disappointing+
- 7. Brings out the best in me
- 8. Worthwhile

All things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied have you been with your relationship with your parent-in-law since becoming engaged or married?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Completely dissatisfied			Neutral			Completely satisfied

*Scoring.* + items were reverse scored. The final, general item was averaged with the mean of the first eight items to create a composite satisfaction score. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.

**Appendix D: Demographic Questions**

Please provide the following information about yourself and your fiancé/spouse.

Your age is: \_\_\_\_\_

You are a (please check one): \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male

You are: \_\_\_\_\_ Engaged to be married \_\_\_\_\_ Married

If engaged, this is your \_\_\_\_\_ engagement: \_\_\_\_\_ first, \_\_\_\_\_ second, \_\_\_\_\_ third

If married, this is your \_\_\_\_\_ married: \_\_\_\_\_ first, \_\_\_\_\_ second, \_\_\_\_\_ third

Your level of education is (please check one):

- \_\_\_\_\_ Some high school
- \_\_\_\_\_ High school graduate \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced degree
- \_\_\_\_\_ Some college \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please specify:
- \_\_\_\_\_ College graduate \_\_\_\_\_

Your ethnic background is (please check one):

- \_\_\_\_\_ White, non-Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Asian
- \_\_\_\_\_ African-American \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: (please specify)

Your fiancé/spouse's age is: \_\_\_\_\_

Your fiancé's/spouse's ethnic background is (please check one):

- \_\_\_\_\_ White, non-Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Asian
- \_\_\_\_\_ African-American \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: (please specify)

How long were you in a relationship with your fiancé/spouse before becoming engaged? \_\_\_\_\_ years and/ or \_\_\_\_\_ months.

How long have you been engaged/married?: \_\_\_\_\_ years and/or \_\_\_\_\_ months

When do you plan to get married or when did you get married? (this may be more general if you and your fiancé have not yet set the wedding date): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you and your fiancé/spouse have any children together?: \_\_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_\_ no.

If so, how many children do you and your fiancé/spouse have together?: \_\_\_\_\_ child(ren)

Please provide the following information regarding your parent-in-law or future parent-in-law.

Throughout the remainder of the survey the term parent-in-law will be used to refer to your future parent-in-law and parent-in-law

*Please think of ONE parent-in-law (either your mother- or father-in-law) while completing the remainder of the survey.*

The parent-in-law I am reporting on is my: \_\_\_\_\_ mother-in-law \_\_\_\_\_ father-in-law.

My parent-in-law is: \_\_\_\_\_ years of age

My parent-in-law is my fiancé/spouse's: \_\_\_\_\_ biological mother/father \_\_\_\_\_ stepmother/stepfather \_\_\_\_\_ adoptive mother/father

My parent-in-law's ethnic background is (please check one):

- \_\_\_\_\_ White, non-Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_ Asian

African-American       Hispanic  
 Other: (please specify)

How long have you known your parent-in-law? In other words, how long has it been since your first interaction with her? \_\_\_\_\_ years and/or \_\_\_\_\_ months

How often do you talk to your parent-in-law?

- Several times a year
- Several times per month
- Weekly
- Daily

When you talk to your child-in-law, it is usually:

- face-to-face
- on the phone
- over email
- through text message
- on skype
- through online chatting (e.g., g-chat)
- on facebook

How frequently do you visit your parent-in-law?

- Several times a year
- Several times per month
- Weekly
- Daily