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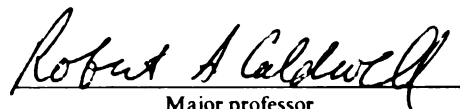
**OPERATIVE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO
LONG TERM SATISFYING MARRIAGES**

presented by

Karen Marie Williams

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Psychology



Major professor

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**OPERATIVE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO
LONG TERM SATISFYING MARRIAGES**

By

Karen Marie Williams

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

OPERATIVE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO
LONG TERM SATISFYING MARRIAGES

By

Karen Marie Williams

The topic of long-term, satisfying marriages has just recently begun being examined and discussed. Most of the research, however, has focused only on single variables as they relate to long-term, satisfying marriages. The present research study examined the predictive power of a model of several variables that work together to achieve a "successful" marriage. The subjects were ninety-nine couples, with a mean age of fifty-eight, a mean number of years married thirty-three, and a mean number of 2.6 children. Racial composition was as follows: forty-four percent were White, fifty-three percent were Black, one percent were Native American, and one percent were Asian.

Results indicated that the variable with the most influence on a "successful" marriage and other ingredients of marriage was the ability to problem solve. Problem solving directly influenced effective communication (path coef. = .26), low conflict (path coef. = -.45), humor and play (path coef. = .43), intimacy (path coef. = .45), the sexual relationship (path coef. = .26), and marital satisfaction (path coef. = .24). No other variable came close to having such an impact on other variables as did problem solving. In fact, the only other variable in the model that influenced

marital satisfaction was commitment, however, the influence of commitment on marital satisfaction was mediated by commitment's effect on the amount of conflict present in the marriage. The more commitment evidenced in marriage, the less conflict there was (path coef. = $-.28$). These findings could lead one to conclude that to the extent that couples are committed and can adequately problem solve positively influences many other aspects in the marital relationship.

These findings should guide future research in the direction of evaluating the marital relationship from an integrative perspective. These findings should also guide clinicians who work with couples in the areas of premarital counseling, marital counseling, and marital enrichment. By knowing what variables significantly contribute to marital satisfaction, better steps can be taken for better intervention/prevention.

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INTRODUCTION

Most Americans get married, and nearly half of these marriages end in divorce. Traditionally, marriage and the family have been viewed as the foundation of society. Each marriage marks the start of an emotional, intimate interaction between two humans, as well as a civil contract between two individuals, and in the majority of cases, a religious rite. In trying to understand why some marriages fail and others succeed, it is troublesome that so little attention has been directed toward successful marriages. Although recent research has begun to examine successful marriages, most studies have focused on single variables as they relate to marriage (e.g., sex, self-disclosure, etc.). Few studies have examined marriage and the operative variables that are necessary for a successful marriage from an integrative approach.

If researchers/clinicians want to truly understand the long-term, satisfying marital relationship, an integrative approach is the logical next step. This type of marriage is made up of more than just two people who communicate, or two people who self-disclose, or two people who become intimate. It seems more likely that there are direct as well as indirect variables influencing this intricate relationship;

it is the sum of its parts working together that can best explain successful marriage, and we must therefore begin to examine it from this perspective. Thus, one might say that communication, self-disclosure, and intimacy (to name a few), are all important variables that together help add to marital quality, but they do not function independently. For example, a satisfying marriage is made up of two people who self disclose to one another, who have good communication (verbal and nonverbal), which in turn allows them to attain intimacy. It is from this standpoint that marriage will be examined, and that Figure 1 was developed, to show the numerous variables that are thought to influence marriage. Thus, the focus of this research study is: in the face of difficulty and divorce, what is it that keeps some couples together while others drift apart? What are the variables that work together to achieve a "successful" marriage?

Seeking closeness with others appears to be a basic need of most people (Fromm, 1956; Maslow, 1971). To love and to feel loved, to feel close to another, to experience companionship, and to care and be cared about are all feelings that most people wish and need to experience; especially within the context of marriage and the family. All of these feelings/experiences fall under the general umbrella of intimacy. According to Cox (1985), the basic goals of intimacy in a marriage are emotional gratification

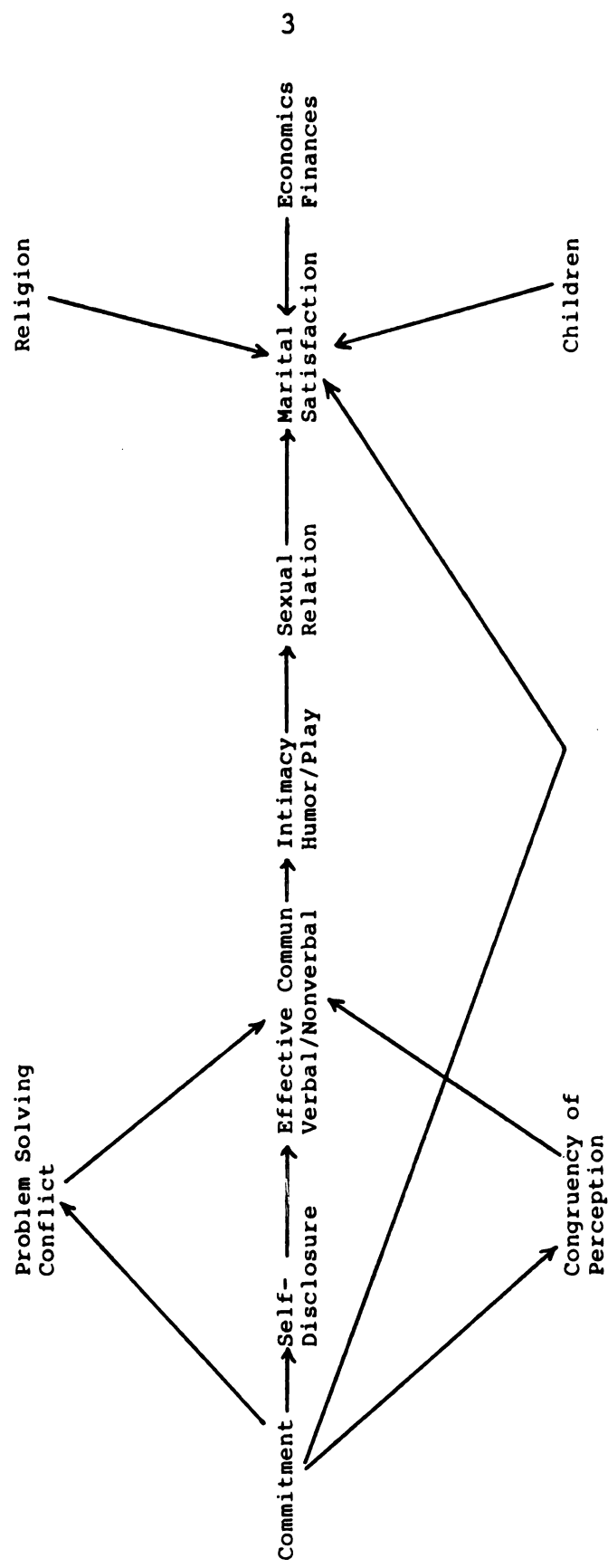


Figure 1. Basis for Hypotheses

of each partner, helping each partner deal with crises and problems, and helping each grow in a fulfilling manner.

Marriage is also a civil contract, with governing laws that vary from state to state. However, in the United States, the marriage, like all contracts, must be entered into by mutual consent; both individuals must be competent and eligible to enter into the contract, and there is a prescribed form to the contract. Another important feature of marriage as a civil contract is that it involves three parties: the man, the woman, and the state. The state specifies duties and privileges, and restrictions of the marriage, and if the marriage is to be ended, it must be done by the state.

In most cases marriage is also a religious rite. Approximately 75 percent of all marriages in the United States take place in a church (Cox, 1985). The state gives the clergy legal privileges to perform the marriage ceremony. In the United States, most faiths consider marriage as a sacrament. God is called on to witness and bless the marriage, with most vows stating: "Those whom God hath joined together let no [?] (mane) put asunder."

There is a great deal of evidence suggesting that the foundation of marriage is deteriorating. The following statistics indicate a dramatic change in traditional trends: between 1970 and 1983, the proportion of young women in the 20 to 24 age bracket who had never been married increased from 36% to 56%; between 1970 and 1983, the number of

couples cohabitating more than tripled; if current divorce rates continue, as many as half of all children will live in a fatherless family for a period of time before they are grown (Thornton & Freedman, 1984).

Throughout the century, the divorce rate has been steadily increasing in this country. This trend is summarized by Cherlin (1981). In 1900, there was approximately one divorce for every 12 marriages, and by 1922, one divorce for every eight marriages. By the late 1940's, there was about one divorce for every three and a half marriages. This peak is thought to have occurred due to dislocations stemming from World War II. Between 1950 and 1970, the divorce rate leveled off to approximately one per every four marriages. This stability in rate did not last long, and by 1976 an all time high of one out of every two marriages ended in divorce. This trend, it seems has persisted; currently there are more than a million couples a year now getting divorced (Lauer & Lauer, 1986). Some social scientists predict that by the end of this century, half of all marriages will end in divorce (Cox, 1981; Lauer & Lauer, 1986).

The reason the divorce rate has increased is because pressure on marriage has increased. According to Brehm (1985), this increased pressure on marriage comes from various sources. First of all, people today live longer, therefore the number of years that a married couple can spend together has increased. Also, with people having

fewer children, there is more focus on the marital relationship. In previous years, marriage was more a straightforward division of labor. With an increasing number of women working, marriages today may suffer from excessive demands placed on working wives and mothers. This can, in turn, lead to resentment between husbands and wives. Lastly, expectations of marriage have changed, people want happiness as well as fulfillment.

In past years, a marriage was said to be successful if the couple stayed together and produced children. This is not the case, however, today. Married couples are searching for and expecting more out of marriage; they want happiness, fulfillment, emotional support, companionship, and a host of other ingredients that go into an enduring as well as a personally satisfying relationship (Cox, 1985; Lauer & Lauer, 1986). These "ingredients" will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this paper.

Reasons for Studying Enduring, Satisfying Marriages

Because of this shift in marital needs and wants, enduring as well as satisfying marriages are very important to study. Traditionally, marriage and the family have been viewed as the foundation of society. In 1966, a group of Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations issued a statement reflecting this traditional viewpoint. The group declared:

We believe that the family is the cornerstone of our society. It shapes the attitudes, the hopes, the ambitions, the values of every citizen. The child is usually damaged when family living collapses. When this happens on a massive scale, the community itself is crippled. (Lauer & Lauer, p. 16)

According to this view, if the family starts to crumble, then so does society. And it must be pointed out that current trends do indicate that the foundation is, indeed, crumbling.

Another reason "healthy" marriages need to be examined is because of the effects of divorce. This area has been thoroughly examined by many researchers. For the husband and wife, there are economic costs, and greater yet, emotional trauma. This "emotional trauma" includes several stages divorcing couples usually go through. These stages include a period of denial, followed by grief, mourning, and a mixture of the following: self-pity, vengeance, despair, wounded pride, anguish, guilt, loneliness, fear, distrust, withdrawal, and relief (Cox, 1985, p. 463-464). Although this emotional trauma is experienced by many couples, there are exceptions. For some people, a divorce is a relief from a terrible and destructive situation.

If children are involved in the divorce process, they too are affected. Sometimes they become pawns in the struggle between the parents. Additionally, the pain of

seeing their parents separate becomes invariably intense. Initially, children are typically upset, then go through a period of anger and resentment. They self blame, act out, and have a host of other behavioral and emotional problems.

If we know what goes into, or is necessary for a healthy marriage, several positive events could occur: many children would have fewer psychological/emotional problems that occur in unstable families or families of divorce, pre-marital counseling would be more accurate and beneficial, as would marital counseling and marital enrichment.

Another important reason for studying "healthy" marriages is because of their positive effects on individuals. In a study by Verbrugge (1979), marital status differences in health for the United States population were examined. Results indicated that divorced and separated people have the worst health status, with the highest rates of acute conditions, of chronic conditions which limit social activity, and of disability for health problems. Widowed people rank second highest for health status, followed by single people. Married people appear to be healthiest. They have the lowest rates of chronic limitation and disability. Although their rates of restricted activity and medical care are intermediate, hospital stays tend to be short, and they have the lowest rate of residence in health facilities. These results are perhaps due to be short, and they have the lowest rate of

residence in health facilities. These results are perhaps due to marital roles and lifestyles which influence health, by selectivity into a marital status because of health, and by tendencies to take health actions when feeling ill. Therefore, theoretically speaking, if the divorce rate decreases, and more marriages endure and are healthy, then more of the general population is healthier.

"Healthy" marriages are also important to study for improvement of clinical applications, such as pre-marital and marital counseling, as well as marital enrichment. If we know and understand factors which are operative in "healthy" marriages, there can be greater impact and success in all three areas. It seems logical that to fully understand how something operates, comes from examination of a fully functioning specimen rather than a poorly functioning one.

Ingredients of a Satisfying Marriage

Research findings point to several ingredients of a satisfying marriage. Included are: commitment, congruence of perception of spouses, effective communication skills, and intimacy. Other factors that affect marital relationships (sometimes positively as well as negatively) that need to be addressed include: the roles of sex, religion, children, and economics. Each of these ingredients plays a crucial part in the way marriage turns out, therefore, each ingredient will be discussed in and of itself for a more thorough understanding.

Commitment. It is frequently said that one must be "committed" in order for marriage to work. According to Kilpatrick (1975, pp. 232-233), "commitment is one of the foremost requirements of an enduring marriage." When this is stated, most people agree. But exactly what is meant by the term "being committed?" Researchers have examined this concept from various perspectives.

Sternberg (1986) explains commitment in terms of two aspects: cognitive and developmental. From the cognitive aspect, it is seen as a "decision/commitment" component, which includes cognitive elements that are involved in decision making regarding the existence of and potential long-term commitment to a loving relationship. More specifically, in the short-term, the decision to love another person, and in the long-term, the commitment to preserve that love.

As for its developmental course, commitment begins at zero when individuals first meet, and increases as they get to know each other. If the relationship is intended to be long term, the commitment level will usually increase gradually at first, and then speed up. As the relationship continues, the level of commitment will generally level off. If the relationship begins to experience problems, commitment goes down, and if the relationship fails, commitment level falls back down to zero. Sternberg's view of commitment differs from others' view of commitment; it

implies that commitment is the result of the marriage and not the cause of it.

Lauer and Lauer (1985), list three types of commitment as it relates to marriage. First, there is the commitment to a happy marriage. This type of commitment endures as long as both partners are happy in the marriage. When happiness wanes, so does the marriage.

Second is the commitment to the institution of marriage. With this type of commitment, marital happiness is unimportant; it is the belief in the binding nature of the wedding vows, their view of the importance of family stability to the children, and their unwillingness to offend family members. With commitment such as this, an unhappy union is endured.

In the third type of commitment, the commitment is to the marriage as well as the spouse. The couple are committed to that which is meaningful and satisfying to them. An interaction exists between their feelings and their commitment: the feelings reinforce the commitment which helps maintain the feelings. However, it is not the commitment that resolves marital problems, rather, it provides the necessary atmosphere for resolution of problems to take place. As stated by Lauer and Lauer (1986), "commitment means a willingness to endure troubled times and to work through the plexus of difficulties that inevitably assault every married couple" (p. 54). With commitment, one overcomes problems rather than being overcome by them.

According to Quinn (1982), the concept of commitment has three subordinate senses. The first is that of a promise (or pledge). For example, "We were making a commitment together, that we were going to work together." The second is that of dedication (or devotion). An example of this is, "We are deeply committed to our marriage and family." Thirdly, is that of an attachment (bond or tie). An example of this sense is, "We were really committed to each other." These different aspects of experience go by the same name, because they are fundamentally related.

Quinn (1982) argues that when used in the sense of a promise, a "commitment" cannot be felt. However, when "commitment" is used in the sense of dedication or attachment, it appears to take on the attribute of being an internal state. More specifically, in its dedication sense, "commitment" means "deep" or "deeply felt," as in "I felt a deep commitment to my marriage and family." Commitment as an attachment, on the other hand, draws on the metaphor of a bond, as a physical connection between people.

As was previously stated, these three senses of "commitment" are packaged into one word because they are fundamentally related. In the context of marriage, "commitment" is a promise to do something, something that entails hard work and time. To make this type of "promise" one must be dedicated to trying. The dedication to try and fulfill this promise, by its very nature, requires a long-term relationship with another person. Making this

commitment to someone is also attaching oneself to the other person for the duration of the commitment. As stated before, commitment alone does not resolve marital problems, but it sets the stage for resolution to occur. Open, honest communication, which is vital to establishing and maintaining the level of commitment necessary for positive marital adjustment to occur is necessary. It is important to note, however, that effective communication has necessary precursors. This includes: problem solving skills, self-disclosure, and congruency of perception, which all influence each other.

Problem Solving and Conflict. Effective problem solving, or, the ease with which differences of opinion are resolved, is a vital, complex, and necessary skill. All couples must deal with conflict. Satisfied couples are those whose communication skills have been enlarged to deal appropriately with the problems inherent in marriage, and couples who make poor marital adjustment have developed drastically different communication styles and techniques which make for inadequate problem solving.

Lauer and Lauer (1986) examine this form of communication, known as "conflict," as it relates to the marital relationship. Findings indicated that although all couples quarrel, happy couples quarrel much less, are less likely to get on each other's nerves. and consider divorce or separation much less than those that are mixed or unhappy in their evaluations. However, no marriage is conflict

free, and no marriage should be. In fact, many people are oblivious of the importance of conflict in a good marriage. Because those in a "good" marriage have learned how to engage in "good fighting," conflict is an important dimension of their well-being.

To better understand conflict, Blood and Wolfe (1978) surveyed over 700 couples and found that the most common conflict was disagreement over money, followed by children, recreation, and personality. Financial conflict was generally about allocation of funds. Conflict over children usually concerned the issue of discipline. Conflict over recreation involved the type of activity each partner would prefer and the amount of time spent together. Personality disagreements referred to behavior of one of three partners that the other found bothersome. Role problems, or questions concerning who does what in the home, did not affect a large number of families in this sample, but this is rapidly changing due to the changing role of women.

Lauer and Lauer point out that the things couples argue about are not the same at all stages of their relationship, nor is the frequency of fighting likely to remain the same. Depending on the developmental stage of the marriage, different types of disagreements arise. In Blood and Wolfe's sample, couples in the honeymoon phase had more disagreements about the personality differences and how to spend recreational time. Past the honeymoon period, conflict over money was the most common problem. Couples in

later stages of their marriages tended to have less conflict of any kind.

All of this, however, applies to long-term, happily married couples, suggesting that people who have been happily married for a long time, are not necessarily more problem-free than others. They experience some of the same problems as other couples, but they know the importance of confronting the problems. This is evidenced by Lauer and Lauer's research. Confronting the problems was seen in the response to the question of how frequently one of the spouses leaves the house after a fight. People in happy marriages seldom use that tactic. Thus, people in long-term, satisfying marriages have the same type of conflicts as others, but they regard them as challenges to be dealt with rather than as a signal of failure.

Conflict also has benefits; it can keep a relationship from deteriorating of dry rot. It is a refusal to let the relationship go sour. Bach and Wyden (1975), marriage counselors who have written about the importance of conflict, state that many of the couples they see do not engage in conflict. These couples avoid fighting. Ironically, however, the result is not peace, but an emotional divorce. Therefore, the refusal to fight severs rather than cements the bond.

This is not to suggest, though, that all fighting is "good" fighting, and conflict can indeed end a marriage. One must be able to engage in "good" fighting, which has

rules that set limits to what is acceptable in a conflict, and aims at a win-win outcome. Even though there are no set laws for engaging in conflict, certain standards of conduct were mentioned several times in Lauer and Lauer's (1986) study. These standards provide guidelines for fighting that aim for a win-win situation. These include: (a) Maintain Your Perspective. Maintaining one's perspective on a disagreement means to remember that everything is not worth fighting about. Every issue is not a win-lose situation. Happy couples in this sample differentiate between trivial issues and those that must be resolved through conflict; (b) Development Tension Outlets. Those couples satisfied with their relationship seem to require the need for tension outlets so as not to take their frustrations out on their spouse. Whether through physical exercise, solitude, or maintaining a sense of humor, tension outlets help to put the conflict into perspective and offset any damaging effects. Each individual must figure out his or her tension outlet, as opposed to arguing with one's spouse when the real issue is some outside tension; (c) Avoid Festering Resentment. Arguments should not become emotional divorces. Issues are confronted, and openly and honestly dealt with. A spouse should not have to mind-read and misinterpret, this only leads to more conflict; (d) Be Sensitive to Timing. There are times when it is appropriate to confront conflict, and times when it should be dealt with at a later time. Open confrontation does not necessarily mean immediate

response to an issue. Different people are receptive to problem-solving at different times, and under different conditions. A number of these "happily" married people also noted that it is not wise to try and solve a problem while still angry. It is better to think while calm, rather than in the heat of anger; (e) Communication Without Ceasing.

There are two things to remember about communication.

First, it is not a cure-all. Communication reveals good as well as bad qualities about a person, as well as irreconcilable differences of opinion. Thus, while communication helps to resolve conflict, it can also promote conflict. Second, the "type" of communication is just as important as the act of communicating. People in enduring marriages noted two qualities of communication important for problem solving; reciprocity and calmness. Reciprocity refers to active listening as well as open expression of one's own ideas and feelings, and calmness rather than aggression; (f) Be Flexible and Willing to Compromise.

Accommodation and compromise as styles of conflict were very important to the couples in this sample. Compromise is not viewed as a surrender, but as the only realistic way to deal with difference. One must be able to tolerate and respect differences, for this leads to finding a suitable solution for both partners involved; (g) Use Conflict to Attack Problems, Not Your Spouse. Attacking problems instead of your spouse is fundamental to good fighting. Respondents suggested two ways to keep the conflict focused on the

problem. One is to define the conflict as a disagreement concerning an issues rather than as a personal attack. The other is to resist the temptation to hurt your mate. Don't let the conflict turn into an "insult session." Good fighting involves attacking the problem and not the person; good fighting resolves problems and builds up people simultaneously; (h) Keep Loving While You are Fighting. Although this may sound contradictory, it is important to let your spouse know that he or she is still loved even though there is a disagreement. An active concern for the well-being of the other should continue to characterize the relationship.

Self-disclosure. Self-disclosure, or the verbal disclosure of one's thoughts and feelings to another person, is also a necessary precursor for effective communication. Jourard (1981) writes: "the optimum in a marriage relationship as in any relationship between persons is a relationship between I and thou, where each partner discloses himself without reserve." Research studies by Komanovsky (1962) and Hendrick (1981) indicate that self-disclosure is an important predictor of marital satisfaction.

But what exactly is self-disclosure? Although there is no one single theory of self-disclosure, several social psychological theories have been used to explain it. Under the general model of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960; Jourard, 1971), the findings show that self-disclosure produces self-

disclosure. Research has shown reciprocal high disclosure between subjects (e.g., Ehrlich & Graevan, 1971; Worthy, Gary, & Kahn, 1969), although self-disclosure may be less reciprocal between friends than between strangers (Derlega, Wilson, & Chaikin, 1976).

Within an exchange theory framework (Hatfield, Utne, & Traupmann, 1979; Homans, 1961), self-disclosure can be viewed as a process with both pros and cons for the disclosure as well as the listener. Cozby (1972) suggested a possible curvilinear relationship between reciprocity and self-disclosure. More specifically, the benefits of reciprocal self-disclosure increase to a certain point, but then increasingly intense intimacy causes self-disclosure to become so threatening and costly that reciprocity no longer occurs.

Congruency of perception. Congruency of perception is the last precursor necessary for effective communication to occur. Congruency of perception of spouses has been examined by various researchers as it relates to marital adjustment (e.g., Luckey, 1960; 1964; Sporakowski & Hughston, 1978; Yelsma, 1984). From an empirical perspective, findings have indicated mixed results.

Luckey (1960) found that spouses who indicated that they were satisfied with their marriage were those whose perceptions were in greater agreement with each other than were the perceptions of couples who were unsatisfied. Later, in 1964, Luckey examined the degree of correlation

existing between the subject's expressed marital satisfaction and (a) one's perception of oneself and (b) one's perception of one's spouse in terms of descriptive personality variables. Results indicated that many personality characteristics that are significantly associated with marital satisfaction are perceived by the subject as being part of themselves as well as a part of their spouse.

Studies by Hurvitz (1960; 1965) support Luckey's finding. The studies concluded that discrepancies between a husband's expectations of his wife's role and her expectation of her role enactment correlated negatively with both persons' satisfaction. However, the wife's measure of role discrepancy was not a good indicator of either partner's satisfaction.

Taylor (1967) noted a similar association existing between the husband's self-concept and the husband's prediction of his wife's perception of him. The wife's self-concept and her prediction of her husband's perception of her showed a similar trend in this research as well as Struckert's (1963) research.

Research by Sporakowski and Hughston (1978) examined 66 couples who were married 50 years or more. They were interviewed regarding what they felt were the most significant factors in a happy marriage. Indices of their marital adjustment and personality were assessed over the stages of the family life cycle, using a self perceived

other comparison technique. Findings suggested that congruence of perception of spouses appears to be of major importance in relation to marital satisfaction of couples who have exceeded their golden wedding anniversaries. This not only applies to personality perceptions, but also to rating of marital happiness and the multifaceted aspects of marital adjustment.

More recently, Yelsma (1984) extended Navran's (1967) work on marital communication. He identified nine items from Navran's adapted version of the Primary Communication Inventory as reliable and valid measures in distinguishing differences between "happy" and "counseling" married couples and their communications. His study of twenty-three happily married and 23 couples seeking counseling showed that happy individuals have more congruency between their self perceptions and their spouses perception of their communication practices. Additionally, happy couples' marital adjustment scores were more congruent than the counseling couples'.

From a theoretical and clinical perspective, the association between discrepant perceptions or incongruent role expectation and marital adjustment appear to be more pronounced. In a study by Laing (cited by Yelsma, 1984), a model of interpersonal communication was developed which postulated that various levels of perception impact upon relationships. Furthermore, they propose that a characteristic of distressed marriages is the inability of

the partners to establish common perceptions of several specific behaviors and role expectations due to different experiences and backgrounds. Frequently, persons experiencing distress are affected by perceptual and interpretive distortion.

Satir (1964) has proposed that a strong relationship exists between accurate perceptions and effective communication. She states that spouse's perception of their own and each other's communication in the relationship are vital to the establishment or degeneration of their relationship. Put simply, the greater the perceived differences between spouses' perception of their own and each other's verbal and nonverbal communication practices, the greater their chances of having an unsatisfactory relationship.

Having discussed the stepping stones for effective communication (problem solving skills, self-disclosure, and congruency of perception), it now makes sense to look at the larger construct of communication, what it is, and how it impacts upon the marital relationship.

Communication. Communication is positively related to good marital adjustment (e.g., Lauer & Lauer, 1986; Navran, 1967; O'Neill & O'Neill, 1972). This sounds simplistic at first, however, after further examination it becomes much more complex. From birth, we are taught that appearance (what one portrays) is more important than reality. Many children have witnessed their parents break off a vicious

argument to answer the phone and talk calmly to the friend who has just called right in the midst of the argument. This "education" continues as we grow older, and we learn to do the same thing ourselves. Therefore, when it comes time to be open and honest, it is difficult to do. However, this honest, free-flowing communication is vital to establishing and maintaining a good marital relationship. The task at hand becomes how to stop saying, "things are fine" and "I feel great" (to put it simply) when in reality, things are a mess and you really feel awful. To begin with, a thorough understanding of communication between two individuals is needed.

Communication comes in two forms: verbal and nonverbal. Research has indicated that approximately 70% of our communication with others is nonverbal (O'Neill & O'Neill, 1972). Although sex is the most profound form of nonverbal communication, other actions, such as the way one's mate stands, holds his or her head, or smiles, can tell one far more than words. Every action gives a sensory cue that can be read by others. Yet, in close relationships, we sometimes ignore these nonverbal cues. One becomes habituated to them, thus, no longer consciously affected by him or her. Other times, one purposely screens them out, not wanting to acknowledge the message being sent to them. Other times, they are accepted and acted on. Whatever one may say, however, it is the nonverbal messages that usually tells the truth. A verbal untruth is easy to

tell, it's the ability to sufficiently control one's body to back up the lie that is the hard part. Thus, it appears that becoming more aware of, and sensitive to nonverbal communication (of self and partner) can help in attaining and maintaining a positive marital relationship, as evidenced in research by Kahn (1970).

Kahn (1970) examined nonverbal communication and marital satisfaction. Twenty-one college couples were identified as maritally satisfied and twenty-one couples as maritally dissatisfied by the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. The Marital Communication Scale and the Primary Communication Inventory were administered to each couple. Results indicated a positive relationship between marital satisfaction and accuracy of nonverbal communication as assessed by both measures. Thus, one might hypothesize that couples who make good marital adjustment are those who are aware of, sensitive to, and react appropriately to nonverbal communication.

Although nonverbal communication is important to a positive marital relationship, and comprises 70% of communication, it is the remaining 30% that is spoken and even more important than the unspoken, as shown by Navran (1967).

In this study, twenty-four "happy" couples and twenty-four "unhappy" couples were administered the Primary Communication Inventory and the Locke Marital Relationship Inventory. Results showed marital adjustment to be

positively correlated with ability to communicate. More specifically, happily married couples had clearly better communication in both verbal and nonverbal sectors, however, good verbal communication was more strongly correlated with good marital adjustment than was good nonverbal communication, ($r=.91$, and $r=.66$, respectively). Overall, this study implies that verbal communication is a much stronger factor associated with good marital adjustment than is nonverbal communication, but the group reporting good marital adjustment makes superior use of both types.

These research studies indicate strongly that communication and marital adjustment are so intertwined, that any factor influencing one, influences the other. This positive association between the two has important clinical implications for marriage counseling. It may be that an important avenue for improving a marital relationship is to focus on the communication pattern of the couple.

Intimacy. The next "ingredient" to be discussed for a healthy marriage is intimacy. This concept seems to follow commitment, the "stepping stones," and communication, for several reasons. First, a refusal to commit oneself to someone is a refusal to love them. If one refuses to love, one relinquishes intimacy. Also, one cannot become intimate without sharing (communicating) thoughts, ideas, and beliefs, which is built upon congruency of perceptions, resolving conflict, and self-disclosing.

Sternberg (1986) described intimacy as the emotional aspect of love. It includes closeness, sharing, communication, and support. Intimacy is expressed by communicating inner feelings; sharing one's possessions, time, and self; and offering emotional support. Developmentally, it increases steadily at first, then at a slower rate until it levels off and goes beneath the surface.

Betcher (1981) looked at intimate play and its influence upon the marital relationship. According to Betcher, little attention had been given to "intimate play" and its effect on marital adjustment. He viewed it as being involved in positive bonding communication, conflict reduction, and more basically, as predisposed to stabilize a marital relationship.

Intimate play usually occurs in a context of felt security. It seems to supply many couples with an assortment of ways of communicating loving, affectionate messages and convincing each other that they are loved. Not only does intimate play nurture conditions of interpersonal trust and acceptance, it also confirms and increases the margin for mutual risk in regression. To the extent that intimate play is personalized, distinctive elaborations of the marital dyad, contribution to the formation of a special bond may take place.

The Sexual Relationship. Another factor that has been examined in relation to marital adjustment is the sexual

relationship. A sexual relationship could be described as satisfactory to the extent that sexual needs of both partners are communicated and fulfilled. The sexual relationship follows the concept of intimacy because sex is a way in which couples may express a form of intimacy.

Few theorists would reject that a satisfactory sexual relationship is an initially important component of a satisfactory marriage. However, controversy exists concerning the continuing role of the sexual component. As Blood (1955) stated, "without care and companionship, marriage would become repugnant, as the sexual impulse is satisfied and ebbs with age" (p. 105). Grant (1957) agreed with this viewpoint and surmised that some degree to decrease in passionate feelings appears somewhat natural to prolonged sexual association, as within marriage. Other theorists (e.g., Beigle, 1952; Symonds, 1946) voiced similar opinions.

There are however opposing views regarding the continuing role of the sexual component. It holds that sexual attraction would increase over the years, because anticipation would probably become more guaranteed of gratification as a result of the numerous experiences of satisfaction with that partner.

Maslow (1954) reported contradictory findings from the previous theorists. He stated that in "self-actualizing" individuals, the love satisfactions and sexual satisfactions

both get better with duration of the relationship. He stated that:

It is a very common report from these individuals that "sex is better than it used to be" and "seems to be improving all of the time." It seems quite clear that familiarity with the partner, rather than novelty, is more rewarding to "healthy" people. (pp. 238-239)

More recent studies have also substantiated Maslow's findings. Ard (1977) examined 161 couples who had been married for approximately 20 years. They reported that they were still experiencing significant pleasure from sexual relations. Seventy percent of the husbands and 57% of the wives stated that they had greater pleasure from their sex relations in the previous years. An additional 25% of the husbands and 33% of the wives reported "mild pleasure." Only 5% of the husbands and 10% of the wives were apathetic or averse to sex.

Even long married couples (50 years or more) may still have meaningful sexual relations, as reported by Roberts (1979-80). Over half of a group of fifty couples married an average of 55.5 years were sexually active or had been in the past years.

Lauer and Lauer (1986), who studied 351 couples married a median of 25.5 years, concluded that sex is not the main ingredient for fulfillment implied by stories and ads. And, contrary to popular opinion, it is not one of those

treasured possessions enjoyed only by the young. The key factor is that people agree on their sex lives. This may involve anything from no sex at all to frequent and regular sexual relations. It is the agreement rather than anything else that is important.

Other Factors. The effects of children on marital quality have been studied by numerous researchers, (e.g., Hicks & Platt, 1970; Ryder, 1973; Sporkowski & Hughston, 1978). More recently, Rankin and Maneker (1985) examined factors that differentiate between marriages of short and long duration with the impact of children as their central focus. Their findings confirm the belief that longer duration of marriage correlates with the presence of children. Some couples stay together not only "for the good of the children," but also due to the presence of children, which makes the divorce process more costly financially and emotionally. Furthermore, there is the possibility that older children may actively dissuade their parents' consideration of divorce, thereby helping to prolong the marriage.

Lauer and Lauer (1986) discuss the influence of children upon marriage as both a burden and a blessing. According to the couples they examined, some of the burdens of child-rearing are the time and energy they consume, and the fact that children can be a source of stress and conflict. In attending to the needs of the children, there is a tendency for attention to be diverted away from the

marital relationship, and for the spouses to neglect each other and their relationship. Lauer and Lauer cite research by Anderson, Russell and Schumm (1983), which indicates that women with children are less likely than those without children to participate in outside activities with their spouses, exchange stimulating ideas with their spouses, work on a joint project, or calmly engage in any type of discussion.

Respondents of Lauer and Lauer (1986) also noted that, in addition to the drain of time and energy, the "trials and tribulations of raising children." Some couples reported conflict with each other due to the strains over, and sometimes the disagreement, about raising children. Even if a couple agree and attempt to support one another, the stress included in raising children can strain the marital bonds. Occasionally, a problem may seem more oppressive at the time than it does in retrospect. A seemingly troublesome child may grow up to be a source of enormous gratification to parents. Although stress present in child raising does not mean terminal disillusionment, simultaneously, that present stress influences every aspect of a parent's life. Even though the problem may not be a troublesome child, it may be a case of worrying about problems the child has (e.g., academic problems, peer relation problems, health problems, etc.). A handicapped child may add significant stress to the marital relationship.

Basically, happily-married couples believe that their children are a cohesive force in their marriage. For a great number of these couples, one of the reasons for marriage. For a great number of these couples, one of the reasons for marriage is to have a family. Their children are one of the reasons they want their marriage to work. Granted, there is evidence that suggests that marital quality is low when children are very young, due to the demands of the time and energy placed on the parents (Sporakowski & Hughston, 1978). As children age, however, the demands may lessen. The couples relationship may improve as they begin a new era of companionship.

For numerous couples, then, children add a vital part of the purposes and meaning of marriage, even though they recognize the added stress and strains. Children provide the couple with a focus outside of themselves. They become a joint project in a shared achievement.

It appears then, that children can be a cohesive factor in both a deteriorating marriage, in which they are the primary reason for staying together, or they can further solidify and enhance an already satisfying marriage. The difference is based upon the degree to which a couple perceives the importance of their relationship and the necessity of ongoing work on their relationship. The parent who looks to the child for fulfillment, who is happy with the marriage mainly because of the children, is placing a responsibility on the children which they cannot fulfill.

Children are not the solution to a troubled relationship, however, they may enhance and enrich an already satisfying relationship.

Religion. Taken as a single factor, religion does not appear to be the critical factor in an enduring marriage. In Lauer and Lauer's (1986) research, less than five percent of the respondents identified religious faith as important. However, those who did, believed that it is the foundation of a happy marriage. For these people, then, religion is viewed as a significant part of their marital relationship. This does not mean, however, that religion is not important to the rest, rather, they feel that other factors are more crucial in explaining the stability and satisfaction with their marriage.

In this same study, religious affiliation was broken down by happy versus unhappy couples. Findings indicated a much higher proportion (13.2%) of the unhappy couples had no religious affiliation, as was shown in earlier research.

According to Landis and Landis (1968), in our culture, the presence of a religious faith is associated with more favorable chances for marital success. When the outcome variable is marital permanence or marital break-up, studies have shown that there were three times as many marital failure among people with no religious affiliations as among those within given religions. In marriages of persons with different religions, religion may be a disruptive factor, yet, the failure rate of mixed religion marriages is usually

lower than that of marriages where there is no religion (p. 348).

Economics. Past research has supported the notion that socioeconomic rewards in marriage, such as income, education and occupational prestige are positively related to favorable marital outcomes. In studies cited by Jorgensen (1979), family socioeconomic status, generally measured by the husband's occupational prestige and income level was shown to have a significant positive relationship with marital cohesiveness, marital satisfaction, development of interpersonal skills such as companionship, empathy, and exchange of affection, and marital stability. These findings led to the generalization that the greater the socioeconomic rewards in a marital relationship, the greater the chance that the marriage would survive a divorce.

Recent research however has not substantiated this notion. Jorgensen's (1979) review of the literature indicated inconsistent results. He examined studies by Brinkerhoff and White, Galligan and Bahr, and Glenn and Weaver. Results of these studies did not support the notion of socioeconomic rewards and marital quality as positively related. In fact, the literature review left uncertainty as to whether the level of income and social status do in fact promote more satisfying, fulfilling, and stable relationships in marriage. Thus, Jorgensen set out to test two alternative hypotheses which may contribute to better understanding of the socioeconomic reward/marital quality

relationship. Level of socioeconomic reward contributions in marriage was divided along three dimensions: occupational prestige, income, and education. Findings were unsupportive of the notion that higher levels of socioeconomic rewards were found to be moderately related to two variable measures for wives: (a) perceptions of their husbands as competent providers and (b) reports of satisfaction with spouse's income. Husband's perceptions of marital quality were unaffected by varying socioeconomic reward levels.

More recently, Schaniger and Buss (1986) examined differences in consumption, decision making, and finance handling behavior patterns between newly married couples who went on to either a divorce or a happy marriage. Findings indicated clear and consistent patterns. Happily married couples were characterized by role specializations, with less husband dominance and more influence of the wife in handling different areas of family finance. This led the authors to conclude that the establishment of equality and equity in the beginning stages of marriage are important for the maintenance of the marriage.

Happily married couples also spent more money for recreational vehicles, appliances, and home purchases. Divorced couples, on the other hand, spent more money for stereos, color televisions, and living room furniture. The authors interpreted this finding along the following lines: the products purchased by the divorced couples all tended to

be worth as much after marital dissolution and tended to be consistent with individual's leisure enjoyment rather than family commitment.

Thus, it appears that couples who stay together make different types of purchases in the early marital stages, and the wife plays an active role in handling family finances. However, the idea of socioeconomic rewards being positively related to marital quality remains questionable.

Criticisms of the Marriage Literature

Many studies have been done on marriage and alternative lifestyles. If cohabitation is not the key to success for first marriages, and does not increase the chances for a long-term, satisfying relationship, what is the answer for those who desire such a relationship? What are the key ingredients of not only an enduring marriage, but one rated as happy by both spouses? In trying to understand why some marriages fail and others succeed, it is troublesome that so little attention has been paid to successful marriages (e.g., Cox, 1981; Lauer & Lauer, 1986). Much information is available on why people break up, but little has been done on why people stay together.

The literature that is available on marriage and marriage adjustment is abundant as one covers the courtship and early marriage years, but decreases as length of marriage increases. Not much has been written about the post-parental years, and even less about marriages that have

existed 40, 50, or more years. It appears that the works that tell couples how to construct an enduring and meaningful marriage tend to be based upon the clinical experiences of those who believe they've found the key to success. Thus, it seems that the focus of better understanding enduring, fulfilling relationships must start by examining marriages that have lasted and asking what was right in those marriages.

Another criticism of the marriage literature is the problem of conceptualization. The early studies of marital happiness and stability were generally atheoretical, with few specific hypotheses to examine. When studies were carried out, general theories were borrowed from disciplines such as sociology, psychology, and social psychology. Researchers examined sex as it related to marriage, or children as they related to marriage, and on and on with single variable studies. Only recently have endeavors been made to examine marriage and the many variables that affect it from an integrative approach.

As a result of the absence of any foundational theory to give rise to a consistent set of concepts, definitional problems in research on marital happiness are almost unending. In many instances, words such as "happiness," "success," "adjustment," and "satisfaction" have been used interchangeably and most frequently to depict the subjective state of the marital relationship. These words have vast distinctions in meaning, leaving scientists who have

examined the phenomena unable to form exact definitions for any of them. As an alternative, investigators have begun to let subjects provide their own definitions, thus, making true comparisons impossible.

With time however, "marital quality" as a concept has been gaining greater usage among social scientists, as it includes the whole range of variables which have been the usual dependent variables in marital research. In fact, one of the significant conclusions from the seventies research has been the unquestionable recognition that marital quality involves multidimensional phenomena, as defined by Lewis and Spanier (1979). According to their definition, marital quality is the subjective evaluation of a married couple's relationship on a number of dimensions and evaluations:

The range of evaluations constitutes a continuum reflecting numerous characteristics of marital interaction and marital functioning. High marital quality therefore, is associated with good adjustment, adequate communication, a high level of marital happiness, integration, and a high degree of satisfaction with the relationship. The definition does not convey a fixed picture of discrete categories, i.e., a high versus low quality marriage, but rather, suggests the existence of a continuum ranging from high to low.

Rationale

Little attention has been directed toward the study of long-term, satisfying marriage. Recently, this has changed, as evidenced by recent studies (e.g., Cox, 1981; Lauer & Lauer, 1986; O'Neil & O'Neil, 1972; Roberts, 1980). The research project here attempts to explore operative factors in long term, satisfying marriages. It will also attempt to delineate between long-term, satisfying marriages versus only long-term marriages.

This particular research study defines satisfying marriage according to the previously stated definition of Lewis and Spanier (1979). This definition was chosen because it does in fact indicate that a continuum of marital quality exists, and that characteristics interact with each other rather than function as separate categories.

The summary of the marriage literature presented earlier suggests that psychologists must begin to focus research efforts in areas of intervention/prevention: marital therapy, marital enrichment, pre-marital counseling and education. Social scientists must also begin examining what is right, to better understand and help what is wrong. This study attempts to do this by examining healthy marriages; marriages that are both enduring and satisfying to both spouses. It will also attempt to go a step further by examining marriage from an integrative approach, rather than a single variable approach, which in the past has been the method of choice.

The literature presented in this paper leads to the following hypotheses regarding long-term satisfying marriages:

- H1: Commitment will be positively related to marital satisfaction because of its direct, as well as indirect influence on all other variables.
- H2: Problem solving, self-disclosure, and congruency of perception will be the best indicators of, and will correlate positively with effective communication, because of their effects on each other and their direct effect on effective communication.
- H3: Intimacy is directly affected by effective communication, and directly affected by commitment, problem solving, self-disclosure, and congruency of perception.
- H4: Conflict is directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, self-disclosure and congruency of perception.
- H5: Intimacy and conflict will be the best indicators of a satisfactory sexual relationship because of their direct effects on the sexual relationship.
- H6: Marital satisfaction is directly affected by intimacy, conflict, the sexual relationship, and commitment, and indirectly affected by the other variables.

- H7: Commitment, effective communication, intimacy, and the sexual relationship will be the best indicators of marital satisfaction because of their direct as well as indirect pathways which influence marital satisfaction.
- H8: Children will be viewed as a significant part of a satisfying marriage.
- H9: Agreement about finances will be positively related to marital satisfaction.
- H10: Most couples in long-term marriage will have the same religious preference.
- H11: Income level will not be related to positive marital satisfaction.

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects of this research study were 99 couples married 20 years or more. Twenty years was chosen because it is over double the median number of years that those Americans who break up are married before the divorce or dissolution (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1988). Thus, it seemed reasonable to say that 20 years is an enduring marriage.

Subjects were selected in the following manner:

1. By use of census tract data, communities with couples ages 40 and over were selected because this age range had the greatest likelihood of having couples who have been married 20 or more years. Recruitment took place in the forms of:
 - a. Door to door solicitation of couples and;
 - b. Recruitment from people who participated in the door to door recruitment. These people were asked to supply me with names of people they know who met the research criteria, and I asked these people to participate in the study via phone call. The couple who turned in the most names of participants was given a prize.

Out of 134 couples, 99 completed and returned the questionnaires. Reasons given for non-participation included: questions too personal, questions too negative, questions did not consider enough of the religious aspect of marriage, or one partner would refuse to answer his/her portion of the questionnaire.

Demographic Characteristics

The subjects of this study were 99 couples with a mean age of 58 years. The mean number of years married was 33, and the mean number of children was 2.6. Racial composition was as follows: eighty-eight (44%) of the participants were white, one hundred six (53%) were Black, two (1%) were Native American, and two (1%) were Asian. Religious composition was as follows: one hundred fifty-five (78%) were Protestant, twenty-five (12%) were Catholic, five (2.5%) were Jewish, seven (3.5%) were no religion, five (2.5%) were other religion, and one (0.5%) did not answer the question. Employment was as follows: one hundred twenty-nine (65%) were employed, forty-nine (24.7%) were retired, sixteen (8%) were homeworkers, and four (2%) did not respond to the question. The mean educational level for participants was 16 years, thus, most participants had completed college.

Materials

Five assessment instruments as well as a set of questions were administered to each couple participating in this research project (see Table 1).

Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). This is a 32-item questionnaire that assesses marital adjustment. Items make up 4 factor scales: Dyadic consensus (e.g., indicate extent or agreement of "handling family finances," "friends," "philosophy of life"), Dyadic Cohesion (e.g., indicate "how often do you and your partner quarrel," "do you confide in your mate"), and Affectional Expression (e.g., indicate whether this area is a problem: "being too tired for sex," "not showing love"). Thus, it contains four non-overlapping scales, one of which will be used to measure marital satisfaction (question #'s 16-23, 31, 32). Each question is scored from zero to five, zero representing poor marital adjustment, and five equivalent to high marital adjustment. The summed total of the 4 subscales is the DAS score. Reliabilities of the 4 subscales range from .73 to .90. The total scale reliability is .96. Items involved in the scale were evaluated for content validity. Items were included if they met the following criteria: (1) They had to be considered relevant measures of dyadic adjustment for contemporary relationships in the 1970's; (2) They had to be consistent with definitions previously suggested by Spanier and Cole, (1974) for adjustment and the components of satisfaction, cohesion, and consensus; (3) They had to be

carefully worded with appropriate responses. Among married respondents, the DAS correlated with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test .86. (See Appendix A for a copy of this scale)

Primary Communication Inventory (Navran, 1967). This 25-item measure assesses quality of verbal communication and accuracy of nonverbal communication in marriage. It contains self-report and spouse-report statements, that is, how a husband or wife perceives his or her own communication, and how a spouse perceives the other's communication. It also assesses whether happily married partners exhibit more congruency in their perceptions of their communication practices than non-happily married couples.

This instrument was originally supposed to be used to measure effective communication as well as congruency of perception. Congruency of perception was not measured in this study, because it was an adapted version of the PCI that was used to measure congruency of perception in other research studies rather than the original version of the PCI which was used in this study.

In recent research, Chronbach's coefficient alphas were computed on each of the scales: verbal PCI and nonverbal PCI. Internal reliabilities for these scales were computed on 96 couples. The alphas for 18 verbal items was .85, and the alpha for 7 nonverbal items was .56. Chronbach alphas were also computed for each category of married couples.

The alpha for 46 happy individuals were: verbal PCI=.79, and nonverbal PCI=.55. The alphas for 46 individuals undergoing counseling were: verbal PCI=.80, and nonverbal PCI=.42. (See Appendix B for a copy of this scale)

Primary Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR), (Olson & Schaefer, undated). The PAIR Inventory is a 36-item questionnaire that describes how each of the partners sees the relationship as it is now and how each would like it to be on five types of intimacy: emotional (e.g., My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to), social (e.g., We enjoy spending time with other couples), sexual (e.g., I am satisfied with our sex life), intellectual (e.g., My partner helps me clarify my thoughts), recreational (e.g., We enjoy the same recreational activities). A sixth scale was added that reveals the tendency to try and make an exaggerated good impression from Edmonds Conventionality Scale (1967). The PAIR has six items for each scale, and six scores are reported. The internal consistency reliability of the PAIR is .70 for intellectual or recreational intimacy to .77 for sexual intimacy. No test-retest reliability is reported. The correlation between PAIR scores and other test scores is significant. The Social Intimacy subscale correlates .98 with couples' scores on the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. The correlation between PAIR and another recently developed intimacy scale, the Waring Intimacy Questionnaire, is significant ($R=.77$; $p>.01$). The correlation between PAIR

and a test of self-disclosure was significant but low (.13 to .31). PAIR is correlated significantly with various measures of family environment, especially Cohesion and Expressiveness. The best scale for predicting other marital questionnaire scores is the scale for Emotional Intimacy. (See Appendix C for a copy of this scale)

Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder, 1981). This questionnaire is a 280-item, true-false questionnaire developed to measure possible sources of marital dissatisfaction. It has one scale to measure the tendency to make a good impression about the marriage, one global satisfaction scale, three scales that measure the general quality of communication and time together, five scales that measure specific sources of marital distress, and one scale to measure the stress and ineffective role models found in the client's original families. Thus, it contains 11 non-overlapping scales, two of which will be used to measure: problem-solving, and finance disagreement.

The internal consistency reliability estimates for all scales were high: from .80 to .97. The average coefficient was .88. Stability estimates of the scores over six weeks were very high: from .84 to .94. The average correlation was .89. (See Appendix D for a copy of this scale)

Self-Disclosure 21 (Jourard, 1960). This is a 21-item questionnaire that assesses self-disclosure among couples. The SD-21 is a modified version of an earlier self-report instrument of self-disclosure, the SD-60 (Jourard & Lasakow,

1958). The statements in the SD-21 covers four of the six topic areas in the SD-60, but is worded differently. The four topic areas covered are: attitudes and opinions (e.g., your personal religious views and the nature of your religious participation, if any); tastes and interests (e.g., your hobbies and how you best like to spend your spare time); work (e.g., the aspects of your daily work that satisfy and bother you); and personality (e.g., characteristics of yourself that give you cause for pride and satisfaction). Excluded are the topic areas of money (e.g., whether or not I owe money; if so, how much), and body image (e.g., problems and worries that I had with my appearance in the past). The SD-21 contains self-report statements which measures the amount of past self-disclosure to ones spouse. Each question is scored from zero to five, zero representing low self-disclosure. The summed total of the 21 questions is the SD score. The general psychometric quality of the SD-60 is considered quite good. Jourard and Lasakow (1958) report overall odd-even split-half reliability coefficients of .94, and Fitzgerald (1963) reports split-half reliability coefficients between .78 and .99 for the six SD-60 topic areas. On adapted versions of the SD-60, such as the SD-21 and others, Jourard and Richman (1963) report odd-even reliability coefficients for each of the topic areas ranging from .75 to .90, and .85 for the total score. Test-retest reliability coefficients after six months were established from two samples and were .61 and

.62 for the total score. (See Appendix E for copy of this scale.)

The following four questions were asked to assess marital commitment:

1. Marriage is a long-term commitment.

1=strongly disagree	3=agree
2=disagree	4=strongly agree
2. If you had your life to live over again, would you:

1=marry another person
2=not marry at all
3=marry the same person
3. Have you ever considered separating from your spouse?

1=seriously	3=yes, but never seriously
2=somewhat seriously	4=not at all
4. How likely is it that in the future you may find a person you would rather be married to instead of your present spouse?

1=very likely	3=somewhat unlikely
2=somewhat likely	4=very unlikely

The following three questions were asked to assess quantity of marital conflict:

1. Frequency of getting on each other's nerves.

1=never	4=more often than not
2=rarely	5=most of the time
3=occasionally	6=all of the time

2. Frequency of quarreling.

1=never

4=more often than not

2=rarely

5=most of the time

3=occasionally

6=all of the time

3. Frequency of discussing divorce, separation or termination of the relationship.

1=never

4=more often than not

2=rarely

5=most of the time

3=occasionally

6=all of the time

The following question was asked to assess sexual gratification.

1. Sex has become more enjoyable over the years.

1=yes

2=no

The following questions were asked to assess humor and play.

1. Frequency of laughing together.

1=never

4=once to twice a week

2=less than once a month

5=once a day

3=once or twice a month

6=more than once a day

2. I enjoy being with my spouse and sharing fun times together.

1=never

4=once to twice a week

2=less than once a month

5=once a day

3=once or twice a month

6=more than once a day

3. My spouse has a good sense of humor.
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1=never | 4=almost always |
| 2=almost never | 5=always |
| 3=occasionally | |
4. My spouse and I engage in outside interests together.
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1=never | 4=almost always |
| 2=almost never | 5=always |
| 3=occasionally | |

The following two questions were asked to assess the significance of children to a successful marriage.

1. Children have been an important factor in the success of our marriage.
- | | |
|--------|---------|
| 1=true | 2=false |
|--------|---------|
2. Our children have provided a significant part of the purpose and meaning of our marriage.
- | | |
|--------|---------|
| 1=true | 2=false |
|--------|---------|

Procedure

Informed Consent. A letter describing the purpose and procedures of the study was given to each subject. An informed consent slip was attached to this description of the study. Subjects who agreed to participate in the study signed a statement of this fact. Only subjects who signed the consent form were allowed to participate. (See Appendix F for a copy of the informed consent form).

Table 1

Marital Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Marsat	198	34.23	3.24	23	42
Selfdisc	198	45.28	13.81	0	84
Problem Solv	198	27.61	8.48	2	38
Sex	198	71.00	18.01	0	96
Intimacy	198	70.07	17.80	20	96
Effcomm	198	65.87	11.24	22	90
Commitment	198	13.66	1.45	9	15
Conflict	198	6.57	1.54	3	13
Humor/Play	198	15.01	1.57	7	23
Children	198	2.28	0.62	2	4

RESULTS

Based upon the foregoing literature reviews, variables were selected for this causal model (see Figure 1). It is from this model that the hypotheses were established, thus, the model serves as a visual representation of the hypotheses. This model also shows very distinct directions of influence, or paths among variables that lead directly or indirectly to marital satisfaction, and is the basis for path analysis.

In Figure 2, all but two variables remained in the model. Variables excluded were religion and congruency of perception. Religion was excluded because it was not actually hypothesized to have an influence on marital satisfaction, but rather, it was hypothesized that most couples would have the same religious preference, more of a yes/no question. Congruency of perception was excluded due to the reasons explained in the methods section.

To get from Figure 2 to the final Figure 3 actually required two additional path models. This entailed using the original correlations from the correlation matrix (see Table 1), to calculate path coefficients. From the coefficients, the correlation matrix was reproduced. From

the actual and reproduced correlations, the error analysis was obtained.

The error analysis begins with the original correlation matrix and the path coefficients. The path coefficients can be combined according to the rules described by Duncan (1975) to produce what may be termed 'the reproduced correlation matrix.' If the path model fits the data perfectly, then the reproduced correlation matrix would match the original correlation matrix exactly. In most cases, however, the path model does not fit perfectly, thus, one must quantify the deviations from the original correlation matrix, and decide if the deviations are statistically meaningful, that is, greater than chance.

The procedure used to determine the degree of misfit for the model as a whole is to substitute elements in the reproduced correlation matrix from the corresponding elements in the original. This gives the error matrix. Inspection of the error matrix indicates where the reproduced correlations deviate from the observed, thus, where the model may need to be modified.

To quantify the fit of the model as a whole, the procedure used is to square the terms in the error matrix and sum them (either above or below the diagonal). To turn this number into a meaningful statistic, a standard error for the unconstrained correlations must be computed. The unconstrained correlations correspond to those paths which were not specified in the model. The standard error is

computed by averaging the unconstrained correlations and entering that value into a formula; this formula is simply the standard deviation for a correlation. The summary measures of the fit of the model is: the sum of the squared errors divided by the standard deviation of the average unconstrained correlations. This statistic is termed 'Q' (Hunter, 1983). 'Q' is equivalent to a chi square, thus, its significance can be tested using a chi square table and the degrees of freedom are equivalent to the number of unconstrained correlations. If the 'Q' statistic is not significant, then the model adequately fits the data.

If the 'Q' statistic is not significant, then the analysis would be finished. As a last check, however, the error terms can be examined by the method to be described below to see if any are significant. When doing this, however, one should keep in mind that a large error may occur simply by chance, thus, a decision to change the model should take into account substantive reasons. The path coefficients are equal to beta coefficients in multiple regression and their standard errors may be computed in like manner.

If the 'Q' statistic is significant, then the model needs to be modified. The basic procedure in modifying the model is to add a path corresponding to the largest error, and then rerun the model. If desired, a statistical test may be constructed for each error as described by Hunter (1983); this is the z-score.

It may happen that the final model has some coefficients which are not significant, and what one does with nonsignificant coefficients depends on the degree to which the model is tied to a theory. If the theory makes specific predictions about certain paths, then a nonsignificant path coefficient is disconfirming evidence, and should be kept. If, on the other hand, the desire is to fit the model to the data without regard to theory, then nonsignificant paths can be dropped and the model rerun, as in this particular research project. In other words, if in the error analysis the z value was > 1.96 ($p < .05$), certain variables were excluded and new paths were needed, thus, two additional path models were necessary to get from Figure 2 to the final Figure 3.

Figure 3 is better than Figures 1 and 2, and the best solution for two major reasons. First of all, the path coefficients obtained in Figure 3 are all strong coefficients and show more interaction among variables than the previous figures. Although it might have been possible to obtain even stronger path coefficients by omitting more variables, the purpose of this particular study was to examine several variables that are thought to work together to achieve a "successful" marriage. Figure 3 has strong path coefficients and maintains the majority of variables discussed in the literature review.

Figure 3 provides much information about the hypotheses, even with the four variables of religion,

finances, children, and congruency of perception excluded. It should be pointed out that the variables of children and finances were excluded from the final path due to them having z values > 1.96 in the path models necessary to get from Figure 2 to the final Figure 3. The final set of variables selected included: commitment, problem solving, self-disclosure, conflict, effective communication, intimacy, humor/play, the sexual relationship, and marital satisfaction. It is believed that these variables or characteristics influence each other directly and/or indirectly, thereby effecting marriage rather than functioning as separate entities. The hypotheses were analyzed two different ways, correlational analysis and path analysis, and are illustrated in Figure 3 and Table 2.

Path Modeling of Long-term, Satisfying Marriages

Hypothesis 1 stated that commitment was positively related to marital satisfaction because of its direct, as well as indirect, influences on all other variables (see Figure 1). There was a significant positive correlation ($r = .26, P < .01$) between commitment and marital satisfaction, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. Figure 3 shows that the influence of commitment on marital satisfaction was mediated by commitment's effect on the amount of conflict present in the marriage. The more commitment evidenced in the marriage, the less conflict there was (path coef. = $-.28$).

Hypothesis 2 stated that problem solving and self-disclosure were the best indicators of, and will correlate positively with, effective communication because of their direct effect on effective communication (see Figure 1). There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .37, p < .001$) between problem solving and effective communication, and the path analysis also showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = .26). There was also a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .43, p < .001$) between self-disclosure and effective communication, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = .40).

Hypotheses 3 stated that intimacy was directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure (see Figure 1). There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .53, p < .001$) between intimacy and effective communication, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = .32). There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .66, p < .001$) between intimacy and problem solving, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = .45). There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .17, p < .05$) between intimacy and self-disclosure, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. Figure 3 shows that the influence of self-disclosure on intimacy was mediated by self-disclosure's effect on effective

communication present in the marriage. The more self-disclosure evidenced in the marriage, the more effective communication (path coef. = .40). There was no significant correlation between intimacy and commitment, but the path analysis showed that the influence of commitment on intimacy was mediated by commitment's effect on conflict present in the marriage. The more commitment evidenced in the marriage the less conflict there was (path coef. = -.28).

Hypothesis 4 stated that conflict was directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure (see Figure 1). There was a significant negative correlation ($r = -.28$, $p < .001$) between conflict and effective communication, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = -.15). There was a significant negative correlation ($r = -.33$, $p < .001$) between conflict and commitment, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = -.28). There was a significant negative correlation ($r = -.48$, $p < .001$) between conflict and problem solving, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. = -.45). There was no significant correlation between conflict and self-disclosure, and the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables.

Hypothesis 5 stated that intimacy and conflict were the best indicators of a satisfactory sexual relationship (see Figure 1). There was a significant positive correlation (r

= .35, $p < .001$) between intimacy and sex, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. There was a significant negative correlation ($r = -.18$, $p < .01$) between conflict and sex, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. The path analysis did, however, show a direct path between problem solving and sex (path coef. = .26), and there was a significant positive correlation ($r = .37$, $p < .001$) between the two variables, and the path analysis also showed a direct path between effective communication and sex (path coef. = .28), and there was a significant positive correlation ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) between these two variables. Correlational analysis showed significant relationships between the variables that were unsupported by the path analysis, as well as the new ones discovered in the path analysis. This difference between the two analyses implies then, that neither intimacy nor conflict is a direct causation for a satisfactory sexual relationship, and although intimacy and the sexual relationship, as are conflict and the sexual relationship are both related, this does not imply causation. Interestingly, problem solving and effective communication were also correlated with the sexual relationship, thereby, supporting results from the path analysis (see Figures 3 and 4).

Hypothesis 6 stated that intimacy, conflict, the sexual relationship, and commitment directly affect marital satisfaction (see Figure 1). There was a significant

positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .40, p < .001$) between intimacy and marital satisfaction, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. There was a significant negative correlation ($\underline{r} = -.57, p < .001$) between conflict and marital satisfaction, and the path analysis showed a direct path between the two variables (path coef. $-.45$). There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .23, p < .001$) between sex and marital satisfaction, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables. There was no significant correlation between commitment and marital satisfaction. Figure 3 shows that the influence of commitment on marital satisfaction was mediated by commitment's effect on the amount of conflict present in the marriage. The more commitment evidenced in the marriage, the less conflict there was (path coef. $= -.28$). Once again, correlational analysis conflicted with the path analysis by showing significant relationships of these variables with marital satisfaction. Here too, relation does not imply causation.

Hypothesis 7 stated that commitment, effective communication, intimacy, and the sexual relationship were the best indicators of marital satisfaction due to their direct and indirect influences on marital satisfaction (see Figure 1). This hypothesis is the same as Hypothesis 6, except it looks at effective communication and marital satisfaction, which Hypothesis 6 does not do. There was a significant positive correlation ($\underline{r} = .28, p < .001$) between

effective communication and marital satisfaction, but the path analysis showed no direct path between the two variables (see Figure 3).

Hypothesis 8 stated that children would be viewed as a significant part of a satisfying marriage (see Figure 1). There was no significant correlation between children and marital satisfaction, and, as stated earlier, the variable of children was excluded from the path model due to its nonsignificant path coefficient (see Figure 3).

Hypothesis 9 stated that agreement about finances was positively related to marital satisfaction (see Figure 1). There was a significant positive correlation ($r = .31$, $p < .001$) between finances and marital satisfaction, but this variable was excluded from the path model due to its nonsignificant path coefficient. This contradictory finding between the correlational analysis and the path analysis might be explained in that agreement about finances could perhaps be a milder version of problem solving, and to the extent that one can agree about finances, one also has good problem solving skills (see Figure 3).

Hypothesis 10 stated that most couples in long-term marriage would have the same religious preference. This hypothesis was supported. Out of the 98 couples that participated in the study, only nine had different religious preferences.

The hypothesized model received only partial support. It must be kept in mind, however, that in using path

analyses, the theoretical model and its linkages were established apriori via theory and a literature review of previous research studies. As a result of this limitation, path analyses does not find causal directions, but instead, is a way for testing directions of causation already established by the researcher. None of the proposed direct influences to marital satisfaction were evidenced. Four of the intermediate variables were omitted, (three due to their non-significance, the other unmeasurable) however, the majority of them remained in the model and were supported directly or indirectly. The focus of this particular research study was to examine the variables that work together to achieve a "successful" marriage, which the final path model does in fact do. Variables with direct influence on marital satisfaction were problem solving and conflict. Also shown by this path model was how the other variables either directly or indirectly influence or add to the marital relationship (see Figure 3).

Other Findings

When variables were analyzed by gender, findings similar to hypothesized results were obtained. Hypothesis 1 stated that commitment was positively related to marital satisfaction. There was a significant positive correlation between husband's commitment and husband's marital satisfaction (see Table 4), and a significant positive correlation between wife's commitment and wife's marital

satisfaction (see Table 5). When these same variables were analyzed between couples, however, there was not a significant correlation between husband's commitment and wife's satisfaction or vice-versa (see Table 6). It seems then that the more committed a person is to the marriage and/or their spouse, the more satisfied the person is with their marriage. Commitment by one person, however, does not mean satisfaction by the other person.

Hypothesis 2 stated that problem solving and self-disclosure were the best indicators of, and will correlate positively with, effective communication. No significant correlation was found between problem solving and self-disclosure, or problem solving and effective communication by gender. When examined between couples, however, there was a significant positive correlation between husband's problem solving and wife's effective communication, but no significant correlation between wife's problem solving and husband's effective communication (see Table 6).

There was a significant positive correlation between husband's self-disclosure and effective communication, a significant positive correlation between wife's self-disclosure and effective communication, a significant positive correlation between wife's self-disclosure and husband's effective communication and a significant positive correlation between husband's self-disclosure and wife's effective communication (see Tables 4, 5, and 6).

Hypothesis 3 stated that intimacy was directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure. There were significant positive correlations between husband's intimacy and effective communication, husband's intimacy and problem solving (see Table 4). There were no significant correlations between husband's intimacy and self-disclosure and intimacy and commitment. There were significant positive correlations between wife's intimacy and effective communication, intimacy and problem solving (see Table 5). No significant correlations were found between wife's intimacy and self-disclosure and intimacy and commitment. There were significant positive correlations between husband's intimacy and wife's effective communication, wife's intimacy and husband's effective communication, husband's intimacy and wife's problem solving, wife's intimacy and husband's problem solving, and husband's self-disclosure and wife's intimacy (see Table 6). There were no significant correlations between wife's self-disclosure and husband's intimacy, husband's intimacy and wife's commitment, or wife's intimacy and husband's commitment.

Hypothesis 4 stated that conflict was directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure. For husband's, there were significant negative correlations between conflict and effective communication, conflict and commitment, and conflict and problem solving (see Table 4).

There was no significant correlation between conflict and effective communication, conflict and commitment, and conflict and problem solving (see Table 5). There was no significant correlation between conflict and self-disclosure. Between couples, significant negative correlations between husband's conflict and wife's effective communication, wife's conflict and husband's effective communication, husband's conflict and wife's commitment, and wife's conflict and husband's commitment (see Table 6). No significant correlation was found between husband's conflict and wife's problem solving. There was a significant negative correlation between wife's conflict and husband's problem solving (see Table 6). There was a significant positive correlation between husband's conflict and wife's self-disclosure (see Table 6). There was no significant correlation between wife's conflict and husband's self-disclosure.

Hypothesis 5 stated that intimacy and conflict were the best indicators of a satisfactory sexual relationship. For husband's, there was a significant positive correlation between intimacy and sex (see Table 4). There was no significant correlation between conflict and sex. For wife's there was a significant positive correlation between intimacy and sex (see Table 5). There was no significant correlation between conflict and sex. Between couples, there was no significant correlation between husband's intimacy and wife's sex. There was however, a significant

positive correlation between wife's intimacy and husband's sex (see Table 6). There were no significant correlations between husband's conflict and wife's sex, or vice-versa.

Hypothesis 6 stated that intimacy, conflict, the sexual relationship, and commitment directly affect marital satisfaction. For husband's there was significant positive correlations between intimacy and marital satisfaction, sex and marital satisfaction, and commitment and marital satisfaction. There was a significant negative correlation between conflict and marital satisfaction (see Table 4). For wife's, there was significant positive correlations between intimacy and marital satisfaction, sex and marital satisfaction, and commitment and marital satisfaction. There was a significant negative correlation between conflict and marital satisfaction (see Table 5). Between couples, there were significant positive correlations between husband's intimacy and wife's marital satisfaction, wife's intimacy and husband's marital satisfaction, and husband's sex and wife's marital satisfaction (see Table 5). There were no significant correlations between wife's sex and husband's marital satisfaction, husband's commitment and wife's marital satisfaction, or vice-versa. There were significant negative correlations between husband's conflict and wife's marital satisfaction, and wife's conflict and husband's marital satisfaction (see Table 6).

Hypothesis 7 stated that commitment, effective communication, intimacy, and the sexual relationship were

the best indicators of marital satisfaction. This hypothesis is the same as Hypothesis 6, except it looks at effective communication and marital satisfaction. There were significant positive correlations between husband's effective communication and marital satisfaction (see Table 4), between wife's effective communication and marital satisfaction (see Table 5), between husband's effective communication with wife's marital satisfaction, and between wife's effective communication and husband's marital satisfaction (see Table 6).

Hypothesis 8 stated that children would be viewed as a significant part of a satisfying marriage. There were no significant correlations by gender or between couples.

Hypothesis 9 stated that agreement about finances was positively related to marital satisfaction. There was a significant positive correlation between husband's agreement about finances and marital satisfaction (see Table 4), but not for wife's, and no significant correlation between couples.

Table 2

Status of the Hypotheses

Hypotheses	S	R	PS
H1: Commitment will be positively related to marital satisfaction because of its direct, as well as indirect influence on all other variables.			PS
H2: Problem solving and self-disclosure will be the best indicators of, and will correlate positively with effective communication, because of their effects on each other and their direct effect on effective communication.	S		
H3: Intimacy is directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure.	S		
H4: Conflict is directly affected by effective communication, and indirectly affected by commitment, problem solving, and self-disclosure.			PS
H5: Intimacy and conflict will be the best indicators of the satisfactory sexual relationship, because of their direct effects on the sexual relationship.		R	
H6: Marital satisfaction is directly affected by intimacy, conflict, the sexual relationship, and commitment.			PS
H7: Commitment, effective communication, intimacy, and the sexual relationship will be the best indicators of marital satisfaction because of their direct as well as indirect pathways which influence marital satisfaction.		R	
H8: Children will be viewed as a significant part of a satisfying marriage.		R	

Hypotheses	S	R	PS
H9: Agreement about finances will be positively related to marital satisfaction.			PS
H10: Most couples in long-term marriage will have the same religious preference.	S		

S = Supported R = Refuted PS = Partially Supported

Table 6
Correlations Among Variables between Couples

HUSBAND'S											
	Conflict	Commit	Children	Humor/ Play	Marital Status	Self- Disclo	Problem Solving	Finances	Effect Commun	Sex	Intimacy
WIFE'S Conflict	.59 p=.001	-.24 p=.02	-.03 p=.80	-.27 p=.01	-.44 p=.001	-.08 p=.43	-.44 p=.001	-.13 p=.19	-.34 p=.001	-.21 p=.01	-.51 p=.001
Commitment	-.22 p=.03	.48 p=.001	-.09 p=.40	.13 p=.20	.12 p=.22	-.22 p=.03	.15 p=.13	.10 p=.33	-.08 p=.42	-.02 p=.86	.15 p=.16
Children	-.04 p=.72	.06 p=.57	.39 p=.001	-.01 p=.89	.08 p=.43	-.01 p=.10	-.02 p=.81	-.05 p=.62	-.03 p=.75	-.10 p=.34	-.16 p=.14
Humor/Play	-.36 p=.001	.25 p=.01	.18 p=.08	.66 p=.001	.44 p=.001	.21 p=.04	.33 p=.001	.11 p=.26	.41 p=.001	.36 p=.001	.44 p=.001
Marital Stat	-.34 p=.001	.08 p=.45	.10 p=.33	.22 p=.03	.40 p=.001	.13 p=.21	.28 p=.006	.02 p=.86	.23 p=.02	.27 p=.01	.44 p=.001
Self-Disclo	.26 p=.01	-.09 p=.38	-.01 p=.89	.14 p=.18	-.02 p=.86	.45 p=.001	-.09 p=.41	-.08 p=.41	.31 p=.002	.13 p=.23	.08 p=.46
Problem Solv	-.18 p=.07	-.12 p=.22	.04 p=.69	.25 p=.01	.33 p=.001	-.04 p=.73	.49 p=.001	.10 p=.35	.30 p=.01	.14 p=.20	.37 p=.001
Finances	-.12 p=.22	-.21 p=.03	-.01 p=.95	-.10 p=.30	.10 p=.31	-.17 p=.10	-.03 p=.80	.11 p=.28	.05 p=.64	-.15 p=.17	.01 p=.94
Effect Commun	-.26 p=.01	.07 p=.48	.03 p=.80	.46 p=.001	.38 p=.001	.36 p=.001	.29 p=.004	.20 p=.05	.64 p=.001	.39 p=.001	.47 p=.001
Sex	-.07 p=.50	-.07 p=.52	-.23 p=.03	.22 p=.03	.14 p=.20	.04 p=.71	.07 p=.47	.09 p=.38	.28 p=.01	.48 p=.001	.39 p=.001
Intimacy	-.31 p=.002	.03 p=.78	.17 p=.11	.44 p=.001	.40 p=.001	.24 p=.02	.32 p=.002	.11 p=.27	.50 p=.001	.39 p=.001	.49 p=.001

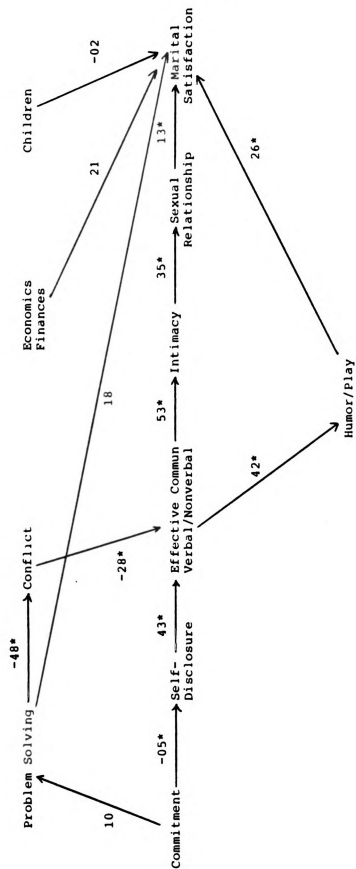


Figure 2. Intermediate Path Model

* Indicates variables significant at the .05 level.

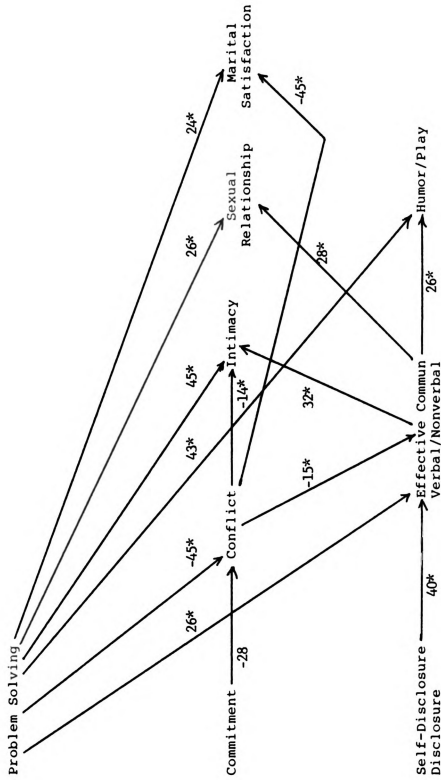


Figure 3. Final Path Model

* All path coefficients significant at the .05 level.

DISCUSSION

The focus of this study was to examine the predictive power of a model of several variables that work together to achieve a "successful" marriage. Using causal modeling and path analysis, its purpose was to add knowledge to the area of marriage using an integrative approach. It is felt that this particular research study was successful in this endeavor in that it went a step further than most previous single variable studies, and examined marriage from an integrative perspective. The original model was an attempt to examine a two-way flow of causal direction, however, path analysis tests only one-way causal direction, thus, a model to fit this type of analysis was developed. This does not mean, however, that a two-way flow of causal direction does not exist. The variables selected for the model were based on an expanding set of theories. The variables included are not exhaustive, however, they are those most researched in previous studies.

Major Findings

The overall model provides moderate support for the hypothesized model as formulated in the path diagram. The model was based on several theories and studies regarding

marital satisfaction; some of which were fully supported, some partially supported, and others refuted.

Several theories commitment as it relates to marriage were discussed. Of these theorists, Kilpatrick's (1975) theory is the most outspoken regarding the importance or connection between commitment and an enduring marriage. He states that "commitment is one of the foremost requirements of an enduring marriage," (1975, pp. 232-233). Keeping in mind Kilpatrick's view, along with other theorists' views (e.g., Lauer & Lauer, 1986; Quinn, 1982; Sternberg, 1985), commitment was hypothesized to directly effect marital satisfaction. The paths revealed by the analyses show that commitment is an important variable, however, its influence on marital satisfaction is indirect rather than direct. As shown in Figure 3, commitment directly affects conflict, which directly affects marital satisfaction. In other words, commitment's direct influence on conflict, which directly affects marital satisfaction. Thus, Kilpatrick's and others views were partially supported.

When this same variable is examined by gender, it was shown that husband's commitment and marital satisfaction were positively correlated with each other, as were wife's commitment and marital satisfaction. This indicates that one's marital satisfaction is related to one's level of commitment. Between couples, however, this was not the case; one cannot predict one spouse's marital satisfaction by the other spouses level of commitment.

Several precursors were discussed as being necessary for effective communication to occur. These included problem solving, low conflict, and self-disclosure. Lauer and Lauer's (1986) theory of conflict and problem solving as it relates to effective communication was fully supported by the results. Their theory suggests that people in satisfied marital relationships are those whose communication skills have been enlarged to deal appropriately with the problems inherent in marriage. These two variables are the only two in the entire path model that have direct effects on marital satisfaction. It seems then, that while all the other variables are important and add to marital satisfaction in some way, it is the extent to which one can problem solve and keep conflict to a minimum that has the most direct influence on one having a satisfactory marital relationship. Interestingly enough, when problem solving and effective communication were looked at by gender, no significant relationships were found. Significant relationships were found, however, between couples in that husband's problem solving was positively related to wife's effective communication, or, the greater the husband's problem solving skills, the more effective the wife's communication skills, or vice-versa. When examining conflict with marital satisfaction, both husbands and wives with low conflict are more satisfied with their marriages, and one can predict a spouses level of marital satisfaction by their level of conflict. This same finding also holds true for effective

communication and marital satisfaction. These findings are also supported by more recent research. Sabourin, Laporte, and Wright (1990) investigated the relationship between problem solving, specific coping efforts and marital distress. Results indicated that when compared to nondistressed spouses, distressed spouses showed less ability to problem solve, a tendency to avoid problem solving activities, and poor strategies to control their behavior.

Regarding self-disclosure, theorists such as Komanovsky (1962), Hendrick (1982), and Jourard (1982) discuss its importance to effective communication and marital satisfaction. Self-disclosure had no direct or indirect influence on marital satisfaction. This same finding held true when examined by gender as well as between couples. It did, however, directly affect effective communication as suggested, and affected several other variables indirectly via effective communication. Once again, this was true via gender and between couples. Husbands' and wives' ability to self-disclose was related to their level of effective communication, and one could predict one spouse's ability to self-disclose based on the other spouse's level of effective communication or vice versa. It seems, therefore, that what Lauer and Lauer (1986) have to say about enlarged communication skills is true, and that effective communication does in fact result from adequate problem solving skills, low conflict, and self-disclosure.

Several studies stated that communication is positively related to good marital adjustment (e.g., Lauer & Lauer, 1986; Navran, 1967; O'Neill & O'Neill, 1972). This theory was supported by the correlation matrix, and indirectly by the path model. It should be pointed out, however, that without problem solving, low conflict and self-disclosure, effective communication could not take place. To take it a step further, it seems that these three variables are what make up effective communication, and it is in this way, through these variables that effective communication impacts on marital satisfaction.

Another "ingredient" included as a part of a satisfactory marital relationship is intimacy. Sternberg (1986), described intimacy as the emotional aspect of love. He further stated that intimacy included closeness, sharing, communication, emotional support, plus a host of other things. For this reason, intimacy was thought to be impacted by and impact on a number of things. Intimacy is directly influenced by problem solving, low conflict, and effective communication, and indirectly by commitment. This was hypothesized and supported. Interestingly, intimacy was thought to have direct influence on the sexual relationship, and although the two variables correlated positively with each other, as did both spouses intimacy with their sexual relationship, and wife's intimacy with their husband's sexual relationship, it did not directly influence the sexual relationship, or any other variable in the path

model. Intimacy was, however, directly influenced by problem solving, low conflict, and effective communication. These findings also held true when examined by gender as well as between couples. It therefore seems safe to say that intimacy is an added feature to a satisfactory marital relationship, however, not a necessary one.

Humor and play was discussed by Betcher (1981) as intimacy in the form of play. He viewed it as being involved in positive bonding, communication, low conflict, and as predisposed to stabilize a marital relationship. Although little attention has been directed to this form of intimacy, it appears that Betcher was correct in its importance to many variables related to marital satisfaction. Humor and play was positively correlated with all variables in the path model. It was positively correlated with most variables for each spouse and most variables between couples. It had no direct influences on variables, but was, however, directly influenced by effective communication, and low conflict.

The sexual relationship and its importance or lack of importance on the marital relationship has been examined by many theorists. Results from this study show that a satisfactory sexual relationship was related to numerous variables in the path model, and it is directly affected by problem solving and effective communication, however, not by intimacy as was proposed. The sexual relationship does, however, correlate positively with the above mentioned

variables for gender, as well as between couples. Results also seem to substantiate previous findings (e.g., Ard, 1977; Lauer & Lauer, 1986; Maslow, 1954; Roberts, 1986). That is to say that long married couples continue to experience significant pleasure from sexual relations, but sex is not the main ingredient for fulfillment in a marriage.

Other factors that were thought to impact on marital satisfaction were children, religion, and economic/finances. The effect of children on marital quality has been studied by numerous researchers (e.g., Hicks & Platt, 1970; Lauer & Lauer, 1986; Rankin & Maneker, 1985; Ryder, 1973). These researchers concluded that children can add a vital part of the purpose and meaning to marriage, but they can also be the source of stress and strains. Additionally, children can be a cohesive force in a deteriorating marriage or they can further enhance an already satisfying marriage. In this study, children did not positively correlate with any variable, and was excluded from the final path model. Interestingly enough, while some participants responded positively to the question, "our children have provided a significant part to the purpose and meaning of our marriage," many more participants responded negatively to the question, "children have been an important factor in the success of our marriage." One could perhaps conclude from this that these participants felt that children are an important part of their marriage, but they feel that their

marriage would have been successful in and of itself, without the influence of children.

In this study, religion was thought to be an important factor in that previous studies showed that most long-term married couples have the same religious preference, or mixed religious preference, and that marital failures were higher among those with no religious preference. This study substantiated previous findings; most couples had the same religious preference, next was mixed religious preference.

Economics/finances as it relates to marital satisfaction has been examined from numerous perspectives. While it was once thought that high socioeconomic status was positively related to favorable marital outcomes, more recent research has not substantiated this notion. Schaniger and Buss (1986) examined differences in consumption, decision making, and finance handling behavior between couples who divorced or stayed happily married. Their results led the authors to conclude that establishment of equality and equity in the early stages of marriage are important for marital stability. This study examined decision making and finance handling behavior. Results from the correlational analysis supported Schaniger and Buss's theory. Agreement on how to handle finances was positively related to marital satisfaction, low conflict, problem solving, plus other variables. When this variable was entered into the path model, however, its significance dropped, and it was excluded from the model.

Summary and Conclusions

These were the major findings with regard to the theories utilized in the present research. The variable with the most influence on variables in the path model was problem solving. It directly influenced effective communication, low conflict, humor and play, intimacy, the sexual relationship, and marital satisfaction. No other variable came this close to having such an impact on other variables. This finding could lead one to conclude that to the extent that couples can adequately problem solve positively influences many other aspects in the marital relationship.

It should be kept in mind, however, that one should be cautious in generalizing these results to all married couples. It would seem that couples who participated in the research were couples who viewed their marriage as a satisfactory one, thus, adding bias to the results. Couples who refused to participate were perhaps distressed, unhappy couples, so data was unattainable on this particular sample. If they had in fact participated, comparisons could have been made, strengthening the results of what leads to marital satisfaction versus marital dissatisfaction.

This study does, however, do what it set out to do; that is, examine long-term, satisfying marriages from an integrative perspective. The findings indicate that a number of variables influence the marital relationship

directly or indirectly, with problem solving being the most influential variable within the path model.

These findings should guide future research in the direction of evaluating the marital relationship from an integrative perspective. These findings should also guide clinicians who work with couples in the areas of premarital counseling, marital counseling, and marital enrichment. Knowing that the ability to problem solve is directly related to marital satisfaction, as well as lack of conflict, effective communication, intimacy, the sexual relationship, and humor/play is very important clinical knowledge. It lets clinicians know that to the extent that problem solving can be taught, modified, and/or enriched in a relationship, it can positively influence all of the above mentioned variables, thus, leading to greater marital satisfaction along couples seeking help. By knowing what variables significantly contribute to marital satisfaction, better steps can be taken for better intervention/prevention.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Do you confide in your mate?	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	0	1	2	3	4	5

	Every day	Almost every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
8. Do you kiss your mate?	4	3	2	1	0

9. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot that best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
o	o	o	o	o	o	o
Extremely unhappy	Fairly unhappy	A little unhappy	Happy	Very happy	Extremely happy	Perfect

10. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship:

- 5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed and would go to almost any lengths to see that it does.
- 4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do all that I can to see that it does.
- 3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- 2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, and I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
- 1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- 0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more than I can do to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX B
PRIMARY COMMUNICATION INVENTORY

TABLE 3

Primary Communication Inventory

Instructions: Below is a list of items on communication between you and your spouse. In the columns on the right are five possible answers. Opposite each item place a check in the column which best represents the extent to which you and your spouse behave in the specified way.

Item	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
1. How often do you and your spouse talk over pleasant things that happen during the day?					
2. How often do you and your spouse talk over unpleasant things that happen during the day?					
3. Do you and your spouse talk over things you disagree about or have difficulties over?					
4. Do you and your spouse talk about things in which you are both interested?					
5. Does your spouse adjust what he (she) says and how he (she) says it to the way you seem to feel at the moment?					
6. When you start to ask a question, does your spouse know what it is before you ask it?					
7. Do you know the feelings of your spouse from his (her) facial and bodily gestures?					

Item	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
9. Does your spouse explain or express himself (herself) to you through a glance of gesture?					
10. Do you and your spouse discuss things together before making an important decision?					
11. Can your spouse tell what kind of day you have had without asking?					
12. Your spouse wants to visit some close friends or relatives. You don't particularly enjoy their company. Would you tell him (her) this?					
13. Does your spouse discuss matters of sex with you?					
14. Do you and your spouse use words which have a special meaning not understood by others?					
15. How often does your spouse sulk or pout?					
16. Can you and your spouse discuss your most sacred beliefs without feelings of restraint or embarrassment?					
17. Do you avoid telling your spouse things which put you in a bad light?					
18. You and your spouse are visiting friends. Something is said by the friends which causes you to glance at each other. Would you understand each other?					

Item	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom	Never
19. How often can you tell as much from the tone of voice of your spouse as from what he (she) actually says?					
20. How often do you and your spouse talk with each other about personal problems?					
21. Do you feel that in most matters your spouse knows what you are trying to say?					
22. Would you rather talk about intimate matters with your spouse than with some other person?					
23. Do you understand the meaning of your spouse's facial expressions?					
24. If you and your spouse are visiting friends or relatives and one of you starts to say something, does the other take over the conversation without the feeling of interrupting?					
25. During marriage, have you and your spouse, in general talked most things over together?					

APPENDIX C

**PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF INTIMACY
IN RELATIONSHIPS PAIR**

PAIR ITEM BOOKLET

By: David H. Olson, Ph.D. and Mark T. Schaefer, Ph.D.

INSTRUCTIONS: This Inventory is used to measure different kinds of "intimacy" in your relationship. You are to indicate your response to each statement by using the following five point scale.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

There are two steps to the Inventory. In Part I you are to respond in the way you feel about the item at present. Use Step One of the ANSWER SHEET for this step. It is labeled "How it is Now."

In the second step you are to respond according to the way you would like it to be, that is, if you could have your relationship be any way that you may want it to be. Use Step Two for this step. It is labeled "How I would like it to be." There are no right or wrong answers.

Respond to all the items in Step One before proceeding to Step Two.

0 Strongly Disagree	1 Somewhat Disagree	2 Neutral	3 Somewhat Agree	4 Strongly Agree
---------------------------	---------------------------	--------------	------------------------	------------------------

1. My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to.
2. We enjoy spending time with other couples.
3. I am satisfied with our sex life.
4. My partner helps me clarify my thoughts.
5. We enjoy the same recreational activities.
6. My partner has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
7. I can state my feelings without him/her getting defensive.
8. We usually "keep to ourselves."
9. I feel our sexual activity is just routine.
10. When it comes to having a serious discussion, it seems we have little in common.
11. I share in few of my partner's interests.
12. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my partner.
13. I often feel distant from my partner.
14. We have few friends in common.
15. I am able to tell my partner when I want sexual intercourse.
16. I feel "put-down" in a serious conversation with my partner.
17. We like playing together.
18. Every new things I have learned about my partner has pleased me.
19. My partner can really understand my hurts and joys.
20. Having time together with friends is an important part of our shared activities.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

21. I "hold back" my sexual interest because my partner makes me feel uncomfortable.
22. I feel it is useless to discuss some things with my partner.
23. We enjoy the out-of-doors together.
24. My partner and I understand each other completely.
25. I feel neglected at times by my partner.
26. Many of my partner's closest friends are also my closest friends.
27. Sexual expression is an essential part of our relationship.
28. My partner frequently tries to change my ideas.
29. We seldom find time to do fun things together.
30. I don't think anyone could possible be happier than my partner and I when we are with one another.
31. I sometimes feel lonely when we're together.
32. My partner disapproves of some of my friends.
33. My partner seems disinterested in sex.
34. We have an endless number of things to talk about.
35. I feel we share some of the same interests.
36. I have some needs that are not being met by my relationship.

ANSWER SHEET

By David H. Olson and Mark T. Schaefer

INSTRUCTIONS: In Part I, use the answer grid on the left side of the page, labeled "1". In Part II use the grid on the right side, labeled "2". Please respond to every item, using the five point scale at the top of each page.

COUPLE NUMBER	GROUP NUMBER	PRE POST	DATE
YOUR NAME:		AGE:	MALE FEMALE
PARTNER'S NAME:		COUNSELOR:	

"How It Is Now"

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

"How I would LIKE it to be"

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

PLEASE NO NOT MARK BELOW THIS LINE

	Em	So	Sx	Int	Rec	Co
PRS -						
x4 =						- SUM 1
NRS -						
Y -	12	12	12	16	8	
Y-NRS -						
x4 =						- SUM 2
SUM 1 -	P-SCORE TOTALS					
+ SUM 2 -						

APPENDIX D
MARITAL SATISFACTION INVENTORY

Instructions: Please read the following statements and circle
 T = True or F = False as near as they apply.
 Please do not skip any statements.

Problem Solving Communication (PSC)

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|---|
| T | F | 1. | There are some things my spouse and I just can't talk about. |
| T | F | 2. | My spouse is so touchy on some subjects that I can't even mention them. |
| T | F | 3. | I sometimes am reluctant to express disagreement with my spouse for fear that he (she) will get angry. |
| T | F | 4. | I sometimes am reluctant to discuss certain things with my spouse because I'm afraid I might hurt his (her) feelings. |
| T | F | 5. | My spouse's feelings are too easily hurt. |
| T | F | 6. | My spouse does not take criticism as a personal attack. |
| T | F | 7. | My spouse has no difficulty accepting criticism. |
| T | F | 8. | My spouse readily admits an error when he (she) has been wrong. |
| T | F | 9. | My spouse often complains that I don't understand him (her). |
| T | F | 10. | My spouse and I almost always discuss things together before making an important decision. |
| T | F | 11. | During our marriage, my spouse and I have always talked things over. |
| T | F | 12. | When my spouse and I have differences of opinion, we sit down and discuss them. |
| T | F | 13. | During an argument with my spouse, each of us airs our feelings completely. |

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|--|
| T | F | 14. | My spouse and I often remain silent for long periods when we are angry with one another. |
| T | F | 15. | My spouse and I seem able to go for days somethings without settling our differences. |
| T | F | 16. | A lot of our arrangements seem to end in depressing stalemates. |
| T | F | 17. | My spouse rarely nags me. |
| T | F | 18. | Frequently when we argue, my spouse and I seem to go over and over the same old things. |
| T | F | 19. | A lot of arguments with my spouse seem to be about trivia. |
| T | F | 20. | Minor disagreements with my spouse often end up in big arguments. |
| T | F | 21. | We sometimes seem unable to settle calmly even our minor differences. |
| T | F | 22. | My spouse seems committed to settling our differences. |
| T | F | 23. | My spouse often insists on getting his (her) own way regardless of what I may want. |
| T | F | 24. | When my spouse and I disagree, my spouse helps us to find alternatives acceptable to both of us. |
| T | F | 25. | My spouse and I need to improve the way we settle our differences. |
| T | F | 26. | Our arguments frequently end up with one of us feeling hurt or crying. |
| T | F | 27. | My spouse and I seem to get carried away in an argument and say things we don't really mean. |
| T | F | 28. | Our arguments often end with an exchange of insults. |
| T | F | 29. | When upset, my spouse sometimes does a lot of little things just to annoy me. |

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|--|
| T | F | 30. | When arguing, we manage quite well to restrict our focus to the important issues. |
| T | F | 31. | My spouse and I are often unable to disagree with one another without losing our tempers. |
| T | F | 32. | Even when angry with me, my spouse is able to appreciate my viewpoints. |
| T | F | 33. | My spouse takes quite seriously my feelings and thoughts about an issue. |
| T | F | 34. | My spouse frequently misinterprets the way I really feel when we are arguing. |
| T | F | 35. | My spouse often fails to understand my point of view of things. |
| T | F | 36. | In most matters, my spouse understands what I'm trying to say. |
| T | F | 37. | I feel sometimes like my spouse is "lecturing" at me. |
| T | F | 38. | My spouse sometimes seems intent upon changing some aspect of my personality. |
| T | F | 39. | Our marriage has never been in difficulty because of financial concerns. |
| T | F | 40. | Serious financial concerns are not likely to destroy our marriage. |
| T | F | 41. | My spouse and I rarely argue about money. |
| T | F | 42. | It is often hard for my spouse and me to discuss our finances without getting upset with each other. |
| T | F | 43. | Trying to work out a family budget makes more trouble with my spouse than it is worth. |
| T | F | 44. | My spouse and I decide together the manner in which the family income is to be spent. |
| T | F | 45. | We could have many fewer marital difficulties if our family income were larger. |

- | | | | |
|---|---|-----|---|
| T | F | 46. | Our income is sufficient to meet necessary expenses. |
| T | F | 47. | I feel as though we outlive our financial means. |
| T | F | 48. | Our financial future seems quite secure. |
| T | F | 49. | My spouse is a very good manager of finances. |
| T | F | 50. | My spouse doesn't always appreciate the importance of keeping good financial records. |
| T | F | 51. | My spouse has much difficulty keeping our checkbook balanced. |
| T | F | 52. | My spouse invests money wisely. |
| T | F | 53. | My spouse has no common sense when it comes to money. |
| T | F | 54. | I trust my spouse with our money completely. |
| T | F | 55. | My spouse is pretty good when it comes to saving money. |
| T | F | 56. | My spouse doesn't seem to understand the importance of putting money into savings. |
| T | F | 57. | My spouse sometimes buys too much on credit. |
| T | F | 58. | My spouse buys too many things without consulting with me first. |
| T | F | 59. | My spouse is forever checking up on how I spend our money. |
| T | F | 60. | My spouse is often too concerned with financial matters. |

APPENDIX E
SELF-DISCLOSURE 21

SD-21

Instructions: Please use the rating scale below and circle the number that best describes how often you have talked with your spouse about the following statements over the marriage.

	daily or almost daily	weekly or several times a month	monthly several times a year	yearly or more than once	at least once	never
	5	4	3	2	1	0

"How often do you talk with your spouse about. . .

1. your views on the way a husband and wife should live their marriage?	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. your usual ways of dealing with depression, anxiety and anger?	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. the actions you have most regretted doing in your life and why?	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. your personal religious views and the nature of your religious participation if any?	5	4	3	2	1	0

	daily or almost daily	weekly or several times a month	monthly several times a year	yearly or more than once	at least once	never
	5	4	3	2	1	0

"How often do you talk with your spouse about. . .

5.	the ways in which you feel you are most maladjusted or immature?	5	4	3	2	1	0
6.	your guiltiest secrets?	5	4	3	2	1	0
7.	your personal views of politics, the presidency, foreign and domestic policy?	5	4	3	2	1	0
8.	the habits and reactions of yours which bother you at present?	5	4	3	2	1	0
9.	the sources of strain and dissatisfaction in your marriage (or your relationship with the opposite sex)?	5	4	3	2	1	0
10.	your favorite forms of erotic play and sexual lovemaking?	5	4	3	2	1	0

	daily or almost daily	weekly or several times a month	monthly several times a year	yearly or more than once	at least once	never
	5	4	3	2	1	0

"How often do you talk with your spouse about. . .

11.	your hobbies, how do you best like to spend your spare time?	5	4	3	2	1	0
12.	the occasions in your life in which you were the happiest?	5	4	3	2	1	0
13.	the aspects of your daily work that satisfy and bother you?	5	4	3	2	1	0
14.	characteristics of your-self give you cause for pride and satisfaction?	5	4	3	2	1	0
15.	the persons in your life whom you most resent?	5	4	3	2	1	0
16.	the people with whom you have been sexually intimate. What were the circumstances of your relationship with each?	5	4	3	2	1	0

	daily or almost daily	weekly or several times a month	monthly several times a year	yearly or more than once	at least once	never
	5	4	3	2	1	0

"How often do you talk with your spouse about. . .

17.	the unhappiest moments in your life; why?	5	4	3	2	1	0
18.	your preferences and dislikes in music?	5	4	3	2	1	0
19.	your personal goals for the next 10 years or so?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20.	the circumstances under which you become depressed and when your feelings are hurt?	5	4	3	2	1	0
21.	the most common sexual fantasies and reveries?	5	4	3	2	1	0

APPENDIX F
INFORMED CONSENT

LONG-TERM MARRIAGE STUDY
Participation Consent Form
Michigan State University
Department of Psychology

This study is designed to investigate the factors that contribute to long-term, satisfying marriages. Divorce has dramatically increased in the past few years, resulting in family instability. Therefore, marital success and satisfaction have become important to study as a way of obtaining information about marriage and hopefully being able to restore some family stability. You will be given questionnaires requiring approximately 45-60 minutes to complete. If you find any questions objectionable, you are free to skip those questions. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. No names will be required and all information obtained will be anonymous and kept strongly confidential.

1. The Long-Term Marriage Study has been explained to me. I understand the explanation that has been given and what my participation will involve.

2. I understand that I do not have to participate at all, and/or that I am free to stop participating in the testing session at any time without penalty.
3. I understand that the results of my scores in the experiment will be strictly confidential, and that my scores will remain anonymous. Within these restrictions, group results of this study will be made available to me upon my request.
4. I understand that if I refer other couples for participation in this study, my name may be used as the referral source only with my permission.
5. I understand that my participation in the experiment does not guarantee any beneficial results to me.
6. I understand that in the unlikely event that should I be made uncomfortable by my participation in this study, Karen Williams, M.A., will be available to discuss my discomfort at (517) 353-6766.
7. I understand that this study is under the direct supervision of Robert Caldwell, Ph.D., and I may direct any questions/concerns to him at (517) 353-4548.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX G
DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET

Michigan State University
Department of Psychology
East Lansing, MI 48824

Demo ID#: _____
Given by: _____
Date: _____
Sex: M _____ F _____

1. What is date of birth? _____
month _____ day _____ year _____
2. Length of time at current residence?
- 3a. How many time have you been married? CIRCLE ONE
1 2 3 4+
- 3b. Number of years married to present spouse? _____
- 3c. Date of marriage to present spouse. _____
month _____ year _____
4. How would you describe your primary cultural/ethnic heritage. CIRCLE ONE

1. White	4. Native American
2. Black	5. Asian
3. Hispanic	6. Other (describe) _____
- 5a. What religion, if any, do you practice? CIRCLE ONE

1. Protestant	4. No religion
2. Catholic	5. Other religion (please explain) _____
3. Jewish	
- 5b. How often do you attend religious services?

1. Several times a week	4. Once a month
2. About once a week	5. Never
3. 2-3 times a month	
6. How many children do you and your current spouse have?

7. What was the highest grade of school you completed?
CIRCLE THE HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED

None	0								
Elementary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
High school	9	10	11	12					
College	1	2	3	4	Degree? _____				
Grad/Prof School	5	6	7	8+	Degree? _____				

8. What kind of work (employment) do you do?

Employed as what? _____

Retired from what? _____

Homemaker _____

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