

COUPLES' PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE AND
COMMUNICATION AS PREDICTORS OF
MARITAL SATISFACTION

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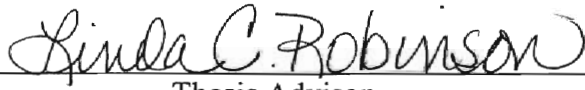
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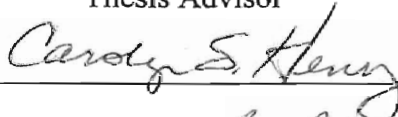
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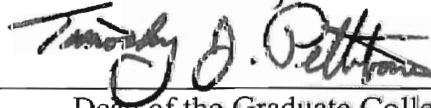


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Couples often plan for a wedding and do not give much thought to planning for a marriage. This is supported repeatedly by the simple fact that approximately half of marriages end in divorce (Baldwin, Ellis, & Baldwin, 1999; Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000; Christensen & Jacobson, 2000; Gottman, 1994; Larsen & Olson, 1989; National Center for Health Statistics, 2000; Stanley, 2001). Although divorce may be necessary in certain circumstances, professionals and researchers seek ways to strengthen marriages. Therefore, there is a growing need to understand couples and couple dynamics in an effort to prevent problems that increase the risk of divorce.

Research has shown that marriage is beneficial for individual well-being for numerous reasons. For example, marriage can improve a person's physical health, emotional health, financial situation, sexual relationship, social status, and overall personal happiness (Waite & Gallagher, 2000). Single people, especially single men, have a higher mortality rate as compared to married couples (Ross, Mirowsky, & Goldsteen, 1990). Waite and Gallagher also discuss how incidents of depression and alcohol abuse are lower among people who marry. Further, these authors found that married couples were actually having more frequent sex than single people. Furthermore, Waite and Gallagher suggested that married sex transcends single sex because of the emotional bonding and long-term commitment that is present in a marriage. In addition, married couples tend to be better off financially. This is because their wealth has the potential to grow with each wage increase, promotion, and savings plan the longer they

are married. Thus, marriage is related to enhanced quality of life for many couples (Hill, 1988).

Marital Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction is a complex term containing many components upon which professionals and researchers often disagree. Conceptualizations of marital satisfaction often include aspects such as marital success, stability, and quality. Bradbury (1995) composed a model for explaining marital satisfaction that included marital quality and stability, adaptive processes, enduring vulnerabilities, and other life events and circumstances. Additionally, Karney and Bradbury (1995) applied this marital satisfaction model to previous longitudinal research focused on marital outcomes, describing how the quality and stability of marriage changes over time.

There are several other factors related to marital satisfaction. A few of these include, but are not limited to communication, conflict resolution, leisure, religion/spirituality, financial, sexual activity, values, roles, time, children, and family or origin (Hill, 1988; Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2001). Hill's (1988) research described how a person's roles, values, time, leisure, and money all contributed to his/her amount of satisfaction in marriage. However, she cautioned that the presence of children in a marriage could sometimes negatively affect the satisfaction in the marriage for some, while enhancing satisfaction of others. Furthermore, Markman, Stanley, and Blumberg (2001) discussed the importance of communication, conflict resolution, sexuality, religion/spirituality, and family of origin with regard to marital satisfaction. They posit that once couples gain the necessary skills to work on their marriage, they too can have a happy, satisfied marriage.

Positive Communication

Positive, effective communication is an asset for married couples, and holds potential for strengthening interpersonal relationships, including marriage. Anyone can have a relationship with another person; but it takes effective positive communication to not only maintain but also strengthen that relationship and its overall satisfaction. Effective communication provides the necessary skills to resolve conflict and can also improve other relationships, which have a direct or indirect bearing on the marital relationship (e.g. family, friends, co-workers, and so on). Contrary to popular belief, successful couples do not have fewer problems; instead, they possess better problem solving skills to address the problems that arise (Eckstein & Jones, 1998). Many mental health counselors and family life educators stress the importance of communication between couples (Cole & Cole, 1999; Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998; Renick, Blumberg, & Markman, 1992). Furthermore, communication is viewed by professionals who study families and couples as being an important component of those relationships (Fowers & Olson, 1992). Renick, Blumberg, and Markman (1992) suggest that if couples communicate in effective ways, then they can control their conflicts instead of the conflicts controlling them. Finally, this is an important area for research because effective positive communication helps foster a satisfied and enjoyable life together as husband and wife.

Joint Leisure

Likewise, another important aspect of couples' relationships that researchers have examined is the couple's leisure time spent together and its overall effect on the couple's relationship satisfaction. Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) suggest that, in the world

today, leisure may be a crucial element for married couples and their continuing relationship. Although there has been constant research on family and/or couples' leisure in the past thirty years, interestingly the field of family science does not seem to regularly include or emphasize joint leisure as a major factor in the study of couple relationships. A greater emphasis by family scientists on couples' joint leisure as a mechanism of enhanced relationship quality may provide valuable insight for practitioners and researchers alike. Therefore, this concept of joint leisure should be brought to the forefront by researchers when they work with couples, especially married couples.

Moreover, a focus on joint leisure in combination with effective communication holds particular promise for improving marital satisfaction. Unfortunately, many couples not only have poor communication skills but also do not share the same leisure pursuits, if they have any leisure interests at all. Leisure experiences may provide a secure place and time in which couples can interact and try various roles they may not otherwise hold in the relationship. Unfortunately, leisure skills are not being taught to couples, and this is a critical mistake.

Working Together: Communication and Leisure

Some suggest that husbands and wives who participate in joint leisure activities are inclined to have more satisfying marriages (Orthner, 1975a; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Shaw, 1997). This is a very promising concept at a time when the divorce rate in the United States is so high. Couples that enjoy a joint leisure experience may develop a sense of exclusiveness and begin to get to know one another better (Orthner, 1975b). This supports Orthner and Mancini's (1990) belief that joint leisure has value for families and couples. Therefore, leisure experiences may

help to lay the groundwork for a strong, satisfying marriage and assist the couple in working on relationship issues in a safe, non-threatening environment. Normally, joint leisure experiences are first seen during the dating and courting phase of a relationship.

Leisure experiences are more than fun; they can also provide a couple a manner in which to communicate, share ideas, and even disagree that might not have been possible earlier without a joint leisure experience. The skills that are learned during a leisure experience might not end there, but instead be taken back to the rest of the interactions in various situations involving the couples (Orthner, 1976; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990). What couples do prior to marriage is often carried over into their marriage. Therefore, if effective communication and joint leisure are not part of that marital relationship, these skills may need to be built into their lives in some way to build a happy, satisfied marital relationship.

Kelly (1997) best illustrated how communication and leisure could benefit couples when he stated,

Life is not composed of theme parks and cruises. It is composed of dinner table talk, vacations together, getting the home and yard in shape, kidding around, caring for each other, goofing off, dreaming, and all the minutiae of the day and hour. (p. 134)

From the previously mentioned research, communication and leisure have both been found to be related to overall marital satisfaction. Therefore, positive communication and leisure skills are two prime areas to focus on in relation to marital satisfaction for this study.

Purpose of the Study

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between communication and leisure in relation to marital satisfaction.

The following are specific research questions for this study:

1. Are perceptions of communication related to overall marital satisfaction?
2. Are perceptions of leisure related to overall marital satisfaction?
3. Is there an interaction between perceptions of communication and shared leisure in relation to marital satisfaction?
4. Does the relationship between perceived leisure and marital satisfaction differ by gender?
5. Does the relationship between perceived communication and marital satisfaction differ by gender?
6. For married couples with high marital satisfaction, which items on ENRICH measuring perceived leisure are related to couples' marital satisfaction?
7. For married couples with low marital satisfaction, which items on ENRICH measuring perceived leisure are related to couples' marital satisfaction?
8. For married couples with high marital satisfaction, which items on ENRICH measuring perceived communication are related to couples' marital satisfaction?

9. For married couples with low marital satisfaction, which items on ENRICH measuring perceived communication are related to couples' marital satisfaction?

Conceptual Definitions

The following are definitions for the key concepts utilized in this study:

Married Couple A man and a woman who are legally married for the first time, have been married zero to ten years, and do not have any children.

Communication Each person's perceived comfort level in his or her ability to share emotions and beliefs with one's spouse. Communication also encompasses one's perceptions of his or her spouse's listening skills, speaking skills, and one's own ability to communicate with his or her spouse (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000).

Leisure Activities Each person's perception of the balance between activities done together and individual leisure activities (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000).

Joint Leisure Those activities or events that a couple participates in at the same time where a high degree of interpersonal interaction and negotiation is present. Joint leisure also allows for the possible exploration and freedom from societal defined roles (Orthner, 1975a; Orthner, 1975b; Orthner & Mancini, 1990).

Marital Satisfaction An overall measure of satisfaction and gratification felt in the couple's relationship (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000).

Reward A reward may be anything one perceives as beneficial to him/herself (Klein & White, 1996).

Cost A cost may be anything one perceives as not beneficial to him/herself. Also, a cost may be perceived as a negative reward (Klein & White, 1996).

ENRICH (ENriching Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness) This is a relationship inventory that is used for married couples. Each spouse completes his and her own inventory and receives a score, then the scores are compiled into a couple score. This instrument includes 14 content areas and is utilized to assist couples in determining strength and growth areas in their relationships (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000; see Appendix A).

Positive Couple Agreement This refers to the couples' agreement or consensus of their scores for each item on the ENRICH inventory (Larsen & Olson, 1989). For an item to be considered a Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) score, each individual must agree or be within one point of his/her spouse's score perceiving the partner or relationship positively. For example, Item 91: "I am very satisfied with how my partner and I talk with each other" (Life Innovations, Inc., 1996)

Outline of the Study

This paper further reviews literature related to effective communication, joint leisure, overall marital satisfaction, and the social exchange theory in Chapter Two and relate this information to first time, married couples without children. Chapter Three discusses the sample, methods, procedures, and limitations of the study. Furthermore, in Chapter Four the analyses of data are reported. Finally, Chapter Five includes the study's findings, conclusions, and implications for practice and future research.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

A review of relevant literature and information from social exchange theory will be presented in this chapter. Literature discussing marital satisfaction will be presented first, followed by literature supporting communication and marital satisfaction. Next, relevant literature regarding leisure and marital satisfaction will be discussed. This will be followed by a brief history of social exchange theory and its application to this research. Finally, conceptual hypotheses will be defined along with identification of relevant variables for this study.

Marital Satisfaction

Many couples in relationships, including marriages, report being satisfied in them; on the other hand, many other couples remain in unhappy marriages. Spanier and Lewis (1980) developed a typology of marriages based upon two dimensions: marital quality and marital duration. Thus, four types of marriages are derived in this model: (1) High Quality/High Stability, (2) High Quality/Low Stability, (3) Low Quality/Low Stability, and (4) Low Quality/High Stability.

Bradbury (1995) builds upon this approach in his model of marital functioning. According to his model, marital functioning incorporates the following: (1) marital quality and stability, (2) adaptive processes, (3) stressful events, and (4) enduring vulnerabilities. He suggested adaptive processes, stressful events, and enduring vulnerabilities influence couples' marital quality and stability. Adaptive processes include the manner in which couples negotiate challenges and difficulties in their

relationship; practitioners and researchers often observe these behaviors between the couple. Additionally, stressful events encompass transitions, incidents, and circumstances that couples experience together. These stressful events may be acute or chronic, and researchers look at how couples draw upon their available resources to navigate the situation. Lastly, enduring vulnerabilities are those things that each individual brings to the marriage, such as his or her personality, background, and history. It is also important to note that marital satisfaction and stability might result from any one of these components, but also from the interaction of all three of them (Bradbury, 1995).

Professionals and researchers measure marital satisfaction in various ways (Bradbury, 1995; Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2001; Glenn, 1998; Gottman & Notarius, 2001; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Additionally, researchers often disagree on the best way to measure marital satisfaction. Therefore, when trying to determine marital satisfaction, often professionals and researchers will try to establish the marital quality of a relationship. According to Glenn (1998), this is best accomplished by asking each spouse how he or she feels about the marriage on an individual basis. Additionally, Glenn points out there is another belief that marital quality can be assessed through the amount of communication, conflict, and happiness that is reported by the married couple. However, he does not adhere to this school of thought and prefers the spouses indicate how they each feel about the marriage for a measure of marital quality. Furthermore, there are other means used to measure marital quality and satisfaction, which include measures of marital happiness, marital adjustment, and often a combination of several of these measures.

Gottman and Notarius suggested that observational measures of the couple are the best methodology for determining marital satisfaction. However, others preferred couples to express their feelings about the relationship separately using individual questionnaires and other quantitative measures (Glenn, 1998; Holman & Jacquart, 1988).

Communication and Marital Satisfaction

One area of a couple's relationship that has a dramatic impact on their lives is communication. Larson (2000) defined communication as "the ability of partners to send messages clearly, understand each other's messages and resolve conflicts in a manner that maintains or strengthens the relationship" (p. 124). Communication was one of the key areas assessed by the major comprehensive premarital questionnaires that Larson, Holman, Klein, Busby, Stahmann, and Peterson reviewed in 1995. The importance of communication to a couple is clear, although there is some difference in the way the skills of communication can be affected by training. Most professionals attempt to increase communication skills in a number of ways. The best time to do this is before major issues arise in the relationship (Parrott & Parrott, 1995). For example, by learning these important communication skills, a couple will be able to build on their existing relationship and carry that level of satisfaction throughout their marriage. Thus, they will also have additional resources to draw upon as needed later in their marriage. It is also critical to note that the dynamics of communication are different in married couples because of the intimate nature of those relationships with regard to other types of couples (Fournier, 1999).

Sanders, Halford, and Behrens (1999) explored family of origin experiences and how their communication influences their offspring. As they predicted, negative verbal

and nonverbal communication was significantly higher for women whose parents had divorced as compared to women whose parents remained married. Thus, if there could be some type of mediation in families of origin with regard to positive communication, maybe there would not be the spillover effect to these women whose parents have divorced (Sanders et al.). Bonds-Raacke, Bearden, Carriere, Anderson, and Nicks (2001) stated that premarital couples enter marriage presuming it will fulfill the need for happiness as well as meet their financial, sexual, social and emotional needs. They contend that relationship satisfaction and marriage expectations are closely related. What many premarital couples see as the ideal marriage and what actually takes place are very different. Furthermore, Sharp and Ganong (2000) discussed that unrealistic marital beliefs, such as reading a spouse's mind, believing that arguments are always destructive to the marriage, and believing that sex should always be good, are often present in one or both spouses in a marriage.

Larson and colleagues (1995) discussed the importance of communication in relationships in some of their research. These researchers identified various inventories designed to get couples talking and listening to one another. Likewise, Outcalt (1998) proposed that couples really get to know one another by asking questions, listening to each other, and opening the lines of communication. Doing so would add to the knowledge base of the couple's married life together by assisting the couple in developing realistic expectations about their relationship. Sometimes married couples need a little prompt or push to get the discussion started using positive, effective communication. It is imperative that the couple be familiar with talking and listening skills so that when a conflict arises they will be able to draw upon those skills, implement them, and then

continue to use these skills throughout the marriage. Unfortunately, many married couples will often state that they do not need to learn how to communicate because they already know how to talk to each other when, in fact, they do not (Cole & Cole, 1999; Stanley, Bradbury, & Markman, 2000; Stanley et al., 2001). Fournier (1999) suggested that skill building that is focused on communication is a constructive format in working with couples.

According to Burleson and Denton (1997), couples that cannot or do not manage conflict wisely may be less satisfied in their relationship. This decreased satisfaction could also lead the couple to the distorted expectation that conflict will not be a part of their relationship once they are married. Burleson and Denton also suggested that the lack of positive communication skills may contribute to relationship problems, including violence and abuse. In addition, Greeff (2000) described several characteristics of families that function well. One of the most important findings is that couples who exchange information freely and are satisfied with the type and level of communication exchanged are part of a well-functioning family. For couples, this type of exchange of positive communication could enable them to have a more realistic viewpoint of marriage and also put them well on their way to a more fulfilled marriage.

Outcalt (1998) suggested that effective communication is crucial to a relationship and its overall satisfaction. Also, Larson and Holman (1994) described how background and contextual factors could influence a relationship. These would include things such as one's childhood experiences within his/her family of origin, a parent's divorce, how one's family dealt with anger and conflict, work ethics of each spouse, and so forth. Outcalt (1998) suggested one way to find out some of these background and contextual

factors is for couples to ask each other questions and have conversations about things such as those previously mentioned.

Researchers and professionals that study families, and especially couples, believe that communication is a valuable aspect of a couples' relationship (Butler & Wampler, 1999; Fournier & Olson, 1986; Fournier, D. G., Olson, D. H., & Druckman, J. M. (1983). Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998; Hunt, Hof, & DeMaria, 1998; Larson, 2000; Renick, Blumberg, & Markman, 1992; Stanley et al., 2001). Many professionals focus on communication and the concept of active listening. Active listening is among the most popular models of current marital therapy. Active listening teaches the person a variety of skills that will hopefully increase his or her communication skills (Cole & Cole, 1999; Fowers, 2001; Hutchins & Vaught, 1997; Larson, 2000; Mundy, 1998). When each individual becomes a better listener, the couple's relationship should improve as well.

It should also be noted that researchers do not always agree on the benefits of active listening. Gottman et al. (1998) raised the point that it is difficult for couples to utilize active listening techniques in heated discussions. Nonetheless, Stanley, Bradbury, and Markman (2000) counter that couples can learn to add structure to heated discussions, diffusing the conflict and allowing for constructive communication. Despite Gottman et al.'s (1998) contention that couples cannot effectively engage in active listening in the midst of conflict, the research on enrichment programs supports the efficacy of skill-based programs of adequate length (Cole & Cole, 1999).

The aspects of active listening that will be emphasized here are "I" statements (sensing skills), paraphrasing, clarifying (listening skills), and nonverbal skills. "I"

statements are statements in which the speaker is stating his or her own opinion, view, or thought about a certain topic (Bolton, 1979; Larson, 2000; McKay, Davis, & Fanning 1983; Mundy, 1998). Paraphrasing can be defined as the action that occurs when the listener restates to the speaker what he/she heard, stated in the listener's own words (Bolton, 1979; McKay, Davis, & Fanning 1983; Mundy, 1998). Clarifying consists of the listener asking the speaker a question that makes a part of the speaker's statement more clear to the listener (Bolton, 1979; Hutchins & Vaught, 1997; McKay, Davis, & Fanning 1983; Mundy, 1998). Nonverbal skills are defined as all the behaviors of a person speaking other than the action of speaking the specific words that were stated. The words spoken relate to *what* is stated. The behavior surrounding the spoken word refers to *how* it was stated. Some of the areas of nonverbal speech include: vocal sounds, tone, pitch, speed of speech, body language, eye contact, gestures, and posture. (Bolton, 1979; Fast, 1970; Hutchins & Vaught, 1997; McKay, Davis, & Fanning 1983).

Consequently, there is a need to increase couple's skills so problems that arise in the marital relationship are dealt with in a more positive manner. Also, improving positive communication skills appears to be related to better use of verbal interactions, improved self esteem and intimacy, and role agreement in relationships (Hunt, Hof, & DeMaria, 1998). Cole and Cole (1999) suggested that there could be an effective impact on a relationship using positive communication skills.

Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

First, leisure experiences could serve as a medium to assist and educate couples in serious life-long relationships such as marriage. Various definitions of leisure exist, but it has best been defined as activities, behaviors, and experiences that people engage in

voluntarily for internal or self-reward (Peterson & Stumbo, 2000). It is important to note that leisure behaviors are not those done in the absence of work, as many have often implied. Instead, "leisure is [more of] a state of mind; ...a way of being, [and a way] of being at peace with oneself and what one is doing" (Neulinger, 1974, p. 120). It is in one's free time that the possibility of leisure is released; it is not that free time is automatically leisure.

Leisure behavior is used to explain a variety of human experiences that are voluntary in nature, allow free choice and intrinsic motivation, and are meaningful and pleasurable to the participants involved. The benefits of leisure are identified by Bammel and Barrus-Bammel (1996) in the following areas: physiological, social, relaxation, educational, psychological, and aesthetic. Other benefits include but are not limited to learning, peace, stress release, freedom, fellowship, and family time (Edginton, Hanson, Edginton, & Hudson, 1998). Leisure may be viewed in many different ways as being beneficial to an individual's development. It is a span of time for one to expand him or herself both personally and as a part of a couple. A change must not always occur in a person to be seen as a benefit of leisure. Finding and maintaining the homeostasis of one's life is often the desired outcome of leisure. The most basic concept of leisure may be that it is fun and makes us feel *good* about ourselves. Godbey (1994) says the following with regard to the importance of leisure:

During the journey from birth to death, the activities which we find pleasurable, what we do voluntarily and economic and social constraints on our free time, health, and work roles are in a state of change, and these changes affect our ... behaviors. (p.171)

When couples are courting, they ask questions, often reveal personal information, and express their thoughts, beliefs, and dreams to one another. In addition to this, couples are usually active in experiences that would be considered leisure. Leisure provides a means whereby bonding with one's partner and establishing stability in the relationship may be achieved (Hill, 1988). Throughout the life-cycle, couples often lose this leisure lifestyle and seem to be at a loss for a way to rekindle it. Orthner, Barnett-Morris, and Mancini (1993) describe the importance of leisure for young adults in the following way:

The potential for leisure experiences to enhance the development of new relationships is particularly evident in dating and courtship. The formation of intimate relationships in adolescence and young adulthood tends to occur during recreational events in which "going out together" is associated with a mutually pleasurable experience. (p. 184)

It is easy for a marriage to become routine and monotonous even in the first few years. Joint leisure environments may allow a couple more opportunities for trying out various roles, improving communication skills, increasing conflict resolution skills, and establishing couple cohesion. Researchers have found that joint leisure between husbands and wives is related to higher levels of marital satisfaction (Orthner, 1975a; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Shaw, 1997). In addition, Holman and Jacquart (1988) identified that just spending time doing activities together was not enough and that the couple must also perceive communication to be high during the experience. Indeed, joint leisure tends to involve interaction and negotiation between the partners (Orthner, 1975a, 1975b). As a couple participates in a joint leisure experience, that experience can allow for better communication and a chance for the

couple to repeat those behaviors outside of a leisure experience in their everyday lives (Orthner, 1975a). Thus, this suggests that communication may moderate the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction.

Researchers in social sciences have been trying to better understand the effect of leisure on couples (Crawford et al., 1986; Hill, 1998; Johnson et al., 1992; Presvelou, 1971; Smith et al., 1988). Also, researchers have examined the importance of leisure to couples and families (Orthner, 1975a, 1975b, 1976, 1990, 1998; Shaw, 1997; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Some of the findings indicate that how couples use their free time has a positive relationship to satisfaction and bonding. Moreover, spending joint leisure time with just one's spouse has been shown to be especially effective (Orthner, 1975a, 1975b, 1976, 1998; Smith et al, 1988; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

Lower divorce rates among couples who have joint leisure experiences have also been noticed (Hill, 1988; Iso-Ahola, 1995; Orthner, 1998). It is important to note that most of this research has been found to have a correlational rather than causal nature. However, the benefits of leisure for married couples must not go unnoticed. Joint leisure would be a wonderful means for all couples to learn some necessary skills for a successful marriage. For example, in a leisure experience a couple may learn to negotiate problems in a secure environment, and later those same skills could be put to use for navigating more serious issues in their relationship (Orthner, 1998). Leisure time, prior to marriage as well as in early marriage, helps to establish the importance of time spent together to increase overall marital quality (Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993).

However, when married couples have more communication in some joint leisure experience, there is more of a chance for conflict to occur. Some researchers have

suggested that this is not necessarily a bad or negative thing for the relationship. Perhaps, it could even be seen as positive. The leisure experience might allow the couple to come up with some alternatives, or they could imitate some other behaviors that they have seen modeled in the leisure experience by another couple to find some alternatives for their problems. Therefore, in this instance it is difficult for one to say whether this should be considered a cost or a reward.

When individuals spend a significant amount of time alone in leisure activities, there is a tendency that individual leisure will have a more negative effect on the marriage. Also, when individual leisure activities become the norm in the relationship, this indicates there is a lack of regard for the relationship (Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993). Whether the leisure activity is social (go to a restaurant, go to a movie), active (take a walk, play a game), or organizational (attend church services, do volunteer work for a club) it is important that the couple have some joint leisure time together. Holman and Jacquart (1988) suggested that when one participates in individual leisure activities, there is no interaction with his or her spouse. On the other hand, joint leisure entails couple interaction and communication is a big part of the process. This type of interaction is good for the couple, and each individual benefits from joint leisure experiences, too. Leisure allows one to try new roles and break out of the usual routines that one participates in when married. For example, it may be the husband who is the planner in the running of the daily household, but the wife may plan the vacations for the couple.

Accordingly, leisure experiences may not always provide a couple with a sense of satisfaction in their marriage. However, the positive potential aspects of leisure will

definitely outweigh the negative aspects of leisure. This is just one justification why teaching couples the benefits of joint leisure is so important.

Gender Differences

Some apparent, as well as ambiguous, gender differences with regard to leisure, communication, and marital satisfaction have been explained by researchers and professional in the following manner. The relationship between leisure and gender is not static and quite complex. It should be noted that much of the current research on gender and leisure has been focused on ways for women to incorporate more time for leisure and reduce the constraints that prevent them from participating in leisure activities. Furthermore, there are certain activities that have been labeled in our society as gender-specific. For example, doing crafts, reading books, watching romantic movies are often considered things that women do, while men might be scoffed at for their participation in these activities. Some researchers have indicated that men often participate more in activities that are sports or physically oriented, while women usually have more involvement in art and cultural type activities (Shaw, 1999).

However, it was also stated by Shaw (1985) that married women typically have far less time for leisure compared to married men. Often women's activities may be considered leisure by others, while women feel the activities are work for them. These constraints can include household obligations and family commitments and they change throughout the life-cycle. For women, there also seems to be an ethic of care where they internalize their responsibilities to others, thus neglecting their own leisure to provide for the needs of their husbands, parents, friends, etcetera (Shaw, 1999).

We also know that men and women communicate in different ways (Griffin,

1997). More often women are the ones who bring up topics for discussion. Additionally, men often feel helpless when discussing concerns with their wives because they want to fix the problem and often do not know how (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2001; Olson & DeFrain, 2000). In addition, Markman and his colleagues found that men tend to withdraw more from their spouse when conflicts arise, while women pursue and want to continue talking. They also found that women show a concern and like to communicate about how the relationship is working out, while men do not seem to value this as much. Moreover, husbands feel as if their wives try to pick fights with them and that their wives get upset often. Therefore, men will usually try to gain some peace, at any price, whether that means agreeing with their spouse, nodding their heads, or giving in on a certain topic (Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2001).

According to Olson and DeFrain (2000), the more husbands and wives differ in their communication styles, the greater the probability for misunderstandings and conflict. However, both men and women want to have good communication and harmony in their relationships. Overall, they may just differ in the manner in which they think would best accomplish this goal.

Gender differences are also expressed and reported in terms of marital satisfaction. When Olson and his colleagues (1989) studied husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction, they found husbands rated their marital satisfaction higher than their wives'; however, the difference was small. Additionally, for both husbands and wives, marital satisfaction tended to decrease as time passed. This decline in marital satisfaction led to an increase in mental health issues, such as depression for women (Olson et al.).

Furthermore, both men and women who report being satisfied in their marriages appear to live longer and have healthier lives, but this seems to be especially true for men more so than women (Waite & Gallagher, 2000). However, Stanley and Markman (1997) found that husbands and wives were similar in their perceptions of marital satisfaction. Finally, Waite and Gallagher expressed that despite the hype that wives are more committed to personal relationships than men, they both usually have equal commitments to each other and marriage.

Consequently, for this study it was imperative to examine the research on gender differences to assist in the development of hypotheses with regard to husbands' and wives' leisure, communication, and marital satisfaction. Since men and women communicate in different ways, this researcher was interested in investigating whether marital satisfaction would differ for husbands and wives as a function of the interaction between communication and leisure. Based upon the previously mentioned research in this area, it appeared that husbands might not show an increase in marital satisfaction even if they perceived communication with their wives as high due to the differences in communication styles; the relationship of leisure to marital satisfaction would not vary as a function of communication. However, due to the importance of communication for women, it was anticipated that communication would be more salient for women when both leisure and communication were high; yet leisure may compensate for low communication

Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory, or framework, has origins that can be traced back to philosophy, utilitarian economics, and psychology. The framework focuses on

relationship development, how relationships are experienced, relationship patterns/dynamics, and how the relationship maintains stability (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). This is a framework that is based on dyads in which the partners interact in ways that will maximize rewards and minimize costs. The central focus of social exchange theory is that of motivation. People are motivated by and act out of their own self-interest. Exchange theory assesses how people arrive at their relationships based on costs, rewards, and profit. The rewards can be seen as things such as relationships, interactions, respect, status, money, and so forth. A person's subjective perception that something is a reward is more salient than an objective *reality* of a reward (Klein & White, 1996; Nichols & Schwartz, 2001). For long-term rewards, people must seek out and establish long-term reciprocity in relationships. In other words, it is the Golden Rule so that people must be willing to get what they give. A cost is something that is a hindrance to that relationship, whereas profit is the ratio of reward to cost. However, it is important to note that there are also times in which a person will suffer the costs and give up the rewards. One example of this would be a woman who stays in an abusive relationship for the sake of her young children.

Furthermore, in the long-term people strive for relationships that will give them the best results, i.e. a profit consisting of rewards in excess of costs. Thibaut and Kelley (1959) posit two mechanisms through which one assesses the balance of rewards and costs: comparison level (CL) and comparison level of alternatives (CL+). The comparison level (CL) is based upon what other people in one's position have and how well one is doing relative to them. The second, comparison level of alternatives (CL+), is based on one's perception of how well one is doing relative to others outside of one's

position, but in positions that supply an alternative or choice. Consequently, it is clear to see that each individual has the potential to perceive the need for or bring about change in a relationship. What one person may consider a cost, another may very well see as a reward and vice versa, depending on the time and situation perceived by each person (Klein & White, 1996; Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). What develops for married couples is a reciprocal way for each individual in the marriage to evaluate the relationship in terms of rewards, costs, and profits. Exchange theory is being utilized to explain married couples' communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction because marriages do not occur in a vacuum. Instead they are constantly being renegotiated throughout the life course as couples have children, send them to school, launch them from home, and participate in their own retirement.

Exchange theory is very useful in describing and further examining the relationship between leisure activities, communication and marital satisfaction. Joint leisure can provide a plethora of opportunities for married couples to practice the give and take that is so important in positive communication. Also, joint leisure experiences may be done in a manner that is non-threatening to the couples, and therefore the usual, routine roles the couple has may not be supported. Also, a leisure experience where conflict is involved is not necessarily a bad thing. Conflict and confrontation can give the couple the opportunity to work out differences and try different approaches to conflict resolution. Orthner and Mancini (1991) explained it best when they stated, "leisure experiences promote opportunities for each individual to maximize her or his own interests and minimize competition" (p. 294).

Klein and White (1996) also suggested that social exchange theory could frequently be applied to relationship intervention and enrichment; thus, married couples can utilize social exchange theory in their interactions with one another. The concept for married couples is to increase awareness and overall enhancement of their skills as individuals and as a couple. When couples increase their communication skills and participate in joint leisure in a relationship, it enables them to have more satisfaction with their partner thus increasing rewards of the relationship. Also, when people have higher satisfaction in their relationship, they are less likely to have severe difficulties that could possibly end their relationship.

Sprether (2001) also used social exchange variables to predict relationship satisfaction. She reported that rewards were regularly associated with relationship satisfaction and rewards were also a predictor of that satisfaction. Sprether also identified that a person who lacks alternatives is more likely to state that he/she is satisfied in a relationship because he/she is likely to devalue his/her alternatives. In her research, she found this to be especially true of women. Furthermore, in long-term relationships couples will experience many changes throughout the life cycle, and during these changes couples may experience dissatisfaction in their relationship. Sprether suggests that this is due to either internal or external factors which may lead each spouse to perceive inequities in the marriage.

For instance, consider the situation in which two married women begin discussing how their husbands always play golf. Wife *A* resents never being invited along, but wife *B* frequently joins her husband on the golf course. Using the comparison level (CL), wife *A* then has a choice to make; she will either remain in the relationship as it is, risking

decreased satisfaction, or she can change the relationship by telling her husband that she would like for them to participate in a leisure activity that they can do together.

Furthermore, if this woman decides to compare her husband to other men who share leisure interests with women (CL+), she would be looking for other alternatives outside of her own situation to see what other options might be available to her. If the woman deems the fact that she and her husband do not share activities together as detrimental to the marriage (i.e., a cost), then she might choose an alternative that could include a separation, divorce, or some other option that she perceives fitting for the situation. Thus, the woman would be concluding that the costs of the relationship outweigh the rewards (Klein & White, 1996; Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959).

Additionally, if a couple enjoys canoeing together and they have excellent communication between them during this leisure experience, they may perceive the rewards of their relationship (marriage) to outweigh any costs that are perceived by one or both spouses. The benefits of joint leisure for couples may depend to some extent upon the effectiveness of their communication. When couples communicate positively, joint leisure may be viewed as more satisfying, thus enhancing marital satisfaction. In this situation leisure and communication are viewed as rewards. This benefit may exist even if one spouse enjoys the activity more than the other. Thus, perceptions of rewards may differ somewhat for each spouse, but the overall experience is viewed as profitable for both. For example, a husband may view being in nature as rewarding, while his wife may view it as a cost. For the wife, the reward may just be spending time together.

In conclusion, one can see how social exchange theory can be utilized to describe the interaction of effective communication and joint leisure in relation to overall

relationship satisfaction. Additionally, from the review of previous research it is apparent that effective positive communication skills and joint leisure experiences are beneficial for couples, but especially important for married couples.

Conceptual Hypotheses

The general hypotheses to be investigated include:

- H1: For couples there will be a positive relationship between perceptions of communication and marital satisfaction.
- H2: For wives and husbands separately, there will be a positive relationship between perceptions of communication and marital satisfaction.
- H3: For couples there will be a positive relationship between perceptions of leisure and marital satisfaction.
- H4: For wives and husbands separately, there will be a positive relationship between perceptions of leisure and marital satisfaction.
- H5: For wives, the relationship between perceived leisure and marital satisfaction will differ according to level of perceived communication.
- H6: For husbands, the relationship between perceived leisure and marital satisfaction will not differ according to level of perceived communication.

The variables involved in this study include the amount of positive couple agreement on perceived communication, positive couple agreement on perceived leisure, and positive couple agreement on marital satisfaction. For the hypotheses, the predictor variables are a) agreement on perceived communication and b) agreement on perceived leisure. The outcome variable is the level of agreement of overall marital satisfaction. The hypotheses

are directional and based on a review of relevant literature, including information from social exchange theory.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Procedures

Type of Research

The research design for this study is correlational, using an existing data file, and quantitative in nature. It also consisted of a cross-sectional time dimension because the data were collected from married couples that had previously taken the ENRICH inventory at an earlier point in time. In addition, the purpose of the research design is descriptive; self-administered survey instruments were utilized to describe the association between communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction for first time, married couples without children. Finally, the unit of analysis that was used for this study is the married couple.

Selection of Subjects

Although, the results of this study cannot be specifically generalized to married couples from the United States, the intent of this project was to attempt to describe variables that offset typical couples in the United States. The sampling frame is an existing database of married couples from across the United States, identifiable only by a single number, that took the ENRICH inventory in a variety of settings (i.e., church, therapy, university, marital enrichment program) in the past eight years. During these years, a total of 4027 couples (8054 individuals) completed the ENRICH inventory. Of those couples, a subsample of 765 couples met the criteria for this study. This criteria included couples in a first marriage who were married 0 to 10 years and had no children. The average years of marriage was 2.05. Twenty-four percent of couples were in their

first year of marriage, and an additional 35% were in their second year of marriage (see Table 1). The females' average age was 25.15 years, but they ranged from 18-51 years of age with 10 women declining to disclose age. The males' average age was 26.21 years, but they ranged from 18-49 with eight men declining to disclose age. Normally couples who take ENRICH do so as part of an enrichment program or during couples counseling. A purposive sample was utilized by selecting all the couples who fit the criteria for this study. Therefore, the sampling units are the married couples and the sample size is 765 married couples.

Research Method

Scores from 765 married couples met the criteria for this study. These married couples' scores for Communication, Leisure, and Marital Satisfaction items were gathered and reviewed from an existing database of couples who completed ENRICH inventories. ENRICH is an anonymous, self-administered marriage inventory that was given to married couples by a qualified ENRICH instructor. Since the ENRICH inventory was developed by Olson, Fournier, and Druckman in 1982 there have been two revisions; however, this study utilized the 1986 version of ENRICH (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000).

Using a correlational research design with an existing data file, many concerns regarding the ethical treatment of research subjects have been alleviated. The researcher did not have any identifiable information, including names, for the married couples in this study. Furthermore, the researcher never interacted with the subjects since only secondary data were analyzed, so complete anonymity of these couples was able to be maintained for this study. Additionally, the instrument for this study, ENRICH, was

specifically designed to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the married couples that utilize it. Accordingly, couples are assigned a number from an ENRICH instructor and this is the only means of identification. Because the researcher does not have access to any list of names attached to identifying numbers, complete anonymity and confidentiality were assured.

Instrument

ENRICH (ENriching Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness)

This is a 125-item multidimensional inventory for couples who are married (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000). It is written in the first person and each man and woman completes the instrument and receives a score along with a couple score. For this study, Couples' Scores and the Individual scores for both the Husbands Only and Wives Only for Communication, Leisure, and Marital Satisfaction items on the ENRICH inventory were considered and measured. Items in these three scales are measured on a 5-point Likert scale, as are all the items. This scale ranges from "1 = strongly disagree" to "5 = strongly agree," and the level of measurement for communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction will be treated as interval. ENRICH is a widely known and utilized inventory. This instrument has proven face validity, concurrent validity, construct validity, as well as, external validity. ENRICH has high internal consistency which is documented to range from .75 to .90 (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000). Furthermore, the three subscales of ENRICH used for this study have the following reliabilities of internal consistency and test-retest: Communication, .90 and .81; Leisure Activities, .75 and .77; Marital Satisfaction, .86 and .86 (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000, p. 78.2).

For the current sample, Cronbach's coefficient alpha of internal consistency reliabilities were: .65 for leisure, .84 for communication, and .84 for marital satisfaction.

Bivariate Correlations

Bivariate correlations were used to examine the associations among communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction. The SPSS for Windows Release 11.0 (2001) computer analysis program was used to test the data from an existing data file for any significant ($p \leq .05$) relationships between the variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test for significance between the variables (see Table 2). Any significant relationships found were then used in a hierarchical multiple regression equation.

Hierarchical Multiple Regressions

Hierarchical multiple regression equations were utilized to analyze whether or not the predictor variables (leisure and communication in combination) were significantly ($p \leq .05$) related to the outcome variable (marital satisfaction). Since both variables were significantly related to marital satisfaction in the bivariate correlations, they were entered as predictor variables in hierarchical multiple regression equations.

A hierarchical multiple regression yields the unique amount of variance in marital satisfaction explained by the linear combination of the two predictor variables and the interaction between them (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). In step one, leisure was entered as the predictor variable to ascertain its ability to predict marital satisfaction. In step two, communication was entered as a predictor variable to ascertain its ability to predict marital satisfaction. Finally, in step three, the interaction term of leisure by communication was entered as a predictor variable to ascertain its ability to predict

marital satisfaction (Aiken & West, 1991). The variables were entered in this manner based on the amount of research that is available on marital satisfaction predictors. Much is known about communication and its relationship to marital satisfaction. However, when one compares communication to leisure, in relation to marital satisfaction, very little is known. Therefore, it is of interest to ascertain the unique contribution of perceived leisure in relation to marital satisfaction as well as the additional variance explained by perceived communication. Because the independent variables are continuous, regression analyses affords greater power than other analyses, such as analysis of variance, in which categories would be developed from continuous data. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis affords the ability to partition the unique variance in the outcome variable accounted for by the independent, or predictor, variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Operational Hypotheses

- H1: For couples there will be a positive relationship between Positive Couple Agreement scores on the communication subscale of ENRICH and Positive Couple Agreement scores on the marital satisfaction subscale of ENRICH.
- H2: For wives and husbands separately, there will be a positive relationship between Individual Scores on the communication subscale of ENRICH and Individual Scores on the marital satisfaction subscale of ENRICH.
- H3: For couples there will be a positive relationship between Positive Couple Agreement scores on the leisure subscale of ENRICH and Positive Couple Agreement scores on the marital satisfaction subscale of ENRICH.

- H4: For wives and husbands separately, there will be a positive relationship between Individual Scores on the leisure subscale of ENRICH and Individual Scores on the marital satisfaction subscale of ENRICH.
- H5: For wives there will be an interaction between Female Individual Scores on the leisure subscale and the Female Individual Scores on the communication subscale in relation to the Female Individual Scores on the marital satisfaction subscale.
- H6: For husbands there will be no interaction between the Male Individual Scores on the leisure subscale and the Male Individual Scores on the communication subscale in relation to the Male Individual Scores on the marital satisfaction subscale.

Evaluation of Design

Limitations of the Study

One potential weakness is that the researcher is uncertain about each ENRICH instructor's level of training and amount of experience. In addition, one does not know if each set of couples were treated exactly the same and took the ENRICH inventory in the same type of environments. However, the likelihood of these conditions biasing the results were not very high due to the large sample size. Furthermore, since this was a correlational study one would not be able to determine cause and effect regarding the variables of interest. Instead, the researcher will only know whether the predictor variables were related to the outcome variable, the percent of variance in marital satisfaction explained by the linear combination of the predictor variables, as well as whether there was an interaction between the predictor variables in relation to the

outcome variable. Finally, one needs to be aware of any cohort effects since the sample was drawn from a time span of approximately eight years.

Chapter IV

RESULTS

This study examined the perceptions of leisure and communication in relation to marital satisfaction for married couples in first marriages of 0 to 10 years and have no children. Of the variables in this study, only those which were significant in bivariate correlations were entered into separate hierarchical multiple regressions.

Frequencies

Sample means and standard deviations were obtained for communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction from Couple Agreement Scores (see Table 3). These scores showed much variability in the sample with the couple means gathering around the midpoint of the actual range of scores. Also, the same variables' means were calculated separately from wives and husbands individual scores. In general, the wives and husbands' scores were similar to one another and the means were a little above the midpoint of the actual range of scores.

There were 765 married couples for this study. The frequencies for Positive Couple Agreement for marital satisfaction can be seen in Table 4. Additionally, the sample was divided into those with high and low marital satisfaction based on frequency percentages. Leisure frequencies for husbands and wives, separately, are outlined in Tables 5 and 6 respectively. Furthermore, the communication frequencies for husbands and wives, separately, are located in Tables 7 and 8 respectively.

Bivariate Correlations

As previously stated, bivariate correlations were used to examine the associations among communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction. Thus, significant relationships

were then used in a hierarchical multiple regression equation.

Correlations for Marital Satisfaction for Couples, Husbands, and Wives

Hypothesis 1 was supported by the bivariate correlations. Specifically, for couples marital satisfaction was positively related to couple communication ($r = .79, p \leq .01$; see Table 2). Hypothesis 2 was supported as well. Marital satisfaction was positively related to communication for husbands only ($r = .81, p \leq .01$) as well as wives only ($r = .82, p \leq .01$). Additionally, Hypothesis 3 was supported by the positive relationship between couples' marital satisfaction and leisure ($r = .65, p \leq .01$). The bivariate correlations indicated support for Hypothesis 4 in that leisure was positively related to marital satisfaction for husbands ($r = .66, p \leq .01$) and wives ($r = .61, p \leq .01$) separately.

In order to analyze items which were related to low and high levels of marital satisfaction, couples were divided into categories based upon frequency percentages (see Table 4). Those couples who scored 70 or above on their marital satisfaction Positive Couple Agreement were categorized as *high satisfaction* ($n = 332$; 30%). Also, those couples who scored 40 or less on their marital satisfaction Positive Couple Agreement were categorized as *low satisfaction* ($n = 281$; 37%).

Individual Leisure Scores: Couples with High Marital Satisfaction

When the bivariate correlations for perceived leisure were examined, using the individual's scores that were categorized as high marital satisfaction, the following significant correlations were found (see Table 9). More than 25% of the items were significant at either the .05 or the .01 level. Specifically, 18 of the correlations were significant at the .01 level. The following correlations found were significant and positive unless otherwise noted.

There was a positive correlation between both husbands' and wives' perceptions that they sometimes feel pressured to participate in leisure with their spouse ($r = .28, p \leq .01$). Furthermore, husbands' perceptions of good balance of leisure time together and separate were positively correlated to wives' perceptions of feeling pressured to participate in activities their spouse enjoys ($r = .15, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation between husbands' perceptions of good balance in their leisure activities, both alone and with their spouse, in relationship to the wives' wish that their partners would spend more time/energy in leisure with them ($r = .21, p \leq .01$). Moreover, husbands' perceptions of good balance were positively correlated to wives' concerns about the lack of interests/hobbies of their partner ($r = .12, p \leq .05$).

However, both the husbands' and wives' perceptions that they enjoyed the same types of activities were positively correlated ($r = .36, p \leq .01$). Furthermore, there was a positive correlation between both husbands' and wives' beliefs that they liked the amount of time and the activities they shared together ($r = .41, p \leq .01$). Additionally, for both husbands and wives there was a positive correlation with regard to the good balance of joint and individual leisure activities ($r = .34, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation for both husbands and wives which indicated that neither had concerns with the amount and type of television programs that were viewed ($r = .46, p \leq .01$). Finally, there was one significant negative correlation ($r = -.16, p \leq .01$). As wives were satisfied with the amount of time and the leisure activities they share with their partners, husbands tended to have fun even without their wives.

Individual Communication Scores: Couples with High Marital Satisfaction

When the bivariate correlations for perceived communication were examined, using the individual's scores that were categorized as high marital satisfaction, the following significant correlations were found (see Table 10). Fifty-six percent of the scores were significant at either the .05 or the .01 level. Of those scores, 44 were significant at the .01 level. The following correlations found were significant and positive unless otherwise noted.

Husbands' perceptions of satisfaction with the way they and their spouse talk was positively correlated with wives' perceptions of satisfaction with the way they and their husbands talk ($r = .35, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation with both husbands' and wives' perceptions that their partner puts them down ($r = .32, p \leq .01$). Related to this, there was a positive correlation between husbands' perceptions that their wives put them down, while the wives' expressed satisfaction with how they and their spouse talk ($r = .21, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation between husbands' perception that it is easy to express feelings to their wives and wives' perceptions that their husbands are reluctant to share their feelings ($r = .31, p \leq .01$). When wives reported that they did not always share negative feelings with their spouses due to the possibility of upsetting the husbands, husbands tended to perceive their wives were reluctant to express their feelings with them ($r = .17, p \leq .01$). Similarly, when husbands feared expressing negative feelings to their wives, wives tended to perceive that their husbands were reluctant to express their feelings ($r = .25, p \leq .01$).

There was a positive correlation between wives' perceptions that their husbands were good listeners and husbands' feeling their wives do not understand how they feel

($r = .26, p \leq .01$). Husbands' fear expressing their needs to their wives was positively related to wives' fear of expressing their needs to their husbands ($r = .21, p \leq .01$). Finally, there was one significant negative correlation ($r = -.13, p \leq .05$). As wives indicated it was easy to express feelings to their husbands, husbands tended to perceive that their spouses were less reluctant to share their feelings with them.

Individual Leisure Scores: Couples with Low Marital Satisfaction

When the bivariate correlations for perceived leisure were examined, using the individual scores that were categorized as low marital satisfaction, the following significant correlations were found (see Table 11). Twenty-seven percent of the scores were significant at either the .05 or the .01 level. Specifically, 15 of the correlations were significant at the .01 level. The following correlations found were significant and positive unless otherwise noted.

When husbands felt that there was a good balance between joint and individual leisure activities, wives also perceived a good balance between joint and individual leisure activities ($r = .26, p \leq .01$). Husbands' perceptions of good balance between joint and individual leisure is positively related to wives' feelings that they liked the amount of time and leisure activities they shared with their husbands ($r = .27, p \leq .01$). There was a positive relationship between husbands' perceptions of pressure from their wives to participate in activities they enjoyed and wives' feelings that they liked the amount of time and leisure activities they shared with their husbands ($r = .19, p \leq .01$). Husbands' and wives' perceptions of enjoyment of the same type activities were positively related ($r = .34, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation between husbands' perceptions of

There was a positive correlation between husbands' and wives' perceptions of satisfaction with their communication ($r = .29, p \leq .01$). There was a positive relationship between husbands' perceptions of their ability to express their feelings and wives' perceptions of their husbands' reluctance to express their feelings ($r = .29, p \leq .01$). Furthermore, there was a significant positive correlation between husbands feeling put down by their wives and wives' inability to believe everything their partners tell them ($r = .23, p \leq .01$). Moreover, there was a positive relationship between husbands' perceptions that their wives were reluctant to share their feelings with them and wives' perception that it is easy to express feelings with their husbands ($r = .26, p \leq .01$).

Husbands' perceptions of their satisfaction with the way they and their spouse talk is positively correlated with wives' perception that it is easy to express feelings with their husbands ($r = .26, p \leq .01$). There was a positive correlation between husbands' perceptions of their wives' reluctance to express their feelings and wives' fear to express their negative feelings to their husbands because of believing their husbands might become angry ($r = .20, p \leq .01$). There was a positive relationship between wives' satisfaction with the way they and their spouse talk and husbands' perceptions that their wives sometimes put them down ($r = .23, p \leq .01$). Additionally, as wives' reported satisfaction with the way they and their spouse talk, this was related to husbands' perceptions of fear of expressing their needs to their wives ($r = .22, p \leq .01$). Lastly, there was a positive correlation between wives' perceptions that their husbands were good listeners and husbands' perceptions that it was easy for them to express their feelings to their wives ($r = .21, p \leq .01$).

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

The interactions for leisure by communication were calculated by the procedure outlined by Aiken and West (1991). The predictor variables, leisure and communication, were first centered by subtracting the mean from the raw scores. The centered values were then multiplied to yield the interaction term for each equation.

Wives Only Scores on Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 5 was supported by the hierarchical multiple regression analysis. In step one, leisure was entered and was significantly related to marital satisfaction for wives ($\beta = .66, p \leq .01, \Delta R^2 = .44^{**}$; see Table 13). In step two, communication was added resulting in an additional 28% of the variance in marital satisfaction; leisure ($\beta = .25, p \leq .01$) and communication ($\beta = .67, p \leq .01$) were both positively related to marital satisfaction. In step three, the interaction of leisure by communication was significant in relation to marital satisfaction ($\beta = -.10, p \leq .01, \Delta R^2 = .01^{**}$) as were leisure ($\beta = .25, p \leq .01$) and communication ($\beta = .66, p \leq .01$). The nature of the interaction (leisure by communication) was explored as outlined by Holman and Jacquart (1988).

Combinations of high and low values of leisure and communication (High Leisure-High Communication, High Leisure-Low Communication, Low Leisure-Low Communication, and Low Leisure-High Communication) were inserted into the regression equation yielding the corresponding values for marital satisfaction. The plot of the interaction is shown in Figure 1. This plot shows that when leisure is low and communication is low we see that marital satisfaction is lower than when leisure is low and communication is high. A similar pattern occurs when leisure is high, yet the plot of the lines are not quite parallel indicating that at some point we would see a reverse in

these relationships. Marital satisfaction is higher when communication is low and leisure is high than when leisure is high and communication is lower. Therefore, the linear combination of leisure, communication and leisure by communication accounted for 73% of the variance in wives' marital satisfaction.

Husbands Only Scores on Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 6 was not supported because an interaction was present for leisure and communication in relation to marital satisfaction for husbands. In step one, leisure was entered and was significantly related to marital satisfaction for husbands ($\beta = .66, p \leq .01, \Delta R^2 = .43^{**}$; see Table 14). In step two, communication was added resulting in an additional 27% of the variance in marital satisfaction; leisure ($\beta = .24, p \leq .01$) and communication ($\beta = .66, p \leq .01$) were both positively related to marital satisfaction. In step three, the interaction of leisure by communication was significant in relation to marital satisfaction ($\beta = -.07, p \leq .01, \Delta R^2 = .01^{**}$) as were leisure ($\beta = .24, p \leq .01$) and communication ($\beta = .66, p \leq .01$).

As with the Wives Only regression analysis, combinations of high and low values of leisure and communication (High Leisure-High Communication, High Leisure-Low Communication, Low Leisure-Low Communication, and Low Leisure-High Communication) were inserted into the regression equation yielding the corresponding values for marital satisfaction. The plot of the interaction is shown in Figure 2. This plot shows that when leisure is low and communication is low we see that marital satisfaction is lower than when leisure is low and communication is high. A similar pattern occurs when leisure is high, yet the plot of the lines are not quite parallel indicating that at some point we would see a reverse in these relationships. Marital satisfaction is highest when

communication is high and leisure is high. Therefore, the linear combination of leisure, communication and leisure by communication accounted for 70% of the variance in husband's marital satisfaction.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the perceptions of leisure and communication in relation to marital satisfaction for first time married couples who had been married 0 to 10 years and had no children. The hypotheses were identified based on literature pertaining to communication, leisure, and marital satisfaction. All of the hypotheses were supported from the results of this data with the exception of Hypothesis 6. For husbands, contrary to the hypothesis, there was an interaction between the Male Individual Scores on the leisure subscale and the Male Individual Scores on the communication subscale in relation to the Male Individual Scores on the marital satisfaction subscale. This suggests that husbands are similar to wives in relation to the interaction that takes place between leisure and communication on marital satisfaction.

The data presented in chapter four supports the notion that communication and leisure are directly related to marital satisfaction. The significant interactions extend scholarship on relations between leisure and communication relative to marital satisfaction, although further investigation of the nature and parameters of these relationships is warranted. Other researchers have implied there might be a significant relationship between these variables (Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Orthner, Barnett-Morris & Mancini, 1993; Holman & Jacquart, 1988). However, this study provides a solid foundation for further explorations of the connection between leisure, communication, and marital satisfaction. Moreover, this study should be regarded as a beginning instead of an end within the investigation between the relationships of leisure, communication, and marital satisfaction.

It should also be noted that these correlations are consistent with and can be explained using the social exchange theory. For Hypothesis 1, couples' communication and marital satisfaction were significantly related. This score was the strongest out of all the correlations for the couples. Once again, this finding supports the existing literature that couple communication is strongly linked to marital satisfaction (Burleson & Denton, 1997; Cole & Cole, 1999; Renick, Blumberg, & Markman, 1992). Exchange theory would suggest that couples who have high communication and perceive their communication to be a reward would therefore also find their marital satisfaction rewarding as opposed to couples who do not communicate as well.

For Hypothesis 3, couples' leisure and marital satisfaction were also significantly related. This data supports the existing literature, which suggests that joint leisure and marital satisfaction are related to each other (Hill, 1988; Holman & Jacquart, 1988; Iso-Ahola, 1995; Orthner, 1975a; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Shaw, 1997; Zabriski & McCormick, 2001). This research further confirms that there is a relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction. Further investigation may reveal whether this relationship is reciprocal or whether the variables are linked causally. The exchanges that occur during communication and joint leisure tend to be positively related to marital satisfaction. This should encourage family service professionals to value not only communication, but leisure as well. Too often couples are expected to facilitate their own positive leisure experiences. Many couples are uncomfortable using or unable to use their leisure time to maximize the potential gains available from those experiences. Family service professionals might consider the value of teaching couples how to effectively use their leisure interactions, just as many

programs teach the skills necessary for positive, effective communication. As with communication, exchange theory would suggest that couples who have high leisure and perceive leisure to be a reward would be more likely to find their marital satisfaction rewarding than couples with more negative perceptions of their leisure and communication.

With regard to Hypotheses 2 and 4, when considering husbands' and wives' scores separately, both husbands and wives had positive correlations which were significant between communication and marital satisfaction as well as leisure and marital satisfaction. The correlations for husbands and wives were similar and support existing scholarship on the significance of communication and leisure to the satisfaction of married couples (Holman & Jacquart, 1988). For both husbands and wives, communication and joint leisure may be considered rewards of marriage by enhancing satisfaction, allowing for role transitions or exchanges, and providing an opportunity to interact in a non-threatening environment (Hill, 1988; Iso-Ahola, 1995; Holman & Jacquart, 1988; Kelly, 1997; Orthner, 1975a, 1975b; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Shaw, 1997; Zabriski & McCormick, 2001).

When looking at Hypotheses 5 and 6, the marital satisfaction is highest when both leisure and communication are high, suggesting that the exchanges that take place during communication and leisure may play an important role in the marital satisfaction of couples. Although the interactions were statistically significant, they may not be practically significant. This is because the relationships are more like parallel relationships than an interaction and the probable point of intersection for both the husbands only and wives only scores is out of the range of practicality using these

measures. Therefore, for all practical purposes, one can look at the significance of leisure to marital satisfaction and communication to marital satisfaction, but there is still an uncertainty as to the extent to which the interaction of leisure by communication is meaningful in predicting marital satisfaction. Thus, more research involving a more objective look at leisure and communication is warranted for an interaction at a practical level.

Social exchange theory provides a means to understand the relationship among leisure, communication, and marital satisfaction. Both communication and leisure are full of potential opportunities for costs and rewards to be negotiated in a marriage (Iso-Ahola, 1995; Orthner, 1976; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990). Hopefully, as couples participate in joint leisure and effectively use communication skills to negotiate those experiences, those couples who maximize those opportunities in communication and leisure will tend to have more satisfaction in their marriage. One could also speculate that those couples who have low communication and leisure along with low marital satisfaction do not spend enough time together, thus failing to reap the rewards that leisure and communication can offer. Another possibility is that these couples are not effective at negotiating those communication and leisure experiences which they share with their spouse and may choose an alternative to being married such as divorce. Further consideration and study of how the importance of leisure and communication can be to a couples' marital satisfaction could be highly beneficial for those working with married couples, those researching factors which enhance marital satisfaction, as well as the married couples themselves.

Recommendations

Many family educators, therapists, clergy, and public policy makers are trying to improve marriages and assist couples in staying together in healthy, satisfied relationships. Using the results of this study, one can see which areas might assist in this endeavor. Leisure and communication were significantly related to marital satisfaction. Many of the premarital and marital enrichment programs contain information about communication and how important it is to a marriage (Cole & Cole, 1999; Fournier & Olson, 1986; Hunt, Hof & DeMaria, 1998; Larson, 2000; Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2001; Parrott & Parrott, 1995; Stanley et. al., 2001). However, only some of these programs discuss leisure or *fun things* couples can do with each other. Furthermore, of the programs that incorporate skills training, there are a few, if any, that include some type of leisure skills training. This study finds that married couples who perceive leisure and communication to be high also have high marital satisfaction.

Implications for Future Research

Since couples may experience different levels of marital satisfaction over the life cycle, it would be useful to do a longitudinal study to examine these changes as they occur. For example, research shows that couples' relationship satisfaction may either increase or decrease after the birth of a child (Hill, 1988). Furthermore, a qualitative study in which the researcher is able to ask open ended questions as well as observe the interactions of the couples' communication and joint leisure activities may provide further insights into their responses that could prove to be invaluable. Moreover, based on the findings in this study, future researchers may wish to examine the type of leisure that

couples participate in and whether or not it is truly a balance of individual and joint leisure.

Additionally, mostly correlational research has been done with these variables. Future researchers may wish to utilize causal research to further explain the effects that communication and leisure may have on marital satisfaction. Furthermore, it might be interesting to explore husbands' and wives' views and interpretations of what it means to be a *good listener*. Finally, a similar study to this one could be conducted in which the researcher looks at the predictor variables (leisure and communication) in a more objective manner, rather than subjective. This may afford future researchers a means to determine the practicality of an interaction between these two variables. For example, researchers may be able to determine whether it is the nature of the discussion, the activity the couple is engaging in, the quality of communication, or possibly a combination of these things.

Implications for Practice

As for implications for practice, couples should be encouraged to attend a premarital program before they are married and then continue to attend enrichment programs after marriage and throughout the life cycle as their families change. Research shows that premarital and enrichment programs work (Cole & Cole, 1999; Stanley, Bradbury, & Markman, 2000). This is just one way couples can get the skills needed to attain a satisfied marriage.

In this study, of the couples with high marital satisfaction, husbands and wives had very similar views with regard to balance of joint and individual leisure and they also liked the amount of activities they shared together. However, it was clear to see that some

of the correlations also indicated there may be some problems for some of the husbands and wives with regard to how they perceive leisure. For example, there were instances when both husbands and wives, with high and low marital satisfaction, felt pressured to participate in leisure that their spouse enjoyed. Furthermore, if only one spouse finds the leisure experience pleasurable, is it truly joint leisure for the other spouse? This is a question for future scholars and researchers, with the hope of developing a better definition of joint or shared leisure between couples. Family Life Educators could also stress the importance to couples of not pressuring or persuading their spouse to participate in activities they enjoy, rather to explore leisure experiences that are agreeable to both husbands and wives.

Similarly, in couples with high and low marital satisfaction, many husbands and wives reported satisfaction with the way they and their spouse talked. However, some husbands and wives also felt as if their spouse made comments which put them down. Also, as some husbands expressed that sharing their feelings with their spouse was easy for them, some of the wives felt as if their husbands were reluctant to share their feelings. Furthermore, a few of the husbands and wives also reported a fear of expressing negative feelings with their spouses. This could be one area where Family Life Educators could discuss the implications of verbal abuse and teach couples how to express their feelings without fearing repercussions from their spouses. While some of the wives felt their husbands were good listeners, some of the husbands reported feeling that their wives did not understand how they felt. Therefore, one might speculate that even though some of the spouses indicated some level of satisfaction with this, their feelings may not have been totally expressed to their spouse or completely understood. There is a difference in

talking to one's spouse and effectively communicating with one's spouse. Perhaps couples need to be taught not only how to communicate effectively, but also how to respect each others' style of communication. Furthermore, practitioners and researchers need to collaborate and make sure there is some type of skills training incorporated into enrichment and educational programs for couples. Overall, one can see the need to incorporate skills training into education programs for couples.

Based on the findings of this study with regard to leisure and communication, family and leisure service professionals need to collaborate in educating couples about how to maximize their potential for marital satisfaction. As previously mentioned, enrichment programs which include skills training in leisure, as well as communication, would tend to benefit the overall marital satisfaction of the couples. However, due to the high correlations among various concepts further research should take into account that shared variance.

Conclusions

The goal of this study was to determine if married couples' perceptions of leisure and communication were related to overall marital satisfaction. According to the data and results of this study, there was a positive relationship between perceptions of communication and marital satisfaction. Results of this study also found there was a positive relationship between perceptions of leisure and marital satisfaction. Additionally, the relationship between perceived leisure and marital satisfaction differed depending on the level of perceived communication. However, this is not necessarily a practically significant finding and more research in this area needs to be completed.

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TABLES

Table 1

Frequencies of Years Married (n = 765)

Years Married	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
0	181	23.7	23.7
1	266	34.8	58.4
2	95	12.4	70.8
3	66	8.6	79.5
4	44	5.8	85.2
5	42	5.5	90.7
6	20	2.6	93.7
7	22	2.9	96.2
8	11	1.4	97.6
9	11	1.4	99.1
10	7	.9	100.0
Total	765	100.0	
Mean	2.05		
SD	2.25		
Median	1.00		

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Table 2

Bivariate Correlations for Positive Couple Agreement Scores, Husbands Only Scores, and Wives Only Scores

	CMS	CC	CL	HC	HL	HMS	WC	WL	WMS
Couple Marital Satisfaction									
Couple Communication	.79**								
Couple Leisure	.65**	.61**							
Husbands Communication	.72**	.83**	.56**						
Husbands Leisure	.57**	.55**	.79**	.63**					
Husbands Marital Satisfaction	.83**	.70**	.58**	.81**	.66**				
Wives Communication	.74**	.84**	.53**	.64**	.44**	.62**			
Wives Leisure	.58**	.53**	.74**	.45**	.50**	.50**	.61**		
Wives Marital Satisfaction	.87**	.73**	.57**	.64**	.48**	.71**	.82**	.61**	
Mean	54.00	45.36	49.94	34.52	34.39	36.71	34.26	35.61	36.25
Standard Deviation	28.90	29.84	23.91	7.22	5.34	6.45	7.80	5.46	7.12

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$

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Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations (n = 765)

Variable	Theoretical Range	Actual Range	M	SD
Couple Agreement Scores				
Communication	0-100	0-100	45.36	29.84
Leisure	0-100	0-100	49.93	23.91
Marital Satisfaction	0-100	0-100	54.00	28.90
Wives Individual Scores				
Communication	0-50	12-50	34.26	7.80
Leisure	0-50	20-50	35.61	5.46
Marital Satisfaction	0-50	14-50	36.25	7.13
Husbands Individual Scores				
Communication	0-50	12-50	34.52	7.22
Leisure	0-50	17-49	34.39	5.34
Marital Satisfaction	0-50	16-50	36.71	6.45

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Table 4

Frequencies of Positive Couple Agreement for Marital Satisfaction (n = 765)

Marital Satisfaction	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent	
0	49	6.4	6.4	
10	56	7.3	13.7	
20	51	6.7	20.4	
30	55	7.2	27.6	
40	70	9.2	36.7	↑ Low Marital Satisfaction
50	88	11.5	48.2	
60	64	8.4	56.6	
70	99	12.9	69.5	↓ High Marital Satisfaction
80	109	14.2	83.8	
90	101	13.2	97.0	
100	23	3.0	100.0	
Total	765	100.0		
Mean	54.0			
SD	28.90			

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Table 5

Leisure Frequencies for Husbands Only

ENRICH Item Themes	Theoretical Range ^a	Actual Range ^a	Low Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 281)		High Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 332)	
			Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1R ^b -pressure activities	1-5	1-5	3.05	1.15	3.80	1.01
17R ^b -more time/energy	1-5	1-5	2.68	1.09	3.51	1.09
18R ^b -spend time alone	1-5	1-5	3.50	1.24	3.55	1.16
28S ^c -not enough interests	1-5	1-5	3.05	1.21	3.83	1.03
31B ^d -same type activities	1-5	1-5	3.38	1.08	4.17	.72
33R ^b -concerns w/ holidays	1-5	1-5	3.05	1.16	3.81	1.07
60B ^d -no t.v. concerns	1-5	1-5	3.05	1.23	3.29	1.17
72R ^b -time/activities shared	1-5	1-5	2.87	1.06	3.81	.96
84R ^b -no fun w/o partner	1-5	1-5	3.74	.83	3.62	.94
114B ^d -good balance	1-5	1-5	2.83	1.06	3.79	.83

^a Ranges were identical for both low satisfaction and high satisfaction husbands only.

^b R = Respondent

^c S = Spouse

^d B = Both

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Table 6

Leisure Frequencies for Wives Only

ENRICH Item Themes	Theoretical Range ^a	Actual Range ^a	Low Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 281)		High Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 332)	
			Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
1R ^b -pressure activities	1-5	1-5	3.12	1.21	3.89	.99
17R ^b -more time/energy	1-5	1-5	2.71	1.24	3.63	1.03
18R ^b -spend time alone	1-5	1-5	3.69	1.18	3.74	1.03
28S ^c -not enough interests	1-5	1-5	3.63	1.22	4.32	.74
31B ^d -same type activities	1-5	1-5	3.48	1.03	4.28	.71
33R ^b -concerns w/ holidays	1-5	1-5	3.10	1.24	3.57	1.19
60B ^d -no t.v. concerns	1-5	1-5	2.98	1.26	3.39	1.23
72R ^b -time/activities shared	1-5	1-5	2.80	1.17	4.00	.90
84R ^b -no fun w/o partner	1-5	1-5	3.82	.82	3.79	.78
114B ^d -good balance	1-5	1-5	2.79	1.10	3.91	.83

^a Ranges were identical for both low satisfaction and high satisfaction husbands only.

^b R = Respondent

^c S = Spouse

^d B = Both

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Table 7

Communication Frequencies for Husbands Only

ENRICH Item Themes	Theoretical Range ^a	Actual Range ^a	Low Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 281)		High Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 332)	
			Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
2R ^b -express feelings	1-5	1-5	3.03	1.16	4.10	.96
6S ^c -silent treatment	1-5	1-5	2.99	1.34	3.69	1.11
40S ^c -put downs	1-5	1-5	2.84	1.18	4.11	.94
54R ^b -fear of expressing needs	1-5	1-5	3.10	1.14	4.03	.85
66S ^c -reluctant to express feelings	1-5	1-5	2.52	1.10	3.60	1.02
73R ^b -inability to believe spouse	1-5	1-5	3.62	1.15	4.46	.70
81S ^c -does not understand feelings	1-5	1-5	2.13	.80	3.30	1.09
91R ^b -satisfied w/ communication	1-5	1-5	2.89	1.05	4.31	.63
98R ^b -fear of expressing (-) feelings	1-5	1-5	2.46	1.02	3.58	1.04
109S ^c -good listener	1-5	1-5	3.03	1.09	4.02	.80

^a Ranges were identical for both low satisfaction and high satisfaction husbands only.

^b R = Respondant

^c S = Spouse

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Table 8

Communication Frequencies for Wives Only

ENRICH Item Themes	Theoretical Range ^a	Actual Range ^a	Low Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 281)		High Satisfaction (<u>n</u> = 332)	
			Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
2R ^b -express feelings	1-5	1-5	3.01	1.25	4.24	.88
6S ^c -silent treatment	1-5	1-5	3.16	1.29	3.96	1.01
40S ^c -put downs	1-5	1-5	2.93	1.35	4.15	.95
54R ^b -fear of expressing needs	1-5	1-5	3.02	1.22	4.11	.93
66S ^c -reluctant to express feelings	1-5	1-5	2.10	1.06	3.30	1.19
73R ^b -inability to believe spouse	1-5	1-5	3.42	1.29	4.46	.69
81S ^c -does not understand feelings	1-5	1-5	1.92	.81	3.08	1.14
91R ^b -satisfied w/ communication	1-5	1-5	2.76	1.17	4.35	.62
98R ^b -fear of expressing (-) feelings	1-5	1-5	2.69	1.17	3.88	.95
109S ^c -good listener	1-5	1-5	2.70	1.16	3.94	.95

^a Ranges were identical for both low satisfaction and high satisfaction husbands only.

^b R = Respondant

^c S = Spouse

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Table 9

Bivariate Correlations for Leisure Scores: Individual Scores for Couples with High Marital Satisfaction (n = 332)

	HR1	HR17	HR18	HS28	HB31	HR33	HB60	HR72	HR84	HB114
1WR ^a -pressure activities	.28**	.05	.02	.16**	.21**	.07	-.02	.11*	-.10	.15**
17WR ^a -more time/energy	.08	.06	.05	.16**	.07	-.05	.04	.28**	-.02	.21**
18WR ^a -spend time alone	.09	.01	.16**	.08	.02	-.04	-.06	.03	.06	.09
28WS ^b -not enough interests	.13*	-.06	-.07	.01	.04	.02	-.07	.07	.11	.12*
31WB ^c -same type activities	.16**	.10	-.10	.13*	.36**	.02	-.01	.09	-.08	.12*
33WR ^a -concerns w/ holidays	.11	.04	.14*	.01	-.01	.21**	-.01	.00	.02	.01
60WB ^c -no t.v. concerns	.04	.10	-.01	.07	.08	-.04	.46**	.10	-.01	.00
72WR ^a -time/activities shared	.09	.11*	-.02	.03	.14*	-.05	.01	.41**	-.16**	.22**
84WR ^a -no fun w/o partner	.04	-.05	.03	.01	-.07	-.07	-.09	-.02	.21**	.05
114WB ^c -good balance	.07	.01	.06	.06	.08	-.08	-.02	.32**	.02	.34**

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$ ^a R = Respondent^b S = Spouse^c B = Both

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Table 10

Bivariate Correlations for Communication Scores: Individual Scores for Couples with High Marital Satisfaction ($n = 332$)

	HR2	HS6	HS40	HR54	HS66	HR73	HS81	HR91	HR98	HS109
2WR ^a -express feelings	.05	.05	-.03	.09	-.13*	.02	.09	.12*	.01	-.05
6WS ^b -silent treatment	.19**	-.06	.20**	.09	.10	.04	.23**	.18**	.16**	.13*
40WS ^b -putdowns	.08	.09	.32**	.01	.20**	.18**	.21**	.13*	.07	.05
54WR ^a -fear of expressing needs	.14*	.10	.19**	.21**	.24**	.10	.24**	.16**	.07	.07
66WS ^b -reluctant to express feelings	.31**	.01	.18**	.14*	.26**	.16**	.17**	.24**	.25**	.11
73WR ^a -inability to believe spouse	.00	.04	.17**	.04	.01	.08	.07	.06	.07	-.06
81WS ^b -does not understand feelings	.09	.18**	.18**	.15**	.14**	.04	.23**	.17**	.08	.10
91WR ^a -satisfied w/ communication	.21**	.05	.21**	.18**	.25**	.08	.23**	.35**	.09	.09
98WR ^a -fear of expressing (-) feelings	.13*	.10	.15**	.16**	.17**	.16**	.17**	.16**	.19**	.03
109WS ^b -good listener	.15**	.12*	.18**	.13*	.05	.14*	.26**	.15**	.12*	.14*

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$ ^a R = Respondent^b S = Spouse

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Table 11

Bivariate Correlations for Leisure Scores: Individual Scores for Couples with Low Marital Satisfaction ($n = 281$)

	HR1	HR17	HR18	HS28	HB31	HR33	HB60	HR72	HR84	HB114
1WR ^a -pressure activities	.08	.10	.13*	.08	.22**	.18**	.04	.15*	-.03	.11
17WR ^a -more time/energy	.14*	-.08	-.11	.04	.05	.06	-.17	.17**	-.11	.16**
18WR ^a -spend time alone	.08	-.14*	.04	.13*	.04	.07	.12*	.03	.04	.11
28WS ^b -not enough interests	.07	.03	.08	-.13*	-.02	.05	.01	.07	.07	.09
31WB ^c -same type activities	.10	.10	-.03	.02	.34**	.18**	.02	.07	.00	.11
33WR ^a -concerns w/ holidays	.05	-.04	.08	-.02	.01	.25**	-.03	-.09	-.00	-.01
60WB ^c -no t.v. concerns	.14*	-.04	-.10	-.01	.16**	-.07	.42**	.01	.07	.08
72WR ^a -time/activities shared	.19**	.14*	-.02	.08	.11	.10	-.02	.32**	-.05	.27**
84WR ^a -no fun w/o partner	.01	-.04	-.01	.01	-.16**	-.05	-.08	-.08	.13*	-.09
114WB ^c -good balance	.14*	.13*	.03	.04	.05	.09	-.11	.21**	.09	.26**

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$ ^a R = Respondent^b S = Spouse^c B = Both

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Table 12

Bivariate Correlations for Communication Scores: Individual Scores for Couples with Low Marital Satisfaction ($n = 281$)

	HR2	HS6	HS40	HR54	HS66	HR73	HS81	HR91	HR98	HS109
2WR ^a -express feelings	.11	.16**	.04	.17**	.26**	.11	.20**	.26**	.07	.04
6WS ^b -silent treatment	.15*	-.10	.09	.09	-.03	.10	.11	.13*	.05	-.04
40WS ^b -putdowns	-.05	.15*	.21**	.10	.10	.13*	.12*	.16**	.09	.11
54WR ^a -fear of expressing needs	.01	.08	.07	.13*	.19**	.14*	.14*	.08	.07	.05
66WS ^b -reluctant to express feelings	.29**	-.07	.17**	.13*	-.08	.05	.15*	.18**	.12*	.01
73WR ^a -inability to believe spouse	.17**	.01	.23**	.11	.08	.19**	.16**	.09	.15*	.07
81WS ^b -does not understand feelings	.07	.02	.10	.09	.08	.18**	.11	.16**	.10	.10
91WR ^a -satisfied w/ communication	.18**	.09	.23**	.22**	.18**	.16**	.19**	.29**	.16**	.08
98WR ^a -fear of expressing (-) feelings	.03	.16**	-.01	.15*	.20**	.10	.15**	.12*	.13*	.05
109WS ^b -good listener	.21**	.14*	.08	.08	.01	.17**	.08	.12	.11	.04

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$ ^a R = Respondent^b S = Spouse

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Table 13

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Marital Satisfaction (Wives Only Analysis)

Predictor Variables	<u>b</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>B</u>	ΔR^2
Step 1:				.44**
Leisure	.86**	.04	.66**	
Step 2:				.28**
Leisure	.33**	.03	.25**	
Communication	.61**	.02	.67**	
Step 3:				.01**
Leisure	.33**	.03	.25**	
Communication	.60**	.02	.66**	
Leisure x Communication	-.01**	.00	-.10**	
Multiple <u>R</u>				.85
<u>R</u> ²				.73
Adjusted <u>R</u> ²				.73
<u>F</u> Value				678.89**

* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$

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Table 14

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis: Marital Satisfaction (Husbands Only Analysis)

Predictor Variables	<u>b</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>B</u>	ΔR^2
Step 1:				.43**
Leisure	.79**	.03	.66**	
Step 2:				.27**
Leisure	.29**	.02	.24**	
Communication	.59**	.02	.66**	
Step 3:				.01**
Leisure	.28**	.03	.24**	
Communication	.59**	.02	.66**	
Leisure x Communication	-.01**	.00**	-.07**	
Multiple <u>R</u>				.84
<u>R</u> ²				.70
Adjusted <u>R</u> ²				.70
<u>F</u> Value				191.70**

* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$

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FIGURES

Figure 1

Wives Only Scores for Marital Satisfaction

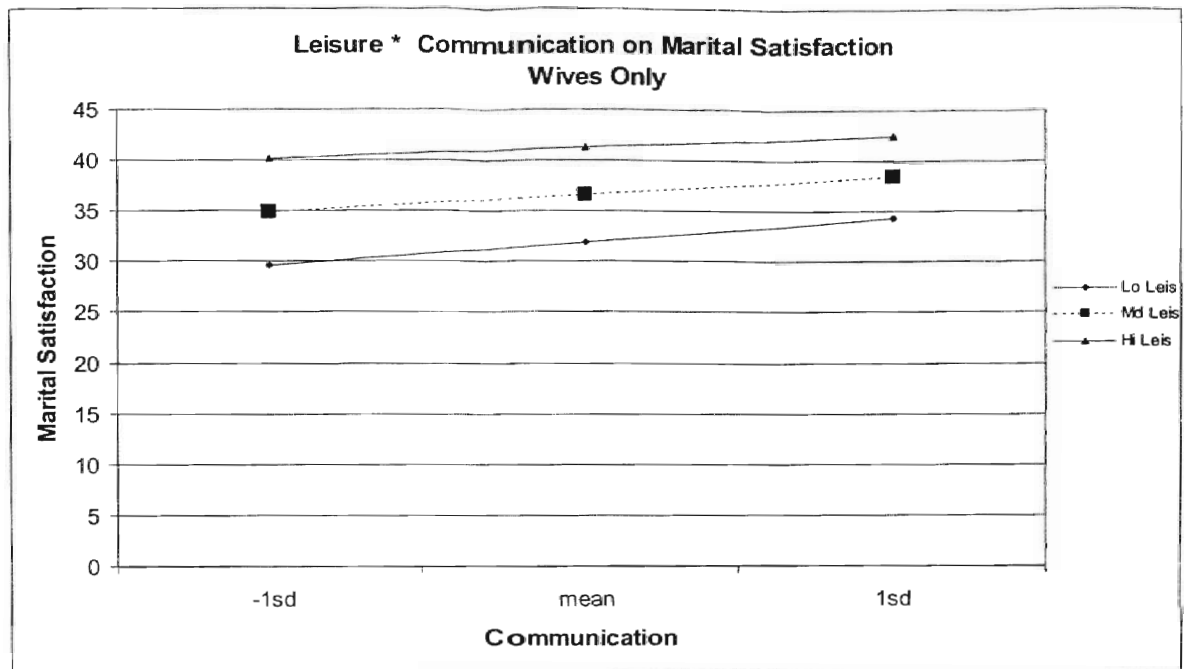


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Figure 2

Husbands Only Scores for Marital Satisfaction

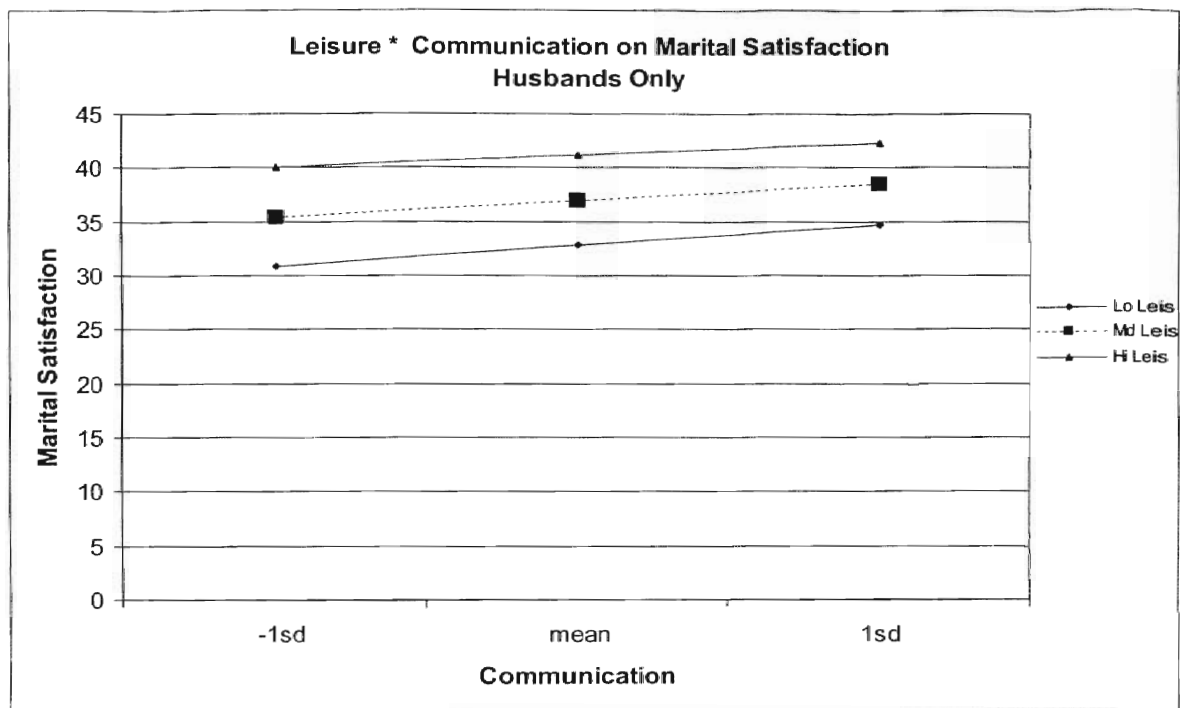


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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

ENRICH INVENTORY (SELECTED SUBSCALES)

Communication

- (+) 2. It is very easy for me to express all my true feelings to my partner.
- (-) 6. When we are having a problem, my partner often gives me the silent treatment.
- (-) 40. My partner sometimes makes comments which put me down.
- (-) 54. I am sometimes afraid to ask my partner for what I want.
- (-) 66. I wish my partner was more willing to share his/her feelings with me.
- (-) 73. Sometimes I have trouble believing everything my partner tells me.
- (-) 81. Sometimes my partner does not understand how I feel.**
- (+) 91. I am very satisfied with how my partner and I talk to each other.
- (-) 98. I do not always share negative feelings I have about my partner because I am afraid he/she will get angry.
- (+) 109. My partner is always a good listener.

*Revised Item

**New Item

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Leisure

- (-) 1. I sometimes feel pressured to participate in activities my partner enjoys.*
- (-) 17. I wish my partner would have more time and energy for recreation with me.*
- (-) 18. I'd rather do almost anything than spend an evening by myself.
- (-) 28. I am concerned that my partner does not have enough interest or hobbies.
- (+) 31. My partner and I seem to enjoy the same type of social or recreational activities.
- (-) 33. I am sometimes concerned about where and how we spend our holidays with our families.
- (+) 60. We never have concerns about the types of T.V. programs or the time spent watching television.
- (+) 72. I like the amount of time and leisure activities my partner and I share.**
- (-) 84. I do not seem to have fun unless I am with my partner.*
- (+) 114. My partner and I have a good balance of leisure time together and separately.

*Revised Item

**New Item

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Marital Satisfaction

- (-) 14. I am not pleased with the personality characteristics and personal habits of my partner.
- (+) 19. I am very happy with how we handle role responsibilities in our marriage.
- (+) 32. I am not happy about our communication and feel my partner does not understand me.
- (-) 36. I am very happy about how we make decisions and resolve conflicts.
- (-) 52. I am unhappy about our financial position and the way we make financial decisions.
- (+) 53. I am very happy with how we manage our leisure activities and the time we spend together.
- (+) 82. I am very pleased about how we express affection and relate sexually.
- (-) 88. I am not satisfied with the way we handle our responsibilities as parents.
- (-) 99. I am dissatisfied about our relationship with my parents, in-laws, and/or friends.
- (+) 113. I feel very good about how we each practice our religious beliefs and values.

*Revised Item

**New Item

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Master of Science

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