

THE IMPACT OF DIVORCE ON INTERPERSONAL
INTERACTIONS IN WOMEN

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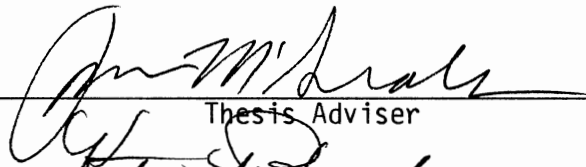
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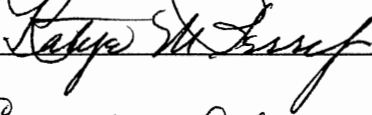
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
July, 1990

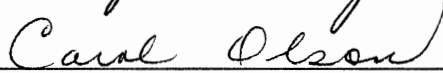
This study is lovingly dedicated to
the memory of my mother,
Thelma Summers Burks


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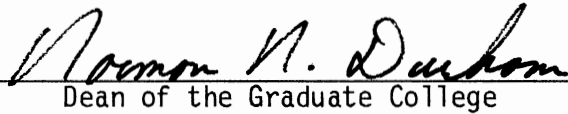

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my committee for their knowledge, guidance, and willingness to serve. A very special thank you goes to Dr. Jim Seals, whose unwavering support was always present during the past six years. Space is too limited in this brief section to express fully how much his expertise, guidance, and encouragement has meant to me as my major adviser, dissertation director, and my friend. To Dr. Sherry Maxwell, my friend, teacher, and committee member, whose help and encouragement has been invaluable, both professionally and personally, throughout the duration of my endeavors, goes my sincere gratitude. A special thanks is offered to Dr. Katye Perry for her guidance and patience in the completion of Chapters IV and V. I would also like to thank Dr. Carol Olson for her assistance and support in the completion of this project. Appreciation is expressed as well to Dr. David Lane for his willingness to serve.

Sincere appreciation is extended to Sharon Phillips for her cheerful encouragement as well as her skill and expertise in the technical preparation of this project.

The word "friendship" takes on a whole new meaning in graduate school. I have been blessed with many special friends and to them goes my sincere appreciation and love: Dr. Kathy McKean for her expertise, tutoring, and infinite patience during the most difficult of times, and especially for teaching me "canonical domain correlation sampling theory"; Todd DeWolf for his sense of humor and loving friendship and for

the experience of having a "little" brother; Dr. Harriet Slater for her emotional support--having "been there before me," she has been both an inspiration and an encouragement to me--Dr. Marcia Dickman for the "walking therapy" and for her realistic encouragement; Dr. Judy Dobson for her guidance and emotional support; and, of course, to George, who was always there when things got hard, and for his unwavering faith in me. Special thanks must also go to the OSU Cowboy baseball team and coaches who provided entertainment and a much needed escape.

I have been blessed with wonderful parents, Herschel and Annelies Burks. To them, I offer loving thanks for their encouragement, their love, and their belief in me. Finally, and most especially, to my daughter, Jennifer, whose love has kept me going in difficult times, whose patience has been beyond belief (especially for a teenager), and whose sense of humor has kept me human, goes my heartfelt appreciation and love for her encouragement and self-sacrifice during this time.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Divorce, once a relatively rare and negatively perceived event, has become commonplace in the United States. In 1915, the divorce rate was one divorce per 1000 population. The divorce rate increased to 2.5 per 1000 by 1966 and to 5.3 divorces per 1000 by 1979 (Norton & Glick, 1979). As of January, 1986, the divorce rate had stabilized at 5.0 per 1000 population (National Center for Health Statistics, 1986). Divorce has affected the lives of millions of Americans over the last 25 years.

The literature indicates that, in general, women have more difficulty adjusting to and coping with divorce than do men (Albrecht, 1980; Leslie & Grady, 1985). Albrecht examined characterizations of the divorce experience looking for differences according to the gender of the respondent. He found that the trauma and stress associated with divorce were significantly greater for women than for men. It was not known whether this difference resulted from the women's reluctance to accept the end of the marriage, from economic and practical reasons, or from a combination of issues. However, according to Albrecht's study, the divorce experience is more difficult for women than for men. Woodward, Zabel, and DeCosta (1980), in their study on loneliness and divorce, also found that the experience of divorce was more stressful and emotionally traumatic for women.

Dealing with financial and job issues, emotional issues, and social and interpersonal issues are common themes among divorced women (Bloom,

Asher, & White, 1978; Bohannon, 1970; Maury & Brandwein, 1984; Wallerstein, 1986). Anxiety and depression are higher among divorced women than any other marital status group (Radloff & Rae, 1979; McLanahan, Wedemeyer, & Adelberg, 1981). When compared to married women, divorced women reported poorer health (Berk & Taylor, 1984) and lower levels of psychological well-being (Bloom, Hodges, & Caldwell, 1983). As women move through the divorce process, they often seek counseling for assistance in coping with these issues and adjusting to divorce. Divorced women have been found to be the major consumers of mental health services (Guttentag, Salasin, & Belle, 1980).

Lazarus (1978) has suggested that any therapeutic intervention designed to facilitate adaptation and social competence assumes a knowledge of the specific difficulties confronted by the population and their contribution to distress. In addition, Lazarus stated that the counselor should be aware of the range and efficacy of coping strategies that may be employed by the population. In counseling with women who are involved in a divorce or have recently been divorced, the counselor must have an adequate information base to be optimally successful. Counselors must be aware of the unique societal and self-imposed pressures and constraints of divorced women.

Interpersonal relationships have a significant impact on the happiness and mental health of any individual and especially on divorced women (Kazak & Linney, 1983; Kohen, 1981). It is well documented that the presence and quality of interpersonal relationships are highly related to successful coping and adjustment in divorced women (Colletta, 1979; Kohen, 1981; Raschke, 1977). Therefore, interpersonal relationships are an appropriate and essential concern within the counseling relationship. Counselors must be knowledgeable about the customary interpersonal

interactional behaviors of divorced women if the counselor expects to be of assistance to this population.

Significance of the Study

It has been well documented that the divorce rate in the United States has increased drastically over the past 25 years. Recent estimates indicated that nearly 50% of all new marriages will ultimately end in divorce (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1984). Divorce can be defined as a social, emotional, and legal process through which individuals come to regard themselves and be regarded by others as a single person. Divorce has also been viewed as a transition process, bridging marriage and another lifestyle (Brown, 1976; Maury & Brandwein, 1984). Before one can emotionally accept divorce and begin life as a single person, a wide range of responses and behaviors may be experienced (Brown, Felton, Whiteman, & Manela, 1980; Menaghan & Lieberman, 1986).

A majority of the research on the process of divorce has focused on issues such as major emotional change; new concerns about money, jobs, children, and living arrangements; and disruptions of familiar activities, routines, and habits (Bohannon, 1970; Bloom et al., 1978; Albrecht, 1980; Maury & Brandwein, 1984; Day & Bahr, 1986). In addition, several studies have examined the divorce adjustment process (Colleta, 1979; Cutrona, 1986; Griffith, 1986; Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1978; Kurdek, 1988). These studies consistently point to the establishment of interpersonal relationships as being not only a difficulty for divorced women, but also one of the most effective mediators of adjustment to divorce. During the adjustment process following divorce, women who have supportive interpersonal relationships have been shown to experience less stress (Raschke, 1977) and to be more effective parents (Colletta, 1979).

Further, Kohen (1981) found women with highly supportive relationships made better transitions to a single identity than did divorced women who receive low levels of support from relationships. The literature regarding interpersonal relationships and social support has also examined changes in social networks (Leslie & Grady, 1985), social support as predictors of adjustment (Pett, 1982), and various types of social support (McLanahan et al., 1981). However, investigations of interpersonal interaction styles of divorced women were not found in the literature.

Divorced persons have been found to be overrepresented in clinical populations (Bloom, 1975; Crago, 1972). Bloom et al. (1978) reported that as many as 40% of all divorced persons receive some kind of professional counseling. Because of the importance of interpersonal relationships in women's adjustment to divorce, it is essential for the counselor working with this clinical population to be aware of strengths and weaknesses of the interpersonal skills of the client (Lazarus, 1978). Further, it is vital that the counselor be cognizant of any unique differences in interpersonal interactions associated with the process of going through a divorce.

The interaction style of an individual is affected by the personal characteristics of the individual (Colletta, 1979). Therefore, interpersonal interactions may change as a direct result of the impact of the divorce process on personal characteristics. Although the importance of interpersonal relationships in divorce adjustment is well documented, no studies have been found which examine interpersonal interaction styles of divorced women. Therefore, the focus and purpose of this descriptive study was to examine any differences between the interpersonal interactions of married and divorced women.

Statement of the Problem

The question addressed in this study was: What is the impact of divorce on interpersonal relationships in women?

Research Questions

The specific research questions addressed in this study were the following:

1. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and "high" on Inclusion, either wanted or expressed, as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

2. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and "high" on Control, either wanted or expressed, as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

3. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and "high" on Affection, either wanted or expressed, as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

Definition of Terms

The following are terms which were utilized in this study:

Marital Status. Divorced--referring to a woman who has been through the legal divorce process, who has obtained a divorce, and who has not remarried. Married--referring to a woman who is currently legally married, excluding those who are legally separated.

Interpersonal Relationships/Interactions. These terms are interchangeable and refer to the characteristic behavior of an individual towards other individuals in the areas of inclusion, control, and affection.

Interaction Variables. The interaction variables of the FIRO-B were defined by Ryan (1977). Inclusion--referring to the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with people with respect to interaction and association. Control--referring to the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with respect to control and power. Affection--referring to the need to have satisfactory relationships with others with respect to love and affection. The three interpersonal interaction variables of Inclusion, Control, and Affection were examined on two dimensions, wanted and expressed behavior, as measured by scores on the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation Behavior Scale (FIRO-B) (Schutz, 1958). The Inclusion scale measures the degree to which a person moves toward or away from people. The Control scale measures the extent to which a person wants to assume responsibility or make decisions. The Affection scale measures the degree to which a person becomes closely involved with others.

Limitations

Generalizations related to this study should be approached with caution until further research is completed. The subject pool was restricted to the ages of 25-45 and to those individuals who were divorced not more than four years, limiting representativeness beyond that age and time frame. Subjects in this study were limited to university students in a clinical setting at a large, southwestern university.

Therefore, this may not be representative of all students at the university, or of university students in general.

Organization of the Study

The present chapter includes an introduction to the problem, the significance of the study, a statement of the problem, the definition of terms, the research questions, and the limitations of the study. Chapter II contains a review of the literature pertinent to this study. Chapter III describes the subject pool and selection of subjects, procedures, instrumentation, research design, and analysis data. Chapter IV contains the findings and a discussion of the results of the study. Chapter V includes a summary of the results of the study, conclusions and implications, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED SUBJECTS

Introduction

The review of related literature begins with an examination of the impact and effects of divorce on women. This includes emotional issues, financial issues, and social and relationship issues. The process of divorce adjustment and the factors influencing divorce adjustment are the next areas of focus. Finally, a review of research dealing with the interpersonal interactions of divorced women is reported.

Impact and Effects of Divorce on Women

Divorce is not likely to become painless or casual, despite the increasing frequency of its occurrence. It is reported that the newly divorced are probably destined to suffer at least some amount of stress, personal disorganization, anxiety, unhappiness, loneliness, low self-esteem, anger, and fear (Bloom et al., 1978, 1983; Kurdek, 1988; Weiss, 1976).

Emotional Concerns

The emotional reactions to divorce are marked by varying degrees of trauma (Kurdek & Blisk, 1983; Spanier & Thompson, 1983). Goode's (1956) classic study indicated that the symptoms of memory loss, work inefficiency, poor health, or poor sleeping are found among the divorced. The

author reported that 50% of the divorced women in his study suffered from three out of four of these symptoms, indicating a high degree of trauma. Menaghan and Lieberman (1986) and Propst, Pardington, Ostrom, and Watkins (1986) add loneliness, anxiety, panic attacks, and loss of appetite to the list of emotional responses reported by divorced women. Divorced women have described themselves as progressing through phases of numbness, denial, shock, rage, bitterness, and depression (Hetherington, Cox, & Cox, 1982; Wallerstein, 1986). Menaghan and Lieberman found that the newly divorced tend to experience increased depressive feelings over time. They reported that the increased depression closely reflects the divorced person's greater economic problems and lack of personal support systems. In addition, Hunt and Hunt (1977) found that women experienced feelings of guilt, shame, and a sense of failure in relation to their divorces. A sense of failure as a parent and spouse was reported by Hetherington et al. (1982) to be pervasive during the first year following divorce. In Albrecht's (1980) study of 500 divorced persons from eight Rocky Mountain states, numerous factors were identified by respondents as contributing to the emotional trauma associated with divorce. Legal concerns and children and parenting concerns were among the factors. However, a feeling of personal failure was identified as the most common factor producing trauma and stress for divorced individuals. In addition, when controlling for sex it was found that stress, emotional trauma, and a sense of personal failure were significantly greater for the female than for the male.

Loneliness was found to be an emotional concern of divorced women. Woodward et al. (1980) concluded in their study on loneliness after a divorce that women were affected by loneliness after a divorce to a greater extent than were men. The authors also found that loneliness was

exaggerated by social rejection due to the divorced state. Feeling out of place at social events, performing daily tasks, and having no one with whom to share daily responsibilities contributed to loneliness in divorced individuals. Furthermore, they suggested that it is more difficult for women to establish relationships that might diminish loneliness after divorce than it is for men. The authors suggested that the period of time between physical separation and the final divorce was when the largest percentage of women (52%) in the study experienced the most severe feelings of loneliness.

The emotional reaction to divorce has been described as a grief and mourning period. Kubler-Ross (1969) offered that a grief reaction occurs with any loss, not just death, but also if a person is separated or divorced. Additionally, Krantzler (1974) reported similarities when comparing the loss resulting from death and the loss due to divorce. The grief and mourning period often includes responses of anger and irritability. There may be a sense of unreality and a feeling of emotional distance from other people (Menaghan & Lieberman, 1986). Kitson, Lopata, Holmes, and Meyering (1980) conducted a study that dealt with the similarities and differences of divorcees and widows. They found that the sense of loss as well as the bereavement process through which both groups of women moved had many similar characteristics. Kitson et al. (1980) found disorganization, loneliness, isolation, and anger to be common characteristics among widows and divorcees. The researchers determined that, in addition to similarities, the divorced women had more difficulty in relationships with others and less social support and ease of adjustment to the end of marriage than did widows. Kitson et al. also suggested that divorcees experience a greater sense of loss and more emotional trauma than widows.

Divorce brings with it emotional hardship. The extent and intensity of the emotional trauma associated with divorce may vary among women, but the presence of emotional hardship is evident. The emotional divorce and its concerns begin prior to separation (Maury & Brandwein, 1984) and often do not end until long after the legal divorce is final.

Financial Concerns

A major concern of many divorcing women is finances. For most, their income will be decreased and their standard of living will be lowered (Wallerstein, 1986). Economic divorce for many women may be based on the reality of ending a marriage where the husband contributed a majority if not all of the family income while the wife performed domestic duties. Pearce and McAdoo (1981) stated that as many as 45% of the women on Aid to Families With Dependent Children may join the welfare roles as a result of financial needs instigated by divorce. The authors further reported that many divorced women remain on welfare as a result of limited employment and child care options for single parent families. Although not every woman ends up on welfare after divorce, the great majority are economically affected. Day and Bahr (1986) suggested that, following a divorce, most women will experience an abrupt change in their previous standard of living. Ross and Sawhill (1975) predicted that almost half of the families headed by women will face a poverty-level existence at some point in time. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) found that loss of income as a result of divorce brings about a decline in the standard of living for all family members. This decline, regardless of the level of affluence, adversely affected 75% of the women studied. Bane (1979) has also documented the severe decline in economic status which divorced women undergo. Her research over a five-year period showed that

intact families experienced an average rise of 35% in income, and divorced men showed an overall rise in earnings. However, divorced women over the same five-year period showed a net economic decline of 17%.

Divorced women face hardships such as reduced income, unemployment, outdated job skills, inadequate education, and inexperience in financial management (Hetherington et al., 1978; Maury & Brandwein, 1984). Previous research supports a dismal picture of economic hardship for divorced women, often with barely enough resources to manage (Brandwein, Brown, & Fox, 1974; Brown, 1976; Day & Bahr, 1986). Kazak and Linney (1983) found that economic difficulties created more stress for divorced women than did the transition to single parenting or to single social participation. Further, the authors stated that divorced women's satisfaction with life is most affected by success as an economic provider. Financial independence and adequate income have been found to enhance women's emotional well-being and adjustment to divorce (Ambert, 1983; Duffy, 1989). Menaghan and Lieberman (1986), in their panel study, concluded that the increased depression of the divorced closely reflected their greater economic problems and their perception that they have lost economic ground. Financial concerns such as loss of income and a decreased standard of living, as well as the depression these issues can create or exacerbate, are of universal importance to women experiencing divorce.

Social and Relationship Concerns

Women whose social relationships were established because of their roles as a wife will usually experience a great deal of disruption in their "couple" contacts. Kurdek (1988) reported that during and following divorce, many women tend to turn to others for support. Family and friends may be sympathetic, jealous of her new freedoms, or project that

the single-again woman is a failure, crazy, or inadequate. Likewise, male acquaintances may be seductive, fatherly, frightened that she is husband hunting, or angered if she is not. There continues to be some stigma associated with divorce, and no divorced woman escapes the stigma entirely (Kitson et al., 1980; Maury & Brandwein, 1984). Frequently, a loss of respect and status is experienced by divorced women. Since the single-again status is ambiguous and noninstitutionalized, women tend to experience conflicting expectations and perceptions of them. Most women will need ample time to sort out the numerous and conflicting responses they receive.

Divorced women may feel left out or like a "fifth wheel" as they attempt to participate as a single person in a couple-oriented society. In a study on loneliness and divorce, Woodward et al. (1980) determined that certain social situations are major contributors to stress and loneliness for the divorced. The authors reported that social rejection due to their divorced status and feeling out of place at a particular time or event were experienced regularly by divorced individuals and were difficult to manage.

Kolevzon and Gottlieb (1983) offered that women living alone in a couple society feel as though they are not living life completely. In addition, the authors stated that when the aloneness and isolation comes as a result of a divorce, there is a sense of failure and depression that accompanies it. When divorced women do begin to socialize and date again, they are faced with the conflict of wanting affection and intimacy on one hand and the insecurity of possible rejection on the other (Hetherington et al., 1982; Krantzler, 1977; Weiss, 1976). This conflict causes additional feelings of loneliness and desperation (Woodward et al., 1980).

Losing one's social role of wife impacts women differently, depending on their social characteristics. Older divorced women may be more traumatized because they are more entrenched in an established social order (Chiriboga, 1982). Chiriboga suggested that when a person's marital status is unusual for their age and sex, it is more difficult to enter freely into the customary social life. For example, the emotional impact of divorce may be greater among older than younger adults because it is less common among the older group. Loss of a valued social role may be more damaging to those who have few other valued social roles (Thoits, 1983). Consequently, women without careers or children may be more negatively affected.

Divorce is generally known to have a disruptive effect on the social lives and relationships of women. Losing the role of wife often restricts the social lives of divorced women. Friendship patterns and social interaction networks are frequently changed or lost entirely (Leslie & Grady, 1985). In the United States, marriage remains the norm (Spanier & Thompson, 1984), and socializing is organized around couples. Being a single woman limits social and relationship opportunities. Establishing meaningful interpersonal relationships and a social life are high trauma areas for most divorced women.

The Process of Divorce Adjustment

Early research in the area of adjustment to divorce is rare. Waller's (1930) study was the initial work dealing with divorce adjustment. Waller proposed an adjustment model with several tasks of reorganization that confront divorced women, which include difficulties in: (1) reorganization of the individual's sex life; (2) recovery from loss of pride as a result of failure in marriage; (3) readjustment of marital habits

and daily routines; (4) redefining relationships with friends and relatives; (5) economic adaptations; and (6) resolution of personality conflicts resulting from the divorce. Although additional studies tangentially related to divorce adjustment were conducted in the 1930's and 1940's (Raschke, 1977), it was not until Goode's (1956) classic study of 425 divorced urban women that the study of divorce adjustment was again undertaken. It was 10 years before another major contribution was made dealing with divorce adjustment. Although Hunt's (1966) World of the Formerly Married was written for the general public, it was based on questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation. The author's work served to identify the issues surrounding adjustment to divorce. Hunt's model suggested behavior modification, examination of expectations, and expression of emotions to facilitate adjustment to the divorce.

The 1970's saw the divorce rate in the United States rise to approximately 20.5 per 1000 married couples (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1977); with it also rose the number of studies addressing divorce adjustment. Bohannan's (1970) Divorce and After presented the concept of adjustment as a process. Bohannan used a grief model to explain the divorce process and problems. Describing divorce grief, Bohannan stated, "Divorce is difficult because it involves a purposeful and active rejection by another person, who, merely by living, is a daily symbol of the rejection . . . there is no recognized way to mourn a divorce" (p.37). Basing his model on interviews and questionnaires from divorced persons, Bohannan suggested that there are six experiences or "stations" which are overlapping, rather than sequential processes:

- (1) the emotional divorce which centers around the problem of the deteriorating marriage;
- (2) the legal divorce which is based on grounds;
- (3) the economic divorce which deals with

money and property; (4) the co-parental divorce which deals with custody, single-parent homes, and visitation; (5) the community divorce, surrounding the changes of friends and community that every divorcee experiences; and (6) the psychic divorce with the problem of regaining individual autonomy (p. 30).

Bohannon (1970) offered that these experiences begin long before physical separation of the couple and continue during and after the final decree.

Wiseman (1975) defined the divorce adjustment process as one of both grief and growth. She likened the divorce process to the grief process described by Kubler-Ross (1969). Wiseman described the process as a series of five overlapping stages of emotional crises: (1) denial--an attempt to deny serious marital problems; (2) loss and depression--occurs when the marital difficulty is recognized to exist; (3) anger and ambivalence--includes acknowledgment of the dissolution of the marriage and is usually when physical separation takes place; (4) reorientation of lifestyle and identity--involves reworking of identity in all areas touched upon by the marriage; and (5) acceptance and a new level of functioning--happens gradually as the divorced individual begins to establish positive self-worth and acceptance of the divorce. Wiseman (1975) viewed this process as one in which both marital partners experience emotional crisis with unique characteristics as well as unique opportunities for growth. The author stated that acceptance of divorce implies the absence of negative feeling related to identifying oneself as a divorced person. Her definition of acceptance does not emphasize remarriage. Wiseman suggested that adjusted divorced persons are ready for an intimate relationship, while they do not hold remarriage as an ultimate goal.

Similar to the above researchers, several others have proposed models of the divorce process, creating terminology for various stages of adjustment to divorce. These studies include Weiss' (1975) two-phase

model, Kessler's (1975) seven stages of emotional divorce, and Froiland and Hozman's (1977) five phases of grief theory. Spanier and Casto (1979) proposed a model of the divorce process, consisting of two overlapping phases: the ending of the marriage and the beginning of a new lifestyle.

Salts (1979) offered that the various models and stages proposed by different theorists are not conflicting and can be integrated. Her first stage is the erosion phase of emotional divorce. In this stage, growing awareness of serious marital breakdown is evident, though often denied by both spouses. Using children or money as a rationale, couples often remain in this phase for years. Detachment, the second stage, occurs when the reality of the faltering marriage is acknowledged. Sharing, physical affection, and sex are avoided in this phase. Anger and depression begin to be experienced and often neither spouse any longer invests much in the marriage. Towards the end of the detachment stage, events and decisions come more quickly, thus leading the couple into the separation and divorce stage. This third stage of Salt's (1979) integration model typically involves physical separation and preservation of the marriage becomes very difficult. Loneliness, legalities, and transition punctuates this phase. The fourth stage, revision of identity, involves the search for a new life pattern. Dating, establishing new friendships, and increasing indifference to one's ex-spouse and former lifestyle are included in the identity stage. Finally, the acceptance and recovery stage is reached in which the individual experiences life as balanced and enjoyable. This last phase is characterized by the ability to establish new, meaningful relationships, to accept the compromises associated with intimacy, and to set realistic goals for oneself.

More recently, Crosby, Gage, and Raymond (1983) and Crosby, Lybarger, and Mason (1987) developed a model of the grief resolution process in divorce. The researchers' model includes: three chronological process stages (first awareness of serious marital problems, separation or filing, and final decree); three filing categories (actives, passives, and mutuals); and three variables (affect, cognition, and behavior). The researchers found the recovery process of the actives and mutuals to be quite similar. However, the passives were different, experiencing greater emotional trauma in the first two process stages.

Successful adjustment to divorce has been described by Kitson and Raschke (1981) as having the ability to develop a self-identity that is not dependent on the former spouse or the state of being married. According to the authors, successful adjustment further includes the ability to function adequately in the role responsibilities of home, work, and leisure time.

Review of the literature indicates the adjustment to divorce is attained through a periodic process of recovery. According to various researchers, the length of the adjustment period is not stable. Kolevzon and Gottlieb (1983) reported that short-term emotional adjustment takes less than two years. In contrast, Hetherington et al. (1978) found the process of adjustment to take a minimum of two years. Wallerstein (1984) argued that three to three and one-half years is typical before women attain a sense of stability. Weiss (1979) similarly reported that the divorce recovery and adjustment period may last three to four years after separation.

The divorce adjustment process appears to include a cyclic progression of stages or phases. These stages include social, familial, and interpersonal role redefinition which leads up to and can continue past

the legal proceedings that terminate a marriage. Each divorce adjustment model allows for individual uniqueness. Stages may be repeated, skipped, or occur simultaneously, and the legal divorce can occur at different points in the process. The intensity and length of the divorce process and emotional and behavioral responses to the process may also vary greatly, depending on the inhibitors and facilitators of adjustment the individual experiences.

Factors Influencing Divorce Adjustment

Frequency of divorce in the United States has been accompanied by an increasing concern with isolating the factors that may affect adjustment to divorce. This concern has been more prevalent for women than men, perhaps because women appear to be more negatively affected by divorce (Albrecht, 1980; Kressel, 1980; Raschke, 1977; Thomas, 1982). Women most often become the head of single-parent families (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980). Single-parent families headed by women have been the fastest growing family unit in the United States, increasing at a rate of two and one-half times that of traditional families (Ross & Sawhill, 1975). For most women, the divorce experience is accompanied by a multitude of changes which go far beyond the legal act of dissolving a marriage (Leslie & Grady, 1985). Changes created by divorce often include altered relationships with children and friends, broken intimate ties with the former spouse, a lower standard of living, and different living arrangements (Albrecht, 1980). Acknowledgment that some benefits of the former marriage are irretrievable can make adjustment formidable for newly divorced women. Even if the marriage was difficult, unsatisfactory, or conflict-filled, and divorce offers the possibility of an improved life,

difficulties associated with transition to life as a single woman is traumatic (Menaghan & Lieberman, 1986).

Factors which facilitate or hinder the process of adjustment to divorce are numerous. Several researchers have attempted to identify variables which inhibit or enhance divorce adjustment. Bernard (1956), Goode (1956), and Hunt (1966) all asserted that remarriage was an indicator of positive divorce adjustment. Hunt stated that individuals who remain divorced for extended periods experience severe trauma and will adjust more slowly. In the 1950's and 1960's divorced women were viewed as maladjusted and undesirable (Bernard, 1956), or as misfits who were still grieving (Goode, 1956; Hunt, 1966). Bernard (1973) later changed his position, reporting that women who remarry are less well adjusted than single women. More recently, trends point toward an ever-increasing number of divorced women happy to be out of their marriages and choosing to remain single. The rate of remarriage has declined steadily since the 1960's. Remarriage in the United States has diminished, from a rate of 130/1000 in 1965 to 94/1000 in 1982 (Glick & Lin, 1986). Green (1983) and Weingarten (1985) suggested that this may be due in part to a greater societal acceptance of divorce and of remaining single.

A majority of the research indicated that women experience a greater degree of emotional trauma and pragmatic turmoil associated with divorce. Thomas (1982) found that women have a more difficult adjustment to divorce than do men. Her study of once-married, currently divorced individuals from Tennessee showed the "poorest adjusted" group to consist primarily of women. Similarly, Albrecht (1980) and Kressel (1980) suggested that changes created by divorce were usually more traumatic for women and hindered adjustment. Divorced women are consistently found to be one of the main consumers of mental health services (Guttentag et al.,

1980), indicating greater difficulty with the divorce adjustment process for women. Chiriboga, Roberts, and Stein (1978) asserted that, while women may experience greater emotional turmoil because of the divorce than men do, women's adjustment time may be shorter due to the emotional intensity. In contrast, Hetherington et al. (1982) found that women experience adjustment problems for longer periods of time than do men following divorce. The researchers reported that the most difficult time for both spouses was during the first year after the divorce, in terms of emotional adjustment and establishing meaningful interpersonal relationships. In addition, Hetherington et al. found that although men appeared to have more difficulty with their self-concept immediately following the divorce, after two years, only the women were still having adjustment problems in terms of self-concept.

Spivey and Scherman (1980) investigated the effects of time lapse, personality characteristics, and stress on divorced women. Three groups (married, newly married, and divorced) were studied by time periods (0-6 months; 1-1/2 years; 3-1/2 - 4-1/2 years; and 6-1/2+ years) since the time of the divorce. The first six months after the divorce appeared to be the most stressful, while the indicators of poor adjustment did not occur until six months to a year later. The authors reported that by 3-1/2 years post-divorce, stress had subsided and indicators of poor adjustment were the same in both the married and the divorced groups.

Duration of the marriage and age at time of divorce have been found to affect adjustment to divorce. Older women with a longer marital history are reported to have a more negative and difficult experience with adjustment (Berman & Turk, 1981; Wallerstein, 1986). Nelson (1981) examined moderators of women's adjustment to divorce and found that older women encounter greater adjustment problems than younger women. Nelson

suggested that increased stress and difficulty with adjustment for these women may be the result of long-established lifestyles and habits being difficult to change. In addition, Chiriboga (1982) included the presence of two or more children and having male children as factors which negatively influenced adjustment in older, longer married women. Hetherington et al. (1978) found that older women with children had more trouble establishing new social relationships and developing a personal identity separate from the marriage.

Marital quality and marital stability as predictors of divorce adjustment were the focus of Green's (1983) investigation. The researcher reported that a more positive adjustment to divorce was found in individuals with lower levels of marital quality and strong attractions to alternative relationships and/or statuses. Fewer external pressures in their social environment to remain married were also found to be related to positive adjustment. Accordingly, individuals with higher levels of marital quality, minimal alternative attractions, or intense pressure in their social environment to remain married found the adjustment to divorce more difficult and problematic. External pressures to remain married were found to be the strongest negative correlate of adjustment for women.

Goode (1956), Hetherington et al. (1982), and Spanier and Casto (1979) reported an active social life and establishing intimate relationships to be associated with healthy adjustment following divorce. Hetherington et al. found that participation in social activities was positively related to successful adjustment. However, the most essential factor identified by Hetherington et al. to influence successful adjustment was the establishment of satisfying, intimate, interpersonal relationships. Similarly, social participation and dating were demonstrated

by Kazak and Linney (1983) to be significantly related to positive divorce adjustment and life satisfaction. Nelson (1981) investigated moderators of adjustment following divorce and offered that for women, a positive current relationship and positive feelings about the former spouse were the strongest moderators of successful divorce adjustment. Daniels-Mohring and Berger (1984) found positive adjustment to be related to a stable social network of friends and relatives. The highest adjustment group in the study reported twice the number of intimate relationships than did the lowest adjusted group. Hughes (1988) examined the effects of social support on divorce adjustment and found that social support had a positive influence. The researcher stated that the most effective support came from friends rather than relatives.

Albrecht's (1980) study focused on sex differences in divorce adjustment. He found adjustment problems significantly greater for women. A low level of social participation was associated with a more difficult adjustment to divorce. The most significant finding of Albrecht's study concerned income. The researcher stated that 66% of the women sampled experienced a significant decrease in income, while only 7% reported an increase in income following the divorce. This downward economic trend among divorced women was found to be related to poor adjustment.

Employment and adequate income levels are consistently represented in the literature as factors which positively relate to divorce adjustment. Raschke (1977), Spanier and Casto (1979), and Wise (1980) reported that individuals with higher incomes have an easier adjustment process to divorce. Related to income, recent research has also indicated that employment contributes to the positive divorce adjustment of women (Lottinville & Scherman, 1988). The researchers found that the structure work provides, the income, the relationships with co-workers, and the

learning of new skills are conducive to positive self-image and divorce adjustment.

Another prominent factor identified in the literature that influences adjustment to divorce deals with whether an individual had an initiator or noninitiator role in the decision to divorce. Crosby et al. (1983) found that initiators had the benefit of being more prepared for the termination of the marriage. Thus, initiators resolved anger over the divorce more quickly, began social participation sooner, and had less feelings of failure. Noninitiators did not progress through the adjustment process as rapidly or with as much ease. Pettit and Bloom (1984) and Spanier and Thompson (1983) reported that initiators generally have a less difficult time with adjustment to the divorce. Initiators of the divorce are more in control of the situation, while many times, noninitiators are resistant to the divorce. Maury and Brandwein (1984) found that divorced women who were initiators adjusted more positively than did divorced women who were noninitiators. Control over the timing of the divorce and relinquishment of the wife role were indicators of less troublesome adjustment.

Kressel (1980) reported that noninitiators may become depressed due to the lack of control they feel over the divorce. Kitson (1982) stated that noninitiators may have greater feelings of attachment to the spouse than initiators or higher commitment to the marriage. These factors were shown to negatively impact the adjustment process. In agreement, Power (1986) stated that emotional difficulties with divorce were related to women not having been initiators of the divorce. Additional research has confirmed the initiator role as a positive influence on adjustment. Thomas (1982) considered personality variables in relation to divorce adjustment. She found that the best adjusted individuals tended to be

leaders in their marriages and were more likely to have initiated the divorce.

Buehler (1987) examined the effect of initiator status on psychological well-being and stress during the divorce process. A sample of 80 divorced individuals were surveyed at six months to one year and one and one-half to two years post-divorce. Initiators reported higher stress and more change at six months to one year, while noninitiators reported higher levels of stress and change at one and one-half to two years post-divorce. Other than these timing differences, Buehler reported similar emotional responses to divorce for initiators and noninitiators alike. A majority of the research on role in the decision to divorce strongly indicates that initiators experience less stress, more positive adjustment, and higher life satisfaction than noninitiators. Buehler (1987) was the sole investigator found to report similar experiences for both initiators and noninitiators.

Factors that influence divorce adjustment are numerous and varied. There is no one established list of positive and negative factors of adjustment to divorce. The presence of social and interpersonal relationships in women's lives is a central theme and possibly the most prominent facilitator found in the literature to influence successful divorce adjustment. Age, length of the marriage, income, and role in the decision to divorce are also notable factors shown to impact divorce adjustment. Research on the divorce adjustment process is extensive, identifying numerous factors which impact the intensity and duration of this process as inhibitors or facilitators to women's adjustment.

Interpersonal Interaction of Divorced Women

Interpersonal interactions in the form of social and intimate

relationships have been found to facilitate women's adjustment to the process of divorce (Daniels-Mohring & Berger, 1984; Leslie & Grady, 1985). Conversely, interpersonal interactions, as well as establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, are also among the greatest difficulties divorced women encounter (Hetherington et al., 1982). The interaction style of an individual is affected by the personal characteristics of the individual. Therefore, interaction styles may change as a direct result of the impact of the divorce process on personal characteristics. Review of the literature as it relates to interpersonal interactions of divorced women on the dimensions measured by the FIRO-B (inclusion, affection, and control, both wanted and expressed) will be discussed in the following section.

Inclusion

Inclusion refers to an individual's social orientation. The interpersonal need for inclusion is the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with respect to interaction and association (Ryan, 1977). The wanted inclusion dimension of the FIRO-B assesses the need to belong and be accepted, the extent to which individuals want others to include them in social activities, and whether or not they encourage others to move toward them. Expressed inclusion measures the extent to which individuals are comfortable in social settings, move toward people, and will initiate social activities with others.

In the United States there is no defined role model for divorced individuals or for those persons in their social networks. This leaves divorced individuals confused as to how to relate to family and friends. Even when divorced women want to be included, society may not allow it. Divorced women are frequently seen as outsiders by society (Maury &

Brandwein, 1984), thus leading to feelings of alienation and isolation and possibly inhibiting their ability to make social contacts. Kitson and Raschke (1981) reported that divorced women may feel like outsiders when they attempt to participate in activities with married friends, thus causing divorced women to be less inclusive of others.

Thomas (1982) investigated the relationship between personality factors and divorce adjustment by identifying differences in best and poorest adjusted groups. She found that the best adjusted group in the study scored high on a social boldness measure. These persons were more adventurous in meeting people and showed an active, overt interest in the opposite sex. In addition, Thomas found that those in the poorest adjusted group tended to be inhibited, restrained, and socially cautious. This suggests that high inclusion facilitates adjustment to divorce. Although social participation appears to be high on the list of needs and a positive facilitator to adjustment, it seems that many divorced women are inhibited in social behavior after divorce.

Daniels-Mohring and Berger (1984) addressed the issue of change in social networks during the divorce adjustment process. The authors suggested that inclusion to or exclusion from social networks varies from each individual's perspective. If the individual's social network revolved around mutual relationships with the spouse, inclusion in the social group may be denied to either spouse. On the other hand, if the social networks of spouses were not mutually shared, the individual can anticipate fewer changes. Often, divorced women tend to feel alone and alienated without the traditional roles of a wife, such as caring for a home, providing food and entertainment for the spouse, and deferring decisions to the spouse. This may inhibit the ability to establish a new

lifestyle and relationships if women feel they no longer have anything of value to offer others.

Patterns of coping in divorce were the focus of a three-year research project done by Kressel (1980). The researcher identified four stages in an individual's coping response: denial, mourning, anger, and readjustment. During the mourning phase, Kressel stated that the individual is likely to express low inclusion needs, often withdrawing from social contacts. Woodward et al. (1980) found that it was more difficult for women than men to establish relationships that might reduce loneliness. They asserted that this may be partially due to negative societal views on women who take the initiative in establishing relationships with men. When divorced women are not reinforced for inclusive behavior by their significant others or social networks, social isolation can be the result.

Divorced women often cling to the security of their families during the initial phases of the divorce process. This behavior and fear of further rejection can restrict inclusion of the social relationships that facilitate adjustment. Bradbury and Fincham (1990) reported that distressed individuals tend to blame their estranged spouses, regarding them as selfishly motivated and acting with negative intentions. Divorced women often generalize these negative feelings for their former husbands, distrusting others and withdrawing from any intimate relationships other than family (Kressel, 1980). Kurdek (1988) investigated the social support of divorced single mothers and their children. The researcher found that mothers' satisfaction with support was likely due to increased interactions with friends and relatives. This finding suggests a high degree of both wanted and expressed inclusion. However, Kurdek also reported that divorced women were disinterested in divorce-related

organizations. This may indicate that high inclusion is limited to friends and relatives and does not extend into the extrafamilial sphere for divorced women. Leslie and Grady (1985) suggested high inclusion needs in their finding that divorced mothers at some point in time will move away from dense, kin-filled networks to social networks of friends and intimate relationships. The researchers also found this move to facilitate adjustment to divorce.

It appears that inclusion needs may change as time passes following the divorce. After the initial period of confusion and depression, women act warmer toward others and relate to others in a more emotional manner. Kazak and Linney (1983) reported that shortly after divorce, women tend to have increased contact with family, children, and established friends. The researchers found that, over time, dating and participation in social groups also increases. Raschke (1977) found that divorced women did not feel social participation was important and they reported very low social activity for the first six months after physical separation. However, during the second six months following divorce, social participation became extremely important in alleviating stress in divorced women and remained at this high degree of importance throughout the second year.

In their longitudinal study on the impact of divorce, Hetherington et al. (1982) found that divorced persons scored lower on socialization scales than did married persons. Divorced mothers were reported to have significantly less contact with adults and felt isolated in a child's world. This finding was more prevalent among nonworking than working women. By the end of the first year, divorced women in Hetherington et al.'s follow-up expressed a pervasive desire for intimacy, which suggests that wanted and expressed inclusion may increase with the passage of time. However, the researchers reported that during the two years

post-divorce, although there was much improvement in functioning and increased wanted inclusion, social life was still severely restricted for divorced women. These findings suggest that women may experience conflict in wanted and received inclusion.

The importance of social and intimate relationships to women's successful adjustment to divorce is consistent in the literature. The review suggests that inclusion needs may vary in intensity on wanted and expressed dimensions of inclusion for divorced women. The literature also indicates that the passage of time may impact both dimensions of inclusion in divorced women.

Control

Control refers to leadership and authoritarian behavior. The interpersonal need for control is the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with respect to power and control (Ryan, 1977). The wanted control dimension of the FIRO-B measures the extent to which individuals want to be controlled by others and have others make decisions for them. Expressed control measures the amount of responsibility individuals are willing to assume and the degree to which individuals are willing to make decisions for themselves and others.

Traditional socialization of women and society's resistance to recognize or accept women in an independent and authoritative role creates difficulties for divorced women asserting themselves as the "head of household." Traditional socialization in the United States teaches women to be indecisive and nonassertive. Maury and Brandwein (1984) found that a woman's sense of control is most vulnerable after she has dropped the role of wife but has not yet assimilated the role of a single woman. During this period, divorced women tend to live by the definitions of

significant others. Duffy (1989) reported that traditional women have been socialized to find their identity through their husbands; therefore, they are not socialized to function as a single person. The author further stated that divorced women are not prepared to act as independent, autonomous adults in interactions with societal institutions, for emotional satisfaction, or for companionship and conversation.

In 1980, Doherty looked at the influence of divorce on locus of control and reported that divorced persons were significantly the most internally controlled of the marital status groups studied, including married and never married. This finding suggested that successful adjustment to divorce may lead individuals to stronger beliefs in personal control of their lives. In his 1983 follow-up, Doherty predicted that the experience of divorce would increase women's externality or wanted control and weaken beliefs in internal or expressed control over outcomes in their lives. Doherty's (1983) findings supported his prediction. The researcher reported that divorced women in his longitudinal study showed an increase in externality up to three years post-divorce. However, the increase diminished between years three and eight to a level comparable with married women. This contradicted Doherty's (1980) earlier findings, which showed a trend of greater control for the divorced women in comparison to the married women.

Other studies have shown that divorced women report less ability to control and direct their lives than married women (Weiss, 1979), and feel significantly less in control of their thoughts and feelings (Pett, 1982). Divorce often produces strong dependency needs. This wanted control may be demonstrated through relationships with family, friends, or even the individual's attorney in the divorce proceeding (Kressel, 1980). Bloom et al. (1983) and Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) found that

the divorce experience often increases the need for information and advice. Thus, divorced women may exhibit behavior indicative of high wanted control.

In Kressel's (1980) research on coping patterns in divorce, he reported an imbalance of power in divorce, depending upon who initiates the separation. Frequently, only one spouse desires and initiates a divorce. For initiators, expressed control would likely be quite high. Noninitiators are generally less accepting of the divorce, often trying to control the situation with resistance and unrealistic demands or threats. Conversely, noninitiators may perceive themselves as being totally controlled and thus yield to the initiator's wishes.

Thomas (1982) looked at personality factors as they relate to divorce adjustment. Persons in the best adjusted group scored significantly higher on nine dimensions of personality than did the poorest adjusted group. One of the measures significantly different was dominance and assertiveness. These women were likely to be leaders, exhibit boldness, and have occupations requiring independence and management abilities. Thomas suggested that the qualities of dominance and assertiveness that lead to better adjustment to divorce have traditionally been viewed as masculine characteristics and may meet with disapproval from others.

In contrast, some of the literature has shown increased autonomy, a new sense of competency and control, and improved functioning as a result of going through a divorce. Divorcing individuals will often initially experience marked deterioration of planning and decision-making ability (Kressel, 1980). However, Kressel reported that, as individuals move through phases of adjustment to divorce, these abilities return. Following divorce, women have demonstrated greater independence and

increased assertive behavior (Berman & Turk, 1981). The researchers stated that the rigors of the divorce process in resolving numerous practical problems of beginning life as a single person furnished divorced individuals with a sense of competence and control. Maury and Brandwein (1984) found that women who initiate divorce have less difficulty because the decision-making process gives them a sense of control. For women, divorce includes taking on new and greater responsibilities. Frequently, divorced women must be mother, father, and provider for their families. Responses to these changes can vary from competent and in control to resignation and dependence on others.

Affection

Affection refers to intimate relationships. The interpersonal need for affection is the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with respect to love and affection (Ryan, 1977). The wanted affection dimension of the FIRO-B produces a measure that ranges from rarely, if ever, wanting others to initiate close relationships to always wanting others to initiate close relationships. The expressed affection scale ranges from individuals who readily establish intimate relationships with others, to those who are selective and cautious in initiating any intimate relationship.

Hetherington et al. (1982) measured intimacy in relationships as part of their longitudinal study. They defined intimacy as ". . . love in the sense of valuing the welfare of the other as much as one's own, of a deep concern, and strong attachment to the other person" (p. 249). In the researchers' study on the impact of divorce, they found happiness and high self-esteem related to the ability to be intimate in relationships. Hetherington et al. viewed intimacy as not exclusively related to sex but

to include affection and closeness with another person as well. In rating social support, Kurdek (1988) found the areas of sexual needs and physical intimacy to be the lowest realized among divorced women. Because of the negative influence divorce has on one's sense of intimacy and attachment, affectional behavior in divorced women may be low.

Although affectional behavior may not be readily demonstrated by divorced women, an investigation of the first eight months of separation by Bloom et al. (1983) concluded that these individuals are likely to have high affection needs, both wanted and expressed. They found divorced individuals to need more support than usual in the areas of physical intimacy. Gold and Nadelson (1988) found that, although there is desire to alleviate the loneliness and find affection, many divorced women cannot bear the thought of developing an intimate relationship. The authors stated that anger and lack of trust against the former spouse can generalize and transfer to other men. Thus, many divorced women cannot imagine being interested in a man again, even for a casual date.

In a three-year research project, Kressel (1980) investigated patterns of coping response to divorce. A central theme of divorced persons reported by Kressel was a perception of oneself as being unlovable while they long for love and affection. These findings suggest a conflict for divorced individuals who need and want love and affection, but at the same time feel unlovable. Kressel identified the initial stage of coping as denial. He stated that during this phase, individuals may engage in affectionate behaviors toward their estranged spouses as a result of wanting the marriage to work. This behavior often includes frantic efforts to rekindle the care and affection once known in the marriage. These individuals may be expressing a need for the affection they had in marriage, or may be mourning the lack of affection in a deteriorating

marriage. However, Kressel (1980) found that later in the process, during the anger phase, the same individual may have very low affection needs and are often hostile toward the spouse and possibly members of the opposite sex in general.

Weiss (1979) included "attachment," or a sense of emotional closeness and security as one of the areas in his multidimensional model of social support for divorced persons. He predicted that women's support in the area of attachment would be especially low because of the loss of attachment from the former spouse. Received affection from the ex-spouse is usually low or nonexistent during divorce. This could result in increased wanted and low expressed affection for divorced women.

Hetherington et al. (1982) concluded that giving and receiving affection is essential to the happiness and self-esteem of divorced women. The authors found that happiness and self-esteem highly related to intimacy in relationships. They further reported that one year after divorce, women expressed a pervasive desire and need for intimacy. This finding may be suggestive of high affectional behavior in divorced women. The researchers also found a tendency for divorced mothers to be less affectionate with their children during the first year following divorce. However, at two years post-divorce these mothers were more consistent, affectionate, and nurturing with their children, thus suggesting that levels of expressed and wanted affection may be altered with the passage of time.

Summary

The literature is extensive on divorce and women's adjustment to divorce. Research has consistently found women to be more negatively affected by divorce and the adjustment process to divorce than men

(Albrecht, 1980; Woodward et al., 1980). Further, the review identifies interpersonal relationships as not only a difficulty for divorced women, but also as an essential mediator to divorce adjustment (Cutrona, 1986; Griffith, 1986; Kurdek, 1988). Although studies were found that referred to the interpersonal interaction dimensions of inclusion, affection, and control, no studies were found that examined specific styles or patterns on these interpersonal interaction variables. Neither did the literature suggest any consistent directional differences on these dimensions. Therefore, further research is warranted to determine the impact that divorce has on the interpersonal interactions of divorced women on the dimensions of inclusion, affection, and control.

CHAPTER III

INSTRUMENTATION AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine any differences between the interpersonal interactions of married and divorced women. This chapter begins by discussing the subjects employed in this study, and examines the instrument used to measure three dimensions of interpersonal interactions: inclusion, control, and affection. The methodology used in conducting this study is also explained. Specifically, the demographic information and selection of subjects, research design, collection procedures, and analysis of data are discussed.

Subject Selection

The subjects for this study were women between the ages of 25 and 45, identified from already existing files in a university counseling agency. The agency is located at a large, land-grant university in the southwestern United States. All of the subjects had been seen as clients at a university counseling agency. Criteria for being included in this study were involvement in counseling, gender, age, and completion of the FIRO-B, which was administered during the first month of contact with the agency. Subjects were classified based upon information from the files of the university counseling agency. The classifications were: (1) married--referring to a woman who is currently married; and (2) divorced--

referring to a woman who has been through the legal divorce process, obtained a legal divorce, and has not remarried.

From a pool with a minimum of 300 in each group (married and divorced), 80 subjects per group were randomly selected using a table of random numbers. The pool of individuals from which the subjects were drawn was generated from agency files for the years 1985-1989. The subject pool was restricted to the ages of 25-45 to eliminate possible bias of less mature interpersonal interaction styles in younger women. Because the literature indicated a maximum adjustment time to the initial divorce crisis of 3-1/2 to 4 years (Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980; Weiss, 1975), the pool was also limited to those individuals who were divorced not more than four years.

Procedures

The data for this study were collected from existing files at a university counseling agency located at a large southwestern university. A confidentiality information sheet (Appendix A) notifying clients that data from agency records may be used for research purposes and offering right of refusal is given to each client during the initial session at the agency. An informed consent form (Appendix A) is signed by each client during the initial session at the agency. Each client is given the FIRO-B as part of a routine testing battery administered by the agency. A pool with a minimum of 300 in each group (married and divorced) was generated from existing agency files. From the pool, 80 subjects per group were randomly selected using a table of random numbers.

During data collection, all materials remained in the university counseling agency. The FIRO-B scores, demographic information (Appendix

B), and marital status were collected for each subject in both groups. The data collected were recorded without identifying information.

Only files containing a signed consent form (Appendix A) were used in the study. For each subject, the demographic information form (Appendix B) was completed using information from the counseling agency's client information form in each file. FIRO-B scores from the FIRO-B profiles in each subject file were recorded onto the test score sheet (Appendix C).

Data collection was accomplished during regular operating hours of the university counseling agency, providing for the presence of supervision to clarify any issues concerning subject confidentiality. When not working with data collection, all demographic information forms and test score sheets were kept in a locked file drawer in the university counseling agency's file room. All agency files were returned to their file drawers when data collection was completed. At no time were agency files removed from the agency.

Instrumentation

Fundamental Interpersonal Relations

Orientation-Behavior Scale (FIRO-B)

According to Schutz (1967), all human relational behavior can be classified as inclusion, control, and affection. Scores on the FIRO-B measure the degree to which individuals want others to express these three behaviors toward them, and the degree to which individuals express these behaviors toward others.

The FIRO-B is a questionnaire that consists of 54 items. It was compiled and published by Schultz in 1958. The FIRO-B is a test of per-

ceived interaction that measures three dimensions of interpersonal interactionals: inclusion, control, and affection. For each dimension, two scores are obtained: expressed behavior and wanted behavior. Expressed behavior is that which is observable and is directed from self to others. Wanted behavior is that which is preferred from others and directed toward self.

Six basic questions on the FIRO-B are stated in nine different ways. Subjects are asked to select their response to each item from a list of six possible responses, ranging from "never" to "usually." For subjects to invalidate the test they must inconsistently record answers that are in contrast to other answers provided on different forms of the same question. According to Ryan (1970), the questions are "naive and benign in appearance" (p. 2), suggesting that the FIRO-B tends not to contribute to anxiety and therefore the probability of faking is low.

The primary purposes of the FIRO-B are to measure how an individual acts in interpersonal situations and to provide an instrument that will facilitate the prediction of interaction between people (Schutz, 1967). The FIRO-B is based upon the theory that the three dimensions measured are needs which exist in all people. The three dimensions of the FIRO-B (inclusion, control, and affection) represent behavior that is produced in relation to needs that an individual has in the same areas. Thus, the FIRO-B is designed to measure the degree to which needs related to the three dimensions exist and the degree to which these same needs can be met by an individual, based upon the self-report of behavior.

The basic interpersonal interaction dimensions of the FIRO-B (inclusion, control, and affection) were defined by Ryan (1977):

Inclusion. The interpersonal need for inclusion is the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with people, with respect to interaction and association. The need to be included relates to an individual's pursuit of attention, acknowledgment, identity, prominence, and participation.

Control. The interpersonal need for control is the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with others with respect to control and power. Control behavior is concerned with the decision-making process between people. The need to control is evidenced by the desire for power, superiority, authority over others, and thus over one's own future. On the other hand, when the need for control is low, it may be demonstrated by avoidance of responsibility or submissiveness. The need for control may be quite different in terms of an individual's expressed control and an individual's wanted control.

Affection. The interpersonal need for affection is the need to have satisfactory relationships with others with respect to love and affection. Emotional feelings and intimacy with others reflect the quality of this dimension. Affection behavior refers to intimate, personal, and emotional feelings between two persons; whereas, both inclusion and control may occur in dyads or between one individual and any number of others. Relationships between family members, friends, or lovers are illustrative of affectional relations.

Each of the FIRO-B dimensions is assessed in two ways: expressed behavior (e)--that which is observable by the other person, and wanted behavior (w)--that which is preferred from others.

Reliability of the FIRO-B

Coefficient of Internal Consistency. Since the scales of the FIRO-B are all Guttman scales (unidimensional scales which produce a cumulative scale), reproducibility is the appropriate measure of internal consistency. This measure indicates the degree to which test items assess the same thing. Reproducibility requires that all items are unidimensional and occur in a certain order and is thus is a more stringent criterion than other measures of internal consistency. The FIRO-B scales were developed using the responses of approximately 150 college student subjects. The reproducibility was computed using 1,550 subjects. Coefficients of internal consistency of .93 to .94 for the six basic questions of the FIRO-B, with a mean coefficient of .94, is reported by Schutz (1967, 1978). Gilligan (1973) established means and reliability coefficients on the FIRO-B and found them to be lower than those reported in the manual. The highest internal consistency of the overall scales was found to be .81, with the sums of the wanted and expressed scales to be .75. Similar populations of college freshmen were utilized in each study.

Coefficient of Stability. This measure refers to the correlation between test scores and scores on retest after a time lapse. Schutz (1967, 1978) reported coefficients of stability based upon test-retest reliability results among Harvard students over a one-month period, except the coefficients related to the affection dimension which were collected over a one-week period. Reported coefficients of stability range from .71 to .82 for the six FIRO-B questions, with a mean coefficient of .76.

Validity of the FIRO-B

Construct Validity. Kramer (1967) determined that the three basic dimensions of the FIRO-B (inclusion, control, and affection) clearly share significant common variables which normal subjects could perceive in themselves. Froehle (1970) was unable to reproduce Kramer's results, although Gluck (1979) suggested that this was due to a difference in design used by Froehle and supported Kramer. Additional support for the FIRO-B as a research instrument was provided by Malloy and Copeland (1980); however, caution was advised in its use as a clinical measure.

Research Design

The study utilized a two-group, nonexperimental design, with the groups being divorced and married females. This exploratory descriptive study was looking for all possible differences on all six dimensions because the review of literature was inconclusive and did not suggest any directional differences on the interactional dimensions of inclusion, control, and affection.

Analyses of Data

The FIRO-B produces six measures, all wanted and expressed: inclusion, control, and affection. Scores on the FIRO-B may range from 0-9 on each dimension. The obtained scores may be classified as: 0-2 ("low"), 3-6 ("average"), and 7-9 ("high") (Ryan, 1970).

A two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on the data. MANOVA was selected for two reasons. First, MANOVA is specifically designed to be used with multiple dependent variables. Second, MANOVA was selected over a series of Univariate Analyses of

Variance (ANOVA) because of the protection it affords against Type I errors. The Type I error rate was set at .05. Current marital status (married and divorced) was the independent variable. The dependent variables of inclusion, control, and affection (expressed and wanted) were tested for significance in married and divorced women. ANOVAs were employed as post hoc procedures. Additional regression analyses were employed to examine the effects of demographic variables.

A 2 x 3 chi-square was used to further investigate significant differences found between the groups. A significance level of .05 was used. Ryan's procedure was employed to identify differences in low, average, and high scores.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results and statistical analyses utilized in the study. The purpose of this study was to examine the differences between the interpersonal interactions of married and divorced women. The data consisted of subjects' scores on the FIRO-B inclusion, control, and affection scales. The procedure involved the collection of archival data from client files at a university counseling agency.

A two-group multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to test for significant differences between married and divorced women on the six dependent variables of expressed inclusion, expressed control, expressed affection, wanted inclusion, wanted control, and wanted affection. Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) on each dependent variable were employed as post hoc procedures.

Chi-square analyses were used to investigate the practical implications of the results. Additional regression analyses were utilized to test for the effects of age, number of children, time since divorce, and initiation (whether or not the woman initiated the divorce), on the six dependent variables.

Demographic Data

Table 1 lists the number of subjects (N=160) in each of the groups who were enrolled in school, their school status, enrollment status, and employment status. The majority of subjects in both groups were undergraduate students (55% of the married subjects and 61% of the divorced subjects). Approximately one-third of the subjects in each group were graduate students, and 8% were not enrolled in school during the time of therapy.

Table 1

School and Employment Status of Subjects

Variable	Married (N=80)	Divorced (N=80)
<u>School Status</u>		
Freshman	5	6
Sophomore	15	3
Junior	8	19
Senior	16	21
Graduate	27	25
Not enrolled	9	6
<u>Enrollment Status</u>		
Full-time	52	44
Part-time	19	30
<u>Employed Outside the Home</u>	40	43

The mean age of the subjects across groups was 31.71. Specifically, the mean age of the divorced group (32.69) was slightly higher than that of the married group (30.72). The age distributions were skewed (see Figure 1), in that most subjects were in the younger age ranges(under 34 years old). Of the married women, 76.25% were under 34; this age range included 63.75% of the divorced women. The influence of the age difference between the groups on the dependent variables will be discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter.

Figure 2 depicts the frequency distributions for the number of children in each group. The mean number of children for the divorced group (1.46) was greater than the mean for the married group (.94). Since the presence or absence of children in the home had a potential influence on the dimensions of inclusion, control, and affection, the effects of this variable were investigated in post hoc analyses.

Data on two moderator variables were collected for the divorced group: time since divorce and divorce initiation. The mean number of months since legal divorce at the initiation of therapy was 22.8; a stem-and-leaf display indicated that the variable was normally distributed. The values ranged from 1 to 48 months. Of the divorced women, 62.5% were the initiators of divorce proceedings.

Statistical Analyses of Research Questions

Table 2 shows the mean profiles of married and divorced women on the FIRO-B. A two-group MANOVA was used to analyze the overall difference between the groups on the mean scores of the six dependent variables. The overall multivariate test of significance indicated a significant difference between the married and divorced subjects ($F(6,153)=4.368$, $p<.001$). Moreover, group membership accounted for 15% of the variance

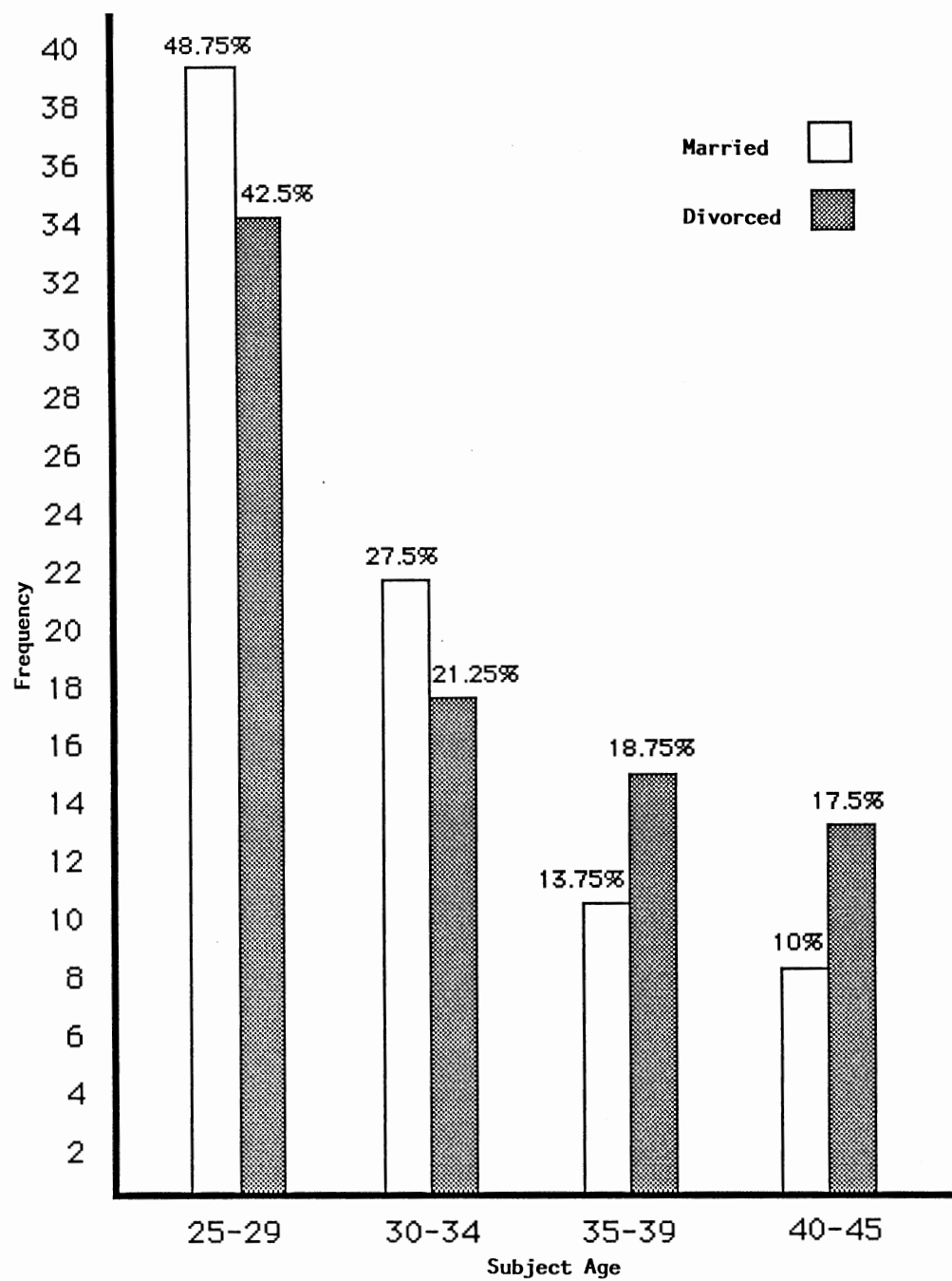


Figure 1. Age Distributions of Married and Divorced Subjects

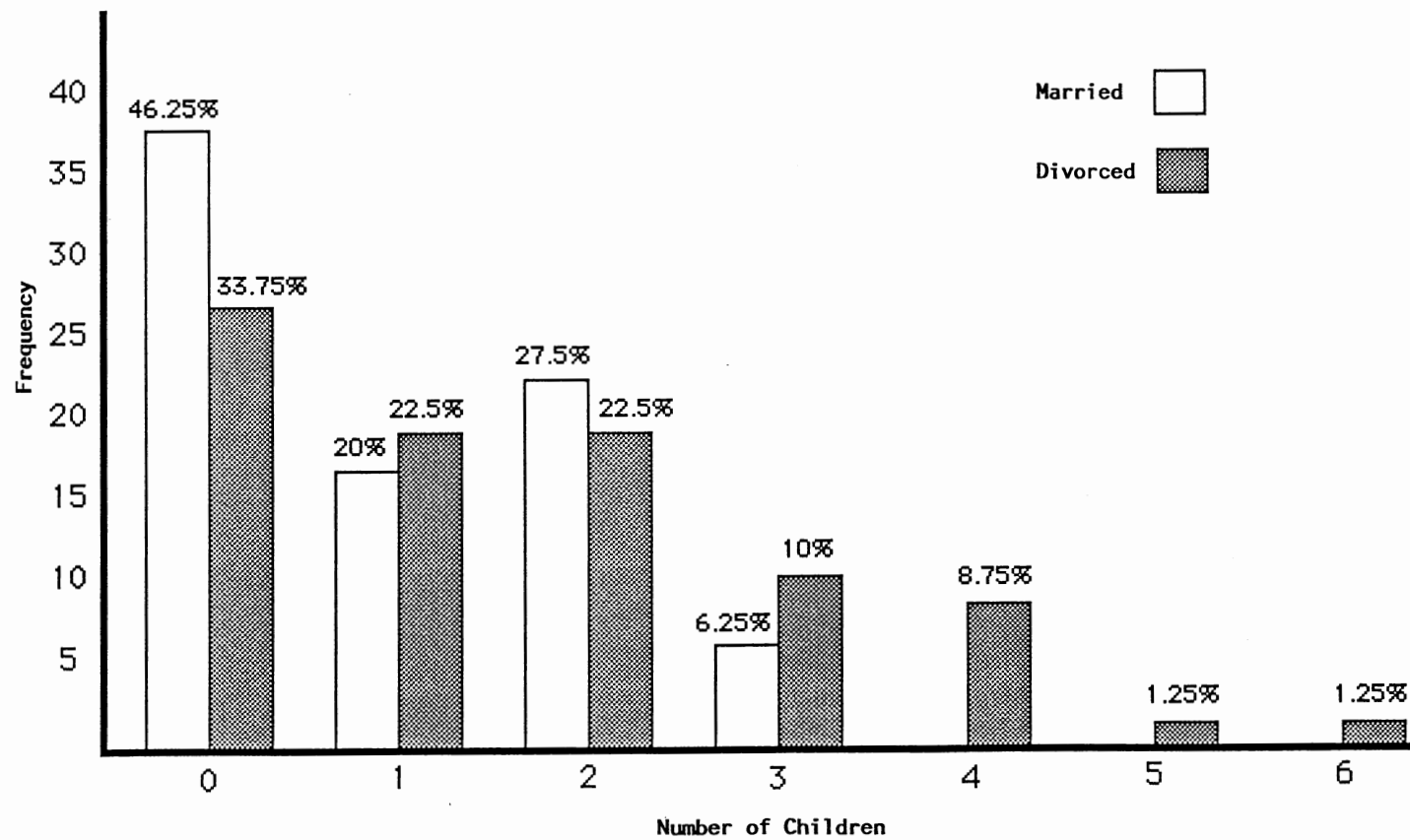


Figure 2. Number of Children of Married and Divorced Subjects

(1-Lambda) in the dependent variables. Univariate analyses were significant for three of the six variables: expressed inclusion ($F(1,158)=4.991$, $p<.05$), expressed control ($F(1,158)=10.68$), $p<.05$), and wanted control ($F(1,158)=4.753$, $p < .05$). Specifically, divorced women scored significantly higher on expressed control and lower on expressed inclusion and wanted control than did married women. Results of the MANOVA and follow-up univariate ANOVAs are presented in Table 3.

Table 2

Mean FIRO-B Profiles for Married and
Divorced Subjects

	Inclusion	Control	Affection
<u>Married (N=80)</u>			
Expressed	3.65	3.45	3.28
Wanted	3.84	3.85	4.94
<u>Divorced (N=80)</u>			
Expressed	2.85	5.02	3.50
Wanted	4.52	2.99	5.16

Table 3

MANOVA Summary Table

Effect	Test	Value	F	df	Significance
Marital Status	Wilks Lambda	.854	4.368	6,153	.000
<u>Univariate Tests:</u>					
Expressed Inclusion			4.991	1,158	.027
Expressed Control			10.681	1,158	.001
Expressed Affection			.320	1,158	.572
Wanted Inclusion			1.605	1,158	.207
Wanted Control			4.753	1,158	.031
Wanted Affection			.304	1,158	.582

Follow-Up Analyses

Additional analyses were performed to examine whether the subject's age or number of children had an effect on the six dependent variables of expressed inclusion, expressed control, expressed affection, wanted inclusion, wanted control, and wanted affection. Multivariate regression analyses were utilized to investigate possible effects of these two independent variables. The subject's age and number of children were not found to be significantly related to scores on the dependent variable. No significant relationships were found beyond the effects of marital status ($F(6,151)=4.38$, $p < .001$). The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Multivariate Regression Summary for Marital
Status, Age, and Number of Children

Effect	Test	Value	F	df	Significance
Marital Status	Wilks Lambda	.852	4.383	6,151	.000
Subject Age	Wilks	.930	1.891	6,151	.086
Number of Children	Wilks	.986	.350	6,151	.909

For the divorced women, the effects of time since divorce and divorce initiation were investigated. Neither of these effects was significant. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Multivariate Regression Summary for Time
Since Divorce and Divorce Initiation
(Divorced Group Only)

Effect	Test	Value	F	df	Significance
Time	Wilks	.925	.974	6,72	.449
Initiation	Wilks	.905	1.256	6,72	.289

The practical importance of these results was investigated through an analysis of interpretative categories (low, average, and high) of married versus divorced subjects. For each of the three dependent variables found to be significant in the MANOVA, chi-square analyses were used to test for significant differences in the numbers of individuals scoring in each interpretive category (Table 6).

All three chi-square analyses were significant at the .05 level, indicating an overall association between each variable and marital status. Ryan's procedure was used to determine specific differences. For expressed inclusion, the only two levels that differed significantly ($\chi^2 = 5.80$, $p < .05$) were low and high, with divorced women more likely to score low and married women more likely to score high. Specifically, married women tended to initiate social relationships more than divorced women.

Two differences were noted on expressed control. Both the low and average levels differed significantly from the high level ($\chi^2 = 9.36$, 7.53 , $p < .05$). Divorced women were more likely to score high on this dimension of the FIRO-B, indicating that divorced women are more willing to assume responsibility and make decisions than married women. The procedure indicated no significant differences on the dimension of wanted control; the overall difference between the groups cannot be reliably differentiated.

Discussion of Research Questions

The specific research questions addressed in this study were the following:

1. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and

Table 6
Chi-Square Analyses for Expressed Inclusion,
Expressed Control, and Wanted Control

FIRO-B Interpretive Categories	Low	Average	High	Total
<u>Expressed Inclusion</u>				
Married	38	24	18	80
Divorced	52	21	7	80
Total	90	45	25	160
$\chi^2(2 \text{ df})=7.22^*, p < .05$				

<u>Expressed Control</u>				
Married	42	23	15	80
Divorced	28	17	35	80
Total	70	40	50	160
$\chi^2(2 \text{ df})=11.70^*, p < .05$				

<u>Wanted Control</u>				
Married	39	25	16	80
Divorced	53	20	7	80
Total	92	45	23	160
$\chi^2(2 \text{ df})=6.21^*, p < .05$				

"high" on the Inclusion (either wanted or expressed), as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

No significant differences were found on the wanted inclusion scale between married and divorced women. However, on the expressed inclusion dimension, the divorced women were less likely than married women to initiate social relationships. Of the divorced women, 65% scored in the low category; 47.5% of the married women were low scorers. Only 8.75% of the divorced women were high scorers; 22.5% of the married women scored in the high category.

2. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and "high" on Control (either wanted or expressed), as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

Significant differences were found on both the expressed and wanted dimensions of control. On expressed control, married women tended to score low and divorced women tended to score high. The number of divorced women expressing high levels of control was twice that of the married women. The majority of married women were low scorers; only one-third of the divorced group fell into this category. Divorced women were more likely to actively take responsibility for controlling their environments.

Scores for both groups on the dimension of wanted control tended to be low. One-half of the married women and two-thirds of the divorced women were low scorers. However, twice as many married women fell into the high category, indicating that divorced women were less likely to allow others to take responsibility for decisions or actions.

3. Is there a difference between the numbers of divorced and married women who score in the three categories of "low," "average," and

"high" on Affection (either wanted or expressed), as measured by the FIRO-B and classified by Ryan (1970)?

No significant differences were found on either the expressed or wanted dimensions of the affection scale.

Discussion

The literature supports social participation as a positive facilitator to divorce adjustment. However, the results of this study suggested that divorced women are inhibited in initiating social behavior. After experiencing divorce and incurring a sense of loss, fears of further abandonment and rejection may lower motivation for forming new relationships. Negative feelings and distrust towards the former husband may also generalize and further hinder initiation of any new relationship.

Divorced women are confronted with a myriad of changes and new situations. Often they will have to seek employment, arrange child care, and obtain alternative housing. These modifications and adjustments can be quite overwhelming, and may leave divorced women without the emotional or physical energy to establish even casual relationships.

Additionally, divorced women may feel left out or out of place in a couple-oriented society. They may also experience social rejection from "couple friends" due to the divorce. Divorced women may deal with this by choosing not to participate socially or initiate social contact. Moreover, it is possible, considering well-meaning friends and family, attorneys, new neighbors, and new co-workers, that divorced women have an abundance of people in their lives and have no desire for more.

The current study utilized a university population which naturally involves a great deal of contact with university staff, faculty, and

fellow students. Again, this may be more than sufficient to meet the needs of these divorced women for casual social interaction.

Divorced women who were in a traditional role in their marriage, focused on home and family with few outside interests, may feel as though they have nothing of value to offer others. Society in the United States provides no defined role model for single women. Therefore, losing the familiar role of wife could leave divorced women confused as to how to behave interpersonally as a single, thus inhibiting social initiation or participation.

The present study suggests that divorced women are more willing to assume responsibility and make decisions for themselves and others than are married women. A possible explanation for this finding could relate to the divorce process itself. The rigors of resolving an abundance of practical problems that go hand in hand with beginning a new lifestyle may equip divorced women with a sense of competence and control. Divorced women may find themselves accomplishing tasks, making decisions, and controlling their environment out of necessity, which brings about a realization of capability and competence.

The possibility also exists that in this study the characteristics of high expressed or low wanted control were present before the divorce. In that instance, the divorced women may merely have a predisposition to take control and leave an unsatisfactory marriage. Accordingly, the married women may not be more content in their marriages, but simply less likely to assume responsibility and control by leaving an unsatisfactory marriage.

Divorced subjects' high expressed and low wanted control characteristics may be a function of either their initiator or non-initiator status in the divorce. Initiators have obviously assumed responsibility and

made the decision to leave an unsatisfactory marriage. Non-initiators may exhibit high control characteristics in an effort to prevent further unwelcome change and to gain a sense of being in control of their lives.

The legal process of divorce exposes women to a number of new external controls and constraints: an attorney's advice, formula-regulated financial awards, and judicial decisions regarding their future. This in itself may account for women's reluctance to surrender control to others after the divorce.

Divorce brings with it emotional upheaval and insecurity. Therefore, divorced women may have a high need to control their environment and to assume responsibility for themselves in order to compensate for the lack of control they are experiencing on an emotional level.

The current study found no differences in married and divorced women regarding affection needs. One might speculate that divorced women would have increased wanted affection needs due to spouse absence. However, the results of this study may simply indicate that divorced women are getting these needs met through family, children, or friends. It cannot be assumed that married women's affection needs are being met totally by the spouse either, but possibly by several other close relationships as well.

Because a woman is married does not mean she either wants or is receiving more or less affection than divorced women. The findings of this study contradict the traditional myth that being married means feeling loved and cherished, while being single means feeling alone and unloved.

Summary

Of the variables investigated (marital status, age, and number of

children), only marital status had a significant effect on the six dependent variables. Two additional variables, time since divorce and divorce initiation, were analyzed for the divorced women only; neither of these was significant. Chi-square analyses indicated FIRO-B interpretive differences between the groups on the dimensions of expressed inclusion and expressed control.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Interpersonal interactions have a significant impact on the happiness and mental health of any individual and especially on divorced women (Kohen, 1981; Kazak & Linney, 1983). Interpersonal interactions in the form of social and intimate relationships have been found to facilitate women's adjustment to divorce (Daniels-Mohring & Berger, 1984; Leslie & Grady, 1985). The interaction style of an individual is affected by the personal characteristics of the individual. Therefore, interaction styles may change as the direct result of the divorce process on personal characteristics. Interpersonal interactions are an important concern for the counselor working with this clinical population. The purpose of this study was to examine the differences between married and divorced women on interpersonal interaction variables.

The subjects in this study were 160 women between the ages of 25 and 45 identified from existing files in a university counseling agency. Criteria for inclusion in the study were involvement in counseling, gender, age, and completion of the FIRO-B. The subjects were classified as married (currently married) and divorced (legally divorced, not remarried). Test data consisted of subjects' scores on the FIRO-B and demographic data.

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to test for significant differences between married and divorced women on the six dependent variables of expressed inclusion, expressed control, expressed affection, wanted inclusion, wanted control, and wanted affection. Univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were employed as post hoc procedures. Chi-square analyses were utilized to investigate the practical implications of the results. Regression analyses were used to examine the effects of age, number of children, time since divorce, and divorce initiation.

The dimensions of interpersonal interactions that were the focus of this study as measured by the FIRO-B were inclusion, control, and affection. For each dimension, two scores were obtained: expressed and wanted. Expressed behavior is that which is observable and is directed from self to others. Wanted behavior is that which is preferred from others and directed toward self.

Inclusion means the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with people, with respect to interaction and association. The need to be included relates to an individual's pursuit of attention, acknowledgment, identity, prominence, and participation. The Inclusion scale measures the degree to which a person moves toward or away from people. Divorced women scored significantly lower than married women on expressed inclusion, indicating that they were less likely to initiate social relationships or to include a great number of people in their social activities. No differences were found on the wanted dimension of inclusion.

Control means the need to establish and maintain satisfactory relationships with people, with respect to decision-making and power. The need to control or be controlled is evidenced by desires for power,

superiority and authority, or conversely, avoidance of responsibility and submissiveness. The Control scale measures the extent to which a person wants to assume responsibility or make decisions. Significant differences between the groups were noted on both the expressed and wanted dimensions of control. Divorced women were more likely to report high levels of expressed control (assuming responsibility) and low levels of wanted control (submissiveness).

Affection means the need to have satisfactory relationships with others with respect to love and intimacy. Affection behavior refers to intimate, personal, and emotional feelings between two persons; whereas, both inclusion and control may occur in dyads or between one individual and any number of others. The Affection scale measures the degree to which a person becomes closely involved with others. No significant differences were found between married and divorced women on either expressed or wanted affection.

None of the other variables in this study (age, number of children, time since divorce, or divorce initiation) were found to have significant effects on the interaction styles of the subjects.

Conclusions and Implications for Professionals

The different FIRO-B profiles of married and divorced women have implications for counselors. Married and divorced women differed on both expressed and wanted control. Married women tended to be "matchers," demonstrating the same levels of expressed and wanted control. Divorced women, on the other hand, demonstrated a discrepancy between their high scores on expressed control and low scores on wanted control. Their mean score of 5 on expressed control is considered high for a client population. This suggests that they may tend to assume responsibility and take

control of their environments. This may be a reflection of a desire for independence or a response to unwanted situational responsibilities.

In the therapeutic relationship, counselors have an option of assuming a great deal of control over the relationship or encouraging independent behavior. This study suggested that divorced women express high levels of decision making and assuming control in relationships. The qualities of dominance and assertiveness that lead to optimal divorce adjustment may meet with disapproval from others (Thomas, 1982). Counselors may find themselves disapproving of divorced women's high expressed control. Attempting to assume too much control over a divorced woman in the counseling relationship may result in either a power struggle between client and counselor or the client's regressing into submissive or dependent behavior (Bloom et al., 1983).

Divorced women tended to score as "loners" or "exclusive clubbers" on expressed inclusion. Kurdek (1988) found that divorce had a negative influence on one's sense of attachment and inclusion, reporting that divorced women were not interested in socializing or joining organizations. They may engage in social relationships very rarely, or they may socialize with a small circle of close friends. The results of this study and other studies (Hetherington et al., 1982; Kurdek, 1988) contradict the common myth that divorced women are needy, continually seeking love and approval from even the most casual acquaintances. The counselor needs to recognize that these clients may be quite content with minimal social interaction. Divorced women do not necessarily need to "meet more people," "make new friends," or "join more clubs."

Recommendations for Further Research

As a result of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The present study included married and divorced women in a counseling setting. A replication of this study with a non-client population would allow greater generalization of findings.

2. Similar studies involving other populations, such as divorced and married men, single and widowed women, or divorced men and women, would provide an interesting comparison to the results of this investigation.

3. A replication of this study using clients of a community mental health agency would provide information for comparison of a community-based population with a university-based population. Both expressed and wanted needs in this population might be different than in a university counseling agency.

4. Intrapersonal differences between married and divorced women (e.g., self-concept or locus of control) may be different from interpersonal interaction styles. A similar study utilizing measures of both intrapersonal and interpersonal interaction styles would add to the body of knowledge about this population.

5. The present study provides no information as to causation of the differences between divorced and married clients. A longitudinal investigation would provide information concerning initial differences between women who divorce and those who remain married, and changes in women during the process of divorce.

6. Further research employing administration of the FIRO-B with divorced women upon entering counseling and at termination would provide information regarding the impact of counseling on interpersonal interaction characteristics in this population.

7. The results of this study suggested that divorced women exhibit high expressed and low wanted control. Further research is recommended

employing various counseling methods to determine which method is most beneficial in working with clients having similar characteristics.

8. Further research could investigate possible relationships between interpersonal interaction characteristics identified in divorced women and positive or negative divorce adjustment. This information may enable the counselor to be of more assistance to this population.

9. In the present study, most subjects were in the younger age ranges (under 34 years). A replication of this study with older (over 45 years) subjects would provide an interesting comparison to this investigation.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

AGENCY CONFIDENTIALITY INFORMATION AND
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

CONFIDENTIALITY*

We place a high value on the confidentiality of the information that clients of the Student Mental Health Clinic share with us. Please read the following statements concerning confidentiality carefully and discuss any questions you may have with your therapist.

Personal information that you share with us as well as testing data may be entered into your records in written form. However, every effort is made to avoid entry of information which may be especially sensitive or embarrassing. The only individuals with access to our files are staff members who are directly involved in providing services to you and those performing related clerical tasks. Data from records may be used in group form for research purposes. At no time will any identifying information be used for research purposes. All persons with access to records are aware of the strict confidential nature of the information in the records. Persons from outside our office are not allowed access to our files.

Release of Information to Others

If, for some reason, there is a need to share information in your records with someone not employed by the Mental Health Clinic, (for example, your physician or another therapist), you will first be consulted and asked to sign a form authorizing transfer of the information. You may wish to discuss the release of any information and the possible consequences before you sign. The form will specify the information which you wish released. You may revoke this permission by giving written notice at any time.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

There are several important instances in which confidential information may be released to others.

1. If you have been referred to this agency by the Court, the Court may wish to receive some type of report or evaluation. You should discuss with us exactly what information may be included in such a report before you disclose any confidential material. In such instances, you have a right to tell us only what you want us to know.
2. If you are involved in litigation of any kind and inform the Court of the services that you received from us (making your mental health an issue before the Court), you may wish to consult your attorney regarding such matters before you disclose that you have received counseling.
3. If you threaten to harm yourself or someone else, and we believe that threat to be serious, we are obligated under the law to take whatever action seems necessary to protect you and others from harm. This may include divulging confidential information to others.
4. If we have reason to believe that you are abusing a child/children, we are obligated by law to report this to the appropriate state agency.
5. If you make it clear that you intend to be involved in a future criminal act, we are obligated by law to inform the appropriate authorities.

In summary, we make every reasonable effort to safeguard the personal information you share with us. If you have any questions about confidentiality, please discuss them with us.

*Adapted from Innovations in Clinical Practice: A Source Book, by Peter A. Keller & Lawrence G. Ritt.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

INFORMED CONSENT

The Student Mental Health Clinic has given me written information regarding the Clinic Policy, Confidentiality, and Client Rights and Responsibilities. I have had an opportunity to read these and was furnished a personal copy. I have had the opportunity to discuss and question my therapist about any/all issues that concerned me.

*

Signature

Date

*Please do not sign the above until you have discussed any concerns you may have with your therapist.

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. AGE: _____
2. MARITAL STATUS: Married Divorced
3. LEVEL OF EDUCATION: Freshman Sophomore Junior
Senior Graduate
4. IN SCHOOL AT TIME OF THERAPY? Yes No
FULL TIME? Yes No
5. TIME SINCE LEGAL DIVORCE FROM SPOUSE? _____ Months
6. WORKED OUTSIDE THE HOME BEFORE DIVORCE? Yes No
7. WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME AT TIME OF THERAPY? Yes No
8. DID SUBJECT INITIATE DIVORCE? Yes No
9. NUMBER OF CHILDREN? _____
10. NUMBER OF CHILDREN LIVING WITH SUBJECT AT TIME OF
THERAPY?

APPENDIX C

TEST SCORE SHEET

TEST SCORE SHEET

MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED DIVORCED

FIRO-B SCORES:

	INCLUSION	CONTROL	AFFECTION	TOTALS
<u>EXPRESSED</u>				
<u>WANTED</u>				
<u>TOTALS</u>				

2

VITA

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Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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