

MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION OF OLDER
HUSBANDS AND WIVES

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

Only in the past few years has society turned its research efforts to the older generation. Most of the early research concerning the older person was limited not only in number but also in scope. Much of this early research dealt with the basic problems of aging such as economic security and health. However, as the interest in this area has increased so has its field of study. As Havighurst (1953, p. 5) states:

Much of the early effort to smooth the way of the lengthened life span concentrated on economic security. Today other factors that make up emotional security for the old are coming in for an increasing share of scrutiny and consideration.

One of the most important areas influencing the emotional security of the elderly and one of the most neglected areas of research is the marriage and family relationships of the older person. Streib and Thompson (1960, p. 448) state that "of all the institutions which condition the behavior and adjustments of the individual, perhaps none is more important than the family." Streib and Thompson continue by saying that this may be extremely true for the older person since

the later years are often marked by a decline of active participation in other institutions. Since the children of the older couple have usually left home, there is also a tendency toward decreased interaction with the children. This decreasing interaction with other institutions of society and with the children, suggest that the older husband and wife must depend more upon each other and their marriage relationship for the fulfillment of important emotional needs, such as the need for affection, respect, and meaning in life. In certain respects the marriage relationship may be of greater importance to the emotional and mental well being of an individual in the later years of life than in the younger years. To gain a greater understanding of the older person, it is necessary to obtain greater knowledge concerning the marriage relationships of those persons age sixty-five and over. As such knowledge is extremely limited, there is an urgent need for more thorough research of the marriage relationships of older persons. There is particularly a need for more comprehensive investigation of the marital satisfaction of older persons. There is great merit in identifying those needs which are most and least satisfied in the marriages of older persons, and in determining the association between marital satisfaction of the older person and certain social and psychological factors.

Increase in Persons Sixty-five Years of Age and Over

In 1900 it was considered unusual for a person to reach his seventieth or eightieth birthday. However, today, medical technology and a higher standard of living have contributed to a longer life span.

The U.S. Department of Commerce (1969) reports that the number of persons age sixty-five and over was an estimated 19.1 million as of July 1, 1968. The U.S. Department of Commerce (1967) reports that the number has risen rapidly in the past several decades. In 1940 there were 9.0 million persons age sixty-five and over, and in 1966 there was an estimated 18.5 million. These figures reflect an annual increase of 362,000 older persons in this period and a more than doubling of this age group in twenty-six years. There are indications that there will be a continued increase in the population of persons age sixty-five and over, with a 6.1 per cent gain during the remainder of this decade, bringing the population of this age group to 19.6 million in 1970. Corresponding to this will be an average annual gain of 282,000 older persons. Projections indicate twenty-seven million older persons in 1990 implying an increase of 8.5 million, or forty-six per cent, in the twenty-four year period after 1966 and an average gain of 356,000 older persons annually.

The U.S. Department of Commerce (1969) reports that although the annual growth of persons in the sixty-five

years and over age category will begin to occur at increasingly slower rates in the future, as of the fiscal year 1967-68, the rate of growth of persons sixty-five and over is still higher than for the population of all ages.

Increase in Length of Marriage

Nimkoff (1961, p. 92) states that:

There are relatively more married males and females and relatively fewer widowed and divorced persons among the aged now than in 1900. The causes are mainly the longer length of life and the higher rates of remarriage.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce (1967) there are eighty per cent of the males and sixty-six per cent of females between ages sixty-five and seventy-four that are presently married. There are fifty-eight per cent of the males and twenty per cent of the females over seventy-five years of age who are presently married.

Nimkoff (1961) reports that in the last half century men and women marry earlier and stay married longer. The marriage component has expanded and parental component has shrunk, with the married couple having fifteen and sixteen years together after the last child has left home. Nimkoff also states that the quality of the older marriage as well as the quantity has changed, with today's marriages inclined toward more equalitarianism.

Problems of the Older Person

A meaningful consideration of the marriage relationships of older persons requires an awareness of some of

the common problems during the later years. Barron (1961, p. 40) states:

All people, regardless of age, need adequate food, clothing, shelter, and maintenance of health. They also need emotional security and affection, social status and recognition, and a sense of worth and self respect.

In many instances the older person is deprived of such needs.

In the past the study of the older person has been an area of much neglect. Society has worked to meet one or two of the older persons' needs while ignoring other needs which are just as important. Barron states some of the problems as follows:

1. Of the total population of older people, approximately seventy-five per cent live with their own families in their own household. This leaves twenty-five per cent that live alone, with non-relatives, institutions, and hotels. This implies that many housing arrangements of the older person provide feelings of loneliness, bitterness and a loss of meaning in life.
2. As the life expectancy of the older person increases, the working life span has shortened, resulting in a longer retirement which in turn creates more problems.
3. According to the findings of the senate sub-committee on problems of the aged and aging in

1959, three-fifths of the men and women sixty-five years of age and over receive an annual income of less than one thousand dollars. This creates many problems for elderly people who have been accustomed to a much higher standard of living.

4. Due to more frequent ill health of the older population than the rest of the population they have more medical expenses and yet less income and fewer opportunities to obtain such care on a prepaid basis.
5. At one time it was thought that mental disorders resulted from an inevitable breakdown of the person as an organism. Today, however, the belief is that the kind of social relations and experiences, such as loneliness and loss of self respect, have much to do with mental health problems.
6. Perhaps one of the most serious problems of the older person is lack of social participation and recreation. As Barron (1961, p. 50) comments:

Early, highly active lives in a compatible economy often leave the aged unprepared to spend their time pursuing satisfying interests and hobbies /and/ many still want to lead constructive, meaningful lives.

Barron also comments that:

They crave to be recognized as distinctive individuals who count for something. When they fail to achieve these satisfactions they may become bitter and cynical.

Although for the married couple these problems may not be as magnified as for the widowed or divorced, they too still want to feel that they belong and to feel that their life has meaning. To a large extent the fulfillment of such needs in the older couple, as well as their reaction to such problems as those previously mentioned, is influenced by the quality of their marriage relationship.

Need to Emphasize the Positive Aspects of the Older People

Most of the research today has focused upon the problems of the older person. Although this is vitally important, it is just as important to note the positive aspects of aging. Martin Gumpert (1944, p. 37) says it this way:

Aging is like a game of chess, in which individual pieces may be captured, but in which a few potent figures can still hold the field and even regain a new and powerful position.

Concerning research in the area of marriage relationships of the older person, it is important to investigate those aspects of marriage which the older person finds most satisfying as well as those he finds least satisfying.

Need For Research

Birren (1968) in a paper "Research on Aging," states that the older person is seen in a new context and the public is restless for a better and higher quality of life

for the older person.

If we are to understand and assist the older individual better, greater knowledge and insight concerning his marriage and family relationships must be obtained. There is a great need for more systematic research concerning this aspect of the older person's life. Also there is a need to bring this research into the classroom. As Bossard (1951) states, in the American marriage pattern most men are married in their early twenties, usually to women several years younger than themselves. Research and classroom instruction of marriage and family life are stressed according to this fact, emphasizing the younger age period of marriage. One result is a neglect of other stages of marriage and family living, particularly marriage relationships in the later years. Marriage relationships of the older person often seem remote to the high school and college student, yet they constitute a reasonably large span in the cycle of marriage and the family as a whole.

Need for Instruments to Measure Marital Satisfaction of Older People

Until now there have been practically no instruments to measure marital satisfaction of people sixty-five years of age and over. Moreover, scales used for measuring marital satisfaction of younger age couples have simply been extended to include older people. As is obvious, the use of a scale which was developed for the early

marriage years is not appropriate for measuring the marital satisfaction of older couples who are at a completely different developmental stage of life. As the years of married life increase the expectations and needs change. There is, then, a great need for the development of an instrument to measure the marital satisfaction of older couples in accordance with their particular developmental needs.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the marital need satisfaction of older persons and to relate such satisfaction to certain social and psychological factors.

The specific purposes of this study were to:

1. Develop an instrument, the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale, to measure the degree of satisfaction which older husbands and wives express concerning the fulfillment of certain needs involved in the marriage relationship during the later years.
2. Determine the needs which older persons feel are the most and least satisfactorily fulfilled by their mates.
3. Compare differences in marital need satisfaction scores according to: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) employment status of males, (d) occupation of males for major part of life, (e) residence for

major part of life, (f) living arrangements, (g) number of years married to present mate, (h) geographic closeness to children, (i) amount of contact with children through visits, (j) perception of happiest period of life, (k) self-perceived happiness of marriage, (l) perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time, and (h) perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

4. Determine if there is an association between marital need satisfaction scores and: (a) morale, (b) self-image, and (c) personality orientation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Only recently has our society become aware of the need for research in the area of marital relationships of the aged. Following is a review of the limited research which has been done in this area.

Duvall (1967) states that successful aging is the goal of the later years. Duvall reports that as husbands and wives get older they must learn the new roles appropriate to their stage of life. Following is a list of the developmental tasks for the husband and wife which Duvall (1967, p. 441) has summarized:

1. Finding a satisfying home for the later years
2. Adjusting to retirement income
3. Establishing comfortable household routines
4. Nurturing each other as husband and wife
5. Facing bereavement and widowhood
6. Maintaining contact with children and grandchildren
7. Caring for elderly relatives
8. Keeping an interest in people outside the family
9. Finding meanings in life

In the last developmental task, finding meanings in life, Duvall states that this is the time which the older person must decide what his philosophy of life is. He must review his experiences and decide what life means to him. Duvall (1967, p. 471) states, "the aging years are the weighing years when the froth and the frills are

discarded and only the really important things are held close."

Lipman (1960) in a study of the role conceptions of retired husbands and wives, found that the most frequently chosen role for the female past sixty years of age, was an expressive one, including such personal qualities as understanding, consideration, devotion and expression of love. However, for the male role, women emphasized the importance and desirability of expressive and emotional qualities for men past sixty years of age much more frequently than the males did for themselves. The men were more reluctant to relinquish their occupational roles in the marriage relationship, whereas the women seemed more willing to allow them to relinquish these activities. For 11.1 per cent of the men, the most important qualities of a good husband past sixty years of age, was that of a good provider, whereas only 2.9 per cent of the females expressed this as being important. Lipman concluded that the role strain of the retired male would appear to be not so much a function of disagreement of husband and wife concerning male roles, but instead this role strain often seems to be due to the males' unrealistic adherence to his pre-aging role pattern which emphasized work activity.

Lipman (1961) also reports that the majority of older husbands and wives in his study felt their marriage had become more satisfactory since retirement. He found that as married couples retire the husband and wife move toward a common area of identity in role activities. The

emphasis is centered on sharing and cooperating and where similar expressive qualities such as love, understanding, companionship, and compatibility become the most important things a couple can give each other in marriage.

Difficulty arises when one or both spouses adhere to a clearly defined, instrumental role, usually resulting in a decrease of morale. This was evidenced by the finding that two-thirds of the women who gave instrumental roles as the most important role for the female indicated a decrease of morale.

Cavan (1953) in the book, The American Family, states that although some husbands and wives find enjoyment in sharing household tasks, many others find this a lowering of status for the man and disturbing to the customary routines of the wife and in general a threat to the self-concept and role of both the husband and wife.

Fried and Stern (1948) on the basis of their study of older people's marriage relationships found that some older husbands and wives had in their later years become better adjusted and more acceptable as partners in marriage, "less egotistical," "less temperamental," "less demanding," "less irritable," and "less bent on having their own way". They found others that felt his or her partner had become more incompatible with advancing years, expressing an increase in "nagging," "fault finding," "selfishness," and "untidiness".

Fried and Stern found that with increasing marital satisfaction some couples had gained in emotional

maturation, while others felt their increased marital satisfaction was unrelated or even conflicting with emotional maturation. It was reported that some couples had come to depend almost exclusively upon the company of each other. For such couples, departure of the children from the home only intensified their interdependency.

For marriage partners whose marital satisfaction had decreased, Fried and Stern report that they tended to have few common interests when they embarked on marriage, and that they had grown even further apart with advancing age. In cases where the marital satisfaction of husbands and wives had decreased, the children's departure from parental homes increased the isolation of the parents, partly because the foremost common interest, necessity of making a home for the children, no longer exists, and partly because the parents now have to reflect more upon their marital relationship.

Another factor reported by Fried and Stern is that enforced retirement or a serious illness is seen to modify the relationship in a manner always satisfactory to the nurtured partner, and frequently gratifying to the nurturing partner. The one partner is gratified by affection; the other by feelings of usefulness.

Fried and Stern concluded that nearly all the marriages which were satisfactory at the time of the interview had been satisfactory from the beginning of the marriage. Approximately half of such marriages had become even more satisfactory as the partners aged. Most

of the marriages that were unsatisfactory at the time of the interview had generally been unsatisfactory from the beginning, and almost half of these marriages deteriorated further as the partners advanced in years.

Goldfarb (1968) agrees with Fried and Stern when he states, marriages which were good to begin with usually tend to improve through the later years, whereas an unhappy marriage in the early years tends to get progressively worse. Goldfarb continues by stating that old persons whose marriages do last appear to be healthier, more content, and longer-lived than divorced, widowed or separated. He considers these individuals to be more socially engaged, congenial, and to have higher opinions of themselves, better productivity records, and in general fewer mental disorders.

Goldfarb concludes by saying that when marital problems do exist, they can usually be understood in terms of "a successful or unsuccessful search by one or both partners for aid or support from the other." (p. 118).

Bossard and Boll (1955), in a study of marital happiness in the life cycle, found that the happiest period of marital satisfaction perceived by older men was in the seventy and over age category, while the second happiest was in the sixty to sixty-nine category. For older women the happiest period was perceived to be in the twenty to twenty-nine age category and the next happiest was seventy and over.

Nimkoff (1961) in a paper on family relations of

older people, in which he compares husbands and wives at present with husbands and wives a half century ago, suggests that the husband and wife relationship in the later years is strengthened today by its prolongation and its more equalitarian nature.

One study that is often cited as evidence for increased marital disenchantment in the later stages of the family life cycle is the research of Pineo (1961), based on data from the Burgess and Wallin research. He found the middle years to show a drop in marital satisfaction. He observed a loss of intimacy, confiding, kissing, and reciprocal settlement of disagreement to become frequent. This loss of intimacy appears to be an aspect of disenchantment.

Although Pineo's study strongly suggests a decrease in marital satisfaction, it is important to remember that this study only followed couples into the middle years rather than the later years of married life.

Blood and Wolfe (1960) in a study of husband and wife relationships in the working class found the first two years of marriage to be the happiest. In the first two years fifty-two per cent of the wives were reported to be very satisfied with their marriages, and none notably dissatisfied. Twenty years later only six per cent were still very satisfied, while twenty-one per cent were conspicuously dissatisfied.

Blood and Wolfe's study shows a large decrease in marital satisfaction with age but it should be noted that

the sample is mostly the working class, and that the older husbands and wives were not analyzed according to initial marital satisfaction.

Townsend (1957), on the basis of his research of older people in the Bethnal Green area of London, found that one out of five of the women whose husbands had retired, revealed marked hostility in their marital relationship. Townsend also reports that the aging husband in London finds companionship not so much with his wife but with friends at work, local pub, and sporting events. The wife finds her companionship with relatives such as daughters or sisters. Townsend points out that when there is such a small amount of shared companionship, friction is likely to arise between husband and wife in normal married life but when the added conflict of retirement occurs, this increases frustration in both the husband and wife in their marital relationship.

Rose (1965) on the basis of his interviews with 141 respondents who were 65 years of age and older, concluded that married spouses are somewhat better adjusted than are single or widowed persons. About two-fifths of the married men scored in the high life adjustment group as compared to one-fifth of the widowed and divorced persons. Also, men living with their wives appeared to be better adjusted than did those living alone or in some other arrangement. However, it should be noted that Rose found this primarily true for men rather than for women.

Barron's (1961) study of retired people showed

retirement to generally be a greater social problem for the unmarried than for married people because the former depend more on their work for gratification of their social and emotional needs than do the latter.

Kutner (1956) in his research, reported in Five Hundred Over Sixty, found a lower morale among single older people than among either the married men and women or the widowers. Kutner's data concludes that stability of the marital relationship throughout the later years contributes greatly to positive individual adjustment, but this is truer among those of higher social position than among those of low social status and economic hardship.

Havighurst and Albrecht's (1953) study also found higher morale and more positive adjustment among older married partners, than among single or widowed older persons. Also Havighurst and Albrecht report older people living with their spouse to have a higher activity score than single or widowed persons.

Cavan (1956) brings to our attention the importance of research in the later years of the marriage relationship by pointing out the unimportance that is often attached to the latter stages of the family life cycle:

At every age level except old age, the need for intimate contacts is recognized--in fact, stressed. The significance of marriage is said to be in its close companionship; the child's need for loving care by the parents has never been more strongly emphasized. But suddenly, in old age, men and women long accustomed to primary group life are assumed no longer to need it. (p. 323).

In conclusion, the survey of literature indicates

that there has been very little research conducted concerning the marital satisfaction of older husbands and wives. There has been no instrument developed to measure specifically the marital satisfaction of older couples. The previous research concerning the marital satisfaction of older couples has usually been based on one question asking the older person how happy his marriage is, or else it has been based upon marital adjustment scales which have been primarily designed for younger age couples.

Summary

The review of literature of marital satisfaction in later years suggest the following:

1. There is evidence that many older people feel their married life is as satisfactory or more satisfactory than previous years.
2. One of the major adjustments in the later years, especially for males, is that of changing from an instrumental role to an expressive role.
3. Marriages which are perceived as satisfactory in the later years have usually been satisfactory whereas those seen as unsatisfactory have usually been unsatisfactory.
4. The happiest period of marital satisfaction perceived by men is in the seventy and over age category. The happiest period perceived

by older women is the twenty to twenty-nine age category, while the second happiest period is in the seventy and over age category.

5. Older married men and women living with their spouses are usually found to be better adjusted and have a higher morale than widowed, divorced, or single older people.
6. There has been very little research concerning the marital satisfaction of older couples and there has been no instrument designed to specifically measure the marital satisfaction of older couples.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Selection of Subjects

The 227 subjects of this study were obtained from senior citizen centers' mailing lists throughout Oklahoma. The subjects were predominately over sixty-five years and retired.

Cover letters, explaining the research and assuring anonymity, were sent to 418 married couples. Two questionnaires (one each for the wife and husband) were included with each letter. Husbands and wives were requested to complete the questionnaires individually and not to compare answers. The data were obtained during the months of February and March, 1969.

Of the 240 returned questionnaires, thirteen were excluded from the analysis because they were incomplete or the subjects were under the required age of sixty years.

Information Sheet

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of questions designed to obtain background information such as: (a) sex of respondent, (b) age of respondent, (c) race, (d) religious preference, (e) residence, (h) occu-

pational status (Duncan's Socioeconomic Index, 1961).

Also included in the general information section of the questionnaire were questions concerning the respondent's perception of his married life in the later years (Appendix) such as the following:

1. Which of the following do you consider to be the happiest time of your life (choice of five responses)?
2. Which of the following do you consider to be the happiest period of your married life (choice of three responses)?
3. Do you consider your marriage to be happy (choice of five responses)?
4. Since the time you and your mate were first married, do you feel your marriage relationship has become better or worse (choice of four responses)?

Marital Need Satisfaction Scale

The Marital Need Satisfaction Scale consisted of twenty-four statements which were developed and utilized to measure the degree of marital need satisfaction of senior citizens in accordance with specified developmental needs in this age group. The items represented six basic needs in the marital relationship: (a) love--including such qualities as affection, security, expression of feelings of emotional closeness, and expression of feelings of having a common purpose in life;

(b) personality fulfillment--including such qualities as developing a feeling of optimism toward life, fulfilling individual potentials, development of most positive individual qualities, and improvement of personality; (c) respect--including such qualities as being a good listener, providing encouragement, accepting differences and disagreements in the mate, and avoiding habits which annoy the mate; (d) communication--including such qualities as expressing true feelings to mate, and finding satisfactory solutions to disagreements; (e) finding meanings in life--involving such qualities as helping mate to feel that life has meaning, feeling needed, helping mate to feel that his life is serving a purpose, and helping the mate to obtain satisfaction and pleasure in daily activities; (f) integration of past life experiences--including such qualities as giving marriage partner recognition for past accomplishments, helping mate to feel life has been important, helping mate to accept past life experiences as good and rewarding, and helping the mate to accept himself despite shortcomings.

The first four needs (love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication) were adapted from the forty-six item Marital Competence Scale (Stinnett, 1967). A factor analysis of the Marital Competence Scale indicates that the items fell into the four need categories of love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication. All forty-six items were found to be

significantly discriminating at the .001 level of significance. A split-half reliability coefficient, computed with the Spearman-Brown Correction Formula of +0.99 was obtained. In the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale, four statements were included from the Marital Competence Scale for each of the first four needs. The statements were, however, reworded in order to ask the mate how satisfied he or she was with the other mate's performance in fulfilling these needs.

It is very important to the personal happiness and satisfaction of the older husband and wife that each gives the other emotional support. This emotional support is to a great extent provided by fulfilling basic needs such as need for love, personality fulfillment, respect, communication, finding meanings in life, and integration of past life experiences. It appears logical that the older husband and wife will be more successful in satisfying such needs in each other if they have established patterns of fulfilling these needs of each other in the past. The first four needs of love, personality fulfillment, respect, and communication are needs which are generally considered important to all age groups although in many instances the older person may feel these needs more strongly due to his decrease in interaction with other institutions of society and his children. The last two needs, finding meanings in life and integration of past life experiences, were included in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale as the review of

literature indicates these to be two important needs applying more specifically to the later years of life. Four statements were included for each of these two needs.

Each of the twenty-four items in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale was characterized by five degrees of response: (a) very satisfactory, (b) satisfactory, (c) undecided, (d) unsatisfactory, and (e) very unsatisfactory. The responses were scored so that a favorable response was given the highest score. The scores were ranked and the upper and lower quartiles obtained. All subjects whose scores fell within the higher quartile were considered as having a high degree of marital need satisfaction. Those subjects whose scores fell within the lower quartile were considered as having a low degree of marital need satisfaction.

Life Satisfaction Index-Z

In addition to the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale, the Life Satisfaction Index-Z was included to measure the morale of the subjects. This index measures the respondent's perception of his well-being. The Life Satisfaction Index-Z was derived from the Life Satisfaction Rating Scale, which requires extensive interview data used as a basis for rating each respondent on five rating scales for the five components of life satisfaction: zest, resolution and fortitude, congruence between desired and achieved goals, positive self-concept,

and mood tone. Two item analyses were run on the original Life Satisfaction Index and the results suggested the omission of seven statements. The thirteen remaining items, referred to as the Life Satisfaction Index-Z, has a reliability coefficient of .80. The correlations of the Life Satisfaction Index Z ranged from .45 to .57 between the self report scores and those of outside raters (Neugarten, Havighurst and Tobin, 1961).

Self-Image Scale

The Self-Image Scale developed and utilized by Kutner (1956) in his research reported in Five Hundred Over Sixty was included to obtain a self-image measure of the respondents. This self-image measure seeks to determine how the respondent views his physical and economic well-being in comparison with that of his age peers. The Self-Image Scale was developed from a large number of items and reduced to three items with a reproducibility of 96.2 per cent, utilizing the Guttman scaling technique.

Ori Scale

The fourth scale utilized in the questionnaire was the Bass Ori Scale. The twenty-seven-item Ori Scale was shortened to fifteen items which seemed most appropriate for older persons. This scale was included to secure the self-interaction-task orientation inventory of the respondents. The Ori Scale is a measure of personal aspiration and reflects the types

of satisfactions and rewards a person most prefers and those he least prefers. The items include three alternative kinds of satisfaction: getting the job done (task orientation); having a happy time with others (interaction orientation); or gaining some self satisfying ends (self orientation).

Bass (1962) reports test-retest reliabilities for the three orientation scores, based on eighty-four college students taking two administrations of the Ori Scale a week apart, as follows: self orientation, .73; interaction orientation, .76; and task orientation, .75.

Additional research is needed on the Ori Scale before it can be utilized to any great degree. According to Bass (1962), additional reliability studies are needed and an accumulation of more extensive and representative norms are required to make interpretations of Ori scores more meaningful.

Analysis of the Data

The chi-square test was used in an item analysis of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale. The split-half method was used to measure reliability of the items in this scale.

An analysis of variance was used to test the following null hypothesis:

1. There is no significant difference in marital need satisfaction scores according to: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) employment status of males,

- (d) occupation of males for major part of life, (e) residence for major part of life, and (f) living arrangements.

An analysis of variance was also used to test the following null hypothesis:

2. There is no significant difference in marital need satisfaction scores according to: (a) number of years married to present mate, (b) geographic closeness to children, (c) amount of contact with children through visits, (d) perception of happiest period of life, (e) self-perceived happiness of marriage, (f) perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time, and (g) perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the following null hypothesis:

3. There is no significant association between marital need satisfaction scores and: (a) morale, (b) self-image, and (c) personality orientation.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Description of Subjects

Table I presents a detailed description of 227 older husbands and wives who served as subjects in this study.

Forty-nine per cent of the sample consisted of males and fifty-one per cent were females. The respondents ranged from 60 to 89 years of age, with the greatest proportion falling in the age category 65-69 (36%). The smallest proportions were in the age categories 80-84 (4%) and 85-89 (1%). The sample was predominately Protestant (93%). Most of the male subjects' occupations fell in the skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled category (43%). The respondents represented the educational levels of less than high school (38%) and some high school (20%). Seventy-nine per cent of the male respondents were retired, while five per cent were employed part time. Thirty-six per cent of the females had been employed for the major part of their lives, while sixty-four had not been employed. The sample was predominately white (98%). Respondents' residence for the major part of life was reported to be predominately from a small town under 25,000 (50%), and the smallest proportion (4%) from a city

of over 100,000. The living arrangement of the respondents was predominately in their own home (90%), while six per cent lived in an apartment and three per cent fell in the "other" category which consisted primarily of rented housing. The number of years married to present mate ranged from one year to 50 and over, with most respondents (52%) falling in the 40-49 year category. The geographic closeness to the child living nearest the respondent was reported by the greatest proportion of respondents as being in the 300 miles and over category (19%) and in the less than one mile category (17%), while the smallest proportions of respondents indicated the 5-25 miles (7%) and the 25-50 miles (7%) categories.

The Item Analysis

In order to obtain an index of the validity of the items in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale, the chi-square test was utilized to determine if each item significantly differentiates between those subjects scoring in the upper quartile and those subjects scoring in the lower quartile on the basis of the total scores. All of the 24 items on the scale were found to be significantly discriminating at the .001 level.

A split-half reliability coefficient, computed with the Spearman-Brown Correction Formula, of +0.99 was obtained in determining an index of the reliability of the items in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUBJECTS

Variables	Classification	No.	%
Age	60-64	47	21.76
	65-69	77	35.65
	70-74	56	25.93
	75-79	24	11.11
	80-84	9	4.17
	85-89	3	1.39
	90+	0	0
Sex	Male	110	49.33
	Female	113	50.67
Religious Preference	Catholic	5	2.23
	Protestant	209	93.30
	Jewish	1	0.45
	Morman	3	1.34
	None	2	0.89
	Other	4	1.79
Current Employment Status of Males	Full Time	9	8.33
	Part Time	6	5.56
	Self-employed	14	12.96
	Retired	79	73.15
Employment Status of Female for Major Part of Life	Employed for major part of life	40	35.71
	Not employed for major part of life	72	64.29
Race	White	223	98.24
	Negro	1	0.44
	Indian	3	1.32
	Other	0	0
Occupation of Males	Professional- Managerial	16	14.95
	Clerical-Sales	14	13.08
	Skilled, semi- skilled, and unskilled	46	42.99
	Farm	31	28.97

TABLE I (Continued)

Variables	Classification	No.	%
Education	Less than high school	86	38.39
	Some high school	45	20.09
	High school graduate	29	12.95
	Some college	29	12.95
	College graduate	16	7.14
	Post graduate study	19	8.48
Residence for Major Part of Life	On farm or in country	74	33.33
	Small town under 25,000	110	49.55
	City of 25,000 to 50,000 population	19	8.56
	City of 50,000 to 100,000	10	4.50
	City of over 100,000	9	4.05
Present Living Arrangement	Live in own home	199	90.87
	Live in an apartment	12	5.48
	Live with children	0	0
	Live with other relatives	0	0
	Live with non-relatives	0	0
	Live in trailer	0	0
	Other	8	3.65
Ownership of Home	Yes	197	89.14
	No	24	10.86
Number of Years Married	Less than 5	4	1.83
	5-9	8	3.67
	10-19	6	2.75
	20-29	15	6.88
	30-39	38	17.43
	40-49	114	52.29
	50+	32	14.68

TABLE I (Continued)

Variables	Classification	No.	%
Geographic Closeness to the Child Who Lives Nearest	Less than 1 mile	36	16.59
	1-5 miles	27	12.44
	5-25 miles	15	6.91
	25-50 miles	15	6.91
	50-100 miles	32	14.75
	100-300 miles	35	16.13
	300+	41	18.89
	Do not have children	16	7.37

TABLE II
ITEM ANALYSIS BASED ON COMPARISONS OF THE
UPPER AND LOWER QUARTILES OF TOTAL
MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION SCORES*

How satisfied are you with your mate
in each of the following areas?

Item	df	χ^2	Level of Sig.
<hr/>			
1. Providing a feeling of security in me.	4	78.27	.001
2. Expressing affection toward me.	4	87.89	.001
3. Giving me an optimistic feeling toward life.	4	88.46	.001
4. Expressing a feeling of being emotionally close to me.	4	88.92	.001
5. Bringing out the best qualities in me.	4	90.46	.001
6. Helping me to become a more interesting person.	4	93.39	.001
7. Helping me to continue to develop my personality.	4	79.10	.001
8. Helping me to achieve my individual potential (become what I am capable of becoming).	4	80.36	.001
9. Being a good listener.	4	80.46	.001
10. Giving me encouragement when I am discouraged.	4	82.03	.001
11. Accepting my differentness.	4	90.29	.001
12. Avoiding habits which annoy me.	4	84.08	.001

TABLE II (Continued)

Item	df	χ^2	Level of Sig.
13. Letting me know how he or she really feels about something.	4	91.59	.001
14. Trying to find satisfactory solutions to our disagreements.	4	75.60	.001
15. Expressing disagreement with me honestly and openly.	4	65.53	.001
16. Letting me know when he or she is displeased with me.	4	63.52	.001
17. Helping me to feel that life has meaning.	4	100.15	.001
18. Helping me to feel needed.	4	89.14	.001
19. Helping me to feel that my life is serving a purpose.	4	85.75	.001
20. Helping me to obtain satisfaction and pleasure in daily activities.	4	76.42	.001
21. Giving me recognition for my past accomplishments.	4	89.41	.001
22. Helping me to feel that my life has been important.	4	96.30	.001
23. Helping me to accept my past life experiences as good and rewarding.	4	96.64	.001
24. Helping me to accept myself despite my shortcomings.	4	83.29	.001

* Love items: 1-4; personality fulfillment items: 5-8; respect items: 9-12; communication items: 13-16; finding meanings in life items: 17-20; and integration of past life experiences items: 21-24.

Sub-Scores of Marital Need Satisfaction Scale

The Marital Need Satisfaction Scale consisted of four statements for each of the six need categories. Since the six categories were considered to be pertinent in marital need satisfaction of older husbands and wives, mean sub-scores were obtained in order to secure an indication of the areas of marital need satisfaction which the respondents seemed to find most satisfying as well as those found least satisfying. Table III lists the total mean sub-scores and the mean sub-scores for males and females. Both males and females scored highest in the need category "love", and the lowest sub-score for the males was in the need category "respect", while for females the lowest sub-score was in the need category "communication". The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference in mean marital need satisfaction sub-scores according to sex. As Table IV indicates, there was a significant difference in the three marital need satisfaction sub-scores of love, respect, and communication according to sex. Males indicated a significantly greater degree of satisfaction in all three need categories.

The finding that males' lowest marital need satisfaction sub-score was in the category of respect may be due to the husband's feeling that the wife does not respect him now as much as when he was the principle wage earner. This agrees with Lipman's (1961) suggestion

TABLE III
MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION SUB-SCORES FOR
TOTAL SAMPLE AND ACCORDING TO SEX*

Category	Mean Sub-Scores		
	Total Sample	Male	Female
1. Love	16.91	17.34	16.52
2. Personality Fulfillment	16.55	16.95	16.22
3. Respect	15.96	16.26	15.70
4. Communication	16.37	17.19	15.56
5. Finding meaning in life	16.46	16.84	16.06
6. Integration of past life experiences	16.54	16.86	16.26

*Mean Total Score: Total sample - 98.09; Male - 101.56;
Female - 94.88.

TABLE IV

F SCORES REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION SUB-SCORES ACCORDING TO SEX

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<hr/>				
<u>Love</u>				
Males	102	17.34	8.67	.001
Females	109	16.00		
<u>Personality</u>				
<u>Fulfillment</u>				
Males	99	16.95	3.47	n.s.
Females	107	15.76		
<u>Respect</u>				
Males	100	16.26	4.90	.05
Females	109	15.17		
<u>Communication</u>				
Males	100	17.19	4.54	.05
Females	108	15.56		
<u>Finding Meanings</u>				
<u>in Life</u>				
Males	100	16.84	2.59	n.s.
Females	108	16.06		
<u>Integration of</u>				
<u>Past Life</u>				
<u>Experiences</u>				
Males	100	16.52	1.69	n.s.
Females	107	15.84		

that when role strain between husband and wife exists, it may be due to the male's unrealistic adherence to his pre-aging role pattern which emphasized work activity. Therefore, the tendency of the older husband to continue to associate respect primarily with work activity may result in his feeling less satisfied concerning the fulfillment of this need than with other needs. The finding that the wives' lowest marital need satisfaction sub-score was in the area of communication could be due to the fact that during previous periods of the family life cycle, the husband and wife were preoccupied with rearing a family. This deep involvement in child rearing may have caused a decrease in husband and wife communication which went unnoticed until the children had departed from the home. In re-establishing her role as wife she may find this loss of communication dissatisfying. This suggestion coincides with the report of Blood and Wolfe (1960) that with the coming of children couples tend to grow farther apart. It is suggested that the presence of children limits the time to be deeply involved in the marital relationship.

Table V indicates the mean marital need satisfaction sub-scores for the different age categories. It is interesting to note that the highest mean sub-scores for the need categories of love, personality fulfillment and respect were received by those husbands and wives in the 65-69 age category. The highest mean sub-score for the need category of communication was received by those in

TABLE V
MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION SUB-SCORES
ACCORDING TO AGE

Category	Mean Sub-Scores					
	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89
1. Love	15.96	17.93	16.27	17.55	14.67	16.67
2. Personality Fulfillment	16.83	17.10	15.57	16.63	14.89	15.67
3. Respect	15.06	16.70	15.90	15.62	13.89	16.00
4. Communication	15.68	16.16	16.22	19.75	13.78	15.33
5. Finding Meanings in Life	16.04	16.59	16.61	16.35	16.25	16.00
6. Integration of Past Life Experiences	16.15	17.05	16.16	16.00	15.50	17.67

the 75-79 age category. The highest mean sub-score for the need category of finding meanings in life was received by those in the 70-74 age category. The highest mean sub-score for the need category of integration of past life experiences was received by those husbands and wives in the 85-89 age category.

Examination of Hypotheses and

Discussion of Results

Hypothesis I(a). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of sex.

The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized in determining if there was a significant difference in marital need satisfaction during the later years between males and females. An F score of 7.40 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the .01 level. Table VI illustrates that males have a higher mean score than females. This finding may be due to the tendency of women to adjust more in the marriage relationship than do men (Landis, 1965). This tendency to adjust more may lead the wife to be more attentive to the fulfillment of her husband's needs, contributing to his higher degree of marital need satisfaction. The tendency to adjust more and possibly to be more attentive to the husband's needs, associated with the tendency to depend more upon the husband for her own emotional need fulfillment during the later years, may contribute to the older wife having greater expectations of her husband, as well as contributing to a more sensitive awareness of the husband's inadequacy in fulfilling her needs.

TABLE VI
F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MEAN MARITAL
NEED SATISFACTION SCORES ACCORDING TO SEX

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Sex</u>				
Male	98	101.56	7.41	.01
Female	106	94.88		

Hypothesis I(b). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of age.

No significant difference was found when the one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a difference in marital need satisfaction according to age. However, Table VII indicates that the mean marital need satisfaction score was least favorable for the respondents in the 60-64 age category and was most favorable for the respondents in the 80-84 age category. The two categories over 85 years were omitted because of the small number of cases. This finding implies that, although there was no significant difference in marital need satisfaction scores according to age, there was not a decrease in marital need satisfaction with age. In fact, marital need satisfaction was shown to increase with an increase in age, except for the 70-74 age category. This is contrary to some commonly held opinions concerning marriage satisfaction in the

later years of life.

TABLE VII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO AGE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Age</u>				
60 to 64 years	46	95.04	.51	n.s.
65 to 69 years	73	98.71		
70 to 74 years	51	96.96		
75 to 79 years	19	100.00		
80 to 84 years	7	102.00		

Hypothesis I(c). Marital need satisfaction of
older males is independent of employment status.

Table VIII indicates that no significant difference was found when the one-way classification analysis of variance was applied to the examination of this hypothesis. However, it is interesting to note that retired males indicated a higher mean marital need satisfaction score than males who were employed full-time or part-time. Those subjects who were self-employed received the highest mean marital need satisfaction score.

Hypothesis I(d). Marital need satisfaction of
older males is independent of occupation for
major part of life.

In examining this hypothesis the one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if

TABLE VIII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES OF OLDER MALES
ACCORDING TO EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Employment Status</u>				
Employed by others full time	8	100.00	.04	n.s.
Employed by others part time	5	101.00		
Self-employed	13	102.38		
Retired	72	101.63		

TABLE IX

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES OF OLDER MALES
ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION FOR MAJOR
PART OF LIFE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Occupation for Major Part of Life</u>				
Professional-Managerial	16	103.44	.46	n.s.
Clerical-Sales	13	103.54		
Skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled	40	102.35		
Farm	27	98.85		

there was a significant difference in marital need satisfaction scores of older males according to employment for major part of life. Table IX indicates that the F score obtained was not significant.

Hypothesis I(e). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of residence for major part of life.

The one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference in marital need satisfaction according to residence for major part of life. Table X shows an F score of 1.20 was obtained, indicating there was no significant difference. The results suggest that place of residence is not a major factor contributing to marital need satisfaction in the later years.

TABLE X

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
RESIDENCE FOR MAJOR PART OF LIFE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Residence for Major Part of Life</u>				
On farm or in country	67	95.49	1.20	n.s.
Small town under 25,000	100	97.71		
City of 25,000 to 50,000	19	103.21		
City of 50,000 to 100,000	10	100.00		
City over 100,000	9	105.56		

Hypothesis I(f). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of living arrangements.

When this hypothesis was subjected to the one-way classification analysis of variance, no significant difference was found between marital need satisfaction scores and living arrangements. Four categories were excluded from the analysis due to the insufficient number of cases. Table XI indicates that respondents in the category "other", consisting mainly of those living in rented houses, received the least favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, whereas those residing in an apartment received the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score. The results seem to suggest that the factor of living arrangements is not as important as other variables in contributing to the marital need satisfaction of older persons.

TABLE XI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Living Arrangements</u>				
Live in own home	183	98.37	.15	n.s.
Live in an apartment	12	100.08		
Other	8	95.63		

Hypothesis II(a). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of number of years married to present mate.

In examining this hypothesis, the one-way classification analysis of variance was again used. As the F score indicates in Table XII, there was no significant difference in marital need satisfaction according to number of years married to present mate. The category 1-5 years was omitted in the analysis due to the small number of cases. It is noted that older husbands and wives married ten to nineteen years report the least favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, while those married five to nine years and fifty or more years had the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction scores. This finding implies that the number of years married to present mate is not a significant factor in the marital need satisfaction of older couples. This finding strengthens Fried and Stern's (1948) suggestion that it is the satisfaction which the husband and wife have gained throughout their married life rather than the length of married life which is important in contributing to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the later years.

Hypothesis II(b). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of geographic closeness to children.

No significant difference was found when the one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to examine

TABLE XII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO NUMBER
OF YEARS MARRIED TO PRESENT MATE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Number of Years Married to Present Mate</u>				
5 to 9 years	8	104.88	.64	n.s.
10 to 19 years	5	92.20		
20 to 29 years	13	95.69		
30 to 39 years	38	99.68		
40 to 49 years	108	97.20		
50 years or more	25	101.12		

TABLE XIII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
GEOGRAPHIC CLOSENESS TO CHILDREN

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Geographic Closeness to Children</u>				
Less than 1 mile	31	99.16	1.36	n.s.
1 to 5 miles	26	97.46		
5 to 25 miles	14	92.57		
25 to 50 miles	15	104.00		
50 to 100 miles	31	100.23		
100 to 300 miles	30	90.93		
300 miles or more	40	97.93		

if there was a difference in marital need satisfaction according to geographic closeness to children. An F score of 1.46 was obtained, which is not significant as shown in Table XIII.

Hypothesis II(c). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of amount of contact with children through visits.

In order to determine if there was a significant difference in marital need satisfaction according to the amount of contact with children through visits, a one-way classification analysis of variance was applied. An F score of 4.38 was obtained, indicating that the difference was significant at the .001 level. The respondents with the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, as shown on Table XIV, were those who visited or received visits from their children five to seven times a year. Respondents with the least favorable mean marital need satisfaction score were those who visited or received visits from their children once a year. In interpreting this finding it appears logical that when there is a close and satisfying relationship between husband and wife there also tends to be a close relationship between parents and children. This in turn will affect the frequency of contact between children and parents in the years after the children have departed from the home. This suggests that the marital need satisfaction of husband and wife is a contributing factor to the amount of contact with children and vice versa. However, when the marriage

relationship has been unsatisfactory and one or both parents turn primarily to children for fulfillment of emotional needs, dissatisfaction may increase if the children do not respond to their demands. This suggestion is in agreement with Kerckhoff (1961) who further suggests that older couples who have had a satisfying life together are in less need of close generational ties, whereas couples who have not had a satisfactory relationship may be more demanding of their children. If these demands on children are not met, greater dissatisfaction may result, thereby possibly contributing to less frequent contact between parents and children.

TABLE XIV

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORE ACCORDING TO AMOUNT
OF CONTACT WITH CHILDREN THROUGH VISTS

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Contact with Children</u> <u>Through Visits</u>				
Once a year	25	85.16	4.75	.001
2 to 4 times a year	39	100.08		
5 to 7 times a year	21	105.24		
8 to 10 times a year	12	95.50		
10 times a year or more	89	98.64		

Hypothesis II(d). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of perception of happiest period of life.

When this hypothesis was subjected to the one-way classification analysis of variance, a significant difference was found in marital need satisfaction in the later years according to perception of happiest period of life. As Table XV illustrates, an F score of 10.05 was obtained, indicating that the difference is significant at the .001 level. Those subjects who perceived childhood as their happiest period of life had a much lower mean marital need satisfaction score than did the other groups. Subjects who perceived the present time as the happiest period of life had the most favorable mean score. This finding implies that satisfaction with life at the present period has a significant effect on how they view their marriage, and likewise, a satisfactory marriage affects how they view their life in general. This finding points to the inference made earlier that the marital relationship may be of greater importance to the emotional and mental well-being of an individual in the later years of life than in the younger years due to the fact that in the later years there is decreased interaction with other social institutions and with children.

Hypothesis II(e). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of self-perceived happiness of marriage.

The examination of this hypothesis was included

TABLE XV

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
PERCEPTION OF HAPPIEST PERIOD OF LIFE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Perception of Happiest Period of Life</u>				
Present time	101	103.50	10.06	.001
Middle years	48	98.92		
Young adult years	27	88.15		
Teenage years	8	96.50		
Childhood	9	74.00		

TABLE XVI

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
SELF-PERCEIVED HAPPINESS OF MARRIAGE

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Self-Perceived Happi- ness of Marriage</u>				
Very happy	89	108.39	83.08	.001
Happy	103	93.35		
Unhappy	5	45.20		

primarily as an additional validation measure of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale. An F score of 83.07 was obtained when the one-way classification analysis of variance was utilized to examine this hypothesis. As Table XVI indicates this difference is significant at the .001 level. The categories "very unhappy" and "undecided" were excluded from the analysis due to the small number of cases. Those subjects perceiving their marriage as very happy had the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, while those subjects perceiving their marriage as unhappy had the least favorable mean marital need satisfaction score. The findings of this analysis represent further validation of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale.

Hypothesis II(f). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time.

The one-way classification analysis of variance was again used in examining marital need satisfaction according to perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened. An F score of 26.34 was obtained, which is significant at the .001 level. Table XVII shows that older husbands and wives who perceived an improvement in their marriage over time had the most favorable mean marital need satisfaction score, whereas those who perceived their marriage as becoming worse had the least favorable mean score. The category "undecided" was omitted from the analysis due to the small number of cases. This finding offers disagreement with the commonly accepted idea that disenchant-

ment occurs in the later years of marriage and strengthens Fried and Stern's (1948) and Goldfarb's (1968) suggestions that marriages which were good to begin with usually tend to improve through the later years, whereas unhappy marriages in the early years tend to deteriorate further as partners advance in years. This finding also appears to represent further validation of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale.

TABLE XVII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO PERCEPTION OF WHETHER OWN MARRIAGE HAS IMPROVED OR WORSENERD OVER TIME

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Perception of Whether Own Marriage has Improved or Worsened Over Time</u>				
Better	108	103.74	26.34	.001
Worse	6	59.83		
Remained about the same	86	94.64		

Hypothesis II(g). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

In order to determine if there was a significant difference in marital need satisfaction according to perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time, the one-way analysis of variance was applied.

As Table XVIII illustrates, the difference was not significant. However, it is noted that respondents who perceived most marriages as improving over time received the highest mean marital need satisfaction score. Conversely, those who considered most marriages as becoming worse over time had the lowest mean score.

TABLE XVIII

F SCORE REFLECTING DIFFERENCES IN MARITAL NEED
SATISFACTION MEAN SCORES ACCORDING TO
PERCEPTION OF WHETHER MOST MARRIAGES
IMPROVE OR WORSEN OVER TIME

Description	No.	\bar{X}	F	Level of Sig.
<u>Perception of Whether Most Marriages Improve or Worsen Over Time</u>				
Better	88	101.43	2.26	n.s.
Worse	10	88.10		
Remained about the same	65	97.74		
Undecided	31	95.74		

Hypothesis III(a). Marital need satisfaction in
the later years is independent of morale of the
subjects.

To determine the existence and degree of relationship between morale and marital need satisfaction, the morale scores (obtained from the Life Satisfaction Index-Z) were correlated with the marital need satisfaction scores by means of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

As Table XIX indicates, a significant positive correlation of .37 was obtained which is significant at the .001 level. As the research of Barron (1961), Kutner (1956), and Havighurst and Albrecht (1953) indicate that married older couples have a higher morale than single, widowed or divorced older persons, it is logical that a higher degree of morale is present among those older couples who possess a greater degree of marital need satisfaction than among those who possess a lower degree of marital need satisfaction. This finding also emphasizes the importance of the relationship between marital need satisfaction and the emotional and mental well-being of the older person.

TABLE XIX
CORRELATION BETWEEN MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION
SCORES AND MORALE SCORES

Description	<u>Pearson r Score</u>	
	Marital Need Satisfaction	Level of Sig.
Morale	+.37	.001

Hypothesis III(b). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of self-image of the subjects.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to determine the existence and degree of relationship between self-image (obtained from Kutner's

Self-Image Scale) and marital need satisfaction. Although not significant, as indicated in Table XX, there was a positive correlation between self-image and marital need satisfaction.

TABLE XX
CORRELATION BETWEEN MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION
SCORES AND SELF-IMAGE SCORES

Description	<u>Pearson r Score</u>	
	Marital Need Satisfaction	Level of Sig.
Self-Image	+.13	n.s.

Hypothesis III(c). Marital need satisfaction in the later years is independent of personality orientation of the subjects.

To determine the existence and degree of relationship between personality orientation and marital need satisfaction, the separate scores for self orientation, interaction orientation, and task orientation (obtained from the Bass Ori Scale) were correlated with the marital need satisfaction scores by means of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. The following correlation coefficients were obtained: marital need satisfaction and self orientation, $-.08$; marital need satisfaction and interaction orientation, $+.00$; and marital need satisfaction and task orientation, $+.03$. As indicated by Table XXI, there was no significant association between marital

need satisfaction and any of these three types of personality orientation.

TABLE XXI
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN MARITAL NEED SATISFACTION
SCORES AND PERSONALITY ORIENTATION SCORES

Description	<u>Pearson r Score</u>	
	Marital Need Satisfaction	Level of Sig.
<u>Ori Category</u>		
Self Orientation	-.08	n.s.
Interaction Orientation	+.00	n.s.
Task Orientation	+.03	n.s.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to design an instrument, the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale, to measure the degree of satisfaction which older husbands and wives express concerning the fulfillment of certain needs involved in the marriage relationship during the later years, and to relate marital need satisfaction scores to certain social and psychological factors.

The sample was composed of 227 older husbands and wives who were on the mailing lists of the Senior Citizen Centers throughout Oklahoma. The subjects were predominately over sixty-five years of age and retired. They were primarily Protestant and in the skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled occupational category for the major part of their life. The data were obtained during the months of February and March, 1969.

The questionnaire included the following: (a) an information sheet for securing various background data, (b) the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale designed to measure the degree of satisfaction which older husbands and wives express concerning the fulfillment of certain needs involved in the marriage relationship during the later years, (c) Neugarten, Havighurst, and Tobin's 13 item

Life Satisfaction Index-Z, used to measure the morale of the subjects, (d) Kutner's Self-Image Scale, used to obtain a self-image measure of the respondents, and (e) a shortened version of the Ori Scale, used to obtain a self-interaction-task orientation inventory of the subjects.

The chi-square test was used in an item analysis of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale to determine those items that significantly differentiated between the subjects scoring in the upper quartile and the lower quartile groups on the basis of the total scale scores. The one-way classification analysis of variance was used to determine if marital need satisfaction was independent of: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) employment status of males, (d) occupation of males for major part of life, (e) residence for major part of life, (f) living arrangements, (g) number of years married to present mate, (h) geographic closeness to children (i) amount of contact with children through visits, (j) perception of happiest period of life, (k) self-perceived happiness of marriage, (l) perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time, and (m) perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to determine the significance of relationship between marital need satisfaction and (a) morale, (b) self-image, and (c) personality orientation.

The results and conclusions of the study were as

follows:

1. All of the 24 items of the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale were significantly discriminating between the upper quartile and lower quartile groups at the .001 level.
2. A split half reliability coefficient, computed with the Spearman-Brown Correction Formula, of +0.99 is an indication of the reliability of the items in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale.
3. The mean sub-scores on the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale according to sex indicated that the area of greatest satisfaction for both males and females was "love", the area of lowest satisfaction for the males was "respect", while for females the lowest score was in the area of communication.
4. There is a significant difference in the marital need satisfaction sub-scores of love, respect, and communication, according to sex, with males expressing significantly greater satisfaction in all three areas.
5. The mean sub-scores on the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale according to age indicated that the highest mean sub-scores for the need categories of love, personality fulfillment, and respect were received by those husbands and wives in the 65-69 age category. The highest

mean sub-score for the need category of communication was received by those in the 75-79 age category. The highest mean sub-score for the need category of finding meanings in life was received by those in the 70-74 age category. The highest mean sub-score for the need category of integration of past life experiences was received by those husbands and wives in the 85-89 age category.

6. The following variables (according to the one-way classification analysis of variance) were found to be significantly related to marital need satisfaction at the .001 level: (a) amount of contact with children through visits, (b) perception of happiest period of life, (c) self-perceived happiness of marriage, and (d) perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time. The respondents' sex was significantly related to marital need satisfaction at the .01 level. Factors that were not significantly related to marital need satisfaction were: (a) age, (b) employment status of males, (c) occupation of males for major part of life, (d) residence for major part of life, (e) living arrangements, (f) number of years married to present mate, (g) geographic closeness of children, and (h) perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time.

7. Marital need satisfaction (according to the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient) is significantly related to morale at the .001 level. Marital need satisfaction is not significantly related to self-image or personality orientation.

From the analysis of this study, the general conclusion which could be drawn is that a large majority of the older husbands and wives feel a high degree of marital need satisfaction during the later years of their marriage. The results of the study would indicate that the variables of age, employment status of males, occupation of males for major part of life, residence for major part of life, living arrangements, number of years married to present mate, geographic closeness of children, and perception of whether most marriages improve or worsen over time, are not significantly associated with marital need satisfaction. However, the results indicate that the variables of sex, amount of contact with children through visits, perception of happiest period of life, self-perceived happiness of marriage and perception of whether own marriage has improved or worsened over time, are significantly associated with marital need satisfaction. The results also indicate that self-image and personality orientation are not significantly associated with marital need satisfaction. However, the results do indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between morale and

marital need satisfaction.

Limitation of the Study and Recommendations

This study was concerned only with older husbands and wives who were on the Senior Citizen Centers' mailing lists throughout Oklahoma and would not necessarily be representative of the total older population of the United States. The different religious, racial, educational, and occupational groups were not represented to the extent that generalizations can be made to the entire population of older husbands and wives. Also, the need categories represented in the Marital Need Satisfaction Scale are certainly not exclusive, though they are, according to the literature, among the more important marital needs.

It is suggested that repeated studies of the marital need satisfaction of older husbands and wives be conducted, utilizing more heterogeneous samples. For example, it would be particularly desirable in future studies to include more representative samples concerning region of country, race, religion, and living arrangements. Further, more detailed investigations of the following findings of the present study would appear to have potential for obtaining greater understanding of the older husband and wife: (a) the finding that older wives express a lower degree of marital need satisfaction than do older husbands, (b) the finding that older husbands were least satisfied in the need category of respect, while older wives were

least satisfied in the need category of communication, (c) the finding that the older husbands' and wives' frequency of contact with their children is significantly related to marital need satisfaction, and (d) the finding that there is a significant and positive relationship between marital need satisfaction and morale. Greater knowledge concerning the possible reasons for these findings could be very beneficial.

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APPENDIX

Your cooperation in this research project is greatly appreciated. Your contribution in a research project of this type helps us to gain greater knowledge and insight into family relationships.

Please check or fill in as appropriate to each question. Since your name is not required, please be as honest in your answers as possible.

The blanks at the extreme left of the page are for purposes of coding (do not fill in).

___ 1-3

___ 4. Sex: ___ 1. male ___ 2. female

___ 5. Age: ___ 1. 60-64 ___ 4. 75-79
 ___ 2. 65-69 ___ 5. 80-84
 ___ 3. 70-74 ___ 6. 85-89
 ___ 7. 90 and over

___ 6. Race: ___ 1. White
 ___ 2. Negro
 ___ 3. Indian
 ___ 4. Other _____

___ 7. Religious preference:
 ___ 1. Catholic ___ 4. Morman
 ___ 2. Protestant ___ 5. None
 ___ 3. Jewish ___ 6. Other _____

___ 8. For the major part of your life have you lived:
 ___ 1. on farm or in country ___ 4. city of 50,000
 ___ 2. small town under to 100,000
 25,000 ___ 5. city over
 ___ 3. city of 25,000 to 100,000
 50,000 population

___ 9. Do you presently live:
 ___ 1. on farm or in country ___ 4. city of 50,000
 ___ 2. small town under to 100,000
 25,000 ___ 5. city of over
 ___ 3. city of 25,000 to 100,000
 50,000 population

- ____ 10. Years of education completed:
- ____ 1. less than high school
 - ____ 2. some high school
 - ____ 3. high school graduate
 - ____ 4. some college
 - ____ 5. college graduate
 - ____ 6. post graduate study
- ____ 11. What was your occupation for the major part of your life?
-
- ____ 12. At the present time of your life, which of the following, if any, do you find to be problems? (Please check no more than 3 problems.)
- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ____ 13. ____ 1. housing | ____ 6. being dependent on |
| ____ 14. ____ 2. money | ____ your children |
| ____ 3. use of leisure time | ____ 7. inlaws |
| ____ 4. poor health | ____ 8. finding a job |
| ____ 5. not feeling useful | ____ 9. our marriage relationship |
| | ____ 10. no problems |
- ____ 15. Number of years married to present mate:
- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ____ 1. less than 5 years | ____ 5. 30-39 years |
| ____ 2. 5-9 years | ____ 6. 40-49 years |
| ____ 3. 10-19 years | ____ 7. 50 years and over |
| ____ 4. 20-29 years | |
- ____ 16. If you have been remarried, was it because of:
- ____ 1. death of previous mate
 - ____ 2. divorce
 - ____ 3. have not been remarried
- ____ 17. Which of the following do you consider to be the happiest time of your life?
- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| ____ 1. present time | ____ 4. teenage years |
| ____ 2. middle years | ____ 5. childhood |
| ____ 3. young adult years | |
- ____ 18. Which of the following do you consider to be the happiest period of your married life?
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| ____ 1. present | ____ 3. young adult years |
| ____ 2. middle years | |
- ____ 19. Do you consider your marriage to be:
- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| ____ 1. very happy | ____ 3. unhappy |
| ____ 2. happy | ____ 4. very unhappy |
| | ____ 5. undecided |

Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- ___28. As I grow older, things seem better than I thought they would be.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___29. I have gotten more of the breaks in life than most of the people I know.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___30. This is the dreariest time of my life.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___31. I am just as happy as when I was young.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___32. These are the best years of my life.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___33. Most of the things I do are boring and monotonous.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___34. The things I do are as interesting to me as they ever were.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___35. As I look back on my life, I am fairly well satisfied.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___36. I have made plans for things I'll be doing a month or a year from now.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___37. When I think back over my life, I didn't get most of the important things I wanted.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___38. Compared to other people, I get down in the dumps too often.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___39. I've gotten pretty much what I expected out of life.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___40. In spite of what people say, the lot of the average man is getting worse, not better.
 ___1.agree ___2.undecided ___3.disagree
- ___41-42. Would you say you feel older or younger than
 ___43. most people your age?
 ___1.older ___2.feel same age ___3.younger

- ___44. Do you think your health is better or worse than that of most people your age?
 ___1.better ___2.same ___3.worse
- ___45. Would you say your standard of living is better or worse than the standard of living of most of your friends and acquaintances?
 ___1.better ___2.same ___3.worse
- ___46. Which of the following do you consider to be the three most rewarding aspects of your present marriage relationship?
- ___47. ___1.economic security
- ___48. ___2.having your physical needs cared for
 ___3.your standing in the community
 ___4.being able to effectively express true feelings to each other
 ___5.companionship
 ___6.being needed by your mate
 ___7.affectionate relationship with your mate
 ___8.sharing of mutual interests
 ___9.other _____
 ___10.none are rewarding
- ___50. Which of the following aspects of your relationship with your mate do you consider to be the two most troublesome at the present time.
- ___51. ___1.lack of mutual interests
 ___2.not being able to effectively express true feelings to each other
 ___3.unsatisfactory affectional relationship
 ___4.different values and philosophies of life
 ___5.lack of companionship
 ___6.frequent disagreements
 ___7.other _____
 ___8.nothing is troublesome

Since you were first married to your present mate, do you feel your marriage relationship has improved or worsened in each of the following areas:

- ___52. Love and affection for each other
 ___1.improved ___2.worsened ___3.neither improved nor worsened
- ___53. Expressing true feelings and thoughts to each other
 ___1.improved ___2.worsened ___3.neither improved nor worsened
- ___54. Companionship
 ___1.improved ___2.worsened ___3.neither improved nor worsened

- ____55. Respect for each other
 ____1.improved ____2.worsened ____3.neither improved
 nor worsened
- ____56. Understanding each other
 ____1.improved ____2.worsened ____3.neither improved
 nor worsened
- ____57. Helping each other to find meaning in life
 ____1.improved ____2.worsened ____3.neither improved
 nor worsened
- ____58. Personality growth of each partner
 ____1.improved ____2.worsened ____3.neither improved
 nor worsened
- ____59-60.

Now we would like to find out how satisfied you are with your mate's present performance of certain marriage roles at the present time of your life. Please answer each question by circling the most appropriate letter at the left of each item.

Circle VS if you feel very satisfied; circle S if you feel satisfied; circle U if you feel undecided; circle US if you feel unsatisfied; and VUS if you feel very unsatisfied.

How satisfied are you with your mate in each of the following areas?

- | | | | | | | |
|--------|----|---|---|----|-----|--|
| ___61. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Providing a feeling of security in me. |
| ___62. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Expressing affection toward me. |
| ___63. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Giving me an optimistic feeling toward life. |
| ___64. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Expressing a feeling of being emotionally close to me. |
| ___65- | | | | | | |
| ___66. | | | | | | |
| ___67. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Bringing out the best qualities in me. |
| ___68. | VS | S | U | US | VUS | Helping me to become a more interesting person. |

- ___69. VS S U US VUS Helping me to continue to develop my personality.
- ___70. VS S U US VUS Helping me to achieve my individual potential (become what I am capable of becoming).
- ___71-
___72.
- ___73. VS S U US VUS Being a good listener.
- ___74. VS S U US VUS Giving me encouragement when I am discouraged.
- ___75. VS S U US VUS Accepting my differentness.
- ___76. VS S U US VUS Avoiding habits which annoy me.
- ___77-
___78.
- ___79. VS S U US VUS Letting me know how he or she really feels about something.
- ___80. VS S U US VUS Trying to find satisfactory solutions to our disagreements.
- ___81. VS S U US VUS Expressing disagreement with me honestly and openly.
- ___82. VS S U US VUS Letting me know when he or she is displeased with me.
- ___83-
___84.
- ___85. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that life has meaning.
- ___86. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel needed.
- ___87. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that my life is serving a purpose.
- ___88. VS S U US VUS Helping me to obtain satisfaction and pleasure in daily activities.
- ___89-
___90.

- ___91. VS S U US VUS Giving me recognition for my past accomplishments.
- ___92. VS S U US VUS Helping me to feel that my life has been important.
- ___93. VS S U US VUS Helping me to accept my past life experiences as good and rewarding.
- ___94. VS S U US VUS Helping me to accept myself despite my shortcomings.
- ___95-
- ___96.
- ___97-
- ___99.
- ___100-
- ___101.
- ___102-
- ___103.
- ___104-
- ___105.

For each of the statements below please indicate which one of the three alternatives (possible answers), A, B or C is most true, or most preferred, or most important to you by writing A, B, or C in the Most column.

Then choose the least preferred or least important of the three possible answers (A, B, or C) and write its letter in the Least column.

For every statement, be sure you mark one of the possible answers in each column. If A is entered under the Most column, then either B or C should be marked under the Least column, and so on.

Do not debate too long over any one statement; your first reaction is desired.

MOST LEAST

- () () 1. One of the greatest satisfactions in life is:
- A. Recognition for your efforts
- B. The feeling of a job well done
- C. The fun of being with friends

MOST LEAST

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| () | () | 2. I like my friends to:
A. Want to help others when possible
B. Be loyal at all times
C. Be intelligent and interested in a number of things |
| () | () | 3. My best friends:
A. Are easy to get along with
B. Know more than I do
C. Are loyal to me |
| () | () | 4. I would like to be known as:
A. A successful person
B. An efficient person
C. A friendly person |
| () | () | 5. I enjoy:
A. Just being with friends
B. The feeling of accomplishment I have after doing something well
C. Being praised for some achievement |
| () | () | 6. If I had more time, I would like to
A. Make more friends
B. Work at my hobby or learning something new and interesting
C. Just take it easy, without any pressure |
| () | () | 7. I think I do my best when:
A. I work with a group of people who are friendly
B. I have a job that is in my line
C. My efforts are rewarded |
| () | () | 8. I like:
A. Being appreciated by others
B. Being satisfied personally with my performance
C. Being with friends with whom I can have a good time |
| () | () | 9. Nothing is worse than:
A. Having your self-esteem damaged
B. Failure at an important task
C. Losing your friends |
| () | () | 10. I like a leader who:
A. Gets the job done
B. Makes himself respected by his followers
C. Makes himself easy to talk to |

MOST LEAST

- () () 11. Which leisure time activity is important to you:
A. Watching T.V.
B. Chatting with acquaintances
C. Keeping busy with interesting hobbies
- () () 12. I like:
A. Sincere praise for my efforts and accomplishments
B. Cooperative effort
C. Wisdom
- () () 13. Which is important to you?
A. To know what you want to do
B. To know how to do what you want to do
C. To know how to help others to do what they want to do
- () () 14. I am considerably disturbed by:
A. Hostile arguments
B. Rigidity and refusal to see the value of new ways
C. Persons who degrade themselves
- () () 15. I would like to:
A. Be accepted as a friend by others
B. Help others complete a mutual task
C. Be admired by others

VITA /

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