

STANDARDS OF MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS:  
THE INFLUENCE OF RELATIONSHIP  
EXPERIENCE AND GENDER

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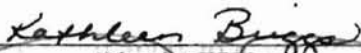
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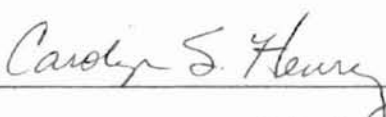
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of Problem .....	1
Concepts and Definitions.....	4
Theoretical Framework.....	5
Rationale for the study.....	9
Conceptual Hypotheses .....	11
II. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	13
Definitions .....	13
Purpose .....	18
Influence on satisfaction.....	19
Formation.....	27
Relationship experience.....	29
Gender.....	33
III. METHODOLOGY .....	39
Participants .....	39
Procedure .....	40
Instruments .....	40
Operational Hypotheses.....	45
Statistical Measures .....	47

Chapter	Page
IV. RESULTS .....	49
Relationship Experience .....	50
Target's Gender .....	54
Respondents' Gender .....	56
V. DISCUSSION .....	59
Relationship Experience .....	59
Target's Gender .....	65
Respondents' Gender .....	68
Limitations .....	73
Implications .....	74
Future Research .....	76
REFERENCES .....	78
APPENDICES .....	88
APPENDIX A – INFORMED CONSENT .....	88
APPENDIX B – STANDARDS QUESTIONNAIRE AND RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRES .....	90
APPENDIX C – CONCEPTUAL CLUSTERING .....	99
APPENDIX D – TABLES 1-14 .....	106
APPENDIX E – INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL .....	133

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Sample Demographics .....	107
2. Relationship History .....	110
3. Length of Longest Relationship.....	111
4. Seriousness of Most Serious Relationship.....	112
5. Gender by Relationship Experience .....	113
6. Means and (Standard Deviations) of Affection and Leisure Clusters .....	114
7. ANOVA for Affection and Leisure Clusters based on Relationship Experience.....	116
8. ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) for Gift Giving Items and Relationship Experience .....	117
9. ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) of Religion, Friends and Family, Conflict Resolution, and Financial Clusters.....	119
10. Items with the Largest Discrepancies between Husband and Wife Means.....	121
11. ANOVA, Means, (Standard Deviations), for Affection, Sex, and Leisure Clusters by Gender .....	122
12. ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) for Items.....	123
13. Most Important Marital Standards as Indicated by Respondents .....	124
14. Means and (Standard Deviations) for All Items .....	125

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of the Problem

Despite the current high divorce rate, many young people see marriage as a high priority. In the Monitoring the Future Survey, a sample of high school seniors have been asked to rank fourteen life goals on a four-point scale ranging from “extremely important” to “not important” each year since 1976. The majority of the respondents ranked having a good marriage and family life as extremely important, making it the highest ranked life goal [(Bachman, Johnston, & O’Malley, 1975-1992) as reported in Glenn (1996)]. Seventy-two percent of boys and eighty-two percent of girls ranked this item as extremely important. There has been a trend of slight increase since 1976 of the percentage ranking this goal as extremely important. There also has been an increasing trend in the percent who said they definitely would prefer to have a mate most of their lives [(Bachman, Johnston, & O’Malley, 1996-1999) as reported in Popenoe & Whitehead, 2001].

Most people marry sometime in their lifetime. In Western countries over 90% of the population marry by age fifty (McDonald, 1995). Many adolescents also believe that they will marry in the future. The 1996-1999 data from the Monitoring the Future survey indicate that 80% of teenage respondents believe they will most likely choose to get married in the long run. Four percent believe they will probably not get married and the remainder are either already married or have “no idea.” Many young adults lack confidence, however, in their future marriages. The Monitoring the Future survey also

indicated youth were skeptical that their marriages would last. Sixty-four percent of females and fifty-nine percent of males indicated it would be very likely that they would stay married to the same person for life [(Bachman, Johnston, & O'Malley, 1996-1999) as reported in Popenoe & Whitehead, 2001]. Zimmer (1986) conducted a study examining premarital anxieties of never-married college students. Young adult men and women were most worried that their marriage would be unable to bring them personal fulfillment (e.g., emotional fulfillment, close rapport, equality with mate, staying romantic).

Even though the majority of young adults plan to marry and indicate that marriage is a high priority, individuals are still concerned that their marriages may not succeed. Research gives reason for the concern. Larson (1988) concludes there is a great need for education at the college level based on college students' results of a quiz involving myths and facts about marriage. Larson found the young adults missed an average of 7 out of 15 (47%) items on this quiz. Larson concludes that Americans have high and unrealistic expectations of marriage. That is, individuals expect a spouse to simultaneously be a friend, confidant, fulfilling sex partner, counselor, and parent.

Studies have shown that unrealistic expectations of marriage can lead to marital instability. Realistic expectations have been found to be significantly different between satisfactorily-married couples and those who were separated or divorce (Fowers & Olson, 1986; Larsen & Olson; 1989). Distressed couples hold more unrealistic expectations than nondistressed couples (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). Unstable couples have been found to have more dysfunctional beliefs regarding relationships than stably married couples (Kurdek, 1993).



Many young adults have expectations of marriage that are difficult to fulfill. This may lead to individuals being dissatisfied with their future relationships. If educators can help young adults to have more realistic expectations, this may lead to more satisfaction, and more confidence that their marriages will succeed. With the high rates of marital dissolution, the need for high caliber education of young people about marriage becomes more critical.

In the last three decades the median age at first marriage has been rising. The current age is the highest of the century with men marrying at a median age of 27 years and women at 25 years (Popenoe & Whitehead, 2001). With young people waiting longer to marry, educators have a greater opportunity to provide education.

Examining the cognitions that young adults have concerning marriage is necessary in order to provide education. Once these cognitions are identified, educators will have a greater understanding of the way marriage is viewed according to young adults. With this understanding, effective programs can be developed in accordance with their views.

Thus, this study proposes to identify the importance young adults place on one type of cognitions, standards of a marital relationship. Marital cognitions serve as a guide to one's behavior and shape how one thinks and feels. Standards, in particular, serve as a baseline that individuals use to evaluate a relationship. If an individual's baseline is unrealistic, most relationships the individual engages in will not be fulfilling. Thus, identifying individuals' perceived standards are beneficial to the study of cognitions. The influence of gender and relationship experience on marital standards will be examined.

### Concepts and Definitions for this study

For purposes of this study the concept of standards, relationship experience, gender of the respondent, and gender of the target will be used. *Standards* are defined in this study as a responsibility or duty that should be fulfilled by a spouse. Standards are not what a spouse could do or what would be nice to do, but what a spouse must do to meet their obligations in their relationship. Respondents were asked to indicate how important each standard was to fulfilling a partner's responsibility to the partner's spouse. The importance of each standard was assessed using a five point Likert type scale ranging from "not very important" to "very important."

*Relationship experience*, for purposes of this study, is conceptualized in three ways. First, self-reports of past relationship history was assessed. This included relationships that were casual/not-serious, serious/but not exclusive, steady/exclusive without discussion of marriage, steady/exclusive with the discussion of marriage, and engagements. Experiences in cohabitating relationships were also assessed. Secondly, relationship experience was measured by the length of one's longest relationship. Thirdly, the level of seriousness in one's most serious relationship was assessed. Thus, relationship experience was conceptualized through relationship history, length of longest relationship, and level of seriousness in one's most serious relationship.

Gender is examined in two ways. First, the *gender of the respondent* is used. This will be referred to as male or female. Secondly, the *target's gender* was explored. This is the spouse's gender on the Standards questionnaire. This will be referred to as husband and wife.

## Theoretical Framework

Social learning theory provides a useful framework for examining individuals' perceived standards of a marital relationship. This theory has evolved into the social-cognitive theory. Both will be discussed and applied to the current study.

Social learning theory was developed to explain normal behavior and personality development. This united work from social psychology, cognitive psychology, and behaviorism. The basic premise of this theory is that intrapersonal factors, social and physical environmental factors, and behavioral factors influence one another and are influenced by one another. This is Bandura's (1986,1977) model of reciprocal determinism. Therefore, cognitive processes, such as expectations, standards, and beliefs have equal status with an individual's behavior and one's environment. A person's behavior can act on the environment, which can then affect the individual. One's cognitive processes influence an individual's behavior, which can in turn shape one's cognitions. The environment that surrounds an individual can shape one's cognitions, which can then influence the environment. All three domains are interrelated.

In terms of marital standards, the process of reciprocal determinism explains the process of how standards are formed and modified. Early in an individuals' life, standards for how people should be treated are developed by observing others' relationships. The parental relationship is usually an individual's first exposure to this. Then, one can observe peers, older siblings, teachers, and gain knowledge through the mass media. All of these areas are part of the individual's social and physical environment. These are the beginning of one's standards, which are part of the intrapersonal domain. Standards are used to select whom one decides to begin a

relationship with. These cognitions affect the person's environment. When an individual gains more relationship experience, the person may find partners' behaviors that do not fit within the individual's particular standards. An individual must change one's standards or change the relationship. Standards are also used as a guide for one's own behavior, providing an example of how the intrapersonal aspect affects the domain of behavior. If a person has a standard that a wife should stay home with her children while her husband works, she will turn down a job offer so she can fulfill her standard. However, if this family is not able to afford their standard of living, the wife may be in a position where she needs to work. Thus, the social and physical environment can affect behavior. If the woman does decide to work and take her children to childcare, she may change her standard to a wife should stay home with her children if it is financially possible. Thus, behavior can affect standards, a part of the intrapersonal domain. Behavior can have an effect on one's environment. The woman may accept a job and become friends with a co-worker who has several children herself. The two may set up play dates for their children, changing both of their environments. All three domains, intrapersonal, social and physical environment, and behavior, are important factors in examining human behavior and more specifically, marital cognitions.

Bandura (1986) expanded his ideas further in an additional version of this theory, which he renamed social-cognitive theory. In this theory, Bandura develops the idea of intrapersonal and societal variables more extensively. Five capabilities of humans that influence learning are discussed. First, humans have the capability to symbolize. This enables models to be created based on experiences and serve as guides for future experiences. Assumptions and standards are examples of models that humans use to steer

future behavior. Individuals use their past experiences to form standards. These standards are then used to guide one's own behavior through evaluating current relationships to those standards. Also, one's behavior can be evaluated

Secondly, humans have the capability of forethought allowing one to anticipate consequences to one's behavior. Also, individuals set goals and plan for the future with this capability. The ability to think ahead allows individuals to formulate standards for future relationships. If this were not possible, individuals would not know what to expect from a relationship and have no baseline to compare current relationship outcomes to.

Thirdly, the capability of vicarious learning provides humans with a way of learning that does not have to involve oneself. Vicarious learning is the learning of new behaviors or expectations by observing others' behavior and the consequences associated with this behavior. This was an extension of the concept of operant learning. Vicarious learning enables an individual to learn without having to undergo a trial and error process. For example, an adolescent may see his parent's marriage fall apart when his mother was not faithful to his father. The adolescent may learn from this experience that infidelity is harmful to a relationship and a family. The adolescent does not need to be unfaithful in his relationships to learn this lesson.

Individuals develop a large part of their assumptions and standards through vicarious learning. One can observe parents, peers, older siblings, and models in the media and form assumptions or standards based on these observations. However, vicarious learning is not sufficient to form adequate standards. Standards are constantly being revised through one's own experience. Nevertheless, vicarious learning enables standards to be formed before one has personal romantic relationships.

Another capability of humans is the ability to self-regulate. This is done by comparing behavior to one's internal standards. Thus, an individual's behavior is not an isolated incident, but is influenced by standards. Also, one's behavior can be evaluated against a person's standards. For example, an individual who is having a conversation with her mother on the phone may want to respond in a negative way to her mother's criticism of the individual's job. However, the individual has a standard to treat her parents with respect. If the individual follows her internal standard she will let the comment slide or will voice her concern to her mother in a respectful way.

A final capability important in the social-cognitive theory is the ability for self-reflection. Self-reflection enables an individual to gain understanding of, evaluate, and change one's own thinking. This capability is essential in the formation of relationship standards. This capability allows for standards to be ever-changing, to not remain static. If self-reflection did not exist, an adolescent's standards for marriage may be the same as an adult's standards. An adolescent may have standards that have been formed through vicarious learning. The individual has an expectation of how a partner should and should not act. If this individual experiences a relationship that is perceived as fulfilling, but defies one's standards, through self-reflection the individual is able to alter those standards. Thus, standards are consistently being modified through one's own experiences.

The social learning theory and social-cognitive theory provide a framework useful in studying marital standards. The three domains that interact to describe human behavior are important when studying marital cognitions. This study will examine two of the domains directly. The intrapersonal domain will be explored through the concept of

perceived marital standards. That is, what standards individuals find important in the context of a marital relationship. These perceived standards are part of the individual's cognitions of a marital relationship. Cognitions are part of one's intrapersonal domain. The social and physical environment domain will be investigated through the influence of relationship experience. An individual's interactions within romantic relationships are part of the individual's environment. The interaction that takes place between the intrapersonal domain and the social environment will be studied. This study will examine whether the level of an individual's relationship experience impacts the importance the individual places on standards of a marital relationship.

### Rationale of the Study

Marriage continues to be a high priority for young adults and adolescents. However, individuals are skeptical that a marriage will last for a lifetime. Individuals also have high or unrealistic expectations, which have been shown to lead to marital instability. Examining the perceived standards that young adults have concerning marriage is necessary in order to determine if they are unrealistic. If they are unrealistic, these individuals can be educated about what to expect from marriage and future relationships.

Marital cognitions are important to study because they serve as a guide to one's behavior and shape how one thinks and feels. Standards, in particular, serve as templates that an individual uses to process the ongoing events in one's marriage (Baucom, Epstein, Sayers, & Goldman Sher, 1989). Standards serve as a baseline of what the individual will accept in a relationship. If an individual holds unrealistic standards, they may not be able to determine any relationship as acceptable.

The first step is to examine what individuals' perceived standards are. Because many different terms have been used to examine individuals' marital cognitions the literature is incoherent. Baucom and Epstein's (1990) five types of cognitions provide a comprehensive view of marital cognitions. Focusing on one of these five types of cognitions, this study examined the standards individuals hold concerning the roles of a wife and husband. That is, what the responsibilities are that a husband or wife is obligated to fulfill in a marital relationship. This is considered a standard because respondents were instructed to rate each responsibility as what should occur in a marital relationship. In some studies, standards were explored only through the use of a checklist (Killian, Sharp, Hardesty, Cushinberry, & Ganong, 2000). The current study used a scale in which respondents can rate the importance of each item.

Research has shown that standards can have a great influence on marital satisfaction and quality. Studies have shown that discrepancies between perceptions of a current relationship and ideal standards are associated with low levels of relationship satisfaction. Relationship quality can also be affected if an individual believes they are not meeting their partner's ideal standards. Also, the content of an unmet standard is not relevant because overall relationship quality is affected. One reason standards should be investigated further is because they have a large impact on marital quality.

Standards are formed in several ways. In early life, standards are formed through vicarious learning of observations of parents, older siblings, peers, and the mass media. One's own relationship experience may also affect an individual's standards. However, studies examining the link between relationship experience and standards are limited. Research has shown that as individuals grow older, they tend to use their personal



experience more in refining expectations as opposed to looking at their parents' marriage. Also, with more relationship experience, levels of romanticism or idealization decrease. Studies have also shown that those with more relationship experience look for more permanent types of relationships. Other research has indicated one's level of relationship experience does not influence one's expectations. Because this literature is limited and somewhat ambiguous, this study examined the impact of one's personal relationship experience and the influence on individuals' standards.

Gender is another factor that can greatly influence one's standards. In Larson and Holman's (1994) review of premarital predictors of marital quality and stability, the authors stated that future research should examine marital quality and stability predictors by gender. Because standards impact marital satisfaction, gender should be examined when researching standards. The majority of studies have found that women desire intimacy more than men, however there are studies that contradict this finding. Other studies have found that men place more importance on ideal characteristics having to do with sexual contact. This study explored the influence gender has on one's standards.

This study examined two of the domains described in social learning theory. The interaction that takes place between the intrapersonal domain, involving standards, and the social environment, including relationship experience will be studied. Based on this information, the following hypotheses are considered in the present study.

#### Conceptual Hypotheses

Based on previous research, four hypotheses were examined in this study:

- I) The importance of perceived standards of those with less relationship experience will vary from those with more relationship experience

(relationship history, length of longest relationship, level of seriousness of most serious relationship).

- II) The importance of perceived standards of those with more relationship experience will vary from those with less relationship experience (relationship history, length of longest relationship, level of seriousness of most serious relationship).
- III) The importance of perceived standards will vary between the targets of the Standards questionnaire (husbands and wives).
- IV) The importance of perceived standards will vary by the respondent's gender (male and female).

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature pertaining to expectations of marriage, as well as the influence of relationship experience and gender. The various terms used to study cognitions will be described. The purpose of cognitions, as well as how they are formed, will be discussed.

#### Definition of cognitions

Cognitions relating to marriage have been conceptualized in many different ways including assumptions, beliefs, standards, expectations, and ideals. All relate to the ideas individuals bring to a relationship. Baucom and Epstein (1990) described five types of interrelated cognitive phenomena that play a role in marital conflict and distress. These include assumptions, standards, perceptions, expectancies, and attributions. Perception, expectancies, and attributions involve perceiving marital events, predicting what will occur, and attributing a reason to the behavior. These three types, perceptions, expectancies, and attributions, are cognitions that are formed in the response to marital events. An individual brings assumptions and standards into a relationship, whereas perceptions, expectancies, and attributions are formed in response to the couple's interactions. Therefore, this review primarily focuses on assumptions and standards because these two types exist regardless of involvement with a partner.

Because there is overlap between the five types, it is important for researchers to distinguish each as a separate concept. The five combine to give a complete picture of

marital cognitions, thus all five types are important in studying beliefs about marriage. However, this review will focus specifically on assumptions and standards.

Schema. A schema provides a basis for coding, categorizing, and evaluating experiences in an individual's life (Dattilio & Padesky, 1990). Assumptions and standards make up a person's relationship schema (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). Because the schema includes assumptions and standards, it is a rather complex structure involving the interrelationships between a number of characteristics. For example, an individual may have a schema that represents the events that take place on a wedding day. The individual has an idea of who will be in attendance, activities of the day, food that is served, and how family members will interact.

A person's experience can influence the schema, as well as the schema can influence a person's experience (Epstein & Baucom, 1993). When one's partner behaves in a manner relevant to the content of one's schema, the schema is activated. An individual perceives events or actions through his assumptions or standards. If an individual, within his schema representing appropriate marital interactions, has the standard that marital partners should have little conflict, a major argument may be devastating. In turn, when the argument is resolved and the stability of the marriage is preserved, the individual's standard may be changed, thus changing the schema.

Assumptions. Assumptions are defined as ways in which individuals come to believe about the nature of the world and correlations among events. For example, an individual has assumptions about what the role of a husband involves. A husband may be seen as trustworthy, dependable, honest, and emotionally strong. If an individual sees

that a husband has the characteristic of being emotionally strong, the individual may make an assumption that the husband is also dependable (Baucom & Epstein, 1990).

Beliefs. Beliefs are similar to assumptions, both involving views of the nature of relationships. Assumptions an individual holds are based on the more general beliefs the individual has. For example, if an individual has the belief that wives typically nag their husbands, the individual may have the assumption that when his wife asks him to perform a task, the wife is nagging him. Beliefs are typically examined as unrealistic, realistic, or dysfunctional. Kurdek (1993) defines unrealistic beliefs as predispositions that bias a person toward interpreting events in an irrational manner.

Standards. Assumptions concern a person's conception of characteristics about people and events that *do* exist. Standards, on the other hand, are a person's idea of what characteristics *should* exist. Standards involve the person's views about the way people and relationships should be (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). Standards can be similar to an assumption, but may also be the converse of an assumption. For example, an individual may have an assumption that relationships typically require a great deal of work to maintain. If an individual evaluates this as negative, the individual's standard may be that a good relationship should require little work.

Entitlement. Another body of research that is connected to marital cognitions is the notion of entitlement. In close relationships, this is defined as the type of and quality of outcomes an individual believes is deserved as a result of maintaining the relationship. In the past individuals have felt entitled to have a partner who was a provider or a partner who took care of the home and children. Individuals now believe they are entitled to having a relationship which brings them personal fulfillment and emotional gratification

(Attridge & Berscheid, 1994). The idea of entitlement is similar to standards, however entitlement involves beliefs about the outcomes of a relationship, whereas a standard entails the beliefs about what should occur in a relationship.

Ideals. Ideals are a widely studied concept. Ideals involve both assumptions and standards. Ideals are characteristics that an individual would like to have in a partner or a relationship. Characteristics of an ideal romantic partner have been extensively studied. Hester and Rudolph (1994) found kindness and understanding, intelligence, and an exciting personality were the most highly desired characteristics in an ideal romantic partner. In Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas, and Giles's (1999) study, 320 undergraduate students indicated ideal partner characteristics included factors associated with intimacy, loyalty, attractiveness, health, social status, and resources that individuals possessed.

Obligations. The concept of obligations is similar to standards. Obligations, however, have typically been defined as unique to kin relationships. Stein (1992) describes obligations as the 'oughts' and 'shoulds' of family members and their relationships. Obligations are also conceptualized as expectations for appropriate behavior within the context of specific, personal relationships. Obligations are similar to the idea of standards in that they both examine what should occur in relationships. However, research concerning this concept has typically focused on kinship obligations and generally has neglected marital relationships.

All of these cognitions can be considered to be on a continuum. Ideals might be considered the highest on the continuum. That is, individuals may have characteristics of an ideal partner, but would consider being in a relationship with someone that does not meet all of these ideals. Ideals may contain goals that individuals would like to reach, but

these may not be realistic (Fletcher, Simpson, & Thomas, 2000). Fletcher et al. (1999) stated most research on cognition look at the average or mode, whereas ideals are on the positive end of the evaluative dimension. Individuals may hold their ideals as the point in which they strive for, but will accept less. One's assumptions or standards may be different than one's ideals. For instance, an individual may have the assumption that relationships typically involve two people that are highly dependent on each other. This is how the individual views the nature of most relationships. If the individual considers a high level of dependence on a partner as negative, the individual would not want dependence as a characteristic of his relationship. Therefore, one would not hold dependence as a characteristic of an ideal relationship, but dependence would be an assumption one holds concerning relationships. Thus, ideals are at the highest point of the continuum of marital cognitions.

Schema, assumptions, beliefs, standards, entitlement, and ideals are some of the labels that have been used to study cognitions within the marital relationship. Many of these concepts overlap, resulting in an incoherent body of literature. If consistent labels were used when studying marital cognitions, more opportunities to make comparisons between studies would exist. Baucom and Epstein's (1990) five types of cognitions provide an adequate view of marital cognitions. Using one of the five types of cognitions that Baucom and Epstein (1990) describe, the present study examined the standards individuals hold concerning the roles of a wife and a husband. That is, what the responsibilities are that a husband or wife is obligated to fulfill in a marital relationship. This is considered a standard because respondents were instructed to rate each responsibility as what should or ought to occur in a marital relationship.

### Purpose of Cognitions → marital satisfaction

Cognitions can influence and guide one's behavior from moment to moment. Relationship-related cognitions shape how people think, feel, and behave in relationships (Sullivan & Schwebel, 1995). If an individual has a standard that relationships should exist with little work, an individual is likely to end a relationship if it is perceived that maintaining the relationship is requiring a great deal of effort. Ellis (1977, 1986) went so far as to state spouses commonly enter a marital relationship with unrealistic or extreme standards about marriage. When reality does not match their standards, spouses are likely to be displeased with the relationship.

The purpose of assumptions and standards is to serve as templates that individuals use to process the ongoing events in their marriage (Baucom et al., 1989). Assumptions provide individuals with information about characteristics of relationships and factors that influence partners' behaviors. Standards provide the basis for evaluating the acceptability of a partner's behavior (Epstein & Baucom, 1993). Standards serve as a baseline of what the individual will accept in a relationship. For example, a person may believe that a wife should be emotionally supportive of her husband. If the wife neglects to comfort her husband in a time of crisis, the husband may deem this behavior as unacceptable based on his standard. Besides serving as a way to evaluate a relationship, standards can also serve as a way to regulate and make adjustments in a relationship (Fletcher & Simpson, 2000). Using the same example, if a husband discusses with his wife his disappointment of the wife not fulfilling his view of a wife's role, the wife may change her future behavior or the husband may alter his standard.



### Influence of cognitions on marital satisfaction

Because standards are used to evaluate one's relationship, satisfaction can be influenced by discrepancies between the current relationship and standards or ideals that one holds. Sternberg and Barnes (1985) asked twenty-four graduate and undergraduate students to complete two inventories under four different sets of instructions to examine a realistic ideal as a comparison level. The researchers defined the realistic ideal as "what might be realistic in their lives rather than in terms of some impossible standard that could never be met" (p. 1588). The instructions were a) how they feel about the other, b) how they believe the other feels about them, c) how they would wish to feel about an ideal other, and d) how they would wish an ideal other to feel about them. The results showed that both the absolute outcomes from the relationship and subjects' obtained outcomes relative to their ideals were predictive of relationship satisfaction. Therefore, an individual whose current relationship corresponds with his ideals is more likely to have a higher level of satisfaction in the relationship than those whose current relationships do not meet their ideals.

A limitation of Sternberg and Barnes' (1985) study is that the study used only twenty-four respondents. However, Morrow and O'Sullivan (1998) conducted a study with two hundred and forty college students finding similar results. Students were asked to evaluate the degree to which behaviors and feelings that were described occurred in their present relationship, to evaluate the degree to which each item would occur in the ideal romantic relationship, and to rate items according to how important they felt each was in a romantic relationship. When compared to those individuals involved in less satisfying relationships, those who had perceived higher satisfaction had higher reported

current relationship outcomes and few discrepancies between their current relationship and their ideal relationship on several factors. These factors included emotional intimacy, sexual behavior, romantic behavior, and security/trust. Again, higher satisfaction was found with those who believed their current relationship coincided with their beliefs about an ideal relationship.

Fletcher et al. (1999) conducted a study also comparing couples' current relationship to their ideal relationship using eighty-nine college students. The results indicated that the higher the consistency between ideals and perceptions of the current partner or relationship, the more positively individuals viewed their current partners or relationships.

The previous studies comparing current relationships with an ideal relationship were cross-sectional studies, allowing only for a static examination of relationship satisfaction. Fletcher, Simpson, and Thomas (2000) conducted a study similar to the studies previously mentioned, however, the study was longitudinal allowing one hundred participants to be tracked across the first three to four months of their dating relationship with a one-year follow-up. Results indicated greater ideal-perception consistency was associated with greater perceived quality of the partner and the relationship. Higher ideal-perception consistency predicted lower breakup rates which was mediated through having more positive relationship evaluations. Therefore, an individual thinks more highly of one's current partner and relationship if one's perception of the current relationship is in agreement with one's ideals. The individual is also less likely to end the relationship when ideals and perceptions of the current relationship coincide. An interesting result of the study was that positive perceptions of the partner and the

relationship on certain dimensions at an early point in the study predicted more importance being placed on those dimensions over time. These findings suggest that These studies have shown relationship satisfaction is lower when large discrepancies exist between ideals or standards and the perception of the current relationship. However, these studies did not take into account the importance placed on ideals. An individual may be more flexible on some ideals and rigid on others. Therefore, the importance placed on ideals or how flexible an individual is concerning his ideals should be studied. The degree to which individuals' standards are flexible can impact their relationship quality. Campbell, Simpson, Kashy, and Fletcher (2001) examined the flexibility of ideal standards to see if flexibility would moderate the relationship between ideal standards and relationship judgments. Flexibility was defined as the amount of discrepancy an individual is willing to accept between current perceptions and their ideal standards. This project consisted of two studies with 239 individuals participating in the first study and 104 couples in the second study. Three dimensions of an ideal romantic partner were assessed consisting of warmth/trustworthiness; vitality/attractiveness; and status/resources. Two dimensions of relationship ideals, intimacy/loyalty and passion, were assessed. Both studies found that the degree to which individuals perceived that their partners matched their ideals predicted perceived relationship quality. These findings are similar to the previously mentioned studies.

However, perception-ideal consistency was not the only factor in relationship quality. The degree of flexibility on ideals moderated the relationship between partner discrepancies and relationship quality for the status/resources and warmth/trustworthiness

dimensions in the first study and the warmth/trustworthiness and vitality/attractiveness dimensions in the second study (Campbell et. al, 2001). These findings suggest that unmet ideals are not the only factor in a low level of relationship quality. The degree to which individuals are flexible on their ideals plays a role in the resulting level of perceived relationship quality. If an individual believes that an ideal partner is kind and warm, but their partner does not measure up to this ideal, relationship quality can be affected. However, if an individual is fairly flexible on this ideal, quality is not decreased as much as if the individual was rigid in their belief of the ideal.

The researchers also found that the highest perceived relationship quality occurred when partners matched their ideals more closely and individuals were less flexible (Campbell et. al, 2001). Thus, when an ideal is held rigidly and a partner measures up to the ideal, higher relationship quality exists when compared to those who were more flexible on their ideals. An individual who has a low level of flexibility on the characteristic of ideal and warmth, most likely places a great deal of importance on this ideal. Therefore, when a partner has the desired level of warmth and kindness, an individual is satisfied with the relationship because his partner has a characteristic that is very important to him.

On the other hand, those who had large partner discrepancies and were less flexible had the lowest perceived relationship quality (Campbell et. al, 2001). This indicates that individuals who are less flexible in their ideals have lower relationship quality when their partner does not measure up to their ideals. This is understandable. If an individual believes strongly that their partner should be kind and warm and realizes

their current partner does not have these characteristics, the individual is likely to be dissatisfied with the relationship. Consistently, the lowest levels of satisfaction with the

Likewise, Campbell et al.'s (2001) study found that those who fell short of their partner's ideals reported less perceived relationship quality than those who matched their partner's ideals more closely. This result indicated relationship quality could be affected by not meeting a partner's ideals. This signifies that individuals' relationship quality is not only affected by the consistency between their ideals and their perception of the current relationship, but also is affected if they believe they are not measuring up to their partner's ideals.

Campbell et al.'s (2001) study has important implications for future research. The results of their studies indicate that the discrepancy between the perceptions of the current relationship and ideal characteristics are not the only determining factor in relationship quality. Research must also investigate how flexible ideal standards are when examining their effect on relationship quality. Future research could examine the link between importance placed on an ideal and the degree of flexibility of this ideal.

Discrepancies between a current relationship and ideal standards are not always negative. Sometimes unmet standards can be positive. If a partner surpasses a standard or expectation, this can influence satisfaction. Kelley and Burgoon (1991) looked at seven dimensions of a relationship: intimacy, dominance, equality/trust, receptivity, informality, distance, and noncomposure/arousal. The 206 currently married respondents were asked to indicate how a spouse should behave and how their spouse does behave on a 1 to 7 Likert scale for each item. Participants were also asked to indicate if their spouse's behavior was positive or negative. On all of the dimensions except receptivity

and informality, the highest levels of perceived satisfaction were found with discrepancies that were viewed as positive and the lowest levels of satisfaction with the discrepancies viewed as negative. Thus, discrepancies between ideal spousal behavior and current perceived spousal behavior can be viewed positively or negatively by individuals. This indicates that looking only at discrepancy between ideal standards and current relationships may not be presenting the entire picture. Instead, an individual's evaluation of the discrepancy should be considered. One must consider that these results may be biased due to the fact that a majority of the sample was drawn from a Sunday school class.

Research has shown that the discrepancy between ideal standards and perceptions of a current relationship has an effect on relationship quality. What about the discrepancy between partners' ideal standards? Can relationship quality be affected if a husband and wife have different ideal standards? Results of Kelley and Burgoon's (1991) study showed that discrepancy scores between expected and observed behavior for one's spouse are better predictors of perceived marital satisfaction than the agreement among the spouses concerning relational expectations. Again, this study may have been biased due to the fact that a majority of this homogeneous sample was drawn from a Sunday school class. However, results similar to these findings have been found. Standards were found to be a stronger predictor of perceived marital satisfaction than was the actual degree of discrepancy between the partners' standards (Epstein, Baucom, Rankin, & Burnett, 1991). Therefore, a couple does not necessarily need to have similar standards to be satisfied in a relationship.

When a standard is not met by a current partner, the overall relationship is affected. A violated standard is not limited to the content of the standard. Baucom, Epstein, Daiuto, Carels, Rankin, and Burnett (1996) conducted a study to investigate whether spouses' attributions about problems in their relationship and their affective and behavioral responses to those problems were associated with their personal standards. Two hundred forty-one couples were mailed two separate packets of questionnaires with inventories. Contrary to researchers' expectations, when a relationship standard was perceived as violated, spouses responded in a more general manner when making attributions about the relationship. Perceived violated standards concerning unmet boundaries, investments, or power were all associated with attributions focused on the partner, the relationship, global and stable variables, and variables including boundaries, investments, or power. This implies that the content of a standard is not relevant. If a standard is violated, spouses make generalized attributions about problems in the relationship. If an individual holds a standard that one's partner is to not leave her side at parties and the partner does not meet this standard, the individual is not merely displeased at social gatherings, but satisfaction of the relationship in general is affected.

Unmet standards are not the sole cause of a decrease in satisfaction. Research has shown the response to unmet standards is more influential to satisfaction than the unmet standards themselves. Baucom et al.'s (1996) study found the combination of the degree to which a spouse's standards are unmet and the tendency to become upset in response to these unmet standards were associated with negative attributional, affective, and behavioral responses to the marital problems. Thus, perceived violated standards were not as important as the evaluative rating and response to the violated standards. Other

research has indicated individuals' positive or negative evaluations of the violations of standards influence the levels of distress that the individuals experience (Ellis & Dryden, 1987; Wessler & Wessler, 1980).

Standards are not problematic in themselves, although standards can be dysfunctional when they are rigid, extreme, unattainable, or ill-defined. Extreme endorsement of some standards is not necessarily associated with distress. Epstein et al. (1991) found the more strongly standards were held emphasizing togetherness and personal investment, the greater the perceived marital satisfaction. Even extreme endorsement of these standards was not associated with marital distress.

This review has shown that discrepancies between perceptions of a current relationship and ideal standards are associated with low levels of relationship satisfaction. The level of discrepancy is more important than the agreement between spouses of relationship expectations. The degree to which an individual is flexible in their standards may moderate the relationship between the discrepancy and marital satisfaction. Relationship quality can also be affected if an individual believes they are not meeting their partner's ideal standards. Other research has found that unmet standards are not the main issue. The response one has to an unmet standard or the evaluation of the unmet standard is a better indicator of relationship distress than merely the number of unmet standards. Also, the content of an unmet standard is not relevant because overall relationship quality is affected. Lastly, extreme endorsement of some standards is associated with high relationship satisfaction. This review shows the standards individuals hold about relationships can greatly influence their relationship satisfaction.



This is one reason why standards should be investigated further. What are the specific standards individuals hold about a marital relationship? How are these standards formed?

### Formation of cognitions

Cognitions are formed throughout one's lifetime. An individual's family of origin can have a profound impact on how one views relationships or marriage. Emler and Hall (1994) suggest individuals develop gender-related notions of entitlement and obligation in respect of the household system early in their childhood. Their studies have found adolescents show large differences in the contributions of males and females.

The impact of the primary caregiver and a child's attachment may carry over into adulthood. When a child develops a secure attachment with his primary caregiver, the child typically has greater social skills, high popularity with peers, and positive engagement in peer-group activities (Collins & Sroufe, 1999). Research has found that differences in security were related to descriptions of romantic relationships and behavior with romantic partners (Owens, Crowell, Pan, Treboux, O'Connor, & Waters, 1996). Early experiences with parents not only affect a parent-child relationship, but also influence cognitions about what to expect from a close or intimate relationship.

A parent's marriage can have a great impact on an adolescent's or young adult's cognitions about relationships. An individual's parents typically provide one with the first view of what happens in a romantic relationship. If a person observes that every time his parents argue the mother threatens divorce, the person may learn that any type of conflict is detrimental to a relationship. This person is likely to carry this into her own romantic relationships. Carnelley and Janoff-Bulman (1992) examined optimism about marriage and future love relationships comparing first year college undergraduates and

fourth year college undergraduates. Optimism about marriage was best predicted by the nature of one's parents' relationship with each other. If parents divorce this can impact an individual's beliefs. Black and Sprenkle (1991) found exposure to divorce was associated with more negative expectations of marriage.

Individuals learn what to expect or accept from a romantic relationship from others' romantic experiences. Older siblings' encounters, as well as peers' experiences can serve as an avenue for individuals to develop their expectations (Furman & Simon, 1999, Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Greene, 1989). An individual observes the relationships their older siblings and peers have engaged in. Through these observations, one can determine what one believes is acceptable and what is not acceptable in a relationship. An individual can determine what are appropriate roles of those in casual dating relationships or those that are more serious. For example, if an individual observes an older sibling being unhappy because the older sibling's partner tells the older sibling what can and cannot be done, one may come to the conclusion that being told what to do is not acceptable in future relationships. Observations are not limited to siblings or those in a peer network. Relationship knowledge can also be gained through observations of media, parents, counselors, and teachers (Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Greene, 1989).

The formation of relationship cognitions is not limited to real-life observations. Cultural norms and social roles contribute to expectations of marriage. Before individuals have even considered marriage they have seen and heard about countless romantic relationships through movies, television, books, and other forms of mass media. This may lead to inappropriate expectations. Individuals may have romanticized views of relationships from popular images in the media. One may come to believe that

relationships do not encounter problems that cannot be resolved in thirty minutes as they are in most television shows. Mass media can also negatively influence expectations because the media involves actors who are not representative of the larger population (Baucom & Epstein, 1990).

### Relationship Experience

Observations of relationships in the mass media and parental, sibling, and peer relationships provide a basis for expectations. Additionally, cognitions can be influenced by one's own relationship experience. Furman and Simon (1999) stated that expectations formed from observations of parents, culture, peers, and siblings are "raw material" and are elaborated through one's own romantic experiences. Honeycutt and Cantrill (1991) stated that actions such as talking about the future and expressing love can only be learned once an individual has been involved in his own relationship.

Expectations can be formed from observations, but a person's expectations are continuously changed based on one's experience. Adolescents and young adults have an opportunity to explore and experiment with relationships, sometimes presenting them with new experiences or ones that are inconsistent with their own expectations (Furman & Simon, 1999). Individuals have a chance to learn from these experiences and alter, if need be, their expectations.

One's own relationship experience may be more important to the formation of cognitions than observations of parents, peers, or mass media. Bandura (1977) notes that expectancies that were formed through a person's own direct experiences can be more difficult to alter by means of cognitive interventions than expectancies learned indirectly. Accordingly, expectations formed from one's own experience may be more solidified

than expectations formed from observations of others' relationships. The expectations formed from observations of others' relationships may be more malleable allowing one's own experiences to refine and shape previous expectations. An individual may believe that after observing the individual's parent's marriage, the person will not tolerate a spouse telling the person what to do. However, when the individual has personal experience with relationships, the person may become more flexible on this standard. There may still be a limit to what the individual will tolerate, but that threshold has been placed higher.

Relationship experience provides an avenue for individuals to evaluate and expand their expectations. The level of relationship experience one has accumulated has been shown to affect expectations. Carnelley and Janoff-Bulman (1992) conducted a study examining the differences between first and fourth year undergraduate students. The first year students' ideas about love were more influenced by their parent's relationship and fourth year students' ideas were more influenced by their own romantic relationship experience. For fourth years there was a stronger association between number of times in love and optimism about marriage. This was not found for the first year undergraduates.

Levels of idealism or romanticism may decrease with more relationship experience. Pollis (1969) found differences based on current relationship involvement. Males in the casual involvement stage had significantly higher scores of idealization than those in the moderate or serious involvement stages. There was no difference found for females. Carducci and McGuire (1990) found that people move from idealism to realism to cynicism about love with successive experiences of being in love. Thus, when an

individual begins dating, the person may be highly idealistic with expectations of the relationship. The more relationship experience that is gained, the more realistic and even cynical the individual becomes. The individual's expectations are no longer based on observations, but are now based on personal experience.

Relationships that are longer or have a greater level of commitment are expected to have a greater impact on relationship views than shorter relationships or those with a low level of commitment (Furman & Simon, 1999). Druen (1996) examined the impact of relationship experience on partner selection strategies. Results indicated that the number of persons a partner has had might not be as important as the average length of a person's relationships in influencing a person's beliefs.

Those with relationship experience may be looking for a different type of relationship than those who have had no personal experience. Oner (2000) examined the effect of dating experience with undergraduate students in Turkey. Results showed that participants with high perceived relationship satisfaction who had previous dating experience tended to seek more permanent relationships more than those who had not had any previous dating experience. Those who reported low perceived relationship satisfaction and had no dating experience tended to seek out more permanent relationships than those who had dating experience. Individuals who have not had previous relationship experience may be in the process of establishing and elaborating their standards and may tolerate lower satisfaction when compared to those who have had relationship experience. However, these results may not provide an accurate picture due to the fact that dating experience was assessed by asking if respondents had had previous dating experience (yes or no) or were currently dating someone (yes or no). This is not

an adequate assessment of experience because a simple yes or no question does not examine the number of partners, intensity or duration of relationships. Therefore, an individual who has dated his partner for three weeks would answer yes, as would an individual who has dated numerous partners and has been dating one person for three years. Most likely the latter will have had more of an impact on her expectations than would the former.

Some studies have found relationship experience does not influence marital expectations. Laner and Russell (1995) studied the effects of a marital education class on expectations. Researchers assessed 231 unmarried college students on relationship involvement with seven possible responses ranging from "I am not currently dating" to "I am pre-engaged or engaged." This study found no difference in marital expectations based on level of current involvement.

Some studies have shown that relationship experience has an effect on one's expectations, whereas others have shown no effect. However, studies examining the influence of relationship experience on marital cognitions are limited. Research has shown that as individuals grow older, they tend to use their personal experience more in refining expectations as opposed to looking at their parents' marriage. With more relationship experience, levels of romanticism or idealization decrease. Thus, one begins to form more realistic expectations. Research has also shown that those with more relationship experience look for more permanent types of relationships. Other research has indicated one's level of relationship experience does not influence one's expectations. Because this literature is limited and somewhat ambiguous, future research should

examine the impact of one's personal experience with relationships and how that experience can influence what one believes about relationships or marriage.

### Gender

Parents, peers, mass media, and relationship experience are not the only influences on expectations. Gender has also been shown to affect marital expectations. Research has been conducted examining the influence of gender on ideal partner and relationship characteristics, expectations, obligations, and attitudes of relationships. Fletcher et al. (1999) assessed 320 undergraduate students for qualities of an ideal partner and of an ideal relationship. Results indicated three dimensions of an ideal partner and two dimensions of an ideal relationship. Partner Warmth-Trustworthiness was rated higher than the two other partner dimensions (Partner Vitality-Attractiveness, Partner Status-Resources), and men rated it as more important than did women. Both genders find that a partner who has characteristics of warmth and trustworthiness (being considerate, a good listener, kind, reliable, affectionate) is more important than a partner who has a nice body, is outgoing, is a good lover, is financially secure, or is successful. Men especially find warmth and trustworthiness characteristics as more important than the others. The participants rated relationship Intimacy-Loyalty higher than Relationship Passion. Men placed more importance on the Relationship Intimacy-Loyalty dimension than did women. Both genders placed more importance on an ideal relationship involving honesty, commitment, caring, trust, and support than the level of importance placed on the relationship being exciting, challenging, humorous, or fun. Again, men placed more importance on characteristics associated with intimacy and loyalty than women did. In general, both genders placed more importance on factors associated with

intimacy, loyalty, trustworthiness, and warmth than on the relationship being passionate or the partner being passionate or having resources. However, men placed more importance on these characteristics than did women.

Other studies contradict these findings. These studies find that women rate characteristics associated with intimacy as more important than do men. Hester (1996) assessed thirty-five male and ninety-five female undergraduate students to examine characteristics of an ideal partner. Women desired a mate with characteristics associated with affiliation such as reliability, being considerate, free of pretense, and one who is comfortable in interpersonal relationships. Males preferred a partner who was more autonomous, creative, and masculine.

One of the reasons these findings may be contradictory is that intimacy may be conceptualized differently for men and women. Knobloch (2000) also examined characteristics of an ideal partner and found that women wanted more emotional intimacy and men wanted more recreational intimacy. However, these findings are limited in their generalizability because the results were based on questionnaires completed by eleven couples.

More studies have found women desire emotional intimacy, but have also found that men prefer more sexual contact. Morrow and O'Sullivan (1998) assessed 276 students who had been involved in a romantic relationship of at least one-month duration about the ideal partner and relationship. Women desired more emotional intimacy than did men in an ideal relationship. Men desired more sexual contact than did women in the ideal relationship. This study used participants who were in a current romantic relationship. Rusbult, Onizuka, and Lipkus (1993) used 210 undergraduates and did not



assess whether respondents were in a relationship currently. These researchers found similar results when examining characteristics of an ideal partner and relationship. Women were more likely to stress intimacy, shared life, commitment, friendship between the two partners, altruism and devotion, intense feelings between partners, and marriage and family. Men were somewhat more likely to emphasize sex.

Various studies have asked both partners what they expect from themselves and from their partner. Campbell et al. (2001) asked 239 undergraduate students about their conceptions of their ideal partner and to rate themselves, compared with those of the same gender, on the same qualities of the ideal partner scale. Women rated themselves higher on the warmth/trustworthiness than did men. Women also thought their ideal partner would be more warm and trustworthy than did men, and were less flexible than men on this quality. Women wanted an ideal partner who had more status and resources than did men and were less flexible than men on this quality. Kelley and Burgoon (1991) conducted a similar study, but used married couples as their sample. Participants were asked to indicate how a husband and wife should behave, and how their current spouse does behave. This instrument, although defined as expectations by the authors, assessed standards individuals hold, or what they believe should happen in a marital relationship. Wives expected more intimacy, equality/trust, and receptivity, and to be less dominant, informal, and noncomposed/aroused than their husbands did. Husbands expected husbands to be less receptive than wives expected husbands to be.

The majority of studies have found that women desire intimacy more than men, however there are studies that contradict this finding. Other studies have found that men place more importance on ideal characteristics having to do with sexual contact. These

studies have assessed the characteristics of the ideal partner or relationship with the exception of Kelley and Burgoon's (1991) study, which assessed standards. As stated previously, cognitions are a continuum with ideals being at the highest point on the continuum. There is a possibility that individuals may have ideal characteristics of a partner, but are willing to be in a relationship with someone who does not meet these ideals. Individuals may have expectations that are different from ideals. The following studies examined expectations of relationships and not ideal characteristics.

Research has shown that males are thought to have more responsibilities than women, especially with regards to earning money. Killian et al. (2000) examined beliefs about partners' obligations in cohabiting and marital relationships of 278 undergraduate students. Respondents were asked to indicate which items a partner had a responsibility to fulfill. Married men had more responsibilities than married women, cohabiting men, or cohabiting women. Males were seen as more obligated to earn money and help support their partners than were females. Ganong and Coleman (1992) asked 131 females and 103 males to compare their future marital partners to themselves with regard to intelligence, ability to handle things, professional success, personal income, and educational achievement. Males expected their partners to have lower desire for professional success, less actual success, and a greater difference in incomes than females expected. Females expected their partner to be more intelligent, better able to handle things, more successful, higher paid, and have higher level of education. These studies have indicated men are expected to be more responsible in earning money and in being successful more than women are expected to be.

Studies have found that in addition for women wanting men to have adequate economic resources, research has shown that men place high importance on physical attractiveness. Buss (1985) had males and females rank thirteen characteristics of a marital partner. Men gave more priority to physical attractiveness and women placed more importance on a good earning capacity. Buss et al. (1990) found support across 37 cultures for the fact that men placed importance on partner's reproductive potential and women gave priority to partner's capacity to provide resources.

The following studies assessed individuals' attitudes or beliefs about relationships. Males typically have more romantic ideals than females. Pollis (1969) found that males in the casual involvement stage of relationships have significantly higher scores of idealization than males in the moderate or serious involvement stages. This difference was not found for females. Sprecher and Metts (1999) found men scored significantly higher than women on romanticism. Sharp and Ganong (2000) found males held higher levels of unrealistic and highly romantic beliefs when compared to women. Israeli (1982) found males have more idealized, romantic attitudes while women have more practical, realistic love attitudes. Frazier and Esterly (1990) found men tend to be more romantic and women more pragmatic.

In review, research has found that women typically desire intimacy more than men, however there are studies, which contradict these findings. Other studies have found that men place more importance on sexual contact. Women also place importance on their partner's earning capacity and level of success. Men place importance on physical characteristics of their partner. In terms of beliefs of relationships, men are typically more romantic or idealistic than women.

However, some studies find no difference between genders at all. Carnelley and Janoff-Bulman (1992) examined optimism towards future love and marriage. Males and females did not differ in their level of optimism. Knox, Schacht, and Zusman (1999) assessed 184 undergraduates on romantic beliefs finding males and females did not differ on their beliefs of love at first sight or that love can conquer all.

Though many studies examine gender differences, there is still a need to continue to investigate this variable. In Larson and Holman's (1994) review of premarital predictors of marital quality and stability, the authors stated that future research should examine marital quality and stability predictors by gender. The authors suggest that gender-linked specific variables should be studied more closely. Research has shown that ideals, expectations, and beliefs about relationships differ based on one's gender. Because expectations have been shown to have an influence on marital satisfaction, gender should be examined when researching expectations. The current study examined the influence of gender on individuals' standards.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the participants, procedure, instruments, operational hypotheses, and statistical measures that were used to conduct the study.

#### Participants

The results obtained from this study were intended to generalize to the population of never-married young adults. The population of the Midwest university from which the sample was drawn consisted of 47.9% female and 52.1% male undergraduates. With international students excluded, 84% of undergraduates' ethnicities are in the non-minority with 16% being in the minority. Freshman students comprised 21.5% of students, 19.2% being sophomores, 19.3% being juniors, and seniors included 20.9% of students. International students represented 4.7% of the undergraduate population.

The convenience sample was never-married college students enrolled in a general education undergraduate lifespan development of the family course and four general education political science courses at a midwestern university. Participation in this study was voluntary and students were not given any credit or compensation for completing the questionnaires. The questionnaires were completed during class time. A total of 306 participants responded to the questionnaires.

All returned questionnaires were complete, however 10% of the questionnaires did not meet the selection criteria and were not used because respondents were currently or previously married, or were international students. Thus, analyses were conducted on the resulting 276 questionnaires. The respondents were predominately female (60.9%),

freshman (47.1%) and Caucasian (86.2%). Age of respondents ranged from 17 to 26 years ( $M = 19.25$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ). To protect confidentiality, students were not asked to indicate which course the questionnaires were completed in. Thus, analyses were conducted as a whole and not separated by courses. Additional sample demographic information is indicated in Table 1.

### Procedure

With the permission of the instructors, students were asked to participate on a voluntary basis with no compensation provided. Each participant was given a packet consisting of a) an informed consent form (see Appendix A); b) a Relationship Experience questionnaire; c) a Wives' Standards questionnaire; and d) a Husbands' Standards questionnaire. In half of the packets, the Wives' Standards questionnaire was followed by the Husbands' Standards questionnaire. In the other half of the packets, the Wives' Standards questionnaire followed the Husbands' Standards questionnaire. This was to balance a possible bias of responses that could occur based on which questionnaire was completed first. The researcher explained the informed consent. Questionnaires were then completed taking approximately twenty minutes. Participants were asked to put the informed consents in a separate pile than the questionnaires to maintain confidentiality. All information was recorded anonymously into a fixed format data file.

### Instruments

Standards questionnaire. The Standards questionnaire consisting of sixty items (see in Appendix B) was modified from the Obligation Checklist used in Killian et al.'s study (2000). Killian et al.'s (2000) instrument included forty-eight items of various spousal responsibilities and one item marked as "other" in which participants could write

in an additional responsibility. The Standards questionnaire used for this study did not include the “other” item. Killian et al.’s instrument used several items to assess perceived standards relating to leisure activities. Four of these were not used for the Standards questionnaire. Six other items were seen as less significant standards by the author of this study compared to others that could be used. Thus, a total of ten items in Killian et al.’s (2000) study were removed so that more substantial items could be added.

The twenty additional items on the Standards questionnaire were adapted from the PREPARE inventory (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 2000). The PREPARE inventory consists of eleven categories, nine of which were used in the creation of the Standards questionnaire. The PREPARE inventory category of realistic expectations was not used because items examine general relationship beliefs. The PREPARE inventory category of personality issues was not used because items are directed toward a specific partner.

Instructions on the Standards questionnaire requested participants to mark the number that corresponds with how important the particular item is to fulfilling the target’s responsibility to the target’s spouse. Each participant completed two questionnaires, one for wives’ responsibilities and one for husbands’ responsibilities, consisting of a total of 120 items. Participants were asked to not indicate what the husbands or wives could do or what would be nice to do, but what they should or ought to do. In Killian et al.’s study (2000), a checklist of obligations was used requesting participants to indicate whether items were or were not considered an obligation. The current instrument expanded the checklist format to asking respondents to indicate the level of importance of each standard on a Likert type scale ranging from 1 (Not very important) to 5 (Very important). This method of evaluation was used to identify the

level of importance that is associated with each standard for comparison purposes. The instructions on Killian et al.'s (2000) checklist are identical to instructions on the Standards questionnaire except the current instrument asked participants to indicate the level of importance of each item.

Conceptual clustering of the sixty items from the Standards questionnaire was created to allow comparisons to be made not only with specific items, but also groupings of items that revolve around a conceptual theme. Also, the conceptual clustering could be used to evaluate the usefulness of a statistical factor analysis. The conceptual clustering can be found in Appendix C. Italicized items are the standards added to the questionnaire used in Killian et al.'s study (2000). The conceptual clustering consisted of eleven groupings. The clusters and sample items were affection (hugging or kissing), leisure (attending a movie, play, concert together), children and parenting (having personal desire to have child), religion (discussing spiritual beliefs with spouse), role relationships (being employed), communication (listening to spouse), conflict resolution (discussing problems within marriage), financial (being open about the way money is spent), friends and family (spending time with in-laws), other-centered/treatment of partner (treating spouse with respect), and sex (initiating sexual advances).

To ensure face validity, the Standards questionnaire was given to several professors and lay individuals to examine the instrument. The Standards questionnaire was modified based on the feedback received and appears to have face validity. Construct validity appears to exist due to the fact that eleven categories of standards, comprised of items from the literature and Killian et al.'s (2000) study, were used.



Relationship experience. The Relationship Experience questionnaire (see Appendix B) was created for purposes of this study. Relationship experience was assessed in three ways. First, respondents were asked to indicate the number of previous partners in several types of relationships. This included relationships that were casual/not-serious, serious/but not exclusive, steady/exclusive without the discussion of marriage, steady/exclusive with the discussion of marriage, engagement, and marriage. Experiences in cohabitating relationships were also assessed.

Weights based on the level of seriousness of each type of relationship were assigned based on the experience of the researcher. It was assumed that the more serious type of relationships would have a greater impact on perceived standards than the less serious relationships. Casual/not-serious relationships were assigned a weight of 1.0. Serious/but not exclusive relationships were given a weight of 1.25. Steady/exclusive without discussion of marriage received the weight of 1.75. Steady/exclusive with the discussion of marriage was assigned a weight of 2.0. Engagement was given the weight of 2.5. A composite score was created using the weights combined with the number of relationships in each category. The number of relationships was factored in because it was believed that the more relationships one has experienced, the greater the impact on perceived standards. Four categories were developed based on the distribution of the responses of the composite score: none, low, moderate, and high. The none category consisted of those respondents who indicated they had no dating experience. The lower 33% were placed in the low category, the middle 33% in the moderate category, and the upper 33% in the high category. Table 2 indicates participants' relationship history.

Secondly, relationship experience was assessed through the length of the respondent's longest relationship. Four categories were developed based on the distribution of the years in a relationship: none (0), low (1 month to 9 months), moderate (10 months to 1 year, 11 months), and high (2 years +). The low category consisted of the lower 34% of participants' responses. The moderate category consisted of the middle 36% and the high category consisted of the upper 30%. The none category included respondents who indicated they had not been in a relationship. Table 3 indicates participants' length of longest relationship.

The third method of assessing relationship experience used a nine point Likert scale ranging from low seriousness to high seriousness. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of seriousness in their most serious relationships. Three categories were developed based on the distribution of indicated seriousness: low (1-6), moderate (7-8), and high (9). The low category consisted of the lower 31% of scores. The moderate category consisted of the middle 36% of scores and the high category consisted of the upper 33% of scores. Table 4 indicates participant's perceived level of seriousness in most serious relationship.

Gender, ethnicity, age, and year in college were assessed for demographic purposes. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they were currently married and the length of the current marriage, or if they had been previously married. If respondents indicated they were married or had been previously married, their questionnaires were not used in this study because this project was looking at perceived standards of never-married individuals. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they were international students. Those that indicated they were international students were eliminated from the

study because their perceived standards were presumed to be vastly different from the rest of the sample, creating a possible bias. Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of children that they had. If they did not have children, respondents were to indicate if they hope to have children in the future. Respondents were asked if they plan to be legally married in the future. Finally, respondents were asked the ideal age for a person to marry.

Construct validity seemed to exist because relationship experience was assessed in three ways that seemed to tap into several dimensions of relationship experience.

#### Operational Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were used to operationalize the conceptual hypotheses.

- I) The importance of perceived standards of those with less relationship experience will vary from those with more relationship experience (relationship history, length of longest relationship, level of seriousness of most serious relationship).
  - a) Those with less relationship history (none or low) will place greater importance on the affection and leisure clusters, and the gift giving items, than those with more relationship experience (moderate or high).
  - b) Those with a shorter length of longest relationship (none or low) will place greater importance on the affection and leisure clusters, and the gift giving items, than those with more relationship experience (moderate or high).
  - c) Those with less seriousness in their most serious relationship (low) will place greater importance on the affection and leisure clusters, and

- Those with more relationship experience will place more importance on the gift giving items, than those with less relationship experience (low to moderate to high).
- II) The importance of perceived standards of those with more relationship experience will vary from those with less relationship experience (relationship history, length of longest relationship, level of seriousness of most serious relationship).
- a) Those with more relationship history (moderate or high) will place greater importance on the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial clusters.
  - b) Those with a longer length of longest relationship (moderate or high) will place greater importance on the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial clusters.
  - c) Those with more seriousness in their most serious relationship (high) will place greater importance on the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial clusters.
- III) The importance of perceived standards will vary between the targets of the Standards questionnaire (husbands and wives).
- a) Respondents will place more importance when husband is the target spouse on: being employed, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, sexually satisfying spouse, and having a child if spouse wants one.
  - b) Respondents will place more importance when wife is the target spouse on: respecting spouse's wishes when spouse does not want to discuss something, not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family, and responding to spouse's sexual requests.

- IV) The importance of perceived standards will vary by the participant's gender (male and female).
- a) Females will place greater importance on the affection cluster than will males.
  - b) Females will place greater importance than males on: listening to spouse and sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, and comforting spouse.
  - c) Males will place greater importance on the sex and leisure clusters than will females.
  - d) Males will place greater importance than females on: not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family.

#### Statistical Measures

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 10.0 version was used for all statistical analyses. Frequency distributions were used to determine basic demographic information such as gender, age, and education level. A factor analysis was used to determine which items from the Standards questionnaire loaded together. Chi-square analyses were used to determine if level of relationship experience differed by gender of the respondent.

To test Hypotheses I and II, relationship experience was examined using three methods. First, the relationship history questions were used to develop four categories of relationship history: none, low, moderate, and high. A one-way ANOVA using a .05 alpha significance level was conducted using the factors from the Standards questionnaire and the four categories of relationship history. The independent variable is the category of relationship history and the dependent variable is each respective factor resulting from

the factor analysis of the Standards questionnaire. Second, the length of longest relationship was grouped into three categories: none, low, moderate, and high. These categories and the factors from the Standards questionnaire were used in a one-way ANOVA using a .05 alpha significance level. The independent variable, the category of relationship length, and the dependent variable, the respective factors of the Standards questionnaire, examines the mean differences between the categories of length of relationship. Another one-way ANOVA, using a .05 alpha significance level examined the level of seriousness in the respondent's most serious relationship and the importance of perceived standards by factor. The independent variable is the category of seriousness and the dependent variable is the respective factors from the Standards questionnaire. Item-analysis was also conducted to examine potential differences on the two gift giving items.

Hypothesis III was tested using descriptive statistics. The dependent variable is the items from the Standards questionnaire and gender of the target is the independent variable. This analysis allows mean differences between genders to be examined.

To test Hypothesis IV, one-way ANOVAs were utilized. The dependent variable, the factors of the Standards questionnaire, and the independent variable, gender of the respondent help to examine mean differences between gender of the respondents. A .05 alpha significance level was used. Item-analysis was also conducted to examine hypotheses based on specific items.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

A factor analysis using principle components analysis was conducted on the sixty items from the Standards questionnaire. The criteria used to select a factor were: Kaiser criteria, an Eigenvalue greater than one, and the scree plot test. Though several factors emerged, applying the above criteria resulted in five factors accounting for 37% of the variance. Only two factors, sex and religion, had strong loadings (26.87, 8.81). Many items loaded onto multiple factors suggesting a homogeneous variable set with factors having influence on more than one domain. For example item "Complimenting spouse" loads on the Affection factor and the Support factor as the item does suggest a verbal announcement of affection, as well as showing support for one's spouse. Therefore, the conceptual clustering of items based on literature was used for the statistical analyses of the hypotheses. For each conceptual cluster, three factors were created. The first was based on responses from the wives' questionnaire, the second based on responses from the husbands' questionnaire, and the third based on the combined responses from the husbands and wives' questionnaires.

A chi-square was conducted to examine potential differences between males and females for relationship experience. No significant differences were found for relationship history ( $X^2 = .77$ ), length of longest relationship ( $X^2 = .70$ ), or level of seriousness in most serious relationship ( $X^2 = .75$ ). Table 5 indicates additional information of relationship experience based on gender.

Relationship experience (M = 27.01, SD = 4.05) – “The same item on the husbands’

Hypothesis Ia predicted that those with less relationship history would place more importance on the affection and leisure clusters, as well as items involving gift giving. This included “Surprising spouse with little gifts” and “Giving each other gifts.” This prediction was made because those with less relationship experience would place greater importance on less substantial aspects of a relationship.

Hypothesis Ia was not supported. To test this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA between the composite score of weighted relationship types, and affection and leisure clusters was conducted. The test using the factor of wives’ leisure cluster was found to be significant,  $F(3, 3.01)$ ,  $p < .05$ . A post-hoc LSD test identified significant differences between the none group ( $M = 23.63$ ) and the moderate group ( $M = 28.59$ ),  $p < .05$ , the low group ( $M = 26.65$ ) and the moderate group ( $M = 28.59$ ),  $p < .05$ , and the none group ( $M = 23.62$ ) and the high group ( $M = 27.98$ ),  $p < .05$ . Those groups with greater relationship history placed more importance on leisure when wife was the target spouse. This is counter to what was hypothesized. The husband leisure cluster and the combined cluster were found to have no significant differences. Affection clusters were found to have no significant differences. Table 6 contains means and standard deviations for the affection and leisure clusters. Table 7 indicates additional statistical information for the affection and leisure clusters.

On the item “Surprising husband with little gifts” a one-way ANOVA indicated a significant difference,  $F(3, 2.84)$ ,  $p < .05$ , for the item on the wives’ questionnaire. A post-hoc LSD test indicated a significant difference between the none ( $M = 2.75$ ) and high ( $M = 3.53$ ) relationship history groups,  $p < .05$ , as well as the low ( $M = 3.13$ ) and



high ( $M = 3.53$ ) relationship history groups,  $p < .05$ . The same item on the husbands' questionnaire was found to have a significant difference,  $F(3, 2.82)$ ,  $p < .05$ . A post-hoc Tukey test revealed differences between those with no ( $M = 2.50$ ) relationship history and those with high ( $M = 3.53$ ) relationship history,  $p < .05$ . Thus, for this item, those with more relationship history placed more importance on surprising a spouse with little gifts than those with less relationship history. This is counter to what was hypothesized. On the item "Giving each other gifts" no significant differences were found for the groups based on relationship history. Thus Hypothesis Ia was not supported. Table 8 contains statistical information for relationship experience and the two gift giving items.

Hypothesis Ib predicted those with a shorter length of longest relationship would place greater importance on the affection and leisure clusters, as well as the items involving gift giving. This prediction was made because those with less relationship experience would place greater importance on less substantial aspects of a relationship.

A one-way ANOVA using the four categories of length of longest relationship and the affection and leisure clusters were used. A significant difference was indicated for the wives affection cluster,  $F(3, 2.84)$ ,  $p < .05$ . A post-hoc LSD test indicated significant differences between the none ( $M = 10.00$ ) and the moderate ( $M = 12.31$ ) length of longest relationship groups,  $p < .05$ , as well as the low ( $M = 11.65$ ) and moderate ( $M = 12.31$ ) groups,  $p < .05$ . Thus, those individuals who have been in longer relationships placed more importance on affection for wives than did those who have had shorter relationships. This is counter to what was predicted. No significant differences were found for the husband's affection cluster or for the combined husband and wives' cluster. No significant differences were found for any of the leisure clusters.

For the item “Surprising husband with little gifts” a significant difference,  $F(3, 3.06)$ ,  $p = .029$ , was found for the item on the wives’ questionnaire and the length of relationship when a one-way ANOVA was conducted. A post-hoc Tukey test indicated a difference between the low ( $M = 3.02$ ) and the moderate ( $M = 3.51$ ) groups,  $p = .025$ . This is not consistent with Hypothesis Ib. However, the individuals who had not had a relationship ( $M = 3.67$ ) placed the greatest amount of importance on this gift-giving item than did the other groups. When husband was the target, no significant differences were found for the item, “Surprising husband with little gifts.” No significant differences were found for the item “Giving each other gifts.” Thus, Hypothesis Ib was not supported.

Hypothesis Ic predicted those who considered their most serious relationships less serious would place more importance than those indicating more seriousness on the affection and leisure clusters, and the gift giving items. This prediction was made because those with less relationship experience would place greater importance on less substantial aspects of a relationship.

A one-way ANOVA and post-hoc Tukey test using the three groups of perceived seriousness was used with the affection clusters. For the wives’ affection cluster a significant difference,  $F(2, 5.27)$ ,  $p < .01$ , was found. The Tukey test indicated a significant difference for the low ( $M = 11.45$ ) seriousness group and the high ( $M = 12.4$ ) seriousness group,  $p < .01$ . A significant difference,  $F(2, 3.22)$ ,  $p < .05$ , was found using the husbands’ affection cluster between the low ( $M = 11.52$ ) seriousness group and the high ( $M = 12.34$ ) seriousness group,  $p < .05$ . For the combined wives and husbands’ affection cluster, a significant difference,  $F(2, 3.96)$ ,  $p = .02$ , was found. The Tukey test indicated a significant difference between the low ( $M = 23.10$ ) seriousness group and the

high ( $M = 24.72$ ) seriousness group,  $p < .01$ . Thus, those who indicated they have experienced a high level of seriousness in a relationship placed greater importance on affection than did those who indicated they have experienced a lower level of seriousness. These tests indicate a strong pattern, however, the pattern contradicts the prediction made in Hypothesis Ic. No significant differences were found for the leisure clusters.

The “surprising husband with little gifts” item was used with the three groups of perceived seriousness in a one-way ANOVA. A significant difference,  $F(2, 3.34)$ ,  $p < .05$ , was found for the item on the wives’ questionnaire. Individuals indicating they had experienced a relationship with a high ( $M = 3.41$ ) level of seriousness placed more importance on this gift-giving item than did those who had a low ( $M = 3.05$ ) level of seriousness. No significant differences were found for the item on the husbands’ questionnaire. No significant differences were found for the “Giving each other gifts” item.

Hypothesis IIa, that those who had more relationship history would place greater importance on the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial clusters, was tested using a one-way ANOVA. The combined clusters, using the responses from the husbands and wives’ questionnaires were used in this analysis. The ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed between level of relationship history and religion,  $F(3, 2.06)$ ,  $p > .05$ , friends and family,  $F(3, 1.04)$ ,  $p > .05$ , conflict resolution,  $F(3, .32)$ ,  $p > .05$ , and financial,  $F(3, .93)$ ,  $p > .05$ , clusters. This hypothesis was not supported.

A one-way ANOVA test was used to test Hypothesis IIb, that those who have had a longer relationship would place greater importance on the same four clusters, was tested using a one-way ANOVA. The combined clusters, using the responses from the husbands and wives' questionnaires were used in this analysis. No significant differences were found for the relationship between length of longest relationship and religion,  $F(3, 1.35), p > .05$ , friends and family,  $F(3, .743), p > .05$ , conflict resolution,  $F(3, 1.27), p > .05$ , and financial,  $F(3, .91), p > .05$ , clusters. This hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis IIc, that those who had perceived their relationship with a high level of seriousness would place greater importance on the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial clusters, was tested using a one-way ANOVA. In this analysis, the combined clusters using the responses from the husbands and wives' questionnaires are used. The ANOVA indicated no significant differences between level of relationship history and religion,  $F(2, 2.04), p > .05$ , friends and family,  $F(2, .23), p > .05$ , conflict resolution,  $F(2, .73), p > .05$ , and financial,  $F(2, .85), p > .05$ , clusters. This hypothesis was not supported.

According to these results, relationship experience does not affect individual's beliefs about the religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial items on the Standards questionnaire. Table 9 indicates ANOVA statistics, means, and standard deviations for the religion, family and friends, conflict resolution, and financial clusters.

#### Target's gender

Hypothesis IIIa predicted that respondents would place more importance when the husband was the target gender of the Standards questionnaire on the following items:

being employed, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, sexually satisfying spouse, and having a child if spouse wants one. Descriptive statistics were used to examine means to identify trends. “Being employed” was seen as much more important when a husband ( $M = 4.57$ ) was the target than when a wife ( $M = 3.54$ ) was the target of the questionnaire. Husbands ( $M = 3.68$ ) were seen as more obligated to “have a child if the spouse wants one” than were wives ( $M = 3.56$ ). On the item of “sexually satisfying spouse” husbands ( $M = 4.33$ ) were seen as slightly more obligated than were wives ( $M = 4.26$ ). These items were all consistent with Hypothesis IIIa. “Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse” was incorrectly predicted as wives ( $M = 4.68$ ) were seen as slightly more obligated than were husbands ( $M = 4.66$ ).

Hypothesis IIIb predicted that respondents would place more importance on the following standards when the wife was the target spouse: respecting spouse’s wishes when spouse does not want to discuss something, not discussing couple’s relationship with friends and family, and responding to spouse’s sexual requests. This hypothesis was not supported. Husbands ( $M = 4.08$ ) were seen as more responsible to respect their spouse’s wishes when the spouse does not want to discuss something than were wives ( $M = 3.88$ ). On the item “not discussing couple’s relationship with friends or family” husbands ( $M = 3.32$ ) were again seen as more responsible than were wives ( $M = 3.24$ ). Husbands ( $M = 4.06$ ) were seen as more obligated to respond to spouse’s sexual requests than were wives ( $M = 3.77$ ). Table 10 contains additional items in which there were discrepancies of importance placed on husbands and wives’ standards.

### Respondent's gender

Hypothesis IVa predicted that female respondents would place greater importance on the affection cluster than would males. Although the results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no significant difference,  $F(1, 12), p > .05$ , the direction of the means was in support of the hypothesis. Female respondents ( $M = 24.01$ ) did place slightly more importance on the items making up the affection cluster than did males ( $M = 23.84$ ), though this difference was not significant. Thus, Hypothesis IVa was not supported. Table 11 contains ANOVA statistics on the affection cluster.

Hypothesis IVb predicted that females would place greater importance than males on the following items: listening to spouse, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, and comforting spouse. The results of the one-way ANOVAs were consistent with this prediction. When wife was the target spouse, females ( $M = 4.73$ ) placed more importance on "listening to spouse" than did males ( $M = 4.56$ ),  $F(1, 4.44), p < .05$ . Also, when husband was the target spouse, females ( $M = 4.81$ ), placed more importance on the item than did males ( $M = 4.63$ ),  $F(1, 6.45), p < .01$ . On the standard "sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse" females ( $M = 4.78$ ), placed more importance than males ( $M = 4.51$ ), when the wife was the target spouse,  $F(1, 13.61), p < .001$ . Females ( $M = 4.74$ ), also placed more importance than did males ( $M = 4.54$ ), on the standard when husband was the target spouse,  $F(1, 7.81), p < .01$ . On the third item, "comforting spouse", females ( $M = 4.77$ ), placed more importance than males ( $M = 4.54$ ) when the wife was the target spouse,  $F(1, 11.51), p < .001$ . Also, females ( $M = 4.81$ ) placed more importance than males ( $M = 4.68$ ) on the standard when husband was the target spouse,

$F(1, 3.99)$ ,  $p < .05$ . Thus, females placed more importance on listening to a spouse, sharing negative feelings with a spouse, and comforting a spouse, supporting Hypothesis IVb. Table 12 indicates the means, standard deviations, and ANOVA statistics for these items.

Hypothesis IVc predicted that males would place greater importance on the sex and leisure clusters than would females. No significant differences were found as a result of three one-way ANOVAs using gender and the wives' sex cluster,  $F(1, .87)$ ,  $p > .05$ , the husbands' sex cluster,  $F(1, .61)$ ,  $p > .05$ , and the combined husbands and wives' sex cluster,  $F(1, .64)$ ,  $p > .05$ . Males ( $M = 56.09$ ) did place slightly more importance than females ( $M = 55.24$ ) on the sex cluster when combining the husbands and wives scores, though this was not a significant difference. No significant differences were found as a result of two one-way ANOVAs using gender and the wives' leisure cluster,  $F(1, .78)$ ,  $p > .05$ , and the combined husbands and wives' leisure cluster,  $F(1, 2.08)$ ,  $p > .05$ . A significant difference on the husbands' leisure cluster,  $F(1, 4.29)$ ,  $p < .05$ , was found using a third one-way ANOVA. Males ( $M = 28.92$ ) placed more importance than did females ( $M = 27.40$ ) when the husband was the target of the questionnaire. Thus, the hypothesis that males would place more importance on items having to do with sex was not supported. The hypothesis concerning leisure was partially supported, but only when the target was a husband.

Hypothesis IVd predicted males would place greater importance than would females on "not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family". A one-way ANOVA was used to examine differences. When the target of the questionnaire was the wife, males ( $M = 3.34$ ) placed slightly more importance on this item than did females

( $M = 3.18$ ), although the difference was not significant,  $F(1, 1.36)$ ,  $p > .05$ . When a husband was the target, a significant difference was found,  $F(1, 5.47)$ ,  $p = .02$ . Males ( $M = 3.52$ ) placed more importance on this standard than did females ( $M = 3.19$ ). This hypothesis was supported, that is, males placed more importance than females on not discussing the relationship with others, only when a husband was the target of the questionnaire.



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the standards of a marital relationship that individuals hold, as well as examine the influence of relationship experience and gender on these standards. Documenting the perceived marital standards of individuals, and influences on these standards, has important implications for educating individuals about marriage. Table 13 identifies the standards that were seen as most important by respondents' gender. The meaning of the results for each hypothesis, limitations of the study, implications, and possibilities for future research will be discussed.

#### Relationship experience

Affection. Hypothesis Ia, Ib, and Ic predicted that individuals with less relationship history, shorter length of longest relationship, and less seriousness would place more importance on affection than those with more relationship history, longer length of longest relationship, and more seriousness. This was not supported. In fact, when examining the means, a trend appeared that those who have had more relationship experience placed greater importance on affection than those with less relationship experience. There were some significant results indicating those who had more relationship experience placed greater importance on affection than those with less relationship experience. When examining length of longest relationship, those with longer relationships placed more importance on affection than those with shorter relationships when the wife was the target spouse,  $p < .01$ . Significant differences were found for the wife's affection cluster,  $p < .01$ , husband's affection cluster,  $p < .05$ , and

the combined cluster,  $p = .02$ , when examining respondents' level of seriousness. Again, these differences occurred because those with more relationship experience placed greater importance on affection than did those with less relationship experience.

The hypothesis was made assuming that other aspects of a relationship are more important than affection. Less importance may have been placed on affection if respondents were asked to rank their standards. However, respondents were asked to indicate how important each standard was in fulfilling a partner's responsibility to the marriage. When examining which standards had the highest perceived importance, no affection items were included.

Individuals form cognitions about marriage from sources other than relationship experience. Because the sample is relatively young ( $M = 19.25$ ), their standards of marriage may have been developed from other sources including the mass media or their parent's relationship. Movies, magazines, and television tend to place great importance on the romantic aspects of a relationship, including affection. Carnelley and Janoff-Bulman (1992) found that first year students' beliefs about love were more influenced by their parent's relationship and fourth year students' ideas were more influenced by their own relationship experience. The respondents may have not had enough of their own experience in relationships to modify what they have observed through the mass media or their parents.

An alternate view is that those who have experienced more serious or longer relationships have had a more intimate type of affection than those in less serious or shorter relationships. Perhaps, individuals are satisfied with affection in the beginning of a relationship, but once a more intimate level is achieved, individuals place greater

importance on achieving this level of affection in the future. Consequently, these individuals believe that this type of affection is essential in a marriage. Those who have not experienced intimate affection may believe this is not as important in a marital relationship. Thus, affection may be important at any stage of the relationship, but the quality and meaning changes over time.

Respondents may view affection as a relationship-maintaining behavior. Those with more relationship experience may have more experience maintaining relationships, while those with less relationship experience may have experienced only the beginnings of relationships. Those with more experience possibly recognize that it requires effort to maintain a relationship. These respondents may believe that showing affection is a way to keep a relationship strong, thus recognizing the importance of affection in a marital relationship.

Leisure. Hypothesis Ia, Ib, and Ic also hypothesized that leisure would be more important to those who have less relationship experience than those who have had more relationship experience. There was a significant difference between the groups based on relationship history when wife was the target of the questionnaire. Those who were in the none and low groups placed less importance on leisure than did those in the moderate or high groups. This is the opposite of the prediction that was made. A trend in either direction did not occur when examining the husband's scores or the combined scores based on relationship history or when examining any of the three clusters based on length of longest relationship or level of seriousness.

During the dating process a couple often participates in activities together, such as eating out or seeing a movie. Once a relationship progresses, a couple continues to

participate in these activities, in addition to leisure activities that are not usually considered part of casual dating, such as hanging out together, working out together, or playing sports together. Most of the items making up the leisure cluster are activities that are not typically considered part of casual dating. This may be a reason why those who had more relationship experience placed more importance on leisure.

Another reason for the trend is that those who have greater relationship history may recognize the effort that is required in maintaining a relationship. These respondents could view participation in leisure activities as a way to stay connected. Consequently, the respondents with greater relationship history placed more importance on leisure activities within marriage than those with less relationship history.

Part of participating in leisure activities with another person is the need for companionship. It is possible that those individuals with less relationship history have this need met through friends. People usually prefer to spend their free time with someone they are close to. Individuals, who have experienced more relationships, may place greater importance on participating in leisure activities with the person they are dating, whereas those who have had less relationships may satisfy their companionship need through friendships. If this is true, this preference was carried over to their perceived standards of a marital relationship.

Gift giving items. Hypothesis Ia, Ib, and Ic hypothesized that those with less relationship experience would place more importance on items involving gift giving than those with more relationship experience. This hypothesis was made assuming that other aspects of a relationship are more important than giving or receiving gifts. Several significant differences were found in the opposite direction of the hypothesis. When wife

was the target spouse, a significant difference was found for all three types of relationship experience. Those who had more relationship history, a longer length of longest relationship, and more seriousness placed greater importance on “surprising spouse with little gifts” than did those who had less relationship experience. When husband was the target spouse, a significant difference was identified between those who had no previous relationships and those who had a high level of relationship history. No significant differences were found for the item “giving each other gifts.”

These results coincide with the findings involving affection. Respondents possibly believed that surprising a spouse with gifts is a token of affection, because surprising a spouse is an unexpected event. If this item is viewed as a display of affection, this strengthens the results previously discussed. Those with more relationship experience placed greater importance on surprising a spouse with gifts.

Also, those with more relationship experience may believe that a spouse needs to do things to keep the spark alive in one’s marriage. Surprising one’s spouse is an unpredictable behavior, which could keep the marriage exciting. Those who have experienced longer or more serious relationships might understand the need to keep a relationship stimulating more than those who have had shorter or less serious relationships.

Giving each other gifts may not have been seen as affection, because respondents may have viewed this item as dealing with specific occasions such as birthdays or during the holidays. This type of gift giving may be seen as more of an expected occurrence in a marriage than is surprising one’s partner with a gift. The questionnaire did not assess the amount of gift giving. This may be a flaw of the study because those with more

relationship experience may view the number of gifts or quality of gifts differently than those with less relationship experience.

Religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial. Hypothesis II stated that those with more relationship experience would place greater importance on the clusters of religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial than would those with less relationship experience. This hypothesis was made because these four clusters seemed to be the most substantial clusters on the questionnaire. These four issues can cause conflict in almost any marriage. Thus, it was hypothesized that items involving these issues would be seen as more important in fulfilling a role as a husband or wife. It was believed that those with more relationship experience would have a greater understanding of the important issues in a marriage, thus placing more importance on these issues than those who have not had as much experience with relationships. No significant differences were found when examining the three types of relationship experience. When examining the means of each cluster, no trends were apparent.

A possible reason these differences did not emerge is because of the young age of respondents. When considering the respondents' life stage, many respondents may have not had to face these issues with a partner. Most undergraduate students have not been faced with tough financial issues. Also, they are usually away from family members, which could mean they have not had many interactions with their family and dating partners together. While these characteristics are important in a marriage, standards about these issues may not be influenced by dating relationships engaged in while an undergraduate.

Another possible reason differences did not exist based on relationship experience is because standards having to do with these important issues may be formed before dating begins. A person may even determine who one will date based on some of these important facets of marriage. Religion, interactions with friends and family, how to handle conflict, and the way to handle money may be more influenced by an individual's values, than it is relationship experience. These standards may not be as malleable as other standards, thus not being affected by dating experiences.

#### Target's gender

Hypothesis IIIa. Hypothesis IIIa predicted that respondents would place more importance on husbands being employed than wives. This hypothesis was supported. Even though it is more common for women to be employed than in the past, society still holds husbands as being more responsible than wives for their family's financial status. This finding is consistent with Killian's et al. (2000) study in which males were seen as more obligated than females to earn money and help support their partners. These findings are also similar to a finding in Ganong and Coleman's (1992) study. Males expected their partners to have lower desire for professional success and less actual success. Females expected their partners to be more successful and have higher pay.

Hypothesis IIIa predicted respondents would place more importance on husbands than wives to have a child if their spouse wanted one. This was supported by this study's findings. In the past a woman's domain of the marriage has been the children and the household. Women are typically the primary caretakers of their children (Deutsch, Lussier, & Servis, 1993; Russell & Russell, 1987; Simons, Beaman, Conger, & Chas, 1993). This may extend into beliefs individuals have about marriage because they may

see women as having a greater desire to have children than are men. It may be the view of the participants of this study that a husband should support his wife's desire to have children.

Hypothesis IIIa predicted that respondents would see husbands as being more responsible than wives in sexually satisfying their spouse. Findings show that husbands were slightly more responsible than wives, however, this was not a large difference. Studies have found that men place more importance on sex than do women (Morrow & O'Sullivan, 1998; Rusbult et al., 1993). Thus, it was hypothesized these findings would carry over to husbands being more responsible for sexually satisfying one's spouse. However, the findings do not indicate significant differences placed on this particular item involving sex. Respondents viewed a husband and wife as being nearly equally responsible for sexually satisfying their spouse.

Hypothesis IIIa stated that husbands would be held more responsible than wives in sharing feelings of anger, hurt or disappointment with spouse. This was not supported. Wives were more obligated to share these feelings, though this difference was minor. This hypothesis was made because wives are seen as typically sharing more feelings of negativity than their husbands (Markman, Stanley, Blumberg, 1994; Rands, 1988). It was believed that respondents would counteract this view by indicating husbands should share their feelings more. However, the respondents indicated that spouses are nearly equally responsible in sharing feelings of unhappiness with the spouse. This item had one of the highest means of all items of perceived importance for both husbands and wives. Respondents indicated this is a fundamental responsibility of a partner in a marital relationship. Discussing these types of feelings with a spouse can be difficult, but



is necessary to maintain a satisfying marriage. In this regard, respondents have a realistic view of a marital relationship.

Hypothesis IIIb. Hypothesis IIIb predicted wives would be seen as being more responsible in respecting spouse's wishes when her spouse does not want to discuss something. This prediction was made because a wife is typically the partner who wants to discuss something, with the husband being the one that is more withdrawn. However, this hypothesis was not supported. Husbands were seen as being more responsible than their wives to not pressure their spouse to discuss something. This may be the case because men are usually viewed as the more dominant and aggressive of the two genders (Aries, 1996; Kopper, 1993). Therefore, the pressure a husband may put on his wife to discuss something may be more intimidating than if a wife was pressuring a husband to discuss something. A husband's pressure may be viewed as dominating, while a wife's pressure may be viewed as nagging.

It was predicted in Hypothesis IIIb that respondents would place more importance on wives not discussing the couple's relationship with friends or family than would be placed on husbands. This was predicted because a wife is typically the partner who discusses her relationship with people outside of the marriage (Tannen, 1990). This, however, was not supported in the current study. More importance was placed on husbands ( $M = 3.32$ ) not discussing the relationship with others than was placed on wives ( $M = 3.24$ ). This may be because respondents are aware that women typically discuss more interpersonal issues with others than do men. If this was the case, it may be perceived as more acceptable for a wife to discuss issues with others than it would be for a husband.

Hypothesis IIIb predicted that wives would be more obligated to respond to spouse's sexual requests than would husbands. This prediction was made because men typically place a higher priority on the sexual domain of marriage. Therefore, wives may be seen as needing to be supportive of the importance her husband places on sex. Rusbult et al's (1993) study found that men emphasized sex more often than females did when describing an ideal partner or relationship. Morrow and O'Sullivan (1998) found that men desired more sexual contact than did women in the ideal relationship. This hypothesis was not supported. This finding may have occurred due to the same reason the hypothesis was made. If respondents view men as placing more importance on sex, then respondents may view importance of sex as more of a responsibility of a husband to respond to their partner's sexual requests than a wife's responsibility to support him. If a husband did not respond to his wife's sexual requests, he may be seen as not fulfilling his "duty", whereas it may be more acceptable for a wife to not respond to sexual requests made by her husband.

It is interesting to note that out of the sixty items on the Standards questionnaire, husbands were found to be more responsible than wives on thirty-nine of the items. Wives were seen as more responsible than husbands on eighteen items. This is consistent with Killian et al.'s (2000) findings. On three of the standards, the means for husbands and wives were equal (see Table 14).

#### Respondents' gender

Hypothesis IVa and IVb. Hypothesis IVa predicted that females would place greater importance on the affection cluster than would males. This prediction was based on information from previous studies. Morrow and O'Sullivan (1998) found that women

desired more emotional intimacy in their ideal relationship than did men. Also, Rusbult et al. (1993) found women were more likely to stress intimacy than were men. These studies examined the importance of intimacy. The current study assessed affection, which may be included in one's definition of intimacy. The hypothesis that females would place more importance on affection than males was not supported. Females ( $M = 24.01$ ) placed slightly more importance on affection than did males ( $M = 23.84$ ), but this was not a significant difference. Research has been mixed with some studies indicating women place more importance on intimacy (Morrow & O'Sullivan, 1998; Rusbult et al., 1993), while others find that men place more importance on intimacy (Fletcher et al., 1999). If affection is considered an extension or a part of intimacy, then the results of this study are not unusual. This study found that males and females placed a similar level of importance on the need for a husband or wife to be affectionate. Thus, affection is viewed in a similar manner by both genders.

It may be that males and females differ on what type of affection is important in a marital relationship. There were significant differences when considering each affection item individually. Females placed more importance on "hugging or kissing" and "touching affectionately" than did males. Males placed more importance on "giving massages." Both females and males see affection as important in a marriage, but differ on what type of affection is important (see Table 14).

Hypothesis IVb predicted that females would place greater importance than males on listening to spouse, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, and comforting spouse. These predictions were made as an extension of studies that have found that females desire more emotional intimacy than do males (Knobloch,

2000; Morrow and O'Sullivan, 1998; Rusbult et al., 1993). This hypothesis was supported. Females placed more importance than males on listening to spouse, sharing feelings of negativity, and comforting spouse regardless of who the target of the questionnaire was. This is consistent with previous findings concerning intimacy. It is interesting to note that these three items were among the top ten items with perceived greatest importance (see Table 13). This suggests that respondents viewed intimacy as a high priority in a marital relationship.

Hypothesis IVc and IVd. Hypothesis IVc predicted males would place greater importance than females on the items concerning sex. Previous research has found that males tend to place more importance on sex than do females (Rusbult et al., 1993; Morrow and O'Sullivan, 1998). No significant results were found, indicating that males and females placed similar levels of importance on standards concerning sex in a marital relationship. This finding does not coincide with previous research.

A possible reason a gender difference about sex was not found in this study is that the items making up the sex cluster may be different aspects of sex than the aspects examined by previous research. The items in this study were not only about sexual contact, but also involved initiation of and response to sexual advances, as well as communicating about expectations and sexual history.

An additional reason as to why a gender difference did not exist on the items concerning sex is the mean age of the participants. At the average age of nineteen, participants may consider responsibilities toward sex differently than previous generations. Males and females of this age may have more similar attitudes about sex than older adults. Also, it is possible that respondents have not had many sexual

relationships, limiting their experience when dealing with sexual issues. Also, because an item dealt with communication about sexual history, respondents of this age may see it as a responsibility of either gender to inform a partner about the possibilities of STD's.

Hypothesis IVc also predicted that males would place more importance than females on the items concerning leisure. Knobloch (2000) found that in an ideal partner women desired emotional intimacy, while men desired more recreational intimacy. Thus, the prediction was made that males would place more importance on leisure than females. This hypothesis was supported when the target spouse was husband. Males placed more importance than females on leisure when the target spouse was husband, but not when the target spouse was wife. This indicates that males feel that participating in leisure activities with one's wife is a responsibility that a husband has. This coincides with Knobloch's (2000) finding. If males desire more recreational intimacy, then leisure may be an avenue to feel closer to one's spouse. If the male respondents recognized that leisure is important to them as males, opposed to being important to everyone, this could explain why the significant difference was found only when a husband was the target spouse. Possibly, respondents believed leisure was not as important to females, thus not placing importance on leisure when the target spouse was a wife.

Hypothesis IVd predicted males would place greater importance than females on not discussing the couple's relationship with friends or family. This prediction was made because a wife is more likely to discuss interpersonal issues with others outside of a marriage, sometimes to the dismay of her husband. It was believed that males would place more importance than females on refraining from this behavior because males do not typically engage in discussions about their relationship with family members of

friends and may not understand why females are more likely to do so. The findings support this prediction. A significant difference was found indicating that males placed more importance than females on this item, but only when the target spouse was a husband. This may be because respondents believed that females are more likely to discuss interpersonal issues with others, while males are less likely to do so. Therefore, if a husband was to discuss the marriage with others, this could be a violation of the norm, whereas a wife discussing the relationship with others would not be unusual.

In summary, those with more relationship experience view items involving affection and leisure, as well as surprising one's spouse with gifts as more important than those with less relationship experience. Several possibilities exist of why these results occurred. Those with more relationship experience may conceptualize these items differently than those with less relationship experience or may see these standards as relationship-maintaining behaviors. Relationship experience did not affect perceived standards of religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, or financial clusters. This may be because the respondents have not experienced these issues fully with a partner. A second possibility is these standards are formed before dating begins.

Respondents placed more importance on a husband being employed, having a child if spouse wants one, respecting spouse's wishes when spouse does not want to discuss something, not discussing the couple's relationship with friends or family, and responding to spouse's sexual requests than the importance placed on a wife. Husbands and wives were seen as similarly responsible for sexually satisfying spouse and sharing feelings of anger, hurt, or disappointment with spouse. Thus, some differences existed between the perceived responsibilities of a husband and wife.

Some gender differences were also found based on respondents' gender. Males and females placed a similar level of importance on a spouse being affectionate and items involving sex. Females placed greater importance than males on listening to spouse, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, and comforting spouse. Males placed more importance on items involving leisure and not discussing the couple's relationship with friends or family when husband was the target spouse.

### Limitations

A limitation of this study is that the results are not generalizable to all young adults. Because the sample consisted of undergraduate students, those young adults who choose to work following high school are not represented. Their standards of a marital relationship may be different than those who attend college. College life or the level of education one has may influence one's standards. Also, the sample consisted primarily of Caucasians. As other ethnic groups are underrepresented, these results may not be as generalizable to other ethnicities. A third bias of the sample is that the respondents live in the Midwest. Perceived standards of a marital relationship may be different for individuals living in other parts of the country. Despite these biases, these findings can be generalized to the majority of young adults, particularly those who are college educated, Caucasian, and live in the Midwest.

A second limitation of this study is that the categories of relationship types may not have been explicit enough for individuals. Many individuals indicated they had been in casual/not-serious relationships (90%) and serious relationships without the discussion of marriage (74%), but 47% of respondents indicated they had not been involved in a serious, but not exclusive relationship. It was assumed that individuals move from

casual/not-serious relationships to serious, but not exclusive relationships to serious relationships involving no discussion of marriage. It may be that individuals move from casual dating into a steady/exclusive relationship. If the progression of relationships that individuals experience is not consistent with the researcher's belief, then the weights assigned to each relationship type may not be valid. This would affect the composite score used to compare respondents based on relationship history.

A third limitation is the unexpected response to the question assessing the level of seriousness in one's most serious relationship. Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated they had reached a level of seven, eight, or nine, with nine being the highest seriousness possible. The majority of respondents have not been engaged or married. This indicates that most respondents either believe their relationships have been as serious as an engagement or marriage, or did not consider the possibility that they may have more serious relationships in the future. When examining the results using relationship seriousness, this should be considered.

An additional limitation is that the items from the Standards questionnaire did not load adequately in the statistical factor analysis that was conducted. It is possible that the items are not mutually exclusive. That is, an item such as "being open about sexual expectations" may be assessing standards about sex and about communication. Therefore, the Standards questionnaire should be altered for future studies in order to ensure items are assessing specific standards instead of a combination of standards.

### Implications

The results of this study indicate that those individuals with more relationship experience find affection more important to a marital relationship than do those with less



relationship experience. If respondents believe the same type and amount of affection that is found in non-marital relationships exist in long-term marriages, they may not hold a realistic standard for a long-term marriage. Also, other aspects that are important in long-term marriages, such as religion, friends and family, conflict resolution, and financial issues, were not affected by respondents' relationship experience. This may be a result of inadequate assessment since items were not asked to be ranked, however, if this is an accurate depiction of young adults' marital standards, educators and researchers should take note. It could be that young adults do have unrealistic expectations of marriage and may find future relationships unsatisfying because of these expectations.

The life stage of the respondents may play a major role in their determination of marital standards. When the respondents reach the next life stage of having a career and possibly marriage, their perceived standards may be different. However, 78% of respondents indicated the ideal age for someone to marry is between the ages of 22 and 25. Based on the mean age of respondents, this is 3 to 6 years into the future. If these findings are not a factor of the respondents' life stage, the respondents may have romanticized views of marriage.

Another implication of this study is that gender differences do exist for marital standards. Individuals believe husbands and wives are responsible for different things. This is important for clinicians, educators, and researchers. Professionals should be aware of these gender differences when working with young adults and their relationships. Young adults should be educated on these differences so that they are aware of the need to discuss what is expected of them and of their partners before entering into a marriage.

Gender differences also exist in the way the two genders view marriage. Males place importance on aspects of marriage that females do not, such as leisure and keeping the couple's relationship between the two partners. Females see marriage differently than males do by placing more importance on listening to spouse, sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse, and comforting spouse. Professionals should be aware of this and assess for these differences before making assumptions that their perspectives are similar. Professionals can also help individuals be aware of their own and their partner's biases. Those involved in relationships should be educated on the importance of discussing their standards before entering a marriage because of these possible differences.

#### Future research

Possibilities for future research include conducting reliability analyses on each conceptual cluster. This would facilitate in making the conceptual clusters more empirically reliable. This may make a difference in the current study's analyses.

Another possibility is using a similar questionnaire assessing standards of a marital relationship with an older population. It would be interesting to examine the standards of seniors or graduate students and compare the results to the results of this younger sample. Older individuals may have more personal relationship experience and additional maturity from which to adopt their standards for marriage.

Another possibility is examining the influence of actual marital experience on individuals' standards. Research could use currently married individuals as the sample. One could assess marital quality compared to standards of a marital relationship. Also, married individuals' expectations of their current marriage could be compared to

individuals' perceived standards of future relationships. The Standards questionnaire could possibly be altered based on the standards of partners in marriages. This information could also help in assessing whether unmarried adults have realistic perceptions of marriage.

Another possibility to examine the influence of actual marital experience is to examine standards of individuals that have previously been married, but are now divorced. Their standards may be based on their previous marital experiences. These standards could be compared to those individuals who have never been married.

It would be interesting to use a different format when assessing the influence of relationship experience and gender on one's standards. Respondents could be asked to rank standards. Differences may arise in the rankings of standards than were found in this study in which respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each standard.

Further studies involving standards of marital relationships are important to conduct. Researchers could examine standards of older, married, and divorced individuals, as well as assessing how individuals rank various standards. Future research examining perceived standards is essential in order to provide professionals with vital information. With this knowledge, professionals may be able to educate individuals about realistic expectations of marriage.

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APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

## **INFORMED CONSENT**

### **A. AUTHORIZATION**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize Suzanne Jones to perform the following procedure.

### **B. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH AND ASSOCIATED RISKS/BENEFITS**

#### Standards of Marital Relationships

- This research study is being conducted as part of Suzanne Jones' thesis project through Oklahoma State University.
- The purpose of this research is to identify standards individuals hold for marital relationships. It is hoped that findings from this research will provide information on what individuals deem important in relationships. Also, gender and relationship experience will be assessed to examine the influence these have on individuals' standards.
- The results of this study may help educators with the education of young adults concerning marriage.
- You will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which will take approximately 20 minutes. You will be asked to return the informed consent forms to a separate pile than the questionnaires.
- Your questionnaire will not have your name associated it in anyway, providing you with confidentiality of responses. Questionnaires will be kept in locked filing cabinets in an Oklahoma State University office separate than the informed consent.

If you have any questions or comments please contact: Suzanne Jones: 333 Human Environmental Sciences, Stillwater, OK 74078. Phone: 405-744-5058

Additional contacts:

Kathleen Briggs, Thesis Advisor, Oklahoma State University, 243 Human Environmental Sciences, Stillwater, OK 74078. Phone: 405-744-8354.

Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, Oklahoma State University, 203 Whitehurst, Stillwater, OK 74078. Phone: 405-744-5700.

### **C. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

I understand that participation is voluntary and that I will not be penalized if I choose not to participate. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and end my participation in this project at any time without penalty. I understand that I can leave a question blank if I choose.

### **D. CONSENT DOCUMENTATION FOR WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT**

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

---

Signature

Date

1.125

2.125 - 2.2.125 - 2.2.125 - 2.2.125

2.125 - 2.125 - 2.125 - 2.125

**APPENDIX B**  
**STANDARDS AND RELATIONSHIP**  
**EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRES**



## WIVES' RESPONSIBILITIES

I would like to know what you think about standards associated with marital relationships. Please respond to the following items based on **what you think and believe**. There are no correct or incorrect answers.

Regardless of your marital status, intent to marry, or sexual orientation, which of the following are duties or responsibilities that **WIVES** should fulfill for their husbands? I am not asking about what they could do or what would be nice to do, but what **they should do or ought to do**. Please circle the number that corresponds with how **important this standard is to fulfilling her responsibility to her husband**.

Not important				Very important	
1	2	3	4	5	WIVES' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
					Hugging or kissing
					Working together on household repairs
					Participating in religious activities together
					Telling husband he is loved
					Being tolerant of husband's friends
					Discussing problems within the marriage
					Having a child if husband wants one
					Sticking to a budget
					Touching affectionately, cuddling (holding hands)
					Hanging out together (e.g., listening to music, watching TV, sitting and reading together)
					Doing what husband asks
					Sharing spiritual beliefs with husband
					Complimenting husband
					Spending time with in-laws
					Attending a movie, play, concert together
					Talking to husband when he asks for attention
					Treating husband with respect
					Apologizing
					Satisfying husband sexually
					Being the primary caretaker of children
					Giving massages
					Helping pay husband's debt accumulated before marriage
					Shopping together
					Obedying husband's requests
					Sharing important decision-making with husband

Not important					Very important	WIVES' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
1	2	3	4	5		
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with husband
1	2	3	4	5		Calling to tell husband where she is
1	2	3	4	5		Listening to husband
1	2	3	4	5		Surprising husband with little gifts
1	2	3	4	5		Responding to husband's sexual requests
1	2	3	4	5		Working out together
1	2	3	4	5		Allowing husband to take the major role in disciplining their children
1	2	3	4	5		Not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family
1	2	3	4	5		Playing sports together
1	2	3	4	5		Helping husband with his household chores
1	2	3	4	5		Feeling love for husband
1	2	3	4	5		Being employed
1	2	3	4	5		Accepting husband's refusal to engage in sexual activity
1	2	3	4	5		Eating out together
1	2	3	4	5		Letting husband know when he has done something she does not like
1	2	3	4	5		Confiding in husband
1	2	3	4	5		Forgiving husband for a mistake
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing feelings of contentment or happiness with husband
1	2	3	4	5		Engaging in sexual intercourse
1	2	3	4	5		Helping husband to solve problems
1	2	3	4	5		Comforting husband
1	2	3	4	5		Being open about sexual expectations
1	2	3	4	5		Telling husband he is liked
1	2	3	4	5		Respecting husband's wishes when he does not want to discuss something
1	2	3	4	5		Expressing approval for something husband did
1	2	3	4	5		Giving each other gifts
1	2	3	4	5		Ensuring husband has a good time
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing past sexual history
1	2	3	4	5		Going somewhere with husband she did not want to go
1	2	3	4	5		Making an effort to get along with husband's friends

Not important					Very important	
1	2	3	4	5		WIVES' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
1	2	3	4	5		Admiring husband as a person
1	2	3	4	5		Being tolerant of husband's behavior
1	2	3	4	5		Initiating sexual advances
1	2	3	4	5		Having personal desire to have child
1	2	3	4	5		Being open about the way money is spent

## HUSBANDS' RESPONSIBILITIES

I would like to know what you think about standards associated with marital relationships. Please respond to the following items based on **what you think and believe**. There are no correct or incorrect answers.

Regardless of your marital status or sexual orientation, which of the following are duties or responsibilities that **HUSBANDS** should fulfill for their wives? I am not asking about what they could do or what would be nice to do, but what **they should do or ought to do**. Please circle the number that corresponds with how **important this standard is to fulfilling his responsibility to his wife**.

Not very Important				Very important	HUSBANDS' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
1	2	3	4	5	
					Hugging or kissing
					Working together on household repairs
					Participating in religious activities together
					Telling wife she is loved
					Being tolerant of wife's friends
					Discussing problems within the marriage
					Having a child if wife wants one
					Sticking to a budget
					Touching affectionately, cuddling (holding hands)
					Hanging out together (e.g., listening to music, watching TV, sitting and reading together)
					Doing what wife asks
					Sharing spiritual beliefs with wife
					Complimenting wife
					Spending time with in-laws
					Attending a movie, play, concert together
					Talking to wife when she asks for attention
					Treating wife with respect
					Apologizing
					Satisfying wife sexually
					Being the primary caretaker of children
					Giving massages
					Helping pay wife's debt accumulated before marriage
					Shopping together
					Obedying wife's requests
					Sharing important decision-making with wife

Not important					Very important	HUSBANDS' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
1	2	3	4	5		
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with wife
1	2	3	4	5		Calling to tell wife where he is
1	2	3	4	5		Listening to wife
1	2	3	4	5		Surprising wife with little gifts
1	2	3	4	5		Responding to wife's sexual requests
1	2	3	4	5		Working out together
1	2	3	4	5		Allowing wife to take the major role in disciplining their children
1	2	3	4	5		Not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family
1	2	3	4	5		Playing sports together
1	2	3	4	5		Helping wife with her household chores
1	2	3	4	5		Feeling love for wife
1	2	3	4	5		Being employed
1	2	3	4	5		Accepting wife's refusal to engage in sexual activity
1	2	3	4	5		Eating out together
1	2	3	4	5		Letting wife know when she has done something he does not like
1	2	3	4	5		Confiding in wife
1	2	3	4	5		Forgiving wife for a mistake
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing feelings of contentment or happiness with wife
1	2	3	4	5		Engaging in sexual intercourse
1	2	3	4	5		Helping wife to solve problems
1	2	3	4	5		Comforting wife
1	2	3	4	5		Being open about sexual expectations
1	2	3	4	5		Telling wife she is liked
1	2	3	4	5		Respecting wife's wishes when she does not want to discuss something
1	2	3	4	5		Expressing approval for something wife did
1	2	3	4	5		Giving each other gifts
1	2	3	4	5		Ensuring wife has a good time
1	2	3	4	5		Sharing past sexual history
1	2	3	4	5		Going somewhere with his wife he did not want to go
1	2	3	4	5		Making an effort to get along with wife's friends

Not important					Very important	HUSBANDS' DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
1	2	3	4	5		
1	2	3	4	5		Admiring wife as a person
1	2	3	4	5		Being tolerant of wife's behavior
1	2	3	4	5		Initiating sexual advances
1	2	3	4	5		Having personal desire to have child
1	2	3	4	5		Being open about the way money is spent

## RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle one response for each question

Gender: 1. Male 2. Female Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: 1. Freshman 2. Sophomore 3. Junior  
4. Senior 5. 5<sup>th</sup> year senior

Ethnicity: 1. African-American 2. Asian 3. Caucasian  
4. Hispanic 5. Native American  
6. Mixed (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
7. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you an international student? 1. Yes 2. No

Are you currently engaged? 1. Yes 2. No If yes, how long? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

How many partners have you been engaged to?  
0 1 2 3-4 5-7 8-10 More than 10

Are you currently married? 1. Yes 2. No If yes, how long? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

Have you previously been married? 1. Yes 2. No If yes, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any children? 1. Yes 2. No

If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, do you hope to have children in the future? 1. Yes 2. No

Approximately how many people have you ever dated?

None 1 or 2 3 to 5 6 to 10 11 to 20

More than 20 (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Of these, how many were **casual/not serious** dating relationships?

0 1 2 3-4 5-7 8-10 More than 10

Of these, how many were **serious/ but not exclusive** dating relationships?

0 1 2 3-4 5-7 8-10 More than 10

Of these, how many were **steady/exclusive relationships without the discussion of marriage?**

0 1 2 3-4 5-7 8-10 More than 10

Of these, how many were **steady/exclusive relationships with the discussion of marriage?**

0 1 2 3-4 5-7 8-10 More than 10

Have you ever lived with someone you were involved with? 1. Yes 2. No

If yes, indicate the number of partners you lived with in each category:

\_\_\_\_\_ Casual/not serious

\_\_\_\_\_ Serious/ but not exclusive

\_\_\_\_\_ Steady/exclusive relationships without the discussion of marriage

\_\_\_\_\_ Steady/exclusive relationships with the discussion of marriage

\_\_\_\_\_ Engagements





Model

Model  
1998

Model  
1998

APPENDIX C  
CONCEPTUAL CLUSTERING OF ITEMS  
ON STANDARDS QUESTIONNAIRE

## WIVES' RESPONSIBILITIES (Conceptual version)

This questionnaire is to see what you think about standards associated with marital relationships. Please respond to the following items based on **what you think and believe**. There are no correct or incorrect answers.

Regardless of your marital status, intent to marry, or sexual orientation, which of the following are duties or responsibilities that **WIVES** should fulfill for their husbands? This is not what they could do or what would be nice to do, but **what they should do or ought to do**. Please circle the number that corresponds with how **important this standard is to fulfilling her responsibility to her husband**.

Not very Important				Very important	
1	2	3	4	5	Hugging or kissing
1	2	3	4	5	Touching affectionately, cuddling (holding hands)
1	2	3	4	5	Giving massages
<b>Leisure</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	Hanging out together (e.g., listening to music, watching TV, sitting and reading together)
1	2	3	4	5	Working out together
1	2	3	4	5	Playing sports together
1	2	3	4	5	Shopping together
1	2	3	4	5	Eating out together
1	2	3	4	5	Attending a movie, play, concert together
1	2	3	4	5	Going somewhere with husband she did not want to go
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Ensuring husband has a good time</i>
<b>Children &amp; Parenting</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Having a child if husband wants one</i>
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Having personal desire to have child</i>
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Allowing husband to take the major role in disciplining their children</i>
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Being the primary caretaker of children</i>
<b>Religion</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	Participating in religious activities together
1	2	3	4	5	<i>Sharing spiritual beliefs with husband</i>

**Role relationships**

1	2	3	4	5	Working together on household repairs
1	2	3	4	5	Doing what husband asks her to do
1	2	3	4	5	Helping husband with his household chores
1	2	3	4	5	Obedying husband's requests
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being employed</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing important decision-making with husband</i>

**Communication**

1	2	3	4	5	Telling husband he is loved
1	2	3	4	5	Complimenting husband
1	2	3	4	5	Telling husband he is liked
1	2	3	4	5	Talking to husband when he asks for attention
1	2	3	4	5	Expressing approval for something husband did
1	2	3	4	5	Confiding in husband
1	2	3	4	5	Listening to husband
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Respecting husband's wishes when he does not want to discuss something</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with husband</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing feelings of contentment or happiness with wife</i>

**Conflict resolution**

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Discussing problems within the marriage</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Letting husband know when he has done something she does not like</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Helping husband to solve problems</i>

**Financial**

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sticking to a budget</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being open about the way money is spent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	Helping pay husband's debt accumulated before marriage

**Friends and Family**

1	2	3	4	5	Being tolerant of husband's friends
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Spending time with in-laws</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Making an effort to get along with husband's friends</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family</i>

**Other-centered/ Treatment of partner**

1	2	3	4	5	Feeling love for husband
1	2	3	4	5	Treating husband with respect
1	2	3	4	5	Admiring husband as a person
1	2	3	4	5	Giving each other gifts
1	2	3	4	5	Surprising husband with little gifts
1	2	3	4	5	Apologizing
1	2	3	4	5	Forgiving husband for a mistake
1	2	3	4	5	Comforting husband
1	2	3	4	5	Calling to tell husband where she is
1	2	3	4	5	Being tolerant of husband's behavior

**Sex**

1	2	3	4	5	Engaging in sexual intercourse
1	2	3	4	5	Satisfying husband sexually
1	2	3	4	5	Responding to husband's sexual requests
1	2	3	4	5	Accepting husband's refusal to engage in sexual activity
1	2	3	4	5	Initiating sexual advances
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing past sexual history</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being open about sexual expectations</i>

## HUSBANDS' RESPONSIBILITIES (Conceptual version)

This questionnaire is to see what you think about standards associated with marital relationships. Please respond to the following items based on **what you think and believe**. There are no correct or incorrect answers.

Regardless of your marital status, intent to marry, or sexual orientation, which of the following are duties or responsibilities that **HUSBANDS** should fulfill for their wives? This is not what they could do or what would be nice to do, but **what they should do or ought to do**. Please circle the number that corresponds with how **important this standard is to fulfilling his responsibility to his wife**.

Not very Important				Very important	
<b>Affection</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	Hugging or kissing
1	2	3	4	5	Touching affectionately, cuddling (holding hands)
1	2	3	4	5	Giving massages
<b>Leisure</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	Hanging out together (e.g., listening to music, watching TV, sitting and reading together)
1	2	3	4	5	Working out together
1	2	3	4	5	Playing sports together
1	2	3	4	5	Shopping together
1	2	3	4	5	Eating out together
1	2	3	4	5	Attending a movie, play, concert together
1	2	3	4	5	Going somewhere with wife he did not want to go
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Ensuring wife has a good time</i>
<b>Children &amp; Parenting</b>					
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Having a child if wife wants one</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Having personal desire to have child</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Allowing wife to take the major role in disciplining their children</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being the primary caretaker of children</i>
<b>Religion</b>					
1	2	3	4	5	Participating in religious activities together
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing spiritual beliefs with wife</i>

**Role relationships**

1	2	3	4	5	Working together on household repairs
1	2	3	4	5	Doing what wife asks him to do
1	2	3	4	5	Helping wife with her household chores
1	2	3	4	5	Obedying wife's requests
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being employed</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing important decision-making with wife</i>

**Communication**

1	2	3	4	5	Telling wife she is loved
1	2	3	4	5	Complimenting wife
1	2	3	4	5	Telling wife she is liked
1	2	3	4	5	Talking to wife when she asks for attention
1	2	3	4	5	Expressing approval for something wife did
1	2	3	4	5	Confiding in wife
1	2	3	4	5	Listening to wife
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Respecting wife's wishes when she does not want to discuss something</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with wife</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing feelings of contentment or happiness with wife</i>

**Conflict resolution**

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Discussing problems within the marriage</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Letting wife know when she has done something he does not like</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Helping wife to solve problems</i>

**Financial**

<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sticking to a budget</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being open about the way money is spent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	Helping pay wife's debt accumulated before marriage

**Friends and Family**

1	2	3	4	5	Being tolerant of wife's friends
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Spending time with in-laws</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Making an effort to get along with wife's friends</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family</i>

**Other-centered/ Treatment of partner**

1	2	3	4	5	Feeling love for wife
1	2	3	4	5	Treating wife with respect
1	2	3	4	5	Admiring wife as a person
1	2	3	4	5	Giving each other gifts
1	2	3	4	5	Surprising wife with little gifts
1	2	3	4	5	Apologizing
1	2	3	4	5	Forgiving wife for a mistake
1	2	3	4	5	Comforting wife
1	2	3	4	5	Calling to say hello
1	2	3	4	5	Being tolerant of wife's behavior

**Sex**

1	2	3	4	5	Engaging in sexual intercourse
1	2	3	4	5	Satisfying wife sexually
1	2	3	4	5	Responding to wife's sexual requests
1	2	3	4	5	Accepting wife's refusal to engage in sexual activity
1	2	3	4	5	Initiating sexual advances
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Sharing past sexual history</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Being open about sexual expectations</i>

APPENDIX D

TABLES 1-13



Table 1

Sample Demographics

Category	<u>n</u>	%
Gender		
Males	108	39.1
Females	168	60.9
Year in school		
Freshman	129	47.1
Sophomore	96	35.0
Junior	31	11.3
Senior	11	4.0
Fifth-year senior	7	2.6
Age		
17	2	.7
18	88	32.1
19	103	37.6
20	41	15.0
21	22	8.0
22	8	2.9
23	4	1.5
24	3	1.1

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Sample Demographics

Category	<u>n</u>	%
25	1	.4
26	2	.7
Ethnicity		
African-American	5	1.8
Asian	7	2.5
Caucasion	238	86.2
Hispanic	3	1.1
Native American	16	5.8
Mixed	6	2.2
Other	1	.4
Currently engaged		
Yes	7	2.5
No	269	97.5
Number of children		
N/A	273	99.3
One child	2	.7
Previous cohabitation		
Yes	24	8.7
No	252	91.3

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Sample Demographics

Category	<u>n</u>	%
Plan to legally marry in the future		
Yes	267	97.1
No	8	2.9
Number of people dated		
0	10	3.7
1 or 2	43	15.8
3 to 5	98	35.9
6 to 10	65	23.8
11 to 20	49	17.9
More than 20	8	2.9
Ideal age for most people to marry		
16-19	2	.8
20-21	13	5.0
22-23	76	28.7
24	56	21.1
25	76	28.7
26-28	36	13.6
29-30	6	2.3

Number of relationships			EXCLUSIVE		WITHOUT THE DISCUSSION		THE DISCUSSION			
	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%	<u>n</u>	%
0	27	10.0	126	47.2	70	25.8	119	44.2	258	94.2
1	44	16.4	46	17.2	90	33.2	111	41.3	15	5.5
2	49	18.2	35	13.1	54	19.9	33	12.3	1	.4
3-4	64	23.8	43	16.1	42	15.5	6	2.2	0	0.0
5-7	42	15.2	12	4.5	12	4.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
8-10	16	5.9	4	1.5	2	.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
More than 10	27	9.8	1	.4	1	.4	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 3

Length of longest relationship

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Months	<u>n</u>	%
0	3	1.2
1-2	13	5.0
3-4	19	7.4
5-6	26	10.1
7-8	13	5.1
9-10	21	8.1
11-12	15	5.8
13-17	24	9.4
18	14	5.4
19-23	15	5.9
24	17	6.6
25-29	20	7.9
30	9	3.5
31-35	5	2.0
36-47	24	9.4
48-59	7	2.8
60-71	8	3.1
72-84	4	1.6
84-96	1	.4

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Table 4

Seriousness of most serious relationship

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Level	<u>n</u>	%
1 (Low)	9	3.4
2	2	.8
3	9	3.4
4	13	4.9
5	26	9.8
6	23	8.7
7	54	20.4
8	43	16.2
9 (High)	86	32.5

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Table 5

Gender by Relationship Experience

Category	Male (n)	Female (n)
Relationship history ( $X^2=.77$ )		
None	4	4
Low	27	50
Moderate	37	53
High	35	52
Length of longest relationship ( $X^2=.70$ )		
None	2	1
Low	33	51
Moderate	32	44
High	35	60
Seriousness ( $X^2=.75$ )		
Low	33	49
Moderate	38	59
High	30	56

Table 6

Means and (Standard Deviations) of Affection and Leisure Clusters

	Affection			Leisure		
	Wife n=257	Husband n = 258	Combined n = 25	Wife n = 252	Husband n = 251	Combined n = 243
Range	3-15	3-15	6-30	8-40	8-40	16-80
Relationship history						
None	11.00 (2.67)	10.38 (2.19)	21.38 (4.90)	23.63 (7.19)	23.87 (7.22)	47.50 (14.23)
Low	11.71 (2.19)	11.93 (2.22)	23.75 (4.22)	26.65 (5.99)	27.48 (6.28)	54.21 (11.62)
Moderate	12.03 (1.81)	11.88 (2.11)	23.91 (3.51)	28.59 (5.37)	28.44 (5.56)	57.06 (10.71)
High	12.26 (1.84)	12.11 (2.01)	24.43 (3.48)	27.98 (5.48)	27.88 (5.71)	55.86 (10.00)
Length of longest relationship						
None	10.00 (3.00)	11.00 (4.58)	21.00 (7.55)	29.67 (8.39)	30.67 (10.12)	60.33 (18.50)
Low	11.65 (1.93)	11.80 (2.00)	23.56 (3.64)	27.37 (5.17)	27.74 (5.46)	55.40 (10.03)
Moderate	12.31 (1.74)	12.08 (1.85)	24.42 (3.07)	28.44 (5.75)	28.49 (6.00)	57.19 (11.47)
High	12.18 (2.09)	12.10 (2.42)	24.28 (4.29)	27.80 (6.09)	28.18 (6.23)	55.73 (11.96)

(table continues)



Table 6 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of Affection and Leisure clusters

	Affection			Leisure		
	Wife n=257	Husband n = 258	Combined n = 25	Wife n = 252	Husband n = 251	Combined n = 243
Seriousness						
Low	11.45 (2.02)	11.52 (2.09)	23.10 (3.68)	27.48 (5.25)	27.66 (5.86)	55.63 (10.47)
Moderate	12.11 (1.96)	12.05 (2.08)	24.19 (3.73)	28.00 (5.42)	28.17 (5.41)	56.22 (10.79)
High	12.40 (1.79)	12.34 (2.13)	24.73 (3.72)	28.12 (6.26)	28.54 (6.40)	56.44 (12.12)

Table 7

ANOVA for Affection and Leisure Clusters based on Relationship Experience

	Affection			Leisure		
	df	F	p	df	F	p
Relationship history						
Wives	3	.92	.434	3	1.64	.182
Husbands	3	1.74	.160	3	1.26	.291
Combined	3	1.40	.244	3	1.48	.221
Length of longest relationship						
Wives	3	2.84	.039*	3	.55	.650
Husbands	3	.53	.661	3	.39	.763
Combined	3	1.46	.227	3	.49	.692
Seriousness						
Wives	2	5.27	.006**	2	3.96	.748
Husbands	2	3.22	.042*	2	.46	.634
Combined	2	3.96	.020*	2	.11	.897

\* =  $p < .05$  , \*\* =  $p < .01$

Table 8

## ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) for Gift Giving Items and Relationship Experience

	Surprising spouse with little gifts		Giving each other gifts	
	Husbands $n = 259$	Wives $n = 255$	Husbands $n = 255$	Wives $n = 258$
	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	
Relationship history	$F(3, 2.82), p < .040^*$	$F(3, 2.84), p < .039^*$	$F(3, 1.84), p < .141$	$F(3, 1.75), p < .157$
None	2.50 (.93)	2.75 (.46)	2.88 (1.13)	2.63 (.92)
Low	3.43 (1.12)	3.13 (1.18)	3.41 (1.13)	3.35 (1.13)
Moderate	3.37 (1.12)	3.18 (1.08)	3.09 (1.13)	3.07 (1.15)
High	3.62 (1.10)	3.53 (1.02)	3.38 (1.10)	3.35 (1.20)
Length of relationship	$F(3, .095), p < .963$	$F(3, 3.06), p < .029^*$	$F(3, 1.90), p < .130$	$F(3, .84), p < .471$
None	3.33 (1.53)	3.67 (1.15)	3.33 (1.53)	3.67 (1.15)
Low	3.48 (1.00)	3.02 (1.09)	3.15 (1.09)	3.21 (1.13)
Moderate	3.53 (1.07)	3.51 (1.02)	3.57 (1.02)	3.45 (1.11)
High	3.55 (1.21)	3.39 (1.12)	3.28 (1.21)	3.22 (1.23)

\* =  $p < .05$ 

(table continues)

Table 8 (continued)

ANOVA Means, and (Standard Deviations) for Gift Giving Items and Relationship Experience

	Surprising spouse with little gifts		Giving each other gifts	
	Husbands $n = 259$ Mean (SD)	Wives $n = 255$ Mean (SD)	Husbands $n = 255$ Mean (SD)	Wives $n = 258$ Mean (SD)
Seriousness	$F(2, 1.88), p < .155$		$F(2, 1.56), p < .212$	
Low	3.30 (1.11)	3.05 (1.07)	3.13 (1.08)	3.20 (1.12)
Moderate	3.52 (1.04)	3.32 (1.04)	3.42 (1.03)	3.32 (1.11)
High	3.63 (1.17)	3.49 (1.16)	3.33 (1.25)	3.26 (1.26)

\* =  $p < .05$

Table 9  
ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) of Religion, Friends and Family, Conflict Resolution, and Financial Clusters

	Religion $n = 255$	Friends and Family $n = 248$	Conflict Resolution $n = 250$	Financial $n = 247$
Husbands and Wives Scores Combined				
Range	4-20	8-40	6-30	6-30
Relationship history	$F(3, 2.06), p < .106$	$F(3, 1.04), p < .370$	$F(3, .32), p < .813$	$F(3, .93), p < .429$
None	17.86 (2.85)	26.63 (3.42)	28.13 (1.25)	20.88 (1.89)
Low	16.93 (4.40)	28.49 (5.03)	27.86 (2.31)	22.31 (4.01)
Moderate	15.26 (5.00)	29.46 (5.40)	27.62 (2.35)	22.90 (3.51)
High	16.20 (4.73)	28.63 (5.33)	27.93 (2.46)	22.73 (3.91)
Length of longest relationship	$F(3, 1.35), p < .258$	$F(3, .74), p < .527$	$F(3, 1.27), p < .285$	$F(3, .91), p < .437$
None	18.67 (2.31)	27.00 (2.65)	29.00 (1.00)	22.00 (1.00)
Low	16.33 (4.57)	28.73 (4.59)	27.42 (2.54)	22.14 (3.75)
Moderate	16.54 (4.25)	29.64 (5.57)	27.84 (2.21)	23.15 (4.05)
High	15.34 (5.27)	28.58 (5.55)	28.04 (2.36)	22.64 (3.64)

(table continues)

Table 9 (continued)

ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) of Religion, Friends and Family, Conflict Resolution, and Financial Clusters

	Religion $n = 255$	Friends and Family $n = 248$	Conflict Resolution $n = 250$	Financial $n = 247$
Husbands and Wives Scores Combined				
Seriousness	$F(2, 2.04), p < .133$	$F(2, .23), p < .793$	$F(2, .73), p < .483$	$F(2, .85), p < .428$
Low	8.41 (2.23)	29.22 (4.56)	27.68 (2.30)	22.81 (4.03)
Moderate	7.70 (2.33)	28.82 (5.20)	27.68 (2.23)	22.27 (3.27)
High	8.12 (2.44)	28.67 (5.79)	28.06 (2.56)	22.98 (4.05)

Table 10

Items with the Largest Discrepancies between Husband and Wife Means (significance not indicated)

	Husband (M)	Wife (M)	Discrepancy
Being employed	4.57+	3.54	1.03
Accepting spouse's refusal to engage in sex	4.03+	3.57	.44
Working together on household repairs	4.08+	3.69	.39
Being the primary caretaker of children	2.85	3.22+	.37
Responding to spouse's sexual requests	4.06+	3.77	.29
Allowing spouse to take major role in disciplining their children	2.70	2.98+	.28
Complimenting spouse	4.50+	4.24	.26
Ensuring spouse has a good time	3.78+	3.54	.24
Helping spouse with household chores	3.76+	3.53	.23
Initiating sexual advances	3.82+	3.61	.21

Note: + = Higher mean

Table 11

ANOVA Means, and (Standard Deviations) of Affection, Sex, and Leisure Clusters by Gender

	Males	Females	Range	<u>n</u>	df	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Affection							
Wives	12.01 (2.13)	11.95 (1.88)	3-15	271	1	.07	.796
Husbands	11.08 (2.38)	12.01 (1.96)	3-15	272	1	.63	.428
Combined	23.85 (4.18)	24.01 (3.55)	5-30	267	1	.12	.726
Sex							
Wives	27.56 (4.40)	27.04 (4.36)	7-35	264	1	.87	.352
Husbands	28.52 (4.33)	28.10 (4.25)	7-35	267	1	.61	.435
Combined	56.09 (8.43)	55.24 (8.25)	14-70	259	1	.64	.424
Leisure							
Wives	28.11 (5.42)	27.47 (5.88)	8-40	266	1	.78	.378
Husbands	28.92 (5.50)	27.40 (6.07)	8-40	265	1	4.28	.039*
Combined	57.07 (10.45)	54.99 (11.62)	16-80	256	1	2.09	.150

\* =  $p < .05$



Table 12

ANOVA, Means, and (Standard Deviations) for Items

	Males	Females	<u>n</u>	df	<u>F</u>	p
Listening to spouse						
Wives	4.56 (.60)	4.73 (.66)	271	1	4.44	.036*
Husbands	4.63 (.69)	4.81 (.47)	274	1	6.45	.012*
Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse						
Wives	4.51 (.74)	4.78 (.48)	270	1	13.61	.000***
Husbands	4.54 (.69)	4.74 (.52)	274	1	7.81	.006**
Comforting spouse						
Wives	4.54 (.65)	4.77 (.46)	269	1	11.51	.001***
Husbands	4.68 (.56)	4.81 (.47)	273	1	3.99	.047*
Not discussing couple's relationship with friends or family						
Wives	3.34 (1.16)	3.18 (1.14)	270	1	1.36	.245
Husbands	3.52 (1.06)	3.19 (1.20)	274	1	5.47	.020*

\* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$ , \*\*\* =  $p < .001$

Table 13

Most Important Marital Standards as Indicated by Respondents

Item	<u>Husband</u>		<u>Wife</u>	
	<u>M</u>	Rank	<u>M</u>	Rank
Feeling love for spouse	4.90	2	4.91	1
Treating spouse with respect	4.95	1	4.85	2*
Telling spouse he/she is loved	4.86	3	4.82	4
Discussing problems within the marriage	4.85	4	4.85	2*
Confiding in spouse	4.77	7	4.79	5
Admiring spouse as a person	4.84	5	4.77	6*
Sharing important decision- making with spouse	4.78	6	4.75	8
Sharing feelings of contentment, or happiness with spouse	4.76	8*	4.77	6*
Comforting spouse	4.76	8*	4.68	9*
Listening to wife	4.74	10	4.66	11
Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse	4.66	12	4.68	9*

\* indicates tie

Table 14

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
	<u>n</u> = 104	<u>n</u> = 166	<u>n</u> = 270	<u>n</u> = 107	<u>n</u> = 166	<u>n</u> = 273
Hugging or kissing	4.48 (.75)	4.65 (.58)	4.58 (.65)	4.33 (.93)	4.67 (.62)	4.54 (.77)
Working together on household repairs	3.51 (1.19)	3.80 (1.05)	3.69 (1.11)	3.98 (1.09)	4.14 (.90)	4.08 (.98)
Participating in religious activities together	3.97 (1.24)	4.22 (1.16)	4.12 (1.20)	3.91 (1.34)	4.22 (1.17)	4.10 (1.24)
Telling spouse he/she is loved	4.70 (.52)	4.90 (.37)	4.82 (.45)	4.80 (.64)	4.90 (.35)	4.86 (.49)
Being tolerant of spouse's friends	3.87 (.90)	3.89 (.85)	3.88 (.87)	3.81 (.92)	3.86 (.86)	3.84 (.88)
Discussing problems within the marriage	4.77 (.47)	4.90 (.31)	4.85 (.38)	4.76 (.47)	4.92 (.28)	4.85 (.37)
Having a child if spouse wants one	3.74 (1.00)	3.45 (1.07)	3.56 (1.05)	3.84 (.94)	3.58 (1.01)	3.68 (.99)
Sticking to a budget	4.23 (.79)	4.33 (.85)	4.29 (.83)	4.26 (.79)	4.25 (.89)	4.26 (.85)
Touching affectionately, cuddling, holding hands	4.30 (.84)	4.53 (.67)	4.44 (.75)	4.20 (.98)	4.52 (.69)	4.39 (.83)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Hanging out together	4.47 (.79)	4.66 (.59)	4.58 (.68)	4.43 (.87)	4.63 (.66)	4.55 (.76)
Doing what spouse asks	3.48 (.99)	3.30 (1.01)	3.37 (1.01)	3.59 (.95)	3.41 (.90)	3.48 (.92)
Sharing spiritual beliefs with spouse	3.63 (1.34)	4.16 (1.16)	3.95 (1.26)	3.66 (1.38)	4.16 (1.18)	3.96 (1.28)
Complimenting spouse	4.02 (1.00)	4.37 (.82)	4.24 (.91)	4.53 (.77)	4.48 (.78)	4.50 (.78)
Spending time with in-laws	3.42 (1.02)	3.64 (1.00)	3.55 (1.01)	3.28 (1.09)	3.57 (1.07)	3.46 (1.09)
Attending a movie, play, concert together	4.00 (.91)	3.89 (1.06)	3.93 (1.01)	3.99 (1.00)	3.90 (1.07)	3.93 (1.05)
Talking to spouse when he/she asks for attention	4.33 (.77)	4.40 (.74)	4.38 (.75)	4.51 (.69)	4.49 (.66)	4.50 (.67)
Treating spouse with respect	4.75 (.51)	4.90 (.32)	4.85 (.41)	4.91 (.32)	4.97 (.17)	4.95 (.24)
Apologizing	4.28 (.88)	4.43 (.86)	4.37 (.87)	4.46 (.73)	4.54 (.72)	4.51 (.72)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Satisfying spouse sexually	4.38 (.88)	4.18 (.89)	4.26 (.89)	4.49 (.81)	4.22 (.89)	4.33 (.87)
Being the primary caretaker of children	3.24 (1.01)	3.20 (1.10)	3.22 (1.07)	2.96 (.91)	2.78 (.90)	2.85 (.90)
Giving massages	3.23 (1.24)	2.77 (1.20)	2.94 (1.23)	3.28 (1.22)	2.83 (1.27)	3.00 (1.27)
Helping pay spouse's debt accumulated before marriage	2.48 (1.37)	2.45 (1.17)	2.46 (1.25)	3.06 (1.28)	2.38 (1.17)	2.65 (1.26)
Shopping together	2.99 (1.18)	3.01 (1.22)	3.00 (1.20)	3.02 (1.22)	2.73 (1.23)	2.84 (1.23)
Obedying spouse's requests	3.41 (1.03)	3.15 (1.10)	3.25 (1.08)	3.54 (.90)	3.18 (.96)	3.32 (.95)
Sharing important decision-making with spouse	4.64 (.64)	4.83 (.44)	4.75 (.53)	4.72 (.51)	4.83 (.43)	4.78 (.46)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Sharing feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment with spouse	4.51 (.74)	4.78 (.48)	4.68 (.61)	4.54 (.69)	4.74 (.52)	4.66 (.60)
Calling to tell spouse where he/she is	3.90 (.95)	3.89 (.97)	3.90 (.96)	3.80 (.99)	4.00 (.91)	3.92 (.95)
Listening to spouse	4.56 (.60)	4.73 (.66)	4.66 (.64)	4.63 (.69)	4.81 (.47)	4.74 (.57)
Surprising spouse with little gifts	3.19 (1.22)	3.33 (.99)	3.28 (1.09)	3.66 (1.17)	3.33 (1.05)	3.46 (1.11)
Responding to spouse's sexual requests	3.92 (1.05)	3.67 (1.00)	3.77 (1.03)	4.31 (.87)	3.89 (.87)	4.06 (.89)
Working out together	3.01 (1.21)	2.88 (1.14)	2.93 (1.17)	3.04 (1.12)	2.90 (1.14)	2.95 (1.13)
Allowing spouse to take the major role in disciplining children	3.07 (1.09)	2.93 (1.14)	2.98 (1.12)	2.83 (1.12)	2.61 (.94)	2.70 (1.02)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Not discussing couple's relationship						
with friends or family	3.34 (1.16)	3.18 (1.14)	3.24 (1.15)	3.52 (1.06)	3.19 (1.20)	3.32 (1.16)
Playing sports together	2.79 (1.15)	2.74 (1.20)	2.76 (1.18)	2.94 (1.10)	2.79 (1.20)	2.85 (1.16)
Helping spouse with household chores	3.52 (1.09)	3.54 (1.09)	3.53 (1.09)	3.78 (1.02)	3.74 (.96)	3.76 (.98)
Feeling love for spouse	4.88 (.36)	4.93 (.37)	4.91 (.36)	4.83 (.47)	4.95 (.29)	4.90 (.37)
Being employed	3.24 (1.34)	3.73 (1.16)	3.54 (1.25)	4.69 (.67)	4.49 (.89)	4.57 (.82)
Accepting spouse's refusal to engage						
in sexual activity	3.35 (1.31)	3.74 (1.13)	3.59 (1.22)	3.89 (1.16)	4.13 (.94)	4.03 (1.04)
Eating out together	3.89 (.98)	3.64 (1.11)	3.74 (1.07)	3.97 (.92)	3.65 (1.11)	3.78 (1.05)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Letting spouse know when he/she has done something he/she does not like	4.60 (.58)	4.57 (.62)	4.58 (.60)	4.48 (.72)	4.43 (.71)	4.45 (.71)
Confiding in spouse	4.72 (.55)	4.84 (.42)	4.79 (.47)	4.58 (.73)	4.89 (.33)	4.77 (.54)
Forgiving spouse for a mistake	4.58 (.63)	4.70 (.64)	4.66 (.64)	4.57 (.75)	4.74 (.56)	4.67 (.65)
Sharing feelings of contentment or happiness with spouse	4.62 (.60)	4.87 (.39)	4.77 (.49)	4.61 (.72)	4.86 (.40)	4.76 (.56)
Engaging in sexual intercourse	4.46 (.84)	4.27 (.97)	4.34 (.92)	4.43 (.84)	4.29 (.96)	4.34 (.91)
Helping spouse to solve problems	4.37 (.74)	4.52 (.66)	4.46 (.69)	4.57 (.60)	4.56 (.62)	4.56 (.61)
Comforting spouse	4.54 (.65)	4.77 (.46)	4.68 (.55)	4.68 (.56)	4.81 (.47)	4.76 (.51)

(table continues)



Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Being open about sexual expectations	4.38 (.71)	4.27 (.80)	4.32 (.77)	4.29 (.88)	4.32 (.85)	4.31 (.86)
Telling spouse he/she is liked	4.56 (.65)	4.69 (.62)	4.64 (.63)	4.67 (.58)	4.72 (.51)	4.70 (.54)
Respecting spouse's wishes when he/she does not want to discuss something	3.88 (.95)	3.89 (.97)	3.88 (.96)	4.08 (.84)	4.08 (.87)	4.08 (.86)
Expressing approval for something spouse did	4.13 (.82)	4.33 (.82)	4.25 (.82)	4.30 (.84)	4.33 (.86)	4.32 (.85)
Giving each other gifts	3.43 (1.24)	3.13 (1.09)	3.25 (1.16)	3.46 (1.19)	3.19 (1.06)	3.30 (1.12)
Ensuring spouse has a good time	3.69 (1.05)	3.45 (1.03)	3.54 (1.04)	4.07 (.95)	3.59 (.94)	3.78 (.97)
Sharing past sexual history	3.13 (1.52)	3.43 (1.42)	3.31 (1.47)	3.22 (1.45)	3.54 (1.42)	3.41 (1.44)

(table continues)

Table 14 (continued)

Means and (Standard Deviations) of All Items

Item	<u>Wife</u>			<u>Husband</u>		
	Males <u>n</u> = 104	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 270	Males <u>n</u> = 107	Females <u>n</u> = 166	Total <u>n</u> = 273
Going somewhere with spouse he/she						
did not want to go	3.22 (1.05)	3.20 (.99)	3.21 (1.01)	3.49 (.94)	3.25 (.89)	3.34 (.92)
Making an effort to get along with						
spouse's friends	3.74 (.95)	3.74 (.88)	3.74 (.91)	3.71 (.94)	3.71 (.83)	3.71 (.88)
Admiring spouse as a person	4.69 (.61)	4.82 (.49)	4.77 (.54)	4.79 (.43)	4.87 (.42)	4.84 (.42)
Being tolerant of spouse's behavior	3.94 (1.01)	3.96 (.84)	3.96 (.91)	4.08 (.89)	4.04 (.82)	4.06 (.85)
Initiating sexual advances	3.89 (1.19)	3.42 (1.02)	3.61 (1.11)	3.93 (1.06)	3.74 (1.04)	3.82 (1.05)
Having personal desire to have a child	3.89 (1.02)	3.85 (1.28)	3.87 (1.18)	3.81 (1.16)	3.76 (1.29)	3.78 (1.24)
Being open about the way money is spent	4.34 (.77)	4.45 (.80)	4.41 (.79)	4.42 (.73)	4.49 (.75)	4.46 (.74)

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Oklahoma State University  
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 10/2/02

Date: Wednesday, October 03, 2001

IRB Application No HE0216

Proposal Title: STANDARDS OF MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS THE INFLUENCE OF RELATIONSHIP  
EXPERIENCE AND GENDER

Principal  
Investigator(s)

Suzanne Jones  
700 W. Scott #215  
Stillwater, OK 74075

Reviewed and  
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

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Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

## VITA<sup>2</sup>

Suzanne Danielle Jones

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: STANDARDS OF MARITAL RELATIONSHIPS: THE INFLUENCE OF  
RELATIONSHIP EXPERIENCE AND GENDER

Major Field: Family Relations and Child Development

Specialization: Marriage and Family Therapy

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Louisburg, Kansas on August 17, 1977, the daughter of  
Ronald and Ellen Jones.

Education: Graduated from Louisburg High School, Louisburg, Kansas in May  
1995; received Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from Kansas State  
University, Manhattan, Kansas in May 1999. Completed the requirements for  
the Master of Science degree with a major in Family Relations and Child  
Development with a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy at  
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December 2001.

Experience: Employed by Oklahoma State University, Department of Family  
Relations and Child Development as a graduate teaching and research assistant.  
Marriage and Family Therapy Intern at the Center for Family Services,  
Stillwater, Oklahoma and Family and Children's Services, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Professional Memberships: American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy,  
National Council of Family Relations.