

RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS  
WITH PARTNERS OF SIMILAR AND  
DISSIMILAR CAREERS

By

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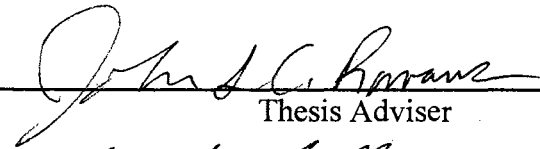
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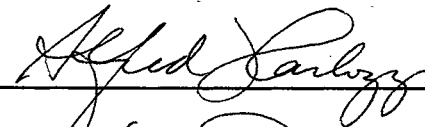
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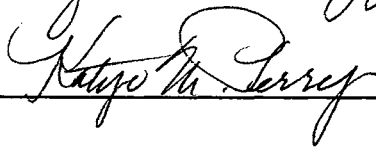
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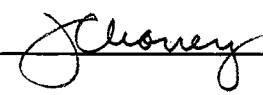
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Chapter  | Page |
|--|------|
| I. INTRODUCTION .....  | 1    |
| Statement of the Problem .....                                       | 1    |
| Overview of Related Theories .....                                   | 2    |
| Definitions of Related Terms .....                                   | 7    |
| Research Questions and Underlying Hypotheses .....                   | 8    |
| Significance of the Study .....                                      | 9    |
| Organization of the Study .....                                      | 10   |
| II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....                                   | 11   |
| Introduction .....   | 11   |
| Relationship Satisfaction: Theory & Supporting Research .....        | 11   |
| Summary: Relationship Satisfaction Theory & Supporting Research ...  | 24   |
| Relationship Satisfaction: Other Associated Variables .....          | 25   |
| Summary: Relationship Satisfaction: Other Associated Variables ..... | 30   |
| Dual-Career Couples .....  | 31   |
| Holland's Congruence .....   | 36   |
| Psychologists .....  | 38   |
| Summary: Psychologists .....   | 42   |
| Conclusion .....   | 44   |
| III. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN .....                                    | 45   |
| Participants .....   | 45   |
| Instrumentation .....  | 46   |
| Procedure .....  | 50   |
| Analysis .....   | 51   |
| IV. RESULTS .....  | 52   |
| Introduction .....   | 52   |
| Participants .....   | 52   |
| Research Questions & Null Hypotheses .....                           | 54   |
| Statistical Analysis .....   | 54   |
| Means and Standard Deviations .....                                  | 55   |
| Supplemental Analysis .....  | 58   |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| V. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS ..... | 63 |
| Introduction .....                                  | 63 |
| Summary of the Study .....                          | 63 |
| Statistical Findings .....                          | 64 |
| Discussion of Results .....                         | 64 |
| Limitations .....                                   | 68 |
| Directions for Future Research .....                | 69 |
| Summary and Conclusions .....                       | 70 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....                                  | 71 |
| APPENDIXES .....                                    | 82 |
| APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER .....                      | 83 |
| APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION .....           | 84 |
| APPENDIX C: CAREER COMMITMENT MEASURE .....         | 86 |
| APPENDIX D: DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE .....           | 87 |
| APPENDIX E: MARITAL SATISFACTION SCALE .....        | 89 |
| APPENDIX F: IRB REVIEW FORM .....                   | 91 |

## LIST OF TABLES

| Table  | Page |
|--|------|
| I. Summary of DAS & MSS Mean Scores for Gender, Career Match, & CCM. . . . . | 56   |

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of the Problem

The practice of psychotherapy is influential with clients as a function of the emanation of the *person* of the practitioner (Wilson, 1984). Although there are techniques and theories supporting the practice of psychotherapy, they do not themselves constitute treatment. "No technique supersedes the importance of the therapist. Therapy is, at all times, a human encounter" (LaPierre, 1979, p. 882). The intensely personal nature of applied psychology exerts an introspective force on many of its trainees (Ford, 1963), which highlights the uniqueness of this field.

Toward the end of graduate training, students begin to identify themselves as therapists (Flapan, 1984); that is, they have developed a professional identity. There is less pretense, little contrived "faking" of a role. They are more genuine in therapy sessions and appear "real" to their clients (Flapan, 1984). This is due to a gradual transformation of identity at both professional and personal levels (Bruss & Kopala, 1993). The transformation comes both from internalizing the philosophies of psychology and experience providing therapy. Since the practice of psychology requires lengthy, laborious training that is innately personal, psychologists may be as likely to exhibit unique relationship transformations as they do personal and professional identity evolution.



Previous research has suggested that people tend to establish and maintain relationships with partners similar to themselves (Byrne, 1971; Whyte, 1990). This may be especially true for psychologists whose training for professional work often takes them through an identity transformation. This study attempts to examine the extent to which perceptions of relationship satisfaction among psychologists is associated with the similarity or dissimilarity of the career of their significant-other partners. There is a wealth of literature on relationship satisfaction in general (Bradbury & Fincham, 1989; Craddock, 1983; Cupach & Metts, 1986; Davis & Oathout, 1987; Hardesty & Betz, 1980; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1992; Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962), and more specifically for dual-career couples (Albrecht, & White, 1984, Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Gilbert & Constantine, 1996; Nicola & Hawkes, 1985; Ray, 1988; Rotheram & Weiner, 1983; Shrivastava, 1995; Thomas) but no studies have focused on psychologists in particular. This study attempts to fill that gap in the literature.

#### Overview of Related Theories

Homan's exchange theory (1961) may rightly be called the foundation for several other theories in the area of relationship satisfaction. Exchange theory explains the maintenance of relationships in terms of giving and receiving attention, communication, understanding, and commitment, among other things. It is a theory of balance between costs and rewards, positing that people will maintain relationships as long as the benefits outweigh the costs.

Interdependence theory, developed by Thibaut & Kelly (1959; Kelly & Thibaut, 1978) was based on exchange notions. It posits that the outcomes for any participant in an ongoing interaction can be stated in terms of perceived rewards and costs. The outcomes are evaluated for acceptability in terms of the individual's standards for an "attractive" relationship, that is according to the standard the participant believes he or she deserves. Comparisons are also made using the lowest level of outcomes the individual will accept in light of available alternatives. The degree to which perceived outcomes in the relationship exceed the standard set against available alternatives determines how greatly the person depends on the dyad for further favorable outcomes. In relationships, each partner's dependence is the basis for the other partner's power.

Rusbult's (1983) investment model is an extension of interdependence theory, sharing the idea that individuals will be more likely to stay in relationships when they provide and experience high rewards and low costs. The investment model adds that individuals will be more satisfied in relationships, and therefore more likely to maintain them, when they exceed their generalized expectations and comparison level. That is, people will be more committed to their relationships when they perceive that the quality of alternative eligible partners is relatively poor. This perception of alternatives is supposed to be formed in the same exchange tradition, according to the perceived rewards and costs.

Walster, Bercheid, and Walster (1973) extended exchange theory another way to include "equity," the fair distribution of rewards between partners. Equity theory

contends that if partners feel they are either under- or overbenefited, their satisfaction with the relationship will decrease.

Clearly, exchange theory and its successors (interdependence, investment, and equity theory) concern themselves with the need people have for more rewards than costs in relationships. Winch (1952) formulated a theory of compatibility through complementarity that also attempts to explain relationship needs in mate selection. Complementarity is the meeting of needs of one partner using needs of the other. An example would be a partner with a high need to express affection in a relationship with someone who had a high need for affection. From Winch's viewpoint, people tend to select and keep partners who are perceived to provide maximum need gratification. Homans (1961) might concur, and contend that the eligible partners would be the ones who offer more rewarding interactions than costly ones in relationships, thereby meeting needs more effectively. Winch's (1952) theory pinpoints the individual differences people have in terms of what they need in relationships. He suggested that compatible partners may share not only similar but also complementary qualities.

Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) followed Winch's theory with a sequential filtering model that is sensitive to the changing needs for types of similarity in the relationship over time. During the initial mate selection process, need for identification with similarities in social status is more important than later in the relationship, when similarity in personal values emerges as salient.

Another theoretical underpinning in relationship satisfaction research is the contextual model (Bradbury & Fincham, 1989). As its name suggests, the model is

concerned with the contexts in which partners interact in their relationships. Both the short-term day-to-day context and the long-term intrinsic characteristics context influence perceptions of interactions between partners and ultimately their satisfaction with the relationship.

The contextual notion of the perception of an interaction functioning as reality for individuals is also shared by the cognitive mediational model (Digisueppe & Zee, 1986), which was tested by DeBord, Romans, & Krieshok (1996). This model posited that idiosyncratic perceptions of interactions between partners is more important than the interactions themselves. Further, the perceptions of interactions are influenced by beliefs partners have previously formed about relationships in general.

Holland (1985) posited that people are interested in and choose occupational environments that are congruent with their personality types. In extrapolating his notion of congruence, it seems logical that people would be more satisfied with partners who have personalities congruent with their own. Holland (1985) contends that congruent types of personalities facilitate attraction, mutual understanding, and enjoyment because similar personality types are reinforcing for one another.

The rationale for this study is from components of these prominent relationship theories. From the interdependence and investment theories, the notion of comparison with available alternative partners, which is formed according to perceived rewards and costs; from Winch's notion that compatible partners share similar and complementary qualities that provide maximum need gratification; and from Holland's theory of the attraction of congruent personality types.

The issue of career salience, the relative importance of career and work in one's life (Hardesty & Betz, 1980), has specific relevance to this study. In previous studies that looked at the moderation of career salience on relationship satisfaction, a strong effect was found (Hardesty & Betz, 1980), especially in the case of women's career salience. Sekaran (1996) found that career orientation (career salience and job involvement) had a stronger relationship with satisfaction in work and nonwork spheres than did gender. In this study, it is hypothesized that career salience may mediate the extent to which career similarity of the partner is associated with relationship satisfaction of the psychologist. That is, the more committed the psychologist is to his or her career, the more he or she might be attracted to other mental health professionals with similar commitments.

The work of psychologists toward acquiring therapeutic capacity often serves to expand personal understanding and identity (Ford, 1963). Attraction to and satisfaction with partners with similar developmental experiences and value for this work may be especially strong for this population. This research uses the investment notion (Rusbult, 1983) that people are more likely to maintain and be satisfied in relationships in which they perceive higher rewards and lower costs, as well as poor alternative partner choices. Also, it implements Winch's (1952) notion that people will feel drawn to partners with similar or complementary needs, and Kerkhoff and Davis's (1962) sequential filtering idea that similarity in personal values becomes important for maintenance of relationship satisfaction. Both of these aspects gain even more importance with psychologists as the population of interest. The nature of the training, as mentioned earlier, is both arduous and personally penetrating. It would seem that this population would be even more

drawn to partners with similar or complementary values, and that the higher rewards from interacting with this type of partner as well as the relatively few alternative similar partners would further enhance relationship satisfaction of psychologists with partners of similar careers.

### Definitions of Related Terms

**Psychologist:** For this study, psychologists included are randomly selected Health Service Provider members of the American Psychological Association.

**Career Salience/Commitment:** The perceived importance of career in one's total life.

**Partner:** An unrelated adult who is the participant's spouse, significant other, or boyfriend/girlfriend. Marriage is not required for participation.

**Relationship:** Any exclusive, romantic union between partners. It includes but is not limited to marriage. Other relationships (either gay/lesbian or heterosexual) to be included in the study are nonmarried cohabiting relationships and separate-residence dating relationships.

**Career similarity:** Since participants are Health Service Provider Psychologists, partners with "professional-similar" careers are those who work in a professional therapeutic capacity in the mental health field. These careers include: psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC's), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT's), and LPC or LMFT-eligible master's level therapists. Partners with "professional-dissimilar" careers are those who have an assured competence or advanced study in a particular field

not related to mental health. Examples of these careers include: attorneys, architects, nurses, physical therapists, college professors, elementary and high school teachers, administrators, physicians, veterinarians, dentists, accountants, financial analysts, marketing executives, engineers, and biologists. Partners with “nonprofessional-dissimilar” careers are those who are not qualified members of professional groups. Examples of these types of employment are: food service workers, nurses’ assistants, bank tellers, salespeople, secretaries and receptionists, mechanics, custodians, postal workers, and landscapers.

Relationship satisfaction: Respondent’s perception of happiness and/or contentment with his/her relationship.

#### Research Questions and Underlying Hypotheses

1. Relationship satisfaction for psychologists may be influenced by few alternative choices of partners who share similar needs, interests, and values common to people in the mental health service profession. That is, psychologists may tend to be more satisfied in relationships with those who share similar careers than will psychologists who are in relationships with partners who do not have in common their professional identity. Psychologists may be more attracted to people who are most similar to them in terms of personal value of professional practice and interests in the mental health profession. Therefore, to what extent will psychologists who are partnered with other mental health professionals tend to report higher relationship satisfaction than those with partners of dissimilar careers? In other words, to what extent will scores on

the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Marital Satisfaction Scale (the two dependent variables) be affected by the independent variable of Career Match?

2. Psychologists who have high career salience may be more inclined to desire partners of similar careers than those with low career salience. Therefore, to what degree is career salience of the psychologist, an independent variable represented by scores on the Career Commitment Measure, associated with the extent to which the first hypothesis is supported?

3. Gender differences in predictors related to relationship satisfaction have documented in several studies (Bryson, Bryson, Licht, & Licht, 1976; Kurdek, 1991; Lamke, Lollie, Durbin, & Fitzpatrick, 1994; McGowen & Hart, 1990; Ray, 1988; Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984; Vera & Betz, 1992). Therefore, to what degree is the gender of the psychologist, an independent variable from the demographics page, associated with the extent to which the first hypothesis is supported?

#### Significance of the Study

The following study addresses psychologists as a population. It is the intent of this study to increase knowledge about variables important to the relationships of psychologists. Relationship satisfaction of psychologists in terms of a variety of demographic variables, including the career of their partners, may inspire further research into the personal and professional growth of professionals in this field. The results of the study may have implications for graduate training of psychologists. It may also provide



training directors with empirical evidence to assist them in preparing their students for life in this profession.

### Organization of the Study

The following chapter will provide an in-depth look at literature in the areas of relationship satisfaction in general and more specifically for dual career couples. It also covers Holland's career development theory of congruence and its relevance to the theoretical underpinnings of this research. Lastly, chapter two expands on the professional uniqueness of psychology and the relevance this research has to the field.

Chapter three outlines the methodology of the study. Specifically, it addresses selection of participants and instrumentation, the procedure of conducting the survey, and the planned statistical analysis.

Chapter four covers the statistical analysis and results. Chapter five covers discussion as well as limitations in the study and possible areas for future related research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Introduction

It is doubtful that people embark on relationships with little hope for positive outcome; yet “about one-half of all first marriages formed in recent years will end in divorce...with the peak period for divorce being two to five years after marriage” (U.S. Department of Commerce/Bureau of Census, 1987, as cited in Textor, 1994, p. viii). What it takes to keep people satisfied in their significant relationships is complicated and elusive. There are, however, various theories that lend themselves to the task of attempting to explain this dynamic.

#### Relationship Satisfaction: Theory & Supporting Research

Homans (1961) built a theory of relationship satisfaction through reinforcement called *exchange*. Developed upon the analogy of the marketplace, Homans explains exchange literally: giving and receiving goods and/or services in addition to incurring rewards and costs during the process. Exchange theory explains the maintenance of relationships in terms of giving and receiving attention, communication, understanding, and commitment, among other things.

Using exchange theory as a basis for hypotheses, Markman (1979) longitudinally investigated whether or not the exchange of mutually rewarding outcomes and minimizing costs would accurately predict future relationship satisfaction after two years. Markman assessed 26 couples from a Midwestern university who were planning marriage. At the time of the first survey, three predictors were assessed: reward level of communication, problem intensity, and relationship satisfaction. The second and third follow-ups were used to assess the couples' dating status and relationship satisfaction. All the couples participated in all three testing sessions, a somewhat unusual occurrence for longitudinal research, but certainly a desirable phenomenon.

Results indicated that unrewarding interaction patterns preceded the development of relationship dissatisfaction. That is, if couples reported unrewarding interaction patterns on the first questionnaire, they were unlikely to report dissatisfaction with their relationship at that time. The dissatisfaction showed up later. So, interactional differences between distressed and nondistressed couples in previous cross-sectional studies may not simply be consequences of existing distress. Interestingly, the second assessment done did not show distress in couples who had initially reported unrewarding communication patterns. The third assessment was where the distress was reported. It took between one and 2.5 years for the quality of the couple's interactions to affect global relationship satisfaction (Markman, 1979).

*Interdependence theory*, developed by Thibaut & Kelly (1959; Kelly & Thibaut, 1978) posits that perceived rewards and costs heavily inform the outcomes for any participant in an interaction. People evaluate the acceptability of the outcomes by

comparing them with individual standards for an “attractive” relationship, that is the standard the participant believes he or she deserves. People often make comparisons of outcomes while factoring in any perceived alternative partner opportunities. Their perception of alternatives may influence the lowest level of outcomes they will accept to maintain the relationship. How far the perceived outcomes in the relationship exceed the comparison made with available alternatives influences how greatly the person depends on the dyad for further favorable outcomes. Each partner’s dependence is the yardstick for the other partner’s power in the relationship.

Rusbult (1983) tested her *investment model* (Rusbult, 1983), a general extension of interdependence theory (Kelly & Thibaut, 1978), which followed exchange theory. Specifically, the investment model shares two important concepts with interdependence theory. Both theories define “satisfaction” as positive affect toward or attraction to one’s relationship, and “commitment” as the tenancy to maintain a relationship and feel psychologically attached to it (Rusbult, 1983).

The investment model argues that individuals will be more satisfied in their relationships when they provide and experience high rewards, low costs, and exceed their generalized expectations or comparison level:

Thus, if individuals share many common interests with their romantic partner (i.e., derive numerous rewards) with whom they seldom argue (i.e., incur few costs), and expect little from their romantic involvements more generally (i.e., have a low comparison level), then they should be relatively satisfied with their involvement. (Rusbult, 1983, p. 102)

With regard to commitment, investment theory proposes that people become more committed when they perceive that their quality of alternative partners is comparatively poor. Perception of alternative quality is formed in much the same way as satisfaction; that is, according to rewards and costs.

Rusbult tested this theory longitudinally over seven months on a sample of 34 undergraduate college students. It should be noted that students were volunteers who responded to a flyer, which may bias the sample. Every seventeen days participants completed questionnaires designed to measure perceived rewards, costs, alternatives, satisfaction and commitment. To assist participants in accurately perceiving abstract concepts like rewards, costs, and satisfaction, definitions for all the concepts were provided, as was assistance with general and specific questions. Participants participated for as long as the study would allow or until their relationships ended. In seven months, 29% of the participants' relationships ended. Results indicated that increased rewards predicted increased satisfaction, but variations in costs didn't effect satisfaction. Increased satisfaction and investment size, and poorer alternatives gave higher commitment for the entire sample. For men, alternatives alone didn't significantly impact commitment. With regard to the relationships that terminated during the course of the study as opposed to those which remained in tact, data indicated useful differences between "leavers" and "stayers." For stayers, perceived rewards, satisfaction, and level of commitment increased over time, whereas perceived costs only rose slightly. For leavers, perceived costs increased greatly as did alternative partner quality while perceived

rewards only increased slightly. Commitment, satisfaction, and overall investment all declined for leavers (Rusbult, 1983).

Simpson (1987) conducted a longitudinal study of factors involved in relationship stability and emotional distress following the breakup of a dating relationship. Simpson wanted to remedy the limitation of cross-sectional studies of relationship dissolution. The retrospective interpretations of events preceding breakup are prone to distortion in such research designs. Simpson reasoned that, following the interdependence/ investment model of relationship satisfaction (Kelly & Thibaut, 1978, Thibaut & Kelly, 1959), people would be satisfied in current relationships if rewards are high, costs are low, and alternatives are poor. There are ten factors that Simpson hypothesized would make a relationship less susceptible to dissolution, but would increase emotional distress if and when a relationship does dissolve: satisfaction with the partner, closeness of the relationship, the extent to which one is interdependent with a partner, relationship duration, quality of the best actual and imagined alternative dating partner(s), self-monitoring propensity (high self-monitoring gives high situationally influenced behavior), sexual activity in the relationship, and attitudes about unrestricted (unmonogamous) sex.

In this study, 234 undergraduate students in dating relationships participated, which required them to fill out an extensive questionnaire initially, and a somewhat shorter version of it three months later. 228 students were successfully contacted at the follow-up time. The questionnaires included measures of closeness (Berscheid, Snyder, & Omoto, 1987, as cited in Simpson, 1987), satisfaction, length and sexual nature of

relationship, best imagined and actual partner, exclusivity of the relationship, self-monitoring (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986, as cited in Simpson, 1987), and attitudes about sexual activity restriction. The follow-up survey included measures of relationship stability, intensity, and duration of emotional distress.

Simpson found that those who were still dating the same partners after three months were, as expected, more satisfied with the relationships, felt closer to their partners, and were more likely to have had sex with the partners. Similar to Rusbult's (1983) findings, the partners in these intact relationships imagined that future suitable alternative partners would be scarce. Furthermore, these partners reported that their actions were more inclined to reflect their own attitudes than they were to be responsive to situational cues of appropriateness (low self-monitoring). Lastly, the partners in intact relationships adopted restricted attitudes about engaging in casual sexual relations.

At a multivariate level, satisfaction with the relationship, length of the relationship, sexual nature of the relationship, and attitudes about engaging in casual sex continued to predict relationship stability when all other predictors were controlled (Simpson, 1987).

Simpson was also interested in the degree which these ten predictors could foretell the level of emotional distress in those relationships that terminated during the course of the study. Three of the ten factors--closeness, duration of the relationship, and perceived ease of finding an alternative partner--independently predicted the intensity and duration of emotional distress following a breakup.

Both Rusbult and Simpson's studies utilized samples from the undergraduate university student population. This limits the generalizability of the studies. In Rusbult's case, the study included a very small group (N=34) of undergraduates, which even further impacts the external validity. Another limitation both studies share is that of including the self-report of only one member of the dyad in question. Although these limitations do not negate the results of the studies, they should be a warning to interpret the findings with caution.

*Equity theory*, formed by Walster, Bercheid, and Walster (1973, 1976) contends that the presence of balance (equal distribution of rewards) and fairness (equity) between partners correlates positively with relationship satisfaction. If partners feel they are underbenefited or overbenefited in an inequitable relationship, they tend to report discontent and instability (Utne, Hatfield, Traupmann, & Greenberger, 1984).

Cate, Lloyd, Henton, and Larson (1982) measured equity (perception of fair rewards for input), equality (equally allocated rewards), and reward level as predictors of relationship satisfaction. Participants were 337 undergraduate college students in exclusive dating relationships. They were administered a global measure of perceived equity and equality (Walster, Utne, & Traupmann, 1977, as cited in Cate et al., 1982), a seven-item scale measuring reward level developed by Cate et al., and the Austin Contentment/Distress measure (Austin, 1974) to assess relationship satisfaction. Results indicated that equity and equality tended to co-occur. 74% of the relationships were either equitable-equalitarian (n=160) or inequitable-nonequalitarian (n=90). Three hierarchical regression analyses revealed the relative power of equity, equality and reward level in



predicting relationship satisfaction. Each variable did not account for significant variance by itself, but the variables together accounted for 37% of the variance, indicating moderate support for the notion that a perceived “just balance” of adequate rewards in relationships predict relationship satisfaction.

Craddock (1983) applied equity theory to relationship satisfaction in terms of marital role expectations of engaged couples. Previous studies indicated that marital role structure has frequently taken a traditional, male-authoritarian form (King, 1975, 1977, as cited in Craddock, 1983). However, many couples prefer an equalitarian or democratic role structure. Freer sex-role choice and more options in relationships may lead to considerable conflict and frustration if partners have incongruent expectations. Craddock (1980) already investigated the joint operation of role incongruence and male traditionalism in a longitudinal study of married couples. His hypotheses were confirmed. Craddock’s (1983) study involved 100 engaged couples. He found that those who possessed equalitarian role expectations reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction in the areas of personality issues, communication, conflict resolution, leisure activities, and family and friends than did the groups who held traditional or unequalitarian beliefs about role expectations (Craddock, 1983).

Winch’s (1952) *theory of compatibility through complementarity* attempts to explain relationship needs in mate selection. Specifically, “in mate selection each individual seeks within his or her field of eligibles for that person who gives the greatest promise of providing him or her with maximum need gratification” (Winch, Ktsanses, & Ktsanses, 1954, p. 242, as cited in Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993). A corollary to this is

that people tend to pick partners with complementary, not identical, structures of needs. An example would be a nurturer feeling attracted to one who needs nurturing.

Subsequent to Winch's writing, Kerckhoff and Davis (1962) formulated a *sequential filtering theory* sensitive to the changing structure of the relationship over time. They hypothesized that early in mate selection, variables associated with similarity in social status are salient. As the relationship matures, consensus on personal and family values and need complementarity emerge as salient.

In Whyte's (1990) report on the results of a 1984 survey of mate choice and marriage expectations of 459 women in the greater Detroit area, the importance of homogamy emerged. Homogamy is the tendency of people to pick partners from similar backgrounds to their own. Whyte discussed homogamy in terms of: social pressure, most specifically familial pressure; differential association, which is subtle segregation of society that produces many chances to meet people from similar backgrounds, but fewer chances to meet diverse people; and values selection, wherein individuals select partners with similar values to their own. Various subgroups have different values, which further enforces Whyte's notion of differential association.

The *contextual model*, proposed by Bradbury and Fincham (1989), attempts to include length of relationship with ongoing interaction between partners. In other words, "It is one of the few that seeks to combine a detailed analysis of dyadic interaction in close relationships with consideration of the relatively stable factors that influence, and are influenced by, the interaction" (Bradbury & Fincham, 1989, p. 125). It accounts for the short-term context of, for instance, how a person's day as gone, and the long-term

context of things like personality characteristics and relationship values. According to the theory, behaviors are enacted by one partner and perceived, interpreted and responded to affectively by the other partner:

These processes, together with residual thoughts and feelings from prior events in the interaction (i.e., proximal context) and a variety of continuing psychological characteristics of the responding partner (i.e., distal context) guide the behavioral response.(Bradbury & Fincham, 1989, p. 124.)

Similar to the proximal context, the influence of interpretation of stimuli on behavior is a central notion in the *cognitive mediation model* (Diguiseppe & Zee, 1986). With regard to dyadic relationships, the cognitive mediational model has implications for emotional and behavioral reactions that each partner experiences. These reactions are “in part determined by each member’s perceptions of the nature and meanings of the interactions between them” (DeBord, Romans, & Krieshok, 1996, p. 264). With this in mind, problems in relationships may be more accurately attributed to idiosyncratic *perceptions* of interactions between partners rather than the interactions themselves. Likewise, beliefs about one’s self, relationships in general, and one’s partner could plausibly moderate perceptions of interactions, much like contextual theory suggests. Previous theorists have gone so far as to contend that adherence to unrealistic standards or beliefs by one or both partners can lead to relationship distress and dissatisfaction (Ellis & Harper, 1975; Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). This study investigated the role of general irrational beliefs, measured by the Irrational Beliefs Test (Jones, 1968, as cited in DeBord, Romans, & Krieshok, 1996 ), and relationship-specific irrational beliefs,

measured by the Relationship Belief Questionnaire (Romans & DeBord, 1994, as cited in DeBord, Romans, & Krieshok, 1996) on perceived quality of relationships of married or cohabiting couples.

Results indicated that both general and relationship-specific irrational beliefs were correlated with reports of dyadic adjustment, as measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). However, contrary to the hypothesis, higher relationship-specific irrational beliefs predicted higher dyadic adjustment, not lower. The authors entertain the hypothesis that increased pessimism, or perhaps depressive realism, may account for the unexpected direction of the correlation. "When the basic concepts tapped into by the Relationship Beliefs Questionnaire are examined, it appears that most can be considered positive, even Pollyannaish, irrational beliefs" (DeBord, Romans, & Krieshok, 1996). Increased pessimism may not mean increased irrationality. It may account for a more realistic expectational level. A higher level of relationship satisfaction makes sense in this context.

Kurdek (1991) made a valuable contribution to the literature on relationship satisfaction in two ways. First, he conducted his research on a sample of gay and lesbian couples, a population largely ignored in the literature. Kurdek pointed out that relative to partners in married couples, those in gay or lesbian relationships may be more likely to leave unsatisfying partnerships when perceived alternatives become more desirable than current attractions to the existing relationships. This may be due to the absence of institutional barriers to leaving the relationship that are present for heterosexual, married individuals.

Second, he integrated three prominent theories proposing a moderating system they might have on relationship satisfaction. Kurdek hypothesized that variables associated with the contextual model (Bradbury and Fincham, 1988), the investment model (Rusbult, 1983), and the problem-solving model (Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Stroasli, 1988) separately account for significant portions of variance in relationship satisfaction. Kurdek's study explored the relative ability of these variables together predicting relationship satisfaction.

To increase the likelihood that each of the models was fairly assessed, Kurdek used several variables from each model. Variables from each model are assumed to account for relationship satisfaction at different levels of generality. The contextual model is the most general because it considers people's preexisting filters that they bring to their relationships. More specific is the investment model which focuses on the rewards and costs incurred in a relationship. Still more specific is the problem-solving model, which addresses processes of partner appraisals of interactions within the relationships. Variables at more specific levels were thought to moderate those that were more general. Each of the 75 gay and 51 lesbian couples were asked to complete demographic information, a global measure of relationship satisfaction, and measures of the specific variables from the contextual, investment, and problem-solving models. Kurdek found that there were almost no instances when mean levels of model variables differed significantly in gay versus lesbian couples. In fact, the only reliable difference found for both partners was that lesbian couples reported more positive rewards than gay men. Kurdek offers that this finding is consistent with his previous research

(Kurdek, 1988), and may be due to gender-related socialization which encourages females to be more interpersonally focused. Strength of the correlates did not differ significantly between the groups, and regression analysis indicated that together, the variables account for about half the variance in relationship satisfaction.

A year later, Kurdek (1992) published a similar study. In this research, he tested the integrated information derived from the contextual model and the interdependence model using a longitudinal design (from Rusbult, 1983, investment theory). He assessed 80 gay and 53 lesbian cohabiting couples annually for four years with measures of variables derived from both the contextual and interdependence models. These data were hypothesized to predict relationship stability and satisfaction. Kurdek assessed variables from the contextual model using the Relationship Beliefs Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982, as cited in Kurdek, 1992), the Social Support Scale Sarason et al., 1987, as cited in Kurdek, 1992), and the Symptom Checklist 90-Revised (Derogatis, 1983, as cited in Kurdek, 1992). He assessed variables from the interdependence model using the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), Rempel's (1983, as cited in Kurdek, 1992) Trust and Motivation Scales, and the Survey of Relationship Values (Peplau & Cochran, 1981, as cited in Kurdek, 1992). Three demographic, four contextual, and five interdependent scores were submitted to a two-by-two MANOVA finding similar output for gay and lesbian couples:

Participants from couples that separated differed from those who didn't on only one of the contextual variables, but on all five of the interdependence variables. In support of Rusbult's (1983) model, partners who separated reported

high dissatisfaction with the relationship, and placed a high value on personal autonomy, perhaps signaling the presence of self-oriented alternatives to the relationship. They invested little time, few personal financial resources, and little emotional commitment in their relationships. (Kurdek, 1992, p. 139)

#### Summary: Relationship Satisfaction Theory & Supporting Research

In summary, exchange theory and its successors (i.e. interdependence and investment models, equity theory) explain relationship satisfaction in terms of personal rewards and costs. Put simply, if the rewards outweigh the costs in a relationship, people are more likely to maintain it. Kurdek (1991) found that lesbian women tended to report more positive rewards in their relationships than did gay men. He postulated that the interpersonal socialization of women lends itself to enhancing the exchange of rewarding interactions.

Winch's (1952) theory of compatibility through complementarity attempts to explain relationship satisfaction through selection of partners and maintenance of relationship on the basis of maximum need gratification. That is, individuals tend to form and perpetuate relationships with partners who are similar or complementary in their needs and who are perceived to provide the most fulfillment of the individual's needs. The contextual and cognitive mediational notions of relationship satisfaction posit that perceptions of interactions are reality for individuals, affecting their satisfaction with relationships. Those perceptions are influenced by beliefs and biases about relationships which are previously formed.

## Relationship Satisfaction: Other Associated Variables

Relationship satisfaction is difficult to describe, account for, and predict. Many theories have attempted to capture its essence, and still more variables not as closely linked to the prominent theories have been isolated in the research of this construct. The literature on relationship satisfaction is quite diverse, attempting to implicate many predictors.

Vera and Betz (1992) explored self-regard and affective self-disclosure as predictors of relationship satisfaction in the college student population. They surveyed two hundred undergraduates who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course. Instruments included the Unconditional Self-Regard Scale (Betz, Serling, & Wohlgemuth, 1991, as cited in Vera & Betz, 1992), the Emotional Self-Disclosure Scale developed by Snell (1988, as cited in Vera & Betz, 1992), the Affective Self-Disclosure Scale (Davidson, Balswick, and Halverson, 1983, as cited in Vera & Betz, 1992), the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988), and the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983). Vera and Betz found that female students reported significantly higher levels of emotional self-disclosure than male students. Affective self-disclosure was significantly related to relationship satisfaction for both males and females. Self-esteem among women was positively related to both the level of emotional self-disclosure and relationship satisfaction. Self-esteem was not related to either of these constructs in male students. The results strongly supported the importance of affective self-disclosure in



relationship satisfaction, and supported the importance of self-esteem in relationship satisfaction among female students.

Clearly, the sex of the participants in the Vera and Betz study had a great deal to do with the importance of self-esteem moderating relationship satisfaction. Lamke, Lollie, Durbin, & Fitzpatrick (1994) endeavored to expand information about the influence of gender roles on relationship satisfaction. In their study, 174 undergraduate dating couples, receiving course credit for their participation, completed the Personal Attributes Questionnaire Short Form (Spence et al., 1975, as cited in Lamke, 1994) which operationalized the constructs of masculinity, in part by instrumental behavior, and femininity, in part by the display of expressive behavior. They also completed the Interpersonal Competence Scale (Buhrmester et al., 1988, as cited in Lamke, 1994) which operationalized the concepts of instrumental and expressive components. Lastly, they completed the Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988). Even though the mean age for the participants was quite young (females=20, males=21), there was representation of 65 different major areas of study in the sample and a broad range of length of relationships, from one month to thirteen years. A concern with using an undergraduate sample ought to be decreased ability to generalize to other populations; however, some diversity of field of study is represented in this sample. For both male and female participants, relationship satisfaction was related to their own expressive competence and to perceptions of their partner as expressive.

The influence of dysfunctional relationship beliefs and problem-solving style on relationship satisfaction was investigated by Metts and Cupach (1990). They

hypothesized a direct relationship between problem-solving and relationship satisfaction and the influence of dysfunctional beliefs on problem-solving style. 322 college students involved in romantic relationships with the opposite sex for at least one month were administered the Relationship Belief Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982, as cited in Metts & Cupach, 1990), a problem-solving responses measure reported by Rusbult et al.(1986), and the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988). Results indicated that “dysfunctional relationship beliefs exhibited positive correlations with the destructive problem-solving responses of ‘exit’ and ‘neglect’ and negative correlations with the constructive problem-solving response of ‘voice’” (Matts & Cupach, 1990, p. 170). Both dysfunctional beliefs were negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction, and problem-solving style tended to influence the association between dysfunctional beliefs and relationship satisfaction.

Based on Bowlby’s 1969 concepts of attachment theory, Pistole (1989) hypothesized that people who are more securely attached will solve problems more effectively and consequently tend to be more satisfied in relationships. In a survey of 137 undergraduate psychology students who had been involved in one or two important love relationships, it was found that approximately 58% were securely attached, 23% were avoidant, and 18% were anxious/ambivalent. They were categorized according to Hazan and Shaver’s (1987) criteria for attachment styles. The participants all took the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory (1983, as cited in Pistole, 1989) and Spanier’s (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale. There were significant differences among the attachment groups on three styles of conflict resolution and on relationship satisfaction. Securely

attached participants reported significantly higher levels of relationship satisfaction and were more likely to use a mutually focused conflict strategy.

Smith, Snyder, Trull and Monsma (1988) examined the relationship between use of leisure time and relationship satisfaction. They administered two leisure activity measures as well as two scales from the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder, 1979, as cited in Smith et al.) to 251 married couples. The results confirmed couples' use of leisure time as a predictor of relationship satisfaction. Specifically, "engagement in individual pursuits and interaction with others to the exclusion of the spouse was significantly correlated with global marital distress"(Smith et al., 1988, p. 11). The most consistent predictor of relationship satisfaction was spousal time together. However, leisure activity patterns showed differential importance for men and women: For wives, patterns of leisure pursuit account for nearly twice the variance in marital distress as for husbands; specifically, engagement in leisure activities with others to the exclusion of one's spouse has a significantly stronger relationship to marital distress for wives. (p. 11)

Another variable examined in the literature for prediction of relationship satisfaction is strategy of coping. Ptacek & Dodge (1995) surveyed forty dating student couples and thirty married couples who were slightly older than the students. They hypothesized that there would be a demonstrable link between useful problem-focused coping and/or adaptive emotional coping and relationship satisfaction. Coping was measured using the COPE scale (Carver, Scheier, & Weintraub, 1989) and relationship satisfaction was measured with Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Results indicated that the dating student group reported using more of the "less useful" coping

(i.e. disengaging mentally or emotionally from stressful situations) than did the married group. Greater similarity in partners' coping styles was found to be associated with higher relationship satisfaction in both groups. That is, "those individuals who perceived that they and their partners coped in similar ways also reported being more satisfied with their relationships" (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995, p. 81). The strongest correlation was found between the reported utilization of less-useful coping and dissatisfaction with the relationship. This correlation was found in both groups.

Davis & Oathout (1987) proposed a model of relationship satisfaction based on the "notion that personality in general and empathy in particular affect relationship satisfaction through their influences on specific mediating behaviors" (Davis & Oathout, 1987, p. 397). They tested their hypothesis on 264 undergraduate heterosexual couples, 11% of which were married or engaged and the rest exclusively dating. They assessed dispositional empathy with three subscales from the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980, as cited in Davis & Oathout, 1987). Degree of satisfaction with the relationship was measured using four items from Locke's (1951) Marital Adjustment Test which were modified for use with either married or dating partners. Finally, desirable and undesirable interpersonal behaviors of both self and partner was assessed using a 25 item frequency list of sample behaviors. Path analysis was used to evaluate the model hypothesized by the authors. Interestingly, the model best explained relationships with durations of longer than a year. For example, the role of "perspective taking" in influencing relationship satisfaction was stronger for longer relationships. The authors explained this phenomenon by offering that chronic dispositional tendencies may be less

visible in the early stages of relationships due to partners' tendencies toward positive self-presentations. In general, the model was supported by the results. Empathy had predictable influences on self-reported behavior and partners' perceptions of the behavior. Specifically, both perspective taking and empathic concern were associated with more self-reports of positive behavior and fewer of negative behavior. These perceptions were significant predictors of relationship satisfaction.

#### Summary: Relationship Satisfaction & Other Associated Variables

In this section, several studies were surveyed for their contribution to literature identifying predictors of relationship satisfaction. In summary, affective self disclosure correlated positively with relationship satisfaction for men and women, whereas self-regard correlated positively only for women (Vera & Betz, 1992). Dysfunctional relationship beliefs correlated negatively with relationship satisfaction, and problem-solving style influenced the association between beliefs and satisfaction (Metts & Cupach, 1990). Individuals' secure attachment style predicted their reporting of higher relationship satisfaction and a more effective, mutually focused conflict strategy (Pistole, 1989). Spousal time together, and specifically leisure time spent together, accounted for more prediction of marital satisfaction for wives than for husbands (Smith et al., 1988). Employing less useful strategies of coping correlated strongly with dissatisfaction in relationships (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995). Lastly, perspective-taking and empathic concern were associated with relationship satisfaction in a study by Davis and Oathout (1987).

Several of the studies shared some important limitations. Most of them used undergraduate university students as participants, which limits generalizability of results, and introduces characteristics common to that population into the uncontrolled variance of the analyses. Many of the studies specified inclusion of only heterosexual relationships, which restricts the external validity. Finally, almost all the studies utilized self-report measures, which adds the influence of participants' possible tendencies to give socially desirable responses.

### Dual-Career Couples

The number of couples in which both partners are employed has recently become much greater (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993). This arrangement is more economically realistic for many couples, but brings with it unique stressors and sex-role issues (Srivastava, 1995). Hendrick & Hendrick draw a useful distinction between dual-career and dual-worker couples. "Dual-career" refers only to those couples in which both partners have a "career or profession that is intrinsically rewarding, that requires considerable education or training as well as dedication and involvement, and that offers promise of continued professional growth and advancement: (1993, p. 221). The term "dual-worker" refers to both partners employed in jobs that require fixed amounts of time and involvement as well as a limited potential for promotion or growth (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993).

Exchange theory has been addressed with specific regard to dual-career couples. Nicola & Hawkes (1985) investigated the possibility that a more equalitarian sex-role

structure in dual-career couples would predict greater satisfaction with the relationship. The assumption, based on Scanzoni & Scanzoni's (1976) exchange theory, is that more equalitarian relationships are also those in which partners receive instrumental and expressive benefits in exchange with each other. Instrumental and expressive behavior is associated with mastery/productivity and emotion/social relationships respectively. In sex-role research, instrumental behavior is commonly associated with traditionally masculine roles, while expressive behavior is often associated with traditionally feminine roles.

Participants in Nicola & Hawkes' study (1985) included 69 couples in which the wife's occupation (college faculty, tenure track) was close in income and prestige to her husband's. Questionnaires assessed expressive and instrumental aspects of marriage and sex-role attitudes. Structured interviews were also conducted with the participants. This qualitative aspect of the study added detail and breadth of information, and is unusual for this body of research.

The wives' positive self-concept and husbands' androgynous sex role attitudes positively predicted marital satisfaction. Wives' high career commitment was the variable that contributed most to wives' dissatisfaction with the marriage; however, causal order is not clear: wives may or may not immerse themselves in their careers *after* dissatisfaction with marriage is established. Qualitative data suggested that wives' dissatisfaction was frequently a function of role overload. High household/childcare task scores contributed to their marital dissatisfaction. The data also indicated that both husbands and wives

were more likely to be unhappy when the wives' career role was high, or when partners' emotional supportiveness was unequal.

It is interesting to note that husbands' high career commitments have been common for men, but remains socially deviant for women. High career aspirations may lead to role conflict for women, but do not seem to do so for men (Gilbert, 1979, as cited in Nicola & Hawkes, 1985). It should be noted that in a similar study by Hardesty & Betz (1980) contrary results were found in that higher career salience for wives positively predicted marital adjustment for both partners. It did not predict negative consequences for their marriages.

Eldridge & Gilbert (1990) broadened the construct of dual-career relationships to include the experience of lesbian couples. This is a valuable contribution to an otherwise largely heterocentric body of literature. In this study, various psychological variables were assessed in both partners of 275 lesbian couples who considered themselves "dual career." The instruments used included Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale, dyadic attachment and autonomy scales developed for lesbian couples by Peplau, Cochran, Rook, & Padesky (1978, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), a scale measuring the influence each partner feels she has in the relationship (Caldwell & Peplau, 1984, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships Inventory (Schaefer & Olson, 1981, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Robinson & Shaver, 1973, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), a measure of career commitment reported by Elman & Gilbert (1984, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), a measure adapted from the Life Satisfaction Scale



reported by Holtzman & Gilbert (1987, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990), and measures developed by Holahan & Gilbert (1979, as cited in Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990) to assess three types of role conflict. Individual and couple scores were correlated with relationship satisfaction scores. It was also found that, when considering only one partner in the couple at a time, level of one's own career commitment was not correlated with her relationship satisfaction. However, when considering both partners in couples, *differing* levels of career commitment between partners predicted relationship dissatisfaction for both partners. And, when both partners reported about the same level of career commitment, they also tended to report relationship satisfaction.

Sex roles appear to effect personal satisfaction as well as satisfaction in a relationship. Rotheram & Weiner (1983) found that while dual-career couples experience more personal and work stress than nondual-career dyads, they also report the highest personal and relational satisfaction if they endorse androgynous sex role beliefs.

At least in the case of heterosexual marriage, the husband's support of his wife's career is clearly important for satisfaction in the dual-career relationship (Ray, 1988; Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984). In fact, the husband's attitude toward the wife's career predicts his and her satisfaction (Ray, 1990). Both husbands and wives report a relationship between marital satisfaction and perception of career involvement of their spouse, and this is closely related to being involved themselves in their spouses' careers (Ray, 1990). Ray (1988) found that for men, marital satisfaction is most strongly related to high involvement of the partners in their careers. High involvement specifically included: attending business functions, interacting with husbands' work associates,

understanding of the husbands' careers, and willingness to speak with the husbands about their careers. If both partners are in similar careers, their understanding and support of one another may likely be increased (Hendrick & Henrick, 1993). This is an important part of the rationale for this thesis.

Gilbert & Constantine (1996) investigated the distinction within the dual-career pattern of how having similar or dissimilar careers affects partners' marital satisfaction and process. Analysis of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) did not reveal significant differences for the two groups, but their "convenience" sample only included 24 couples (14 dissimilar, 10 similar in careers). Qualitative analysis revealed that in career-similar couples, partners reported more difficulty separating work and personal life. In career-different couples, some partners reported that the dissimilarity in their careers often provided interesting conversation, but they also found it difficult to understand their partners' work-related stressors or be understood by their partners during their own times of stress. The dissimilar group also expressed more concern about being unable to contribute much to their marriages due to involvement in their careers. Interestingly similar to Ray's (1988) findings, this study revealed that husbands in the career-different group more often emphasized their wives' ability or inability to contribute to or comprehend their work. Career-similar couples generally noted that working the same type of job ensured time off together, making scheduling much less of a hassle.

## Holland's Congruence

The idea that people with similar careers might be more compatible in a relationship is one of the central propositions of this paper. Holland (1985) posited that individuals are interested in and choose occupational environments that are congruent with their personality types. For example, a person who's personality style is markedly "Realistic" tends to flourish in a Realistic type of environment, which provides opportunities and rewards that meet that person's needs.

In extrapolating Holland's theory, it seems logical that congruence might apply to relationships as well. If people of certain personality types are more satisfied in congruent occupational environments, would they not be more satisfied with partners of congruent personalities expressed in their career choices? Holland writes:

The key assumption...is that identical or related types will be attracted to one another, will be more understanding of one another, and will enjoy one another, because similar types will act as reinforcing environments for one another.

(Holland, 1985, p. 115)

Studies of marital relations have lended mixed support to this notion. Holland reports several studies that show support for his idea that congruence can be applied to social interaction and marital satisfaction. Williams (1967, as cited in Holland, 1985) conducted a very simple experiment using 39 freshman college roommate pairs who were reported by housing staff to be "in conflict" and 39 pairs who were not. The 78 pairs were administered the Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI: Holland, 1958). The

congruence of student codes was positively associated with lack of conflict. Wiggins & Westlander (1979, as cited in Holland, 1985) assessed 23 couples with the VPI. These couples had come in for marriage counseling. The authors found a similar control group and compared couples in treatment with them. Couples who were in counseling were more incongruent than the control group. Wiggins, Moody, & Lederer (in press, as cited in Holland, 1985) studied 125 couples using the Satisfaction with Spouse and Marriage Blank, the VPI, and a background questionnaire. The couples' congruency was the only significant predictor of reported marital satisfaction ( $r=.70$ ).

Holland also cited studies which did not lend support for the theory that greater congruence between partners' typologies would yield higher satisfaction. Mathis (1977) and Dorset (1977) both conducted studies which hypothesized that husbands and wives who were married to a spouse with similar occupational interests should experience greater marital satisfaction than couples of dissimilar occupational interests. Dorset (1977) used the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory to measure occupational interests, and to assign Holland type codes. Mathis (1977) used the Vocational Preference Inventory. Similarity or degree of congruence was determined by the spouse's position on the hexagon model (Holland, Whitney, Cole, & Richards, 1969, as cited in Rouse & Roach, 1984). Both investigators measured marital satisfaction with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test. Both researchers found no significant relationships between congruency and satisfaction of marital relationships.

Rouse & Roach (1984) studied the relationship between occupational interests and marital satisfaction of both partners from the Holland congruence notion. In addition,

they reported on some of the other work done in this area. None of the studies they reported, including their own, found significant relationships between the two variables.

Rouse & Roach commented that their work, as well as that of Mathis (1977) and Dorset (1977), had some of the same limitations. First, their samples contained relatively few numbers of couples, the majority of which were college graduates, Caucasian, and professional. Also, most spouses were fairly congruent with each other in terms of job interest. Further, no distinction was made between a job and a career as suggested previously by Hendrick & Hendrick (1993). A better test of Holland's theory would include a more heterogeneous group. This opinion is one that Holland himself expressed (1985).

Rouse & Roach also commented that almost everyone in their study was satisfied with their marriage. Perhaps, as Rouse & Roach hypothesized, the fact that all the couples were somewhat congruent in Holland personality type and occupational choice lends support to Holland's theory. Even though they were not looking only for couples who were congruent, the researchers seemed to wind up with that type of sample. Perhaps people whose personalities and occupational choices are vastly different from potential spouses' would not pursue marriage to those partners, and thus disqualify themselves from samples of such studies.

### Psychologists

Choosing psychology as a professional career speaks about the values, interests, and priorities of many of the individuals who pursue it. It requires a personal

commitment, unlike many other types of professions, to a revision of both personal and professional identity (Bruss & Kopala, 1993). There were no studies found that estimated career congruence between psychologists and their partners as a predictor of relationship satisfaction.

Personal and professional issues of psychologists married to each other were addressed in a study by Bryson, Bryson, Licht & Licht (1976). The study was designed to assist in understanding how such couples develop and accommodate two careers. "To maximize the degree of career equivalency and to make role comparisons justifiable, the study focused on couples in the same field, psychology" (Bryson et al., 1976).

Participants were 200 husband-wife members of the American Psychological Association (APA). A control group of randomly selected men (76) and women (62) who were members of APA was used. The survey mailed to the couples had three parts: a section for the husband, a section for the wife, and a section for them to fill out as a couple. The questionnaire consisted of a range of items covering basic demographics and background information, employment history, estimation of professional productivity (self-report of number of books and articles published, papers presented at conventions, and grants received), personal and professional satisfaction and perceived problems, and division of domestic responsibilities.

Interesting gender differences arose from their data: husbands in professional pairs tended to be more productive than their wives at work, perceive distinct advantages in their marital relationships, and reported satisfaction with work and family life. Males in general (husbands and control males) tended to work longer hours and receive higher

salaries than females in general. Overall, wives tended to feel discriminated against and less satisfied with their careers. Wives tended to be more productive than the control group, but less so than their husbands. Institutional constraints like antinepotism policies were more likely to constrain wives' careers than husbands, with 45.5% of pairs reporting one or more incidents of unavailability of desirable openings due to this problem.

However, survey results indicated that many hindrances to wives' careers were either self imposed or imposed by their spouses. Highest among these restrictions were (1) the differential placement of value on husband and wife's career (indicated by responses to questions concerning conditions under which they (or their spouse) would accept a job, and who of the pair they believed merited greater professional recognition), and (2) inequitable division of household responsibilities. Bryson et al. conclude the discussion of results saying that "the shared and individual goals of each member of the pair conflict with the external realities of institutional regulations and domestic demands... Typically, the resolution [of the conflict] is at least partially based on traditional sex roles" (Bryson et al., 1976, p. 16). Unfortunately, their data revealed that the resulting division of domestic responsibilities is inequitable, an effect most strikingly revealed in the wives' perceptions of their situations relative to that of their husbands' and colleagues'. Though the study is twenty years old, the findings alert the reader to the continuing need for understanding women's experiences, as we face unique barriers and struggles in professional capacities.

McGowen & Hart (1990) wrote about their experiences as female graduate students and psychologists, echoing differences found in the Bryson et al. (1976) study.

They illuminated differences they perceived in female and male developmental experiences that influenced them personally and professionally. Specifically, McGowen & Hart conceptualized gender differences in identity development as a divergence of values, whereby female identity is based on attachment, and male identity is founded in separateness. They offered that these identity differences could account for differences in professional aspirations, productivity, and advancement. The Bryson et al. (1976) survey meaningfully illuminated some of these barriers, but did not attend to differences in relationship satisfaction between the psychologist-couple group and the members of the control group who were in significant relationships with partners of dissimilar careers.

“The process of becoming a psychologist is lengthy, arduous, and complex. It involves a transformation of identity at both a professional and personal level” (Bruss & Kopala, 1993, p. 685). Training is often fraught with self-examination feedback about how one’s personal issues affects work with clients, talk about values and life philosophy both with clients and colleagues, and challenges toward personal growth. There is a paucity of literature on the development of the psychologist’s professional identity, which has been noted by several authors (Friedman & Kaslow, 1986; Kalsow & Rice, 1985; Soloway, 1985; as cited in Bruss & Kopala, 1993). The impact of psychotherapy training on students has been examined by Brightman(1984) and Eckler-Hart (1987, as cited in Bruss & Kopala, 1993; Ford, 1963). Ford (1963) commented that “acquiring therapeutic capacity serves to expand personal identity” (p. 473). The work of psychotherapy was noted to exert a introspective force on personal development in the students. Ford went on to write that most trainees reported they had been aware of a striving for self-



realization for years before endeavoring to learn psychotherapy. The impact of these personal characteristics common to psychologists serve also to distinguish our identity from that of other fields.

In the context of training for marital and family therapy, J.L. Framo (1979) writes, "I...believe that to some extent family therapists are born and not made. Some people having mastered in some way the struggles in their original families, continue the process with clinical families" (p. 868). His particular philosophy in training was to deal with the personal development of the trainee as well as the clinical skills and intuition. Framo placed a great deal of importance on the value of personal struggle in the making of a talented therapist, again illustrating the inseparable nature of personal and professional identity for the psychologist.

The philosophy underlying psychology permeates trainees and later its professionals. The infiltration of values is probably more saturating in psychology, where in many ways the business is "personal life," than it is in other careers where the boundary between business and the personal is more distinct. LaPierre (1979) writes

Theory is formulated to be tested...techniques are aides in the process...and do not themselves constitute therapy...No theory and no technique supersedes the importance of the therapist. Therapy is, at all times, a human encounter. (p. 882)

### Summary: Psychologists

In summary, the literature that addresses the training and development of identity as a psychologist suggests that acquiring therapeutic capacity tends to expand personal identity (Ford, 1963). The training required to become a psychologist can be

conceptualized according to a developmental model (Flapan, 1984) and causes a transformation of personal and professional identity (Bruss & Kopala, 1993).

Psychotherapy is influential as a function of the emanation of the person of the practitioner (Wilson, 1984), and theories and techniques must not be confused with the humanness of the process of therapy (LaPierre, 1979). These factors that characterize the practice of psychotherapy are unique to this field. The focus on personal growth (Rothery, 1992) and identity transformation along the way to becoming a psychologist sets those who embark on that endeavor apart from other professionals.

The professional identity literature suggests that psychologists may, to a great extent, personally invest in their professional development and practice of psychology. Therefore, it seems reasonable that such a population would be even more likely to seek others with similar investments, and rate relationships with similar career partners higher due to lack of similar alternative partners. Following investment and interdependence theories, when comparing outcomes of interactions, psychologists probably factor in the availability, or lack thereof, of available alternative partners. This assists the psychologists in determining the outcome level needed to maintain dependence on the dyad for further positive outcomes. Thus, available alternative partners are few, psychologists may perceive their current relationship in a more favorable light. Winch's notion that compatible partners with similar and complementary qualities provide maximum need gratification fits here as well. Partners of similar careers would be better able to understand and empathize with the types of stressors this job has. For this population, career salience may affect this relationship. That is, the more important the

career is (Greenhaus, 1971) to the psychologist's total life, the more personally invested he or she probably is, and the more they would tend to be attracted to other psychologists with similar career commitments. In other words, if psychology is very important in the psychologist's total life, it might be attractive to them that psychology is a part of their partner's repertoire of priorities.

### Conclusion

This study examines relationship satisfaction reported by psychologists in exclusive romantic relationships for differences between those whose partners are of similar and dissimilar careers. The hypothesis is that group of psychologists with partners of similar careers (mental health professionals) will score higher than the groups with partners of dissimilar careers on Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Marital Satisfaction Scale (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981). The rationale supporting the hypothesis lies in the idea that psychologists may feel more support and understanding from their partners when they share psychology as a career. Greater understanding, support, and similarity has been implicated in the theoretical and empirical literature as contributing greatly to relationship satisfaction (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993; Ray, 1988).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

#### Participants

A mailing list consisting of 1,000 randomly selected psychologists was purchased from the American Psychological Association. The participants were randomly selected from the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology because the requirements for listing in the register are well-standardized and the sample is national in scope. In order to qualify for inclusion as a health service provider, “one must be a psychologist, certified or licensed at the independent practice level in his or her state, and duly trained and experienced in the delivery of direct health care services” (Lewis, Greenburg, and Hatch, 1988). In 1995, the APA reported having 51,060 Health Service Provider members, which means roughly 2% of the members were sent surveys in this study. However, 1,000 was deemed the designated number of outgoing packets needed to balance limited financial resources and the desire to obtain a sample large enough to conduct inferential analyses.

Being in a significant romantic relationship was a prerequisite for eligibility to participate in the study, but relationship status is not a demographic variable tracked by APA. Therefore, packets were sent to a random sample of health service providers with the presumption that some percentage of the recipients of the packets would be ineligible to participate due to noninvolvement in a significant romantic relationship. Therefore,

1,000 was assumed large enough to allow for an acceptable return rate even with ineligible recipients. Previous surveys of psychologists have yielded return-rates ranging from 22% (Polusny & Follette, 1996) to 58-60% (Pope, Feldman, & Shirley, 1992; Pope & Tabachnick, 1994).

## Instrumentation

### Demographics

The demographics survey consists of twenty items (Appendix A). The first eight items ask for age, gender, race/ethnicity, major psychotherapy orientation, highest degree associated with license, year degree was granted, current primary employment status, and the primary job affiliation. The next seven items ask for descriptors of the participant's significant relationship: type (married/committed, cohabiting, dating and living separately, other), length of relationship with this partner, age, gender, race/ethnicity of the partner, the highest educational degree title obtained by the partner, partner's degree title, partner's current employment status, and the primary job setting and title of the partner. Question 19 addresses the participant's perception of similarity between his/her career and his/her partner's career. The final question asks for the participant's perception of the impact his/her partner's career has had on their relationship.

### Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976) is a 32-item, self-administered, primarily Likert-style questionnaire utilizing 5-, 6-, and 7-point response

formats. There are also two items answered yes or no. The majority of the items use a 6-point format, with options scored from zero to five, ranging from *always agree* to *always disagree* or *all the time* to *never*. It is designed to assess the quality of marriage or other similar dyads, and is appropriate for use with married or unmarried cohabiting couples. The factor analytic information presented (Spanier, 1976) indicates the existence of four components of dyadic adjustment which can be used as subscales: dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and affectional expression. The scale can be used as an overall measure of dyadic adjustment, or any “of the scales can be used alone without losing confidence in the reliability or validity of the measure” (Spanier, 1976, p. 22). The scores can range from 0-151. Higher scores indicate higher dyadic adjustment.

In his psychometric development of the DAS, Spanier (1976) surveyed 218 married people and 94 divorced. The analysis showed a  $M=114.8$  and  $SD=17.8$  for the married group, and  $M=101.5$  and  $SD=28.3$  for the total sample. The sample from this study was similar to Spanier’s married group, but scored slightly higher than a group of 95 married people who participated in a later psychometric evaluation of the DAS (Sharpley & Cross, 1982):  $M=108.5$ ,  $SD=19.7$ .

Content validity of the DAS was reportedly assessed by the evaluation of three judges. Items were only included in the DAS if the judges considered the items to be relevant measures of dyadic adjustment, consistent with the operational definitions indicated by Spanier and Cole (1974, as cited in Spanier 1976), and appropriately worded and formatted for response choices. Criterion validity was demonstrated by the significantly different scores (.001) obtained by married and divorced couples. Content

validity was demonstrated by the correlation of the DAS with the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (1959) at .86 for married couples and .88 for divorced respondents ( $p < .001$ ). Internal consistency reliability for the DAS was reported using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (1951, as cited in Spanier, 1976). The total scale reliability was .96.

### Marital Satisfaction Scale

A second relationship assessment instrument was also administered. The Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS-Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981), using language adapted for nonmarried dyads, originally consisted of 73 Likert-type attitudinal items. Due to the need to limit the overall length of the survey packet so as not to adversely affect return rate, the shorter, revised form of the scale was used. This version includes 48 items designed to assess relationship satisfaction as an attitude. Scoring on each item ranges from 1-5, with response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The most favorable attitude toward one's relationship is indicated by a score of 5, while the least favorable attitude is indicated by 1. For the original 73 items, the maximum possible score was 365. For the revised version, 240 is the highest possible score. Factor analysis revealed that 70 of the items were significantly related to a single factor at the .05 level. Cronbach's alpha was .982, indicating high internal consistency. However, a later study revealed a low correlation (.33) between the MSS and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, as cited in Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981).

In 1977, Bowden conducted a validity study on the MSS. Concurrent validity was established by first distinguishing satisfied and dissatisfied groups of couples. This was done by peer ratings and by professional marriage counselors. The differences between the mean scores for the respective groups was statistically significant, indicating the discriminating ability of the MSS. This ability was further defined by a correlation of MSS scores and scores on the Marriage Problem Checklist (Roach, 1977, as cited in Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981). More satisfied couples reported fewer problems and dissatisfied couples reported more problems.

After reliability and validity had been established, revising the form of the MSS received attention. Frazier (1976) studied the internal consistency of the MSS minus 20 items with item-whole correlations of less than .50. Cronbach's alpha was .9713, which was actually higher than with the original 73 items. Four other items were eliminated for theoretical and redundancy reasons, leaving the scale with 48 remaining items. The shorter form is now being evaluated for reliability and validity, but "the preceding research on which it is based strongly suggests that it is at least of the same quality as its parent instrument" (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981, p. 543).

In 1984, Rouse and Roach used the revised 48-item version of the MSS to investigate the relationship between occupational interests and marital satisfaction of couples using Holland's notion of congruence as a rationale for their study. They found no significant relationship between similarity of occupational interest and relationship satisfaction; however, their work had several major limitations (described in chapter two) which may have affected their results. However, most research on the MSS has been



conducted using the original 73-item version. Other studies utilizing the 48-item version of the MSS include: Arias (1989, 1990), Lim & Park (1994), and Woo & Lee (1994).

### Career Commitment Measure

The final instrument assesses career salience. The Career Commitment Measure (CCM- Carson & Bedeian, 1994) is a twelve-item instrument using a Likert-type scale to assess “one’s attitude toward one’s vocation, including a profession” (Blau, 1988, p. 295, as cited in Carson & Bedeian, 1994). The construction of the measure culminated in a field test of 476 respondents employed in varied work settings. Cronbach coefficient alphas for the three factor-analyzed dimensions (career identity, career planning, and career resilience) ranged from .79 to .85. The authors reported that the CCM’s discriminant validity was supported by factor analysis, and “it detected differences in career commitment levels associated with varying levels of professionalism across occupational groups” (Carson & Bedeian, 1994, p. 237).

### Procedure

The 5-page questionnaire was reviewed by six counselors and psychologists. These participants were invited to offer feedback about the instruments and the demographic sheet.

One thousand Health Service Provider APA members were sent a 5-page questionnaire (see Appendixes A through E for cover letter, demographics sheet, CCM, DAS, & MSS), asking them to complete and return it in an enclosed envelope. Informed consent was presented in the cover letter and was implied by completion of the survey.

The order of presentation of instruments was randomized to prevent an order effect. To maintain confidentiality, participants were asked not to provide any other identifying information.

### Analysis

A multivariate analysis of variance (2 x 3 x 2 between subjects design) was conducted to assess the impact of gender, career configuration group, and CCM scores (independent variables) on DAS and MSS scores. Career configuration groups were determined by report of partner's career on the demographics survey sheet. If the partner's career was reported to be in a professional therapeutic capacity in the mental health field (e.g. psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC's), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT's), and LPC or LMFT-eligible master's level therapists), then the participant was placed in the "professional similar" group. The dissimilar groups, both professional and nonprofessional, consisted of participants whose partners are not involved in careers in the mental health field. Partners in the "professional dissimilar" career category are those who have advanced training and professional designation in a particular specialized field not related to mental health. Partners with "nonprofessional-dissimilar" careers are those who are not qualified members of professional groups. (For examples of careers in these categories, please refer to page 7). High and low career commitment groups were determined by scores on the CCM.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the differences between the reported relationship satisfaction of psychologists with partners of similar and dissimilar careers, and to identify the moderating effect that career commitment and gender may have had on the satisfaction scores. Relationship satisfaction was measured using the total scores from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-Spanier, 1976) and the Marital Satisfaction Scale (MSS-Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981). The career commitment of the participants was measured using the total score from Career Commitment Measure (CCM-Carson & Bedeian, 1994).

#### Participants

Participants were 256 respondents to a questionnaire packet mailed to 1,000 Health Service Provider psychologists randomly selected from an American Psychological Association database, for a response rate of 25.6%. This rate of response was within the expected parameters of previous surveys of psychologists which ranged from 22% - 60% (Pope, Feldman, & Shirley, 1992; Pope & Tabachnick, 1994). The participants were very similar on several demographic variables to the population from which they were randomly selected. Of the sample, 48.4% were female and 51.6% were male, compared with 44.9% female and 55.1% male in the database. The respondents

ranged in age from 29-82 (M=48.4), but the largest group was from age 45-49 years of age which comprised 28.1% of the sample, compared with 21.2% of the database, and also the largest group. The ethnic composition of the sample was primarily Caucasian, accounting for 95.7% of the participants, compared with 74.5% of the database (20.5% of the database did not choose to identify their ethnicity). African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans each comprised 1.2% of the sample, which corresponded with 1.5% African American, 1.9% Latino, and 1.0% Asian American representation in the database. No participants in the study identified themselves as Native American, compared with .5% in the database.

Eighty-six percent of the respondents reported having a Ph.D., 10.5% a Psy.D., and 3.5% an Ed.D. Participants reported the year their degree was earned: 9.4% in 1969 or earlier, 26.6% between 1970-79, 46.5% between 1980-89, 17.2% between 1990-95, and .4% in 1996 or later. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they were employed full-time, and 64.5% of the participants reported private practice as their primary job affiliation. The next highest categories indicated were 9% "other" and 8.6% "hospital."

Thirty-one percent of the sample indicated a relationship with another mental health professional, which placed them in the "professional-similar" category of career match. Fifty-four point seven percent indicated a relationship with a "professional-dissimilar" partner, and 14.5% reported a relationship with a "nonprofessional-dissimilar" partner. Reported relationship length ranged from under a year to 59 years; however, the largest length category groups were: 20.7% in 1-9 years, 30.9% in 10-19 years, and 30.1%

in 20-29 years. 93.4% of the sample reported being married/committed, 1.6% were unmarried but cohabiting, and 4.7% indicated they were dating and living separately.

### Research Questions & Null Hypotheses

The first question addressed by this study is, to what extent will psychologists who are in relationships with other mental health professionals report higher relationship satisfaction than those with partners of dissimilar careers? The null hypothesis for this question is that psychologists who report relationships with partners of similar careers will not significantly differ on the DAS and MSS from those who indicate relationships with partners of dissimilar (professional and nonprofessional) careers.

The second question is, to what degree will the career salience of the psychologist, as measured by the CCM, moderate the hypothesized relationship between career similarity and relationship satisfaction? The null hypothesis is that scores on the CCM will not be a significant predictor in the hypothesized relationship between career similarity and relationship satisfaction.

The third question is, to what degree will the gender of the psychologist, as indicated on the demographics page, moderate the relationship between career similarity and relationship satisfaction? The null hypothesis is that gender will have no effect on the association between career similarity and relationship satisfaction.

### Statistical Analysis

A 2 x 3 x 2 multivariate analysis of variance was performed to test the three research questions. The MANOVA was used in order to avoid inflating the overall type I

error rate by the use of fragmented univariate tests (Stevens, 1996). Gender (two levels), career match between the psychologist and his or her partner (three levels), and high or low career commitment scores on the CCM (two levels) were the three independent variables. CCM scores fell roughly into a normal distribution and the range was divided via median split into two groups, high and low. It was previously determined that career match would include three groups into which participants would be classified: (1) those who had partners in a professional, similar career in the mental health field; (2) those whose partners worked in a professional but non-mental health capacity; and (3) those in relationships with nonprofessional jobs. Total scores from the DAS and MSS served as dependent variables. Computations were calculated using the SPSS for Windows, Version 7.1 software.

#### Means and Standard Deviations

One hundred ten female participants reported being in relationships with male partners, while 14 reported having female partners. One hundred twenty-seven male participants reported being in a relationship with female partners, and 5 reported having male partners. 85.5% of psychologists tended to be partnered with people who had professional careers, and 30.9% of the sample reported that their partners worked in some professional capacity within the mental health field.

The number of participants, means, and standard deviations on both dependent variables for each of the groups are reported in Table 1.

Table 1

Summary of DAS & MSS Mean Scores for Gender, Career Match, & CCM

| Males                      |                           |                |                         |                            |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Career Match               | Career Commitment Measure | Number in Cell | Dyadic Adjustment Scale | Marital Satisfaction Scale |
| Professional-Similar       | Hi                        | 16             | 108                     | 179                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 32             | 119                     | 191                        |
| Professional-Dissimilar    | Hi                        | 14             | 108                     | 172                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 43             | 112                     | 196                        |
| Nonprofessional-Dissimilar | Hi                        | 9              | 112                     | 189                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 18             | 118                     | 200                        |
| Females                    |                           |                |                         |                            |
| Career Match               | Career Commitment Measure | Number in Cell | Dyadic Adjustment Scale | Marital Satisfaction Scale |
| Professional-Similar       | Hi                        | 5              | 117                     | 185                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 26             | 113                     | 188                        |
| Professional-Dissimilar    | Hi                        | 25             | 107                     | 182                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 58             | 113                     | 196                        |
| Nonprofessional-Dissimilar | Hi                        | 3              | 105                     | 179                        |
|                            | Lo                        | 7              | 112                     | 194                        |

For the total number of participants in this study (N=256), the descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) for the two dependent variables were M=113.27 and SD=15.39 for the DAS; and M=190.92 and SD=32.94 for the MSS.

The scores on the DAS and the MSS had a Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient of .73 and the distributions were essentially symmetrical. M=113.27 and SD=15.39 for the DAS; and M=190.92 and SD=32.94 for the MSS. M=45.9 and SD=7.54 for the scores on the CCM. The distribution of CCM scores appeared to be symmetrical with no differences across gender.

No statistically significant differences were found between the groups, Wilk's Lambda=.972,  $F(4,486)=1.731$ ,  $p<.142$ . Thus, there is a failure to reject each of the three Null Hypotheses associated with the research questions..

Power, the ability of a statistical test to correctly reject the null hypothesis, was considered. If power is too small, there is an increased chance for a Type II error, which could have accounted for a failure to reject the Null Hypothesis. A small sample size can seriously decrease power, and Stevens (1996) suggests the prudence of abandoning the traditional alpha level of .05 for a more liberal level of .10 to improve power sharply. Power for the multivariate test = .53 ( $\alpha =.05$ ) and .65 ( $\alpha =.10$ ). The effect size was .014 in both cases, which suggests that the groups did not differ in the sample along the independent variables, and the power of the multivariate test suggested a 65% (.65) of finding a difference between groups if one is there (Stevens, 1996).

Box's M (1949, in Stevens, 1996) test was conducted to assess for homogeneity of covariance matrices. The Box test was significant well beyond the .01 level ( $F=2.272$ ,



$p=.000$ , approximately) which indicates a violation of the assumption of homogeneity of covariance. Had there been a significant interaction, this violation would have been a concern in interpretation because the group means and variances were not consistently proportional which may have indicated a liberal (more risk for Type I error) multivariate statistic (Stevens, 1996).

Roy's largest Root for the interaction  $(2,224)= 3.394$ ,  $p<.035$ . Roy for the main effect of career match =  $3.084$ ,  $p<.048$ . The relationship of this multivariate test statistic to the discriminant functions (eigenvalues), which are linear combinations of dependent variables and indicate differences between groups (Stevens, 1996), shifted the analytical interest to a discriminant analysis.

#### Supplemental Analysis

A discriminant analysis was conducted to compare career match across the dependent variables. The procedure was used to attempt to maximize the between to within association and investigate the possible meaning of Roy's largest Root. Box's test for this analysis was not significant ( $F=1.18$ ,  $p<.309$ ) which indicates equal variance in population covariance matrices. The first discriminant function was associated with an eigenvalue that accounted for 94.4% of the variance, and Wilk's Lambda for this function=.955, which indicates nonsignificance. Further, the classification results of the discriminant analysis revealed that 39.1% of the original grouped cases were correctly classified. With cross-validation that number dropped to 37.9%.

Interest then shifted to the demographic variable of perceived similarity of partner's career to one's own because no significant differences were found between the original career similarity groupings. It might have been possible that participants' perceptions of their partner's career similarity was a more influential variable in terms of their relationship satisfaction than was the researcher's perception of their similarity according to classification criteria. However, multivariate analysis of variance revealed that Wilk's Lambda for the interaction of gender and perceived similarity = .939,  $p < .051$ , and again, Roy's largest Root seemed inflated at 3.163,  $p < .015$ . Therefore, neither value indicated significant differences between the groups.

One item on the demographics page requested comments from the psychologists about what impact their partner's career has had on their relationship. Roughly half of the respondents elected to comment. Of the commentors in the "professional similar group" (those whose partners were also mental health professionals), 86% indicated that their partner's career positively impacted their relationship. Reasons for the positive influence on their relationship seemed to emerge along some common themes: they perceived that having similar interests and being collegial with their partners was enjoyable, added to feelings of closeness in the relationship, and helpful in growing together professionally (a few said it was because they felt competitive with one another); many indicated that having their careers in common allowed them to empathize with one another's job pressures and better offer support; and some remarked that various personal attributes (e.g. nurturing, understanding, active listening, communication skills) partially related to job skills have enhanced their relationships.

Only 14% of psychologists in the “professional similar” group remarked that their partner’s career had a mixed or negative effect on the relationship: they mentioned that differences in orientation sometimes impaired their communication; because they shared the same interests, they also seemed to hit burnout the same time; and that the downside to the more positive aspects of career similarity include the partner’s devotion of too much time to work, which was noted by some to be a result of financial pressures imposed by managed care.

In the “professional dissimilar” group, which included the largest group of respondents, the comments were more diverse. Unlike the professional similar group, 11% remarked that their partner’s career had a no significant impact at all on their relationship. Psychologists commenting that their partner’s careers impacted their relationship positively (63%) did so along the following themes: many remarked that the partner’s career has provided financial stability in the relationship; some commented that partner’s career makes him or her a more interesting or more satisfied person; others have enjoyed “broadening horizons” or becoming more “balanced” by learning about a different career and meeting different people through their partner’s career, some of them remarked that it is refreshing to come home to someone who is not a psychologist; some indicated that although their careers are different they still share common interests or “passions” which have contributed to the closeness in the relationship; a few commented that it has motivated them to achieve more or compete financially, which they perceive as positive; and a couple respondents commented that their partner’s work hours complemented their’s in a way that was helpful for childrearing.

Fourteen percent of these respondents had comments that reflected mixed feelings about their partner's career impact on their relationship: many in this group commented that although they have enjoyed the financial benefits of their partner's career, the job stress of the partner has taken a toll on their relationship; related to this factor, one respondent commented that although his wife likes having her own money, he believes her career has negatively impacted their relationship because she's more tired and "abstracted" than he would like; also related to this factor, another respondent commented that the multiple moves required by her husband's career are exciting but stressful.

Thirteen percent of the commenting psychologists in the professional dissimilar group commented negatively about their partners' careers: some commented that it makes communication difficult because of the differences in their values; others indicated negative impact between the financial crunch their partner's career had put them in as well their lack of interest in their partner's career; those who lived apart and commuted to see one another mostly commented that it had a negative impact. So, this adds up to 27% of the respondents in this group with mixed or negative opinions about the impact of their partner's career on the relationship as compared with 14% of commenting psychologists in the professional similar group.

The nonprofessional dissimilar group of respondents was by far the smallest, and only a few of them elected to comment about the impact their partner's career had on their relationship. Those who did indicated: their partner's lack of a professional career

balanced them; they are just glad their partner is working at all because it reduces pressure on them for support; and that their partner's career choice is problematic.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study and an interpretation of the results. The implications of the statistical findings are discussed, as well as limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

#### Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the differences in relationship satisfaction between psychologists with partners of similar and dissimilar careers, and grouping them according to career salience and gender. Relationship satisfaction was measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Marital Satisfaction Scale. Career Salience, which divided the participants into high and low groups, was assessed using the Career Commitment Measure.

One thousand survey packets were mailed to a randomly selected group of practicing Health Service Provider psychologists whose names were obtained from the American Psychological Association's national database. 256 surveys were returned. The sample closely matched the population from the database in terms of demographic information including age, race/ethnicity, degree type, and gender.

There were three null hypotheses in this study. The first stated that there would be no difference in relationship satisfaction scores between psychologists with partners of

similar and dissimilar careers. The second was that career salience would not moderate the relationship between partner's career similarity and relationship satisfaction. The third was that gender would not moderate the relationship between partner's career similarity and relationship satisfaction.

### Statistical Findings

The research questions were tested using a 2x3x2 between subjects multivariate analysis of variance, with significant alpha initially set at the .05 level. No statistically significant differences were found between relationship satisfaction scores of psychologists with partners of similar and dissimilar careers regardless of gender or career salience. Therefore, there was a failure to reject the null hypotheses.

### Discussion of Results

Overall on the DAS, psychologists reported being about as satisfied in their relationships or slightly more so than did participants in previous psychometric studies on the instrument (Spanier, 1976; Sharpley & Cross, 1982). Scores on the DAS were highly correlated with those on the MSS ( $r=.73$ ).

The fact that almost a third of this sample reported being involved in relationships with partners also in their field might be a significantly greater number than among, for example, attorneys or entrepreneurs or engineers. Had there been any similar data available on other types of professionals, these descriptors of the relationship characteristics of psychologists might be even more meaningful. Comparing

psychologists to other professional groups in terms of their relationship characteristics might be an interesting area of future study.

Although this sample of practicing psychologists seemed to hold a fairly positive opinion of their relationships, their satisfaction was independent of career similarity, their own career commitment, and gender. This similarity in relationship satisfaction across the groups shifted interest to a supplemental analysis addressing the possibility that perhaps the psychologists' own perceptions of their partners' similarity in career to their own would be more predictive of relationship satisfaction than was the imposed criteria for similarity classification used in the research question. Perceived similarity of partner's career to one's own was asked on the demographic sheet, with a five-point likert-type scale. However, this variable did not prove to be a significant predictor of differences between respondents' relationship satisfaction scores.

The literature on relationship satisfaction indicated many predictors associated with relationship satisfaction. Personal rewards and maximum need gratification by the partner have been implicated by exchange (Homans, 1961), interdependence theories (Thibaut & Kelly, 1959), and the theory of complementarity (Winch, 1952). Affective self-disclosure (Vera & Betz, 1992), beliefs about relationships (Metts & Cupach, 1990), problem-solving style, attachment style (Pistole, 1989), spousal time spent together (Smith, et al., 1988), and perspective-taking or empathic concern (Ptacek & Dodge, 1995) are all examples of variables found to be associated with reported relationship satisfaction.



One possible explanation for the results of this study might be that the design did not tap into, even indirectly, the established predictors of relationship satisfaction. There might have been a possibility of finding significant differences between the groups if career similarity had been related to one of the other established predictors, so that having a career similar to one's spouse involved one of those variables (e.g. affective self-disclosure or spousal time spent together), which was a reliable predictor of relationship satisfaction. Winch's (1952) notion that partners with similar and complementary qualities provide maximum need gratification and therefore greater relationship satisfaction addresses the importance of similarity. Part of the logic for this study was that partners who have similar careers might be better able to empathize with each other about job stressors, which could enhance relationship satisfaction. Perhaps what the results of this study suggest is that partners in a relationship can have similar and complimentary qualities without having similar careers.

The notion that psychologists are a unique population was entertained in the formation of this study, and perhaps they are in some ways, but the results did not suggest that they are in terms of relationship satisfaction and career similarity. Holland (1985) posited the notion of congruence to explain how people are more satisfied in occupational environments that fit with their personality types. Holland went on to suggest that "identical or related types will be attracted to one another, will be more understanding of one another, and will enjoy one another, because similar types will act as reinforcing environments for one another" (Holland, 1985, p. 155). The fact that this study found no significant difference between the relationship satisfaction of psychologists with partners

of similar and dissimilar careers may not necessarily suggest that Holland's notion is inaccurate. Each Holland Codetype indicates several compatible careers with the personality characteristics noted for the type. Perhaps there are careers that attract similar codetypes that are not in the mental health field. For example, Holland (1966) outlined several examples of occupations complementary to one who has a predominantly "social" codetype, which includes applied psychology: teacher, guidance counselor, medical doctor, nurse, social worker, speech therapist, and school principal. With the exception of social worker, all of these occupations would have been coded as "professional-dissimilar" if using the criteria for this study, yet according to Holland, they are the same type code as a psychologist. In this study, career similarity was determined using criteria unrelated to the Holland type codes. The lack of significance in this study may be due to the way career similarity was determined. The partners of the participants were not surveyed to assess their Holland type codes. However, that might have been a more effective way to research the notion of congruence. For example, according to the career match classification, a partner who is an attorney would be placed in the professional dissimilar category. However, the partner might possess an identical Holland type code as the psychologist-participant, and relationship satisfaction may be related to that similarity.

Previous research on Holland's notion of congruence for relationship satisfaction yielded mixed results (Williams, 1967; Wiggins & Westlander, 1979; Mathis & Dorset, 1977; Rouse & Roach, 1984). In this study it was hypothesized that psychologists were a unique population due to their training and the personal nature of the work they do, and

might be more likely to substantiate the theory of congruence than other populations. No previous research had been done on the relationship satisfaction of psychologists, so this hypothesis emerged solely from literature on the existing theories of relationship satisfaction, dual-career couple literature, and the writing done about the personal and professional development of psychologists. The results of this study might mean that psychologists' relationship satisfaction is influenced by variables not associated with career similarity of their partners. However, the methodology of the study raises concern about adequate testing of the construct of "career similarity," so the results should be interpreted with caution. What the study does suggest is that according to the career match classification system used there are no significant differences between career match groups in relationship satisfaction.

#### Limitations

1. Exploring relationship satisfaction and career similarity in part using the notion of congruence, which is based on Holland type codes, without determining the code types of the participants or their partners. Using the actual Holland codetypes may have provided the researcher grouping criteria for career (and personality) similarity and dissimilarity that would have shown significant differences in relationship satisfaction scores. Surveying the partners of the participants would have been necessary for this design to work, which was not feasible given the available resources.

2. Size of the sample: although the total  $N=256$ , a respectable number, some of the individual cell groups were very small. Collapsing cell groups together across career

salience to maximize the cell n did not boost cell numbers much, but a larger sample size could have provided better generalizability of results.

3. Self report measure: The survey packet was self report, which is convenient, but problematic in terms of accuracy of report and who chooses to respond. Although the participants could remain anonymous, there is a possibility of socially desirable response sets. Taking this notion further, it is possible that only those psychologists who perceived their relationships to be fairly satisfactory even responded to the survey. Perhaps psychologists who were involved in unsatisfactory relationships were less likely to respond, which may have affected the results.

#### Directions for Future Research

Future studies should address the limitations of the current study. That is, future studies should determine the Holland codetypes to establish the similarity of the partner's career. This would necessitate the participation of both the psychologists and their partners. Future studies should include a larger sample and control for the possibility of only participants with fairly satisfactory relationships responding. It might also be useful to use a comparison group of professionals considered to be different from psychologists in terms of Holland type codes, like physicists or accountants, to help in interpreting results of the relationship satisfaction and congruence information. Just finding out if about a third of professionals in other groups have partners that are in their same field would be interesting. It would provide a "yardstick" against which to compare psychologists as a population.

## Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, this study found no significant differences in relationship satisfaction between psychologists with partners of similar and dissimilar careers, according to grouping criteria developed for this project, and regardless of gender or career salience of the participants. It is concluded that the design of this study precludes generalization regarding Holland's notion of congruence and relationship satisfaction because determination about grouping of participants into similar and dissimilar partner career groups was made without using Holland type codes. The methodology would need to include assessment of both partners in a relationship to determine the similarity of their type codes for more accurate grouping to adequately test this theory.

This study suggests that psychologists personal perceptions of the similarity of their partners' careers was not associated with their level of relationship satisfaction. The descriptive information about psychologists' relationships and their feedback about them was interesting and previously unreported. It may have implications for training of doctoral students in terms of informing them about characteristics of many psychologists' relationships and their opinions about them. As a profession that often works in depth with clients about navigating their significant relationships, it may be interesting and meaningful for us to continue to gather more information about how we're doing in our own.

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## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A: COVER LETTER

Dear Colleague:

I am conducting a study to better understand the relationships and careers of psychologists. Your name was randomly selected through the American Psychological Association.

*If you are currently involved in an exclusive romantic relationship with a significant other, I would be very grateful for your participation. It involves completing a demographic sheet and three brief questionnaires, taking no more than fifteen minutes. Just return them in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. If you are not currently in a romantic relationship, and you have a colleague who is, passing this packet on to them would be greatly appreciated.*

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and informed consent is implied when you fill out the survey. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained. All the information you provide is confidential, and no individual participant or answer will be identified.

If you have questions you may contact Bithiah Harmon, M.S. or John Romans, Ph.D. at (405)744-6036 or Gay Clarkson with the Institutional Review Board at (405)744-5700.

If you would like to obtain results of this study, complete the bottom of this cover sheet and return it with your survey. To maintain confidentiality, this cover sheet will be separated from the questionnaires upon receiving them.

Thank you for participating in this project!

Sincerely,

Bithiah Harmon, M.S.

Complete the following and return this letter with your questionnaire  
if you want the results of the study:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender:  Female  Male
3. Race/Ethnicity:  White/Anglo  Black/African American  Hispanic/Latino  
 Asian American  American Indian  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Major Psychotherapy Orientation (Check all that apply):  
 Cognitive Behavioral  Psychodynamic  Existential  
 Reality  Humanistic  Systems  
 Gestalt  Eclectic  Behavioral  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Highest degree associated with license:  Ph.D.  Ed.D.  Psy.D.  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Year degree granted: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Current employment status:  Employed  Unemployed  
 Full time  Part time (number of hours: \_\_\_\_\_)
8. If employed, what is your current primary job affiliation (check one):  
 Mental Health Center  Outpatient Clinic  Hospital  School System  
 Private Practice  Medical School  Academia  
 University Counseling  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Please specify the status of the *significant, romantic relationship* in which you are currently involved:  
 Married (i.e. "Committed" if gay/lesbian)  Unmarried, cohabiting  
 Dating, living separately  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Length of relationship with partner described in last question (years or months): \_\_\_\_\_

11. Age of partner: \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Gender of partner: \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_ Male  
13. Race/Ethnicity of partner: \_\_\_ White/Anglo \_\_\_ Black/African American \_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino  
\_\_\_ Asian American \_\_\_ American Indian \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Highest educational degree obtained by partner: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Partner's degree title: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Partner's current employment status: \_\_\_ Employed \_\_\_ Unemployed  
\_\_\_ Full time \_\_\_ Part time (number of hours: \_\_\_\_\_)

17. Partner's primary job setting: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Partner's primary job title: \_\_\_\_\_

19. How similar to your career is your partner's career? (Circle one)

Very Similar      Somewhat Similar      Only Slightly Similar      Somewhat Dissimilar      Very Dissimilar

20. What has been the impact of your partner's career on your relationship?

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## APPENDIX C: CAREER COMMITMENT MEASURE

Please respond to the following items by circling the appropriate corresponding number.  
 5=strongly agree (SA); 4=agree (A), 3=neither agree nor disagree (N); 2=disagree (D);  
 1=strongly disagree (SD)

|  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. My career field is an important part of who I am.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 2. This career field has a great deal of personal meaning to me  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 3. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this career field.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 4. I strongly identify with my chosen career field.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 5. I do not have a strategy for achieving my goals in this career field. I                             |    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 6. I have created a plan for my development in this career field.                                      | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 7. I do not identify specific goals for my development in this career field.                           | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 8. I do not often think about my personal development in this career field.                            | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 9. The costs associated with my career field some times seem too great.                                | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 10. Given the problems I encounter in this career field, I sometimes wonder if I get enough out of it. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 11. Given the problems in this career field, I sometimes wonder if the personal burden is worth it.    | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 12. The discomforts associated with my career field sometimes seem too great.                          | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |

Carson, K.D., & Bedeian, A.G. (1994). Career commitment: Construction of a measure and examination of its psychometric properties. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 44, 237-262.

## APPENDIX D: DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

5=Always Agree (AA); 4=Almost Always Agree (AAA); 3=Occasionally Disagree (OD);  
2=Frequently Disagree (FD); 1=Almost Always Disagree (AAD); 0=Always Disagree (AD)

|  | AA | AAA | OD | FD | AAD | AD |
|--|----|-----|----|----|-----|----|
| 1. Handling family finances                    | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 2. Matters of recreation                       | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 3. Religious matters                           | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 4. Demonstration of affection                  | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 5. Friends                                     | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 6. Sex relations                               | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 7. Conventuality (correct or proper behavior)  | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 8. Philosophy of life                          | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws     | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 10. Aims, goals, and things believed important | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 11. Amount of time spent together              | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 12. Making major decisions                     | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 13. Household tasks                            | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 14. Leisure time interests and activities      | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |
| 15. Career decisions                           | 5  | 4   | 3  | 2  | 1   | 0  |

0=All the Time (AT); 1=Most of the Time (MT); 2=More Often than Not (MON); 3=Occasionally (O);  
4=Rarely (R); 5=Never (N)

|   | AT | MT | MON | O | R | N |
|---|----|----|-----|---|---|---|
| 16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation or terminating your relationship? | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?           | 5  | 4  | 3   | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 19. How often do you confide in your mate?  | 5  | 4  | 3   | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 20. How often do you ever regret that you married or lived together?                                      | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. How often do you and your mate get on each other's nerves?  | 0  | 1  | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- (Circle one)
23. How often do you kiss your mate?
- |           |                  |              |        |       |
|-----------|------------------|--------------|--------|-------|
| 4         | 3                | 2            | 1      | 0     |
| Every Day | Almost Every day | Occasionally | Rarely | Never |
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?
- |             |              |              |                  |              |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| 4           | 3            | 2            | 1                | 0            |
| All of Them | Most of Them | Some of Them | Very Few Of Them | None of Them |

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your partner? (circle the appropriate number)  
 0=Never (N); 1=Less than Once a Month (LOM); 2=Once or Twice Per Month (OTM);  
 3=Once or Twice a Week (OTW); 4=Once a Day (OD); 5=More Often (MO)

|  | N | LOM | OTM | OTW | OD | MO |
|--|---|-----|-----|-----|----|----|
| 25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas | 0 | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5  |
| 26. Laugh together                       | 0 | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5  |
| 27. Calmly discuss something             | 0 | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5  |
| 28. Work together on a project           | 0 | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  | 5  |

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks (circle the appropriate number).

|                              | YES | NO |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| 29. Being too tired for sex. | 0   | 1  |
| 30. Not showing love.        | 0   | 1  |

31. The numbers on the line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the number which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, in your relationship:

| 0                 | 1              | 2                | 3     | 4          | 5               | 6       |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------|-------|------------|-----------------|---------|
| Extremely Unhappy | Fairly Unhappy | A Little Unhappy | Happy | Very Happy | Extremely Happy | Perfect |

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?  
 (Circle the corresponding number)

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

Spanier, G.B. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: new scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 38, 15-28.

## APPENDIX E: MARITAL SATISFACTION SCALE

Please respond to the following items by circling the appropriate corresponding number.

5=strongly agree (SA); 4=agree (A), 3=neither agree nor disagree (N); 2=disagree (D); 1=strongly disagree (SD)

|   | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. I know what my partner expects of me in our relationship.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 2. My partner could make things easier for me if he/she cared to.                                     | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 3. I worry a lot about this relationship.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 4. If I could start over again, I would choose someone other than my present partner.                 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 5. I can always trust my partner.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 6. My life would seem empty without this relationship.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 7. This relationship is too confining to suit me.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 8. I feel that I am "in a rut" in this relationship.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 9. I know where I stand with my partner.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 10. This relationship has a bad effect on my health.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 11. I become upset, angry, or irritable because of things that occur in this relationship.            | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 12. I feel competent and fully able to handle this relationship.                                      | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 13. This present relationship is not one I would wish to remain in permanently.                       | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 14. I expect this relationship to give me increasing satisfaction the longer it continues.            | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 15. I get discouraged trying to make this relationship work out.                                      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 16. I consider this relationship situation to be as pleasant as it should be.                         | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 17. This relationship gives me more real personal satisfaction than anything else I do                | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 18. I think this relationship gets more difficult for me each year.                                   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 19. My partner gets me badly flustered and jittery.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 20. My partner gives me sufficient opportunity to express my opinions.                                | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 21. I have made a success of this relationship so far.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 22. My partner regards me as an equal.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 23. I must look outside this relationship for those things that make life worthwhile and interesting. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |



|  | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 24. My partner inspires me to do my best work.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 25. This relationship has "smothered" my personality.                                  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 26. The future of this relationship looks promising to me.                             | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 27. I am really interested in my partner.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 28. I get along well with my partner.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 29. I am afraid of losing my partner through relationship dissolution.                 | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 30. My partner makes unfair demands on my free time.                                   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 31. My partner seems unreasonable in his/her dealings with me.                         | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 32. This relationship helps me toward the goals I have set for myself.                 | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 33. My partner is willing to make helpful improvements<br>in our relationship.         | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 34. This relationship suffers from disagreement concerning<br>matters of recreation.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 35. Demonstrations of affection by me and my partner are<br>mutually acceptable.       | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 36. An unhappy sexual relationship is a drawback in this relationship.                 | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 37. My partner and I agree on what is right and proper conduct.                        | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 38. My partner and I do not share the same philosophy of life.                         | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 39. My partner and I enjoy several mutually satisfying outside I<br>nterests together. | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 40. I sometimes wish I had not gotten into a relationship with<br>my present partner.  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 41. My present relationship is definitely unhappy.                                     | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 42. I look forward to sexual activity with my partner with<br>pleasant anticipation.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 43. My partner has respect for me.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 44. I have definite difficulty confiding in my partner.                                | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 45. Most of the time my partner understands the way I feel.                            | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 46. My partner does not listen to what I have to say.                                  | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
| 47. I frequently enjoy pleasant conversations with my partner.                         | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 48. I am definitely satisfied with this relationship.                                  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |

Roach, A.J., Frazier, L.P., & Bowden, S.R. (1981). The Marital Satisfaction Scale: Development of a measure for intervention research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 43(3), 537-546.

APPENDIX F: IRB REVIEW FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

Date: 07-31-97

IRB#: ED-98-005

Proposal Title: RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS WITH PARTNERS OF SIMILAR AND DISSIMILAR CAREERS

Principal Investigator(s): Bithiah Harmon, John Romans

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

ALL APPROVALS MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT NEXT MEETING, AS WELL AS ARE SUBJECT TO MONITORING AT ANY TIME DURING THE APPROVAL PERIOD.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR DATA COLLECTION FOR A ONE CALENDAR YEAR PERIOD AFTER WHICH A CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL.

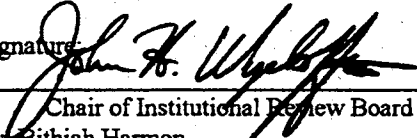
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Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Disapproval are as follows:

SUGGESTIONS:

1. Clearly identify investigator, advisor, and IRB contact as affiliated with OSU (specific departments).
2. For maximum anonymity, subjects should send requests for results via a separate postcard (sent to Principal Investigator sent separately from questionnaires).

Signature

  
Chair of Institutional Review Board  
cc: Bithiah Harmon

Date: August 1, 1997

VITA<sup>2</sup>

Bithiah Harmon

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION OF PSYCHOLOGISTS WITH  
SIMILAR AND DISSIMILAR CAREERS

Major Field: Applied Behavioral Studies

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in San Jose, California, on August 18, 1971, the daughter of Jim and Dee Byers.

Education: Graduated from Paris High School, Paris, Arkansas in May 1989; received a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from the University of Tulsa, Tulsa, Oklahoma in December 1991. Received a Master of Science degree in Applied Behavioral Studies from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 1995. Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Counseling Psychology at Oklahoma State University in July 1998.

Experience: Employed as a psychiatric technician and a psychological assistant intern during undergraduate and masters education; worked as a marriage and family therapist and a part-time clinical counselor at Oklahoma State University as part of doctoral practicum requirements; employed as an intake counselor for Personal Counseling Services at Oklahoma State University, 1997 to present.

Professional Memberships: American Psychological Association, student affiliate.