

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOINT/SHARED ACTIVITIES WITH
MARITAL DISSATISFACTION, FLEXIBILITY,
COHESION, AND COMMUNICATION

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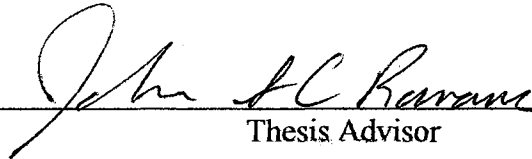
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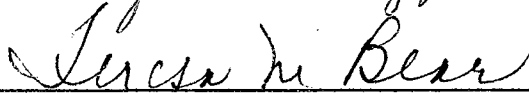
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“Bringing dreams to life” was what inspired me to pursue my dream at Oklahoma State University. I dare to dream because I believe that God is the one who is more than able to fulfill my dreams. Now, the completion of my doctorate study is one of God’s many ways to witness to others and to me that He can bring the seemingly impossible to be a reality.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Over the past several decades, researchers have increasingly investigated marriages from various perspectives, such as marital maintenance and repairing strategies (Baxter & Dindia, 1990; Dindia & Baxter, 1987); coping efforts (Bowman, 1990); essential ingredients for marriages (Fitzgerald, McKellar, Lener, & Copans, 1985); quality and the stability of marriage (Lewis & Spanier, 1979); and conflicts (Fincham & Beach, 1999; Jenkins, 2000; Mackey & O'Brien, 1998; Ridley, Wilhelm, & Surra, 2001). Studies on the relationship between marital satisfaction and other areas, such as communication (Boland & Follingstad, 1987; Burlison & Denton, 1997; Richmond, McCroskey & Roach, 1997), work (Burley, 1995; Pittman, 1994; Wilkie, Ferree, & Ratcliff, 1998), interaction (Gottman, Coan, Carrere & Swanson, 1998; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Matthew, Wickrama & Conger, 1996), role (Marks, & MacDermid, 1996), and gender (Allen, & Webster, 2001; Ragsdale, 1996) are abundant as well.

Many studies have explored the satisfying aspects of marriage; nonetheless the divorce rate in the United States is climbing like never before. Currently, the last-reported U.S. divorce rate for a calendar year is 0.40% per capita based on the year 2001 report from the National Center for Health Statistics (Kreider, & Fields, 2002). Since

every divorce involves two people, it is suggested that the percentage would reflect a more accurate picture if the number were doubled because each divorce involves two parties. It is also estimated that the percentage of first marriages ending in divorce is between 40% to 50%. Schmid (1996) confirmed that the number of divorced people has increased to 17.4 million in 1994, while it was 4.3 million in 1970. Some suggested that there was a curvilinear relationship between divorce rate and the labor force participation rate of females (Booth, Johnson, White & Edwards, 1984). Where societies are less developed, female participation in the labor force helps to lower the divorce rate. Where societies are more developed, female participation in the work force is associated with an increase in the divorce rate. One explanation is that when prestigious jobs are more accessible to women, as in more developed societies, the economic climate gives women the freedom to leave a failing marriage that they do not have in less developed societies. Of course, there are many other explanations for higher divorce rates in more developed countries/societies.

When both members of a couple have outside employment, they tend to spend less time together (Jacobs & Gerson, 2001; Kingston & Nock, 1987). According to Jacobs and Gerson (2001), married couples in dual-earner families tend to differ in the type of activities they share. Thus, activities shared between couples could be a crucial factor in their marriage. When couples are spending time alone or with other people (without their spouse), they are increasingly emphasizing individual autonomy (Kalmijn & Bernasco, 2001). When couples share less time and fewer activities together, their sense of identity as being a couple may be weakened (Betcher, 1987). This could bring

about less communication time, which will diminish their bonding and partnership as a united unit. Furthermore, they may lose a sense of common purpose, leading to a decrease in their marital satisfaction. Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) suggested that when husbands and wives have joint lifestyles, they “produce a set of goods that are directly connected to their marriage and that primarily yield benefits to that specific relationship” (p. 639). It would cost them more if the relationship dissolves; thus, a joint lifestyle is also a safeguard for marriage.

A satisfying marital relationship can bring about better physical health, longer life, more financial stability, a sense of protection and security, a deeper level of emotional intimacy and a better sex life (Shek, 1995; Waite, 1995). Marital satisfaction can bring about many positive experiences for people. For example, Greeff (2000) studied the characteristics of healthy families. It was revealed that changes in family satisfaction have the greatest effect on family functioning. When family members are less satisfied, they tend to function in a more fragmented manner. They might be more rigid in negotiating their priorities with each other, which creates more conflict.

Types of shared activities also are linked with marital satisfaction. For example, the importance of leisure time management in married couples ranks right next to the sexual relationship in its influence on relationship satisfaction. Lee (1988) indicated that “joint involvement with friends” was important in providing a support network for married couples. As the married couples enjoy friendship with others, their sense of oneness is strengthened. Time with family and friends is also identified as crucial in family satisfaction. Bruess and Pearson’s (1997) research concerning rituals in marriage

further indicated that sharing enjoyable activities and time together might promote greater marital satisfaction. Their study indicated couples' most frequently reported Couple-Time rituals contribute to marital satisfaction. Twenty three percent of their sample identified "enjoyable activities" and "togetherness rituals" as the two most common rituals that they share. The sampled couples reported that they liked to bowl, canoe, listen to music, and watch television together. By sharing activities, couples develop their unique way of relating, which contributes to the security, and stability of the marriage relationship. The uniqueness of intimate play provides the couples a sense of "we-ness" (Betcher, 1987). Although it is generally assumed that sharing activities is important to marital satisfaction, only a few studies are devoted to this area of the marital relationship. Is there a relationship between joint/shared activities with marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion and communication? If so, does it matter that husbands and wives just play together (leisure activities), but not work together (non-leisure activities)? If there is not a common goal between husbands and wives in working together, such as sharing household responsibilities and caring for their young ones, do they tend to be less satisfied? How does each type of activity explain the various dynamics in the marital relationship? These are a few of the questions that this study will attempt to shed light upon.

Olson (2000) suggests a healthy relationship needs to have a balanced cohesion with flexibility. Couples need to be flexible as they encounter many life situations and decisions during the course of their marriage relationship. They need to be cohesive as a unit in order to reach agreements or to solve problems without alienating each other. So,

what are the roles of joint/shared activities as related to flexibility and cohesion? These two variables will be included in the investigation of the relationship with joint/shared activities and marital dissatisfaction. All these perspectives are significant in offering a dynamic perspective in dyadic relationships.

It is the hypothesis of this current study that couples will be less dissatisfied, more flexible, cohesive and communicative with their relationship if they spend time together through sharing leisure and non-leisure activities. By sharing all these activities, their sense of identity as a couple will be strengthened. It is also hypothesized that couples who share leisure and non-leisure activities tend to be more flexible and cohesive as a unit and their relationship will be enhanced. As a result of increasing shared activities, couples' communication is enhanced because as they play and work more together as a couple, they will also learn to communicate their differences. This continuing communication reflects a willingness on both parties to negotiate (flexibility factor) and to become more united (cohesion factor) as a couple. In fact, Olson (1992) suggested that communication is a crucial ingredient to reach a balanced flexibility and cohesion in marital relationship. Thus, the main focus of this present investigation is to explore the relationships of joint/shared leisure and non-leisure activities with couples' marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion, and communication.

Statement of the Problem

The rationale of this study is based on research (Bruess & Pearson, 1997; Greeff, 2000; Heller & Wood, 1998; Kalmijn & Bernasco, 2001; Lee, 1988) which indicated the

importance of friendship, togetherness and joint lifestyle in a marital relationship. The purpose of this study is to explore if there is a relationship between marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion and communication with joint/shared leisure and non-leisure activities. When couples are able to enjoy activities under relaxed circumstances during joint leisure time, their relationship will be strengthened (Greeff, 2000, p. 959). Spending good time together naturally increases positive feelings towards the other partner. On the other hand, married couples' dependence on each other will increase when they also share the non-leisure activities. They are helping each other and serving each other in their daily lives to create a family and to maintain a place called "home".

For the purpose of this study, four different dimensions are used in measuring marital relationship. They are global distress/dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion and communication in the marital relationships. Three measurements, the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised by Douglas K. Snyder (1997), the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES II) (1992) and the ENRICH Couple Scales (2003) will be used. The last two measurements come from Olson's Circumplex Model (2000) measuring the quality of the marital relationship investigating the dynamics between couples. Two revised scales measuring Joint/shared activities originally created by Kingston, Nock (1987) and Kalmijn, Bernasco (2001) will be used as well. Each of these scales will be introduced more in-depth in Chapter Three.

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (1997) has a shared activity component named Time Together (TTO) Scale, but it lacks specificity. This scale

evaluates couples' time together in leisure activity only. The current study will provide more concrete specific information regarding the various dynamics of marital relationship including global distress, flexibility, cohesion, communication and joint/shared activities including leisure and non-leisure activities than it has previously been provided. One of the advantages of using only the global distress score of the MSI-R in evaluating relationships is that it increases the ease in interpretation, and a global score contains a higher internal consistency (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). Meanwhile, its disadvantage is the lack of specific information on the dynamics of the marital relationship. Thus, Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES II) and ENRICH Couple Scales will be used to meet this gap. It offers a more in-depth picture of how couples relate and negotiate.

The distinctive aspect of this current investigation is to examine the relationship between joint/shared leisure and non-leisure activities with global marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion and communication. Most other research focuses on the leisure time between couples without exploring the other activities that couples usually share on a daily basis, such as household responsibilities. Focusing on both the leisure and non-leisure activities offers a larger view of the couples' overall activities. So, do playing and working together affect couples' overall assessment of their marriage? Do those who play and work together find themselves less dissatisfied, more flexible, more cohesive and more communicative in their marital relationship than those couples who just do one thing or the other? Marriage is more than playing but working together in partnership as well. Thus, are the types of shared activities critical to the overall dissatisfaction,

flexibility, cohesion and communication in the marital relationship? Do leisure and non-leisure activities correlate differently to cohesion, flexibility, communication and global distress in the relationship? These are some of the questions that this study will attempt to answer.

Research Questions

- 1) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables (e.g., race, and gender) predict marital dissatisfaction?
 - a) Activities are measured by the Four Types of Leisure Activities Scale-Revised (revised from Kalmijn and Bernasco) and Joint/shared Activities Scale (revised from Kingston and Nock).
 - b) Marital Dissatisfaction is measured by the Global Distress scale (GDS) on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised.
- 2) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables (e.g., race, and gender) predict flexibility/adaptability in the marital relationship? (Flexibility will be measured by FACES-II: Couples Version).
- 3) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables (e.g., race, and gender) predict cohesion in the marital relationship? (Cohesion will be measured by FACES-II: Couples Version).
- 4) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables (e.g., race, and gender) predict communication in the marital relationship? (Communication will be measured by ENRICH Couple Scale).

Definition of Terms

Joint/shared activity is defined as any activity/project/interaction that offers opportunities to cultivate positive, meaningful and encouraging verbal/non-verbal exchanges between the married couple. This includes leisure and non-leisure activities, such as daily household responsibilities.

Leisure activity includes social contacts, entertainment, outdoor leisure and indoor leisure. Examples of social contacts are visiting friends, acquaintances, and neighbors; visiting parents, siblings, and other family members. Examples of entertainment are eating at a restaurant, and going to a theater. Examples of outdoor leisure are practicing organized sports, and going on a vacation. Examples of indoor leisure are doing hobbies at home, and watching television.

“Cohesion” is defined as the “emotional bonding that (family) members have with one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system” (L’Abate, & Bagarozzi, 1993, p. 168). “Optimal functioning means achieving a balance of togetherness and separateness. Family members are connected yet separate” (Kouneski, 2000, p. 8).

“Adaptability”/“Flexibility” is defined as the “ability of a marital/family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stresses” (L’Abate, & Bagarozzi, 1933, p.168). “Optimal functioning involves a balance of stability and change ... the term ‘flexibility’ (refers) to the degree of change...” (Kouneski, 2000, p. 8).

Communication is considered a facilitating factor for the marital/family system to negotiate changes. Specifically, it refers to the family unit's ability to change its levels of cohesion and flexibility (Kouneski, 2000). It is also an important hypothesis in the Circumplex Model, which proposes that balanced couples/families will have more positive communication compared to unbalanced couples/families. Communication is vital for the system to find the right balance of cohesion and flexibility (Maynard, & Olson, 1987).

Significance of the Study

It is the purpose of this study to explore the relationships between joint/shared activities and the marital relationship, specifically global distress, flexibility, cohesion, and communication. Exploring links among these variables has several implications. First, expanding the knowledge about the relationship between these dynamics and shared activities can enrich marriage therapy. It expands ideas on the importance of sharing a wider span of activities in the marital relationship. Secondly, increased knowledge regarding leisure and non-leisure shared activities will have implications for the way couples organize their daily life. An inventory of activities may be assessed which will assist couples to re-prioritize their ways in spending time together. Thirdly, the study will provide information as to whether there is a gender difference in the subject of sharing activities. Married individuals may perceive that a certain activity is important to their marriage when in fact it may not correlate with any relationship dynamics. Fourthly, the study may provide direction for future research in the area of a wider range of activities between couples and marital relationship. It may encourage

further causal-comparative and experimental research on 1) joint/shared activities that lead to higher marital satisfaction; 2) further exploration into the type of joint/shared activity brings about more marital satisfaction; and 3) the shift of activities as the marital relationship matures. It is hoped that the information resulting from this study will be incorporated into marriage seminars and therapy. Married couples might be encouraged to share more activities and change the relationship dynamic with a goal to strengthen their relationships.

Limitations

Due to the nature of this correlational research design, a causal relationship/prediction between joint/shared activities and marital dynamics (including global distress, flexibility, cohesion and communication) cannot be made. A strong relationship does not imply one causing the other. This means that a statement of more joint/shared activities causing less dissatisfaction, more flexibility, more cohesion and more communication in the relationship cannot be verified. In other words, a lower marital dissatisfaction does not cause more joint/shared activities; and more joint/shared activities do not necessarily cause less marital dissatisfaction. This study purposes to make attempts to explain the observed relationships among variables.

Second, the generalizability of the result is limited due to the demographic nature of the sample. Participants will be primarily from the Central Oklahoma area and Metropolitan Kansas City, Missouri areas. Central Oklahoma consists of people who are probably more conservative in their lifestyles and worldviews than what may be typical of other areas of the United States. The population tends to be disproportionately Euro-

Americans. Kansas City, Missouri consists of people who are more likely to have a mixed background ranging from liberal to conservative in their lifestyles and worldviews.

Third, the use of self-report instruments in this study has limitations.

Respondents will interpret the questionnaire items based on their own interpretation, which may or may not be the original intent of the instruments/researchers. Since no one will be physically present for the respondents at the time of filling out the instruments, respondents will have to rely on their own ability to understand the items. Moreover, this type of research format has a potential problem with respondents' dishonesty. They may gear their answers to what they want/wish versus the fact. Vaughn & Baier (1999) contended that "relationship-satisfaction measures often are contaminated by a social-desirability bias that is not easily controlled" (p. 138). Respondents may have a tendency to give the socially desirable responses. Depending on the subject matter and content of the various instruments, a certain level of anxiety may be created in respondents, which will affect their responses. For example, if the couples have had a recent argument over homemaking issue, they may rate a specific item on the Joint/shared Activities Scale lower than they may otherwise.

Fourth, there are limitations of the instruments measuring couples' joint/shared activities. The current scales by Kingston & Nock (1987) and Kalmijn & Bernasco (2001) focus on the physical and social activities, e.g., doing housework, watching television, caring for children, going to a movie, etc. The focus is on physical and social activities. Both of the instruments do not cover the extensive range of activities that couples may share. For example, sexual (Liu, 2000; Waite & Joyner, 2001; Young,

Luquis, Denny, & Young, 1998) and spiritual activities (Heller & Wood, 2000) are not included, which are interesting areas for further investigation as well.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

In this section, the attention of the literature review will address the main focus of the present study, which are joint/shared activities, household responsibilities, activities with children, cohesion and adaptability, and communication as to how they are related to the marital relationship. The joint/shared activities between married couples in this section of literature review refer to some of the leisure, and pleasurable activities that couples share. The amount of time spent in joint leisure activities is usually dependent on work hours, which could explain partially the amount of time that couples could spend in other types of activities. Working long hours is likely to reduce couples' available time together in sharing other activities. An activities scale created by Kingston and Nock (1987) is used in the present study to explore joint/shared activities and the marital relationship. This scale covers the areas of activities with children such as childcare and discipline, and household responsibilities. Another scale measuring joint activities is adapted from Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001). They used a 12-item inventory to categorize four types of leisure activities: social contacts, entertainment, outdoor leisure and indoor leisure. A review of literature will consist of these topics.

Furthermore, the variables of cohesion and adaptability are addressed as to how they are related to marriage and family relationships. The Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems introduces three basic dimensions, which are cohesion,

adaptability/flexibility (change), and communication (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989). Olson (1992) suggested that a balanced cohesion and adaptability in marriage/family is a healthy sign of relationship. His prominent measurement - FACES (Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales) has been used extensively in many studies, and it will be addressed in this section as well. The variable of communication in marriage is also reviewed with an emphasis on a measurement called ENRICH (Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness) which was developed by Olson, Fournier, and Druckman (1986).

Joint/shared activities and Marital Relationship

Since the 1930's (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989), marriage has been researched extensively. Many studies have focused on the relationship between marriage and communication, interaction, work, gender role, power, and life development. There is also a wealth of studies on the prediction of marital satisfaction. For example, Kingston and Nock (1987) found that the amount of time a couple spent together affects marital satisfaction. They proposed that couples need the time to learn and refine their roles in order to achieve marriage satisfaction. Through sharing various activities, two people learn to cultivate an identity as a couple.

However, work schedules have an impact on couples' time together in sharing other activities. When both spouses are employed, they tend to spend less time together than one-earner couples (Kingston & Nock, 1987). Husbands and wives tend to differ in the allocation of their shared time. Husbands tend to perceive that they are spending

more time with their wives in watching television. Wives tend to see that they are spending more time in homemaking with their husbands than their husbands' reports. Kingston and Nock (1987) studied time together among dual-earner couples suggesting that two-earner couples tend to spend less time together than single-earner couples. Although this study indicated that family income does not seem to relate to couples' time spent together; it does reveal that high status couples spend less time together in religious activities and help services. These couples tend to spend more time in recreation. In other words, these couples spend time in sharing more leisure seeking type activities because they can afford it financially. Teachman, Polonko and Scanzoni (1987) reported a positive correlation between couples' socioeconomic resources and satisfaction. The study suggested that an extra income would allow a married couple to better cope with marital conflicts. They can purchase outside help, which would increase their leisure activities and decrease household chores.

Bruess and Pearson (1997) emphasized the importance of doing things together, which was termed "rituals". Rituals are critical to personal and social relationship maintenance. They asked if couples were more satisfied with their marriage when they spend time sharing activities. On one hand, they found that leisure is important to maintain closeness and friendship; on the other hand, activities of the non-leisure nature also were important as it provided a full spectrum of life. Rituals were linked with greater marital satisfaction.

Crawford (1999) investigated the relationship between occupational characteristics and marital leisure involvement. The study revealed that women's occupations has a greater influence on marital leisure companionship than those of men

do. Women's choice of leisure activities is more dependent on their occupation. Wives tend to reduce social leisure (such as going to a play, attending sporting events, going to a party or entertaining friends or relatives) if their workplace imposes a closer supervision on them. The level of supervision is measured by how much the women feel that their supervisor has control over their job.

Other studies explored the excitement and boredom of activities between couples (Aron, Aron, Norman, McKenna, & Heyman, 2000; Reissman, Aron, & Bergen, 1993). The study by Reissman, Aron, and Bergen (1993) suggested that merely sharing activities with the spouse does not bring about any increase of marital satisfaction. The deciding factor is the type of shared activities between couples that would influence their satisfaction in the relationship. Reissman et al. (1993) examined the role of spending time with one's spouse as a strategy in maintaining a marital relationship. They asked fifty-three married couples to share activities for 1.5 hours each week for ten weeks. Based on their perception of this time, they were placed in three groups, i.e., exciting, pleasant and control. Pretest and post-test data were collected to measure their marital satisfaction. The finding indicated that there was a significantly higher satisfaction for the people in the exciting than the pleasant group. The implication of this study is that "participating in pleasant activities reduced satisfaction compared to those (couples) doing either no extra activities or exciting activities" (1993, p. 250). Instead sharing exciting activities together enhanced couples' relationship. Reissman et al. explained that just participating in activities might only bring about boredom in relationship because habituation was an obstacle to relationship maintenance, whereas engaging in exciting activities would reduce boredom.

Lee (1988) examined the effects of non-marital roles and marital satisfaction in latter life. He hypothesized that marital satisfaction would be higher in the later stages of the life cycle because husbands and wives diminish their role expectations of each other. However, the result revealed very little support for the hypotheses. The strongest correlation of marital satisfaction for both husbands and wives was friendship interaction. It is possible that when couples are involved with other couple friends, they tend to solidify their marital relationship because they are presenting themselves as one social network. A few studies confirmed the concept of deep friendship as a foundation sustaining a good marriage (Schwartz, 1994; Voss, Markiewicz & Doyle, 1999). Friendship promotes equality in the marital relationship. Friendship is essential for husbands and wives because it will benefit the whole family (Lee, 1988). In fact, Lee found that socioeconomic variables, education, income, and length of marriage have no significant effects on marital satisfaction. This finding has been supported by others (Donohue & Ryder, 1982; Glenn & Weaver, 1978; Jorgensen, 1979). Lee's study (1988) also pointed out that church attendance and number of grandchildren are positively related to marital satisfaction for men but unrelated for women.

It is important for couples to spend time in enjoyable activities, symbolic rituals, communication, intimacy expressions and daily routines because it will cultivate a satisfying marital relationship (Bruess & Pearson, 1997). Joint/shared activities increase couples' opportunities for interaction, and communication, and satisfy both men and women. Women's intimate bonds are characterized by talking, disclosing, and sharing (Oliker, 1989). Men's relationships are fundamentally built within joint/shared activities and common interests (Baxter & Wilmot, 1983; Wood & Inman, 1993). Bruess and

Pearson (1997) indicated couples' most frequently reported Couple-Time rituals contribute to marital satisfaction. Twenty three percent of their sample identified "enjoyable activities", and "togetherness rituals" as the two most common rituals that they share. The sampled couples reported that they liked to bowl, canoe, listen to music, and watch television together. Symbolic ritual is the second most frequently reported type of ritual in marriage. Couples share a "private code" as they play and celebrate together. Play rituals are defined as intimate fun in the form of couples' kidding, teasing, silliness, and/or playful banter (p. 33). By sharing activities, couples develop their unique way of relating; this nature of privacy contributes to the security and stability of the marriage relationship. The uniqueness of intimate play provides the couples a sense of "we-ness" (Betcher, 1987).

Holman and Jacquart (1988) sampled 159 couples concerning their time together for a period of twelve months prior to their study. Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale was used to investigate the couples' satisfaction level. The focus of the project (Holman & Jacquart, 1988) was to investigate the relationship between leisure-activity and marital satisfaction. Their study suggested that leisure activities do not necessarily bring about interaction between spouses. Often couples do not communicate or interact during leisure activities, and as a result, there is no positive impact on the marital relationship. Husbands' marital satisfaction was not significantly related to low joint leisure activities, which was defined as having little or no interaction in their leisure activities with their wives. However, wives' marital satisfaction was related to lower level of joint leisure activities. In fact, there was a greater marital satisfaction only when there was high-joint leisure activities and communication between the couples. When

the couples' interaction was considered as lower or moderate, their marital satisfaction was lower. As a matter of fact, the more they shared the lower or moderate interactive type leisure activities, the lower the marital satisfaction. They found that merely "doing things together" did not bring a high marital satisfaction. The key was the level of communication and interaction between the couples. If they had a high level of communication, then "doing things together" helped to increase their marital satisfaction.

One of the most commonly shared leisure activities is watching television. Walker (1996) investigated the gender and power difference in couples' watching television. Her study looked at how much partners enjoyed the time they spent together, particularly in watching television. She suggested that power differences between gender are more apparent in mundane activities, which strengthens the social structure of power difference between gender. The introduction of the use of remote control devices (RCD) increases couples' frustration because of the way that RCD is used. The various types of RCD use are: 1) grazing - progressing through three or more channels namely switching channel; 2) zapping - switching channels to avoid commercial; and 3) zipping - fast-forwarding during a prerecorded program. More men than women tend to use the RCD. Women are more likely than men to say that RCD use frustrates them because of the "amount of grazing, the speed of grazing, heavy use of the RCD, and the partner taking too long to go back to a channel after switching from it during a commercial" (p. 817). Women tend to watch programs, which are not their preference but their male partners'. Thirty percent of the female participants report that they would change their joint television watching. In contrast, only fifteen percent of the male participants voiced this concern. Also, television watching shared between couples did not seem to increase the

satisfaction in marriage. In fact, Walter's research suggested that television watching introduce more conflict in the couples' relationship. This particular shared leisure activity reveals the difference of latent power in the relationship. Hochschild and Machung (1989) stated that women spend their time mostly in housework and child care, which they describe as their leisure or interest, while men spend time in leisure seeking activities, such as sports and watching television.

When the factor of outside employment is added to the equation, dual-earner couples tend to spend less time together than single-earner couples (Jacobs, & Gerson, 2001; Kingston & Nock, 1987). Jacobs and Gerson (2001) pointed out the new trend in overworking dual income families. Specifically, when both partners work, they tend to differ most in watching television and in homemaking than the one-earner couples. Husbands tend to report that they spend more time with their wives in watching television than their wives report. The authors suggested that the more time couples spend in activities, the happier they are in their marital relationship. However, the numbers of dual-earner families are increasing, and the amount of time spent with their spouse is significantly reduced. As a result, couples may be less capable to attend each other's emotional needs. Although couples' income does not impact their time together, they tend to differ in the type of activities they share. Couples who are high-status tend to spend less time in service-help activities such as religious activities, but more time in recreational activities (Kingston & Nock, 1987).

Kaslow and Robison (1996) focused their study on a range of satisfaction factors in long-term marriages. They quoted Family Therapy News (1990) stating that clinicians believe that quality and quantity of time together is one of the most basic dimensions of a

quality marriage. This finding was supported by Gottman (1994b) who found that “avoidant” couples (those who live parallel but separate lives while sharing the same domicile) reported experiences of marital dissatisfaction. Without the time together, couples tend to be less satisfied. Yet, there are times when couples have their own individual goal and they may be unable to share time with their spouse. A different study analyzed the time factor by exploring goals in terms of couple’s as well as individual’s. Brunstein, Danglemayer, and Schultheiss (1996) reported that “relationship goals” as well as support of spouses’ personal goals contribute to positive affective relationship satisfaction. In other words, the support of spouses in spending separate time away from their partner is an intervening factor to the equation of time together. Another study on leisure activity and spousal support stated that leisure-family conflict could be reduced if there is adequate spousal support (Goff, Fick & Oppliger, 1997).

Household responsibility and Marital Relationship

Apparently, doing enjoyable or even exciting activities together enhances any relationship. Yet, marriage is about sharing experiences in the full spectrum of life. Thus, this study will look at the wider perspective of activities that are commonly shared by married couples. By joining many areas of activities together, couples could develop a stronger sense of “we-ness” (Betcher, 1987). Besides leisure activities, there are also mundane activities such as household responsibility that can be shared by married couples. In spite of the current changes of household responsibilities between the genders, the difference of division of household responsibilities and its expectation

between husbands and wives is clear. Men do between 20% (Robinson, 1988) to 35% (Presser, 1994) of the housework. A higher percentage of the household responsibility rests on women. Men tend to share less housework once they enter marriage (Twiggs, McQuillan, & Ferree, 1999). Housework hours are higher after age 35 for married women and this length seems to rise again after age 45. Men who are older (aged 55 to 64) spent five more hours per week in household responsibilities than the younger men (aged 25 to 34) did. Marriage seems to bring an increase of household work for women but for not men (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer and & Robinson, 2000; Gupta, 1999; South & Spitze, 1994). Others suggested a U-shape curve across the life cycle in response to women's contribution to household responsibilities (Suitor, 1991). Suitor (1991) contended that the more housework participation for women, the lower the marital quality; the less housework participation for women, the higher the marital quality. Women's satisfaction with division of household responsibilities is the "lowest when there were preschool and school age children in the home, and highest in the pre- and post-parental years" (p.225). Men reported to be more satisfied with the division of household labor in all life-cycle stages.

Men spent more than twenty four hours per week in uninterrupted leisure activities, whereas women experienced a higher number of interrupted leisure episodes per day (Bittman, & Wajcman, 2000). A large portion of women's household responsibility is on childcare if younger children are present in the home. Women's leisure activities are often interrupted by various household responsibilities. In fact, "women entering paid employment simply add these hours to their existing hours of housework and child care" (p. 184). Their leisure is characterized by fragmentation

meaning that women tend not to spend leisure time continuously. This study suggested that women are disadvantaged in the allocation of leisure activities (Bittman & Wajcman, 2000).

Allocation of household responsibilities and tasks affect marital satisfaction. Transition to parenthood adds more strains to the many tasks, which can affect the marital relationship. Expectations concerning roles in a marriage are often not clear between couples, and conflict and disappointment may result. Brubaker and Hennon (1982) revealed the negative relationship between marital satisfaction and household responsibilities for retired couples. They contended that the allocation of household responsibilities tend to remain the same by retirement. Many husbands do not take on additional household tasks even if their wives continue to be employed. This creates feelings of resentment towards the husbands.

Twiggs, McQuillan and Ferree (1999) suggested a gendered hierarchy of household tasks. Applying a Guttman scale, this study allowed researchers to predict the performance of specific household tasks in which husbands would participate by a hierarchical model. Certain household tasks are served as the “port of entry” (p. 719) for men to share other types of household responsibilities. “Virtually all (husbands) do dishes (86%), two thirds at least share grocery shopping (66%) and housecleaning (64%), and fewer than half include meals (45%) or laundry (46%) among the chores with which they at least help” (p. 719). Doing dishes appears to be the “port of entry”, which opens the husbands’ involvement in other household tasks, such as grocery shopping. It was suggested that preparing meals is a “high threshold” activity implying that it is unlikely

for low-participation husbands to share this particular activity. If they do, they tend to share more household tasks.

Hojat et al. (2000) suggested that an incongruent attitude towards marriage and family between husbands and wives lead to a higher rate of marital dissolution. This study looked at the gender differences in traditional attitudes toward marriage and the family among Iranian immigrants in the United States. Results showed that there is a sharp difference between couples in their view of traditional roles. This gap is linked with higher marital dissatisfaction. Wilkie, Ferree, and Ratcliff (1998) confirmed this view in their study of the relationship between marital satisfaction and the family division of both paid and domestic work. Their findings indicated that husbands who prefer sharing household responsibility are more likely to be satisfied with their marriages than are husbands who hold conventional preferences. The implication is that women and men will be happier when they hold similar role expectations. If husbands perceive wives to contribute a fair share in the work, they tend to be more satisfied than husbands who perceive a discrepancy in the actual division of labor with their wives. Wives who hold a more egalitarian gender ideology spend less time in housework, reducing the gender gap. Their belief, however, has no impact on the husbands' housework hours. Husbands' more egalitarian gender ideology does not cause them to increase their time in household work.

This view was shared by Burley (1995) who found that couples who perceive their partners as spending an inequitable amount of time in performing household tasks tend to lower their marital satisfaction. "Husbands and wives whose role behaviors as parents are incongruent with their standards or expectations should experience more

marital disharmony” (MacDermid, Huston, & McHale, 1990, p. 478). Another study by Pina and Bengston (1993) supported that marital satisfaction is mediated by the perceptions of how fairly housework is divided. Not all wives see an unequal division of household tasks as unfair. Husbands report higher marital satisfaction when they spend less time in housework (Robinson & Spitze, 1992). However, Yogev and Brett (1985) suggested husbands’ satisfaction in marriage is higher when they consider they are doing the “fair share” of the household responsibility. The definition of “fair share” is subjective and is open to each partner’s perception. For wives who are the only earner in the relationship, they are more satisfied with their relationship when they perceive to be doing less than their share of housework. For the dual income relationships, husbands and wives are most satisfied when they do their share of household responsibilities - not more, not less (Yogev & Brett, 1985). Another study suggested that for wives, marital satisfaction is often dependent on how equitably they perceive the family work is divided (Suitor, 1991). Women are more time-stressed than men are especially when both of them have jobs outside of the house. It is a “double workday” for the women because of the gendered division of housework. Women continue to do more than their share in household responsibilities (Phipps, Burton, & Osberg, 2001).

The role balance theory study by Marks and MacDermid (1996) indicated that a higher role balance leads to greater role ease. Greater role ease implies less role overload. The less the role overload, the higher the self-esteem. This leads to a stronger well being. When the expectation and behavior are congruent, the role overload on the couple is less. Communication between couples is needed to achieve this congruency. Even in recent studies which show wives are increasing labor force participation, many

husbands continue to spend little time in housework (Spitze, 1988; Thompson & Walker, 1991). Robinson and Spitze (1992) claimed that while there is little evidence that the division of household labor affects marital happiness for husbands, however, household fairness does affect marital happiness for wives. Some studies (Bielby & Bielby, 1989; Perry-Jenkins & Crouter, 1990) have reported higher levels of life satisfaction when both spouses occupy traditional gender roles, both at home and the workplace. Jorgensen (1979) found that wives' perceptions of husbands as good providers are a significant determinant of marital quality.

Lueptow, Guss, & Hyden (1989) reported that while men's sex role ideology is not significantly related to marital happiness, women with traditional gender values are slightly happier than women with non-traditional gender values. Perry-Jenkins and Crouter (1990) suggested that husbands who espouse traditional sex role attitudes, but whose wives are employed, would report lower levels of satisfaction with their marriage. In contrast, there are some studies that contradict these findings. For instance, research suggested that involvement in household tasks may increase well being for older men (Dorfman, 1992). A woman's employment may enhance her psychological well being (Adams, 1988). Suitor (1991) found that satisfaction with the division of labor was more consistently related to marital happiness and conflict for husbands and wives than were age, educational attainment, or the involvement of wives' employment.

Activities with children and Marital Relationship

The birth of a child changes the leisure and shared household responsibility. The nature of couples' shared activities becomes more associated with their children after they become parents. When child-oriented activities are excluded, the frequency of couples' joint activities significantly drops. The activities that couples engage in become largely child-oriented (MacDermid, Huston, & McHale, 1990). More specifically, women's work tends to be more affected by the introduction of children than the male counterparts. Women perform more child care and household chores after their children are born. Men's involvement in household tasks stays the same during the early years of marriage; however, they tend to increase more in child-oriented activities after they become parents. MacDermid et al. (1990) found that the duration of a couple's leisure activities decreases after the first child is born. In the same study, it was found the most at-risk group is when parents with more traditional sex-role attitudes and less traditional divisions of labor. They reported less love, more conflict, and lower marital satisfaction.

Children of all ages spend the largest portion of their time with fathers in play and companionship (Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean & Hofferth, 2001). This includes sports, outdoor activities, hobbies and television or video viewing. Personal care of children rank third in fathers' shared time with their children. However, this personal care time decreases as the children become older. Of the personal care, fathers and children spend the most time eating meals at home, averaging about half an hour on weekdays. This personal care time decreases between fathers and children as children become older. Examples of these activities are washing, dressing, and medical care. Fathers' "time

spent in achievement-related, household, or social activities is small” (p. 142). Fathers spent about 73 minutes during the weekday and 149 minutes on a weekend day with their children. Direct engagement time in achievement-related activities is about four minutes on weekdays. On weekends, fathers’ time with children increases to 15%. Children of all ages tend to spend time with their fathers in play and companionship. Under this category of companionship, fathers and pre-school children usually spend time in “passive non-computer and non-electronic play, which includes most indoor play such as playing board games, playing with toys, pretending, and playing house” (p. 143). Overall, most mothers stay to be the primary caregivers of young children on weekdays, while fathers play a more equal role in caring for children on weekends.

Couples spend less time on eating, family care, and household work with their children as their children become older (Bryant & Zick, 1996). Leisure time with children is stable when children are younger. As children become older, couples increase their leisure time alone. Mothers who have outside employment tend to spend less time in childcare with older children, but not with younger children. Fathers, thus, tend to compensate this loss of mother-children hours by increasing their time with the older children. In fact, couples without children or no children at home reported a higher degree of adaptability, higher level of satisfaction with the quality of their leisure time, and more communication (Greeff, 2000). This finding was supported by Sutor’s (1991) study which indicated that “the percentage of wives satisfied with the division of household labor was lowest when there were preschool and school-age children present, and highest in the pre- and post-parental years” (p. 225).

Cohesion, Adaptability/Flexibility and Marital Relationship

The Circumplex Model of Marital and Family Systems was first developed by Olson, Sprenkle, and Russell (1979), and then it went through subsequent modifications. The three basic dimensions of this model are cohesion, flexibility and communication. Cohesion is defined as “the emotional bonding that family members have toward one another” (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1983, p. 70) and the “degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system (L’Abate & Bagarozzi, 1993, p. 168). The four levels of cohesion are disengaged, separated, connected and enmeshed which are measured by several elements. These elements are emotional bonding, family involvement, marital relationship, internal and external boundaries. Members of the disengaged marital/family system have limited attachment to each other and act so independently that they do not appear to belong to the same unit. They have little bonding and high individual autonomy from the marital/family relationship (L’Abate & Bagarozzi, 1993). On the other hand, members of the enmeshed marital/family system have trouble functioning independently outside of the unit (Barber & Buehler, 1996). They over-identify with each other. Whereas, members of the separated and connected are considered being in the balanced state; they have an optimal level of closeness as well as individual identity and are balanced in connectedness and separateness (Olson, Sprenkle, & Russell, 1983).

The second basic dimension is adaptability or flexibility. This dimension includes the extent to which the family system is flexible and is able to change. “It is the ability of a marital or family system to change its power structure, role relationships and

relationship rules in responses to situational and developmental stress” (Maynard, & Olson, 1987, p. 65). The four levels of flexibility are chaotic, flexible, structured, and rigid, which are measured by several elements. These elements are leadership, control, discipline, and roles and rules. Members of the chaotic marital/family system are impulsive in their decision making. The marital/family system boundaries and leadership are absent. On the other hand, members of the rigid marital/family system are unable to change and have trouble in negotiations. They are characterized by closed boundaries. Members of the flexible and structured system are considered being in the balanced state; they have optimal level of flexibility and are willing to change. The assumption behind this model is that balanced couples/families will generally function better than the unbalanced ones. It is suggested that families, which are extreme on both cohesion and adaptability dimensions will tend to have more difficulties functioning across the life cycle. There is an assumption of a curvilinear relationship on these two dimensions, which implies that too much cohesion or adaptability is seen as dysfunctional (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989).

The Circumplex Model can function as a “couple map” (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989, p. 13). This couple map describes sixteen types of marriages. Couples need to balance their cohesion and adaptability as shown on their own map in order to keep the marriage more satisfying. Using this couple map, couples can explore problems and make goals to improve their relationship (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1989).

Clarke (1984) studied families with schizophrenics, and neurotics, and families who had therapy sometime in their past, and a no-therapy control group. Results indicated that families with schizophrenics and neurotics tended to be extreme on the

dimensions of cohesion and adaptability as compared to the no-therapy control group. The no-therapy control group showed a higher level of balance in cohesion and adaptability. Carnes (1987) also revealed a similar result with a population of sex offenders and their families. This type of family tended to score extreme on cohesion and adaptability.

Woehrer (1989) studied the influence of extended families on perceptions of cohesion and adaptability as compared to nuclear families. Results suggest that the perception of cohesion among extended families is high. The high level of emotional affect that usually takes place in enmeshed systems is shared among many people, whereas this high level of emotional affect puts pressure on a few members in the nuclear families. A balanced cohesion is warranted in healthy families, however, extreme cohesion can enmesh the family unit.

Greeff (2000) investigated the characteristics of healthy families. One hundred and nineteen families responded to the surveys. The finding suggested that flexibility is present in the way free/leisure time is spent in the marital relationship, and relationship with family and friends. Satisfied married couples have the opportunity for interaction under relaxed circumstances during joint leisure time. They are also flexible and open in developing other friendships outside of the couple's relationship. This creates a sense of freedom and autonomy in the relationship, which leads to a higher degree of satisfaction in the way in which personal needs and interests are fulfilled.

Robinson, Flowers and Carroll (2001) studied cohesion, marital relationship and workaholism. A total of 1,000 surveys were sent randomly to the members of the American Counseling Association. Out of the total questionnaires, 326 were usable in

their analysis. The study suggests that the strength and cohesion of a marriage connect with the excessive working on one spouse. Excessive working hours decreases the cohesion in the marital relationship. When one marital partner spends many long working hours, it decreases his/her availability to the other spouse. The decrease of physical availability to one's spouse usually would lead to a decrease of emotional availability; cohesion in the relationship is therefore lowered.

Communication and Marital Relationship

Communication is the third dimension in the Circumplex Model and it is considered a facilitating factor for the marital/family system to negotiate changes. It is also an important hypothesis in the Circumplex Model, which proposes that balanced couples/families will have more positive communication compared to unbalanced couples/families. Communication is vital for the system to find the right balance of cohesion and flexibility (Maynard, & Olson, 1987). As the couples/families negotiate and listen to each other's feedback, they will decide the direction of changes. Couple communication is measured by listener's skills, speaker's skills, self-disclosure, clarifying, continuity/tracking, respect and regard (Olson, 1988).

Communication also plays an essential role in marriage, and has been used as an indicator of the level of marital satisfaction. Research has focused on the relationship between the styles of communication and satisfaction in marriage. Burleson and Denton (1997) found that skills and satisfaction were positively associated among non-distressed couples, but were negatively associated among distressed couples. The authors found

that distressed couples expressed more negative intentions towards each other than non-distressed couples. Negative communication behaviors are frequently observed in distressed spouses. Wives in non-distressed relationships use their social perception skills to enhance the husbands' positive feelings about them (wives) and the relationship. Wives in distressed relationships use their social perception skills as weapons to attack the husbands, which further decreases marital satisfaction.

Richmond, McCroskey, and Roach (1997) studied the use of power, decision-making and communication styles of spouses in marital dyads. "Management Communication Style" (MCS) is used in the study of communication and the marital dyad by Richmond and his associates. This term is often used in organizational context on the study of superior/subordinate relationships. According to MCS, there is a continuum of communication ranging from "boss centered" to "subordinate centered". There are four orientations constituting this continuum, which are "tell", "sell", "consult" and "join". (p.412). In the "tell" orientation, a spouse makes decisions and simply imposes her/his expectations onto her/his spouse. In the "sell" orientation, a spouse makes decisions and attempts to persuade her/his spouse of the desirability of the decisions. In the "consult" orientation, a spouse also makes the decisions with collaborative inputs from the other spouse. In the "join" orientation, decision-making is shared by both parties. Decisions are based on a consensus after open discussion. Significant correlations between "a member of a marital dyad's marital satisfaction and the person's perception of their partner's MCS is positive, meaning more 'join' oriented" have been found (p. 420). This means that couples experience higher marital satisfaction

when they perceive their partners as using the more join-oriented MCS. Communication styles seem to be associated with higher marital satisfaction between married couples.

Although active listening is a healthy form of interaction and communication, it is not a good indicator in measuring marital satisfaction for couples who need to resolve their conflicts (Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998). Gottman and his associates (1998) found that married couples did not commonly use the skill of active listening when resolving their conflicts. They believed that this observation was not unique only for unhappy married couples, but was a characteristic in all marriages as well.

Regardless of the type of communication, Gottman and his associates believed that the key was the interaction between the couples. They suggested that the deciding factor was the husbands' ability to de-escalate the tension in the relationship, which provided the solution to the marital conflicts. Only when husbands were willing to share power with their wives could they ease the conflict, consequently leading to a stable marriage.

Another essential factor in resolving a conflict was for the couples to learn "physiological soothing" of self and partner. In other words, Gottman and his associates (1998) suggested that it was an interactive process where there was a "a softened start-up by the wife (during conflict), that the husband accepted influence from her, that he de-escalated low-intensity negative affect, that she was likely to use humor to effectively soothe him, and that he was likely to use positive affect and de-escalation to effectively sooth himself" (p. 12). Couples should have the skills to emotionally comfort themselves as well as their spouses, which could be done by various approaches. This interactive process is a predictor of marital stability/satisfaction.

Matthews, Wickrama and Conger (1996) used marital interaction to predict marital instability. They reported that positive behaviors in marriage reduce levels of hostility, which in turn promotes marital stability. Gottman (1994a) also showed that the quality of marital interaction is related to the level of marital instability. The interactional processes that contributed to marital distress (i.e. the amount of hostility and warmth couples exhibit toward each other) also may propel couples toward greater levels of marital instability (Conger et al., 1990). Heller and Wood (1998) studied the interactive process of intimacy in a marriage relationship. They found that accuracy in predicting the partners' feelings indicated a higher level of intimacy in the relationship. This ability in attuning to others' inner lives is cultivated through spending time and sharing activities with partners.

Several research studies have reported that affect or emotion is an integral component of marital satisfaction. Gottman (1994b) studied the interaction in marriages, which he labeled as hostile and hostile/detached. He reported that in hostile marriages husbands were more interested in wives and showed more affection and showed less disgust and contempt than husbands showed in hostile/detached marriages. Wives in hostile marriages whined more, but showed more interest in their husbands and expressed less disgust and contempt than wives in hostile/detached marriages. Griffin (1993) researched what keeps couples in a negative absorbing state, and what is related to their transitions out of it. He reported that wives had fewer, but longer episodes of negative affect than husbands did. Wives' education increased the longevity of the negative state. Husbands' education shortened the duration of negative affect.

Kaslow & Robison (1996), in a comparative assessment, found that the couples' ability to solve problems in stressful situations utilizing more cooperative, supportive and flexible ways of resolving problems rather than more impulsive approaches was correlated with greater marital satisfaction. For years, Gottman and Levenson (1992) have tried to identify constructive and destructive problem resolution styles utilized by couples during conflict. They argued that a concurrent link exists between conflict resolution styles and grasping for something. On the other hand, yielding to fate may at times be an excuse of irresponsibility.

Hypotheses

The following are hypothesis formulated and based on the research conducted by Bruess & Pearson (1997) and Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001). Bruess and Pearson (1997) suggested sharing enjoyable activities and time together might promote greater marital satisfaction. They believed that it is significant to have routine activities, which maintain relationships. "Taken-for-granted routines build in ways that (people) do not always realize until they are removed. Their loss takes away unspoken and unrealized parts of ourselves" (Duck, 1992, p. 86). And Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) contended that couples "produce a set of goods that are directly connected to their marriage and that primarily yield benefits to that specific relationship" when they share joint lifestyle (p. 639). In other words, married couples would benefit their marriage when they share activities together.

The hypothesis for this current study is that there is an inverse relationship between joint/shared activities and global marital dissatisfaction which is measured by the Global Distress Scale (GDS) on the Marriage Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (Snyder, 1997). In addition, there are direct and positive relationships of joint/shared activities with flexibility, cohesion and communication in the marital relationship. Joint/shared activities will be measured by each married individual's report of the frequency and satisfaction level of each activity. Activities will be measured by two activities scales. Marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion and communication will be measured by various questionnaires. These scales and questionnaires are introduced in depth in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter includes a description of the participants, research instruments including the revised version of Joint/Shared Activities Scale, revised version of Four Types of Leisure Activities Scale, Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES-II: Couple Version), Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness (ENRICH Couple Scale), Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (MSI-R), procedure and analysis of the study.

Participants

The targeted population was married individuals who are 18 and above. A convenience sample consisting of seventy-two married individuals from the Central Oklahoma metropolitan area and Kansas City, Missouri area participated in this study. A total of 120 packets were distributed, 72 of which were returned, which constituted a return rate of 60%. Thirty-three of the packets were sent to the Kansas City metropolitan area, and 77 were distributed in the Oklahoma City area. A psychologist helped to distribute the packets to the targeted population in Kansas City area. Most of these surveys were offered to students from two Introduction to Psychology classes for extra credit in a local community college. Seventy-seven surveys were distributed in the Oklahoma City area. Most of them were employees of two behavioral health/mental

health facilities. While a small number of other surveys were hand-delivered to two churches and residents in the Oklahoma City area.

Sixty-two of the participants completed the entire packet for the final analysis. Ten of the returned surveys were not usable. One was returned after the analysis was completed. Nine out of seventy-two of the returned packets contained incomplete data, which were not appropriate for further analysis. Among these nine packets, three completed one side of the MSI-R, three did not complete the MSI-R at all, and one participant returned only the MSI-R. One participant did not complete the ENRICH Couple Scale. Lastly, one participant did not meet the requirement of the target population, though the entire packet was completed correctly.

Fifteen (24.2%) out of the sixty-two were male participants, and forty-seven (75.8%) were female participants. The age group of the participants ranged from 20 to 60 years old. The majority of them (31%) were in the 31 to 40 age group. In terms of ethnic diversity, there were eight Asian/Asian American participants (12.9%); two were Hispanic (3.2%); three were Black/African American (4.8%), 46 were White/Caucasian Americans (74.2%) and 3 of them identified themselves as other (4.8%) on the demographic sheet. One of the 4.8% was Ethiopian, and the other two were identified as bi-racial/multi-racial. The mode of years of marriage among the participants was 4 years. The mean was 11.23 years. Most of the participants have one to two children, which was 71% of the group.

Research Instruments

The following instruments were administered to participants: demographic sheet; two activities scales--the Revised Joint/Shared Activities Scale (Kingston & Nock, 1987), and the Revised Leisure Scale by Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) which categorizes four types of leisure activities: social contacts, entertainment, outdoor leisure and indoor leisure; three marital scales-- Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale-II (FACES-II), ENRICH (Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness) and the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (MSI-R).

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix A). This was designed to gather information on participants' gender, age, racial heritage, years of marriage, number of children, and number of combined work hours between participants and their spouse.

Joint/Shared Activities Scale, revised (Kingston & Nock, 1987) (Appendix B). This list was initially created by Kingston and Nock in 1987. It provides a list of seven categories of joint/shared activities that are shared with one's spouse. The overall Cronbach's Alpha on this scale was 0.81 and 0.84 for husbands and wives respectively (Kingston & Nock, 1987, p. 394). Kingston and Nock (1987) added a marital quality index to this list with a Likert Scale of 1 to 4 (1 = very well to 4 = not well at all) to four simple questions.

1. How well does your (husband/wife) understand you?
2. How well do you understand your (husband/wife)?
3. How enjoyable is time spent with your (husband/wife)?
4. How happy is your marriage?

The current revised version used in this study is adapted from Kingston and Nock' study for two reasons: 1) the Likert Scale was not broad enough, a scale of 7 was added; and 2) the four questions are not the focus of this current study. Two Likert Scales are inserted by this researcher to assess the frequency and the satisfaction of each activity on this list.

The study of Kingston and Nock (1987) examined the amount of time dual-earner couples spent together. Kingston and Nock collected the time diaries of 177 dual earner married couples who completed a detailed time diary by recalling for the interviewer all of their activities since the previous midnight. Based on the provided information by these couples, Kingston and Nock "created seven broad categories of time, each comprising similar activities that seem(ed) important to 'togetherness' " (Kingston, & Nock, 1987, p. 394). These categories of joint/shared activities are: 1) activities with children, 2) recreation, 3) homemaking and personal care, 4) service/helping, such as helping friends with spouse, 5) watching television, 6) eating meals, and 7) talking (with spouse). Based on this original list, the revised scale adds the measurement of frequency and satisfaction of the activity, which is measured by a Likert Scale of 1 to 7. Participants are asked to rate the frequency (i.e., from never to always) and satisfaction (i.e., from least satisfied to most satisfied) of activities shared with their spouse.

Four types of Leisure Activities scale-Revised (Appendix C). The scale used in this study was created from a list of joint leisure activities from Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001). A survey was given to 1523 married and cohabiting couples in the Netherlands. Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) investigated the lifestyles in couple relationship in terms of

joint and separated activities. They used a 12-item inventory to categorize four types of leisure activities: social contacts, entertainment, outdoor leisure and indoor leisure. Examples of social contacts are visiting friends, acquaintances, and neighbors. Examples of entertainment are visiting a theater, a play, a concert, or the movies. Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) then asked respondents to score on “an interval variable: always with partner (1), mostly with partner (2), seldom with partner (3), and never with partner (4)” (p.644).

This researcher added two Likert scales to assess the frequency and satisfaction of each activity on this 12-item list to become the new revised scale. This information is collected on a 7-point Likert Scale. Participants are asked to rate their activities with their spouse from “rarely“ (1) to “a lot of the time” (7) on the frequency scale, they then rate from “least satisfied” (1) to “most satisfied” (7) on the satisfaction scale.

In addition, two scales from the Circumplex Model developed by Olson (2000) were also administered. In 1982, Olson and colleagues published a compendium of nine instruments used for various national family surveys. These instruments included FACES (Family Adaptability and Cohesion Scale), ENRICH (Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication, and Happiness), FILE (Family Inventory of Life Events and Changes), F-COPES (Family Coping Strategies), Family Strengths, and Quality of Life. FACES has gone through various revisions.

For the purpose of this study, the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES-II) and the Evaluating & Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication, Happiness (ENRICH) Couple Scales were used. In order to understand the rationale

behind the selection of these two scales among the rest of the scales offered by Olson (1992), a brief overview of the model follows.

The Family Circumplex Model was developed and based on family systems theory and family development theory with an emphasis on the dynamic nature of change in families across the life cycle (Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, & Wilson, 1989). This model introduces three dimensions of family behavior: cohesion, flexibility, and communication. The Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES) measures the adaptability/flexibility and cohesion factors, which are the focus of this study. Whereas, ENRICH Couple Scales (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 1992) measures the factors of conflict resolution and communication in couples. The use of both scales allows the three basic concepts (Adaptability/Flexibility, Cohesion, Communication) of the Family Circumplex Model to be incorporated in this study.

According to Kouneski (2000), nearly a thousand empirical studies have used the FACES as part of their research. This instrument is used not only in research, but also in premarital and marital assessment. FACES is a widely used family assessment around the world. It has been translated into languages including Swedish, Norwegian, Japanese, Chinese, Polish, German, Italian, Spanish, and Hebrew.

The original FACES was developed in 1978 in two dissertations by Portner and Bell, under the supervision of Olson at the University of Minnesota. It consisted of 111 self-administrated items. It was then modified to improve its psychometric properties, which resulted in FACES II and FACES III. In 1982, FACES was revised, and FACES II was believed to improve the weaknesses in the original FACES. FACES II is short and it

can be used by children and adults with limited reading ability. FACES categorizes families into four groups on the basis of cohesion (disengaged, separated, connected, and enmeshed) and flexibility (chaotic, flexible, structured, and rigid). Healthy family functioning falls in the balanced range (separated, connected, flexible and structured). Altogether, there are 16 types of families: a) four types of balanced families including flexibly connected, flexibly cohesive, structurally connected, and structurally cohesive; b) eight types of midrange families including chaotically connected, chaotically cohesive, flexibly enmeshed, structurally enmeshed, rigidly cohesive, rigidly connected, structurally disengaged, and flexibly disengaged; and c) four types of extreme, or unbalanced families including chaotically disengaged, chaotically enmeshed, rigidly enmeshed, and rigidly disengaged. The scores of cohesion and flexibility/adaptability are obtained from FACES II.

FACES II (Appendix D). This is a self-report couple and/or family measurement with 30 items exploring the individual's perceptions of cohesion and flexibility in the relationship. This questionnaire is on a 5-point Likert scale from almost never (1), once in a while (2), sometimes (3), frequently (4), and almost always (5) (L'Abate, & Bagarozzi, 1993). Its overall reliability is 0.90 and its concurrent validity is 0.93 for the cohesion and 0.79 for adaptability. The Cronbach's Alpha for cohesion and adaptability on FACES II were 0.87 and 0.78 respectively (Olson, 1992, p. 9). The final version of FACES II includes 14 content areas: 16 items on the Cohesion subscale; 14 on the Flexibility subscale (2 to 3 items for each content area) (L'Abate & Bagarozzi, 1993).

FACES II and FACES III are used for different purposes. FACES II is more appropriate for research because it has stronger psychometric properties. The 30-item FACES II has a higher internal consistency and a higher concurrent validity than the 20-item FACES III (Kouneski, 2000). The raw scores are converted into category scores to determine the level of cohesion and flexibility. These scores are combined to determine the family typology on the Circumplex Model.

According to Olson (2000), the Circumplex Model is a useful instrument in measuring marital functioning. For research purposes, FACES II is recommended over FACES III because it has a higher validity and reliability. First, the alpha reliability is higher in FACES II (Cohesion = 0.87 and Adaptability = 0.78) than in FACES III (cohesion = 0.77 and Adaptability = 0.62) (Olson, 1992, p. 5). The two FACES were used to compare with the Dallas Self-Report Family Inventory (SFI) (Hampson, Hulgus and Beavers (1991). For FACES II, the correlations between cohesion and adaptability were reported as 0.93 and 0.79 respectively. For FACES III, the correlations between cohesion and adaptability were reported as 0.84 and 0.45 respectively (Olson, 1992, p. 6).

ENRICH (Appendix E). This is a 37-item, self-administered measure in which individuals are asked to report their attitudes toward themselves and feelings toward spouse. This instrument was designed to investigate any potential problem areas and strengths of relationships. It contains three 10-item subscales including marital satisfaction, communication, and conflict resolution as well as one 7-item Idealistic Distortion Scale. The Cronbach's Alpha for communication on ENRICH was 0.90 (Fowers, & Olson, 1989). The Marital Satisfaction scale on ENRICH provides a global

measure of satisfaction by surveying ten areas of the couple's marriage. These areas include the major categories in ENRICH - personality, role responsibilities, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sexual relationship, parental responsibility, relationships with family and friends, and religious practice and beliefs. The Communication scale is concerned with the individuals' feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about the communication in their relationships. Items focus on the level of comfort felt by both partners in being able to share important emotions and beliefs with each other, the perception of a partner's way of giving and receiving information, and the respondents' perception of how adequately they communicate with partners. The Conflict Resolution scale assesses the individuals' attitudes, feelings and beliefs toward the existence and resolution of conflict in their relationship. Items focus on the openness of partners to recognize and resolve issues, the strategies and procedures used to end arguments, and their satisfaction with the way problems are resolved. The Idealistic Distortion scale measures the extent to which the person is being optimistic, realistic or pessimistic in answering the questions. This information allows researchers to understand couple's abilities to modify the cohesion and flexibility in their relationship after they have been provided with such information.

In the investigation of marital relationship, it is recommended to use FACES II and the ENRICH Couple Scales for marital satisfaction, communication and conflict resolution because the combination of these two scales covers the three dimensions in the Circumplex Model.

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory – Revised (MSI-R). This was developed by Snyder (1997) to address both psychometric and clinical concerns in evaluating distressed couples' relationships. The MSI-R is a multi-dimensional, self-report measure of marital interaction. The MSI-R was standardized on a sample of 2,040 people from the general population and 100 individuals in marital therapy. The sample was geographically diverse and was representative of most educational levels and occupations. The mean age for women was 38.8 and for men was 40.7. Couples in the sample averaged 14.9 years of marriage. The modal number of children was 2. The MSI-R has 13 dimensions which include: 1) Inconsistency (INC); 2) Conventionalization (CNV); 3) Global Distress (GDS) (overall dissatisfaction with the marriage); 4) Affective Communication (AFC) (how well couples convey affect verbally and nonverbally); 5) Problem-solving Communication (PSC); 6) Aggression (AGG); 7) Time Together (TTO) (level of common interests and dissatisfaction with the quality and quantity of leisure time together); 8) Disagreement about Finances (FIN); 9) Sexual Dissatisfaction (SEX); 10) Role Orientation (ROR) (degree to which an individual adopts a traditional versus nontraditional orientation toward marital and parental sex roles; 11) Family History of Distress (FAM); 12) Dissatisfaction with Children (DSC); and 13) Conflict over child rearing (CCR). In this inventory, there are thirteen dimensions of marital and family life covered by 150-true/false fill in the blank items.

The MSI-R scales were found to be internally consistent (alpha range from 0.70 (DSC) to 0.93 (GDS)), with a mean alpha coefficient of 0.82. Test-retest coefficients generally confirm the temporal stability of individual scales, ranging from 0.74 (Global

Distress, Disagreement about Finances, Conflict over Child Rearing) to 0.88 (ROR) with a mean coefficient of 0.79. Inter-correlations among MSI-R scales indicate a high degree of inter-relatedness, particularly those assessing more global or affective components. A strong affective component runs throughout the inventory and accounts for most of the common variance among scales. The MSI-R has a demonstrated ability to discriminate between couples from the general population and couples in therapy on each of the scales. There is a high interrelation between the original and the revised scales, with correlations ranging from 0.94 to 0.98 (median = 95.5) (Snyder, 1997). Specifically, the general tendency is for the Affective Communication, Problem Solving, and Time Together to perform as the best predictors of global satisfaction ($r = 0.77, 0.76, \text{ and } 0.73$ respectively) (Sabatelli, 1988). As an overall measure of relationship accord, the GDS scale has been found to correlate highly with both the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959), and the Spanier's (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Snyder, 1997).

For the purpose of this study, the Global Distress scale (GDS) on the MSI-R is used to measure the overall marital dissatisfaction. According to Snyder, GDS is the “best single indicator of global relationship affect...” in the MSI-R (Snyder, 1997, p. 2). It measures each individual's overall dissatisfaction with the relationship. Its content covers the assessment of global relationship distress, unfavorable comparison to other individuals' relationships, and pessimism regarding the future of the marriage. A high score on this scale indicates the conflicts in the relationship “are likely to be of long duration and to have generalized across diverse areas of the couple's interactions” and

conversely a low score reflects a satisfying relationship (Snyder, 1997, p. 21). The Cronbach's Alpha for GDS on the MSI-R is 0.93 (Snyder, 1997, p. 55).

Procedure

After obtaining the full approval from the Institutional Review Board, participants were identified in Central Oklahoma and Kansas City, Missouri by telephone contact and personal contact. One hundred and twenty people in Central Oklahoma and Kansas City, Missouri were solicited from five sources:

- 1) Residents in two metropolitan areas;
- 2) Staff from a large sized hospital with approximately 1,600 employees (Oklahoma City area only);
- 3) Staff from a community mental health center with approximately 250 employees (Oklahoma City area only);
- 4) Students and their family members from a local community college (Kansas City area only); and
- 5) Members of two Protestant churches in a suburban community (Oklahoma City area only).

People in authority in each referral source such as churches, if necessary, were contacted to seek their cooperation and prior approval. The nature of the study was described to the personnel and/or administrative staff. Issues of confidentiality were explained and discussed. Each packet included a cover letter, informed consent form, a list of local mental health resources (both Kansas City and Oklahoma City areas),

demographic questionnaire, Joint/Shared Activities Scale-revised, Four types of Leisure Activities scale-revised, Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale (FACES II: Couples Version), Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communication and Happiness (ENRICH Couple Scale) and Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (MSI-R).

The cover letter explained the purpose of this project. The identified individuals received a packet containing a full set of questionnaires with instructions to complete the questionnaires. The completed questionnaires were collected in a sealed envelope to protect confidentiality and all surveys were returned through direct mailing to this researcher. Potential participants were given the choice to refuse the completion of the survey without any punishment. All participants were given at least two weeks to complete the questionnaire. They returned the completed surveys by direct mailing to this researcher with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Data were collected over a period of eight weeks.

Design/Analysis

Pearson correlations were computed to explore the initial correlations between the selected demographic variables, independent variables with dependent variables.

Then a Multiple Regression Analysis was performed, which was the primary statistical method in exploring the relationship among the various factors. The independent/predictor variables were 1) non-leisure activities (joint/shared activities) focusing on homemaking, and child-care type responsibilities; and 2) leisure activities focusing on entertainment, indoor and outdoor activities. The dependent/criterion

variables were 1) marital dissatisfaction (measured by the global distress scale on the MSI-R), 2) adaptability/flexibility (measured by FACES II), 3) cohesion (measured by FACES II), and 4) communication (measured by ENRICH). Demographic information was added to the equation as well to explore its significance as related to shared activities, cohesion, flexibility and marital satisfaction. These relationships will be further explored and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This study explored the relationship between shared/joint activities and marital relationship between couples. Marital relationship was measured by global distress, adaptability/flexibility, cohesion and communication. It was hypothesized that married people who share activities more frequently with their spouse tend to be more satisfied with their marital relationship. This means that when they have joint/shared activities more often, their overall dissatisfaction in the relationship would be lower; the flexibility, cohesion and communication in the relationship would be higher. This also implied that when there is a high cohesion level in the relationship, the married couple would find their relationship more satisfying. In addition, this hypothesis further implied that these same people would tend to be more adaptable and flexible with other areas such as their decisions, and rules in their marriage/family unit. Lastly, these people would tend to be more communicative than couples who do not share time and activities with their spouse often. Indeed, when couples are able to communicate in a more satisfied manner, they are more capable to be flexible in their relationship as well. This seemed to be a logical consequence of practicing effective communication.

The findings presented in this chapter are structured in the following manner. Descriptive statistics are displayed by the formats of text and various tables. Pearson Correlations between the predictor variables including demographic variables, shared/joint activities, leisure activities and the criterion variables including cohesion, adaptability/flexibility, communication and global distress are reported. Lastly,

inferential statistics are presented with a focus of using the method of multiple regression to answer the four research questions listed in Chapter One.

Descriptive Statistics

The frequency tables for gender, age group, race, the combined weekly work hours between husbands and wives are presented in Tables 1 to 3. Fifteen out of the sixty-two participants were male, which were 24.2%, and forty-seven were female participants, which was 75.8% of the total participants (Table 1). The means and the standard deviations for the number of children living in the home, the years of marriage and the combined weekly work hours between husbands and wives are reported in Table 4.

The age group ranged from 20 to 60. The majority of them (31%) were in the 31 to 40 age group; the second largest age group was the 41 to 50, which accounted for about 27.4% of all participants (Table 1). In terms of ethnic diversity, there were eight Asian/Asian American participants (12.9%); two were Hispanics (3.2%); three Black/African American participants (4.8%), 46 were White/Caucasian Americans which made up 74.2% and 3 of them were identified as other(s) on the demographic sheet, which made up 4.8% of the rest of the participants. One of the 4.8% was Ethiopian, and the other two were bi-racial/multi-racial (Table 2). The mean for the combined work hours between husbands and wives was 70.16 and the mode and median were 80 hours (Table 3 and 4). Most couples reported having one child living with them, which was 44% of the group. The participants reported to be married ranging from one to twenty-

eight years. The mean for the years of marriage was 11.23, while most of the participants reported to have been married for 4 years.

Table 1

Frequency Table for Gender and Age Group

(N = 62)

Variables	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender			
Males	15	24.2	24.2
Females	47	75.8	100.0
Total	62	100.0	
Age Group			
Under 20	0	0	0
21 - 30	6	9.7	9.7
31- 40	31	50.0	59.7
41 - 50	17	27.4	87.1
51 - 60	8	12.0	100.0
61 and older	0	0	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

Table 2

Frequency Table for Race

(N = 62)

Race	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Asian/Asian American	8	12.9	12.9
Hispanic/Hispanic American	2	3.2	16.1
African- American/Black	3	4.8	21.0
Native American/Indian	0	0.0	21.0
White/Anglo American	46	74.2	95.2
Other(s)	3	4.8	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

Table 3

Frequency Table for Combined Work Hours
between Husbands and Wives
(N = 62)

Weekly hours	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
20	1	1.6	1.6
40	4	6.5	8.1
50	6	9.7	17.7
60	15	24.2	41.9
70	1	1.6	43.5
80	31	50.0	93.5
100	3	4.8	98.4
120	1	1.6	100.0
Total	62	100.0	

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations for the Number of Children
(living in the Home), the Years of Marriage and
the Combined Weekly Work Hours between
Husbands and Wives
(N = 62)

	Range	Mode	Mean	Standard
Number of Children	0 - 5	1	1.82	1.09
Years of Marriage	1 - 28	4	11.23	7.36
Combined Weekly Work Hours	20 - 120	80.0	70.16	17.32

The means and standard deviations for the variables of joint/shared activities and leisure activities are reported in Table 5. The frequency of joint/shared activities were reported as ranging from 2.14 to 6.38 based on a frequency Likert scale of 1 to 7 and the mean was 4.63. The range of the satisfaction level of these activities ranged from 3 to 6.75 based on a satisfaction Likert scale of 1 to 7 and the mean was 5.06. In addition, the frequency of leisure activities ranged from 1.08 to 6 with a mean of 3.32, while the reported satisfaction level of these activities ranged from 1.92 to 7 with a mean of 4.67.

Table 5

Statistics Table for Four Independent Variables (Activities)

	Mean	Mode	Standard Deviation	Minimum range	Maximum range
Joint Activities -Frequency	4.63	3.71*	0.92	2.14	6.38
Joint Activities -Satisfaction	5.06	5.43*	0.89	3.00	6.75
Leisure Activities -Frequency	3.32	3.33	1.08	1.08	6.00
Leisure Activities -Satisfaction	4.67	5.08*	1.27	1.92	7.00

Note: * Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

The modes on Joint Activities - Frequency scale: 3.71, 4, 4.14, 4.57, 4.75, 5, 5.43, 5.57, and 5.86

The modes on Joint Activities - Satisfaction scale: 5.43, 6.00

The modes on Leisure Activities - Satisfaction scale: 5.08, 6.00

Pearson correlations between the demographic variables, independent variables (joint activities/non-leisure activities and leisure activities) and the dependent variables (cohesion, adaptability, communication and global distress) were computed. There was no significant correlation at the 0.01 level indicated with the selected demographic variables including gender, age group, the years of marriage, the number of children living in the home and the combined work hours between husbands and wives.

Cohesion: Significant correlations were found between Cohesion and Joint/Shared Activities (non-leisure activities) as well as Cohesion and Leisure Activities. Specifically, the frequency ($r = 0.622$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.603$) of Joint/Shared Activities/non-leisure activities were positively correlated with Cohesion. In addition, frequency ($r = 0.589$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.656$) of Leisure Activities were positively correlated with Cohesion.

Adaptability/Flexibility: Significant correlations were found between Adaptability/Flexibility and Joint/Shared Activities (non-leisure activities) as well as Adaptability/Flexibility and Leisure Activities. Explicitly, there were statistically significant correlations between frequency ($r = 0.506$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.567$) of Joint/Shared Activities and Adaptability/Flexibility. Frequency ($r = 0.435$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.542$) of Leisure Activities were positively correlated with Adaptability/Flexibility.

Communication: Significant correlations were found between Communication and Joint/Shared Activities (non-leisure activities) as well as Communication and Leisure Activities. In particular, significant correlations were indicated between frequency

($r = 0.433$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.590$) of Joint/Shared Activities and Communication. Frequency ($r = 0.420$) and satisfaction ($r = 0.643$) of Leisure Activities and Communication were positively correlated.

Marital Dissatisfaction (measured by Global Distress): Significant correlations were found between Global Distress and Joint/Shared Activities (non-leisure activities) as well as Global Distress and Leisure Activities. Primarily, significant correlations were found between frequency ($r = -0.591$) and satisfaction ($r = -0.503$) of Joint/Shared Activities and Global Distress. Furthermore, there was a negative correlation between frequency ($r = -0.482$) and satisfaction ($r = -0.502$) of Leisure Activities as related to Global Distress (Table 6).

Table 6

Summary of Pearson Correlations Coefficients for
selected Demographic Variables, Independent Variables and Dependent Variables

	Cohesion	Flexibility	Communi- cation	Marital Dissatisfaction (Global Distress)
Gender	0.064	0.065	0.073	-0.173
Age Group	-0.003	0.027	-0.133	-0.085
Years of Marriage	0.029	0.025	-0.183	-0.033
Number of children	-0.124	0.133	-0.024	-0.010
Combined work hours	-0.114	-0.210	-0.160	0.019
Joint Activities Frequency	0.622**	0.506**	0.433*	-0.591**
Joint Activities Satisfaction	0.603**	0.567**	0.590**	-0.503**
Leisure Activities Frequency	0.589**	0.435**	0.420**	-0.482**
Leisure Activities Satisfaction	0.656**	0.542**	0.643**	-0.502**

Note: ** Correlation is significant at $p < 0.01$ level, two-tailed

Inferential Statistics

Most statistical analyses rely upon certain assumptions about the variables. In this current study, several multivariate analyses of variance procedures were performed to explore the four research questions. Before the findings are presented, some of the important assumptions of the regression are discussed.

There are several important assumptions of multiple regression that were tested. First of all, regression assumes that variables are normally distributed. The variables on demographic data, joint/shared activities, leisure activities, cohesion, adaptability/flexibility, communication and marital dissatisfaction were checked for any outliers and their patterns of distribution. Neither univariate nor multivariate outliers were found by the methods of Z-score (acceptable Z-score for skewness: -3 to +3) and visual inspection of the data plots. No skewness or kurtosis or outliers were found except the variable of adaptability/flexibility, which indicated a skewness of -0.356. This researcher decided not to adjust this variable because it is the original scale designed by Olson and his colleagues.

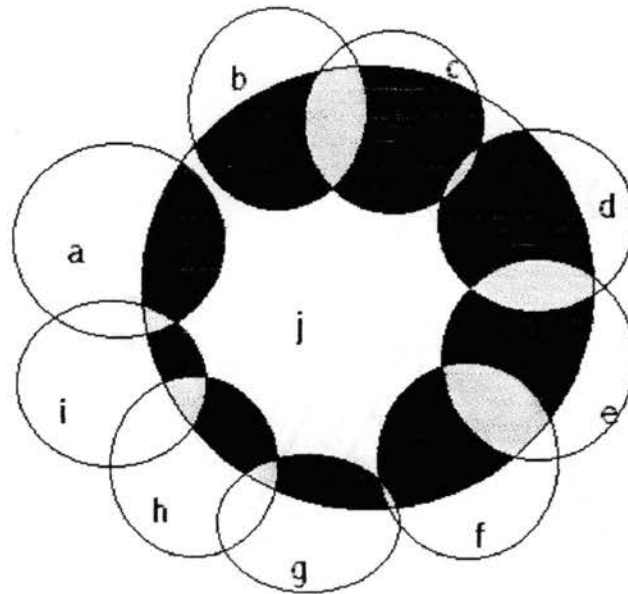
In addition, multiple regression assumes a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. If they are not linear, the results of analysis will have two risks: increasing Type I or Type II error (Osborn & Water, 2002). This assumption was tested by the visual examination of the data plot. The data in this study met this assumption.

Furthermore, another important assumption is having the same level of variance of errors across all levels of the dependent variables called homoscedasticity (Pedhazur,

1997, p. 33). This was tested by visual examination of the plot of the standardized residuals. Again, the assumption was met in this study.

Figure 1

The Nine Independent Variables accounting for the
Variance in Dependence Variables



Note: a - i = independent variables: gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction

j = dependent variable(s): global distress, flexibility, cohesion, communication

The combination of all the black areas = Unique variability

The combination of all the gray areas = Shared variability

** The black and gray area does not exactly correspond to the actual variance. (For illustration purposes only).

Research Questions

Since there was not a large response from the minority groups, the variable of race was not selected in the final analysis. The selected demographic variables were gender, age group, the number of children living in the home, the years of marriage, and the combined work hours between husbands and wives.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted by entering all of the predictor variables at the same time to explore their extent to which all of these variables might contribute to the variance of scores in marital dissatisfaction, flexibility, cohesion, and communication.

“A squared semi-partial correlation indicates the proportion of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by a given independent variable after another independent variable(s) was partialled out from it” (Pedhazur, 1997, p. 178). This squared semi-partial correlation explains the contribution of shared and unique variabilities of independent variables in accounting for dependent variables as shown in Tables 8, 10, 12 and 14. Unique variability refers to the part that is solely contributed by the combination of all independent variables (as shown by the black areas in Figure 1) in explaining the variance in the dependent variables. Whereas, shared variability refers to the combination of the overlapping portion of the independent variables (as shown by the gray areas in Figure 1) in explaining the variance in the dependent variables.

- 1) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict marital dissatisfaction?

Marital Dissatisfaction was the criterion variable while all demographic variables and joint/shared activities variables were the predictor variables. This regression model was significant for marital dissatisfaction. The joint/shared activities and the demographic variables accounted for a total 42.5% (R Square = 0.425, Adjusted R Square = 0.325) of the variance in marital dissatisfaction which was measured by the Global Distress scale (GDS) on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised. Among all the independent variables, the frequency scale on the Joint/Shared Activities indicated to be significant in accounting for the variance in marital dissatisfaction. This is reported in Table 7. The unique variability (11.71%) and the shared variability (30.79%) of the variables are reported in Table 8. This means that the combination of each individual independent variable accounted for 11.71% of the variance in marital dissatisfaction. The combination of the overlapping independent variables accounted for 30.79% of the variance in marital dissatisfaction.

Table 7

Standard Regression on Marital Dissatisfaction
(as measured by Global Distress)

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square
With all nine independent variables*	0.652	0.425	0.325

Note: *Predictor Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

Table 8

Coefficients Table on Marital Dissatisfaction andNine Independent Variables

	Sig.	Semi-Partial Correlations (Sr)	The Square of Semi- Partial Correlations
Gender	0.194	-0.138	0.019
Age Group	0.532	-0.066	0.004
Years of Marriage	0.479	0.075	0.006
Number of Children	0.256	-0.121	0.015
Combined work hours	0.668	-0.045	0.002
Joint Activities - Frequency	0.048*	-0.213	0.045
Joint Activities - Satisfaction	0.615	-0.053	0.003
Leisure Activities - Frequency	0.908	-0.012	0.0001
Leisure Activities - Satisfaction	0.152	-0.153	0.023
Total			0.1171

Note: * Indicate significance $p < 0.05$

Unique Variability = 0.1171

Shared Variability = 0.3079

The nine Independent Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

2) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict the flexibility/adaptability in the marital relationship?

This question explored the variance in flexibility/adaptability as accounted for by joint/shared activities and the five selected demographic variables. The mean was 5.83, which indicated a “flexible” marriage relationship according to Olson (1992). The Joint/shared activities and the demographic variables accounted for a total of 45.9% (R Square = 0.459, Adjusted R Square = 0.366) of the variance in flexibility/adaptability in the marital relationship (Table 9). There were two independent variables indicating to be significant in explaining the variance in flexibility/adaptability. First, the satisfaction scale on the Joint/Shared Activities indicated to be significant in accounting for the variance in flexibility. Secondly, the variable of the number of children found to be significant in predicting flexibility/adaptability. This is reported in Table 10. The unique variability (14.27%) and the shared variability (31.63%) of the variables are reported in Table 10. This means that the combination of each individual independent variable accounted for 14.27% of the variance in flexibility/adaptability. The combination of the overlapping independent variables accounted for 31.63% of the variance in flexibility/adaptability.

Table 9

Standard Regression on Adaptability/Flexibility

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
With all nine independent variables*	0.678	0.459	0.366

Note: *Predictor Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

Table 10

Coefficients Table on Adaptability/Flexibility and
Nine Independent Variables

	Sig.	Semi-Partial Correlations (Sr)	The Square of Semi- Partial Correlations
Gender	0.266	0.115	0.013
Age Group	0.802	-0.026	0.0007
Years of Marriage	0.779	-0.029	0.0008
Number of Children	0.040*	0.215	0.046
Combined work hours	0.324	-0.101	0.010
Joint Activities - Frequency	0.411	0.084	0.007
Joint Activities - Satisfaction	0.038*	0.217	0.047
Leisure Activities - Frequency	0.892	-0.014	0.0002
Leisure Activities - Satisfaction	0.190	0.136	0.018
Total			0.1427

Note: * Indicates significance $p < 0.05$

Unique Variability = 0.1427

Shared Variability = 0.3163

The nine Independent Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

3) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict cohesion in the marital relationship?

This question addressed the variance in cohesion as accounted for by joint/shared activities and the five selected demographic variables. Again, the model showed to be a significant one. The mean was 5.75 indicating a “connected” relationship according to Olson (1992). The Joint/shared activities and the demographic variables accounted for a total 53.7% (R Square = 0.537, Adjusted R Square = 0.457) of the variance in cohesion in the marital relationship. However, no single independent variable was found to be significant in accounting for the variance in cohesion. This is reported in Table 11. The unique variability (7.87%) and the shared variability (45.83%) of the variables are reported in Table 12. This means that the combination of each individual independent variable accounted for 7.87% of the variance in cohesion. The combination of the overlapping independent variables accounted for 45.83% of the variance in cohesion.

Table 11

Standard Regression on Cohesion

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
With all nine independent variables *	0.733	0.537	0.457

Note: *Predictor Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

Table 12

Coefficients Table on Cohesion and

Nine Independent Variables

	Sig.	Semi-Partial Correlations (Sr)	The Square of Semi- Partial Correlations
Gender	0.975	0.003	0.000009
Age Group	0.847	-0.018	0.0003
Years of Marriage	0.822	0.021	0.0004
Number of Children	0.625	-0.046	0.002
Combined work hours	0.548	-0.057	0.003
Joint Activities - Frequency	0.088	0.164	0.027
Joint Activities - Satisfaction	0.440	0.073	0.005
Leisure Activities - Frequency	0.429	0.075	0.006
Leisure Activities - Satisfaction	0.053	0.187	0.035
Total			0.07871

Note: Unique Variability = 0.07871

Shared Variability = 0.4583

The nine Independent Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

4) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict communication in the marital relationship?

The last question investigated the variance in communication as accounted for by joint/shared activities and the five selected demographic variables. Again, this equation for communication was significant. The mean score of Communication in this study was 36.76 which was higher than the reported mean (31.0) based on Olson's sample of 40,133 couples (Olson, 2003). The Joint/shared activities and the demographic variables accounted for a total 54.5% of the variance in communication measured by the communication scale on ENRICH. In other words, 54.5% of the variance in communication can be explained by this equation. Among all the independent variables, the satisfaction scales on both of the Joint/Shared Activities and the Leisure Activities found to be significant in accounting for the variance in communication. This was reported in Table 13. The unique variability (24.14%) and the shared variability (30.36%) of the variables are reported in Table 14. This means that the combination of each individual independent variable accounted for 24.14% of the variance in communication. The combination of the overlapping independent variables accounted for 30.36% of the variance in communication.

Table 13

Standard Regression on Communication

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
With all nine independent variables *	0.739	0.545	0.467

Note: *Predictor Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

Table 14

Coefficients Table on Communication andNine Independent Variables

	Sig.	Semi-Partial Correlations (Sr)	The Square of Semi- Partial Correlations
Gender	0.056	0.183	0.033
Age Group	0.246	-0.110	0.012
Years of Marriage	0.075	-0.170	0.029
Number of Children	0.069	0.173	0.030
Combined work hours	0.916	-0.010	0.0001
Joint Activities - Frequency	0.854	-0.017	0.0003
Joint Activities - Satisfaction	0.049*	0.188	0.035
Leisure Activities - Frequency	0.538	-0.058	0.003
Leisure Activities - Satisfaction	0.001*	0.314	0.099
Total			0.2414

Note: * Indicates significance $p < 0.05$

Unique Variability = 0.2414

Shared Variability = 0.3036

The nine Independent Variables: Gender, age group, number of children, combined work hours, years of marriage, Joint/Shared Activities-frequency, Joint/Shared Activities-Satisfaction, Leisure Activities-Frequency, and Leisure Activities-Satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study, and a discussion of the major research findings, and conclusion. The limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are discussed as well.

Summary of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between joint/shared activities and the cohesion, adaptability, communication and marital dissatisfaction of married couples. Most research has focused on other factors in marital relationships, such as coping (Bowman, 1990), conflict resolution (Bray & Jouriles, 1995; Fincham & Beach, 1999), communication approach (Gordon, Baucom, Epstein, Burnett, & Rankin, 1999; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989) and personal styles (Kenny & Acitelli, 1994). The hypothesis of this study is focused on shared leisure and non-leisure activities between married couples because activities are such an integral part of everyday life. When couples live together without shared activities, their relationship may be negatively impacted. By sharing activities, couples develop their unique way of relating; this nature of privacy contributes to the security and stability of the marriage relationship. The uniqueness of intimate play provides the couples a sense of “we-ness” (Betcher, 1987).

This study was comprised of data from 62 married people who were solicited from various sources in the Kansas City, Missouri metropolitan area and the Oklahoma City area. They were between the ages of 20 to 60 years old. All of the participants reported to have been married for at least one year; the maximum length of marriage was 28 years. A few of them did not have children or did not have children living in the home. A majority of them have children living with them, which added many interesting dynamics in the marriage relationship. Fifty percent of these respondents reported having combined weekly work hours of 80, suggesting that they were dual income families. About one third of the 120 surveys were distributed to a behavioral health hospital and a community mental health center in Oklahoma City area. Participants being employed in the human service sector may be likely to share certain similar characteristics than those employed in other fields such as accounting, law and engineering.

There were four research questions. The first question was to study the impact of joint/shared activities on the overall dissatisfaction in the marital relationship. This marital dissatisfaction was measured by the global distress scale (GDS) on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised. The second question was to explore the impact of joint/shared activities on the overall couples' adaptability/flexibility to each other such as role and responsibilities. This adaptability was measured by the adaptability/flexibility scale on the FACES II. If they are able to share activities in a pleasing manner, they should be more capable to negotiate and to be adaptable. Thirdly, this study examined the influence of joint/shared activities on the cohesion between couples. Cohesion was measured by the cohesion scale on the FACES II. It is referred to the "emotional bonding that family members have toward another" (Olson, 1992, p.1). Lastly, the fourth

question was to examine the impact of joint/shared activities on couples' communication. Communication was measured by the communication scale on ENRICH. It was believed that when activities were shared in a satisfying manner, so would the communication between married couples.

Discussion of Major Research Findings

Interestingly, all the predictor variables, which were the focus of this current study, were found to be significantly correlated to the various aspects of marital satisfaction, which included global distress, adaptability/flexibility, cohesion and communication. Both the quality and quantity of the shared non-leisure activities and shared leisure activities were significantly correlated to all the criterion variables. This implied that the more frequent the shared activities, the more satisfying the marital relationship. In terms of quality of the shared activities, the more satisfying the shared activities, the more satisfying the marital relationship. However, this is not a causal relationship. Doing more activities together as married couples does not necessarily bring about higher marital satisfaction. However they are highly correlated (Table 6). Perhaps, when couples are more satisfied in their relationship, they may tend to share more activities together. The actual causes of their satisfaction may be other than shared activities, but their satisfaction may make them more inclined to be engaged in shared activities.

When couples have more time to share various activities, they may be able to enjoy each other, which also means more availability to negotiate differences and be

more adaptable to each other's needs. Particularly, sharing activities with a common goal can strengthen the couple's identity as a unit. They become partners with an understood and shared purpose. This common/shared purpose transcend the mundane activities such as child-family activities, educational activities and discipline which were measured in the Joint/Shared Activities Scale in this study. They share a higher goal in simply sharing activities. On the other hand, when couples are distracted by the many other responsibilities such as with friends, jobs, and individual hobbies; they may not have the luxury to take the time to communicate and to understand their spouse. They may lose a sense of partnership. They may not be as flexible with each other. As a result, they may tend not to be as satisfied.

Discussion of Research Questions

1) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict marital dissatisfaction?

Joint/shared activities and the demographic variables played a significant part in predicting marital global dissatisfaction in this study. Overall, the factors of gender, age, years of marriage, number of children, combined work hours and joint/shared non-leisure and leisure activities accounted for 42.5% of the variance in global dissatisfaction. In other words, 42.5% of the differences in global dissatisfaction can be explained by all the selected demographic variables, the Joint/Shared Activities (non-leisure) scale and Four Types of Leisure Activities scale. However there was not a significant impact of each unique variable on global dissatisfaction except for the frequency scale on Joint/Shared

non-leisure activities. One possible explanation is the high intercorrelation among the independent variables. This means that the variables of gender, age, years of marriage, number of children, combined work hours, and activities are all crucial parts in understanding marital relationship satisfaction. The shared variability was almost 32% (Figure 1).

One interesting observation of this result is that the quantity (frequency) of the non-leisure activities is negatively correlated with global dissatisfaction ($r = -0.591$) (Table 6). This means that married couples tend to be less satisfied with their relationship when they do not share a quantity of activities such as childcare, and household responsibilities. This finding confirmed the study by Sutor (1991) who added the factor of gender in the equation. Sutor (1991) suggested that the more housework participation for women, the lower the marital quality (higher marital dissatisfaction); the less housework participation for women, the higher the marital quality. A different study found that women remain sharing more household responsibilities than their counterparts throughout the duration of the marriage (Spitze, 1988; Thompson & Walker, 1991). Brubaker and Hennon (1982) revealed the negative relationship between marital satisfaction and household responsibilities for retired couples. Although this current study did not focus on retired couples, the concept of negative relationship between marital satisfaction and non-leisure activities was supported.

Perhaps these types of activities are the fundamental components in any marriage relationship. One cannot omit these basic routine activities and still be functional in the partnership of marriage. Husbands indeed share “less housework than their wives as their relative earnings and hours spent in the labor market increase” (Hersch, & Stratton,

1994, p.120). Some suggested that there was a curvilinear relationship between divorce rate and the labor force participation rate of females (Booth, Johnson, White & Edwards, 1984). Female participation in the labor force helps to lower the divorce rate in the less developed societies; whereas, female participation in the work force is correlated with increased divorce rate in the more developed societies. As the number of women is increasing in the workforce, it will be likely to increase conflict in the marital relationship. This current study has further confirmed the fact that couples would be more dissatisfied if non-leisure activities are not shared as often.

2) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict flexibility/adaptability in the marital relationship?

The overall combination of the demographic variables and joint/shared activities to the adaptability in marital relationship was significant. Demographic variables and joint/shared non-leisure and leisure activities accounted for almost 46% of the variance of flexibility/adaptability. Among all the independent variables, two of them were found to be significant in explaining the variance in flexibility/adaptability.

First, the satisfaction scale on the Joint/Shared non-leisure activities indicated to be significant in accounting for the variance in flexibility (Table 10). This implies that couples tend to be more adaptable when the quality of the non-leisure activities is satisfying to them. This would make sense if they are able to find a comfortable balance in sharing activities such as household responsibilities, and childcare responsibilities; then they could also be more flexible in other areas such as conflict resolution and role negotiation. In fact, it was suggested that flexibility in the marital relationship might be even more significant than cohesion in promoting marital stability (Mathis & Tanner,

1991). They proposed that balanced flexibility (neither rigid nor chaotic) might keep a couple happy and satisfied.

When both husbands and wives are dual income earners, sharing of non-leisure activities is even more crucial to their relationship satisfaction. Perry-Jenkins and Crouter (1990) suggested that husbands who hold traditional sex role attitudes (lower flexibility/adaptability) and their employed wives tend to report a lower level of satisfaction with their marriage. This is further confirmed by the current study that the satisfaction in sharing non-leisure activities between couples can explain the rigidity in their relationship. When couples are not willing to change or negotiate in simple non-leisure activities, they tend to be adhering to the traditional male and female roles. As a result, their relationship is less satisfying because of their inflexibility.

Secondly, the variable of the number of children was found to be significant in predicting flexibility/adaptability as well (Table 10). In fact, it seems to be a logical explanation in accounting the variance of flexibility. When couples have children, they need the flexibility in many areas, such as work hours, childcare, and schedule of their children's activities to fulfill their partnership in raising a family. The presence of children in families is likely to complicate the interaction and dynamics in the marital relationship, thus, flexibility/adaptability is essential. However, this finding contradicts with Greeff's (2000). Greeff (2000) suggested that couples without children or no children at home reported a higher degree of adaptability, higher level of satisfaction with the quality of their leisure time and more communication.

Family flexibility is defined as "the ability of a marital system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and

developmental stress” (Olson, 1992, p. 1). In this current study, the satisfaction on non-leisure, not leisure activities played a significant role in predicting couples’ ability to change in response to stress. Again, the ability to share activities such as childcare, homemaking requires more flexibility because it has to do with day-to-day responsibilities. Couples incline to be more satisfied when there is a mutual agreement about activities to be shared.

3) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict cohesion in the marital relationship?

Again, the variables of gender, age, years of marriage, number of children, combined work hours and joint/shared non-leisure and leisure activities accounted for 53.7% of the variance in cohesion. In other words, 53.7% of the differences in cohesion can be explained by all the selected demographic variables and joint/shared activities. The overall contribution of the demographic variables and joint/shared activities to cohesion in the marital relationship was high. However, there was no single independent variable that could predict a significant variance in cohesion. The shared variability was 45.8% and the unique variability was only 7.87%. This low unique variability suggests that there is not one single factor, but the combination of various factors that explains the cohesion in marriage. In other words, one cannot focus on one area to manipulate cohesion in a relationship. Cohesion improves when there is satisfaction in a combination of factors in the relationship.

Family cohesion is defined as “the emotional bonding that family members have toward another” (Olson, 1992, p. 1). According to Olson (1992), cohesion is measured by a conglomeration of variables including time, space, friends, interests, recreation, and

others. Thus, it is confirmed by this current study, that no single factor can better explain cohesion in marriage, but a combination of these factors is the key.

4) How do joint/shared activities (frequency and satisfaction) and selected demographic variables predict communication in the marital relationship?

Lastly, the variables of gender, age, years of marriage, number of children, combined work hours and joint/shared non-leisure and leisure activities accounted for 54.5% of the variance in communication. That is to say, 54.5% of the differences in communication can be explained by all the selected demographic variables and joint/shared activities, indicating a high contribution of variance in communication. Both of the satisfaction scales on the Joint/Shared (non-leisure) Activities scale and Four Types of Leisure Activities were significant in accounting for the variance in communication. One can speculate that the better the communication between married couples, the higher the overall satisfaction with their general activities.

In fact, this study confirmed the finding by Holman and Jacquart (1988) that merely sharing activities together would not bring about high marital satisfaction. They suggested that the key was interaction and communication between couples. If the couples communicate, then sharing activities would enhance their relationship satisfaction. It seems that communication lays the foundation to bring out the impact of shared activities on marital satisfaction. If communication between couples is missing, sharing activities will not enhance the relationship. In fact, communication is vital for the marriage/family system to find the right balance of cohesion and flexibility (Maynard, & Olson, 1987). As couples communicate, they listen to each other's feedback and they

decide the direction of any change needed to be done. Consequently, cohesion and flexibility can be obtained in the marriage relationship.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations

First of all, the issue of homogeneity can create a problem of independence of observations. The surveys were distributed based on a convenience sampling technique. Participants were offered the opportunity to respond to the surveys because they were more available to this researcher than any other population. About one third of the respondents in this study were solicited from some kind of mental health setting, these employees may be more homogeneous than if individuals were randomly sampled from a larger population. For example, people who are employed in settings such as accounting, law, engineering may respond differently than those in the mental health setting. Observations based on these individuals can be argued as not fully independent. This may weaken the basic assumptions of the Multiple Regression Analysis in this study.

Secondly, the limitation with the research instruments is discussed. The three measurements (FACES II, ENRICH, MSI-R) measuring the four dependent variables-- cohesion, adaptability, communication, global dissatisfaction are quite strong and they have been used extensively by many researchers. The Cronbach's Alpha for global distress is 0.93 (Snyder, 1997). The Cronbach's Alpha for cohesion and adaptability on FACES II were 0.87 and 0.78 respectively (Olson, 1992, p. 9). The Cronbach's Alpha for communication on ENRICH was 0.90 (Fowers, & Olson, 1989). However, the types of activities on the two activities scales are quite limited. The overall Cronbach's Alpha on

the Joint/Shared Activities scale was 0.81 and 0.84 for husbands and wives respectively (Kingston & Nock, 1987, p. 394). However, these scales do not cover the many varieties of activities that married couples would usually share. In fact, a broader activity scale should be created which should represent the many varieties of activities that married couples usually share. These activities may include sexual, spiritual, intellectual, and emotional. These are major components in married couples' activities. Without measuring all these aspects, the picture of shared activities between couples is partial.

Thirdly, two worth noting characteristics about the sample of this study should be noted here. The response rate of this study was 60%, which represented 72 returned surveys with 62 of them being usable for final analysis. A larger sample of married couples would definitely strengthen the current study. More often than not, a large-scale research requires more resource to collect a higher volume of data. This type of research is seldom seen for a single researcher who has limited resources such as graduate students. It would be fascinating to incorporate federal funding to increase the sample size because this subject is so crucial and fundamental to marital research. The Marriage Initiative is a program initiated by the former governor, Frank Keating, of the state of Oklahoma, which reflects the importance of marriage, viewed by the government. I would suggest a research proposal in the area of shared activities, which would definitely expand and complement the current effort that the Marriage Initiative pursues.

Another typical characteristic of doing research related to personal life is the comparatively low response rate from male participants. Fifteen out of the sixty-two were male participants, which were 24.2%, and forty-seven were female participants, which was 75.8% of the total participants. Suitor (1991) did suggest that there was a

gender difference in the satisfaction of sharing household responsibility. More housework participation for women did increase general dissatisfaction in the marital relationship. Thus soliciting more male respondents in this study would definitely bring about a richer picture of the relational dynamic. In order to increase the response rate from male participants, perhaps some incentives related to their interests would be helpful, such as sports tickets to football games, or baseball games.

Fourthly, due to the nature of the subject matter, the minority population seemed reluctant to respond to questions about their intimate relationships. As a result, the recruitment of the minority groups especially the Asian population was not as successful as originally intended. It would be interesting to see if some creative solicitation methods would create a larger response from the Asian population such as dinner certificates to a Chinese restaurant or gift certificates for some traditional Chinese items such as paintings.

Lastly, this current research focused on shared activities among married couples; research on newly divorced couples focused on their joint activities was a major factor for getting divorced would be beneficial to the mental health field which works with married couples. Perhaps a comparative study on both the married and divorced couples would shed some light on the marriage relationship.

Implications for Practice

Sharing non-leisure activities such as homemaking responsibilities really does decrease marital dissatisfaction. The result from this study is a valuable tool for guiding

couples in therapy or training. When couples present marital problems in therapy, their shared activity level should be assessed. Couples should be advised that the lack of sharing of non-leisure activities, such as household responsibilities could easily sour the relationship. Sharing these types of activities is basic to a flourishing relationship. The results of this study indicate that sharing this type of non-leisure activity makes a difference in the flexibility of a relationship. Some even suggest that flexibility may be more important than cohesion in building long-lasting relationships (Mathis & Tanner, 1991). Today, husbands and wives have difficulty balancing what they spend time on because of the many options of activities that they can choose to do without their spouse. Thus, sharing time together in non-leisure and leisure activities is an essential building block of a marriage/family unit. Kaslow and Robison (1996) believed that quality and quantity of time together is one of the most basic dimensions of a quality marriage. In therapy, marriage counselors or psychologists should assess the couple's overall sharing activities including the sharing of household responsibilities which is often neglected.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A
Marital Survey
Demographic Information

1. What is your gender? Male Female

2. What is your age? Under 20 21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60
 60 and older

3. What is your racial heritage (check all that apply)?
 Asian/Asian American Hispanic/Hispanic American
 Black/Afro-American White/Anglo-American
 Native American/Indian Other(s), please specify: _____

4. What is your spouse's racial heritage (check all that apply)?
 Asian/Asian American Hispanic/Hispanic American
 Black/Afro-American White/Anglo-American
 Native American/Indian Other(s), please specify: _____

5. How many times have you been married? _____ (specify a number)

6. How long have you been married in your current marriage? _____ Years

7. Do you have any children at home? Yes No (skip #7a, 7b and #8)

- 7a. Number of children living with you _____ Adult children (over 18)

- 7b. _____ Younger children (18 and under) (specify a number).

8. What are the ages of the children who live with you? _____ (indicate the age of each child).

9. Are you employed? Yes No (skip #10)

10. The hours you work in a week are:
 Less than 10 hours At least 20 hours
 At least 40 hours More than 40 hours More than 60 hours

11. The hours your spouse work in a week are:
 Less than 10 hours At least 20 hours
 At least 40 hours More than 40 hours More than 60 hours

12. What is your annual household income (both yours and your spouse's if both are working)?
 Under \$20,000 \$20,001 - 40,000
 \$40,001- 60,000 \$60,001 and above

Your help is highly appreciated!

5. Watching television

a) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
rarely a lot of the time

b) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
least satisfied most satisfied

6. Eating meals

a) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
rarely a lot of the time

b) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
least satisfied most satisfied

7. Talking (as a primary activity)

a) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
rarely a lot of the time

b) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
least satisfied most satisfied

8. Other activity (Please specify) _____

a) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
rarely a lot of the time

b) _____
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
least satisfied most satisfied

Revised: 041203

Appendix C
Four types of leisure activities scale-Revised *

Put a number (1-7) in each box indicating a) the frequency and b) the satisfaction of each leisure activity/activities that you currently (at least within the past year) *have shared with your spouse.*

Frequency	a)	_____		_____		_____		_____		_____		_____
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
		rarely						a lot of the time				
Satisfaction	b)	_____										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
		least satisfied						most satisfied				

Social Contacts	a) Frequency	b) Satisfaction
1. Visiting friends, acquaintances, and neighbors		
2. Visiting parents, siblings, and other family members		
3. Talking to best friend		
4. Talking to second best friend		
Entertainment	a) Frequency	b) Satisfaction
5. Visiting a bar or restaurant		
6. Visiting a theater, a play, a concert, or the movies		
Outdoor Leisure	a) Frequency	b) Satisfaction
7. Practicing organized sports		
8. Other outdoor recreation such as jogging, walking, hiking, fishing, or sailing etc.		
9. Participating in community organizations		
10. Going on vacation		
Indoor leisure	a) Frequency	b) Satisfaction
11. Doing hobbies at home		
12. Watching television, reading, or listening to music		

Revised 010303

* adopted from Kalmun, M., & Bernasco, W. (2001). Joint and separated lifestyles in couple relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63, 639-654.

Appendix D
FACES II: Couples Version
David H. Olson, Joyce Portner & Richard Bell

1. Almost never 2. Once in a while 3. Sometimes 4. Frequently 5. Almost Always

Describe Your Marriage:

1. We are supportive of each other during difficult times.
2. In our relationship, it is easy for both of us to express our opinion.
3. It is easier to discuss problems with people outside the marriage than with my partner.
4. We each have input regarding major family decisions.
5. We spend time together when we are home.
6. We are flexible in how we handle differences.
7. We do things together.
8. We discuss problems and feel good about the solutions.
9. In our marriage, we each go our own way.
10. We shift household responsibilities between us.
11. We know each other's close friends.
12. It is hard to know what the rules are in our relationship.
13. We consult each other on personal decisions.
14. We freely say what we want.
15. We have difficulty thinking of things to do together.
16. We have a good balance of leadership in our marriage.
17. We feel very close to each other.
18. We operate on the principle of fairness in our marriage.
19. I feel closer to people outside the relationship than to my partner.
20. We try new ways of dealing with problems.
21. I go along with what my partner decides to do.
22. In our marriage, we share responsibilities.
23. We like to spend our free time with each other.
24. It is difficult to get a rule changed in our relationship.
25. We avoid each other at home.
26. When problems arise, we compromise.
27. We approve of each other's friends.
28. We are afraid to say what is on our minds.
29. We tend to do more things separately.
30. We share interests and hobbies with each other.

Appendix E ENRICH Couple Scale

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Undecided 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree.

1. I am very happy with how we handle our responsibilities in our family/household.
2. I can express my true feelings to my partner.
3. To end an argument, I tend to give in too quickly.
4. My partner and I understand each other completely.
5. I am unhappy with some of my partner's personality characteristics or personal habits.
6. When we are having a problem, my partner often refuses to talk about it.
7. My partner and I have very different ideas about the best way to solve our disagreements.
8. My partner completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.
9. I am unhappy with our communication and feel my partner does not understand me.
10. My partner sometimes makes comments that put me down.
11. When we discuss problems, my partner understands my opinions and ideas.
12. Every new thing I have learned about my partner has pleased me.
13. I am very happy with how we make decisions and resolve conflict.
14. I wish my partner were more willing to share his/her feelings with me.
15. Even during disagreements, I can share my feelings and ideas with my partner.
16. I have never regretted my relationship with my partner.
17. I am unhappy about our financial position and the way we make financial decisions.
18. At times it is hard to me to ask my partner for what I want.
19. Sometimes we have serious disputes over unimportant issues.
20. My partner has all the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
21. I am very happy with how we manage our leisure activities and the time we spend together.
22. Sometimes I have trouble believing everything my partner tells me.
23. I go our of my way to avoid conflict with my partner.
24. We are as happy as any couple could possibly be..
25. I am very pleased with how we express affection and relate sexually.
26. My partner often doesn't understand how I feel.
27. At times I feel some of our differences never get resolved.
28. My partner always gives me the love and affection I need.
29. I am very happy with the way we each handle our responsibilities as parents.
30. I am very satisfied with how my partner and I talk with each other.
31. To avoid hurting my partner's feelings during an argument, I tend to say nothing.
32. I am happy with our relationship with my parents, in-laws, and my partner's friends.
33. It is difficult for me to share negative feelings with my partner.
34. At times my partner does not take our disagreements seriously.
35. I feel very good about how we each practice our religious beliefs and values.
36. My partner is a very good listener.
37. When we argue, I usually end up feeling responsible for the problem.

Appendix F
MSI-R

1. T/F	1. When my partner and I have differences of opinion, we sit down and discuss them.
2. T/F	2. I am fairly satisfied with the way my partner and I spend our available free time.
3. T/F	3. My partner almost always responds with understanding to my mood at a given moment.
4. T/F	4. My childhood was probably happier than most.
5. T/F	5. There are some things my partner and I just can't talk about.
6. T/F	6. It is sometimes easier to confide in a friend than in my partner.
7. T/F	7. My partner seems to enjoy sex as much as I do.
8. T/F	8. I wish my partner shared a few more of my interests.
9. T/F	9. During an argument with my partner, each of us airs our feelings completely.
10. T/F	10. I was very anxious as a young person to get away from my family.
11. T/F	11. I would prefer to have sexual relations more frequently than we do now.
12. T/F	12. Even when angry with me, my partner is able to appreciate my viewpoints.
13. T/F	13. My partner likes to share his or her leisure time with me.
14. T/F	14. There is a great deal of love and affection expressed in our relationship.
15. T/F	15. I am sometimes unhappy with our sexual relationship.
16. T/F	16. There are many things about our relationship that please me.
17. T/F	17. A lot of our arguments seem to end in depressing stalemates.
18. T/F	18. Even when I am with my partner, I feel lonely much of the time.
19. T/F	19. I trust my partner with our money completely.
20. T/F	20. There are some things about my partner that I do not like.
21. T/F	21. Our relationship has been very satisfying.
22. T/F	22. My partner has slapped me.
23. T/F	23. Some equality in marriage is a good thing but, by and large, the man ought to have the main say-so in family matters.
24. T/F	24. The good things in our relationship far outweigh the bad.
25. T/F	25. My partner and I decide together the manner in which our income is to be spent.
26. T/F	26. There are times when my partner does things that make me unhappy.
27. T/F	27. Two people should be able to get along better than my partner and I do.
28. T/F	28. I have never worried that my partner might become angry enough to hurt me.
29. T/F	29. There should be more daycare centers and nursery schools so that more mothers of young children could work.
30. T/F	30. Our relationship is as successful as any that I know of.

31. T/F	31. Our relationship has never been in difficulty because of financial concerns.
32. T/F	32. My partner and I understand each other completely.
33. T/F	33. My partner has slammed things around or thrown things in anger.
34. T/F	34. Such things as laundry, cleaning, and child care are primarily a woman's responsibility.
35. T/F	35. I have often considered asking my partner to go with me for relationship counseling.
36. T/F	36. There are some things about our relationship that do not entirely please me.
37. T/F	37. If a child gets sick, and if both parents work, the father should be just as willing as the mother to stay home from work and take care of the child.
38. T/F	38. My partner and I need to improve the way we settle our differences.
39. T/F	39. My partner and I spend a good deal of time in different kinds of play and recreation.
40. T/F	40. My partner doesn't take me seriously enough sometimes.
41. T/F	41. My parents' marriage was happier than most.
42. T/F	42. My partner is so touchy on some subjects that I can't even mention them.
43. T/F	43. Whenever I'm feeling sad, my partner makes me feel loved and happy again.
44. T/F	44. I am somewhat dissatisfied with how we discuss better ways of pleasing each other sexually.
45. T/F	45. My partner and I don't have much in common to talk about.
46. T/F	46. When we argue, my partner and I often seem to go over and over the same old things.
47. T/F	47. All the marriages on my side of the family appear to be quite successful.
48. T/F	48. One thing my partner and I don't fully discuss is our sexual relationship.
49. T/F	49. My partner's feelings are too easily hurt.
50. T/F	50. It seems that we used to have more fun than we do now.
51. T/F	51. Sometimes I feel as though my partner doesn't need me.
52. T/F	52. My partner sometimes shows too little enthusiasm for sex.
53. T/F	53. Our relationship has been disappointing in several ways.
54. T/F	54. Minor disagreements with my partner often end up in big arguments.
55. T/F	55. My partner and I have never come close to ending our relationship.
56. T/F	56. Our financial future seems quite secure.
57. T/F	57. There are times when I wonder if I made the best of all possible choices in a partner.
58. T/F	58. I get pretty discouraged about our relationship sometimes.
59. T/F	59. I have worried about my partner losing control of his or her anger.
60. T/F	60. Earning the family income is primarily the responsibility of the man.

61. T/F	61. My partner and I seldom have major disagreements.
62. T/F	62. It is often hard to us to discuss our finances without getting upset with each other.
63. T/F	63. My partner occasionally makes me feel miserable.
64. T/F	64. I have never felt better in our relationship than I do now.
65. T/F	65. My partner has never thrown things at me in anger.
66. T/F	66. The man should be the head of the family.
67. T/F	67. The future of our relationship is too uncertain for us to make any serious plans.
68. T/F	68. My partner is forever checking up on how I spend our money.
69. T/F	69. I have never regretted our relationship even for a moment.
70. T/F	70. My partner sometimes screams or yells at me when he or she is angry.
71. T/F	71. A woman should take her husband's last name after marriage.
72. T/F	72. My partner and I are happier than most of the couples I know.
73. T/F	73. Trying to work out a budget causes more trouble with my partner than it is worth.
74. T/F	74. The most important thing for a woman is to be a good wife and mother.
75. T/F	75. When arguing, we manage quite well to restrict our focus to the important issues.
76. T/F	76. Our daily life is full of interesting things to do together.
77. T/F	77. Sometimes my partner just can't understand the way I feel.
78. T/F	78. My parents didn't communicate with each other as well as they should have.
79. T/F	79. My partner has no difficulty accepting criticism.
80. T/F	80. Just when I need it the most, my partner makes me feel important.
81. T/F	81. My partner has too little regard sometimes for my sexual satisfaction.
82. T/F	82. My partner doesn't take enough time to do some of the things I'd like to do.
83. T/F	83. My partner sometimes seems intent upon changing some aspect of my personality.
84. T/F	84. My parents never really understood me.
85. T/F	85. My partner and I nearly always agree on how frequently to have sexual relations.
86. T/F	86. My partner and I seem able to go for days sometimes without setting our differences.
87. T/F	87. I spend at least one hour each day in activity with my partner.
88. T/F	88. My partner does many different things to show me that he or she loves me.
89. T/F	89. I have never seriously considered having an affair.
90. T/F	90. I have important needs in our relationship that are not being met.
91. T/F	91. Our arguments frequently end up with one of us feeling hurt or crying.
92. T/F	92. At times I have very much wanted to leave my partner.
93. T/F	93. My partner is a very good manager of finances.
94. T/F	94. My partner has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a companion.

95. T/F	95. There are some serious difficulties in our relationship.
96. T/F	96. My partner has never pushed me or grabbed me in anger.
97. T/F	97. Where a family lives should depend mostly on the man's job.
98. T/F	98. I might be happier if I weren't in this relationship.
99. T/F	99. My partner and I rarely argue about money.
100. T/F	100. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my partner.
101. T/F	101. I have often wondered whether our relationship may end in separation or divorce.
102. T/F	102. My partner has left bruises or welts on my body.
103. T/F	103. In a relationship the woman's career is of equal importance to the man's.
104. T/F	104. I believe that our relationship is as pleasant as that of most of the people I know.
105. T/F	105. I feel as though we live beyond our financial means.
106. T/F	106. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my partner and I.
107. T/F	107. My partner has never threatened to hurt me.
108. T/F	108. In a relationship, a major role of a woman should be that of housekeeper.
109. T/F	109. I have known very little unhappiness in our relationship.
110. T/F	110. My partner buys too many things without consulting with me first.
111. T/F	111. If a mother of younger children works, it should be only while the family needs the money.
112. T/F	112. My partner has never injured me physically.
113. T/F	113. When we disagree, my partner helps us to find alternatives acceptable to both of us.
114. T/F	114. Our recreation and leisure activities appear to be meeting both our needs quite well.
115. T/F	115. I feel free to express openly strong feelings of sadness to my partner.
116. T/F	116. I had a very happy home life.
117. T/F	117. My partner and I rarely have sexual relations.
118. T/F	118. Sometimes I wonder just how much my partner really does love me.
119. T/F	119. I would like my partner to express a little more tenderness during intercourse.
120. T/F	120. The members of my family were always very close to each other.
121. T/F	121. My partner and I are often unable to disagree with one another without losing our tempers.
122. T/F	122. I often wondered whether my parents' marriage would end in divorce.
123. T/F	123. There are some things I would like us to do, sexually, that my partner doesn't seem to enjoy.
124. T/F	124. My partner often fails to understand my point of view on things.
125. T/F	125. Whenever he or she is feeling down, my partner comes to me for support.

126. T/F	126. My partner keeps most of his or her feelings inside.
127. T/F	127. Our sexual relationship is entirely satisfactory.
128. T/F	128. I believe our relationship is reasonably happy.
129. T/F	129. My partner often complains that I don't understand him or her.
	Couples WITHOUT children STOP here. Couples WITH children answer the following.
130. T/F	130. For the most part, our children are well behaved.
131. T/F	131. My partner and I rarely argue about the children.
132. T/F	132. My children's value systems are very much the same as my own.
133. T/F	133. My partner doesn't spend enough time with the children.
134. T/F	134. Our relationship might have been happier if we had not had children.
135. T/F	135. My partner and I rarely disagree on when or how to discipline the children.
136. T/F	136. I wish my children would show a little more concern for me.
137. T/F	137. Our children often manage to drive a wedge between my partner and me.
138. T/F	138. My children and I don't have very much in common to talk about.
139. T/F	139. My partner doesn't display enough affection toward the children.
140. T/F	140. Our children do not show adequate respect for their parents.
141. T/F	141. My partner and I decide together what rules to set for our children.
142. T/F	142. Our children don't seem as happy and carefree as other children their age.
143. T/F	143. My partner doesn't assume his or her fair share of taking care of the children.
144. T/F	144. Having children has not brought all of the satisfactions I had hoped it would.
145. T/F	145. My partner and I nearly always agree on how to respond to our children's requests for money or privileges.
146. T/F	146. Our children rarely fail to meet their responsibilities at home.
147. T/F	147. Our relationship has never been in difficulty because of the children.
148. T/F	148. Rearing children is a nerve-wracking job.
149. T/F	149. My partner and I assume equal responsibility for rearing the children.
150. T/F	150. I frequently get together with one or more of the children for fun or recreation at home.

Appendix G
Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 7/31/2004

Date: Friday, August 01, 2003

IRB Application No ED043

Proposal Title: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOINT/SHARED ACTIVITIES AND MARITAL
SATISFACTION

Principal
Investigator(s):

Gloria So-Lloyd
1836 Chelsea Drive
Edmond, OK 73013

John Romans
325 E Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Expedited

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

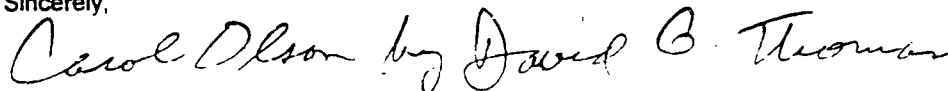
Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research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

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

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

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

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Gloria Lai-Sum So-Lloyd

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctorate of Philosophy

Thesis: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JOINT/SHARED ACTIVITIES WITH
MARITAL DISSATISFACTION, FLEXIBILITY, COHESION AND
COMMUNICATION

Major Field: Education Psychology

Option: Counseling Psychology

Biographical:

Education: Received Bachelor of Arts degree with double majors in Social work, and Organizational Communication from Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota in July 1991. Received a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in May 1992. Completed the requirements for the Doctorate of Philosophy degree with a major in Counseling Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2003.

Experience: Certified Provider for Parent Child Interaction Therapy, for Group Preparation and Selection: Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (MAPP), for Managing Aggressive Behaviors (MAB). Have a variety of clinical experiences at the following agencies: North Care Behavioral and Social Services, Saint Anthony Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Lutheran Social Service in Tulsa, Oklahoma, Siouxland Mental Health Center in Sioux City, Iowa, Tulsa Metropolitan Ministry in Tulsa and Prison Fellowship in Sioux City, Iowa. Completed an APA accredited Pre-doctoral Internship at Oklahoma State Health Consortium in 2002.

Professional Membership: Clinical Licensed Social Worker, American Psychological Association, Oklahoma Psychological Association, National Association of Developmental Disabilities (NADD), and Brain Injury Association of Oklahoma.