

A Q-STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE
SHARED BY YOUNG MARRIED INDIVIDUALS
WITH NO CHILDREN

By

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CHAPTER I

Introduction of the Study

The state of the American family has changed significantly in the past several decades. The definition of family is ever shifting in an attempt to keep up with all the family forms present in society (Teachman, Tedrow, & Crowder, 2001). People are marrying later and divorcing more frequently. Over fifty percent of marriages end in divorce and seventy-five percent of re-marriages meet the same fate (Coleman, Ganong, & Fine, 2001). The average age for males to marry for the first time is 27 and the average age for females to marry for the first time is 26 years old (Olson & Defrain, 1997). Marriage no longer holds the appeal that it once did in American society. Economics, divorce, individualism, and independence have all taken their respective tolls on marriage (Teachman et al.). This is all occurring while Americans are living longer. Moreover, these changes in the family have affected the major institutions of society: church, government, marketplace, and school (Fagan & Rector, 2000).

On the other hand, as Popenoe and Whitehead (2000) stated, "[m]ost Americans continue to prize and value marriage...[and] enter marriage with a strong desire and determination for a lifelong, loving partnership" (p. 3). Despite the majority of people valuing marriage, couples that are marrying are having difficulty creating successful marriages. The number of people who are very pleased in their first marriage has

declined in the past twenty years (Popenoe & Whitehead). Popenoe and Whitehead noted, "[i]t has been estimated that after ten years only twenty-five percent of marriages are... both intact and reportedly happy" (p. 11). Popenoe and Whitehead can best sum up the perception of marriage in America,

... [while] marriage remains an important feature of adulthood, it no longer looms like Mount Everest in the landscape of the adult life course. It is more like a hill that people climb up and down, once or twice, or bypass altogether. (p. 6)

Therefore, while people still value marriage, the ability to sustain a successful lasting marriage is elusive.

Research from family sciences suggests that some of the important aspects of strong marriages are problem solving, communication, time spent together, enjoyment, tolerance, and cohesion (Hunt, Hof, & DeMaria, 1998; Robinson & Blanton, 1993; Stanley, Markman, Peters, & Leber, 1995). The family literature suggests that many of these skills are lacking in marriages and that they may be learned by the couple (Hunt et al.). The field of Premarital and Marital Enrichment is dedicated to improving and strengthening marriages. Strong marriages need high communication, cohesion, and problem solving and low incidents of mental distress such as depression (Hunt et al.).

Leisure

Leisure has been found to help improve many of the skills that are needed for strong marriages, including communication, cohesion, and problem solving (Orthner,

1975; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Zabriskie & McCormick 2001). Two of the main inventories, utilized to assess couples, consider leisure and/or shared fun time for couples so important that they are included as components (Fournier, Olson, & Druckman, 1983; Renick, Blumberg, & Markman, 1992). Although there are some direct links between leisure and marital strength, many of the links between leisure and families and couples are indirect. For individuals, leisure has been found to decrease depression and anxiety and increase interpersonal aspects such as cohesion and friendship (Wankel & Berger, 1991). Self-confidence and leadership skills have been developed for individuals in structured leisure experiences. These skills would be of great benefit to most couples. However, there is limited research on the direct effect of leisure on families and couples. Therefore, the benefits of leisure for individuals should be considered as potential benefits for couples as well.

Individual Leisure

To understand how couples can benefit from leisure one must first understand leisure experiences of individuals. Leisure can be defined as activities, behaviors, and experiences that people engage in voluntarily for internal or self-reward (Peterson & Stumbo, 2000). Leisure behavior is used to explain a variety of human experiences that are voluntary in nature, allow free choice and intrinsic motivation, and are meaningful and pleasurable to the participants involved. The three most important aspects of leisure are generally categorized as perceived freedom, intrinsic motivation, and pleasure. First, a necessary characteristic of leisure experiences is the perception the person is choosing

this experience for himself or herself freely. This perception of choice allows them to fully engage in the leisure experience. Second, the main reward for this experience must come from within the person or people engaging in the experience. Finally, the participant engaging in the leisure activity must view the leisure experience as enjoyable. The leisure experience may not be viewed as pleasurable at the time of the event, but may be looked back upon fondly. The person involved in the leisure subjectively assigns the concept of pleasure for the leisure experience. The order is irrelevant as long as all three components are present.

There are a number of positive outcomes of leisure participation. Leisure could be seen as a time to re-create oneself mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It is a time to grow personally and socially. Leisure activities assist in the formation and development of a person's perceived identity. Leisure often serves as a buffer to the stressors of life and allows time to collect the resources needed to cope with our problems. A change need not always occur in a person to count as a benefit of leisure. Maintaining the homeostasis of one's life is often the desired outcome of leisure (Kleiber, 1999). Leisure and recreation could be considered critical components of a healthy person's growth and development (Kleiber). The development of each individual could directly affect couples as a whole. Hence, while leisure is important for the individual, it is also likely to be valuable to couples as well.

It must be noted that most of the research on leisure and families has been found to have a correlation not a causal relationship. Exactly how leisure directly benefits married couples has yet to be proven. Much of what is believed about leisure and the family is still in the theoretical stage. However, researchers suggest that there is a

correlation between leisure involvement and family strength (Hill, 1988). A number of quantitative studies have examined the relationship between leisure and marital or relational satisfaction (Baldwin, Ellis, & Baldwin, 1999; Berg, Trost, Schneider, & Allison, 2001; Hill, 1988; Orthner, 1975; Presvelou, 1971). The research suggests that there is a positive relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction but the findings do not indicate a causal relationship (Baldwin et al.; Hill; Orthner; Smith, Snyder, Trull, & Monsma, 1988). Increased cohesion, communication, and problem solving are just a few examples of the benefits that have been related to family and couple leisure. Although the empirical evidence of the benefits of leisure for couples is somewhat limited, the theoretical connections between leisure and couples are quite strong (Orthner & Mancini, 1991).

In the past thirty years, there have been a number of researchers in the social sciences who have been trying to better understand the effect of leisure on couples (Crawford, Godbey, & Crouter, 1986; Johnson, Huston, Gaines, & Levinger, 1992; Presvelou, 1971; Smith et al., 1988). Leisure researchers have also been interested in the importance of leisure to couples and families (Orthner 1975; 1976; 1998; Orthner & Mancini, 1991; Shaw 1997; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). There is evidence for the relationship between leisure and global family indicators, but there is need for more in-depth understanding of the relationship, particularly for couples. Research suggests that the way couples use their free time has a positive relationship to satisfaction and bonding, and that the relationship was more powerful when the couples spent shared leisure time with just their spouse (Orthner, 1975; 1976; 1998; Smith et al.; Zabriskie & McCormick).

Shared leisure experiences for couples have also been related to lower divorce rates (Hill, 1988; Iso-Ahola, 1995; Orthner, 1998).

Leisure could be an excellent way for young marital couples to learn the skills needed for successful marriages. In particular, young couples could learn to negotiate problems in a non-threatening environment and then use those same skills when navigating more serious issues in their relationship (Orthner, 1998). Conflict resolution skills could be learned in a leisure setting, such as a date, and then those same skills may be used when a problem arises between those couples. Leisure in early marriage may help establish the importance of time together as a means to increase overall marital quality (Orthner, et al., 1993). Shared leisure experiences could allow for more interactions, increased communication, and a safe area to exchange new ideas, and improve conflict resolution (Orthner, 1998; Orthner & Mancini, 1991). This potential increase in communication may not just stay within the leisure experience, but may spill over into other aspects of couples' lives (Orthner & Mancini).

Leisure is believed to play a part in the way couples balance their marital roles (Iso-Ahola, 1995). It is conceivable that the more couples learn about themselves and each other in leisure experiences, the more it will help them form the skills needed for a successful marriage (Orthner, 1998). Time shared between couples often determines the nature of those relationships. Leisure experiences allow people to step out of socially defined roles and interact with others as their personality dictates (Kleiber, 1999). When people are fostering new unions, leisure may allow them a time or place to develop their relationship. Their relationship will be enhanced by using leisure as a catalyst to role integration and role experimentation. When couples are trying new roles, leisure could

positively influence communication and conflict resolution, two issues that family literature suggests as being important to healthy marriages (Cole & Cole, 1999; Hunt, Hof, & DeMaria, 1998; Larson, Holman, Klein, Busby, Stahmann, & Peterson, 1995; Renick, Blumberg, & Markman, 1992).

The simplest explanation of the possible value of leisure for couples was proposed by Orthner and Mancini (1990) when they stated, "...there is a consistent finding in the literature that husbands and wives who share leisure time together in joint activities (experiences that require interaction and communication for successful completion) tend to be much more satisfied with their marriages than those who do not" (p. 290). It may be possible if couples share positive leisure activities when they are young, they could continue to benefit from them throughout the rest of their lives (Smith et al., 1988). Leisure may have immense value for couples and those assisting couples in their transformation from single life to married life (Orthner, et al., 1993).

Leisure could be used when couples are young to enhance a new union. The literature also suggests that the young adult period is when most individuals are at their highest level of engagement in leisure activities (Kleiber, 1999). It is also at this time that individuals are more likely to try new and varied activities (Kleiber). Researchers have found that husbands and wives who share their leisure time tend to have a more satisfying marriage (Orthner, 1975; Orthner et al., 1993; Orthner & Mancini 1990; Shaw, 1997; Smith et al., 1988). This is important for couples throughout the lifecycle, but is vitally import to young married couples. The beginning of marriage serves as a transitional period for individuals to learn to function as couples (Olson & Defrain, 1997). Therefore,

leisure could help provide the foundation upon which the marriage is built. Kelly (1997) best stated how leisure would help couples when he stated,

Life is not composed of theme parks and cruises. It is composed of dinner table talk, vacations together, getting the home and yard in shape, kidding around, caring for each other, goofing off, dreaming, and all the minutiae of the day and hour (p. 134).

By better understanding the interactions that take place during leisure for couples, the better couples and professionals will be able to replicate those experiences, which were viewed as beneficial to the couple. More information about leisure shared by couples is needed. Leisure that is shared has been typically viewed as an extension of individual leisure. However, the concepts that define individual leisure may not be successful in describing the phenomenon of leisure shared by couples.

Statement of Problem

Leisure and its benefits are typically from an individual perspective. The concept of leisure lends itself to be defined by the individual in the experience, whereas, most definitions of leisure would be inappropriate to define leisure shared by couples. The benefits accrued are related to perceptions of perceived freedom, pleasure, and intrinsic motivation in the leisure experience. Leisure shared by couples in all likelihood must compromise on these qualities. Therefore, understanding the perceptions of leisure shared by married couples will lead to revised understanding of the potential benefits of leisure for couples.

Most of the research has been focused on the correlational relationship between leisure and couples (Crawford, Godbey, & Crouter, 1986; Hill, 1988; Johnson et al., 1992; Orthner, 1975; Presvelou, 1971; Smith et al., 1988). Berg et al. (2001) attempted to broaden the knowledge base by looking at the perceptions of dyads in different relationships and the effect that leisure satisfaction had on relationship satisfaction. They found that individual leisure satisfaction does not significantly affect the dyad's leisure satisfaction. One of the uniqueness of their study was that they were interested in the dyad's perception of satisfaction rather than just each individual's perception of satisfaction of the dyad. Berg et al. also proposed that the relationship of leisure and relationship satisfaction might be bi-directional. Of vital interest, Berg et al. stated, "...it may not be that... [shared]... leisure activities are consistently beneficial to a relationship and individual leisure activities are consistently harmful, but rather that attention must be paid to the nature of the leisure interactions and the satisfaction derived from them" (p. 38). This focus on individual and dyad perceptions by young newly married couples will guide this research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to describe the perceptions of leisure shared with spouses as young adults, newly married, and with no children. It is believed that the meaning attributed to leisure experiences shared with one's spouse will be determined by both the self perceptions of leisure experiences and the perceptions that one has about their spouse's perception of shared leisure experiences.

The following are specific research questions for this study:

1. How do young newly married individuals perceive leisure experiences shared with their spouse?
2. In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spouse experiences contribute to understanding of the results in question #1?

Assumptions

The primary assumption is that shared leisure has value for couples. The method in which couples share leisure experiences illustrates important patterns to the couple's relationship.

Definition of Terms

It is necessary to establish a definition of essential terms used throughout this work so that the reader and researcher may give the same meaning to each term.

Concourse- the data and communication about a subject or topic in which the Q-set and Q-sort are derived from (Brown, 1993)

Condition of Instruction- a method for sorting Q-sampling items (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

Family- "two or more people who are committed to each other and who share intimacy, resources, decision-making responsibilities, and values" (Olson & Defrain, 2000).

Leisure- an activity that occurs during free time that is often a state of mind or attitude,

which allows one to recover from the strains of life and has the qualities of perceived freedom, pleasure, and intrinsic motivation (Kleiber, 1999).

P-set- the participants that are rank ordering statements in a Q study

Q-set- organized sample of concourse information (Brown, 1993).

Q-sort- a set of statements about a certain topic that are rank ordered by a person as to their point of view (Brown, 1993).

Shared Leisure - an activity that occurs during free time that is often a state of mind or attitude. This leisure experience has interaction between the couple needs to require significant interplay among the couple for the couple to be successful in the activity. In addition, the experience has to be viewed as a leisure experience for each person in the couple.

Young Newly Married Couples- couples that are married, are between the ages of 18 and 35, have been married less than five years, and are childless.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is the lack of variability in the subjects since all the subjects were newly married, young people. Another limitation of this study is the limited amount of time that the researcher had with the subjects. More time with the subjects may have provided richer data for the study. A final limitation is with using self-reporting information for the study. The subjects may answer what they think the researcher wants to hear instead of what or how they feel or perceive leisure experiences or their affect.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Leisure

Leisure has been viewed as being an important force in the social, cultural, and economic aspects of western society. Leisure has been seen as a dramatic influencer of people's happiness, well-being, and satisfaction (Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf, & Edginton, 2002). The exact manner as to how leisure affects society and individuals is still being explored. One of the ways leisure has been examined is by studying the critical dimensions of a leisure experience.

The dimensions of the leisure experience have been discussed by a variety of theorists and researchers. A number of characteristics have been attributed to leisure experiences. There are three constant reoccurring themes when discussing leisure; they are perceived freedom, intrinsic motivation, and pleasure. To better understand these concepts an examination of their origins will follow.

The beginnings of leisure theory can be traced back to each of the great ancient civilizations including the Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Aztecs, Sumerians, and Persians (Edginton et al., 2002). To show how the concepts of perceived freedom, intrinsic

motivation, and pleasure define the leisure experience, this literature review will focus on the middle and later part of the twentieth century.

de Grazia's (1962) definition of leisure referred to it as being a personal state of mind. He raised the question about the manner in which the term leisure may be perceived. de Grazia believed the whole concept of leisure was changed when researchers started evaluating leisure as the amount of a person's free time. He felt that free time could be more easily measured than leisure, but had changed the qualitative elements of leisure to a quantitative concept of free time. This allowed researchers to study one aspect of leisure more easily; however, this made leisure appear as just time. As many theorists stated, if someone defines leisure as merely time, they will miss the true depth of the essence of leisure.

Pieper (1963) examined leisure through a psychological perspective. Pieper viewed the process of leisure as a mental and spiritual way of believing, not just the result of external factors or free time. Kaplan (1974) attempted to further this social psychological concept with the following definition of leisure:

...leisure is not an activity, but a construct of elements which are emphasized with roles that are pertinent to the individual rather than to economic, political, educative, religious, or marital life. These elements may, in modified form, be found in other institutions as well. Leisure, then, can be said to consist of relatively self-determined activities and experiences that fall in one's economically free-time roles, that are seen as leisure by the participants, that are psychologically pleasant in anticipation and recollection, that potentially cover the whole range of commitment and intensity, that contain characteristic norms and

restraints, and provide opportunities for recreation, personal growth and service to others. (p. 232)

Sullivan (1990), in her work on leisure, categorized a number of dimensions of a leisure experience. She found that there were six critical aspects that made leisure essentially different than work. Those dimensions were focus, lack of evaluation by others, creativity, reduced distractibility, choice, and intrinsic motivation or positive affect.

Hood (1992) identified nine dimensions of leisure in her study of family functioning. The nine dimensions she examined were: intrinsic motivation, pleasure or enjoyment during the experience, focus on the activity and reduced distractibility, loss of self, a sense of timelessness when involved in the experience, absence of evaluation by others, creativity, sense of control over one's actions in the experience, and choice or perceived freedom in selection or continuation of a leisure experience. These dimensions will serve as the starting point for this study. A further explanation of each of the nine leisure dimensions will provide valuable insight.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is widely accepted as one of the most important aspects of leisure (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; de Grazia, 1962; Dumazedier, 1974; Mannell & Kleiber, 1997; Tinsley & Tinsley, 1986). Intrinsic motivation deals with how people respond to the internal drive they have to participate in leisure. Even though the individuals may have influence from their surrounding environment the decision to take part in a leisure

experience is ultimately of their own control (Kleiber, 1999). Thus, intrinsic motivation may not be the only motivational factors for the leisure experience, but is the primary reason for the involvement.

Csikszentmihalyi (1975) viewed intrinsic motivation as very similar to an *autotelic* experience. An autotelic experience is assumed to have no external rewards or goals. However, it has been suggested that there can be external rewards, but they are viewed as secondary to the intrinsic rewards or motives in an autotelic experience.

Neulinger (1981) also identified a model of work and leisure that dealt with intrinsic motivation. His model used intrinsic motivation as one of its essential defining characteristics of leisure. Many leisure scholars connect intrinsic motivation to leisure.

Pleasure or Enjoyment

Pleasure or enjoyment of the activity or experience of leisure is also another common dimension of leisure (Dumazedier, 1974; Kaplan, 1974; Mannell, 1980; Shaw, 1984, 1985). The concepts of pleasure or enjoyment are often viewed as the central theme in a leisure experience. Many leisure pursuits are those in which people invest their time simply for the fun of it (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997). The concept of enjoyment in leisure has been viewed as being very beneficial to the participants, with numerous postulated outcomes being associated with enjoyment. Enjoyment has been directly related to self-actualization, flow, personal growth, and psychological well-being (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Csikszentmihalyi & Kleiber, 1991; Wankel & Berger, 1991). Enjoyment of a leisure experience may come in the form of anticipation of the experience, the actual

leisure experience, or in the recollection of the leisure experience (Kaplan, 1974). This is one of the main reasons that pleasure or enjoyment remains a point of consensus as a dimension of leisure.

Choice or Perceived Freedom

Freedom has been confirmed by research as being an essential aspect of leisure (Dumazedier, 1974; Kaplan, 1974; Kleiber, 1999). A perception of freedom or choice has been conceived as a must for an experience or activity to be viewed as leisure (Kaplan). Dumazedier stated that liberation or freedom is one the main characteristics of a leisure experience. Kelly (1997) further explained the notion of freedom and leisure in the following:

... freedom becomes defined as a perceived absence of limit rather than a possibility of action. Freedom is freedom *from* rather than freedom *for* action. When leisure is defined purely as a mental state, then freedom is reduced to a feeling rather than an actual condition or possibility. (p. 43)

Neulinger (1981) and Gunter (1987) both distinguished freedom or perceived freedom as an important aspect of leisure. Neulinger actually used perceived freedom to differentiate leisure from work. The concept of freedom is a powerful notion to be associated with leisure. Much of everyday life seems to lacking freedom and leisure may allow a person to truly feel free in his/her pursuits.

Focus on the Activity or Reduced Distractibility

Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) also used a psychological lens through which to view leisure. They believed that there are two different components of a leisure experience: an evaluative aspect and potency aspect. The evaluative aspect refers to the qualitative evaluation of leisure and the value an individual may assign to that experience. The potency aspect of a leisure experience refers to the quantitative elements of a leisure experience, such as time, type of activity, length of participation. They viewed leisure experiences as having cognitive and affective attributes. One of the important dimensions they documented from their work was absorption in the experience.

In the concept of *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), which is the complete involvement of the actor in his/her activity, one of the defining qualities is intense concentration and absorption in the activity. These characteristics of flow could lend themselves to improving the understanding of both increased concentration and reduced distractibility.

Loss of Self

Flow once again would lend itself to help explain the connection between loss of self and leisure. Flow requires that a participant find the balance between skill and challenge. Therefore, for a flow experience to occur one often loses himself/herself within the activity itself while searching for the homeostasis of skill and challenge (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Leisure often serves as an escape from reality or the routine of

everyday life and one is allowed to lose him/herself in the experience (Kleiber, 1999). Several theorists have identified loss of self as a defining quality of a leisure experience (Csikszentmihalyi; Kleiber; Tinsley & Tinsley, 1986).

Timelessness

Mannell (1980) defined leisure as a psychological state of mind that may be easily interrupted. Mannell's research found that participants experienced a decreased awareness of time. He used an experimental setting to discover that the participants experienced a change in their perception of time while engaged in leisure.

Tinsley and Tinsley (1986) also identified a loss of time as a characteristic of a leisure experience. The timelessness has also been acknowledged as a characteristic of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). Gunter (1987) suggested that lack of awareness of time might be the most significant identifier of a leisure event.

Absence of Evaluation from Others

Shaw (1984, 1985) examined the essential dimensions of leisure using time diaries. In these diaries, the participants categorized activities as leisure, work, mixed work and leisure, or neither work nor leisure. Shaw also conducted interviews to further examine and explain certain events from the diaries. The lack of being evaluated was one of the main dimensions associated with leisure in her research. Neulinger (1981) also noted that the influence of others might affect one's leisure choices or decisions. This

concept may also be directly related to the concept of focus or reduced distractibility and loss of self.

Creativity

The concept of creativity is a dimension of leisure that is not discussed by many leisure researchers. When examining the phenomena of leisure, creativity, and the concepts of play, Huizinga (1955) seemed to bind creativity to leisure and viewed play as directly related to leisure. The characteristics of play he identified that could be related to creativity included fun, stepping out of the usual, and awareness of pretending. These are often elements seen in creativity itself. The cross over between play, creativity, and leisure are easily identifiable in his characteristics of play.

Gunter's (1987) research with self-reported essays established a variety of leisure dimensions. One of the dimensions cited in his work was the concept of imagination being a part of a leisure experience. This would also work in concert with Huizinga's concept of pretending being elemental to play.

Sense of Control

The degree to which people feel they can manage their leisure experience deals with the idea of control. Many times a sense of control in an experience may be perceived or real. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) indicated that a sense of control was critical to the development of a flow state. Neulinger's (1981) model of leisure incorporated the

concept of control or the sense of control as being essential to a person's participation in an activity. He believed that this sense of control allowed the participant to continue or disengage from an experience at will. The notion of control may be related to the concepts of intrinsic motivation and perceived freedom or choice.

All nine dimensions may be critical in defining a leisure experience for an individual. However, the value of these dimensions in defining shared leisure experiences is unclear. Many of the dimensions of leisure experiences discussed may need to be modified or deleted in defining shared leisure experiences. The dimensions above reflect the current understanding of leisure from an individualistic perspective and provide a starting point in the process of examining the essential qualities of shared leisure experiences.

Shared Leisure

The dimensions of leisure noted above reflect the current understanding and definition of leisure as an individualistic experience. Several additional areas must be examined in order to fully understand the issues related to couples' experience of shared leisure. The existing literature and research has broken down the concept of shared leisure into several categories including communication, cohesion, and satisfaction. This section will provide a logical investigation of couples' leisure experience.

It must be noted that the following information will explore many of the benefits or outcomes of shared leisure. The benefits of a leisure experience are quite different from the critical dimensions of a leisure experience. Since there is little information about

the critical dimensions of shared leisure, examining the benefits of shared leisure of couples is a way to begin to understand what may be the critical dimensions of shared leisure. This evaluation of the literature and this study is designed to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon of leisure shared by a couple.

Types of Shared Leisure

Orthner (1975) defined three basic types of leisure shared by couples: individual, parallel, and joint. Individual leisure is an experience that requires little or no communication and may actually discourage family members from interacting with each other. This type of leisure occurs when each person in the couple engages in his/her own interests separate from his/her spouse. Moreover, these activities are often not even done within the same space. A high level of this type of leisure in a couple has been viewed as detrimental to the couple (Orthner). The second type of leisure shared by couples as defined by Orthner was parallel leisure. This type of leisure needs minimal interaction; it may occur in a group setting or could be passive in nature. An example of this would be a couple watching a movie where there is little dialogue or interaction between the members of the couple and they sit quietly watching the screen in front of them. The final type of shared leisure that was described was joint leisure. Research indicated that this is the most desirable type of leisure for a couple. Joint leisure requires high communication and interaction for the successful completion of the experience as well as the possibility of interchangeable roles during the leisure experience. An example could be a couple

going camping and the husband becomes the person in charge of food preparation or cooking.

These definitions guided the research in couple's leisure for nearly thirty years. While Orthner's conceptualization of leisure shared by couples is helpful, it only discusses one aspect of shared leisure- that of communication. A more in-depth understanding of the qualities of shared leisure is needed in order to understand the experience and impact of leisure shared by couples. Examining the benefits of leisure shared by couples provides some interesting directions in the process of defining the essential qualities or dimensions of shared leisure. A new concept will hopefully emerge from this research on leisure shared couples.

Benefits of Shared Leisure

One of the main beliefs about leisure for couples is that leisure is *good* for them. Leisure professionals tend to assume that leisure shared by couples is an important developmental aspect of American families (Zabriskie & Estes, 2001). Couchman (1988, as cited in Canadian Parks & Recreation Association, 1997) suggested that leisure could be the most important factor in healthy families and/or couples. This assumption about the importance of leisure for couples is one of the underlying premises of the current study.

The anticipated reward of leisure for couples has been generally accepted. Leisure experiences have been correlated to relationship satisfaction, strength, interaction, and stability (Orthner & Mancini, 1990). It has been suggested that leisure serves as a buffer

to the stressors of life and allows couples time to collect the resources needed to cope with perceived difficulties. Leisure shared by couples could be seen as a time for the couple to *re-create* itself, mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Leisure shared by couples may allow people to step out of socially defined roles and interact with family members as their personality dictates (Kleiber, 1999). When people are fostering new unions, leisure may allow them a place to develop healthily.

The time shared between couples may often determine the nature of that relationship. Thus, leisure may help provide the foundation that successful relationships are built on. It is likely that the more time that is permitted for leisure activities to be done together, the more likely a couple's cohesion will increase (Hill, 1988; West & Merriam, 1970). The more that couples learn about themselves and each other in leisure experiences, the more it will help them form the skills needed for a successful life.

Leisure shared by couples may have a variety of relational benefits such as communication, group cohesion, and satisfaction. Other benefits of leisure shared by couples may be stress reduction, family bonding, and conflict resolution (Orthner et al., 1993). These benefits may be transferred from the leisure setting to other aspects of a couple's life (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). This transferability could be the *real* strength of shared leisure for couples and those who work with couples. The success that couples may have in a leisure environment could possibly be just what is needed later in their relationship to help them overcome difficult situations (Zabriskie & McCormick).

The potential of leisure shared by couples has yet to be examined thoroughly or definitively (Orthner, 1975; Orthner et al., 1993). Shared leisure for couples could be viewed as an important tool to help preserve their marriages as well increase the stability

of the marriages (Hill, 1988). Couples may perceive leisure as being important to the marriage and marriage is a major influence on the couples' leisure pursuits (Baldwin et al., 1999; Orthner et al., 1993). Leisure shared by couples is more than just participating in activities together (Baldwin et al.). Couples that are truly sharing a leisure experience will be interacting with each other on many different levels at the same time during their leisure activity. Couples involved in shared leisure activities may be less stressed and communicate more effectively, which in turn could allow them to share themselves more freely (Hill, 1988; Orthner, 1975).

Leisure shared by couples could be strategic in allowing couples to share themselves fully and encourage their personal and relationship development (Orthner et al., 1993). These shared experiences may allow couples to compensate for deficiencies in other areas of their relationship (Orthner et al.). The reason couples share parts of their lives together is because they enjoy doing things with each other (Kamlin & Bernasco, 2001).

The rewards that couples receive from shared leisure experiences could be viewed as marital capital, resources that may be preserved for another time, for couples to use when times are difficult (Kamlin & Bernasco, 2001). This capital could conceivably be used to strengthen the marriage and help prevent marital dissolution in the present and for the future (Hill, 1988). Hill's study was a longitudinal leisure study of six years that found a significant positive relationship between spouses' shared time and marital stability. In this study, leisure was second only to duration of marriage as a major influencing factor on whether couples would stay together or not. The rewards of shared leisure could help reduce the costs that may occur in marriages. The couples might value

these experiences so much that this could help prevent separation (Kamlin & Bernasco). This would give an added beneficial effect to leisure.

Couples' Communication. The most well known outcome stated in the research literature examining leisure shared by couples has been communication (Orthner et al., 1993; Orthner & Mancini, 1990). Communication has been defined as, "the way humans create and share meaning, both verbally and nonverbally" (Olson & DeFrain, 1997, p. 258). Leisure shared by couples may provide an enjoyable place in which to interact. This context allows them time to share their most intimate needs and wants during the relaxed atmosphere of leisure shared by couples (Orthner 1975; Orthner et al; Orthner & Mancini). The increased communication that occurs during a shared leisure experience can be transferred to all aspects of couples' lives (Orthner et al.).

The potential benefit that shared leisure may have for couples could be of critical importance to those couples. The benefit of leisure for communication was best stated by Orthner et al. (1993): "shared leisure activities promote opportunities for communication, the exchange of new ideas, and the development of new roles that may challenge traditional patterns of interaction in the family" (p. 196).

Communication is a component of the interactions, which takes place between couples in a leisure setting that can have a powerful impact on couples. Orthner et al. (1993) stated that, "...leisure experiences are particularly valuable... because they offer opportunities less constrained by predefined roles that may limit interaction, learning, and relationship development" (p. 176). The actual interaction during a leisure experience may be of more importance than the experience itself. The interactions and

communication that occur during leisure may increase the strength of couples (Orthner & Mancini, 1990). Leisure is theorized to be beneficial to couples' interactions in a variety of ways. Communication, cohesion, stability, and problem solving are a few of the main ways leisure is believed to be important to couples (Hill, 1988; Orthner et al.). Leisure shared by couples may allow them more opportunities to learn how to negotiate and communicate more efficiently. These skills learned in shared leisure can help the couples adapt to other formidable situations that may occur in their life (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

Cohesion for Couples. Cohesion encompasses the concepts of commitment and spending time together. Cohesion is composed of trust, honesty, dependability, and enjoying a loved one's company (Olson & Defrain, 2000). The cohesion of couples is enhanced through leisure experiences (Orthner, 1975; West & Merriam, 1970). Leisure seems to provide couples with a foundation from which to build. It is during leisure that each individual of the couple can maximize his/her own rewards and learn to work together as a unit, possibly increasing cohesion (Orthner & Mancini, 1990). One study supporting a relationship between cohesion and leisure was presented by West and Merriam (1970). Their study found a moderate support for those outdoor recreation activities such as camping, picnicking or canoeing maintained and increased family cohesion. Leisure is a large portion of couple's lives together and the way they spend their leisure time can tell a lot about a couple (Kamlin & Bernasco, 2001).

Leisure experiences shared by couples may allow them to get to know each other better. Couples may come to know one another better through sharing leisure experiences

(Orthner et al., 1993). Leisure time can be seen as an essential time for couples to come to know one another, which could increase their cohesion. Shared leisure can help couples understand each other at a higher level of understanding and development (Orthner, 1976).

Leisure provides a place and time where couples can progress as a family unit. Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) stated the benefits of leisure for couples' cohesion this way, "[t]he collective interest and identity developed through family leisure activities not only strengthens attachments of system members, but continually offers new sources for increased family cohesion and bonding" (p. 282). Leisure may be one of the most powerful positive situations that can bring couples together (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

Couples' Satisfaction. The value of shared leisure by couples crosses many dimensions of family life. Satisfaction is one of the main standards used when outsiders evaluate couples. Satisfaction is based on how couples perceive their overall relationships. The following are some of the contributing areas to satisfaction: family role, expectations, identity, communication, conflict negotiation, leisure, and other relationships. One of the main ways leisure has been positively related to couples has been through marital satisfaction. The majority of research has focused on the effect leisure has on marriages (Johnson et al., 1992; Orthner, 1975; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Smith et al., 1988). There is even more importance placed upon leisure shared by couples now than in years past (Baldwin et al., 1999; Kamlin & Bernasco, 2001; Zabriskie & Estes, 2001; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001).

What couples do in leisure may be directly related to their relationship satisfaction (Smith et al., 1988). Leisure may have the potential to influence couples stability and satisfaction (Hill, 1988; Orthner & Mancini, 1990). There are consistent findings that leisure shared by couples is positively related to the strength or satisfaction of those couples (Orthner et al., 1993; Zabriskie & Estes, 2001). Research shows that, across cultures, husbands and wives who participate in shared leisure activities are more satisfied with their marriages (Orthner & Mancini). In addition, couples who participate in low amounts of shared leisure have reported higher levels of marital distress (Holman & Jacquart, 1988). This is supported by the Smith et al. (1988) leisure time study of 251 married individuals that found that leisure without an accompanying spouse was related to marital distress.

The research looking at a reciprocal relationship between leisure satisfaction and marital satisfaction has been very limited. The effect has been presupposed by some to exist (Baldwin et al., 1999). A correlational relationship between leisure satisfaction and marital satisfaction has been established (Baldwin et al., 1999; Berg et al., 2001; Orthner & Mancini, 1990; Orthner et al., 1993; Smith et al., 1988). Baldwin et al. in their research ascertained with a Tukey test, after their ANOVA of 75 married couples, that a couple with shared leisure had significantly higher levels of marital satisfaction. Research has found that shared leisure experiences are more influential if that shared leisure is alone with the spouse (Smith et al.). Research supports the concept that the more couples are apart the less likely they are to stay married (Orthner & Mancini). The greatest benefit to a couple's satisfaction may be the effect of shared leisure. For a leisure experience to be viewed as shared, both individuals of the couple must perceive the activity as leisure. The

couple's satisfaction, as a whole, is increased by the rise of leisure satisfaction by both spouses (Berg et al.; Hill, 1988).

The type of leisure shared by couples has also been found to affect a couples' satisfaction. Research has also found that spouse support of the partner's leisure interest is beneficial to couples, although, to a lesser degree than shared leisure (Baldwin et al., 1999). Couples who are active in shared leisure increase their marital satisfaction more than couples who are passive in their leisure activities (Baldwin et al.). Couples spending time in exciting shared leisure will increase marital satisfaction more than couples sharing leisure that is perceived as just fun (Baldwin et al.). Apparently, the exciting shared leisure magnifies the benefits of shared leisure more than shared leisure that is just enjoyed passively.

Courtship, Lifecycle, & Leisure. Couples' leisure is also considered important across the life cycle. The manner in which couples come to know one another and relate to one another can be influenced by leisure (Orthner et al., 1993). Leisure plays an important part in the development of families and individuals from infancy to older adulthood. Smith et al. (1988) found in their study the importance of leisure to marital satisfaction over the life cycle. Since the family is seen as the major socializing agent for children and adults, the influence is logical.

Orthner (1975) also stated, "[f]amily life tends to dictate leisure time and experiences for most people" (p. 184). As a result, these leisure experiences bond the family together in relationships they will maintain through adulthood. This bonding in leisure may be valuable to all types of family forms (Orthner et al., 1993). Siblings,

parents, and grandparents can benefit from shared leisure activities with their grandchildren, or siblings can benefit from enjoying a leisure experience together.

The stage in the life cycle may be pivotal for leisure for couples. Although, the research on leisure over the family life cycle is limited, a link between leisure and a young married couple has been established. The effect of leisure starts even before the marriage. Orthner et al. (1993) stated, "[t]he potential for leisure experiences to enhance the development of new relationships is particularly evident in dating and courtship. The formation of intimate relationships in adolescence and young adulthood tends to occur during recreational events..." (p. 184). This connection may be important throughout the life cycle.

The couples who may be enriched the most from shared leisure could be newly married couples. Research literature supports the concept that newly young married couples could benefit greatly from shared leisure (Orthner et al.). This may be because leisure activity patterns do not change very much from courtship to the beginning of a marriage (Orthner et al.). Shared leisure is one way a new couple may be able to keep their marriage fresh and exciting (Orthner, 1975). Yet there are a number of challenges young couples experience related to their relationships.

One possible reason that leisure could be so instrumental during the early stage of marriage for young couples is because couples tend to have more time for leisure at this stage in their lives. It is at this time that couples need shared experiences in which to build a healthy relationship (Hill, 1988). Orthner (1975) found in a study of 216 husbands and 226 wives from the upper middle class in the southeastern part of the United States that the beginning of the marriage was the only phase of the life cycle that had significant

positive association between joint leisure for both spouses. The West and Merriam (1970) study included evidence that suggests a slight causal relationship of recreation though the relationship was strongest in young married couples. Shared leisure for young couples are especially important and beneficial (Orthner et al., 1993; Smith et al, 1988). The shared activities that young couples may experience will serve as the basis for future shared leisure activities for couples (Orthner et al.).

Cautions Related to Shared Leisure

Much has been written about the benefits of couples' leisure. Nevertheless, there are many problems with what is believed about couples' leisure. First, the terms *couples* and *leisure* may cause problems. Although the terms themselves may be recognized, the method in which each person will interpret it will change from person to person (Shaw, 1997). Therefore, there are many assumptions in leisure research that could make researching couples problematic (Shaw).

Most of couples' leisure research has been concerned with establishing the benefits of couples' leisure. However, couples' leisure has been found to have negative aspects to it as well. When couples spend more time together, there are often more conflicts (Shaw, 1997). In addition, couples' leisure may be beneficial to just one person and not the other (Shaw). Leisure is not automatically beneficial to couples.

Another problem with couples' leisure research is the lack of causality research. Most research that has been conducted is correlation research. Thus, the direction of the relationship is not known. It is unclear whether satisfied couples do more leisure than

unsatisfied couples or if leisure enhances satisfaction. Therefore, leisure shared by couples is not automatically beneficial.

Defining Shared Leisure

Shared leisure is very similar to the concept of joint leisure. Both require a great amount of interaction and communication for the people participating in the leisure experience to be successful. Shared and joint leisure is an activity participated in by more than one person. The difference is that shared leisure is a leisure experience that is viewed as leisure by both parties involved in the activity, whereas with joint leisure, this is not necessarily the case. Only one person could enjoy the activity and the experience would still be considered joint leisure. Shared leisure is an experience in which all people taking part in the experience view it as a leisure experience and it requires a high level interaction to be successful in the experience.

The current study will allow the researcher to better understand what people perceive as shared leisure. Much research has been conducted to understand the leisure experience. However, little to no investigation has been conducted on identifying the critical dimensions or defining qualities of shared leisure. The existing definitions of leisure may be ineffective in defining a shared leisure experience. A shared leisure experience may be qualitatively different from individual leisure experience. The benefits of shared leisure allow for limited insight into a shared leisure experience, however more is needed. Therefore, the meanings that couples may assign to the concept of shared leisure will provide a better understanding of shared leisure.

CHAPTER III

Method

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of leisure shared with spouses who are young adults, newly married, and without children. This was accomplished by describing self perceptions and the perceptions they thought their spouse had about leisure experiences they do together. This chapter describes the research method, participants, instruments, study procedures, and data analysis that were needed to carry out the study.

Q-Methodology

Q-methodology, created by William Stephenson (1953) in the early twentieth century, provides a systematic means to examine and understand subjective opinion. Traditionally in Q, people are given a set of statements about a certain topic and asked to rank these statements in relation to their own opinion. There is no right or wrong answer, only the point of view of the responding participants. The process of sorting allows for a physical manifestation of the attitudes or values of the participants. Then the rankings are subjected to factor analysis, with the interest being in how alike or unlike the people's

points of view are to one another, rather than the item level of analysis. Q methodology allows for investigation of the way people subjectively view the world (Brown, 1993). Q-methodology was chosen for this study because the objective of the study was to describe the perception of young married adults. The method allows for a better understanding of the concept of shared leisure.

The Q-items (sample of statements) in a Q-sort are developed and selected from all possible information that is shared about a topic (the concourse). The concourse generally uses the language and concepts of the persons studied (P-set). This language can be obtained in several ways: gathering information from literature, common documents, newspapers, magazines, professional literature or by interviewing people who hold an opinion about the topic of study. One common method for developing the concourse is known as the hybrid method (McKeown & Thomas, 1988), which is a combination of a comprehensive review of the literature and naturalistic interviews of people involved in whatever is being studied.

The rationale for using Q for this study was that much is unknown about the perceptions of leisure experiences shared by married couples. Each married individual provided insight about his or her perceptions on their shared leisure, as well as their perceptions of how they perceived their spouse may view shared leisure experience. Q provides a broad base of understanding the diversity that was associated with the phenomenon of shared leisure between spouses. Therefore, understanding the various ways in which married people view shared leisure could lead to a better understanding of shared leisure.

Research Participants

Phase I

Phase I consisted of conducting interviews with four to six married individuals who were married for less than five years, do not have children, and are between the ages of 18-35 years old. Participants were solicited from students at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, it was found that the interviews were motivating for young adults and that each participant found other participants who would like to talk about leisure experiences with their spouses. The interview protocol (see Appendix A) was designed to be open-ended and solicit as many different ideas as possible. The individuals used for the interview in the first phase of the study would not necessarily take part in the sorting phase of the study. All information was submitted to and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to any contact with subjects.

Phase II

The second phase of the study consisted of recruiting 14 people who agreed to sort the statements that were chosen for the Q-sort. The participants, or P-set, for the sorting section of the study were to be married for less than five years, did not have children, and were between the ages of 18-35 years old. The P-set was not to be over 20 because each individual completed two Q-sorts each. This method is effective in Q-methodology and large random sampling does not benefit the research in Q, because the

power of Q comes from the diversity of the Q-items. The married individuals would be recruited by announcements in classes at Oklahoma State University. Additionally, colleagues and associates of the researcher who meet the study criteria were invited to participate.

Research Instruments

There were three instruments needed to conduct both phases of this study. The demographic survey (see Appendix B) was used for both phases of the study; the interview protocol appropriate for the first phase of the study used to acquire naturalistic data from relevant participants; and the Q sort was used for the core of the study to collect the data that responded to the research questions. The instruments and the development of each will be described in this section.

Demographic Survey

The demographic survey was necessary for both phases as it assured the qualifications of the participants as a purposive sample in order to meet the demands of the research questions. For this study, young (between the ages of 18-35 years) adults, married five years or less with no children, who had experienced leisure with their spouse were solicited. Additionally, the views about individual leisure and shared leisure were sought on the demographic survey (see Appendix B). For the second phase, the demographic survey was completed after the interview and sorting procedure. The last

question on the demographic survey provided valuable information, vital in understanding connections once the sorting data was analyzed during the factor interpretation. This data was beneficial in identifying commonalities that occurred among subjects in the Q-sorts (Brown, 1980). The demographic survey for this study included the following questions: length of marriage, length of relationship with spouse before marriage, ages, and age at marriage, educational level, type and history of individual leisure, and type and history of leisure shared with a spouse.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was used in the first phase of the study. The protocol guided the researcher's questions in the interviews. The researcher probed for meaning about leisure and new meanings for leisure shared with their spouse. The data collected from the interviews provided specific language to be used in designing the Q-items for the Q-sort. The researcher examined the interviews looking for various views of shared leisure to include in the Q-items.

Q-sort

The Q-sort was developed for this study from the literature and the data that emerged from the interviews. A description of the development of the instrument follows.

Concourse development. The first step in a Q study was development of a concourse. A concourse for this study was developed with a mixture of conceptual framework, review of relevant literature, surrounding the family, leisure, and interviews with young married individuals. The words of the individual perceptions were sought and obtained from normal conversations, informal, and formal interviews. The exact language of the individuals was critical to the development of this concourse (McKeown & Thomas, 1988).

Sampling the Concourse. In order to assure range and variety among the Q-items, a comprehensive conceptual framework was used to sample the concourse. The nine domains of leisure identified by Hood (1992) came from a comprehensive review of existing literature. The nine dimensions she reported were as follows: intrinsic motivation, pleasure or enjoyment during the experience, focus on the activity and reduced distractibility, loss of self, a sense of timeless when evolved in the experience, absence of others or evaluating or other constraints, creativity, sense of control over one's actions in the experience, choice or perceived freedom in selection of continuation of a leisure experience.

Once this information was obtained, the forty-nine Q-items were developed from the concourse. Many more Q-items than needed may be generated from the concourse and the researcher must select an appropriate number of items to be used in the Q-sort. Each of Hood's (1992) nine leisure dimensions were represented in the Q-items selected for the Q-sort.

followed the recruitment script (see Appendix C) to confirm that they met the criteria for the study and to set a time for a meeting. The participants completed a consent form (see Appendix D) and demographic survey (see Appendix B) before starting the interview. The researcher then met with the participants to discuss leisure experiences shared with their spouse. The interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. The researcher tape recorded the interviews and took field notes. The purpose of the interview protocol was to provide the needed language for creating the Q-items. Probing questions was designed to seek diversity in meaning about individual and shared leisure from the participants.

Phase II

The second phase of the study occurred after the final Q-set and Researchers Script of Directions for Sorting was submitted to the IRB for approval. Once these items were approved, they were used for the Q-sort with the 14 married individuals in the study. Each individual completed a consent form (see Appendix E), prior to starting his/her two Q-sorts. The sorting was followed by the completion of a demographic survey (see Appendix B). The data collection occurred after approval from the IRB and was conducted between June 10 and July 22 of 2003.

Each married individual was given the option to complete the Q-sort at a time and place convenient to them and the researcher. The individual was given an envelope containing the cards with the items. The researcher gave oral instructions to the people conducting the Q-sorts at this time by reading the Directions to Sorting Script, which had been submitted to the IRB with the sorting items for approval. They were instructed to

read all the items first. Then, they were told to place the items into three piles: those items that are most like their perceptions about shared leisure in one pile, those most unlike their perceptions about shared leisure, and the remaining cards in a third pile. Then participants were instructed to place the item most like their perceptions about shared leisure with their spouse on the board in column furthest to the right. Next, they were told to place the item most unlike their beliefs of shared leisure on the board in column one. Lastly, they were instructed to sort the remainder of the items alternately until all items has been place on the board. After careful recording of the results of the first sort, the married individuals were asked to complete a second Q-sort about their perceptions of what they believe their spouse thinks about shared leisure with them.

Then the process was repeated for the second sort, the other. The condition of instruction for the second sort was: "How would your spouse describe leisure with you?" After sorting and recording the sort, participants were encouraged to leave their telephone number for follow-up clarifications as needed. Only the high pure loader for each factor was called.

Data Analyses

Phase I

The data from the first phase of the study, the interviews, were used to provide the language needed for the Q-items. The responses to the interview questions gave the researcher the insight needed to further expand the range of information and the variety

of potential views of shared leisure gathered from a comprehensive review of the literature. The audiotapes and field notes of the researcher were examined for essential information and diversity about perceptions of shared leisure. This information was essential in attain a diverse understanding of shared leisure.

Phase II

The data was analyzed using PQMethod 2.11 (Smolck, 2002), a program adapted from the Q-method FORTRAN program for statistical analysis of Q-sort data. The Q-sort data was correlated, factor analyzed and rotated for the best possible solution. The items were structured to represent the perceptions of each of the factors by calculating z-scores and arranging them in descending order. The factors were representations of each individual's point of view (Cathey, 2000). The scores highlight the interpretation of the meaning of each factor that was ordered using the factor statements, the consensus items and the items that distinguish the factors from all other factors. Additionally, the demographic information and post-sort survey question assisted in factor interpretation.

CHAPTER IV

Analysis and Interpretation

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of leisure shared by young newly married individuals with no children. The specific research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do young newly married individuals perceive leisure experiences shared with their spouse?
2. In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spouse's experiences contribute to understanding the results in question #1?

Forty-nine statements, based upon an extensive review of literature, Hood's nine critical dimensions, and critical examination of the existing literature comprised the Q-sort and were sorted twice by fourteen participants: once according to the participants' perceptions of leisure shared with their spouse and the second sort according to what they thought their spouse's perception of shared leisure with them would be. This resulted in twenty-eight sorts and the findings and characteristics of the study are described and discussed in detail in this chapter.

Participants

Participants (N=14) were young married individuals, between the ages of 18 and 35 years old and were recruited from Oklahoma, eight were female and six were male. Only one member per couple was included in the study. Age at marriage ranged from 19 to 31 years and average length of marriage was 24.3 months. Length of relationship before marriage ranged from 10 months to 169 months, with an average of 29 months. Table 1 provides the demographic information of the 14 participants in this study.

Table 2

Demographic Information

| Subject | Gender | Age Group | Age Married | Length Married | Length Relationship | Education | Job | Satisfaction Reported |
|---------|--------|-----------|-------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Male | 28-32 | 24 | 54 months | 10 months | Associates | Engineer/Physics | Satisfied |
| 3 | Female | 18-22 | 20 | 24 months | 30 months | Bachelors | Teacher | Very Satisfied |
| 5 | Male | 18-22 | 21 | 20 months | 189 months | Bachelors | Ag. Economics | Very Satisfied |
| 7 | Male | 18-22 | 19 | 11 months | 24 months | Some College | Physical Education | Satisfied |
| 9 | Male | 23-27 | 26 | 12 months | 36 months | Masters | Intramural Sports Coord. | Satisfied |
| 11 | Female | 23-27 | 25 | 14 months | 18 months | Bachelors | Hotel/Restaurant | Satisfied |
| 13 | Female | 23-27 | 22 | 12 months | 72 months | Bachelors | Marriage/Family Ther. | Very Satisfied |
| 15 | Female | 23-27 | 25 | 14 months | 79 months | Masters | Assess. Specialist | Very Satisfied |
| 17 | Male | 23-27 | 24 | 30 months | 21 months | Bachelors | Aerospace Engineer | Very Satisfied |
| 19 | Female | 33-37 | 30 | 48 months | 48 months | Masters | Housewife | Satisfied |
| 21 | Female | 23-27 | 21 | 59 months | 22 months | Bachelors | Graphic Design | Very Satisfied |
| 23 | Female | 28-32 | 28 | 22 months | 12 months | Masters | Dietician | Undecided |
| 25 | Female | 23-27 | 24 | 18 months | 24 months | Masters | Hotel/Restaurant | Very Satisfied |
| 27 | Male | 33-37 | 31 | 36 months | Unknown | Masters | Ed. Psy. | Undecided |

Data Analysis

Each of the fourteen participants completed two sorts, yielding 28 sorts. The Q-sorts were entered into PQMethod 2.11 (Smolck, 2002) computer software program. A correlation matrix demonstrated the comparison of each Q-sort to all other Q-sorts. The matrix was factor analyzed using principal components factor analysis. The default of the PQMethod 2.11 (Smolck) extracted an eight factor unrotated matrix with seven of the eight factors achieving an eigenvalue greater than 1.00. A varimax rotation was used to extract a preferred solution by investigating four and three factor solutions.

Two formulas were used to compute statistical significance for a sort to be considered a significant or defining sort for any one perception. The communality of a sort assesses the proportion of its variance accounted for by the factors (Smolck). First a correlation matrix was analyzed. Next an unrotated factor matrix used principle components. The statistical significance for this study was set at .35. Rotations for a three and a four factor solution were calculated in an attempt to find the best statistical and theoretical solutions.

The four factor solution accounted for 62% of the variance; however, the factors were determined to be unstable and there was not an overriding theoretical implication for the four factor solution to be used in analysis of the data. The four factor solution had the first factor with 7 sorts loaded; factor two had 8 factors; factor three had 5 factors; and factor four only had 3 sorts that loaded. A minimum of five elements or sorts must exist in a factor for that factor to be considered stable. Therefore the four factor solution was rejected for this study (Brown, 1980).

A three factor solution was accepted and interpreted for this study. The three factor solution accounted for 55% of the variance, where five of the twenty-eight sorts did not define any one factor, but were found to be split or nonsignificant. Two sorts were identified as potentially achieving non-significance. A non-significant sort is defined to be a correlation that did not statistically load on any of the factors. Three sorts were recognized as being split. Split or confounded loads are sorts that have a significant loading on two or more factors. Table 2 demonstrates that eight of the sorts loaded significantly on Factor A (21% of the variance), five of the sorts loaded significantly on Factor B (10% of the variance), and ten sorts loaded significant on Factor C (24% of the variance).

Table 3

Factor Matrix Indicating a Defining Sort

| Q-sort | Factor A | Factor B | Factor C |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| 1 Male-Self | 0.5680 | 0.2467 | 0.6104 non |
| 2 Male-Other | 0.5474 | 0.1024 | 0.6435X |
| 3 Female-Self | 0.6188X | 0.0482 | 0.5962 |
| 4 Female-Other | 0.5256X | -0.0574 | 0.1358 |
| 5 Male-Self | 0.2646 | 0.0481 | 0.6447X |
| 6 Male-Other | 0.2314 | 0.1813 | 0.3460X |
| 7 Male-Self | 0.1497 | -0.0526 | 0.2739 non |
| 8 Male-Other | -0.2191 | 0.0763 | 0.4650X |
| 9 Male-Self | 0.7926X | 0.0508 | -0.0071 |
| 10 Male-Other | 0.8439X | 0.0853 | 0.1102 |
| 11 Female-Self | 0.2208 | -0.3240 | 0.4579X |
| 12 Female-Other | 0.0453 | -0.5251X | 0.1496 |
| 13 Female-Self | 0.6937X | 0.0705 | 0.5198 |
| 14 Female-Other | 0.7249X | 0.1664 | 0.4249 |
| 15 Female-Self | 0.2702 | -0.1222 | 0.7736X |
| 16 Female-Other | 0.2258 | -0.0914 | 0.2423 non |
| 17 Male-Self | 0.2887 | 0.5005 | 0.7118X |
| 18 Male-Other | 0.0573 | 0.4080 | 0.7886X |
| 19 Female-Self | 0.7789X | 0.0344 | 0.2569 |
| 20 Female-Other | 0.6455X | -0.1288 | 0.1432 |
| 21 Female-Self | 0.1744 | 0.0066 | 0.8073X |
| 22 Female-Other | 0.3013 | 0.0930 | 0.7868X |
| 23 Female-Self | 0.2389 | -0.5128X | -0.2739 |
| 24 Female-Other | 0.0362 | -0.6858X | 0.1093 |
| 25 Female-Self | 0.4078 | 0.6006X | 0.3790 |
| 26 Female-Other | 0.4603 | 0.4017 | 0.5558 split |
| 27 Male-Self | 0.4593 | 0.3986 | 0.3646 split |
| 28 Male-Other | 0.3327 | 0.6205X | 0.3447 |
| Total number of defining sorts | 8 | 5 | 10 |

X – Indicates a defining sort for that factor.

Research Question One

How do young newly married individuals perceive leisure experiences shared with their spouse?

There were fourteen participants who completed two sorts each reporting views of leisure shared with a spouse. In Table 2, all even numbered sorts are those concerning the participants' perception of shared leisure with their spouse and all odd number sorts are the participants' perception of what they thought their spouse would say about shared leisure with them. The 'self sort' expresses their point of view and the 'other sort' represents what they think their spouse would say. The three factors represent three distinct points of views.

Research using Q-method utilizes various sources of information to analyze and interpret the factor. This information includes the theoretical factor arrays produced by ranking the items according to the descending order of the z-score produced for each statement for each factor. The manner in which each factor is different is represented by the array position of the Q-items' z-scores. The array positions of the z-scores were used to help interpret and explain each factor. The demographic survey information further enhanced the understanding of each factor. The nine domains of leisure that Hood (1992) identified, which came from a comprehensive review of existing literature, were identified as an outline for the concourse of this study. The nine dimensions she reported are: intrinsic motivation, pleasure or enjoyment during the experience, focus on the activity and reduced distractibility, loss of self, a sense of timeless when involved in the experience, absence of evaluation by others or other constraints, creativity, sense of

control over one's actions in the experience, choice or perceived freedom in selection or continuation of a leisure experience. Those nine dimensions, in conjunction with the family studies literature, led to the development of the following areas that were represented by the Q-items: Motivation, Pleasure, Perceived freedom, Absence of evaluation by others, Balance/Disengagement, Communication, Cohesion, Value and Definition. These areas were used to further explain each factor.

Factor Interpretation

The three factor solution represents three unique points of view about the perceptions of leisure shared with one's spouse. Although there were items that each factor showed to be similar, there was a distinct difference between all three factors. For each factor there was a unique blend of leisure dimensions. Each factor is explained as they were named 'The Believers', 'The Hopefuls' and 'The Connected'.

Factor A-The Believers

The married individuals within The Believers factor were people who had participated in some shared leisure with their spouse and had positive experiences with them. The Believers viewed shared leisure with their spouse as adding to their marriage, yet not a magic remedy for their relationship. They have shared leisure with their spouses and want more of those experiences in their relationship because of the results they have had in the past and the potential it may hold for them in the future. They believe that they

and their spouse share the same vision of shared leisure and this shared vision will enhance their marriage. This belief is based on past leisure experiences they have shared with their spouse.

This factor was represented by four people and eight sorts. Each person whose 'self sort' loaded on this factor also had their 'other sort' load on this factor. Thus, the people that defined this factor perceived shared leisure as similar to what they think their spouse would perceive of leisure. This was the only factor for which all 'self sorts' and 'other sorts' match.

The demographic survey information revealed that this factor is comprised of three females and one male. The average age at marriage in this factor is 24.5 years and the average length of marriage is 24 months. Furthermore, they had the second longest relationships before marriage out of the three factors with the average length of relationship before marriage at 46.5 months. Research would suggest that their lengthy relationship before marriage would be an asset to their relationship; however, when asked about their current satisfaction level with the leisure they share with their spouse, they were not as satisfied with the leisure in their marriage as were members of Factor C, The Connected. Out of the four participants, two stated they were very satisfied, while two were satisfied. The benefits of sharing leisure with their spouse were stated as the following: "time together...", "better communication", "relaxation", "laughter", "time to reconnect", "better health", "shut out everyday worries", and "get a chance to talk about feelings and past experiences." These individuals believed in sharing leisure with their spouse, although shared leisure was not something they excelled at with their spouse. They considered that sharing leisure was a fundamental part of their marriage and their

overall life. The individuals in this factor believed that sharing leisure with their spouse was beneficial to their marriage. That was why this factor was labeled “The Believers”.

Individuals in Factor A (see Figure 1 and Table 4), "The Believers", had and have faith in the value of sharing leisure with their spouses. The dimensions of the Q-items that were in the top ten for The Believers were the following: cohesion, value, definition, balance/disengagement, and communication. The following will help identify and explain the characteristics of The Believers.

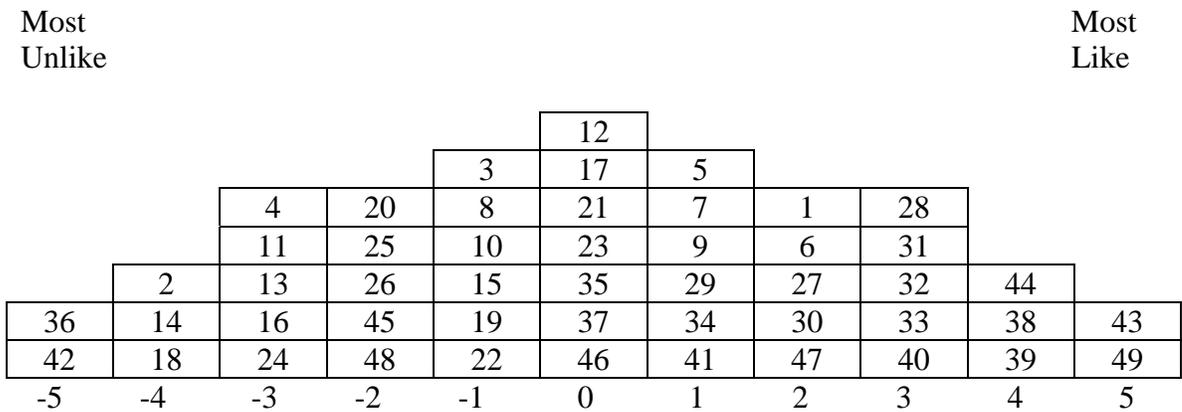


Figure 1. Factor A (The Believers).

Table 4

| Factor A: Array Position and Z-scores for the Top and Bottom Ten | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Top Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
| 49. | Creates a time to enjoy what is vital to our relationship. | 5 | 1.687 |
| 43. | Is good for our relationship and defines who we are as a couple. | 5 | 1.672 |
| 39. | Helps us feel stronger as a couple by creating a shared history. | 4 | 1.655 |
| 44. | Allows us to share other parts of our life together. | 4 | 1.441 |
| 38. | Gives us common goals and interests, and keeps us separate from others. | 4 | 1.399 |
| 40. | Allows us to be creative and explore as a couple. | 3 | 1.308 |
| 28. | Creates a break in the routine of our marriage. | 3 | 1.149 |
| 33. | Allows us to work together as a team. | 3 | 1.137 |
| 32. | Allows us to learn about each other. | 3 | 1.094 |
| 31. | Allows for a deeper level of communication than most of the others things we do together. | 3 | 0.860 |
| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Bottom Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
| 4. | Makes us look good to others. | -3 | -0.777 |
| 16. | Is less free than leisure alone. | -3 | -1.000 |
| 24. | Conflicts with individual leisure. | -3 | -1.032 |
| 11. | Is enjoyed more by my spouse than by me. | -3 | -1.040 |
| 13. | Is stressful. | -3 | -1.122 |
| 18. | Is something that is required rather than something chosen. | -4 | -1.763 |
| 2. | Is dragging my spouse to participate. | -4 | -1.796 |
| 14. | Is something to be endured. | -4 | -1.816 |
| 42. | Has value to me, but not to my spouse. | -5 | -1.950 |
| 36. | Is harmful to our relationship. | -5 | -2.138 |

Balance/Value. The Believers felt they had a grasp on the concept of leisure as a whole. Moreover, the people in this factor viewed leisure as a tool that can and does increase the quality of their marriage as supported by the following concourse statement (49. Creates a time to enjoy what is vital to our relationship., +5, 1.69). The Believers seemed to have the perception that sharing leisure with their spouse was imperative to their relationship. They had the notion that sharing leisure was normal and had value. The Believers perceived shared leisure as being beneficial to their marriage as a whole. Furthermore, the Believers wanted more shared leisure in their relationships, even though they were currently sharing leisure with their spouse. The Believers valued their shared leisure because they were together and they believed leisure has had an impact on them still being together. A prime example was one person from this factor who stated, "Without [shared] leisure our marriage would be shaky". Therefore, individuals in The Believers factor stated that their marriage would not be as it was without sharing leisure with their spouse.

One of the constraints of leisure for the Believers was time. As quoted by the people in the factor that ranked most like this factor, also known as a high and pure loader, "There is not always time to do the things we want to do together. Life gets in the way". The Believers strongly had faith that shared leisure was a powerful influence in and on their marriage. Even though they may not have made enough time for it in their relationship, they still thought it helped shape them and their marriage. Shared leisure was thought of as being a part of them and their marriage.

Another quote from an individual in The Believers factor that expressed the value of shared leisure with their spouse was, "I think having leisure experiences contributes to

staying friends.” One could contend that staying friends was of merit or vital to any marriage. Thus, shared leisure could be seen as a corner stone of the Believers’ marriage, friendship, and relationship. Therefore, the leisure they share with their spouse supported multiple facets of their marriage.

Although shared leisure with one’s spouse does not solve all troubles in a marriage, it does allow the couple an escape from their day to day world and gives them time to discover life together. The following statements substantiated the above, (40. Allows us to be creative as a couple., +3, 1.31; 28. Creates a break in the routine of our marriage., +3, 1.15). The Believers appeared to be aware that leisure has negative and positive potential; they just tend to view and use leisure shared with their spouse as a positive force for their relationship.

Cohesion. The Believers used shared leisure with their spouse as a means of connection (33. Allows us to work together as a team., +3, 1.14; 39. Helps us feel stronger as a couple by creating a shared history., +4, 1.66; 44. Allows us to share other parts of our life together., +4, 1.44; 38. Gives us common goals and interests, and keeps us separate from others., +4, 1.40). Leisure that is shared by the Believers helps maintain their cohesiveness as a couple. Shared leisure adds to their relationship by not only keeping their marriage alive but also their friendship. A few significant words that were recorded by people in this factor included the following: “laughing”, “enjoyable”, “necessary”, “healthy”, and “fun”. Therefore, the Believers were very active in using shared leisure as a means to connect and reconnect with their spouse. The Believers truly

value the leisure they share as a couple; they may consider it as something that improves their marriage.

Communication. The Believers know that leisure as well as their marriage, does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, they are both ever changing and there will be high and low points in their shared leisure as in their relationship and communication. It was the ever changing nature of shared leisure with their spouse that allows them a time and a place in which to work on their marriage by communicating and reconnecting with their spouses. Leisure shared by the Believers gave them an opportunity to learn and understand their spouse better through the verbal exchanges that occurred during leisure experiences that were shared (31. Allows for a deeper level of communication than most of the others things we do together., +3, 0.860; 32. Allows us to learn about each other., +3, 1.09). For the Believers, the motivation to participate in shared leisure could be quite readily explained. Inspirations for the Believers to participate in leisure with their spouse came from their stated benefits of shared leisure which were directly related to communication which included the following: “time to reconnect”, and “get a chance to talk about feelings and past experiences”. The communication that occurred during shared leisure experiences was critical to the Believers.

Definition. The Believers were actively trying to make shared leisure a constant aspect of their relationship (43. Is good for our relationship and defines who we are as a couple., +5, 1.67). They appreciated leisure shared with their spouse and were working to implement more of it into their lives. The Believers felt leisure that was shared with their

spouse helped to define them as a couple. Therefore, they wanted more shared leisure in their lives and they may become frustrated when they were not sharing leisure with their spouse. The Believers tried to make certain that they shared leisure with their spouse and made it an active part of their relationship. Each one of these statements could be seen as a rationale to share leisure with their spouse; however, when they were all combined together this could be highly influential to any couple who believed this to be true.

Factor B-The Hopefuls

The Hopefuls have a textbook view of leisure they share with their spouse. The individuals in this factor have a very limited history of sharing leisure experiences with their spouse; however, they perceive that leisure shared with their spouse as an untapped potential for increasing the quality of their marriage. The Hopefuls have a romantic notion of shared leisure and want to share it with their spouses, yet they do not currently share much leisure with their spouse. These married individuals have limited experiences of sharing leisure with their spouses but have complete faith that the more leisure they share with their spouse, the better off they and their marriage will be for sharing it.

This factor represents five sorts from four different people. Factor B has two sorts of self (participants' perceptions of shared leisure with their spouse) and three sorts of other (participants' perceptions of what they think their spouse thinks about shared leisure with them).

The demographic survey revealed that Factor B was made up of three females and one male. The average age at marriage was 27 years old, the highest age represented

among the three factor groups. The people within this factor had been married for the shortest amount of time, with the average length of marriage at 22.5 months. The married individuals in Factor B had the shortest length of relationships before marriage with an average of eighteen months. The people in this factor had the highest education level and showed the highest average age among all the factors. The demographic survey identified that the married individuals in this factor had the lowest satisfaction with the leisure they share with their spouse of all the factors, with one person very satisfied, one person satisfied and two reported being undecided about their satisfaction with the leisure they share with their spouse. For Factor B the following dimensions were associated with this factor: balance, value, communication, cohesion, perceived freedom, and definition. As an interesting sidebar, three of the four participants within this factor were of Asian descent.

The Hopefuls (see Figure 2 and Table 5) desired shared leisure with their spouse. The dimensions of the Q-items that were in the top ten for the Hopefuls were the following: balance/disengagement, value, communication, motivation, perceived freedom, and definition.

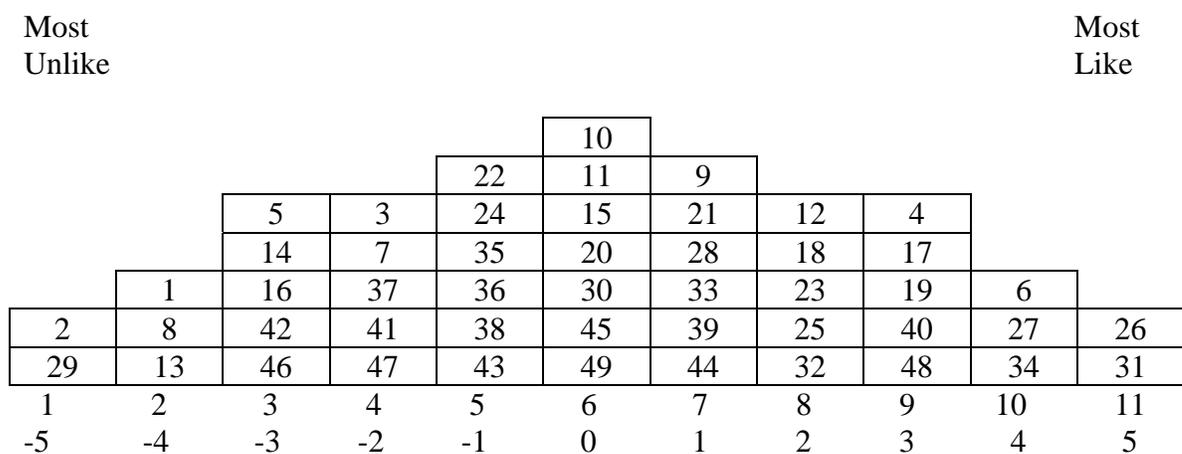


Figure 2. Factor B (The Hopefuls).

Table 5

Factor B: Array Position and Z-scores for the Top and Bottom 10

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Top Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
|------------|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| 26. | Is a relaxed atmosphere. | 5 | 2.176 |
| 31. | Allows for a deeper level of communication than most of the others things we do together. | 5 | 1.371 |
| 6. | Helps us grow closer emotionally. | 4 | 1.368 |
| 34. | Allows us to work on the problems in our marriage. | 4 | 1.344 |
| 27. | Provides a chance to tune out our problems. | 4 | 1.302 |
| 48. | Must be enjoyed by both of us. | 3 | 1.282 |
| 17. | Allows us to participate equally in making decisions. | 3 | 0.904 |
| 4. | Makes us look good to others. | 3 | 0.891 |
| 40. | Allows us to be creative and explore as a couple. | 3 | 0.873 |
| 19. | Allows the greatest amount of freedom. | 3 | 0.868 |
| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Bottom Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
| 14. | Is something to be endured. | -3 | -0.814 |
| 46. | Is more challenging than leisure by myself. | -3 | -0.917 |
| 5. | Helps me feel like a better spouse. | -3 | -1.030 |
| 16. | Is less free than leisure alone. | -3 | -1.096 |
| 42. | Has value to me, but not to my spouse. | -3 | -1.389 |
| 1. | Is necessary even when we don't feel like it. | -4 | -1.548 |
| 8. | Is not always fun during the experience, but is fun to look back on. | -4 | -1.629 |
| 13. | Is stressful. | -4 | -1.957 |
| 29. | Sometimes results in fighting. | -5 | -2.350 |
| 2. | Is dragging my spouse to participate. | -5 | -2.460 |

The Hopefuls wanted more shared leisure because of the tranquil environment it creates for their marriage (26. Is a relaxed atmosphere., +5, 2.18). However, they may not currently actively share leisure as much as they would like to in the future. The participants who were members of this factor viewed shared leisure as an opportunity to work on their marriage. Shared leisure was something they wanted to increase in frequency in their marriage.

Balance/Disengagement. The participants in this factor provided varied information about their perceptions of problem solving abilities and leisure shared with their spouse (34. Allows us to work on the problems in our marriage., +4, 1.34; 27. Provides a chance to tune out our problems, +4, 1.30). Since the Hopefuls were the oldest group as well as the group that had been married for the shortest amount of time, this could explain the difference in their statements. The Hopefuls could be still adjusting to being a part of a couple instead of just being an individual. They may still be searching for the middle ground where shared leisure can occur. During their leisure experiences they shared with their spouse, one spouse may view it as a time to work on their marriage while the other just wants to relax. As one individual in the Hopefuls factor stated, "Sometimes it's fun, but mostly it's just going with the flow." Three significant words that were recorded by the individuals in the Hopefuls factor that could support this idea are "problem solving", "time-consuming", and "challenging". This dichotomy may represent the difference in what a spouse may experience and what they may have reported that they thought their partner would be experiencing.

The participants perceived shared leisure as something both married individuals should enjoy and decide together (48. Must be enjoyed by both of us., +3, 1.28; 17. Allows us to participate equally in making decisions, +3, 0.90). Since they were new couples that were still getting to know each other, the Hopefuls wanted shared leisure to be something that both agree upon. They were the only factor that had this view. One possible reason for this may be that the Hopefuls tended to view leisure shared with their spouse as a quick way to improve their marriage. When the researcher talked with the Hopefuls, they were the respondents who had the most 'textbook' definition of leisure, yet they were the individuals that were most dissatisfied with the leisure they spent with their spouse. They thought shared leisure was a good idea even though they were still lacking an extended history of it in their relationship. They felt shared leisure was important for their marriage even though it did not occur for them as much as they wanted in their relationship.

Value. The Hopefuls do not view shared leisure with their spouse as something that they must force their spouse to do, something that ends up in a fight, stressful event, or something that must be endured. Even though shared leisure may be challenging at times, shared leisure may be something that they look back at fondly (29. Sometimes results in fighting., -5, -2.350; 13. Is stressful., -4, -1.957; 14. Is something to be endured., -3, -0.814; 8. Is not always fun during the experience, but is fun to look back on., -4, -1.629). The Hopefuls think of leisure shared with their spouse as something that they both must value and enjoy (42. Has value to me, but not to my spouse., -3, -1.389). Even though the individuals may value shared leisure they were currently only sharing a

minimum amount of leisure with their spouse at the time of the study, and they desired to have more shared leisure in the future.

Communication. One of the main by-products for the Hopefuls of sharing leisure with one's spouse was increasing their communication and bonding (31. Allows for a deeper level of communication than most other things we could do together., +5, 1.37; 32. Allows us to learn about each other., +2, 0.58). The Hopefuls, like the Believers, used shared leisure as a means to enhance their relationship with their partner. The Hopefuls were particularly interested in the communication that occurs during shared leisure with their spouse. Since they were married at an older age than members of the other factors, they may have been more used to their separate lives: shared leisure allows them to learn more about their spouse. They counted on this communication during shared leisure experiences to make their emotional connectivity better. The significant words the individuals in the Hopefuls factor reported that would support this notion were the following: "togetherness", "sharing", "communication", and "great".

Motivation. Potentially one of the main reasons the Hopefuls participated in shared leisure was the expectation that shared leisure would increase their connection to each other through generating a shared history. This shared history would allow them to better understand their partner better and establish an enhanced connection (6. Helps us grow closer emotionally., +4, 1.37). It may be possible that individuals in the Hopefuls factor participated in shared leisure because they were optimistic about the potential benefits to their relationship (1. Is necessary even when we don't feel like it., -4,-1.548).

A potential incentive of shared leisure for the Hopefuls may be to get acquainted with their partner and learn to better understand their spouses. The stated benefits the Hopefuls reported that would support this include: "shared time getting to know each other", "know each other more", and "understand each other's character". Therefore, a driving force for sharing leisure could be establishing a better connection with their spouse. The Hopefuls appeared to still be adjusting to sharing their leisure with their spouse. A quote from an individual in the Hopefuls that reinforces this point was, "I think it [shared leisure] is important for married people because the more time you spend together you can know each other well." One possibility was that the Hopefuls were still adjusting because they had gotten married later.

Perceived Freedom. The Hopefuls perceived shared leisure as a place of creativity and freedom (40. Allows us to be creative as a couple., +3, 0.87; 19. Allows the greatest amount of freedom., +3, 0.87). Leisure shared with their spouse was a time or a place where they were uninhibited by the world around them. Words stated by an individual in the Hopefuls factor that supported this notion of shared leisure were "less stress" and "togetherness, not related to work or school".

Definition. The Hopefuls were the only factor to state that shared leisure was important to their image as a couple (4. Makes us look good to others; +3, 0.89). Perhaps the Hopefuls wanted to do shared leisure with their spouse as a method to prove to the world that they were together and doing fine. Additionally, they may be attempting to force their shared leisure to fit what they may believe to be socially acceptable. This

could be possible since the Hopefuls had the shortest relationship before marriage and the shortest marital time. Therefore, they may still be learning about their partner as well as still trying to understand themselves as part of a couple. The Hopefuls may view leisure shared with their spouse as something they wanted to do as well as something they should be doing.

Factor C-The Connected

The Connected factor was composed of married individuals who have participated in large amounts of shared leisure with their spouse and still want more. They were currently sharing leisure with their spouses and planned to continue that practice in the future. The individuals in this factor focus on their partner not the activity when sharing leisure. The Connected view shared leisure as neither negative nor positive but rather what you make of the experience. Shared leisure experiences were viewed as a tool that was used by the married individuals to assist them with their marriages. They were comfortable with their spouse and the leisure they share with them. The optimism and belief of the potential value of shared leisure outweighs the potential negative outcomes for shared leisure for the Connected factor.

There were ten sorts and seven people represented in Factor C, the largest number of subjects in all the factors. There were five sorts for 'self' (participants' perceptions of shared leisure with their spouse) and five sorts for 'other' (participants' perceptions of what they think their spouse thinks about shared leisure with them). There were three people whose sort of self and other were within this factor. There were two males and

one female whose self and other sorts were in Factor C. There were two females whose self sort was in Factor C and there were two males whose other sort was also in Factor C.

The demographic survey identified that people in Factor C had an average age at the time of marriage of 22.7 years old, which is the youngest average of all the participants. The people in this factor have the longest average length of marriage of all the factors with 28.9 months. Furthermore, they have the longest average length of relationship before marriage of all the factors with 49 months. Factor C reported the highest satisfaction level of all three factors about the leisure they share with their spouse, with four people that reported very satisfied and three reported being satisfied with the leisure they share with their spouse.

The individuals in Factor C (see Figure 3 and Table 6) contend that they understood the value of shared leisure to their marriages and implemented it in their relationships. The dimensions of the Q-items that were in the top ten for the Connected were the following: cohesion, pleasure, communication, motivation, balance/disengagement, and definition.

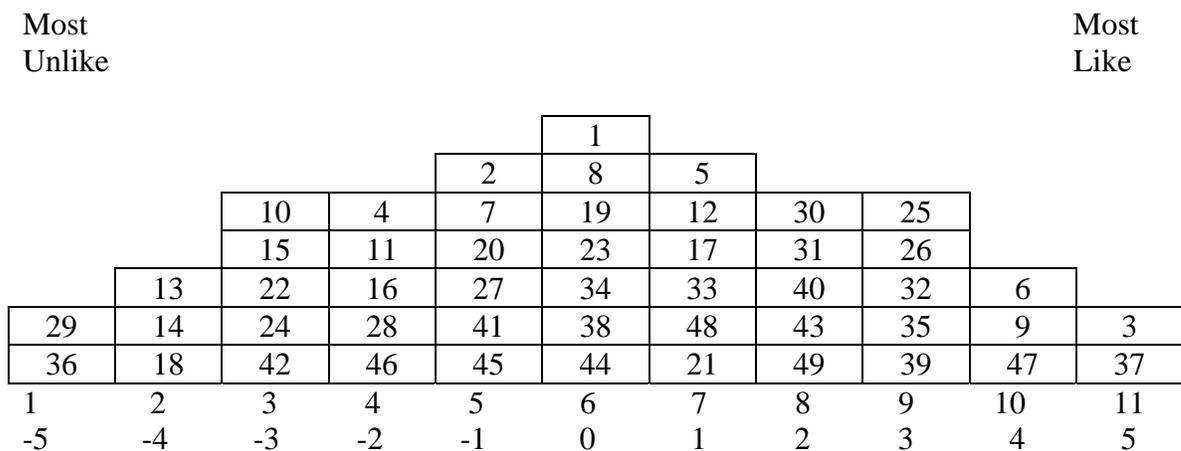


Figure 3. Factor C (The Connected).

Table 6

Factor C: Array Position and Z-scores for the Top and Bottom Ten

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Top Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
|------------|--|-----------------------|----------------|
| 3. | Includes no expectation, except to enjoy the time with my spouse. | 5 | 1.706 |
| 37. | Is about just being together, not doing the activity. | 5 | 1.690 |
| 47. | There is no right or wrong way to share leisure, all that matters is that we are together. | 4 | 1.507 |
| 9. | Provides joy by watching the other person having fun. | 4 | 1.458 |
| 6. | Helps us grow closer emotionally. | 4 | 1.368 |
| 32. | Allows us to learn about each other. | 3 | 1.235 |
| 26. | Is a relaxed atmosphere. | 3 | 1.203 |
| 25. | Is not worrying about anything. | 3 | 1.098 |
| 35. | Results in greater physical intimacy. | 3 | 0.958 |
| 39. | Helps us feel stronger as a couple by creating a shared history. | 3 | 0.937 |

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Bottom Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
|------------|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| 42. | Has value to me, but not to my spouse. | -3 | -1.037 |
| 22. | Involves a conscience decision not to be critical of each other. | -3 | -1.076 |
| 15. | Is something to look forward to but is not necessarily fun to do. | -3 | -1.095 |
| 24. | Conflicts with individual leisure. | -3 | -1.140 |
| 10. | Creates worry about whether or not my spouse is having a good time. | -3 | -1.161 |

Table 6 (continued)

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q-sort Statement Bottom Ten</i> | <i>Array Position</i> | <i>Z-Score</i> |
|------------|---|-----------------------|----------------|
| 18. | Is something that is required rather than something chosen. | -4 | -1.359 |
| 14. | Is something to be endured. | -4 | -1.492 |
| 13. | Is stressful. | -4 | -1.576 |
| 29. | Sometimes results in fighting. | -5 | -1.842 |
| 36. | Is harmful to our relationship. | -5 | -2.107 |

Cohesion. The Connected focused on enjoying each other through shared leisure (37. Is about being together, not doing the activity., +5, 1.69). Being active together in shared leisure with their spouse was a main component of their relationship. Shared leisure with their spouse was mostly done for the sake of those experiences, not the leisure activity itself. Leisure shared with their spouses was stated to be an enormous part of their relationship. The significant words stated by the Connected themselves that support this are the following: “driven”, “exhilarating”, “valuable”, “beneficial”, and “necessary”. A quote from one of the Connected that illustrated this view was, “There’s not enough hours in the day, there is just not enough time together.” As one can see the Connected really treasure the leisure they share with their spouse.

The Connected were active in using shared leisure to increase their cohesion with their partner. They went after shared leisure with their spouse and for the majority of the time they achieved or got what they wanted from leisure experiences shared with their spouse. The stated benefits that supported this were “Gives us time to talk and focus on our relationship”, “Togetherness not related to work or school”, “Quality time together”, and “The joy spending time together and having fun”. The Connected used shared leisure

consciously as a means to improve their marriage. This cohesion that occurs during shared leisure served as a motivator for the Connected.

One of the main bonuses of shared leisure for the Connected was that it aided in the development of emotional and physical intimacy (35. Results in greater physical intimacy., +3, 0.96). Furthermore, it should be noted that this was the only factor that associated shared leisure with greater physical intimacy. Therefore, for the Connected, the activities these married individuals did with their spouses as shared leisure could be credited for increasing their emotional connectivity as well as their physical relationship. This was a unique characteristic that was only defined with the Connected. This was truly one of the essential components that distinguish this factor from the other two factors.

Shared leisure for the Connected may have been used as a method to express their love to their spouses by sharing their life with them (39. Helps us feel stronger as a couple by creating a shared history., +3, 0.94). This reaffirms the concept that shared leisure with their spouses was a fundamental part of the marriages of The Connected. Shared leisure may allow them the ability to create a past and a future for themselves and their spouse. Shared leisure may allow them a time and location to be more of who they want to be in the future of their relationship, instead of the persons they used to be in their marriage. These shared leisure experiences may allow them to examine their relationship and reshape it as they go. This may be because they had been married the longest out of all the factors and because they have had on average the longest relationships prior to marriage. Thus, this may account for this factor having the highest satisfaction of their shared leisure experiences out of all the factors. Since the members in this factor had the longest relationships before marriage, the Connected's marriages may

have been greatly influence by these relationships before marriage. The time spent getting to know each other through shared leisure and growing together could have greatly enhanced the Connected and help provide them with an individual identity as well as a couples' identity. This was interesting since the Connected were the youngest at age of marriage of all the factors. It would appear that the time spent together before marriage was more important to the Connected than the age at marriage.

For the Connected, leisure was all about being with their partner and having fun together. Overall, they considered that being together with their spouse was mainly a positive event. This was supported by another quote from an individual in the Connected factor: "She is my best friend so we can usually find something to do together". Furthermore, this reinforces the dedication that the Connected had to the notion that shared leisure increases their togetherness through enjoyable events.

Pleasure. The above information may provide the evidence for the reason the Connected all rated the leisure they shared with their spouse as being very satisfying. They were the only factor that did this and the comments they had about leisure with their spouses were just as positive. Furthermore, the number one item (3. Includes no expectation, except to enjoy the time with my spouse., 5, 1.706) and the number 4 item (9. Provides joy by watching the other person having fun., 4, 1.458) in their top ten sorts supports the notion that fun, pleasure or enjoyment was crucial element of shared leisure for the Connected. The concept of pleasure or enjoyment was one of the characteristics that was unique to the Connected. Pleasure was a key concept of leisure for most theorists (Mannell & Kleiber, 1997).

Shared leisure experiences between the Connected and their spouses appeared to be peaceful and hassle-free. The environment of shared leisure for the Connected was perceived as relaxed and relatively low stress, which may contribute to the experience being viewed as pleasurable. The Connected viewed leisure experiences with their spouse as laid-back and stress-free for them and their partner; although one of the individuals in the Connected factor stated the following, “While I sometimes have to drag him to an activity he usually ends up enjoying it.” Even though leisure shared with the spouse may have not always started out as fun, it usually ended up that way.

Additionally, a notion that may add some insight to this was the following quote from an individual in the Connected factor, “I do feel it is a vital part of our relationship and we both really enjoy it”. The concept that both people in the couple enjoyed the leisure they shared was also raised by the Hopefuls; however, the Hopefuls never really put this concept into practice. One reason the Connected may think that leisure should be a pleasant experience for both was the fact that the individuals in this factor derived pleasure from watching their spouse participate in leisure experience (9. Provides joy by watching the other person have fun., +4, 1.46). Interestingly, the Connected seemed to embody a philosophy that both could and should enjoy the leisure experiences that the couple shared with each other.

Communication. An increase in the quality of their relationship may be achieved through the communication that occurs during shared leisure with their spouse. Shared leisure for the Connected was an important part of building togetherness in their marriage by learning about each other through shared leisure (32. Allows us to learn about each

other., +3, 1.235). Communication may have served as the foundation for all leisure the Connected shared with their spouse. The Connected identified the following benefits of leisure shared with their spouse: “communicate about what is happening with each other,” “learning about each other,” “gives us time to talk and focus on our relationship, togetherness not related to work or school”, “quality time together growing closer as a couple”, “deeper love and understanding of each other”.

Definition. The Connected used shared leisure experiences as a method to identify themselves and their relationship. The Connected viewed leisure shared with your spouse as a means to show each other what they value about their spouse and their relationship (49. Creates a time to enjoy what is vital to our relationship., +2, 0.81). For the Connected, just sharing leisure together was very important. It did not matter what they did as long as they were together with their spouse. (47. There is no right or wrong way to share leisure, all that matters is that we are together., +4, 1.51). Sharing leisure with their spouse was very important to who the Connected were as a couple.

Balance/Disengagement. The Connected perceived leisure shared with their spouse as something that is positive for their relationship and for them individually. The Connected perceived leisure with their spouse as something that was relaxing and to be enjoyed (26. Is a relaxed atmosphere., +3, 1.24). The people in this factor additionally noted that leisure shared with their spouse was valued and chosen by both in the couple and was virtually trouble free; however, they may not always enjoy the activity at the time. Instead, they tended to look back at the experience fondly. During shared leisure

experiences they were able to tune out the day to day worries and not be bothered by the outside world (25. Is not worrying about anything., +3, 1.10). This may suggest that the Connected tend to benefit from most aspects of shared leisure they shared with their spouse.

Motivation. The stated benefits above all served as motivation for these couples to share leisure with each other. All the dimensions above would be remarkable reasons to have shared leisure experiences with your spouse. Furthermore, an additionally encouraging reason for the Connected to participate in leisure experiences together was that it assisted in deepening their ties to each other (6. Helps us grow closer together., +4, 1.37). Leisure shared with their spouse helped cement the relationship they have with each other. The Connected were also inspired to share leisure together because they were allowed to be themselves and to enjoy time together (3. Includes no expectation, except to enjoy the time with my spouse., +5, 1.71). All of the above information provides insight as to why shared leisure was important and used so readily by the Connected.

Commonalities Across Factors

The following paragraphs was an explanation of similarities that were noted across all three factors. The array position and z-scores will be just a few of the ways in which the relationship of items across the factors will be explained. An explanation of the shared perceptions with the supporting Q-statements, with their array position and z-score for each factor will follow. The factor array has scores which range from +5 (most like)

to -5 (least like) and these represent which end of the continuum the participants' perception was about shared leisure with one's spouse. Some Q-sorts were more closely associated with one of the three factors; the different levels were taken into consideration and calculated as weighted z-scores. The following information will explain these three factors. The correlation between Factor A and Factor B was 0.26; the correlation between Factor A and Factor C was 0.57; and the correlation between Factor B and Factor C was 0.38. The smallest relationship was between Factors A and B. Factor A and B are least alike and factor A and C are most alike.

An agreement was shown among the participants through the consensus with the following Q-statements. All three factors viewed the concept of shared leisure as being freer than leisure experienced alone (16. Is less free than leisure alone.; -3, -1.00; -3, -1.10; -2, -0.97). This may have been related to the next item on which all the factors concurred. The three factors agreed that shared leisure was quite different from leisure alone (45. Is not much different from leisure by myself.; -2, -0.55; 0, 0.06; -1, -0.41). Hence, the factors would concur that individual leisure and shared leisure are different experiences. The concept of freedom or perceived freedom could possibly be viewed as a defining quality of leisure, regardless of whether it is individual or shared in nature.

The participants in all three factors articulated a strong agreement that shared leisure with their spouse was an opportunity to increase communication (30. Provides an avenue for better communication.; 2, 0.62 ; 0, 0.23; 2, 0.66: 31. Allows for a deeper level of communication than most other things we could do together.; 3, 0.86; 5, 1.37; 2, 0.80). Most literature dealing with leisure and couples would support the concept that

communication and leisure are related. Leisure shared with a spouse may be the down time they need to reconnect with each other.

A perception of connectedness or cohesion within shared leisure with a spouse was reported by the participants. Perhaps the concepts of cohesion and communication were related when dealing with leisure shared between spouses. Literature would support this concept (32. Allows us to learn about each other.; 3, 1.09; 2, 0.58; 3, 1.24; 6. Helps us grow closer emotionally.; 2, 0.73; 4, 1.37; 4, 1.37). The uniqueness of shared leisure with one's spouse was captured when shared leisure with one's spouse was identified as being more enjoyable than shared leisure with people other than their spouse. This may have been influenced by the above notion that leisure alone and leisure shared with a spouse were different (12. Is more enjoyable than leisure with my family or friends.; 0, 0.08; 2, 0.82; 1, 0.37).

All factors agreed that shared leisure with one's spouse was not a stressful event for the married individuals in the study (13. Is stressful.; -3, -1.12; -4, -1.96; -4, -1.57). This may be very important since shared leisure was a relatively new experience for all factors, yet those experiences were not viewed as a tense or hectic event. This may be a selling point for married individuals to participate in shared leisure experiences with their spouses.

A final common point across the factors was the perception that shared leisure allows married individuals to be creative and gave them a place to discover as a couple (40. Allows us to be creative and explore as a couple.; 3, 1.31; 3, 0.87; 2, 0.91). Shared leisure for married individuals may provide a common place for the spouses to be imaginative and inspired in what they do with and for their spouse. This approach to

sharing leisure experiences with one's spouse could be an innovative technique to understand and create depth with one's spouse. Hence, the creative and artistic method in which married individuals experience shared leisure was something all the factors agreed upon.

Table 7

Consensus Items for All Factors

| <i>No.</i> | <i>Q Sort Statement</i> | <i>Factor A- The Believers Array Position</i> | <i>Factor B-The Hopefuls Array Position</i> | <i>Factor C-The Connected Array Position</i> |
|------------|---|---|---|--|
| 16. | Is less free than leisure alone. | -3 | -3 | -2 |
| 30. | Provides an avenue for better communication. | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 40. | Allows us to be creative and explore as a couple. | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 31. | Allows for a deeper level of communication than most other things we do together. | 3 | 5 | 2 |
| 45. | IS not much different from leisure by myself. | -2 | 0 | -1 |
| 32. | Allows us to learn about each other. | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. | Is more enjoyable than leisure with my family or friends. | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. | Helps us grow closer emotionally. | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| 21. | Is decided upon together. | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 23. | Is where it does not matter what other people think about us. | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Research Question Two

In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spouse's experiences contribute to understanding of the results in question #1?

Table 8.

| Factors Satisfaction and Significant Sorts | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Subject & Gender | Satisfaction | Length of Rel. before Marriage in Months | Length of Marriage in Months | Factor A- The Believers | | Factor B- The Hopefuls | Factor C- The Connected | Sort Not Defining |
| 1 M | 2 | 10 | 54 | | | | Other | Self |
| 3 F | 1 | 30 | 24 | Self | Other | | | |
| 5 M | 1 | 189 | 20 | | | | Self | Other |
| 7 M | 2 | 24 | 11 | | | | Other | Self |
| 9 M | 2 | 36 | 12 | Self | Other | | | |
| 11 F | 2 | 18 | 14 | | | Other | Self | |
| 13 F | 1 | 72 | 12 | Self | Other | | | |
| 15 F | 1 | 79 | 14 | | | | Self | Other |
| 17 M | 1 | 21 | 30 | | | | Self | Other |
| 19 F | 2 | 48 | 48 | Self | Other | | | |
| 21 F | 1 | 22 | 59 | | | | Self | Other |
| 23 F | 3 | 12 | 22 | | | Self | Other | |
| 25 F | 1 | 24 | 18 | | | Self | | Other |
| 27 M | 3 | Unknown | 36 | | | Other | | Self |

Satisfaction: 1= Very Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Undecided, 4=Unsatisfied, 5=Very Unsatisfied

Table 11 illustrates each subject's satisfaction with the leisure they share with their spouse and what factor or factors that subject's perceptions of shared leisure were determined to represent. All of the subjects stated that they were very satisfied, satisfied, or undecided about the leisure they share with their spouse. Perhaps the subjects' knowledge that they were part of a study may have influenced their rating of their

satisfaction level. There is not sufficient information to associate satisfaction and perceptions of shared leisure for this study.

The information in Table 11 demonstrates that most of the couples' perception of shared leisure and their spouse's shared leisure were very similar. Eight of 14 subjects stated that their spouses have the same perceptions of shared leisure as they share themselves. Subjects 3, 5, 9, 13, 17, 19, 21, and 23 all had their spouse's views of shared leisure fall in the same factor as their own views of shared leisure. It was very interesting that a vast majority of the subjects believed that their spouse's perceptions of shared leisure are the same as their own. The gender breakdown within this area is five females and three males.

There were five subjects who had sorts that were not defining. Out of these five subjects, the 'self sort' for three subjects was established as not defining. Two of the three subjects were in the Connected and one was in the Hopefuls on the 'other sort'. All three of these subjects were males.

Out of the other two subjects whose 'other sort' was not defining, one was in the Hopefuls factor and one was in the Connected factor. Both of these subjects were female. The amount of non-defining sorts would suggest that there are at least one or more points of view that this study was unable to represent. This could represent a fourth factor or more factors that may have existed. This would suggest that more research needs to be done in this area.

There was only one subject, a female, which had her 'self sort' in one factor and her other sort in a second factor. This subject viewed herself as a Connected and her spouse as a Hopeful. Therefore this person would be stating that her spouse perceives

shared leisure differently than she does. This was unique in this study. This means she thinks she is more participatory than her husband in the leisure they share. One explanation for this could have been because they recently opened a business that was closely aligned with her husband's leisure interests and most of their energy and resources were going to establishing this business. They really had not had much time recently for shared leisure, and when they did things together it was still closely related to their budding business venture. The gender differences in the three factors was something that was not expected nor totally accounted for in this study and needs to be explored in more depth.

The table further illustrates that there were at least three different points of view about shared leisure. The number of sorts that were found to be not defining suggests that there maybe one or more additional points of view that were not accurately. Additionally, the two individuals who had the longest relationship before marriage with 189 months and 79 months were found in the Connected factor with their self sort. However, the Believers factor which contained the 'self' and 'others' sorts of its four subjects in that factor, had an average 46.5 months in a relationship before marriage. The individuals in this sort had a relationship prior to marriage that ranged from 30 months to 72 months. This could assist in explaining why their 'self' and 'other' sorts loaded in the same factor. More investigation needs to be done into length of relationship before marriage and similar leisure interests.

The table further represents that eight of the fourteen subjects had their self and other sorts in the same factor. This majority of the subjects thought what they perceived about shared leisure with their spouse, that they thought their spouse would perceive

shared leisure with them as the same. This was a unique finding that was not expected in the study. Furthermore, there was only four other patterns of how the subjects' sorts were arranged.

Summary

The results of this study presented three divergent perceptions about shared leisure by one member of a couple, when that leisure is shared with their respective spouse. Q-methodology was a method that revealed the subjective perceptions about shared leisure with one's spouse and what they thought were their spouse's perceptions of shared leisure for 14 participants of this study. The participants arranged 49 statements about their perceptions of shared leisure with their spouse and then were given the opportunity to rank order the 49 statements according to what they thought were their spouse's perception of leisure shared with them. The statements were based upon an extensive review of literature, Hood's nine critical dimensions, and critical examination by the researcher and colleagues.

The participants in Factor A, the Believers, were actively using shared leisure as a means to enhance their marriage and wanted to increase shared leisure in their marriage. Factor B participants, the Hopefuls, perceived leisure to be good for the marriage; however, they wanted more shared leisure in their lives in order to connect better with their spouse. Participants of Factor C, the Connected, made full use of their shared leisure with their spouse and considered it an active part of their marriage. They believed that shared leisure with their spouse was a foundational part of their marriage

A review of the items in which all factors tended to agree answered the second research question of: In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spouse experiences contribute to understanding of the results in question #1? All factors tended to share some common perceptions about shared leisure with their spouse or what they thought their spouse perceived about shared leisure with them. There were some common perceptions that shared leisure was different and less free than individual leisure. Shared leisure was universally perceived to aid communication in a couple. Chapter 5 presents a summary of the study and the implications for research, theory, and practice will be addressed.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of leisure shared by young newly married individuals with no children. It was believed that the meaning attributed to leisure experiences shared with one's spouse was determined by both the self perceptions of leisure experiences and the perceptions that one has about his/her spouse's perception of shared leisure experiences.

The following are specific research questions for this study:

1. How do young newly married individuals perceive leisure experiences shared with their spouse?
2. In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spousal experiences contribute to understanding of the results in question #1?

The literature surrounding the concept of leisure views leisure as a dynamic individual process. The problem was further compounded since much of the research done into couple or family leisure has been done by family science researchers who have focused on relationships with a limited understanding of leisure by itself. Furthermore, there are even fewer studies that look at leisure shared with others. It was the hope of the researcher to identify the qualities of shared leisure. However, the results of this study lead not only to the responses to these research questions, but lead to other research

potential. This chapter describes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this study.

Summary of the Study

Forty-nine statements were developed, based upon an extensive review of literature, Hood's nine critical dimensions, and critical examination of the existing literature. These statements comprised the Q-sort and were sorted twice: once according to the participants' perceptions of leisure shared with their spouse and the second sort according to what they thought their spouse's perception was of shared leisure with them. The implications and results of the study will be described and discussed in detail in this chapter.

Participants

Participants (N=14) were young married individuals, between the ages of 18 and 35 years old and were recruited from Oklahoma. Eight of the fourteen participants were female and six were male. Only one person per couple participated as a subject in this study. The age at marriage ranged from 19 to 31 years and the average length of marriage was 24.3 months. The length of relationship before marriage ranged from 10 months to 14 years and 1 month, with an average of 2 years and 5 months.

The three factor solution was accepted for this study and accounted for 55% of the variance, where five of the twenty-eight sorts did not define any factor, but were found to

be split or nonsignificant. Two sorts were identified as achieving non-significance. A non-significant sort is defined to be a correlation that did not statistically load on any of the factors. Three sorts were recognized as being split. Split or confounded loads are sorts that have a significant loading on two or more factors. Eight of the sorts loaded significantly on Factor A (21% of the variance), five of the sorts loaded significantly on Factor B (10% of the variance), and ten sorts loaded significant on Factor C (24% of the variance).

The three factor solution represents three unique points of view about the perceptions of leisure shared with one's spouse. Although there were items that each factor showed to be similar, there was a distinct difference between all three factors. For each factor, there was a unique blend of leisure dimensions. Each factor or finding in this chapter will now be explained as they were named 'The Believers', 'The Hopefuls' and 'The Connected'.

Perception A-The Believers

The married individuals within the Believers perception were people who had participated in some shared leisure with their spouse and had positive experiences with them. The Believers viewed shared leisure with their spouse as adding to their marriage, yet not a fix-all for their relationship. They have shared leisure with their spouses and want more of those experiences in their relationship because of the results they had in the past and the potential it may hold for them in the future. The Believers perceived shared leisure as an essential tool with which to make adjustments to their marriage. Shared

leisure was not a “cure” for their marriage but rather a vehicle to maintain their relationships. The more The Believers used shared leisure to influence their marriage in a positive manner, the more effect it had on their relationship; hence the motivation for shared leisure.

They believed that they and their spouse shared the same vision of shared leisure and this shared vision would enhance their marriage. This belief was based on the encouraging past leisure experiences they had shared with their spouse, even though they may have been limited. The critical dimensions associated with The Believers included the following: Balance/Value, Cohesion, Communication, and Definition. The emergence of these critical dimensions within this perception further suggested that The Believers may have realized that marriage, as well as shared leisure, was about constantly negotiating and connecting with one’s spouse to better understand what was valued by his/her partner and helped them understand themselves more effectively at the same time.

Perception B-The Hopefuls

The Hopefuls had almost a textbook view of leisure shared with their spouse. The individuals in this perception had a very limited history of sharing leisure experiences with their spouse; however, they perceived leisure shared with their spouse as an untapped potential for increasing the quality of their marriage. The Hopefuls viewed the notion of shared leisure with their spouse through rose colored glasses, although they did not really understand the concept of shared leisure. These married individuals had somewhat of a blind faith in the potential of shared leisure with their spouse. They

perceived that if they had shared leisure in their marriage, the marriage would be better than in its current state. Although, their view of shared leisure with their spouse was more closely aligned with the Believers, it appeared that the Hopefuls had hoped to get more out of shared leisure than the Believers. However, their experiences of shared leisure were on the same level as the Believers as well as the Connected. This could be supported by their statements they had on their surveys on how satisfied they were with the leisure they shared with their spouse.

The critical dimensions associated with the Hopefuls included the following: Balance/Disengagement, Value, Communication, Motivation, Perceived Freedom, and Definition. The critical dimension of perceived freedom, unique to this perception, could have alluded to the individualized manner in which shared leisure may have been perceived by the Hopefuls. They could have thought of shared leisure similarly to what most people think about individual leisure; thus, explaining why they thought highly of shared leisure, although they had no real experience with sharing leisure with their spouse.

Perception C-The Connected

The Connected perception was composed of married individuals who had participated in shared leisure with their spouse and still wanted more. They were currently sharing leisure with their spouses and planned to continue that practice in more abundance in the future. The Connected viewed shared leisure as neither negative nor positive, but rather what they made of the experience, since they had both positive and

negative shared leisure experiences with their spouse. The Connected had a taste of the positive impact that shared leisure could have on a marriage. The optimism and belief of the potential value of shared leisure outweighed the potential negative outcomes for shared leisure for the Connected.

Shared leisure experiences were viewed as a means to be with their spouse. The Connected focused on their partner, not the experienced activity when leisure was shared. For the Connected, the most important part of shared leisure was being with their spouse. They were comfortable with their spouse and the leisure they shared with them at that point in their marriage.

The critical dimensions associated with the Connected were Cohesion, Pleasure, Communication, Definition, Balance/Disengagement, and Motivation. This was the only perception in which pleasure was identified as an essential element. However, the pleasure for the Connected' could have simply been the pleasure of being together. The vital component of shared leisure for the Connected was that it served as a time, place, activity or experience in which they could be with their partner.

Research Question #2: In what ways do self perceptions and perceptions of spousal experiences contribute to understanding of the results in question #1?

Concerning Research Question two regarding each subject's satisfaction with shared leisure, all of the subjects stated that they were very satisfied, satisfied, or undecided about the leisure they shared with their spouse. Some scholars would suggest that if an experience is not enjoyable or satisfying, it cannot truly be leisure. The

researcher would suggest that the subjects' knowledge that they were part of a study may have influenced their rating of their satisfaction level. There was not sufficient information to associate satisfaction and perceptions of shared leisure for this study.

Most of the couples' perceptions of their leisure as well as their spouse's shared leisure were very similar. Eight of 14 subjects stated that their spouses had the same perceptions of shared leisure as they share themselves. Subjects 3, 5, 9, 13, 17, 19, 21, and 23 all had their spouse's views of shared leisure fall in the same perception as their own views of shared leisure. It was very interesting that a vast majority of the subjects believed that their spouse's perceptions of shared leisure were the same as their own. The gender breakdown within this area is five females and three males.

There were five subjects who had sorts that were not defining. Out of these five subjects, the self sort for three subjects was established as not defining. Two of the three subjects were in the Connected and one was in the Hopefuls. All three of these subjects were males.

Out of the other two subjects whose other sort was not defining, one was in the Hopefuls perception and one was in the Connected perception. Both of these subjects were female. The number of non-defining sorts would suggest that there were at least one or more points of view that this study was unable to represent. This could represent a fourth perception or more perceptions that may have existed. This would suggest that more research needs to be done in this area.

Furthermore, there was only one subject, a female, which had her 'self sort' in one perception and her 'other sort' in a second perception. This subject viewed herself as an Connected and her spouse as a Hopeful. Therefore, this person was stating that her

spouse perceived shared leisure differently than she did. This was unique in this study and meant she thinks she is more participatory than her husband in the leisure they shared. One possible explanation for this could have been because they recently opened a business that was closely aligned with her husband's leisure interests and most of their energy and resources were going to establishing this business. They really had not had much time recently for shared leisure, and when they did things together it was still closely related to their budding business venture. Finally, the gender differences in the three perceptions was something that was not expected nor totally accounted for in this study and needs to be inquired into in more depth.

Similarity in Findings

All perceptions had a favorable view of shared leisure although they agreed that shared leisure experiences were not always positive. There was a desire for more shared leisure by all the perceptions and shared leisure had a certain level of value to The Believers, The Hopefuls and the Connected. Another parallel made by all the perceptions were the critical dimension that was mutually rejected and the critical dimensions that were universally accepted in their perceptions. The critical dimension that was collectively dismissed from all the perceptions was absence of evaluation by others. This would be conceivable since shared leisure would be almost impossible without each individual of a couple evaluating the leisure experiences they were sharing with their spouse. Finally, this was logical because it would be almost impossible to escape the evaluation of your partner during a shared leisure experience.

Conceivably, one of the most essential elements of this study was the difference that was revealed between leisure and shared leisure. Primarily there were dimensions of shared leisure that were uniformly agreed on by all perceptions as well as on dimension that was rejected by all perceptions. The shared critical dimensions between all the perceptions were communication, definition, and balance. Hood (1991) identified critical dimensions of leisure that came from a comprehensive review of existing literature. The nine dimensions she reported were the following: intrinsic motivation, pleasure or enjoyment during the experience, focus on the activity and reduced distractibility, loss of self, a sense of timeless when evolved in the experience, absence of others or evaluating or other constraints, creativity, sense of control over one's actions in the experience, choice or perceived freedom in selection of continuation of a leisure experience. Furthermore, these dimensions were modified in conjunction with the family studies literature and information gathered by the researcher which evolved into the development of the following areas that were represented by the Q-items: Motivation, Pleasure, Perceived Freedom, Absence of evaluation by others, Balance/Disengagement, Communication, Cohesion, Value and Definition.

Communication was a critical dimension that has been constantly reported in research concerning leisure and families. This dimension was one that the existing literature about leisure and families predicted as being important. Shared leisure was agreed upon to be an experience in which the married individuals increased their level of interaction, usually in a verbal manner. Communication was one dimension that was constantly referred to and identified by all three perception groups. It could be plausible that communication was a vital part of shared leisure.

The next dimension that all three perceptions agreed upon was definition. Apparently, shared leisure was a method that the people in each perception could use to identify their relationships, as well as, a technique for others to identify them. This dimension being shared by all the perceptions was the surprising one for the researcher. This was an unexpected point on which all the perceptions agreed. However, it may be that shared leisure experiences allowed the married individuals to help identify themselves, their spouse, and their relationship in a manner in which they desired. This could be supported by the old adage that leisure or recreation allows one to recreate themselves. For the purpose of this study, shared leisure may have allowed a person to recreate him/herself, their spouse, or their relationship. Leisure has been used as a process by which people have been able to achieve, understand, change, and define their personal self identity (Kleiber, 1999). However, could the same be said about shared leisure and the manner in which couples define themselves? Identity could be the same for individual leisure, as definition could be to shared leisure. The fact that all the perceptions agreed upon definition as a critical perception in shared deserves further investigation.

The concept of freedom in leisure was shared by all the perceptions. It was interesting that perceptions felt leisure alone was less free than leisure shared with a spouse. One rationale for this could be that there may be a level of guilt felt when one participates in leisure alone. There needs to be further investigation to understand why the perceptions view leisure alone as less free than leisure shared with their spouse.

Furthermore, a final consensus was found between the Believers, the Hopefuls, and the Connected on the critical dimension of balance. The concept of balance for the three perceptions was something that was not expected in this study. With that stated, the

notion of balance has been constant when one looks at traditional research discussing the dichotomy of leisure and work. Although, the balance the married individuals in this study acknowledged was not in direct relation to work. The balance these married individuals discussed was between individual and shared leisure, as well as it may have been addressing the constant struggle young married individuals have with managing time between work, domestic labor, extended family and friends. The notion of balance could also be important because this may imply that married individuals need to share time together in leisure in addition to their individual interests. However, just as married individuals do not need to do all their leisure separately, they also should not share all their leisure with each other. Contextualizing balance in this manner could make it a more plausible concept which all three perceptions would agree upon.

The Believers and the Hopefuls shared the critical dimensions of value. This was very interesting because they were the two perceptions that were not as progressively active in shared leisure. However, the value of shared leisure did not escape them. There may be a distorted perception of the idealistic notion of shared leisure and this could be another reason that these two perceptions noted this critical dimension.

The Believers and the Connected mutually noted the critical dimension of cohesion. Prior research suggested cohesion and communication would have been the most expected critical dimensions to arise from this study. The cohesion that these two perceptions exhibited during shared leisure experiences would suggest that the importance of shared leisure activities to a large majority would just be being with one's spouse. However, it also must be noted that individual definitions of leisure never addressed the issue of cohesion or being with another within a leisure experience. This

would inform us that an individualized definition of leisure is not appropriate or cannot describe the experiences of shared leisure.

The Hopefuls and the Connected concurred on the critical dimensions of disengagement and motivation. The dimensions of disengagement and motivation may have been noted by these two perceptions because of their similar natures in which they viewed shared leisure. Although, the Connected had a history of sharing leisure, the Hopefuls had a very similar view of shared leisure. The critical dimension of motivation would most likely be very similar for both the Hopefuls and the Connected because the Hopefuls had this notion that leisure would do quite a bit for their relationship and the Connected have noticed that leisure had done quite a bit for their marriage. However, the critical dimension of disengagement would most likely be seen as different for the Hopefuls and the Connected. Thus, for the Hopefuls the disengagement of shared leisure may be disengagement from having to worry about and working on their marriage. This would be compared to the Connected who viewed leisure as a time to disengage from the rest of the world around them and to be with their spouse.

Differences in the Perceptions

A critical dimension that was only found in the Hopefuls' perception was perceived freedom. This would be congruent with the Hopefuls having had a classical view of leisure. This was the same perception that had a romantic definition and assessment of shared leisure and where shared leisure to them had the same qualities and benefits as individual leisure. The Hopefuls had no real experience of sharing leisure with

their spouse; however, they were very confident that they understood shared leisure and what it could offer their marriage.

Finally, a critical dimension that was found only among the Connected was pleasure. It was distinctive that the Connected stated that pleasure was an element of a shared leisure experience with one's spouse. This was notably striking since the married individuals in this perception were the ones who were participating in the largest amount of shared leisure out of all the perception groups. The reason for pleasure to be so notably present in shared leisure for the Connected could be the connection they have with their spouses. This was the same perception that stated the most important part of shared leisure was being with their spouse. Therefore, in retrospect it would be conceivable that pleasure would be a critical dimension of shared leisure for the Connected.

Implications for Theory

One of the original hopes for this study was an attempt by the researcher to define the concept of shared leisure. Although, this study gave more insight to some shared similarities of shared leisure, it also established more questions. Moreover, this study provides credence that leisure and shared leisure were different; however, this study did not establish the extent to which those differences exist. More research was needed in order to properly understand all the differences and similarities of leisure and shared leisure. Although, one of the main conclusions of study identified there was a difference.

The study identified that shared leisure has different characteristics than individual leisure. This research could assist in understanding common qualities of so

called shared leisure or family leisure. The terms “family” and “leisure” are hard to define separately, therefore the difficulty in identifying or define family leisure or shared leisure would be increasingly difficult. A concrete definition of the terms ‘family’ and ‘leisure’ has not been established in either the family or leisure studies fields. Similarly, a flawless definition of shared leisure would be impossible at this time as well. However, this could contribute to the development of family leisure theory in the future. Furthermore, this could be very instrumental in developing a family leisure theory since there has been a lack of sufficient family leisure theory which could help researchers and practitioners alike understand the concept or perimeters of shared leisure.

Theory adoption from other disciplines, which has been common in leisure studies, could assist in the development of family leisure theory. Existing theories of family studies such as Social Exchange theory, Family systems theory, Ecological theory, and Family Developmental theory could facilitate family leisure theory development in the future. A portion of the research conducted about leisure between couples and/or families has been carried out by family studies researchers. They have traditionally seen all types of leisure as the result of an absence of something, whether it be time, work, domestic labor, etc. This definition of leisure would be seen as an unenlightened and limited view of leisure or shared leisure by the majority of leisure scholars and researchers.

Implications for Practice

The concept of family or shared leisure has been a topic of critical inquiry for nearly thirty years (Orthner 1975; 1976; 1990; 1998; Shaw 1997; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). However, there were little researchers agreed upon about family leisure. The words 'family' and 'leisure' have been debated and criticized by researchers, leisure and family providers and policy makers alike. This study was not designed to end these discussions, but rather provide more information for which the aforementioned can more critically view the concepts of both families and leisure. Much more information and research is needed before we can hope to even fully understand the limits of the definitions of both families and leisure. However, this study does allow us to start to understand that leisure shared by married individuals is different from individual leisure.

Recreation and leisure service providers do not program for couples or families because they are not taught how to program for families and/or couples at the higher education level and lower. It is very common for recreation and leisure service providers to program for the family and couples on an individual level. Recreation and leisure service professionals are very proficient at separating and programming; however, most recreation and leisure service providers do not traditionally program for the family as a cohesive unit. This can be traced back to the lack of preparation of programming for families and couples taught through most higher education institutions. One only needs to look at most introductory textbooks in the field of recreation and leisure services to see the lack of emphasis placed on families. Many programming textbooks only mention the family as a unit once or twice. Therefore, to accurately prepare professionals to program

for the family, one would need more exposure and explanation. As stated by Orthner (1998), we are not adequately preparing our students to work effectively with the communities they will be serving. The profession of recreation and leisure needs to address the changes of the family in America that have occurred. Too often the profession has continued with the same programs decade after decade with no regard to the developments that occur in our communities.

Moreover, there also needs to be more effort made in recreation and leisure service providers seeking out others who may be working with their participants. Recreation and leisure service providers and family science providers are often duplicating services and both are working with restricted budgets. Additionally, these professions are not known to have a good understanding of what the other can and may be doing for their participants. For example, many of these relationship skills based programs have a “fun” element in their modules, but typically family professionals rather than leisure professionals have been creating these programs. Therefore, this would be an ideal place to collaborate, share knowledge, and go across disciplines to better assist couples in learning the skills they need to have healthy, happy marriages. Both professions are concerned about the overall quality of life of their participants. Furthermore, both professions could be aided by the expertise of the other field. Recreation and leisure service providers are often confronted with people who need more attention or help than the average professional at a recreational facility can provide. Therefore, it would serve as a great support to have professionals on hand that could deal with a multitude of difficult issues that could arise at a recreation facility or program, such as child abuse, domestic violence, anger management, drug use, or mental health

issues to name a few. A family science provider could assist these individuals as well as educate them about possible reasons and solutions for such occurrences. Family science providers could benefit greatly from the assistance of recreation and leisure service providers in variety of ways as well. For example, the access that recreation and leisure service providers have to a variety of people is often tremendous. Additionally, there is a stigma that is often associated with family science providers such as social workers or therapists that are typically not associated with recreation and leisure service providers. If family science providers could work in conjunction with recreation and leisure service providers, they could possibly have greater access to a wider population of individuals who could benefit from their services. A family may be more likely to attend counseling or an educational program if the location were in a recreation facility instead of a hospital or clinic. Finally, the availability of child care alone could be the greatest benefit of recreation and leisure service providers to family science providers. Many family science providers do not have the quality facilities, programs, and personnel for a family who may not be attending the counseling or education sessions due to child care issues. Once again cost of a partnership could be minimal but advantages could be limitless for both recreation and leisure service providers and family science providers.

One of the easiest manners in which to connect recreation and leisure service providers and family science providers would be leisure education. Leisure education has been defined as teaching recreational skills and attitudes that can be used throughout life (NTRS, 1986). Leisure education and relationship enhancement already have many similarities with the main difference being who would be providing the program. Both recreation and leisure service providers and family science providers offer very similar

skills to individuals and families through their respected mediums. Leisure education tends to work on skills and concepts in a leisure type setting. Relationship enhancement programs often use a leisure setting as well; however their rationale for using such an environment would be because it was fun. In the future, it would not be unconceivable for these two fields to collaborate in research and practice.

Implications for Future Research

There are many recommendations for future studies to assist in the defining and understanding of shared leisure. A replication of this same study should be done with a larger population and from a broader socioeconomic, race/ethnicity, and geographical area. The study should be duplicated across a wider pattern of marital groups and dyadic groups such as, young married couples that are pregnant, young married couples with young children, married couples with older children, older married couples that did not have children, empty nesters, older adults, lesbian and gay couples, and cohabitants just to name a few. Furthermore, there should be additional research conducted in studying both members of the dyad. Additionally, there should be some modification to the Q-items with elimination of any items that were not representative of any of the perceptions. Finally, with the number of non-defining sorts there may be other perceptions that were not represented by the three perceptions.

As mentioned above, part of the original intent of this study was to define shared leisure. Although, more information was discovered about shared leisure, no definition was found. The researcher was able to establish that the characteristics of shared leisure

and individual leisure may be quite different. This could cause recreation and leisure researchers and scholars to view leisure for individuals and for families quite differently. There needs to be more research done that would differentiate between leisure and shared leisure before an acceptable definition of shared leisure could be concluded. A meta-analysis study of leisure and marriage research could greatly advance the current understanding of individual and shared leisure within the context of a family. Furthermore, a longitudinal study of couples and families could identify if and how the concept of shared leisure may change over the lifespan to couples and families. This could allow insight into how couples and families view shared leisure during transitional periods in a family's life, such as birth of a child, death of loved ones, illness, etc. Additionally, there needs to be more research that uses a couple or a family as a unit of analysis. Most studies tend to look at the individual and then extrapolate the results to a couple and/or family. This study has revealed that this type of conjecture may be incorrect. Furthermore, this study has demonstrated that shared leisure is distinguishingly different than individual leisure. Much more research and theory needs to develop before there is a unified understanding of shared leisure.

Moreover, since there has been very little research looking at the concept of shared leisure, this could be a point where more qualitative type studies, such as ethnographies could add more to the existing literature. A mixed methods approach of both qualitative and quantitative research could also add a variety of information and understanding about what has been occurring in shared family leisure.

A distinct advantage of conducting additional research into the understanding of shared leisure would be that the knowledge base of leisure could be greatly enhanced.

This new direction in leisure research could advance many aspects of leisure research. For example, one method in which this may be achieved could be through the collaboration of research efforts of family science providers and recreation and leisure providers. Traditionally, much of the research that has been conducted about families and leisure has been by family science providers; however, their research has been hampered by a limited understanding of leisure. A partnership of family science researchers and recreation and leisure service researchers would have the potential to greatly impact both disciplines. This collaborated effort could also influence greater cooperation between the two fields in the future.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Thank you for helping me with this study. I have a few questions for you that will help me develop the instrument that I will use in my dissertation work at OSU. First of all,

- 1. Are you over 18 years old?*
- 2. Have you been married less than five years?*
- 3. Do you have no children? And*
- 4. Have you and your spouse had leisure experiences together?*

I plan to tape record our discussion so that I will remember your ideas and I will be taking field notes. May I proceed?

Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the leisure experiences that you and your spouse have and/or share?
2. What makes this leisure for you and your spouse?
3. Why do you participate in your leisure experiences?
4. How do you feel about your leisure experiences?
5. What does leisure do for you and your spouse? What do you expect from leisure with your spouse?
6. What happens to you and your spouse during leisure?
7. How does your shared leisure differ from individual leisure?
8. What else would you like to say about leisure experiences with your spouse?

Appendix B

Demographic Survey

Directions: Please provide requested demographic information by checking the most appropriate responses:

A. Gender _____ Male _____ Female

B. Age (Please circle the one that represents you best)

18-22 23-27 28-32 33-35

C. Age at marriage _____

D. Length of marriage _____

E. Length of relationship before marriage _____

F. Highest level of Education Completed (Please circle the one that represents you)

High School Some College Associates Bachelors Masters

G. Occupation/Major _____

H. In any given week what percentage of your leisure time is spent in shared leisure with your spouse _____%.

I. What leisure activities did you share with your spouse _____

_____.

J. What leisure activities do you do by yourself _____

_____.

K. Why do you participate in leisure with your spouse _____

_____.

L. What three words would you use to describe your participation in shared leisure with your spouse _____

M. What else would you like to state about shared leisure with your spouse _____

_____.

N. *Optional* If you would not mind *potentially* answering additional questions by phone, please leave your telephone number _____

Appendix C

Recruitment Script

Hello, a doctoral student in Leisure Studies department at Oklahoma State University, Hugh Gibson, is conducting a study about shared leisure of young married couples. He is looking for any interested parties who meet the following criteria: married for less than five years, without children, between the ages of 18-35, and you and your spouse have shared a leisure experience together. If you meet these criteria and would like to participate please leave just your telephone number with me and I will pass it on to Hugh Gibson the researcher. He will contact you as soon as possible to set up a meeting. The process of the study should take approximately 30-45 minutes. Thank you for your time.

Appendix D

Participant Consent Form – Phase I Interview

Dear Friend,

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to describe how spouse’s view shared leisure experiences. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study will complete a participant consent form, a short survey describing general demographic information, and answer questions about shared leisure with their spouse: a process that generally takes approximately 30-40 minutes, that will be tape-recorded and transcribed. The information gained as a result of this study may improve the concepts of shared leisure for leisure and family professionals.

If you agree to participate, your responses will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in reports nor will it be associated with your data. Only information as a group will be kept beyond the conclusion of this study, all other materials will be destroyed. All comments are voluntary. Specific details of your participation are not provided to your spouse. You have the option of stopping the process at anytime you wish. You are also free to withdraw your consent and end your participation in this project at anytime

Questions about this research can be directed to me Hugh Gibson, 108 East Eskridge Ave., Stillwater, OK 74075, (405) 743-4108, gibson@okstate.edu; Dr. Colleen Hood, (405) 744-5302, hoodc@okstate.edu; Dr. Diane Montgomery, (405) 744-9441, montgom@okstate.edu; or Sharon Belcher, Institutional Review Board, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu. A copy of this information is provided and is yours to keep.

If you agree to participate and have your comments tape-recorded, please read and sign the statement below:

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

Date: _____ Time: _____ (a.m./p.m.)

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

I certify that I have personally explained all the elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it.

Signed: _____

Hugh Gibson, Researcher

Appendix E

Participant Consent Form – Phase II Q sort

Dear Friend,

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to describe how spouse's view shared leisure experiences. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study will complete a consent form, arrange a set of statements shared leisure twice, and a short survey describing general demographic information: a process that generally takes about 30-45 minutes. Each individual will do each of the two sorts by themselves. The information gained as a result of this study may improve the concepts of shared leisure for leisure and family professionals.

If you agree to participate, your responses will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in reports nor will it be associated with your data. Only information as a group will be kept beyond the conclusion of this study, all other materials will be destroyed. The sorting and taped comments are voluntary. Specific details of your participation are not provided to your spouse. You have the option of stopping the process at anytime you wish. You are also free to withdraw your consent and end your participation in this project at anytime.

Questions about this research can be directed to me Hugh Gibson, 108 East Eskridge Ave., Stillwater, OK 74075, (405) 743-4108, gibson@okstate.edu; Dr. Colleen Hood, (405) 744-5302, hoodc@okstate.edu; Dr. Diane Montgomery, (405) 744-9441, montgom@okstate.edu; or Sharon Belcher, Institutional Review Board, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078, (405) 744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu. A copy of this information is provided and is yours to keep.

If you agree to participate and have your comments tape-recorded, please read and sign the statement below:

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

Date: _____ Time: _____ (a.m./p.m.)

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

I certify that I have personally explained all the elements of this form to the subject before requesting the subject to sign it.

Signed: _____
Hugh Gibson, Researcher

Appendix F

Institutional Review Board Approval

**Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board**

Protocol Expires: 5/7/2004

Date: Thursday, May 08, 2003

IRB Application No ED03125

Proposal Title: A Q-STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE SHARED BY YOUNG MARRIED
COUPLES

Principal
Investigator(s):

Hugh Gibson
108 E. Eskridge
Stillwater, OK 74075

Colleen Hood
108 Colvin Center
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved *

Dear PI :

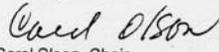
Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research 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

*NOTE: Please change the spelling of the IRB contact person to Sharon Bacher.

VITA

Hugh Manuel Gibson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A Q-STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE SHARED BY YOUNG
MARRIED COUPLES WITH NO CHILDREN

Major Field: Applied Educational Studies

Biographical:

Education: Graduated from Muhlenberg South High School, Greenville, Kentucky in May, 1991; Received Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology/Recreation and Parks Administration from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky in December, 1995; Received Master of Science degree in Recreation and Parks Administration from Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky in May, 1997. Completed the requirements for Doctor of Education degree with a major in Leisure Studies at Oklahoma State University in July of 2005.

Experience: Recreation Leader at Bowling Green Parks and Recreation from 1992-1994; Special Populations Instructor at Bowling Green Parks and Recreation from 1994-1995; Teaching Assistant at Western Kentucky University from 1996-1997; Regional Support Coordinator at Lifeskills, Inc. from 1998-1999; Part Time Administrator at Preston Health and Activity Center from 1999-2000; Graduate Teaching Associate at Oklahoma State University from 2000-2003; Assistant Professor at Southwest Missouri State University from 2003 to present.

Name: Hugh Manuel Gibson

Date of Degree: July, 2005

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: A Q-STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF LEISURE SHARED BY YOUNG MARRIED INDIVIDUALS WITH NO CHILDREN

Pages in Study: 113

Candidate for the Degree of Doctorate of Education

Major Field: Applied Educational Studies

Scope and Method of Study: The purpose of this Q-study was to describe the perceptions of leisure shared with a spouse by young newly married individuals with no children. The first phase of the study consisted of interviews with five married individuals who were between the ages of 18-35 years old, had been married less than 5 years and had no children. The second phase consisted of 14 married individuals who meet the above criteria. Only one person per couple was allowed to participate in the study. Each of the 14 subjects completed two sorts each, one about what each perceived shared leisure with his/her spouse was like and a second sort was about what each of them thought his or her spouse's perception of leisure shared was like with them. The data were analyzed using PQMethod 2.11, a program adapted from the Q-method FORTRAN program for statistical analysis of Q-sort data. The Q-sort data was correlated, factor analyzed and rotated for the best possible solution.

Findings and Conclusions: A three factor solution was accepted and used in this study. The three factor solution accounted for 55% of the variance, where five of the twenty-eight sorts did not define any factor, but were found to be split or nonsignificant. The factors were interpreted as the following factors The Believers, The Hopefuls, and The Connected. The three factors represented three different points of view. The commonalities across all the factors included shared leisure with a spouse as being more free than leisure experienced by oneself, an opportunity to increase communication, added an element of cohesion, was not a stressful event, and allows them to be creative and discover themselves as a couple. The results of the study do suggest that shared leisure and individual leisure are conceptually different. The results in this study do not allow for a complete definition of shared leisure; however, it does provide a foundation for future exploration of the difference between individual leisure and the concept of shared leisure.

ADVISOR'S APPROVAL: Dr. Lowell Caneday
