

MARITAL SATISFACTION, SHARED LEISURE,
AND LEISURE SATISFACTION IN
MARRIED COUPLES WITH
ADOLESCENTS

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PREFACE

The goal of this study was to contribute to the current body of knowledge that exists regarding the relationship between marital satisfaction and shared leisure.

Researchers in this area have called for studies that look beyond the amount of time couples spend together and consider other variables linked to shared leisure. This study in particular examined satisfaction with shared leisure time, satisfaction with shared leisure activities, decision making regarding shared leisure, and similarity of leisure interests between spouses. Each of these variables was significantly correlated to marital satisfaction in this study. There were no significant differences according to gender.

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NOMENCLATURE

LSS	Leisure Satisfaction Scale
RAS	Relationship Assessment Scale
SOCDS	State of the Cities Data System

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

In the last 30 years, there has been a growing interest in the relationship between shared leisure and marital satisfaction (Kelly, 1997; Orthner, Barnett-Morris, & Mancini, 1993). In the past, leisure has been treated casually as a factor possibly related to marital satisfaction, but as more research has been conducted, leisure appears to have potential for increasing levels of marital satisfaction. This growth of interest in the relationship between these two variables has been reflected in the measurements utilized in family services, such as the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), the PREPARE-ENRICH Inventories (Fournier, Olson, & Druckman, 1983), and the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder & Costin, 1994). Orthner et al. also described the importance of leisure shared with family reported by many adults. The purpose of this study, then, was to explore the extent to which there are relationships among the variables of marital satisfaction, couples' leisure patterns, and shared leisure satisfaction in married couples with adolescent children.

In researching the answer to this question, there are several major objectives to be accomplished: (a) to investigate the relationship between the level of marital satisfaction and the percentage of leisure time spent with a spouse, (b) to examine the link between spouses' satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure and levels of marital

satisfaction, (c) to examine the relationship between shared leisure satisfaction and marital satisfaction, (d) to explore any association between a discrepancy in current amounts of shared leisure and desired amounts of shared leisure with levels of marital satisfaction, (e) to investigate whether interaction patterns within leisure correlate to marital satisfaction, (f) to look at the possible relationship between decision making regarding shared leisure activities and levels of marital satisfaction, and (g) to consider the possible interaction with gender.

Concepts

Before proceeding, it is necessary to define the major concepts that are pertinent to the current study. In this study *marital satisfaction* refers to a global level of favorability that individual spouses report with their marital relationship (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981). Marital satisfaction is often viewed as an individual's interpretation of the overall quality of the marriage or the person's happiness with the marriage. This study does not measure the processes that are often associated with levels of relationship satisfaction; rather the focus is on the overarching feelings of satisfaction.

The second key term, *shared leisure*, is more difficult to define. While shared leisure is sometimes thought of as marital partners participating in mutual activities, the concept is really much more complex (Shaw, 1997). Orthner et al. (1993, p. 177) provide a more complex description of leisure, stating that "Recent theories stress the defining conditions of leisure to be: the individual's perception of freedom of choice, activities chosen for reasons intrinsic to the anticipated experience, and the accompanying and/or resulting sensations of positive affect." Shared leisure, as an extension of these ideas, is a social experience associated with discretionary time, in which the individual perceives

freedom of choice, intrinsic motivation, and positive affect (Orthner et al.). Then again, there is some debate about whether shared leisure requires positive affect by both marital partners or whether there is an inherent contradiction in the term “family leisure.” Shaw suggests a conceptualization of shared leisure that recognizes these contradictory aspects: “Because of these diverse ways in which contradictory aspects of family leisure can manifest themselves, to conceptualize family leisure as contradictory is to *expect* positive and negative aspects to coexist” (p. 107). In agreement with Shaw’s comments, the present study placed great emphasis on the subjective nature of leisure. Because the pleasure derived from certain activities and the following determination of leisure is evaluated by the individual, this study asked questions that allowed for each spouse’s personal interpretation.

Another concept examined in the current study was the individual’s satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure. This variable looks at the extent to which individuals are happy with the number of hours they are able to spend in leisure activities with their spouse. The degree of interaction spouses experience during leisure activities is also important. Different activities require different levels of communication. Thus, the function of leisure in the marriage can vary based on how much interaction takes place between spouses during a particular activity. Furthermore, individuals may evaluate shared leisure activities based on the extent to which they are able to choose those activities in which they will participate. One partner may feel that they never have any say in deciding what type of activities they will perform. So decision making regarding shared leisure activities involves the amount of perceived influence a person has in choosing what type of activities they will share with a spouse. It may be easier for

couples to agree about which activities they will do if they have similar interests.

Similarity of leisure interests is degree to which individuals feel that their spouse's leisure interests are like their own.

Leisure satisfaction is defined as “the positive perceptions or feelings which an individual forms, elicits, or gains as a result of engaging in leisure activities and choices” (Beard & Ragheb, 1980, p. 22). In other words, it is the extent to which an individual is pleased with his or her leisure experiences. Beard and Ragheb further explain that these feelings of satisfaction are the result of individual need fulfillment. Leisure activities have the capability of fulfilling the needs of participants, thereby producing feelings of satisfaction or happiness.

Rationale for the Study

Further investigation of the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction is important for two main reasons. The first reason is related to the quality of life for all married couples. Leisure provides pleasurable activities across the life cycle and often involves important relationships, including marriage. Therefore, the more knowledge we gain in this area, the more we can help people utilize leisure to create more enjoyable experiences. Also, we need to learn more about the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction. If leisure does, in fact, positively relate to marital satisfaction, leisure and family professionals can hopefully use this knowledge in improving the quality of family life by employing leisure activities to induce positive experiences for married couples. The second reason is to promote marital stability (i.e., the prevention of divorce) (Orthner et al., 1993). The marital strife often associated with divorce has serious consequences for children and adults (Amato, 2000). Karney and Bradbury

(1995) posit that one key variable in explaining marital stability is marital quality.

Greater marital satisfaction, one dimension of marital quality (Spanier & Lewis, 1980), is positively related to marital stability and negatively related to divorce. Since preliminary evidence shows that leisure is a variable that may explain variation in marital satisfaction, further investigation is needed to more fully explore how leisure relates to marital satisfaction. In turn, such research may yield implications for incorporating leisure-based prevention programs to enhance marital quality and to prevent the risk of divorce.

Exchange Theory

The research in leisure and marital satisfaction lacks a unifying theoretical framework. This particular study will use exchange theory as the guiding perspective. The major premise of exchange theory is that “humans avoid costly behavior and seek rewarding statuses, relationships, interaction, and feeling states to the end that their profits are maximized” or their losses are minimized (Nye, 1979, p. 2). Nye lists sixteen assumptions found in the treatises written on exchange theory from 1959 to 1972:

1. Humans are rational beings.
2. Human beings are actors as well as reactors.
3. People must undergo costs in order to obtain rewards.
4. Social behavior will not be repeated unless it has been rewarded in the past.
5. If no profitable alternative is perceived as available, the one promising the least unprofitable will be chosen.
6. Those who receive what they feel they deserve feel satisfied, those who receive less feel anger, and those who receive more experience guilt.

7. Social life requires reciprocity.
8. It is rewarding to inflict costs on someone who is perceived as having deliberately hurt oneself.
9. The costs of receiving punishment usually are greater than the rewards of inflicting it.
10. Individuals vary in the value they place on specific objects, experiences, relationships, and positions.
11. The more of something one has, the less additional units of it are worth.
12. All behavior is rational, although much of it may be based on inadequate information and faulty prediction of future events.
13. Groups, organizations, associations, and even nations act, in a general way, as do individuals to minimize costs and maximize rewards.
14. Humans are capable of anticipating greater rewards and fewer costs from effective, responsive governmental, educational, health, and economic institutions.
15. Humans are capable of conceptualizing a generalized reciprocity between themselves and society and its social institutions.
16. Humans realize that the alternatives they choose affect the rewards and costs of other members of groups to which they belong.

In looking through the concepts and principles laid forth by exchange theory, it is clear that these concepts are easily applied to the role of leisure in marriage. Possible resources that must be available for leisure in the marital relationship are money, physical

ability, knowledge of the activity, and time. There are, of course, costs and rewards that can be incurred through shared leisure. Costs could include money or time that could be spent with other people or fulfilling other responsibilities. It could be that one partner may find the activity particularly unpleasant. On the other hand, rewards might include personal enjoyment, exercise, or valued communication. The comparison level in this situation would be the evaluation of leisure activities based on the associated costs and rewards.

Society has laid forth certain normative orientations for the marital relationship; typically, leisure is seen as a perfectly acceptable and somewhat expected behavior between spouses. The norm of distributive justice requires that each partner's rewards should be somewhat equal to their costs involved. Partners may ask if it is worth the time, energy, or money they must invest in the leisure activity. According to the norm of fairness, spouses will determine whether or not the profits obtained during leisure with their partner are proportional to the investments based on their individual expectations. In order for equity to exist, perceived output to input ratios must be equal. Spouses want to feel that the other partner is putting as much into their leisure time as they are and that their spouse is enjoying it as well.

Exchange theory offers a unique interpretation of those activities that may not be enjoyable to both partners. For instance, the norm of reciprocity states that exchanges will be responsive. Of course, this may not be immediate. For instance, if a husband enjoys watching football but a wife does not, watching a football game may still be a long-term reward for her based on the expectation that he may later do something that she enjoys that is not enjoyable for him.

The concept of satisfaction plays a significant role in this discussion. As mentioned previously, satisfaction is determined by the rewards minus the costs. Researchers have previously argued that there is a direct relationship between outcomes and satisfaction (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). Thus if the rewards of shared leisure time are greater than the costs, marital satisfaction is likely to increase as a result of the activity. The rewards and costs may be altered by the comparison level of alternatives; the comparison level of alternatives may relate to why a person would choose individual leisure activities over marital leisure. The actor may be looking at the alternatives individually or with other friends or possibly at responsibilities or other duties that need to be fulfilled.

Exchange theory addresses the role of dependence and trust in a relationship as well. Leisure is perhaps one activity through which couples can build trust in their relationship. Along this line of trust is the process of decision making. To ensure that one partner is not being exploited, couples may analyze together the costs and rewards that are acceptable for both of them in their leisure time. Based on this joint analysis, couples choose the activities in which they will participate and from which they will refrain.

The principles of satiation and deprivation could explain why leisure interests change over the marital career. The principle of satiation states that the more you receive of a reward, the less of a reward it becomes. Perhaps leisure activities that couples do together lose their value with time. Conversely, if couples do not participate in a certain leisure activity often, its rewarding value is maintained. While acknowledging the probable changes over the marital career, this study examined the relationship between

leisure and marital satisfaction at one particular piece of time—when a married couple has adolescent children. This particular time was of interest to the researcher because it possibly represents a point at which the spouses may be re-entering a phase of “coupleship.” As adolescent children begin to gain more independence, spouses may have more time and personal resources that can be turned toward the marriage. Hopefully the decreasing demands of childrearing allow spouses to direct much of their schedule and their attention to each other once again.

The principles of exchange theory also led the researcher in the present study to look at the individual as the unit of analysis. This guiding theory focuses on individual perceptions. Each person involved in the relationship absorbs and evaluates information based on his or her own perceptions and experiences. Therefore, it was important to collect and analyze the data accordingly. Each spouse was asked to report his or her own feelings and opinions pertaining to their levels of marital satisfaction and leisure activities.

Hypotheses

This study was designed to investigate how perceptions of couples’ shared leisure patterns and shared leisure satisfaction relate to marital satisfaction. Thus, there were several hypotheses to be tested:

- Hypothesis 1. The percentage of total leisure time reported to be spent in leisure activities with a spouse is positively related to levels of marital satisfaction. The independent variable presented is the percentage of time spent in shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

- Hypothesis 2. The consistency between a spouse's current reports of shared leisure compared to desired levels of shared leisure is directly correlated with marital satisfaction. If couples' actual percentage of leisure time spent with a spouse is closer to the desired percentage of leisure time spent with a spouse, then they are more likely to have higher levels of marital satisfaction. In this hypothesis, the consistency between current and desired percentages is the independent variable, and the level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.
- Hypothesis 3. Satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure with a spouse is positively related to levels of marital satisfaction. The independent variable in this particular hypothesis is the level of satisfaction with the amount of time spent in leisure activities with a spouse. Again, the dependent variable in this hypothesis is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 4. The greater the reported degree of perceived interaction that occurs in shared leisure activities, the greater the level of marital satisfaction. The independent variable in this hypothesis is the interaction pattern of shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 5. There is a positive correlation between an individual's reports about perceived participation in decision making about shared leisure and the level of marital satisfaction. The independent variable in this hypothesis is the degree of participation in decision making. The dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

- Hypothesis 6. There is a positive correlation between the perceived similarity of leisure interests and marital satisfaction. The degree of similarity of leisure interests is the independent variable. The level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.
- Hypothesis 7. There is a direct relationship between the reported level of shared leisure satisfaction and the level of marital satisfaction. In this hypothesis, the independent variable is the level of shared leisure satisfaction, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of and rationale for the current study. Conceptual definitions of the primary variables were provided: marital satisfaction, shared leisure, and leisure satisfaction. Hypotheses were also introduced. Chapter II presents a more thorough review of the literature on the topics of shared leisure and marital satisfaction and associates the current hypotheses with the literature available on these variables. Chapter III discusses the particular methodology to be used, including sampling methods, data collection methods, instrumentation, and statistical analyses. Limitations of the present study are also presented in the third chapter. Chapter IV reports the results of the analyses. Chapter V discusses the results in relationship to existing research and exchange theory. Chapter V also makes recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is an overview of selected scholarly literature that has been published in the areas of marital satisfaction, shared leisure, and leisure satisfaction, the three primary concepts of this study. Each area will be discussed briefly, and then there will be some discussion of the relationship between the variables presented. Theoretical frameworks included in the literature are also presented.

Marital Satisfaction

There has been much confusion in the research with the terms marital quality and marital satisfaction. These terms are often wrongly used synonymously (Heyman, Sayers, & Bellack, 1994). Most research over the past two decades has focused on the term marital quality rather than marital satisfaction. Marital quality is defined as a multidimensional concept that includes “happiness with marriage, the frequency of shared activities, and thoughts or actions that may lead to divorce” (Amato, Johnson, Booth, & Rogers, 2003, p. 5). In the present study, marital satisfaction refers to a global level of favorability that individual spouses report with their marital relationship (Roach, Frazier, & Bowden, 1981). The literature has evidence of attempts to discriminate between these concepts. Most recently, spouses’ satisfaction is seen as just one component of the multidimensional concept of marital quality (Amato et al., 2003). Marital quality can also include factors such as shared activities and relationship

characteristics that may lead to divorce (Amato & Booth, 1997; Amato et al., 2003). The current study focused specifically on the dimension of marital satisfaction, since there is a conflict in examining the relationship between two variables when the dependent variable (marital quality) is actually measured in part by the independent variable (shared leisure). If, in fact, a correlation is detected between levels of satisfaction and shared leisure, the results may actually further support the theorized multidimensional nature of marital quality. In the present study, marital satisfaction was defined as a general sense of favorability toward the marital relationship (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000).

A common pattern in marital satisfaction revealed through recent longitudinal data collection is a slowly decreasing linear trajectory (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Vaillant & Vaillant, 1993). Levels of marital satisfaction are highest in the early stages and continually decline throughout the rest of the marital career. With this view presented in the literature, systematic research of factors related to marital satisfaction is still needed (Bradbury et al., 2000).

Studies on marital satisfaction also report significant differences between genders. In one study using a repeated cross-sectional design, wives reported lower levels of marital happiness over a 20-year period from 1980 to 2000 (Amato et al., 2003). Further, longitudinal research shows husbands and wives' levels of marital satisfaction are affected differently by certain variables (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). For instance, factors related to families of origin may affect husbands and wives differently in terms of marital satisfaction. However, there is a lack of research concerning why the difference in satisfaction levels appears when analyzed according to gender. This discrepancy between husbands and wives could present problems if the unit of analysis is actually the

married couple. Larsen and Olson (1990) conclude that while there are multiple approaches to calculating couple scores, each spouse represents a separate dimension of the relationship. Thus, if the husband and wife's scores were averaged or in some way combined, the meaning and potential significance of individual responses could be lost. Since marital satisfaction is typically viewed as an individual quality and since exchange theory emphasizes the importance of individual perceptions in relationships, each husband and wife's level of marital satisfaction was assessed individually in the present study.

Shared Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

In examining leisure shared by family members, it is clear that leisure activities play a significant role in relationship formation and maintenance (Orthner et al., 1993). There is little research conducted on shared leisure of couples that does not include the concept of relationship satisfaction (Orthner et al.). Feminist theorists have pointed out that differences occur in shared leisure experiences for men and women (Horna, 1994). Mattingly and Bianchi (2003) list a few of the reasons women experience leisure differently, such as vague boundaries between domestic responsibilities and free-time pursuits and the time expense of coordinating family leisure opportunities. This current study acknowledged those differences and examined the data based on individual scores of husbands and wives rather than collapsing scores into one inclusive total. Shared leisure is generally defined as a social experience associated with discretionary time, in which the individual perceives freedom of choice, intrinsic motivation, and positive affect (Orthner et al.)

Initial research in the area of leisure and marital satisfaction led to the generalization that “the family that plays together stays together” (Orthner, 1975). Early empirical studies produced evidence for a direct relationship between shared leisure and marital satisfaction; and from this evidence, researchers reasoned that this was a causal relationship moving from the shared leisure activities to increased levels of marital satisfaction or quality (Baldwin, Ellis, & Baldwin, 1999). Research in more recent years has led family scientists to believe that what was previously seen as a causal link between shared leisure and marital satisfaction was actually a hasty overgeneralization (Crawford, Houts, Huston, & George, 2002). The relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction is much more complex than early researchers presumed. Some authors now argue that there is no significant relationship between the amount of time a couple spends together in leisure activities and the level of marital satisfaction (Berg, Trost, Schneider, & Allison, 2001). This has led to the search for other factors that influence the association between levels of marital satisfaction and shared leisure experiences. The present study examined several leisure pattern variables that may relate to marital satisfaction as detailed in the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1. The percentage of total leisure time reported to be spent in leisure activities with a spouse is positively related to levels of marital satisfaction. The independent variable presented is the percentage of time spent in shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. The consistency between a spouse’s current reports of shared leisure compared to desired levels of shared leisure is directly correlated with marital satisfaction. If couples’ actual percentage of leisure time spent with a

spouse is closer to the desired percentage of leisure time spent with a spouse, then they are more likely to have higher levels of marital satisfaction. In this hypothesis, the consistency between current and desired percentages is the independent variable, and the level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.

Hypothesis 3. Satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure with a spouse is positively related to levels of marital satisfaction. The independent variable in this particular hypothesis is the level of satisfaction with the amount of time spent in leisure activities with a spouse. Again, the dependent variable in this hypothesis is the level of marital satisfaction.

Causality

One criticism of early studies in leisure and marital satisfaction is the assumption of a causal relationship. More researchers are arguing that the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction is best described as reciprocal (Baldwin et al., 1999; Crawford et al., 2002). The level of satisfaction with the relationship may actually induce or augment the desire to engage in leisure activities with a spouse. On the other hand, those couples that are not experiencing sufficient levels of marital satisfaction will probably not be as willing to participate in leisure activities with one another. These findings led to the conclusion that the inferred causal relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction may be erroneous.

Key Factors in the Relationship between Shared Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

Communication. One common approach in the literature is to examine the communicative processes that take place during leisure activities. Leisure activities are

being classified by the degree to which spouses actually interact while participating in these activities. Communication seems to be a critical factor in determining whether or not leisure activities are positively associated with levels of marital satisfaction (Baldwin et al., 1999). The categorization of leisure activities, however, has not been standardized. One of the earliest examples was a study conducted by Orthner (1975). Orthner divided leisure into three categories: individual, joint, and parallel. Individual activities involve no communication with another person and may actually prevent or deter interaction. In order to successfully complete a joint activity, one must deliberately interact with another person. Thus, these types of activities tend to foster communication in contrast to individual activities. The third type, parallel activities, occurs within a group setting, but a minimum amount of interaction is required among participants. Generally, individual leisure activities, in which couples perceived that little or no communication took place, at best had no effect on marital satisfaction but could have even lowered levels of marital satisfaction.

Since this original study, research has replicated this finding that there is a negative relationship between independent leisure (activities lacking or prohibiting communication with another person) and marital satisfaction (Crawford et al., 2002). As an individual increases the amount of time spent in leisure activities without their spouse, the level of marital satisfaction decreases. When a spouse is unable to accept their husband or wife's leisure interest, the spouse's commitment to that activity may result in leisure-family conflict, often taking a negative toll on levels of marital satisfaction (Goff, Fick, & Oppliger, 1997). However, spouse support is one way to minimize this effect. One study specifically examined the outcome of spouse support upon the potential

leisure-family conflict, and results indicated that emotional support is an effective means for reducing leisure-family conflict and reflects a balance between leisure and family (Goff et al.).

Conversely, research overwhelmingly provides support for the conclusion that couples who share joint leisure activities are more satisfied with their marriages than couples who do not (Zabriskie & McCormick, 2001). Joint leisure activities are defined as those activities that “require a high degree of interaction for successful completion of the activity and tend to open communication and encourage role interchange” (Orthner, 1975, p. 93). Joint leisure is the ideal type of leisure for relationship building because joint spouse activities promote both interaction and understanding, thereby increasing the attachment between spouses (Orthner et al., 1993).

Parallel activities are often thought to have neither a positive or negative effect on satisfaction. However, one study conducted on the effects of television viewing (an activity typically considered to be a parallel leisure experience) reported that there were positive benefits from this activity (Finucane & Horvath, 2000). Participants reported that television viewing facilitated communication. Spouses either began talking about the show they were watching, or it spurred conversation on other topics ranging from the events of the day to childrearing practices. Overall, the study’s participants actually perceived television viewing as a positive force in the marital relationship. Therefore, the interaction that takes place between partners during a leisure activity is what determines whether or not the activity is valuable in terms of marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4. The greater the reported degree of perceived interaction that occurs in shared leisure activities, the greater the level of marital satisfaction. The

independent variable in this hypothesis is the interaction pattern of shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Affiliation. Affiliation is another factor positively associated with shared leisure activities. The aforementioned study on television viewing reported that affiliation was the most salient use of television for couples (Finucane & Horvath, 2000). Couples described the enjoyment of just being together. The physical proximity provides the context for nonverbal communication, such as increased touching (Finucane & Horvath). This concept of affiliation has not received much attention in the research thus far but could hold much potential for understanding the way couples spend their discretionary time together.

Compatibility. Marital satisfaction is not the only factor believed to induce shared leisure. Compatibility, in the sense that the both partners enjoy the same leisure activities, has also been examined. One study found that couples were less likely to engage in leisure activities independent of one another if they were more compatible in their leisure interests (Crawford et al., 2002). However, in this same study, compatibility was not related to whether or not spouses pursued activities they both liked, either together or independently. Not only is it important for couples to find activities they both enjoy, but some researchers have hypothesized that couples are more likely to participate in activities together if the activities are exciting to both partners (Baldwin et al., 1999; Crawford et al.). Participation in an activity together, even if it is enjoyable, would not contribute to marital satisfaction unless it is exciting to both partners. Baldwin et al. explain, "Spending time together in exciting activities increases marital satisfaction more so than spending time together in merely pleasant activities" (p.120). The goal in

pursuing activities that are viewed as exciting is to avoid habituation or boredom in marriage, which is in line with exchange theory's principles of satiation and deprivation.

Hypothesis 5. There is a positive correlation between an individual's reports about perceived participation in decision making about shared leisure and the level of marital satisfaction. The independent variable in this hypothesis is the degree of participation in decision making. The dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6. There is a positive correlation between the perceived similarity of leisure interests and marital satisfaction. The degree of similarity of leisure interests is the independent variable. The level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.

Gender. The field of leisure sciences has recently focused on the influences of gender on leisure participation. The awareness of gender differences in experiences of leisure and family is a significant strength of current research efforts (Freysinger, 1997). The literature on leisure and marriage has analyzed some of the differences reported by men and women (Larson, Gillman, & Richards, 1997), but the use of feminist theory might offer greater insight into how spouses might experience leisure differently (Kelly, 1997). Many of the differences between men and women are quite possibly related to the increase in the number of women who are employed full-time (Kelly). Despite the contemporary emphasis on egalitarian relationships in the U.S., there is still a largely uneven distribution of unpaid work between men and women (Bittman & Wajcman, 2000; Mattingly & Bianchi, 2003). One study showed that the hypothesized gap between men and women's average leisure time is not as large as predicted; however, results did

confirm that men typically experience a higher quality of leisure than women (Bittman & Wajcman). Women's leisure experiences are also more often contaminated—either interrupted by domestic responsibilities or burdened with the responsibility of organizing the activity for others (Mattingly & Bianchi). Therefore, it is important to understand how this disparity may affect the way couples experience leisure together. The hypothesized association between the leisure experience and marital satisfaction may be further influenced by gender. Gender was used in the current study to examine the extent to which gender interaction explained variance between the variables included in the hypotheses.

Race. An area largely overlooked in the research on leisure and marriage is racial diversity. One study examined the leisure experiences of interracial couples (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). Findings indicate that interracial couples' shared leisure experiences are still somewhat constrained by discrimination and prejudice. Couples tended to carefully research the activity before investing any money or time. The pressure of organizing leisure activities comfortable for both partners coupled with the prejudice experienced through some leisure settings may prohibit the positive relationship between leisure and satisfaction levels in marriage. Therefore, future research should look further into the effect that racial discrimination can have on the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction.

Leisure Satisfaction

The concept of leisure is highly subjective because it relies heavily upon individual perceptions. Activities typically considered “leisure” may actually have very different meanings and levels of satisfaction for various participants (Berg et al., 2001).

Berg et al. actually look at leisure satisfaction as an additional variable. Leisure satisfaction could also have a great impact on whether an activity is actually related to relationship satisfaction. Significant discrepancies in spouses' leisure satisfaction could have an effect on individual's perceived levels of marital satisfaction. The gender differences in leisure experiences could be significantly related to inconsistencies in leisure satisfaction levels.

Hypothesis 7. There is a direct relationship between the reported level of shared leisure satisfaction and the level of marital satisfaction. In this hypothesis, the independent variable is the level of shared leisure satisfaction, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Theoretical Perspectives on Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

Role Theory

There are few sources that specifically identify theoretical frameworks to use in the study of marital satisfaction and shared leisure. Role theory offers a unique perspective that is described by Baldwin et al. (1999). This theory holds that marital satisfaction varies according to both an individual's salient recreation role and their role support for their spouse's salient recreation role. Marital satisfaction is predicted to be highest when spouses share a strong commitment to an activity or when one spouse who is strongly committed to an activity receives significant role support from the non-committed spouse.

Interdependence Theory

Another perspective is the interdependence theory mentioned by Crawford et al. (2002). This theory simply suggests that compatibility should be viewed as the extent to

which partners like and dislike the same activities. Compatibility then becomes a factor in mate selection and in the amount of shared leisure experienced during marriage. If couples share leisure interests, then it is less likely that they will pursue leisure activities independent of one another. This ties into marital satisfaction because compatible couples who pursue many activities together perceive higher levels of satisfaction than those couples who have difficulty synchronizing their leisure pursuits.

Family Development Theory

The study of the relationship between shared leisure and marital satisfaction has not been adequately studied over the marital career. Initial attempts have been made to look at this relationship longitudinally (Orthner, 1975; Crawford et al., 2002). Some research has examined the relationship between leisure and family using the developmental or life course perspective (Larson et al., 1997). Some studies have followed Orthner's original model, dividing the marital career into six-year stages. Yet there is no theoretical rationale for this method. It would probably be more accurate to examine how the relationship between shared leisure and marital satisfaction changes with the occurrence of real transitions or life events that take place within the marriage.

Family Systems Theory

One of the more recent attempts to utilize theory in the study of leisure and relationship satisfaction utilizes the family systems perspective. Specifically, Zabriskie and McCormick (2001) find the three dimensions of Olson's Circumplex Model (1993) to be particularly appropriate for this area of study. Within Olson's model, family cohesion can be described as the emotional connection between family members, and family adaptability is associated with flexible leadership roles and relational rules.

Family cohesion and adaptability are often facilitated through the communication dimension of the model. Leisure activities quite possibly provide the very best opportunity for this necessary communication. It seems that there is much promise in the application of family systems theory to the study of leisure and marital satisfaction. Still, it is clear that some effort needs to be made to find one major theory in the field of family sciences that can deal with the complexities of the relationship between shared leisure and marital satisfaction demonstrated in the literature.

In light of the current knowledge available, the present study examined the levels of several leisure variables in the relationships of couples as related to marital satisfaction. The issue at hand is not one of causality, but rather correlation. Little research has been conducted on the relationship between the two main variables (shared leisure and marital satisfaction) over the course of the family's life. The present study highlighted couples with adolescent children to reveal information on one specific part of the marital career. As young married couples begin to have children, the time they are able to spend in shared leisure usually diminishes. However, as adolescents are gaining more independence, perhaps their parents are able to once again find more time to dedicate to shared leisure, which is why this population was of interest in the present study. Further research should expand the knowledge regarding changes in the relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction over time. The purpose of this study, then, was to determine if there is a relationship between shared leisure, leisure satisfaction, and marital satisfaction in couples with children between the ages of 12 and 19 years.

Exchange Theory

In reviewing the aforementioned studies, it is clear that this area of research lacks a unifying major theoretical approach. Many of the researchers indicate no theoretical orientation guiding their studies. For instance, Kalmijn and Bernasco (2001) never specifically identify a theory, but they use language of exchange theory arguing that couples are less likely to divorce when they have a joint lifestyle because of the “costs” they might incur. The act of creating a joint lifestyle constructs a set of goods that are seen as “benefits” of the marriage. Shared activities are described as a form of “marital capital.” The language of exchange theory is fundamental in this assumption of Kalmijn and Bernasco: “The way couples organize their leisure depends in part on the *costs* and *benefits* [italics added] involved in developing a joint lifestyle” (p. 641). If researchers are already using the language and concepts of exchange theory, it is likely that this theory might offer a valuable perspective through which family scientists can view this leisure and marital satisfaction relationship.

The major premise of exchange theory is that “humans avoid costly behavior and seek rewarding statuses, relationships, interaction, and feeling states to the end that their profits are maximized” or their losses are minimized (Nye, 1979, p. 2). Exchange theory holds excellent potential for the present study for several reasons. First, the theory is especially useful in analyzing dyads. Since the data in the present study related specifically to marital dyads, exchange theory is a fitting perspective. Another beneficial aspect of exchange theory is the focus on individual perceptions. This emphasis on individual interpretation is especially appropriate due to the subjective nature of leisure, one of the key variables in the current study. Additionally, the cost-benefit analysis of exchange theory helps make sense of why spouses may choose to participate in different

types of leisure activities. This may be especially beneficial in analyzing shared leisure experiences.

Summary

Chapter II discussed the research in the areas of marital satisfaction, shared leisure, and leisure satisfaction. Theoretical perspectives used in the literature were presented as well. The chapter also included the rationale for using exchange theory in the current study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the sample, procedure, measurement, and analyses designed to investigate the research question and conceptual hypotheses described in Chapter I and supported by the literature review in Chapter II. The present study explored the hypothesized relationships between levels of marital satisfaction and the following variables: time spent in shared leisure, satisfaction with the amounts of time, decision making about shared leisure, similarity of leisure interests, and shared leisure satisfaction.

Participants

The target population for this study was all married couples with adolescent children. However, the sampling frame was a list of 258 adolescents who were members of the youth group at a protestant church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. This church was established in 1963 and now has over 2,000 members that attend Sunday services. Since the focus was on marital satisfaction, the study was limited to married parents. After removing single-parent families from the list, 144 unduplicated married couples with adolescent children were included in the sample. From the list of adolescents, 288 parents were contacted as the participants in the study. Of those individuals contacted, 40% completed the surveys, for a final sample of 116 married persons. Fifty married couples were represented in the sample. Respondents lived primarily in two

communities—Oklahoma City and Edmond, Oklahoma, the neighboring city to the north. Oklahoma City is a city of 506,132 residents, and Edmond has approximately 68,315 residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The median household incomes of the two cities are \$34,947 and \$54,556, respectively (State of the Cities Data System [SOCDS] Census Data: Output for Oklahoma City, OK; SOCDS Census Data: Output for Edmond, OK).

The method of sampling used was convenience or availability sampling. In this sampling method, participants are selected because they are accessible. Convenience sampling is not the preferred method for obtaining a sample that is representative of the target population. Since convenience sampling is not a systematic technique, the sample was potentially biased.

There were 52 (44.8%) husbands and 64 (55.2%) wives represented in the sample, which included 50 married couples. There were 110 (94.8%) Caucasian participants, four (3.4%) Native American participants, and one (0.9%) Asian American participant. A more racially diverse sample would be beneficial in future research. The sample represented considerable diversity in household income level. One individual (.9%) reported an annual household income below \$24,999. Eleven respondents (9.5%) had income levels ranging from \$25,000 to \$49,999. There were 20 (17.2%) individuals in the \$50,000 to \$74,000 bracket and 22 (19.0%) individuals in the \$75,000 to \$99,999 bracket. Fifty-eight respondents (50.0%) reported income levels at or above \$100,000. Four participants chose not to disclose their household income level. The number of years married to the current spouse ranged from 6 to 32 years. Four people (3.4%) had been married 10 years or less. Forty-one participants (35.3%) had been married for 11-20 years. Fifty-two respondents (44.8%) reported that they had been married to their spouse

between 21 and 30 years. Three respondents (2.6%) reported that they had been married over 31 years. One chose not to respond. When asked how many times they had been married, 107 participants (92.2%) had only been married once, and 9 participants (7.8%) had been married twice. The number of children in the family, which included both children and stepchildren, ranged from two to five.

Research Design and Procedures

Data for this study was collected through the administration of self-report instruments to married couples. To obtain the best possible response by mail, Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method was used. Dillman's method includes specific instructions designed to increase response rates in mail surveys. Topics addressed include issues such as multiple contacts, the contents of mailings, and the appearance of envelopes. Some adaptations were made to fit financial and time restrictions. For instance, financial incentives were not used in the present study.

In the current study, recipients first received a pre-notice letter explaining what the study was about and the importance of collecting the information (see Appendix A). The questionnaire packet was distributed to the research participants by mail a few days later. The packet included a cover letter and the questionnaire. The cover letter instructed the couples to complete the questionnaires individually and to return them to the researcher individually via the mail in the self-addressed stamped envelopes provided in the packet (see Appendix B). The next two items in the packet were two sets of questionnaires each labeled with a different identification number (see Appendix C). The final elements included were two self-addressed stamped envelopes. The questionnaires were completed at a time and place that was most convenient for the individual. The

researcher reviewed the data after the couples returned the self-administered questionnaires. Approximately ten days after the questionnaires were sent and after several questionnaires had been returned, thank-you postcards were used for follow-up to obtain the best results (see Appendix D).

Measurement

Variables in the study were assessed using a combination of existing self-report questionnaires. Demographic variables were measured using standard fact sheet items. Table 1 displays all measurements utilized in the current study and the corresponding variables.

Table 1

Measurement of Variables

Variable	Instrument	Author	No. of Items	Reliability	
				Previous	Current
Marital Satisfaction	Relationship Assessment Scale	Hendrick	7	0.86	0.92
Current % of Leisure Time Spent with Spouse	Standard Fact Sheet Item	*	1	**	**
Different Between Current & Desired %	Standard Fact Sheet Item	*	1	**	**
Satisfaction with the Amount of Leisure Time	Likert Item	*	1	**	**
Degree of Interaction	Likert Item	*	1	**	**
Decision Making	Likert Item	*	1	**	**
Similar Leisure Interests	Likert Item	*	1	**	**
Leisure Satisfaction	Leisure Satisfaction Scale Social Subscale (Adapted)	Beard & Ragheb	7	0.88	0.87

* Developed by the author for this study

** Reliability does not apply to single items.

Measure of Marital Satisfaction

The reported level of marital satisfaction was measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Hendrick, 1988). The RAS is a seven-item questionnaire designed to measure relationship satisfaction (see Items 1-7 of Appendix C). This particular scale was selected because it focuses on overall happiness with the relationship. Items on the scale focus on the global concept of satisfaction rather than satisfaction related to specific factors often associated with marital satisfaction, such as interaction, conflict-resolution, or shared-decision making. These specific areas, especially the interaction dimension, could affect the results when looking for the connection to shared leisure. Unlike these other scales, the RAS does not include questions about specific variables, such as leisure, which could confound the results. Sample questions include: (a) “In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?” (b) “How good is your relationship compared to most?” (c) “How much do you love your partner?” Response choices used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = “Extremely unsatisfied” to 5 = “Extremely satisfied.” Two items on the scale were reverse scored, and then the total relationship satisfaction score was computed by summing the items and using the mean score for the scale. The RAS has strong reliability, with a reported internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach’s alpha) of .86 (Hendrick). Reliability was also computed using data from the present sample; the Cronbach’s alpha was .92. The scale has been examined for concurrent and predictive validity, producing significant correlations with related scales and predicting couple break-ups (Corcoran & Fischer, 2000). Other scales used to determine concurrent validity included The Love Attitudes Scale (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986), the Sexual Attitudes Scale (Hendrick,

Hendrick, Slapion-Foote, & Foote, 1985), the Self-Disclosure Index and Opener Scale (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983). Significant correlations between the RAS and these selected measures ranged from .21 to .60.

Measure of Shared Leisure Satisfaction

Each spouse's level of shared leisure satisfaction was measured by an adapted version of the 11-item Likert social subscale of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (LSS; see Items 13-19 of Appendix C; Beard & Ragheb, 1980). This subscale was chosen because the primary focus of this study is the leisure activities shared by spouses. The other subscales of the LSS were not specifically concerned with any sort of interaction that takes place during leisure activities. Questions were adapted to relate specifically to the leisure activities shared with the spouse. For instance, the original scale items included "I have social interaction with others through leisure activities," which was changed to "I have social interaction with my spouse through leisure activities." The original item "My leisure activities have helped me to develop close relationships with others" was adapted to "My leisure activities have helped me to develop a close relationship with my spouse." Response choices ranged from 1 = "Almost never true" to 5 = "Almost always true," with higher scores indicating greater levels of satisfaction with leisure activities shared with the spouse. The total score for the social subscale of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale was computed by summing the items and using the mean score for the scale. The internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the social subscale of the LSS was reported as .88 by the author of the scale, but a recent study on the reliability and validity showed a Cronbach's alpha of .80 (Trottier, Brown, Hobson, & Miller, 2002). In verifying the reliability, the current study revealed a Cronbach's alpha of .87 for the

modified scale. The author of the original instrument assessed the scale for face and content validity (Beard & Ragheb), and Trottier et al. additionally reported that the test-retest validity of the subscale (calculated by the Pearson product moment correlation) was .70, which is significant ($p < .001$).

Measurement of Single-Item Leisure Variables

In addition to the previously established RAS and the modified social subscale of the LSS, several single-item measures were created for use in this study. Participants were asked to approximate the total number of hours spent each week in leisure activities. Next, respondents were asked to estimate what percentage of those hours are spent in leisure (a) with their spouse only, (b) with their family (children and spouse), (c) with their friends (without their spouse), (d) with their spouse and friends together, and (e) alone. Along these same dimensions, participants were asked to report what percentages of leisure hours spent with each of the above categories would be considered ideal. The consistency between an individual's percentages of leisure time spent with the spouse was measured by subtracting the current percentage from the desired percentage (see Part II of Appendix C). The single-item Likert questions were also used to evaluate shared leisure patterns, decision-making patterns regarding shared leisure, leisure compatibility, and satisfaction with the shared leisure activities with their partner. In regard to satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure with a spouse, respondents were asked, "To what extent are you satisfied with the amount of time you have for leisure shared with your spouse?" Response choices ranged from 1 = "Extremely unsatisfied" to 5 = "Extremely satisfied." To measure the degree of interaction that typically occurs during shared leisure, participants answered the question, "To what

extent do your leisure experiences shared with your spouse require interaction?” For this item, responses ranged from 1 = “Not at all” to 5 = “To a great extent.” Respondents completed the following statement to report perceived similarity of leisure interests: “In general, my spouse’s leisure interests are...” Response choices ranged from 1 = “Very different from mine” to 5 = “Very similar to mine.” The following statement was used to measure decision-making about shared leisure experiences: “In general, in shared leisure experiences, are you more likely to do things...” Respondents choices ranged from 1 = “My spouse wants to do” to 3 = “We both want to do” to 5 = “I want to do.”

Demographic Questionnaire

Respondents were also asked to provide some demographic information using standard fact sheet items. Questions included variables such as gender, race, household income range, number and ages of children in the family, number of years the couple has been married, and the number of times the respondent has been married. Some of these demographic variables, such as race, annual household income, number of years the couple has been married, and number of marriages were necessary for assessing generalizability.

Operational Hypotheses

- Hypothesis 1. The reported percentage of total leisure time spent in leisure activities with a spouse is positively related to scores on the RAS. The independent variable presented is the percentage of time spent in shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 2. The difference between ideal and current percentages of time spent in leisure with a spouse is negatively correlated with RAS scores. In this

hypothesis, the consistency between current and desired percentages is the independent variable, and the level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.

- Hypothesis 3. The score for satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared leisure with a spouse is positively related to scores on the RAS. The independent variable in this particular hypothesis is the level of satisfaction with the amount of time spent in leisure activities with a spouse. Again, the dependent variable in this hypothesis is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 4. The greater the extent of interaction reported by spouses, the greater the scores on the RAS. The independent variable in this hypothesis is the interaction pattern of shared leisure, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 5. The higher the score on the item related to the individual's perceived influence in decision making, the higher the score on the RAS. The independent variable in this hypothesis is the degree of participation in decision making. The dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.
- Hypothesis 6. The higher degree of similarity of leisure interests reported by participants is directly correlated to scores on the RAS. The degree of similarity of leisure interests is the independent variable. The level of marital satisfaction is the dependent variable.
- Hypothesis 7. There is a direct relationship between the reported scores on the LSS social subscale and the scores on the RAS within the sample population. In

this hypothesis, the independent variable is the level of shared leisure satisfaction, and the dependent variable is the level of marital satisfaction.

Analyses

Prior to testing the research hypotheses, a series of one-way analyses of variance were conducted to determine if gender of participant differences existed on each of the seven independent variables used to test the hypotheses. Next, bivariate correlations were run to test the research hypotheses. Assuming gender of participant differences were evident, the bivariate correlations would have been conducted for the overall sample and for subsamples of males and females. In addition, if gender differences were evident, a set of hierarchical multiple regression analyses would have been required to examine the extent to which gender of participant moderated the relationships between the independent variables and marital satisfaction. For example, if gender differences were found in leisure satisfaction, a set of hierarchical multiple regression analyses would have been conducted using the following steps: step one would have involved the entry of gender as a predictor variable and marital satisfaction as a criterion variable, step two would have involved the entry of leisure satisfaction, and step three would have involved the entry of an interaction variable of gender x marital satisfaction. This procedure allows for the examination of whether the interaction term is significant after taking into account the variance explained by the variables of gender and leisure satisfaction. However, since gender differences were not evident, the hierarchical multiple regression analyses were not necessary.

Methodological Limitations

Convenience sampling was not the preferred method for obtaining a sample that was representative of the target population. Because there was no systematic technique used, the sample was potentially biased. The sample used in this study was largely Caucasian and affluent due to the general characteristics and geographical area of the sample. Generalizability was limited due the homogeneous sample. However, findings produced by this study provided a solid base for future research on more diverse populations.

In addition to the sampling limitations of the present study, nonrespondents were a potential weakness. Not everyone who received the questionnaire returned a completed questionnaire. Dillman's (2000) Tailored Design Method was used to prevent high numbers of nonrespondents. However, bias was a possibility without getting a response from all members of the sample. Moreover, there were some participants who returned incomplete questionnaires. In computing total RAS and LSS scores, the mean for each individual's scores was substituted for missing answers on single items. In statistical analyses, cases were excluded pairwise when insufficient data was provided.

There were some limitations concerning the measurements employed in the present study. For instance, there might be questions raised regarding the adaptation of the LSS social subscale. Some of the original questions were not appropriate when applied specifically to the marital relationship. This may affect the validity of the measurement. However, the field lacks a completely relevant or sufficient instrument for measuring leisure satisfaction pertaining to couples' shared leisure experiences. Because of the previously reported reliability of this scale, it was believed to be an appropriate measure for the current study.

The use of percentages to report with whom individuals spend their leisure time was also a unique measurement technique. Participants were asked to estimate what percentage of their total leisure time they spend (a) with their spouse only, (b) with their families (children and spouse), (c) with their friends, (d) with their spouse and friends together, and (e) alone. Other approaches to measuring leisure have included lists of activities or activity journals, in which the researcher determines what activities qualify as leisure (Crawford et al., 2002; Holman & Jacquart, 1988; Kalmijn & Bernasco; Mattingly & Bianchi, 2003; Orthner, 1975). Leisure, especially shared leisure, tends to be a concept that is difficult to quantify. The definition is highly subjective, based on the individual's interpretation of the activity. Without providing a predetermined list of typical leisure activities, these measurement items in the current study allowed the individual to tell the researcher how much time he or she spends in activities that he or she perceives as leisure. Letting the respondent determine what activities should count as leisure is believed to be more accurate than the interpretations of the researcher.

The RAS has limitations similar to other self-report questionnaires, including questions about whether the participants will answer questions accurately or if they base their answers on perceived expectations of the researcher. Despite these concerns, self-report questionnaires are used frequently in the field of family science. Statistical analyses helped the researcher determine reliability of the data. The RAS was ideal for the present study because of its emphasis on questions regarding the overall relationship satisfaction rather than inferring satisfaction based on responses concerning specific areas of the marital relationship, such as conflict resolution, communication, and so forth.

Summary

Chapter III highlighted the methodology utilized in the present study. The sample was selected based on a convenience sampling method. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed to participants by mail. Measurements included the Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988), the Leisure Satisfaction Scale (Beard & Ragheb, 1980) social subscale, leisure time measurement items, and demographic questions. Operational hypotheses related the variables to specific instruments utilized in the present study. Proposed analytical methods included correlations, one-way ANOVAs, and hierarchical multiple regression analyses. The researcher also acknowledged possible methodological limitations within this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter reports on the results of the one-way analyses of variance and bivariate correlations used to examine the research questions and hypotheses. Specifically, one-way analyses of variance were used as a preliminary check for possible gender differences in the variables. Next, bivariate correlations were used to test the seven hypotheses. Since no gender differences were evident, no analyses were conducted regarding the extent to which gender served as a moderator variable in relationships between other variables and marital satisfaction.

Preliminary Analyses to Address Gender

Because gender differences were possible regarding the variables in the hypotheses, a series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine the association between gender and marital satisfaction and to investigate possible gender differences on all seven independent variables. Results revealed that there was no significant variance by gender on the dependent variable or any of the independent variables: percentage of time spent with spouse, difference between current and desired leisure with spouse, satisfaction with amount of time in shared leisure, degree of interaction, decision making, similarity of leisure interests, and shared leisure satisfaction. Results for the series of one-way ANOVAs were reported in Table 2. Since none of the eight variables yielded significant differences based upon the gender of the

participants, additional analyses relating to gender differences were not conducted.

Table 2
One-way ANOVAs

	Gender	N	df	SD	F
(1) Marital satisfaction	1	52	115	0.75	0.74
	2	64		0.78	
(2) Percentage of leisure time spent with spouse	1	49	108	17.12	0.04
	2	60		17.14	
(3) Difference between current & desired leisure with spouse	1	47	100	13.18	0.85
	2	54		12.66	
(4) Satisfaction with amount of time in shared leisure	1	52	115	1.04	1.83
	2	64		1.11	
(5) Degree of interaction	1	52	115	0.85	0.08
	2	64		0.84	
(6) Decision-making	1	52	114	0.68	0.11
	2	63		0.53	
(7) Similarity of leisure interests	1	51	113	1.13	2.44
	2	63		0.99	
(8) Shared leisure satisfaction	1	52	115	0.65	0.04
	2	64		0.7	

* $p < .05$

Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses 1-7 were tested using bivariate correlations of participants' reports of aspects of leisure and marital satisfaction. The means, standard deviations, and correlations were summarized in Table 3 and described below.

Table 3
Correlations (N = 116)

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Marital satisfaction	1.00							
(2) Percentage of leisure time spent with spouse	0.26 *	1.00						
(3) Difference between current & desired leisure with spouse	-0.13	-0.50 *	1.00					
(4) Satisfaction with amount of time in shared leisure	0.30 *	0.29 *	-0.35 *	1.00				
(5) Degree of interaction	0.47 *	0.27 *	0.14	0.44 *	1.00			
(6) Decision-making	0.29 *	0.12	0.00	0.29 *	0.27 *	1.00		
(7) Similarity of leisure interests	0.38 *	0.26 *	-0.25 *	0.48 *	0.51 *	0.42 *	1.00	
(8) Shared leisure satisfaction	0.65 *	0.24 *	-0.06	0.31 *	0.55 *	0.26 *	0.45 *	1.00
Mean	4.18	26.23	6.31	3.16	3.50	2.87	3.21	3.73
SD	0.76	17.05	12.90	1.08	0.84	0.60	1.06	0.67

* $p < .01$

Leisure Time and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 1 stated that the higher the reported percentage of total leisure time spent with the spouse, the higher the levels of marital satisfaction. This relationship was tested using a bivariate correlation analysis. Participants reported the percentage of leisure time spent with their spouses ranging from 0% to 75% with a mean of 26.23% ($SD = 17.05$, $N = 109$). The relationship between marital satisfaction and the percentage of total leisure time spent with the spouse were positively related at a significant level ($r = .26$, $p = .003$), providing support for Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that the difference between the percentage of leisure time reported to be spent with the spouse and percentage of leisure time desired to be spent with the spouse would be negatively related to marital satisfaction. Rather than looking at only the current percentage of leisure time that an individual spends with a spouse as in Hypothesis 1, this hypothesis looked at the discrepancy between that percentage and the percentage of time the respondents ideally wanted to spend with their spouses in leisure activities. This score was reached by subtracting the current percentage of leisure time spent in shared leisure activities with a spouse from the ideal percentage of leisure time ($M = 6.31$, $SD = 12.90$, $N = 101$). The correlation of this consistency with relationship satisfaction was not significant. ($r = -.13$, $p = .10$). Thus, no support was provided for Hypothesis 2.

Satisfaction with Leisure Time and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 3 examined the relationship between satisfaction with the amount of time spent in leisure with the spouse and marital satisfaction. The mean score on this item was 3.16 ($SD = 1.08$, $N = 116$). Satisfaction with the amount of time spent in shared

leisure was significantly and positively related to marital satisfaction ($r = .30, p = .001$).

The significant relationship between these two variables provided support for Hypothesis 3.

Interaction in Shared Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 4 examined the relationship between the degree of interaction that took place during shared leisure activities and marital satisfaction. The mean score on the item measuring such interaction was 3.50 ($SD = 0.84, N = 116$). Results of the bivariate correlation revealed a significant positive correlation between the two variables ($r = .47, p = .00$), showing that more interaction during shared leisure was positively associated with higher marital satisfaction. A pattern of shared leisure activities that require little contact between spouses was associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction. Thus, the results provided support for Hypothesis 4.

Decision Making and Marital Satisfaction

Support was provided for Hypothesis 5 which proposed that scores on decision making about leisure activities would be positively related to marital satisfaction. The higher the score on this item, the higher the individual's perceived influence in choosing what leisure activities the couple will do. Higher scores did not reflect joint decision making. Scores on the item measuring decision making about leisure activities ranged from 1 to 5 ($M = 2.87, SD = 0.60, N = 115$). There was a significant positive correlation between an individual's participation in decision making about shared leisure and his or her level of marital satisfaction ($r = .29, p = .001$). These results show that participants who perceive they have greater individual influence on choosing which leisure activities they will do with their spouse reported greater marital satisfaction.

Similarity of Leisure Interests and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 6 predicted a positive correlation between participants' reports of similar leisure interests with their spouses and marital satisfaction. Scores on the measure for similarity of leisure interests ranged from 1 to 5 ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.06$, $N = 114$). As hypothesized, the results of the bivariate correlation revealed a significant positive relationship between the two variables ($r = .38$, $p = .00$), supporting Hypothesis 6.

Leisure Satisfaction and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 7 proposed that participants' shared leisure satisfaction would be positively related to marital satisfaction. The significant positive correlation between leisure satisfaction and marital satisfaction provides support for Hypothesis 7 ($r = .65$, $p < .00$). Scores on the LSS ranged from 1.71 to 5.0 ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.67$, $N = 116$). Scores on the social subscale of the Leisure Satisfaction Scale were directly related to scores on the Relationship Assessment Scale, as expected through Hypothesis 7.

Summary

This chapter reported results of statistical analyses used to test the research hypotheses. A series of one-way ANOVAs revealed no significant variation according to gender. Significant correlations existed between marital satisfaction and six of the seven independent variables. The only hypothesis not supported through statistical testing was Hypothesis 3, which looked at the discrepancy between the current and desired percentages of total leisure time spent alone with a spouse.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Chapter V discusses the research results in relation to the research questions, hypotheses, related research, and related theory. Recommendations for practice and future research are presented.

Overview of the Results

The results of this study provided substantial support for the hypotheses that married adults' reports about leisure patterns with their spouses are significantly related to marital satisfaction. In sum, the current study would indicate that marital satisfaction is linked to leisure shared with a spouse. Rather than examining only the amount of time spent together, this study examined variables such as the percentage of total leisure time that the individual spends with his or her spouse, similarity of leisure interests, leisure interaction, and leisure satisfaction.

Hypothesis 1: Current Percentage of Leisure Time and Marital Satisfaction

Consistent with the first hypothesis, marital satisfaction increased as the percentage of leisure time spent with a spouse increased. Having the respondents report how much of their leisure time is spent with a spouse, family, friends, alone, and so forth relates well to the concept of the comparison level of alternatives within exchange theory. The comparison level of alternatives probably relates to why a person would choose marital leisure over leisure activities alone or with other people. Discretionary time can

be seen as a form of relationship capital, and when an individual chooses to invest this time in the marital relationship rather than spending it alone or with others, it may be due to the fact that they receive greater rewards from the time spent in leisure with a spouse. They may perceive that time with their spouse as more rewarding than the time spent alone or with friends. The findings were consistent with the recommendations of earlier researchers who recommend looking at variables other than just the amount of time a couple spends in shared leisure activities (Berg et al., 2001). Having respondents report percentages of time spent with different groups was in line with such recommendations.

Hypothesis 2: Current vs. Desired Percentage of Leisure Time and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 2 was not supported since the discrepancy between the actual percentage of leisure time spent with the spouse and the desired percentage of leisure time spent with the spouse did not seem to be related to marital satisfaction. Perhaps calculating the difference between current and desired percentages of leisure time spent with a spouse was not an effective measure. The task of reporting both current and desired percentages of shared leisure time may have seemed lengthy to some participants, and they may have provided superficial responses. Social desirability might also have affected respondents. Participants might have reported similar percentages on both if they wanted to seem satisfied with the distribution of their leisure time, or they might have exaggerated the difference if they thought it seemed more socially desirable to want to spend more time with their spouse in leisure activities. Additionally, the stage of life of the couples used in the sample could be relevant to explaining the lack of significant findings. Respondents may not place a great deal of importance on leisure spent alone

with a spouse at this stage of life when there are activities with children, careers, social responsibilities, and so forth all vying for their time.

Hypothesis 3: Satisfaction with Leisure Time and Marital Satisfaction

Support was provided for Hypothesis 3 where respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the amount of time they spend in shared leisure activities with their spouse and the results were compared to reported marital satisfaction. This correlation was significant, indicating that marital satisfaction is higher when individuals report they are able to spend an acceptable amount of time in leisure activities with their spouses. Consistent with previous research, this satisfaction variable seems to be a more appropriate measure than looking at strictly the amount of time spouses spend together in leisure activities. Exchange theory argues that satisfaction is determined by the rewards minus the costs. An individual's happiness with the amount of time they spend in leisure activities with a spouse is a rewarding aspect of the relationship. Researchers have previously argued that there is a direct relationship between outcomes and satisfaction. As satisfaction with the amount of time increases, the reward grows, which in turn affects the outcome of overall relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: Degrees of Interaction in Shared Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

This hypothesis examined the extent to which reports of the degree of interaction with the spouse in shared leisure related to marital satisfaction. As with the amount of time spouses spend in leisure together, the interaction that occurs through leisure activities can vary greatly among couples. Results indicated that the greater the degree of interaction reported to take place during shared leisure activities, the higher the levels of

marital satisfaction. Activities that allow communication between participants have a connection to increased relationship satisfaction.

This finding was consistent with previous research, particularly that research by Orthner (1975) and others that examined joint, parallel, and individual leisure activities. The high levels of interaction described in the current study could be equated to what Orthner coined “joint” leisure activities. Chapter I mentioned that valued communication could be a reward associated with shared leisure. This was exactly what Orthner wrote about. Interaction can be very valuable, playing a significant role in contributing to relationship satisfaction. However, as mentioned before, one must be cautious not to infer causality. The major premise of exchange theory is that humans avoid costly behavior and seek rewarding relationships. A spouse may avoid intense interaction if satisfaction with the relationship is already low because of overwhelming costs and insufficient rewards. Due to the correlational nature of the present research, one cannot assume that the high levels of interaction cause the increase in marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Decision Making about Leisure and Marital Satisfaction

Significant results were found for Hypothesis 5, indicating that marital satisfaction tended to be higher when an individual reported they had more influence in deciding what activities they do with the spouse rather than joint decision making or the spouse having more influence. The scores for decision making regarding shared leisure activities were not weighted toward equal decision making between spouses. The more power one individual had in deciding what types of leisure activities the spouses would do together, the greater their marital satisfaction. This finding was consistent with exchange theory, in that choosing leisure activities that an individual enjoys is probably

viewed as a reward that contributes to his or her overall satisfaction with the exchange relationship. The definition of leisure offered in the literature includes the freedom of choice perceived by the individual. Therefore, from a leisure professional's point of view, it makes sense that the activity would contribute more to satisfaction when this sense of choice is greater. The findings regarding Hypothesis 5 would be expected by leisure researchers because of the highly individualized characteristic inherent in leisure activities. Role theory might also contribute to the explanation of these findings.

According to this theory, a spouse would feel more satisfied with an activity that is enjoyable to them as long as they perceive support from their spouse. When an individual gets to choose an experience that is enjoyable for them knowing that their spouse will go along with the decision, this leisure experience will most likely be positively related to marital satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: Similar Leisure Interests and Marital Satisfaction

In support of Hypothesis 6, participants who reported they share similar leisure interests with their spouses also reported greater marital satisfaction. Leisure may play a more positive role in the relationship when spouses can easily identify leisure activities that they both enjoy. This finding fit well within the tenets of exchange theory. The more time a couple can spend in leisure activities that are mutually rewarding, the less time either partner has to spend in an activity that may be viewed as costly. Thus, leisure activities may enhance satisfaction for both partners when they are mutually enjoyable.

Hypothesis 7: Shared Leisure Satisfaction and Marital Satisfaction

Hypothesis 7 was supported by the results that reports of shared leisure satisfaction were directly correlated with marital satisfaction. One interpretation of the

results was that shared leisure satisfaction is a key element in promoting marital satisfaction. On the other hand, the strength of the relationship between these two variables may indicate that there is not a good distinction between the two variables in either conceptualization or measurement. The measure of leisure satisfaction helps determine the level of reward in shared leisure experiences. One might argue that marital satisfaction is improved by shared leisure activities that are satisfying. On the other hand, it may be that respondents who are more satisfied with their relationship with their spouse are naturally going to report that they are more satisfied with the leisure activities they do with their partner. More research is needed to determine whether or not the distinction between these two variables is sufficient or how shared leisure may be an important component of satisfying marriages.

Limitations

Although methodological limitations were noted in Chapter III, a few limitations to this study will be highlighted here as well. One of the greatest limitations of the current study was related to measurement. The study of shared leisure between couples and the field of leisure sciences lacks a published instrument that adequately measures perceptions and feelings about shared leisure. There were several single-items measures used that have not been tested in previous research and do not have evidence of validity or reliability. A scale with demonstrated reliability would be extremely beneficial for uniting future research.

In addition to the limitations with measurements, demographic diversity was very limited with this sample. Results were still significant. Support was provided for six of

the seven hypotheses. However, for greater generalizability, a more racially and socioeconomically diverse sample would be beneficial in future research.

Recommendations for Future Research and Family Professionals

The current study was primarily exploratory in nature. The literature had revealed that measuring only the amount of time couples spend in shared leisure was insufficient. This study focused on other variables related to marital leisure that have great potential. The initial results were very interesting and encourage future research with similar variables, which will hopefully produce more standardized measures.

It is important for researchers and family professionals alike to not assume a one-way relationship between leisure and marital satisfaction. Although the literature does present evidence for the positive effects of leisure on marital satisfaction, it is also likely that marital satisfaction greatly affects the shared leisure experiences of couples. Spouses who are unhappy with their marital relationship are not as likely to enjoy spending time with each other compared to spouses who are more satisfied with their relationship. Leisure in and of itself is not good for marital satisfaction. Leisure education is an important part of using leisure to improve marital satisfaction. By understanding the status of a couple's relationship, leisure professionals can construct leisure activities that might be more beneficial for a couple who is currently struggling with their marriage. But it is dangerous to assume that throwing a struggling couple into leisure activities together will provide a "quick fix" for any problems.

While being cautious about assuming a causal relationship, there are some practical recommendations regarding the findings. It seems that leisure is a valuable aspect of marital satisfaction that should be included as a key topic in both premarital and

marital enrichment education. First, married couples should develop habits of spending time together in shared leisure, apart from times they spend with friends and other family members. Based on the changing needs of each individual and perhaps the entire family unit, a couple may find it beneficial to discuss the amount of time they spend together and find an appropriate amount of time that is satisfactory to both partners. Perhaps leisure activity inventories would be helpful tools to help couples identify which leisure interests they share. Finding activities that are mutually enjoyable may prevent frustration, and having a variety of mutually satisfying activities to choose from may prevent boredom or satiation. Also, couples should be encouraged to share decision making about shared leisure activities.

There is still much to be gained from research on marital satisfaction and shared leisure, but the link between the two is has great promise for family services. As family scientists and professionals learn more about the link between these two variables, perhaps it can be used to help improve relationship satisfaction. Orthner et al. (1993) suggest that leisure experiences play a very significant role in promoting positive interactions on both personal and family levels. Designing and incorporating positive leisure experiences for married couples and families may prove to be a very beneficial practice.

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the current study in relation to hypotheses, theory, and previous research. Limitations of the findings were presented. Finally, some suggestions were given for both practice and future research.

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APPENDIX A

PRE-NOTICE LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE: FIRST MAILING

March 1, 2004

John and Jane Doe
123 Apple Drive
Edmond, OK 12345

Dear John and Jane,

In just a few days, there will be a special packet sent to you through the mail. I am requesting your participation in an important research project being conducted through Oklahoma State University.

This research project focuses on marital satisfaction and shared leisure experiences of married couples with adolescent children.

I am currently working on my masters degree in Human Development and Family Science through OSU. This research is important because it helps us understand how spending time together is associated with relationship satisfaction. This information can be used to help those in family services better meet the needs of married couples. In addition, the general findings will be made available to you and the leadership at the Memorial Road Church of Christ to help the church find ways that they too can better serve families.

Thank you for considering participation in this project. The kindness of people like you will make this research a success.

Sincerely,

Sada Knowles

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE: SECOND MAILING

March 5, 2004

John and Jane Doe
123 Apple Drive
Edmond, OK 12345

Dear John & Jane,

I am requesting your help in a study as a part of my graduate research at Oklahoma State University. This study, titled Marital Satisfaction, Shared Leisure, and Leisure Satisfaction in Married Couples with Adolescent Children, is designed to learn more about the connection between marital satisfaction and shared leisure activities specifically in couples with adolescent children.

I am contacting the parents of all the adolescents in the Memorial Road Church of Christ youth group to ask about how satisfied you are with your marriage, the amount of time you spend in leisure activities with your spouse and other people, and how satisfied you are with leisure experiences you share with your spouse.

The information you provide will help family service providers learn more about how leisure can be used to enhance marital satisfaction. The findings will also be made available to you and to the leadership at the Memorial Road Church of Christ in order to help them better serve the parents of our adolescents.

Let me assure you that every measure will be taken to protect the confidentiality of your responses. Results will only report general findings without any identifiable individual answers. Each of you should complete one copy of the questionnaire in private and return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelopes. When your questionnaire has been returned, your name will be removed from the mailing list, so

your name can never be connected with your responses. Participation in this study is voluntary, but I hope you will take just a few minutes to help in this research effort. If you choose not to respond, please let me know by returning the blank questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

I would be more than happy to answer any questions or concerns regarding this study. You may contact me by phone at (405)340-6222 or by email at sada@okstate.edu. For questions pertaining to the rights of research subjects, contact Dr. Carol Olson, IRB Chair, Oklahoma State University, 415 Whitehurst, Stillwater, OK 74078 (Phone: (405)744-5700).

Thank you for helping with this important study.

Sincerely,

Sada Knowles

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE: SECOND MAILING

By reading the cover letter and voluntarily returning the completed questionnaire, you are giving informed consent to participate in the current study.

Part I – In this section, circle your answer.

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. How well does your partner meet your needs? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Poorly | | Average | | Extremely well |
| | | | | | |
| 2. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Extremely Unsatisfied | | Neutral | | Extremely satisfied |
| | | | | | |
| 3. How good is your relationship compared to most? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Poor | | Average | | Excellent |
| | | | | | |
| 4. How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in this relationship? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Never | | Average | | Very often |
| | | | | | |
| 5. To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Not at all | | Average | | Completely |
| | | | | | |
| 6. How much do you love your partner? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Not much | | Average | | Very much |
| | | | | | |
| 7. How many problems are there in your relationship? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Very few | | Average | | Very many |
| | | | | | |
| 8. To what extent are you satisfied with the amount of time you have for leisure shared with your spouse? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Extremely unsatisfied | | Neutral | | Extremely satisfied |
| | | | | | |
| 9. To what extent do your leisure experiences shared with your spouse require interaction? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Not at all | | Somewhat | | To a great extent |
| | | | | | |
| 10. In general, my spouse's leisure interests are... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Very different from mine | | | | Very similar to mine |
| | | | | | |
| 11. In general, in shared leisure experiences, are you more likely to do things... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | My spouse wants to do | | We both want to do | | I want to do |

Part II - Please give your best estimate about the *amount of time you spend on average each week in leisure activities*.

12. In general, how many total hours do you spend in leisure activities each week? _____

Of that total amount of time spent in leisure activities, estimate the percentage of time you currently spend with the following people and the percentage of time you would like to spend with the following people...

Percentages in each column should total 100%:	Current %	Desired %
with your spouse (without children)	_____	_____
with your family (spouse and children)	_____	_____
with your friends (without your spouse)	_____	_____
with your spouse and friends together	_____	_____
alone	_____	_____

Part III – Circle your responses using the following choices:

	1 Almost True	2 Never True	3 Sometimes True	4 Almost Always True	5
13. My leisure activities allow me to reveal my thoughts, feelings, or physical skills to my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I have social interaction with my spouse through leisure activities.	1	2	3	4	5
15. My leisure activities have helped me to develop a close relationship with my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I prefer leisure activities in which I am with my spouse.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I enjoy making myself useful to my spouse in my free time.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I have a strong sense of belonging toward my spouse when we do leisure activities.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I respect my spouse when we do leisure activities.	1	2	3	4	5

Part IV – Please circle your responses to the questions below.

20. What is your gender? 1. Male 2. Female
21. What is your race? 1. Caucasian or white 5. Native American
 2. African-American or black 6. Mixed race, please specify _____
 3. Hispanic-American or Latino 7. Other, please specify _____
 4. Asian American
22. What is your annual household income? 1. \$0—\$24,999 4. \$75,000—\$99,999
 2. \$25,000—\$49,999 5. \$100,000 or above
 3. \$50,000—\$74,999

23. How many years have you been married to your spouse? ____
24. How many times have you been married? ____
25. Please list the ages of your children and circle the ages of those who do not live in your home.
- _____
26. Please list the ages of your stepchildren and circle the ages of those who do not live in your home.
- _____

APPENDIX D

THANK YOU POSTCARD: THIRD MAILING

In postcard format:

March 18, 2004

Last week you received a questionnaire in the mail about shared leisure patterns and marital satisfaction.

If you have already mailed your completed questionnaire, I want to thank you for your participation. If you have not returned the questionnaire yet, please do so today. Your participation is extremely important to the success of this important study.

If you have not yet received a questionnaire, or if it has been misplaced, please call me at (405) 340-6222, and I will gladly send a replacement to you today.

Thank you,

Sada Knowles

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 2/22/2005

Date: Monday, February 23, 2004

IRB Application No **HE0444**

Proposal Title: Marital Satisfaction, Shared Leisure, and Leisure Satisfaction in Married Couples with Adolescent Children

Principal
Investigator(s):

Sada Knowles
3913 Jim Robison
Edmond, OK 73013

Carolyn Henry
233 HES
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 protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact me in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, colson @ okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Carol Olson

Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Sada Ji Knowles

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: MARITAL SATISFACTION, SHARED LEISURE, AND LEISURE
SATISFACTION IN MARRIED COUPLES WITH ADOLESCENTS

Major Field: Human Development and Family Science

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Sallisaw, Oklahoma, On June 27, 1980, the daughter of Michael and Jolynn Herndon.

Education: Graduated from Oklahoma Christian Schools, Edmond, Oklahoma in May 1998; received Bachelor of Science degree in Family Studies and Vocational Ministry from Oklahoma Christian University, Edmond, Oklahoma in May 2002. Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Family Science at Oklahoma State University in July 2004.

Experience: Employed as a preschool teacher at Westwood Day School; conducted a research project "The Effects of Locus of Control on Performance Under Distraction" and presented at the spring 2002 OPS Conference; helped conduct a study "Bias toward the Mentally Ill in Oklahoma" in coordination with the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

Professional Memberships: Oklahoma Council on Family Relations, Phi Kappa Phi