Cognitive and Social Desirability Factors in Marital Adjustment for a Sample of Retired Older Adults

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COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL DESIRABILITY FACTORS IN MARITAL ADJUSTMENT FOR A SAMPLE OF RETIRED OLDER ADULTS

BY

PRISCILLA BETH WILSON
B.A., Taylor University, 1982

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science degree in Clinical Psychology in the Graduate Studies Program of the College of Arts and Sciences University of Central Florida Orlando, Florida

Summer Term 1987
ABSTRACT

This study investigated cognitive components of marital adjustment and the role of social desirability response sets in a sample of retired older adults. It was hypothesized that higher marital adjustment scores would correlate negatively with dysfunctional beliefs concerning marriage. The objectives of the study were to identify which irrational beliefs are related to higher and lower levels of marital adjustment, and to determine the extent to which higher adjustment scores reflect the tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner. The sample consisted of 45 married couples, each partner of which was retired and aged 65 years or older. Assessment was made by self-report using the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), Relationship Belief Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), and the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Significant correlations were found between virtually all total scores for the total sample as well as males and females separately. Results support the hypotheses that higher Dyadic Adjustment Scale scores were negatively correlated with lower Relationship Belief Inventory and Social Desirability Scale scores. No significant differences were found between males and females on any of the variables.
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INTRODUCTION

Dysfunctional Beliefs

"Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view they take of them," maintained the ancient philosopher, Epictetus.

Cognitive variables have increasingly become recognized as important components in the way in which an individual perceives himself, others, and his environment. This notion is a major premise of many theorists (Beck, 1976; Ellis, 1967; Epstein, 1982; Guidano & Lotti, 1983).

Albert Ellis (1967, 1977) bases his Rational-Emotive Therapy on the assumption that human beings have a biological predisposition for both rational and irrational thought. He maintains that humans have an apparent propensity for irrational thinking and an unwillingness to surrender their irrational ideas even in the face of insight. Ellis (1967) contends that these irrational beliefs are learned in childhood through indoctrination by significant others and later activated in adulthood through autosuggestion and self-repetition. He defines irrational thoughts as those which have self-defeating or self-destructive consequences. These thoughts or beliefs are either empirically false (Ellis, 1974) or are of such a nature that they cannot be empirically verified (Ellis, 1971).
Ellis (1977) maintains that there are certain irrational beliefs common to our culture (and probably other cultures as well). Most of these irrational ideas are "shoulds" or "musts." The notion that people create psychological havoc for themselves by insisting that another person should or must behave in certain ways, or that events should occur in some prescribed fashion is referred to by Ellis as "musterbation." It is this "musterbatory" thinking that, in Ellis' view, is the foundation of human problems (Ellis, 1979).

Ellis has identified several core irrational ideas which become internalized and frequently lead to self-defeating behavior. For example, believing that one must receive love and approval from significant others is irrational because it is arbitrary (cannot be empirically verified), and self-defeating because it will usually lead to frustration and disappointment (Ellis, 1962). Ellis also suggests a relationship between depression and the following core irrational beliefs: "the idea that one should be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all possible respects if one is to consider oneself worthwhile," and "the idea that it is awful and catastrophic when things are not the way one would very much like them to be" (p. 70).

In an attempt to obtain empirical support for Ellis' contentions, Nelson (1977) examined the relationship between
depression and certain types of irrational beliefs utilizing the Jones Irrational Beliefs Test (IBT; Jones, 1968). Results indicated that the beliefs concerning the idea that one should be thoroughly competent, adequate, and achieving in all possible respects if one is to consider oneself worthwhile, and the idea that it is awful and catastrophic when things are not the way one would very much like them to be, bore the strongest statistically significant correlation to depression when compared to eight other dysfunctional beliefs. Thus, these results support Ellis' contentions concerning an association between certain types of irrational beliefs and depression.

Ellis (1975) also has suggested that irrational beliefs play an important role in the generation and maintenance of anxiety. He contends that while some anxiety-provoking situations are unavoidable, an individual's reaction to them can be modified. He identified a core irrational belief which individuals typically adopt when they become anxious: the belief that if something proves threatening, one must get terribly preoccupied and upset about it. He maintains that this anxiety may be reduced or avoided by a realistic assessment of the probability of the occurrence of a tragic consequence and the realization that excessive worry stems from the person's dogmatically held personal ideas.

Jensen and Schill (1982) examined the relationship between irrational beliefs and anxiety in heterosocial
interactions. These researchers assessed the extent of the relationship between IBT scores and subjects' skill and anxiety using self-report and behavioral observation methods. Significant correlations were observed between IBT total scores and each of the self-report measures of heterosocial skill and anxiety. Additionally, subjects' anxiety scores from the structured observation procedure were significantly correlated with their IBT total score, and their scores on Subscales 1 (Love from everyone is necessary), and 6 (Dwell on negative possibilities). Subjects' skill scores were significantly correlated with scores on IBT Subscales 1, 2 (Disaster if hopes are not realized), and 6. Jensen and Schill (1982) asserted that, in the light of these results, cognitive variables should be more frequently considered in assessing heterosocial interactions. They also suggested that intervention strategies which focus on the alteration of certain cognitive distortions may assist in the reduction of heterosocial anxiety.

The relationship between irrational beliefs and psychological dysfunction has also been studied by LaPointe and Crandell (1980). They examined irrational beliefs among persons describing themselves as both depressed and distressed, individuals who were psychologically distressed but not depressed, and non-clinical subjects. Overall correlational results indicated that depressed subjects scored as more irrational on the IBT than distressed but not
depressed individuals. Results also indicated that depressed persons obtained the highest score indicating "a need to excel in everything in order to feel worthwhile," and "being terribly upset when things are not as one wishes" (p. 249).

Another theorist who has focused on the importance of cognitive variables and psychopathology is Aaron Beck. Beck (1976) contends that an individual's problems are derived largely from certain distortions of reality based on erroneous premises and assumptions which originate during early periods of cognitive development. His formula for treatment involves assisting the client in unraveling his distortions in thinking and in learning alternative, more realistic ways to formulate his experiences. Beck contends that this approach brings the understanding and treatment of the emotional disorder closer to the client's everyday experiences. Individuals can relate their disturbances to the types of misunderstandings they have experienced numerous times in their lives and have undoubtedly corrected. The role of the therapist then, is to demonstrate to clients how some of their assumptions about themselves and the world are unrealistic. With the help of the therapist, clients discover their own cognitive distortions and learn how these assumptions influence their behavior. Finally, in collaboration with the therapist, clients learn an alternate set of interpretations (Corey, 1982). Beck (1976) maintains that his cognitive therapy techniques are most effective and
appropriate for those individuals who have the capacity for introspection and for reflection on their own thoughts and fantasies.

In order to obtain information concerning cognitive distortions in depression, Beck and Hurvich (1959) examined the themes in the dreams of depressed individuals. They noted that depressed psychiatric patients displayed a higher proportion of dreams with negative outcomes than a matched group of nondepressed patients. These findings were later validated in a second, more refined study of the dreams of depressed and nondepressed patients (Beck & Ward, 1961).

In a similar study, Beck (1963) analyzed the verbatim verbal productions of samples of depressed and nondepressed psychotherapy patients. He observed that depressed patients distorted their experiences in an idiosyncratic way, misinterpreting events in terms of deprivation, personal failure, or rejection. They also exaggerated the significance of events that appeared to reflect negatively on them, and perseverated in making indiscriminate, negative predictions. These distorted appraisals of reality were similar to the content of the dreams described above.

Another researcher who has studied cognitions is Meichenbaum. Cognitive restructuring plays a central role in Meichenbaum's (1977) cognitive behavior modification. He described "cognitive structure" as the organizing, directive component of the thinking process. He proposed that
"behavior change occurs through a sequence of mediating processes involving the interaction of inner speech, cognitive structures, and their behaviors and resultant outcomes" (p. 218).

Cognitive theorists Foreyt and Rathjen (1978) have also researched cognitions and beliefs focusing on the influence of expectations on the generation of anger. When one's experience is discrepant from expectations, arousal occurs as equilibrium is disturbed and the individual seeks to adjust to the demands of the situation. The arousal is labeled anger when situational cues are present which have a learned connection with anger, particularly when one is inclined to behave aggressively.

According to Foreyt and Rathjen (1978), expectations influence anger in several ways: (1) high expectations for desirable consequences that do not occur may make an undesirable outcome more aversive; (2) high expectations that one will behave aversively may reduce one's own provocation threshold so that anger and antagonistic reactions have a higher probability of occurrence; and (3) low expectations that one can effectively manage a conflict situation may lead to anger and aggression in an attempt to achieve control over the aversive experience. Thus, these results support the assertion that high expectations, whether positive or negative, may increase the possibility of the
generation of an anger response to a situation with an undesirable outcome.

**Cognitions and Marital Adjustment**

Just as the role of cognitive variables and beliefs in individual psychological dysfunction has been recognized by theorists, the influence of these factors on intimate relationships has also been acknowledged. The complex system of the marital dyad and the feelings of adjustment or satisfaction within that relationship have been the focus of much attention in the literature.

Locke (1951) described marital adjustment as "the process of adaptation of the husband and wife in such a way as to avoid or resolve conflicts sufficiently so that mates feel satisfied." Later, Locke and Wallace (1959) redefined marital adjustment as "the accommodation of the husband and wife to each other over time."

Spanier (1976) expanded on Locke and Wallace's definition, proposing that marital or dyadic adjustment may be viewed as either a process, or as a qualitative evaluation of a state. This view requires the assumption of a continuum of adjustment along which a "snapshot" is taken at a point in time. Thus, Spanier defined relationship adjustment as "an ever-changing process with a qualitative dimension which can be evaluated at any point in time on a continuum ranging from well-adjusted to maladjusted."
In recent years, behavioral and cognitive-behavioral theorists have also developed definitions of marital satisfaction. One such definition describes marital satisfaction as a subjective state which is dependent on the exchange of idiosyncratic behaviors defined as pleasing or displeasing to spouses (Jacobsen & Margolin, 1979; Margolin & Weiss, 1978).

A number of assessment instruments have been devised by researchers in an attempt to objectively examine and quantify the degree of adjustment or satisfaction within marriage and other intimate relationships. These instruments include the Marital Adjustment Test (Hamilton, 1929), the Marital Adjustment Form (Burgess & Cottrell, 1939), the Marital Adjustment Scale (Locke, 1951; Locke & Wallace, 1959), and the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976).

The cognitive components of relationship satisfaction and distress have been examined by researchers Epstein and Eidelson (1981; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). They developed the Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI) to assess some of the beliefs about intimate relationships which contribute to relationship distress. The instrument consists of five subscales labeled: Disagreement is Destructive, Mindreading is Expected, Partners Cannot Change, Sexual Perfectionism, and The Sexes are Different.

Eidelson and Epstein (1982) administered the RBI to clinical and nonclinical couples along with the Locke-Wallace
Marital Adjustment Scale (MAS; Locke & Wallace, 1959) and a questionnaire assessing irrational beliefs about self. All five subscales were significantly negatively correlated with marital adjustment as measured by the MAS. Within the clinical sample, couples' unrealistic beliefs regarding their relationships were also negatively associated with the likelihood of improvement in therapy, the desire to improve rather than terminate the relationship, and the preference for marital versus individually-oriented treatment. Correlations between the RBI subscales and the MAS tended to be somewhat lower overall for the nonclinical sample than for the clinical group.

A study by Vincent (1986) examined marital satisfaction as a function of gender, own rationality, and spouse's rationality, as well as combinations of these variables. Each subject's own and his or her spouse's RBI score was correlated with marital satisfaction as measures by his or her score on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Only married couples were used as subjects in order to preserve the marital dyad. This allowed examination of the separate effects of one's own and spouse's rationality on one's own marital satisfaction. Correlations between the subject's own and spouse's RBI score and own DAS score were also examined separately for males and females. The subject's own RBI score was predicted to be the most powerful variable in determining the DAS score. Results revealed a negative
correlation between RBI scores and DAS scores for all subjects. It was also demonstrated that one's DAS score was influenced by both one's own and spouse's RBI scores. The husband's RBI score in particular was most influential on both his and his wife's DAS score. Results also displayed a greater variability in RBI scores for males than for females. A comparison of the means for RBI subscales and total RBI score for males and females revealed no significant differences.

Jensen, Witcher, and Lane (1986) also explored the relationship between cognitive variables and marital satisfaction. One purpose of their study was to assess the relationship between dysfunctional beliefs about marriage and marital adjustment for a black sample. Results demonstrated significant negative correlations between marital adjustment the two beliefs, Disagreement is Destructive and The Sexes are Different.

Witcher (1984) examined the relationship between cognitive variables and marital satisfaction in black and white samples. For both samples, DAS means and standard deviations were similar to those obtained by Spanier (1976) in his standardization sample. Cognitions were observed to be significantly correlated with marital adjustment for both samples, although the specific pattern of relationships differed between the two samples. For black subjects, the belief that Partners Cannot Change had the greatest
correlation with marital adjustment scores. The belief which had the greatest correlation to marital adjustment scores for white subjects was Disagreement is Destructive.

**Marital Satisfaction Among Older Individuals**

It has been suggested that couples as well as individuals proceed through life in an ever-changing developmental process (Troll, 1982). Witcher (1984) observed that for both groups of subjects in her study, subjects who were recently married tended to report higher levels of marital adjustment than those subjects married for longer periods of time.

Schlesinger (1983) also examined the level of marital satisfaction among couples of various ages in his study of "lasting and functioning marriages in the 1980s." He reviewed literature concerning lasting marriages and marital satisfaction and questioned 129 couples aged 33 to 70 years who had been married for 15 years or longer with at least one child. He identified the following three life cycle trends: (1) a linear decline after the honeymoon period; (2) a curvilinear trend in which the empty-nest period is the high point due to increased independence; and (3) a u-shaped curve containing a peak during the initial years, declining with the birth of the children, and improving once the children have left home. Schlesinger (1983) also cites the following 10 areas as important in lasting marriages: respect for each
other, trust in each other, loyalty, love, counting on each other, considering each other's needs, providing emotional support, commitment, fidelity, and give and take in marriage.

Confining her research to older individuals, Gilford (1984) observed contrasts in marital satisfaction among subjects aged 55 through 90 years. The quality of marriage in later years appears to be favorable, with many spouses reporting moderate to high levels of marital satisfaction and considering their relationships to be as satisfactory or more so than in previous years. Gilford noted that previous research had not provided evidence of whether older spouses' evaluations of their marriages continue at satisfactory levels throughout the remainder of the marriage or if satisfaction varies at different stages of later life. She computed the frequency of positive interaction and negative sentiment between spouses from questionnaire responses of 318 married persons aged 55 through 90 years. The questionnaire consisted of ten "things that husbands and wives may do together," the frequency of which subjects indicated on a Likert-type scale. Five items referring to positive interaction and five to negative sentiment were presented randomly: "you calmly discuss something together, one of you is sarcastic, you work together on something (dishes, yardwork, hobbies, etc.), one of you refuses to talk in a normal manner, you laugh together, you have a stimulating exchange of ideas, you disagree about something
important, you become critical and belittling, you have a good time together, you become angry." Contrasts in levels of interaction and sentiment were apparent between three successive age groups with greatest marital satisfaction observed in the 63- through 69-year-old age group. Multiple regression analyses demonstrated continuity in social and personal predictors of marital satisfaction across all three age groups, with greatest predictability for the 55- to 62-year-old group. Fewest predictors and least predictability emerged for the oldest group, aged 70 to 90 years. Gilford (1984) asserted that these results suggest greater potential for happiness as well as vulnerability than has heretofore been attributed to older marriages.

Thus, Gilford's (1984) results support her general predictive postulate of contrast in quality of the marital relationship in older age. Her analysis demonstrates a distinct trend toward marital happiness over the earlier stages of old age and decline over the later stages. Gilford also maintains that evidence suggests developmental aspects of the marital relationship which are not discernible from age-aggregate factors. This is displayed in reports of greatest marital satisfaction of spouses aged 63 through 69 who are likely to be in transition through retirement.

Retirement is a time of change for most couples, and with it may also come health and financial problems (Troll, 1982). Some couples may be filled with hostility, blaming their
spouses for their troubles. They may even wish that they could divorce but feel held together by religious orthodoxy, social pressure such as the stigma of divorce, in addition to health and financial problems.

For other couples, retirement is the time of new freedom, experiences, and intimacy. In a 40-year longitudinal study, Maas and Kuypers (1974) observed lifestyle and personality in 142 mothers and fathers. They maintain that the term "old age," which is used widely and arbitrarily in reference to persons in their 60s and beyond, provides a perjorative label for an increasingly large and diverse population. They suggest repeated evidence through their research that many of their subjects developed their personalities and lifestyles at an earlier age and carried them through their lives into older age. They also suggest that for those small proportions in the study whose personalities and life styles appeared problematic, it was not older age which ushered in dissatisfaction but patterns which developed during early adulthood. Thus, older age merely continues what earlier years have launched. They maintain that, to be properly understood, older age should be viewed as an integral part of the life cycle and not as a terminal period apart from the earlier years of life. Different ways of living may be developed over time, even providing a second and better chance at life. As with
married couples of all ages, many factors may contribute to self-reports of marital satisfaction.

Troll (1982) maintains that the nature of most research information for these later years is tenuous and that conclusions must be drawn tentatively. She also holds that as variation increases in almost every facet of life as the years pass, it would also follow that diversity of marital style in later years increases as well.

Social Desirability Responding

A second purpose of both the Witcher (1984) and Jensen et al. (1986) studies was to examine the influence of social desirability factors on self-reports of marital adjustment and beliefs about marriage. Jensen et al. (1986) discovered a significant correlation between reports of marital satisfaction and social desirability responding. In the Witcher (1984) study, a significant correlation emerged for the black sample, but not for the white sample. Hansen (1981) and Hawkins (1966) also discovered small but significant correlations between self-report measures of marital satisfaction and socially desirable responding. An instrument which has been utilized as a general measure of social desirability responding, and was used in the above studies, is the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). The questionnaire was created to assess the subject's tendency to endorse behaviors which are
culturally desirable but unlikely to actually occur. The utilization of self-report instruments presents a potential problem of social desirability responding. Edmonds (1967) and Spanier (1979) have observed that measures of marital adjustment are particularly susceptible to this type of responding. Because of the value placed on the marital relationship in society, it is an area of much social and self-esteem. Thus, it may appear important for some individuals to present their marriages favorably to others, although it is probable that social desirability is a relevant factor in the use of all self-report procedures (Jensen & Haynes, 1986).

Current Investigation

This study examined the relationship between self-report of marital satisfaction and cognitions pertaining to marriage, and the extent to which these variables are influenced by socially desirable response sets utilizing a population of retired married couples. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976), the Relationship Belief Inventory (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), and the Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) were utilized to assess marital adjustment, dysfunctional relationship beliefs, and social desirability responding, respectively.

It was hypothesized that there would be significant inverse correlations between marital satisfaction and
dysfunctional beliefs, and that socially desirable response sets would also correlate with marital satisfaction. Comparisons of results were also made with previous investigations of these factors.
METHOD

Participants

Subjects consisted of 45 white, community-based, married couples, both partners of which were retired and over the age of 65. Participants were recruited through various community meetings and organizations in the central Florida area including the American Association of Retired Persons.

At the time of participation in the study, these subjects ranged in age from 65 to 80 years of age and had been married from 6 to 61 years. Mean age of participants was 69.37 years for females and 71.02 years for males. Mean number of years married was 42.96. Years of retirement ranged from 1 to 37, with a mean of 8.89 years. Education of subjects ranged from 8th grade to the post-graduate level, with an average educational level of some college, business or professional school. Number of children ranged from 0 to 5, with a mean of 2.61 children. Health of subjects was measured by self-report on a Likert-type scale ranging from Very Poor to Excellent. None of the subjects described their health as very poor, the average state of health being Average to Good.
Measures

The following four self-report questionnaires were utilized: the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI; Epstein & Eidelson, 1981), Social Desirability Scale (SDS; entitled Personal Reaction Inventory: Marlowe & Crowne, 1960), and a demographic information form created for this study.

Dyadic Adjustment Scale

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) is a 32-item scale designed to assess the relationship satisfaction of married or unmarried cohabitating couples (Appendix B). The majority of items are rated on a four- or five-point Likert scale on which lower scores represent dissatisfaction and higher scores indicate satisfaction. The four scales of the DAS are labeled: Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, Dyadic Consensus, and Affectional Expression. Items on these scales discriminate between couples more satisfied with their relationships from those distressed and dissatisfied with relationships. The reliabilities for these scales as measured by Cronbach's coefficient alpha are: .94, .86, .90, and .73, respectively (Spanier, 1976). The total score is the sum of all response values, with higher scores indicating greater relationship satisfaction. For the purposes of the current study, only the total score will be utilized.
The Relationship Belief Inventory (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981) is a 40-item scale which measures adherence to dysfunctional beliefs pertaining to intimate relationships (Appendix C). Each statement is rated on a five-point Likert-type scale indicating extent of agreement or disagreement with that statement. The RBI consists of five subscales comprised of eight items each. The subscales are labeled: Disagreement is Destructive (D), Mindreading is Expected (M), Partners Cannot Change (C), Sexual Perfectionism (S), and The Sexes are Different (MF). Higher subscale scores are indicative of greater adherence to irrational beliefs. Reliabilities for these scales as measured by Cronbach’s coefficient alpha are: .81, .75, .76, .72, and .72, respectively (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982).

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale

The Social Desirability Scale (Marlowe & Crowne, 1960) is a 33-item questionnaire (entitled Personal Reaction Inventory) which measures the extent to which individuals tend to over-endorse positive behaviors and under-endorse negative behaviors in order to portray themselves favorably to others. Subjects are asked to respond True or False to each question (Appendix D). The scale yields a total score, with higher scores indicating a greater tendency to portray oneself in a socially desirable manner.
Demographic Information Form

This form was created by the experimenter in order to obtain descriptive information about subjects in the sample (Appendix E). It surveyed several individual characteristics, including age, sex, years married, years retired, level of education, number of children, and state of health.

Procedure

This study utilized an information and consent form describing the general purpose of the study and informing subjects of their rights as participants in accordance with the ethical standards set forth by the American Psychological Association (Appendix A). The consent form also provided instructions for distribution and collection of the questionnaires.

A brief information sheet was included requesting that subjects not collaborate in completing the questionnaires and to reassure them of their anonymity.

Subjects were recruited through various community meetings and organizations in the central Florida area, including the American Association of Retired Persons. The experimenter attended these meetings and addressed the group regarding the study. Members were then invited to participate in the study. For those willing to participate, two packets of information and questionnaires were given to
the contacted partner. Materials for each partner were contained in separate, unsealed blank envelopes which were numbered to designate dyads. Participants were informed that complete instructions were contained in each packet and that participation for all persons was strictly voluntary. Materials were collected at a designated time and location or were returned to the experimenter by mail. Groups were then informed that they would be provided with a copy of the completed study and its results.
RESULTS

The means and standard deviations for the DAS total scores, RBI total and subscale scores, and the Social Desirability Scale (SDS) total scores for the total sample are presented in Table 1. A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted, to determine if sex differences existed on any of these measures. However, no significant differences emerged between males and females on any of these variables.

A Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to assess the magnitude of relationships between variables. A correlation matrix for the entire sample was generated using total scores of all measures for this study (i.e., DAS, RBI, SDS for self and spouse) and is depicted in Table 2. As can be seen, virtually all intercorrelations among primary measures of interest were statistically significant. Own DAS score was significantly correlated with spouse DAS score, and own and spouse SDS and RBI total scores. In addition, significant correlations emerged between own SDS and spouse SDS scores, and own RBI total scores.

Correlation coefficients were also calculated separately for males and females, the results of which
resemble those for the total sample. As shown in Table 3, statistically significant correlations emerged between females' own DAS score and spouse DAS, own and spouse RBI, and own and spouse SDS scores. Own SDS scores also correlated significantly with spouse SDS and own RBI total scores. In addition, significant correlations were found between own and spouse RBI scores. Spouse DAS scores were significantly correlated with spouse SDS and own and spouse RBI total scores.

Table 4 depicts the correlations for males. As shown, statistically significant correlations emerged between own DAS score and spouse DAS, own and spouse RBI score, and own SDS score. Own SDS score was significantly correlated with spouse SDS score, and own and spouse RBI scores. A significant correlation was also found between own and spouse RBI scores. Finally, spouse DAS score was significantly correlated with spouse SDS and own and spouse RBI total scores.

Correlational analyses were also conducted between own and spouse DAS scores and own and spouse RBI subscale scores. Similar patterns of statistical significance emerged for the total sample and the female only sample, as depicted in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. For both of these samples, scores for own and spouse RBI subscales 1, 3, and 5 (Disagreement is Destructive, Partners Cannot Change, and The Sexes are Different) were significantly correlated with DAS.
Measures

The following four self-report questionnaires were utilized: the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), Relationship Belief Inventory (RBI; Epstein & Eidelson, 1981), Social Desirability Scale (SDS; entitled Personal Reaction Inventory: Marlowe & Crowne, 1960), and a demographic information form created for this study.

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.29, p < .001) and Partners Cannot Change (R^2 = .33, p < .001). For females, one's own belief that Partners Cannot Change was the best predictor of DAS scores (R^2 = .39, p < .001), with significant added contribution of Disagreement is Destructive (R^2 = .44, p < .001). For males, a different pattern emerged. The best predictor of DAS scores emerged from a one-variable model employing the belief that Disagreement is Destructive (R^2 = .29, p < .001).
### TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR ALL MEASURES FOR TOTAL SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment Scale</td>
<td>118.07</td>
<td>17.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief Inventory - Subscale 1</td>
<td>11.96</td>
<td>6.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief Inventory - Subscale 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief Inventory - Subscale 5</td>
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<td>5.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief Inventory - Total Score</td>
<td>75.13</td>
<td>17.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability Scale</td>
<td>21.21</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
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</table>

RBI Subscales:  
1 = Disagreement is Destructive  
2 = Mindreading is Expected  
3 = Partners Cannot Change  
4 = Sexual Perfectionism  
5 = The Sexes are Different
### TABLE 2
**INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN TOTAL SCORES OF ALL MEASURES FOR THE TOTAL SAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SDS Own</th>
<th>SDS Spouse</th>
<th>DAS Own</th>
<th>DAS Spouse</th>
<th>RBI Own</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
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<td>Social Desirability</td>
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<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Own</td>
<td>-.36*</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.48*</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Spouse</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.36*</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.48*</td>
<td>.49*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**df = 89**

2-tailed significance

* $p < .01$
### TABLE 3
INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN TOTAL SCORES OF ALL MEASURES FOR FEMALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SDS Own</th>
<th>SDS Spouse</th>
<th>DAS Own</th>
<th>DAS Spouse</th>
<th>RBI Own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Desirability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Desirability</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dyadic Adjustment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dyadic Adjustment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Belief</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Own</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.37**</td>
<td>-.53**</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship Belief</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Spouse</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 44

2-tailed significance

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$
TABLE 4
INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN TOTAL SCORES
OF ALL MEASURES FOR MALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SDS Own</th>
<th>SDS Spouse</th>
<th>DAS Own</th>
<th>DAS Spouse</th>
<th>RBI Own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Own</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyadic Adjustment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale - Spouse</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.35*</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Own</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.31*</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Belief</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory - Spouse</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td>-.53**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 44
2 - tailed significance
* p < .05
** p < .01
### Table 5

**Intercorrelations Between DAS Total Scores and RBI Subscale Scores for the Total Sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement is Destructive</td>
<td>(-.57^{**})</td>
<td>(-.41^{**})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindreading is Expected</td>
<td>(-.03)</td>
<td>(-.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners Cannot Change</td>
<td>(-.40^{**})</td>
<td>(-.23^{*})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Perfectionism</td>
<td>(-.18)</td>
<td>(.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sexes are Different</td>
<td>(-.39^{**})</td>
<td>(-.30^{**})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 89

2-tailed significance

* p < .05

** p < .01
TABLE 6
INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN DAS TOTAL SCORES AND RBI SUBSCALE SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement is Destructive</td>
<td>-.54*</td>
<td>-.62*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindreading is Expected</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners Cannot Change</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Perfectionism</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sexes are Different</td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>-.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement is Destructive</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
<td>-.37*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindreading is Expected</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners Cannot Change</td>
<td>-.34</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Perfectionism</td>
<td>-.40*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sexes are Different</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 44
2 - tailed significance
* p < .01
### TABLE 7
INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN RBI AND SDS SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>-.46**</td>
<td>-.35**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is Destructive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindreading</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is Expected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.49**</td>
<td>-.25*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sexes</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>-.41**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are Different</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBI Total Score</td>
<td>-.30*</td>
<td>-.43**</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spouse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is Destructive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindreading</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is Expected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>-.28*</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannot Change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sexes</td>
<td>-.35*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are Different</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBI Total Score</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.18 a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

df = 89 for Total sample / 44 for Males, Females
2 - tailed significance
* p < .05
** p < .01
DISCUSSION

Results of the current study clearly confirmed the hypothesis that RBI total scores are negatively correlated with DAS total scores for all subjects, thus supporting previous research demonstrating this relationship (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982; Epstein, 1982; Epstein & Eidelson, 1981; Jacobsen and Margolin, 1979; Jensen et al., 1986; Vincent, 1986; and Witcher, 1984). The range of possible DAS scores is from 0 to 151. The mean DAS scores for this study were 117.51 for males, 118.62 for females, and 118.07 for the total sample which had a mean age of 70.19. Vincent (1986) obtained means of 111.91 for males and 113.50 for females. The total sample ranged in age from 24 to 64 years. (No age means were provided.) As can be seen in both of these instances, females DAS means were slightly higher than those of males. Witcher (1984) obtained means of 110.9 for the white sample and 105.6 for the black sample. Mean age for white subjects was 28.8 years, and 31.8 for black subjects. In his pilot study, Spanier obtained a mean DAS score of 114.8 with a mean age of 35.1 years for married subjects. Thus, marital satisfaction scores were slightly higher for the older sample than for others discussed. These results also support those of Schlesinger (1983), who maintains that
marital satisfaction increases once the children have left
home, and Gilford (1984) who observed greatest marital
satisfaction among couples aged 63 through 69 years of age.

The range of possible RBI total scores is 0 to 200.
For this study, RBI means were 74.75 for females, 75.51 for
males, and 75.13 for the total sample. Eidelson and Epstein
(1982) obtained an RBI mean of 69.43 for their total
standardization sample, the mean age for which was 33.77
years. Vincent's (1986) sample yielded a mean RBI scores of
59.58 for females, 58.91 for males, and 59.25 for the total
sample. Witcher (1984) obtained total RBI scores of 67.40
for the white sample and 70.10 for the black sample. As can
be seen, scores of the retired sample were also somewhat
above those of the younger samples. Perhaps as individuals
(particularly males) grow older, they tend to adhere more
strongly to dysfunctional beliefs.

Results of this study also demonstrated that RBI scores
for both self and spouse significantly impacted one's own
DAS. This suggests that marital satisfaction is influenced
by the behaviors and cognitions of both spouses (Jacobson &
Margolin, 1979). Results further revealed that one's own RBI
score correlated most strongly with one's DAS score for both
males and females. These results are consistent with those
of Epstein and Eidelson (1982), who reported that one's own
rationality was more significant in determining marital
satisfaction. They suggest that in marital therapy, the
therapist must not assume that treatment directed toward the thoughts of one spouse would directly affect those of the other spouse. These results differ from those of Vincent (1986), in which male RBI was primarily related to DAS scores for both males and females. In observing this information, perhaps if husbands' rationality is indeed more influential during younger years, then as couples grow older, wives become more independent in their thought and come to rely more strongly on their own perceptions than on those of their husbands. Upon retirement from work, husbands may lose power in the relationship as they are placed on an equal plane with their wives.

Neugarten and Gutmann (1964) maintain that older age is the only time during adult life during which both males and females subscribe to the same orientation of self-efficacy, or "mastery style." They found that during older age, both males and females turn to an orientation of "magic mastery," in which they appeal to powers greater than themselves in order to get what they want. Neugarten and Gutmann (1968) also suggest that sex differences in stereotyping appear for older as well as younger individuals, but tend toward less differentiation in roles. They reported that the old man in the Thematic Apperception Test picture was perceived by subjects as losing his familial authority and becoming a passive figure, while the old woman was seen as relatively
demanding and aggressive. The behaviors of both were seen as moving toward those characteristic of the opposite sex.

Results of this study also revealed a greater correlation between DAS scores of self and spouse. While the Vincent (1986) study yielded a significant correlation coefficient of \( .28 (p < .05) \), that of the current study was \( .66 (p < .001) \), suggesting greater consistency in adjustment.

The RBI dysfunctional beliefs which contributed most strongly to reduced marital adjustment for both self and spouse for the total sample in this study were: Disagreement is Destructive, Partners Cannot Change, and The Sexes are Different, respectively. These results are consistent with those of Eldelson and Epstein (1982). They also noted that correlations were somewhat lower for the non-clinical sample than for the clinical sample. These data are also similar to those of Jensen et al. (1986) and Witcher (1984) for black samples in which Disagreement is Destructive emerged as the primary predictor of DAS scores and The Sexes are Different as the second most influential predictor.

In the current study, The belief Disagreement is Destructive emerged as the primary predictor of DAS scores in the multiple regression coefficient, with Partners Cannot Change also contributing significantly to adjustment. Results for Witcher's (1984) white sample revealed Partners Cannot Change to be the primary belief contributing to adjustment scores.
For males only, Disagreement is Destructive contributed the most to DAS scores, while for females, a different pattern emerged. The belief that Partners Cannot change was primarily influential, with Disagreement is Destructive also significant. Results for the female sample were consistent with those for Witcher's (1984) white sample, in which Partners Cannot Change was also the primary predictor of marital adjustment. These results suggest that the more that disagreement or interpersonal differences are regarded as threatening to the relationship, the lower the level of reported adjustment.

The attribution of stable, stereotypic behavior patterns to the opposite sex, such as the beliefs that Partners Cannot Change and The Sexes are Different, was associated with lower levels of marital satisfaction. Beliefs such as these represent examples of what Hurvitz (1970) has labeled a "terminal hypothesis." These beliefs discourage attempts to alter problematic relationships, as they are viewed as unchangeable. Thus, individuals may reconcile themselves to the idea that each sex maintains its own type of behavior pattern and that neither their partners nor the quality of their relationship can be changed, resulting in diminished satisfaction. Doherty (1981) suggests that individuals with such low efficacy expectations are likely to experience diminished satisfaction with intimate relationships, feel
less commitment toward the relationship, and make fewer attempts to resolve conflicts.

Results also revealed (consistent with previous research), a significant correlation between marital satisfaction and a tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner (Edmonds, 1967; Hansen, 1981; Hawkins, 1966; Jensen & Haynes, 1986; Jensen et al., 1986; Spanier, 1979; Witcher, 1984). Of a possible total score of 33, SDS means were 21.87 for females, 20.56 for males, and 21.22 for the total sample. Means for the Witcher (1984) study were 16.3 for the white sample and 21.5 for the black sample. Crowne and Marlowe (1960) obtained a mean of 13.72 for their sample. The correlation between DAS and SDS scores for males was slightly greater than for females. Additionally, the SDS total score for males was significantly correlated with RBI total scores for both self and spouse, while SDS total score for females was significantly correlated with RBI total scores for self only and not for spouse. Thus, results from this study support the supposition that self-report measures of marital satisfaction may be contaminated by socially desirable response sets (Edmonds, 1967). The significant correlations found between RBI and SDS scores suggest that the response set was not specific to the report of marital adjustment and may be a general tendency for this sample. These results differ from those of Jensen et al. (1986), in which SDS scores were correlated with DAS only, and not RBI.
It has been suggested that the tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner may be operational whenever persons are asked to provide information regarding socially sensitive subject matter, such as marital satisfaction (Jensen & Haynes, 1986).

It was interesting to note that subjects were extremely guarded concerning their participation in this study. Despite assurance that their names would in not in any way be associated with their responses or participation in this study, many did not return their questionnaires. Participants were more cooperative, however, when they were somewhat familiar with the experimenter. In fact, the more well known the experimenter to the group, the greater the percentage of participation of group members. In consideration of this information in combination with higher SDS scores, it is possible that those who consented to participate were the least guarded of that population. Should all eligible persons present at these meetings have elected to participate in the study, SDS scores may have been higher.

Results of this study suggest various paths of future research as well as implications for therapy. A more complete understanding of the stages of life through which couples move and the varying cognitive tendencies of different ages may assist the marital therapist in the utilization of the most effective approach to couples'
problems. In providing therapy for retired individuals and couples, it would behoove the therapist to be aware that both the husband and wife may be more androgynous than their younger counterparts, moving toward the behaviors and cognitions more typical of the opposite sex. The husband may feel that he is losing his power in the relationship, while the wife is gaining a sense of power in her own feelings. Both spouses, however, may lack a sense of self-efficacy and look to sources beyond themselves to meet their needs. The significant relationship between the index of marital adjustment and measures of cognitive factors suggests the relevance of cognitive factors as a focus in marital therapy. The therapist must also remain aware that clients may operate from a social desirability response set and exercise caution in the interpretation of self-report instruments.
APPENDIX A

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information regarding a research project and to request your participation as a subject. This research concerns the relationship between certain beliefs which persons hold about their marriages and their feelings about these relationships. The research is being conducted by Priscilla B. Wilson as a part of her master's thesis, and is being supervised by Bernard J. Jensen Ph.D. of the Department of Psychology at the University of Central Florida.

To participate in this research project you must be married and currently living with your spouse. Participation will entail the filling out of three anonymous questionnaires and a brief information form, the completion of which will involve approximately 45 minutes of your time. If you are the individual initially approached by the experimenter, you will be asked to deliver the information and consent form and the questionnaires to your spouse. Your spouse should be allowed to read this information and make the decision as to whether or not he/she wishes to participate. If you or your spouse have any questions regarding participation, you may contact Ms. Wilson (658-4852) or Dr. Jensen (275-2216). If both you and your partner wish to participate, please complete all questionnaires independently of your partner and seal them in their respective envelopes for return.

All information obtained in this study will remain completely confidential. Your responses and those of your spouse will be coded in order to link couples together, however, your names will not be linked with your responses. Should you reconsider your participation in this study, you may withdraw at any time and your questionnaires will be destroyed. Please do not discuss your responses to the items on the questionnaires with your spouse prior to their completion. Discussion following completion will be at your discretion.

Psychological risks of participation in this study appear to be minimal since all responses will remain anonymous. It is possible that participation may be beneficial in that it may foster reflection on and communication concerning various aspects of your marriage.
APPENDIX B

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Always Agree</th>
<th>Almost Always Agree</th>
<th>Occasionally Disagree</th>
<th>Frequently Disagree</th>
<th>Always Disagree</th>
<th>Always Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Handling family finances</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Matters of recreation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Religious matters</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Demonstrations of affections</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Friends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sex relations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Philosophy of life</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Always Agree</td>
<td>Almost Agree</td>
<td>Occasionally Disagree</td>
<td>Frequently Disagree</td>
<td>Always Disagree</td>
<td>Always Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Aims, goals, and things believed important</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Amount of time spent together</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Making major decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Household tasks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Leisure time interests and activities</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Career decisions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. Do you confide in your mate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. Do you kiss your mate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every Day</th>
<th>Almost Every Day</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All of them</th>
<th>Most of them</th>
<th>Some of them</th>
<th>Very few of them</th>
<th>None of them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>More often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Laugh together</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Calmly discuss something</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
28. Work together on a project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a week</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>More often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are some things about which couples agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

Yes  No

29. __  ___ Being too tired for sex.

30. __  ___ Not showing love.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Unhappy</td>
<td>Fairly Unhappy</td>
<td>A Little Unhappy</td>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Very Happy</td>
<td>Extremely Happy</td>
<td>Perfect Happy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

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

RELATIONSHIP BELIEF INVENTORY

The statements below describe ways in which a person might feel about a relationship with another person. Please mark the space next to each statement according to how strongly you believe that it is true or false for you. Please mark every one. Write in 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 to indicate the following answers:

5: I strongly believe that the statement is true.
4: I believe that the statement is true.
3: I believe that the statement is probably true, or more true than false.
2: I believe that the statement is probably false, or more false than true.
1: I believe that the statement is false.
0: I strongly believe that the statement is false.

____ 1. If your partner expresses disagreement with your ideas he/she probably does not think highly of you.
____ 2. I do not expect my partner to sense all my moods.
____ 3. Damages done early in a relationship probably cannot be reversed.
____ 4. I get upset if I think I have not completely satisfied my partner sexually.
____ 5. Men and women have the same basic emotional needs.
____ 6. I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me.
____ 7. If I have to tell my partner that something is important to me it does not mean he/she is insensitive to me.
____ 8. My partner does not seem capable of behaving other than he/she does now.
5: I **strongly** believe that the statement is **true**.
4: I believe that the statement is **true**.
3: I believe that the statement is **probably true**, or more true than false.
2: I believe that the statement is **probably false**, or more false than true.
1: I believe that the statement is **false**.
0: I **strongly** believe that the statement is **false**.

---

9. If I'm not in the mood for sex when my partner is, I don't get upset about it.

10. Misunderstandings between partners usually are due to inborn differences in psychological makeups of men and women.

11. I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine.

12. I get very upset if my partner does not recognize how I am feeling and have to tell him/her.

13. A partner can learn to become more responsive to his/her partner's needs.

14. A good sexual partner can get himself/herself aroused for sex whenever necessary.

15. Men and women will probably never understand the opposite sex very well.

16. I like it when my partner presents views different from mine.

17. People who have a close relationship can sense each other's needs as if they could read each other's minds.

18. Just because my partner has acted in ways that upset me does not mean he/she will do so in the future.

19. If I cannot perform well sexually whenever my partner is in the mood, I would consider that I have a problem.

20. Men and women need the same basic things out of a relationship.
5: I strongly believe that the statement is true.
4: I believe that the statement is true.
3: I believe that the statement is probably true, or more true than false.
2: I believe that the statement is probably false, or more false than true.
1: I believe that the statement is false.
0: I strongly believe that the statement is false.

21. I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way.
22. It is important to me for my partner to anticipate my needs by sensing changes in my moods.
23. A partner who hurts you badly once probably will hurt you again.
24. I can feel OK about my lovemaking even if my partner does not achieve orgasm.
25. Biological differences between men and women are not major causes of couples' problems.
26. I cannot tolerate it when my partner disagrees with me.
27. A partner should know what you are are thinking or feeling without you having to tell.
28. If my partner wants to change, I believe that he/she can do it.
29. If my sexual partner does not get satisfied completely it does not mean I have failed.
30. One of the major causes of marital problems is that men and women have different emotional needs.
31. When my partner and I disagree, I feel like our relationship is falling apart.
32. People who love each other know exactly what each other's thoughts are without a word ever being said.
33. If you don't like the way a relationship is going you can make it better.
5: I *strongly* believe that the statement is true.
4: I believe that the statement is true.
3: I believe that the statement is *probably true*,
or more true than false.
2: I believe that the statement is *probably false*,
or more false than true.
1: I believe that the statement is false.
0: I *strongly* believe that the statement is false.

34. Some difficulties in my sexual performance do not
    mean personal failure to me.
35. You can't really understand someone of the opposite
    sex.
36. I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we
    argue.
37. If you have to ask your partner for something it
    shows that he/she was not "tuned in" to your needs.
38. I do not expect my partner to be able to change.
39. When I do not seem to be performing well sexually I
    get upset.
40. Men and women will always be mysteries to each other.
These statements concern your personal reactions to a number of different situations. No two statements are exactly alike, so consider each statement carefully before answering. If the statement is True or Mostly True as applied to you, write T on the space to the left of the statement. If the statement is False or Mostly False as applied to you, write F on the space to the left of the statement.

1. Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.
2. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.
3. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
4. I have never intensely disliked anyone.
5. On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life.
6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
7. I am always careful about my manner of dress.
8. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.
9. If I could get in to a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen I would probably do it.
10. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
11. I like to gossip at times.
12. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
13. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.

14. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.

15. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.

16. I'm always willing to admit when I make a mistake.

17. I always try to practice what I preach.

18. I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud-mouthed, obnoxious people.

19. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.

20. When I don't know something I don't mind admitting it.

21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.

22. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.

23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.

24. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.

25. I never resent being asked to return a favor.

26. I have never been bothered when people expressed ideas very different from my own.

27. I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.

28. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.

29. I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off.

30. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
31. I have never felt that I was punished without cause.
32. I sometimes think that when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved.
33. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.
APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Please respond to the following questions by placing a check mark or answer in the space provided beside the applicable response.

Upon completion of all questionnaires, please return them to their envelope and seal it immediately. Again, thank you for your participation.

Please indicate:

Male _____ Female _____

Age: _____

Race: (Please circle)
White     Black     Hispanic     Other ________________

Years married: _____

Number of children: _____

Previous occupation: ________________________________

Education:_________________________________________

Years retired: _____

Please evaluate your present health status:
Very Poor    Poor    Average     Good     Excellent
REFERENCES


