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In search of intimacy

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In search of intimacy

Abstract

The traditional means to attain intimacy through dictated marriage were historically fulfilled by society and parents who betrothed their children. Societal and parental dictated norms usurped the individual's freedom and required living up to externally mandated expectations of behavior. Today's system of intimacy departs dramatically from the traditional model. Today's model is formed by the individual who freely meets his/her own needs regardless of age or historically based, societal or cultural standards of expected conduct. Today's mode of living gives an individual the freedom to pursue, court and marry based solely upon his/her own needs, expectations and love.

IN SEARCH OF INTIMACY

A Research Paper
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the Department of Educational
Administration and Counseling
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Mark A. Dix
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Searching for intimacy is the oldest endeavor of mankind.

Intimacy first occurred, says the Bible when God said,

. . . It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help mate . . . And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof, and the rib He made into a woman, and brought her to man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called Woman; because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave to his wife and they shall be one flesh. (Bible, 1952, p. 3)

This "heavenly" state did not have the taint of a problem until Adam and Eve ate the fruit from the tree of knowledge, and good and evil, which was against God's will. As punishment God declared in Genesis 3:15 "I will put enmity between you (man) and the woman . . ." (Bible, 1952, p. 3). Because of this heavenly mandate and human evolutionary development, intimacy is not necessarily an ingredient of life. It must be sought after like food, clothing, shelter, intellectual and self-development. Searching for and attaining intimacy in a world filled with "enmity" and disagreement is no easy task. Is it possible to find and have an intimate relationship in marriage?

It is . . . possible for a civilized man and woman to be happy in marriage, although if this is to be the case, a number of conditions must be fulfilled. There must be a feeling of complete equality on both sides; there must be no interference with mutual freedom; there must be the most complete physical and mental intimacy; and there must be a certain similarity in regard to standards of values. (It is fatal, for example, if one values only money while the other values only good work.) Given all these conditions, I believe marriage to be the best and most important relationship that can exist between two human beings. It has not often been realized hitherto, that it is chiefly

because husband and wife have regarded themselves as each other's policeman. If marriage is to achieve its possibilities, husbands and wives must learn to understand that whatever the law may say, in their private lives, they must be free. (Adler, Van Doren, 1977, p. 191)

The traditional means to attain intimacy through dictated marriage were historically fulfilled by society and parents who betrothed their children. Societal and parental dictated norms usurped the individual's freedom and required living up to externally mandated expectations of behavior. Today's system of intimacy departs dramatically from the traditional model. Today's model is formed by the individual who freely meets his/her own needs regardless of age or historically based, societal or cultural standards of expected conduct. Today's mode of living gives an individual the freedom to pursue, court and marry based solely upon his/her own needs, expectations and love.

Young adults, the previously married, and single adults not necessarily looking for mates, take deliberate steps to seek and find intimacy. This is a relatively new phenomenon in the desire for closeness and affection. Traditionally these desires have been reserved for marriage. Today's society is very mobile and has a high divorce rate. This has led to a trend for new dimensions of intimacy in extramarital, comarital and other types of nontraditional intimate relationships.

In today's modern society people are free to choose a mate and create practically any kind of marriage they so desire. Human nature, however, both biologically and psychologically dictates that for attraction to, selection of, and continued satisfaction with a spouse, certain expectations of intimacy must be fulfilled. Expectations of intimacy can be emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, recreational,

spiritual, aesthetic, or any criteria conceived as a prerequisite by a pair who is searching for intimacy. Problems arise when there is a difference between what spouses expect and what they realize in terms of intimacy.

Statement of the Problem

Intimacy is complicated by many theories and explanations. It is a widely used, complex term which has various applications and expectations concerning its acquisition. For these reasons it would be an unrealistic task to attempt to scrutinize every explanation for, and expectation of, intimacy.

The primary purpose of this research was to answer the following questions: What expectations do people have about others, about themselves, and about marriage? Is there a difference in expected and realized emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy of married couples?

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study addressed the following research questions and hypotheses:

Questions

1. Is there a difference in expected emotional intimacy and realized emotional intimacy of married couples?
2. Is there a difference in expected social intimacy and realized social intimacy of married couples?
3. Is there a difference in expected sexual intimacy and realized sexual intimacy of married couples?

4. Is there a difference in expected intellectual intimacy and realized intellectual intimacy of married couples?

5. Is there a difference in expected recreational intimacy and realized recreational intimacy of married couples?

6. Is there an overall difference in expected intimacy and realized intimacy between female and male married couples?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in expected emotional intimacy and realized emotional intimacy of married couples.

2. There is no significant difference in expected social intimacy and realized social intimacy of married couples.

3. There is no significant difference in expected sexual intimacy and realized sexual intimacy of married couples.

4. There is no significant difference in expected intellectual intimacy and realized intellectual intimacy of married couples.

5. There is no significant difference in expected recreational intimacy and realized recreational intimacy of married couples.

6. There is no significant difference in expected intimacy and realized intimacy for all scales of emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational intimacy between married couples.

Importance of the Study

Because marriage plays such a vital role in the lives of most people, it is important to be aware of and understand how expectations and intimacy can influence behavior in marriages. Human service providers can encounter couples experiencing marital problems of the

kind where mates realized intimacy differently than how they expected it to be.

Assumptions

Basic assumptions involved in this research project are: (1) the couples responded to the assessment instrument in an honest and accurate manner, and were not "faking good," and (2) the literature reviewed and the research instrument are valid methods to describe expectations and assess intimacy expectations.

Definitions of Terms

Expectations. An individual's anticipation that people and events will behave and occur as he/she imagined they will.

For the presentation of data, intimacy will be defined in five categories:

1. Emotional Intimacy. The experience of closeness of feeling; the ability and freedom to share openly, in a non-defensive atmosphere when there is supportiveness and genuine understanding.
2. Social Intimacy. The experience of having common friends and a similar social network.
3. Sexual Intimacy. The experience of showing general affection, touching, physical closeness, and/or sexual activity.
4. Intellectual Intimacy. The experience of shared ideas, talking about events in one's life, or discussing job-related issues, current affairs, etc.
5. Recreational Intimacy. The experience of shared interests in pastimes or hobbies; mutual participation in sporting events; mutual involvement in any general recreational or leisure activity. (Olson and Schaefer, 1977, pp. 8-9)

The term intimacy is a popular term with many definitions. It is not the purpose of this paper to equate intimacy with emotions of empathy or promiscuous sexual activity solely for self-gratification. Intimacy is a continuous process that is never fully achieved. Meaningful intimacy is difficult to attain and is not a predictable happening. Intimacy happenings can arise from momentary impulses or a planned event like a marriage ceremony. The degree of intensity, satisfaction, or duration of involvement is not guaranteed. Achievement of meaningful intimacy, especially the type based upon expectations, requires a mutually-focused effort. A well-rounded, balanced, happy relationship or marriage is the logical goal of the effort exerted to attain intimacy.

Authors such as Frank D. Cox (1978), S. J. Gilbert (1976), H. J. Clinebell and C. H. Clinebell (1979), and A. Dahms (1972) define intimacy in these ways:

Intimacy is the experiencing of the essence of one's self in intense intellectual, physical and/or emotional communion with another human being. (Cox, 1978, p. 10)

. . . to the depth, both verbally and/or nonverbally, between two persons, which implies a deep form of acceptance of the other as well as a commitment to the relationship, Gilbert goes on to say . . . intimacy may be a very special instance of self-disclosure. (Schaefer and Olson, 1981, p. 49)

. . . a mutual need satisfaction, . . . with several facets of intimacy including: sexual, emotional, aesthetic, creative, recreational, work, crisis, conflict, commitment, spiritual and communication intimacy. (Clinebell and Clinebell, 1970, p. 29)

Dahms (1972) proposes a conceptual hierarchy of three dimensions of intimacy: intellectual, physical and emotional (p. 19). . . . emotional intimacy has four characteristics: accessibility, naturalness, nonpossessiveness and the need to view intimacy as a process. (Dahms, 1972, p. 38)

The previously mentioned authors have similar but differing definitions of intimacy, each ranked according to hierarchical scales. Research conducted by the aforementioned authors implies that normal development requires intimacy to some extent with at least one significant other.

Still other authors such as Maslow (1954) and Erickson (1950) suggest that the most advanced individuals find fulfillment in a variety of other meaningful relationships in addition to marriage.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

General Discussion of Expectations

People generally go through life with expectations that have been conditioned from past experiences. Psychologist Julin Rotter says expectancies are acquired through experiences and govern to a large degree how we act.

In Rotter's system, the probability that a given behavior will occur is dependent upon (1) what the person expects to happen after a response, and (2) the value the person places on that outcome. . . . Rotter assumes that the expectations and values which influence, organize, and alter behavior are acquired through learning. In order to "have" an expectancy about an outcome or make a judgment regarding its value, the person must have direct or vicarious experience with equivalent or similar situations in the past. (Bernstein & Nietzel, 1980, p. 74)

Experiences can be positive or negative, yielding optimistic, pessimistic or great or small expectations. Psychologist Kurt Lewin, according to Archibald (1974), has described expectations as making up a person's "level of aspiration" (p. 77). Aspirations originate from experiences and/or a consciousness of one's own potentialities and capabilities. The environment in which a person experiences life determines the content of expectations and the concept of life to which they aspire. In other words a person wants and expects according to how they have learned to view life.

As a person strives for "wants," over a period of time, patterns of behavior called basic tendencies develop. Basic behavioral tendencies are learned and play a primary role in governing a person's

method of searching for and fulfillment of their wishes. Tendencies and expectations motivate some people to strive for success and happiness while others may become self-destructive or act out in other antisocial behavior.

Tendencies and expectations can be modified by new experiences. Behavior can be changed through experience. Therefore, people are not locked into predispositions of thinking and acting. People can change if they choose to.

As life unfolds through stages of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, orientations and future expectations change and correspond to actual conditions. Young people have high hopes and their youthful expectations are general in nature and usually are indefinite. Adult middle-age expectations are considered to be more realistic and correspond to actual conditions. Older people generally have met their expectations and tend towards lessening of long-term goal-directed activities. These are general statements on the cycle of life regarding expectations and are not meant to blur the distinction between individuals.

Tendencies and expectations can be changed through new experiences but people are inclined not to seek new experiences and change because of their natural desire to maintain a homeostatic state. Preserving equilibrium is more comfortable than risking the unknown and changing. Fear of the unknown and changing are powerful inhibitors that keep people from risking new experiences and learning new ways of thinking and behaving.

In addition to fear, a self-fulfilling prophecy can inhibit change and make behavior predictable. A self-fulfilling prophecy is a declaration made to oneself that something will occur and then behaving in ways that insure the declared expectation will occur. Archibald (1974) states "the possibility that merely expecting an event to occur increases the likelihood that it does occur" (p. 74). Thus, behavior becomes a function of expectations "simply" by talking to oneself and making predictions of outcomes in advance. The predictions can be founded on fictitious untruths, or scientifically-gathered data. The expectation is formulated nonetheless with a high degree of anticipation of finding out just what has been prophesized about oneself.

Expectations About Others and About Oneself

Expectations about other people and oneself are formed by experiences. Parents, where one was raised, social class, educational and religious upbringing, and family experiences can influence what people expect of themselves and of others.

Author Russell A. Jones points out that expectations about others generally consist of:

(1) the categories we employ to describe the range of abilities, attitudes, interests, physical features, traits and behaviors that we perceive in others, and (2) the beliefs we hold concerning which of these perceived characteristics tend to go together and which do not. (Jones, 1977, p. 3)

. . . Interpersonal expectations appear, under many circumstances, to influence both the behavior of the person holding the expectations and the behavior of the person about whom the expectation is held. (Jones, 1977, p. 4)

People form conclusions about others based upon what is considered to be either desirable or undesirable characteristics. Characteristics

such as character, physical health, economic assets, appearance, personality, level of education and/or where educated, family background, social class, religion or practically any criteria, thought or belief system conceived as a precursor for attraction or acceptance can comprise an expectation dogma.

. . . While a good first impression can provide the basic attraction needed to start a relationship, the making of an intimate relationship involves the common ground of interest, social background and goals in life. Thus while impressions may give the relationship a head start, it is usually compatibility that completes the transaction. (Wong, 1981, p. 441)

To achieve and maintain compatibility, couples need to determine differences in expectations and work to reconcile their differences. The Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (PAIR) assessment instrument (Olson and Schaefer, 1977, p. 1) used for this paper is a tool designed to determine where differences and similarities exist between a married couple's intimacy perceptions and expectations.

The forming of expectations about others can create a communication problem because either intentionally or unintentionally, consciously or unconsciously, expectations are communicated and may not be understood. Cues to communicate expectancies are marked by diversity and span a spectrum of behavior from the most subtle and small to highly visible, striking interpersonal encounters. Cues are not always interpreted as one would expect because people have differing perceptions of behavior.

Communication is necessary to establish and maintain an intimate or social relationship. Successfully managing early stages of a relationship between two persons requires open and honest communication and negotiation of immediate needs, expectations and concerns. This is

accomplished by what psychologists call self-disclosure. It is important that couples fully communicate as much as possible so commonalities and differences can be acknowledged. Negative and positive feelings must be disclosed consciously and accurately, so there will be as little misinterpretation of messages as possible. Mutual self-disclosure, where each person is free and comfortable about stating feelings, beliefs and expectations, leads to a strong, stable and lasting relationship.

Sound relationships last. Expectation of duration distinguishes between temporary and long-term relationships. In the early stages of a relationship, whether it be courtship, professional, or social, successful relating is dependent upon communicating either subtly or openly the expectation of extent of involvement and duration of association. Impulsive situational or specialized relationships, such as those formed for immediate gratification, are customarily characterized as being short-term in nature. Duration of a relationship does not have to affect the quality of relating in terms of self-disclosure, sharing, trust or emotional security. There is no more guarantee of fulfilling expectations or achieving higher levels of intimacy in a long-term relationship than in a short-term affair. It is reasonable to expect that short-term quality relationships will solidify and last.

Besides drawing conclusions and forming expectations about others, human beings also form expectations about themselves. In order for people to derive meaning from life's numerous and diverse experiences, they attempt to establish order and coherence in their lives. To continue to exist, people endeavor to understand the past and anticipate

the future thus enabling themselves to direct their lives with some consistency and regularity.

Psychologists believe individuals form expectations about their behavior by what is called the subjective probability of success.

Will a person's expectations of his/her behavior alter his/her actual behavior? (Archibold, 1974, p. 74)

. . . outcomes that follow the choice of a particular course of action are, in part at least, a function of the expectation or perceived probability that the outcome of interest will result . . . and . . . the most important determinant of the subjective probability of success on familiar tasks is one's own past experiences on the task. . . . Past performance is the best predictor of future performance. (Jones, 1977, p. 6-7)

The preceding thought process addresses performance on familiar tasks. The unfamiliar task where persons have no initial experience, such as achieving intimacy in marriage, must also be addressed.

Author Russell A. Jones (1977) has found,

. . . evidence which seems to indicate that one's subjective probability of success has two components: a dispositional and a situational component. The former appears to be most influential in determining performance on an unfamiliar task. As one gains experience on a task, the influence of the dispositional component by one's experience on the task at hand, becomes a better predictor of performance. (p. 7)

People can expect to do better provided they work at a task.

Raising expectations can be derived from efficient task performance, thus allowing high goals to be set such as developing high levels of intimacy in marriage.

. . . those who relinquish their goals somehow become convinced that they could not achieve them and, hence, do not try as hard as they might have, had they greater faith in the efficaciousness of their efforts. (Jones, 1977, p. 7)

Expecting something to happen is closely related to predicting.

The difference is the degree to which a person believes it will happen.

Those who have relinquished their goals have lessened or stopped hoping and do not expect to be successful, thus fulfilling a self-fulfilling prophecy. When something is expected to happen it implies that there is a fair chance that it will occur. When something is hoped for, there is less chance that an occurrence will take place. The effect of unfulfilled hopes is disappointment. Correspondingly, the letdown from unrealized anticipated predictions and expectations is much greater. Logically, joy from realized hopes is greater than from realized predictions.

People who do not have hope or expectations worry instead. They are described as inactive, apathetic, and dull. Worry immobilizes action; consequently worried people dwell upon dreaded desires or events instead of trying to cope. They give up expecting the positive can happen and feel there is no use expending energy for gain. Their attitude is there's no chance, so why try. If they desire change, they do not take action because of their fears and/or ignorance. On the other hand, those who are hopeful and are coping well have high hopes and rising expectations. They are described as active, vigorous and energetic.

Success in attaining goals based upon hope and expectations is considered important by the psychoanalytic psychologist T. M. French. He theorizes that:

We summarize the process of activation of goal-directed behavior: First, the motivating pressure of a need seeks discharge in diffuse motor activity. Next, hope of satisfaction, based on present opportunity and memories of previous success, stimulates the integrative mechanisms to form a plan, for realizing this hope. Finally, hope of satisfaction activates this plan so that it exerts a guiding influence, concentrating motor discharge on efforts to put the plan into execution . . .

Integrative capacity should vary as a positive function of one's confidence of attaining a goal. (Stotland, 1969, p. 15).

Psychologist Ezra Stotland postulates six hypothesis on the importance of the goal and the expectation of achieving it.

1. The greater the expectation of attaining a goal, the more likely the individual will act to attain it.

2. The more important a goal, the more likely the individual is to attend selectively to aspects of the environment relevant to attaining it.

3. Increased importance of the goal leads to more overt action to attain it.

4. Increased importance of the goal leads to more thought about how to attain it.

5. Increased expectation of the goal leads to more thought about how to attain the goal.

6. Increased expectation of goal attainment leads to more selective attention to aspects of the environment relevant to attaining the goal. (Stotland, 1969, p. 17)

It is beyond the scope of this paper to give an elaborate description and discussion of each of these hypotheses. They are self-evident enough to expand the picture of how expectations influence peoples' behavior and feelings.

Expectations in Marriage

The ultimate combination of expectations about others and oneself is in the state of marriage. What do people expect from marriage?

When marriage was, for the most part, a function of the extended family, or of societal and parental dictates, it did not play a significant role in the emotional life of a couple. Its primary purpose was to produce offspring and bind extended family relationships and to create political alliances.

As time passed, the function of the family as an all-providing entity diminished. As society and civilization developed, families became less self-sufficient and more interdependent. The church, state and community assumed many functions of the extended family and of parents. Prospective mates became free and could choose each other based on their own feelings of attraction and love. Love is an expected part of being married in contemporary society.

Spouses are expected to play roles in a marriage. Role perceptions and expectations played as a spouse, employee, or community member are shaped by social class positions. Members of a social class have been obligated to behave according to social expectations. Middle and upper class socialization has usually consisted of going through various rites of passage like attending college, getting married and getting a white collar position in order to be assimilated into a community.

The classic American marriage is one where the husband works and provides, while the wife stays home and bears children and does housework in a supportive role. Although this stereotypical description has somewhat changed in recent years, mates continue to approach marriage in terms of quite conventional ideas. Couples expect to fall in love, marry in a ceremony and raise a family, but roles are now more shared than in the past. Shared roles could be doing housework, having a dual income and caring for children.

Men and women marry to share an interpersonal relationship meant to fulfill intimacy needs. Each mate brings with them expectations concerning their marital needs. The degree to which these needs and

expectations are met determines the success of the marriage. Because human beings are rational beings, they concern themselves with what they think life should be, as well as what it is right now. People predict their future and have expectations and perceptions about themselves and their mates. Love is a feeling not always predicated upon rational, well thought-out motives and perceptions. The proverbial "love-is-blind" sentiment usually governs how a loved one is viewed. People can perceive their loved ones the way they wish them to be rather than how they really are.

Perceptions are founded upon sensory input. The input can be accepted, rejected, interpreted or changed. In other words, people place their own personal meaning on experiences.

In general most people react to the world according to their own subjective perceptions rather than to what the world may be in reality. Since marriage is a human experience it, too, can be misperceived. In the initial stage of marriage, called the honeymoon, expectations are high. Sometimes expectations are colored by emotions and become distorted and unrealistic. Normal marriages go through a transition phase as subjective perceptions of idealism are later replaced with objective and more realistic perceptions. Mates start viewing each other as real human beings instead of projections of expectations.

A problem arises when a spouse does not go through the ideal-to-real perception transition. Some mates do not view their spouses as they really are. Instead they maintain an image of their own idealizations. Basically this means spouses have substituted their own ideals and delusions for the real people they have married.

In the beginning, people choose one another because enough expectations are met to maintain a desire for companionship. As the marriage relationship develops through time, more and more expectations are projected into the marital equation. Expecting all idealized projections to be met or sustained throughout the life of the marriage would require rejecting all aspects of the mate that do not fit the idealized image of what the mate should be. Eventually if there is to be a healthy marriage, a comparison of ideals to reality must be adjusted and the realization formed that all expectations will not be met exactly. Healthy attitudes and marriages are built upon clear understanding that expectations and reality do not necessarily coincide.

The National Association of Mental Health has described mentally healthy people as: (1) feeling comfortable about themselves, (2) feeling good about other people, and (3) being able to meet the demands of life. (Cox, 1981, p. 162)

Exaggerated expectations based upon romantic ideals will inevitably lead to disappointment. Success or failure of a marriage depends on how a couple copes with inevitable disappointments. Adaptive coping behavior in marriage is founded upon acceptance of one's mate as a real human being. Viewing a spouse as an all-fulfilling ideal is counter-productive to successfully dealing with mistakes and disappointments which naturally occur in any human interaction and more especially in a marriage. Allowing for faults and imperfections means a couple can view themselves as real people involved in a lasting, satisfying relationship.

The happy, workable, productive marriage does not require love or even the practice of the Golden Rule. To maintain continuously a union based on love is not feasible for most

people. Nor is it possible to live in a permanent state of romance. Normal people should not be frustrated or disappointed if they are not in a constant state of love. If they experience the joy of love for ten percent of the time they are married, attempt to treat each other with as much courtesy as they do distinguished strangers, and attempt to make the marriage a workable affair--one where there are some practical advantages and satisfaction for each--the chances are the marriage will endure longer and with more strength than so-called love matches. (Cox, 1981, p. 161)

Unrealistic self-fulfilling prophecies and/or idealized projections are false expectations which can cause high states of anxiety and frustration in a marriage. In a mature marriage, mates see each other as real people who share life's challenges together by combining and devoting their energies and resources to the achievement of mutual and individual desires and accomplishment of the tasks of daily living.

It is a mature pair who recognize that life-long love doesn't demand full-time attention. They do not lose their identity; in their devotion to mutual concerns they express their love, build pair-unity, and at the same time develop their own individual identities. Neither is driven by a compulsion to give or to demand, but both are free to give generously of themselves. (Small, 1968, p. 235)

Healthy marriages grow and evolve with an ever increasing combining of expectations and experiences. A well-combined set of marital expectations and experiences leads to satisfaction. The degree of satisfaction depends upon how well spouses interact with each other so that desires, expectations of intimacy, and the necessities of life are being met.

To maintain a healthy, full-functioning marriage requires a lot of conscious goal-directed effort. Psychologist Frank D. Cox says there are three basic goals of intimacy in marriage:

(1) providing emotional gratification, (2) helping each other deal with crises problems, and (3) helping each other grow in the most fulfilling manner possible. (Cox, 1981, p. 166)

Psychologists Edward Waring, Debbie McElrath, Dan Lefcoe and Gary Weisz (1981) believe there are four dimensions to a marital relationship that lead to satisfaction and commitment:

(1) compatibility . . . crucial in spouse selection and in marital adjustment, (2) . . . explicit rules and roles which provide structure and definition, (3) the capacity or willingness of the spouses to give affection and support, (4) . . . absence of conflict. (p. 172)

Being satisfied and committed are important dimensions in marriage. Married couples that achieve intimacy have complete communication and healthy expectations and perceptions of themselves and of each other. These ingredients comprise a wholesome, growing, satisfied, intimate relationship.

Psychological research has found the desire for intimacy is of relatively great importance to meeting expectations in marriage. American culture places a high value on intimacy and, although not restricted to marriage, most people get married to seek and maintain it (Schaefer and Olson, 1981, p. 47).

CHAPTER THREE

Design of the Study

This study was designed with a two-part purpose: (1) to review the concept of expectations about others, about oneself and about expectations in marriage, (2) to determine expected and realized differences in emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational intimacy of married couples.

What the individual 'would like from the relationship,' versus what they perceive they are 'actually receiving' from it at present. (Olson and Schaefer, 1977, p. 1)

This chapter presents a description of the study participants and the instrument used for collection of the data. In addition, the procedures that were followed are described, as are the types of data analysis used to interpret information obtained in the course of the study.

Subjects

For the purpose of this study, ten married couples who had been married between one month and 21 years (mean = 10.5), ranging in age from 23 to 43 years old (mean = 33.1) were asked to participate in an assessment of intimacy. The couples were part of a Waterloo, Iowa church Sunday school class. The church group was selected because of the researcher's acquaintance with the pastor. Table 1 presents a description of the subjects.

Table 1
 Characteristics of the Sample by Years of
 Marriage and Age of Husband and Wife

	<u>Years of marriage</u>	<u>Husband's age</u>	<u>Wife's age</u>
(N = 10)			
	5	39	39
	21	43	41
	8	29	29
	4	27	26
	13	35	32
	11	29	29
	14	37	35
	9	28	30
	15	36	35
	1 month	28	23
Mean years of marriage = 10.5 years			
Range: 1 month to 21 years			
Mean husbands age = 33.1 years			
Range: 43 to 27 years			
Mean wifes age = 31.9 years			
Range: 41 to 23 years			

Instrument

The principal instrument used for the study was the PAIR. This inventory ". . . is a self-report instrument that systematically assesses the couples perceptions and expectations in their marriage" (Schaefer and Olson, 1977, p. 1).

Validity and Reliability

PAIR was developed . . .

Using several psychometric test construction criteria to select the items for each scale . . . both an item analysis and factor analysis were conducted to test for adequacy of the items and the scales. . . . Reliability testing consisted of a split-half method of analysis. . . . (Schaefer and Olson, 1978, pp. 13, 14, 17)

The Schaefer and Olson instrument has not been subjected to a test-retest analysis to date.

Methodology

Part one of the research was achieved by reviewing literature relevant to the concept of expectations and intimacy in marriage. Part two was accomplished by administering the PAIR instrument to ten married couples.

The PAIR instrument consists of 36 items reflecting emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational categories of intimacy. Couples respond to the 36 items on a prepared answer sheet by choosing from a five point scale: 0 = strongly disagree, 1 = somewhat disagree, 2 = neutral, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = strongly agree. Each of the five components comprise scales containing six items in a common format instrument (see Appendix A).

In addition to the five areas of intimacy, there is a scale on conventionality, which measures the extent to which the couple is 'faking good.' Although this scale contains the same number of items as the intimacy scales, it is interpreted differently. (Olson and Schaefer, 1977, p. 1)

For the purpose of this research paper the conventionality scale was not included because it does not measure intimacy and is interpreted differently.

The inventory comprises two parts. In the first part, the couples answer the way they feel about the relationship at the present. This part is labeled "How it is NOW." In the second part, the couples answer the way they would like the relationship to be. This part is labeled "How I would LIKE it to be" on the answer sheet (see Appendix A).

Actual administration of the PAIR was done at a Waterloo church Sunday school class. An explanation for wanting to give the inventory to the class was given to the pastor of the church by the researcher. The purpose for administering the PAIR to the Sunday school class was to gather data for this research paper. The pastor said in the church bulletin that his class would participate in the PAIR assessment (see Appendix B). He also made the announcement in his Sunday remarks. The researcher administered the PAIR instrument to all the couples Sunday, May 1, 1983 after church services.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation of Data

The purpose of this research was to determine if significant differences exist between married couples expected and realized perceptions of five types of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational.

This chapter contains a summary of the data obtained from administering the PAIR assessment instrument and a discussion of the results. Analysis of data was based on ten married couples. The description of results is comprised of tables and discussion. Table 1, shown on page 22 presents a description of the sample study.

Table 2 contains standard score means, standard deviations and minimum and maximum scores for five scales of intimacy of married couples by sex. Table 3 contains the standard score means and standard deviations totals for all five scales of intimacy. Tables 4 through 8 describe the results according to an analysis of variance for five scales of intimacy: emotional, social, sexual, intellectual, and recreational. Table 9 shows an analysis of variance description of totals for all five intimacy scales.

The Range of Scores

How did the couples score on the average on the intimacy scales? For this study a sample of 10 married couples was used and the following tendencies were found.

The absolute range of scores is 0 and 96. It was found that, the average perceived score fell between 51 and 80 for each scale. The range of discrepancy between male and female perceived was within 8 to 87 points for each scale, so large discrepancies in perceptions occur. The average discrepancy in perceived scores for this sample was 2 to 15 points.

Table 2
Standard Score Means, Standard Deviations, Minimum and
Maximum Scores for All Scales of Intimacy
of Married Couples by Sex

Couples by Sex N = 10	Mean	S.D.	Min. Sc.	Max. Sc.
M Em. Realized	62.80	23.71	16	92
M Em. Expected	86.10	6.36	76	96
F Em. Realized	54.00	20.59	20	88
F Em. Expected	88.40	8.09	76	96
M So. Realized	64.80	20.98	24	88
M So. Expected	75.60	18.03	28	92
F So. Realized	68.80	12.34	48	84
F So. Expected	80.00	9.04	64	92
M Sx. Realized	71.70	24.55	9	96
M Sx. Expected	88.90	7.72	72	96
F Sx. Realized	79.60	11.69	64	96
F Sx. Expected	91.60	5.79	80	96
M Int. Realized	51.60	19.55	24	80
M Int. Expected	68.40	22.41	22	96
F Int. Realized	62.00	27.98	0	92
F Int. Expected	83.40	9.62	64	96
M Rec. Realized	69.50	15.27	47	92
M Rec. Expected	83.20	9.76	64	96
F Rec. Realized	75.60	18.03	36	96
F Rec. Expected	85.20	10.68	64	96

M = Male, F = Female

The average expected scores ranged between 68 and 92, but the actual range of the scores was between 0 and 96. This seems to indicate that most couples seem to expect high levels of intimacy, though low scores do appear (Olson and Schaefer, 1977, p. 7).

Except for the realized emotional scale of intimacy, females average scores are higher. All female expected average scores are higher than all male expected scores. This would seem to indicate that females realize more intimacy, except for emotional intimacy than do males, and females have higher expectations than males.

Table 3

Married Couples Expected and Realized Standard Score Means and Standard Deviations Totals For Five Scales of Intimacy, Emotional, Social, Sexual, Intellectual and Recreational

Scale N = 20	Expected		Realized	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Emotional	87.25	7.28	58.40	22.20
Social	77.80	14.26	66.80	17.21
Sexual	90.25	6.82	75.65	19.22
Intellectual	75.90	17.24	56.80	24.13
Recreational	84.20	10.22	72.55	16.70

All expected average total scores are higher than all realized average total scores. This would seem to indicate that couples have not achieved as much intimacy as expected. The scores would also seem to indicate that none of the couples have achieved more than was

expected in terms of the five types of intimacy examined because none of the realized scores are higher than expected scores.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference (p. 05) in expected emotional intimacy and realized emotional intimacy of married couples.

Analysis of variance for expected and realized emotional intimacy is summarized in Table 4. The F value of 1.1 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized emotional intimacy of married couples on the emotional scale. The F value of 1.1 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 4
Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
for Emotional Intimacy of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between	65.17	1	65.17	1.1 NS
Within	1044.04	18	58.00	

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference (p. 05) in expected social intimacy and realized social intimacy of married couples.

Analysis of variance for expected and realized social intimacy is summarized in Table 5. The F value of .35 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized social intimacy of married couples on the social scale. The F value of .35 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 5
Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
for Social Intimacy of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between	176.8	1	176.8	.35 NS
Within	8993.6	18	499.64	

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference ($p = .05$) in expected sexual intimacy and realized sexual intimacy of married couples.

Analysis of variance for expected and realized sexual intimacy is summarized in Table 6. The F value of .84 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized sexual intimacy of married couples on the sexual scale. The F value of .84 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 6
Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
for Sexual Intimacy of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between	384.5	1	384.5	.84 NS
Within	7493.8	18	416.32	

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant difference (p. 05) in expected intellectual intimacy and realized intellectual intimacy of married couples.

Analysis of variance for expected and realized intellectual intimacy is summarized in Table 7. The F value of 1.89 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized intellectual intimacy of married couples on the intellectual scale. The F value of 1.89 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 7

Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
for Intellectual Intimacy of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between	1665.8	1	1665.8	1.89 NS
Within	15837.2	18	879.84	

Hypothesis 5: There is no significant difference (p. 05) in expected recreational intimacy and realized recreational intimacy.

Analysis of variance for expected and realized recreational intimacy is summarized in Table 8. The F value of .54 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized recreational intimacy of married couples on the recreational scale. The F value of .54 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 8
 Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
 for Recreational Intimacy of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between	206.05	1	206.05	.54 NS
Within	6908.1	18	383.78	

Hypothesis 6: There is no significant difference (p. 05) in expected and realized intimacy for all intimacy scales, emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational between married couples.

Analysis of variance for all expected and realized scores is summarized in Table 9. The F value of 1.1 indicated no significant difference existed between expected and realized scores for all intimacy scales. The F value of 1.1 was not large enough to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 9
 Analysis of Variance of Expected and Realized Scores
 for All Intimacy Scales of Married Couples

Source	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Sq.	F Value
Between (Total)	2462.32	1	2462.32	1.1 NS
Within (Total)	40276.74	18	2237.59	

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary

Brief Description of the Problem

This study examined expectations about others, about oneself and about marriage. It also examined the difference in expected and realized intimacy of married couples.

Methodology

A literature review was conducted to (1) determine what expectations people have about others, about themselves, and about marriage, and (2) the Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships (Olson, 1977, p. 1) inventory was utilized for this study because it is an instrument designed specifically to determine differences in expected and realized intimacy of married couples.

For this study six research questions and six null hypotheses pertinent to the topic of expected and realized intimacy in marriage were formulated. The questions asked if there is a difference in expected and realized emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational intimacy of married couples. The six null hypotheses stated that there is no significant difference in expected and realized intimacy of married couples.

The PAIR inventory was administered to ten married couples. Scores obtained from administering the PAIR were described by standard score means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum scores and

analysis of variance of expected and realized scores for each of the five categories of intimacy and for the total of the five categories.

Findings

The literature review revealed that intimacy desires are influenced by past experiences which determine expectations people have about others, about themselves, and about marriage. The means by which people search for intimacy and realization of their expectations include, among many others, emotional, social, sexual, intellectual and recreational endeavors.

Research results for this study were obtained from administering the PAIR inventory. The score average totals seem to indicate that expectations of married couples are not being met because none of the realized scores are higher than or equal to expected scores. Scores from the intimacy inventory, calculated by the analysis of variance technique, yielded no statistically significant difference in expected and realized intimacy of married couples.

Conclusions

Based on data obtained from the literature review it can reasonably be concluded that people are searching for intimacy and striving to fulfill their expectations. Data obtained by administering the PAIR instrument yields the reasonable conclusion that expectations are higher than realizations for the five categories of intimacy measured by the inventory. However, analysis of variance shows no statistically significant difference in expected and realized intimacy of married couples. Therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypotheses for this study are acceptable.

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APPENDIX A

PAIR Item Booklet and Answer Sheet

PAIR

ITEM BOOKLET

By
David H. Olson, Ph.D.
Mark T. Schaefer, Ph.D.



INSTRUCTIONS: This Inventory is used to measure different kinds of "intimacy" in your relationship. You are to indicate your response to each statement by using the following five point scale.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

There are two steps to the Inventory. In Part I you are to respond in the way you feel about the item at present. Use Step One of the ANSWER SHEET for this step. It is labeled "How it is Now."

In the second step you are to respond according to the way you would like it to be, that is, if you could have your relationship be any way that you may want it to be. Use Step Two for this step. It is labeled "How I would like it to be." There are no right or wrong answers.

Respond to all the items in Step One before proceeding to Step Two.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

1. My partner listens to me when I need someone to talk to.
2. We enjoy spending time with other couples.
3. I am satisfied with our sex life.
4. My partner helps me clarify my thoughts.
5. We enjoy the same recreational activities.
6. My partner has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate.
7. I can state my feelings without him/her getting defensive.
8. We usually "keep to ourselves."
9. I feel our sexual activity is just routine.
10. When it comes to having a serious discussion, it seems we have little in common.
11. I share in few of my partner's interests.
12. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my partner.
13. I often feel distant from my partner.
14. We have few friends in common.
15. I am able to tell my partner when I want sexual intercourse.
16. I feel "put-down" in a serious conversation with my partner.
17. We like playing together.
18. Every new thing I have learned about my partner has pleased me.
19. My partner can really understand my hurts and joys.
20. Having time together with friends is an important part of our shared activities.

0	1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

21. I "hold back" my sexual interest because my partner makes me feel uncomfortable.
22. I feel it is useless to discuss some things with my partner.
23. We enjoy the out-of-doors together.
24. My partner and I understand each other completely.
25. I feel neglected at times by my partner.
26. Many of my partner's closest friends are also my closest friends.
27. Sexual expression is an essential part of our relationship.
28. My partner frequently tries to change my ideas.
29. We seldom find time to do fun things together.
30. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my partner and I when we are with one another.
31. I sometimes feel lonely when we're together.
32. My partner disapproves of some of my friends.
33. My partner seems disinterested in sex.
34. We have an endless number of things to talk about.
35. I feel we share some of the same interests.
36. I have some needs that are not being met by my relationship.

PAIR

ANSWER SHEET

By David H. Olson and Mark T. Schaefer

COUPLE NUMBER:	GROUP NUMBER:	PRE _____ POST _____	DATE:
YOUR NAME:		AGE:	MALE _____ FEMALE _____
PARTNER'S NAME:		COUNSELOR:	

INSTRUCTIONS: In Part I, use the answer grid on the left side of the page, labeled "1". In Part II use the grid on the right side, labeled "2". Please respond to every item, using the five point scale at the top of each page.

1 "How it is NOW"

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	25	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

2 "How I would LIKE it to be"

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	25	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36

PLEASE DO NOT MARK BELOW THIS LINE

	Em	So	Sx	Int	Rec	Co		Em	So	Sx	Int	Rec	
PRS=							=SUM 1						=SUM 1
x4=													
NRS=	○	○	○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○	○	
Y=	12	12	12	16	8	8		12	12	12	16	8	
Y-NRS=	○	○	○	○	○	○	=SUM 2	○	○	○	○	○	=SUM 2
x4=													
SUM 1													
+SUM 2													
	P-SCORE TOTALS							E-SCORE TOTALS					

APPENDIX B

Announcement From Church Bulletin Announcing
PAIR Assessment and Solicitation
of Participants

Pastor's class will participate in the PAIR (Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships) questionnaire. We would like at least 10 couples, please. (May 1, 1983)