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The relationship between egocentric tendencies and marital satisfaction

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The University of Arizona, 1990
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EGOCENTRIC-TENDENCIES AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

by

Kim Ann Merrill

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the
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In the Graduate College

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1990
STATEMENT BY THE AUTHOR

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate if adults demonstrate egocentric-tendencies, and if so, what factors influence the degree of egocentrism displayed. The investigation was also devised in order to determine if there is a relation between the degree of egocentric-tendencies displayed and marital satisfaction.

To measure egocentrism in adults, the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale (AETS) was developed. Both the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and the Marriage Rating Scale were utilized to assess marital satisfaction and functioning.

One-hundred-thirty-six (N = 136) first time married individuals from the general population acted as participants. They were administered all three instruments. Findings indicate that egocentric-tendencies are measurable in adults. Furthermore, specific adults (men, those who are highly educated and those with a lower number of children living in the household) tend to display greater degrees of egocentrism.

This investigation also uncovered a tendency for marital satisfaction to decrease as egocentrism increases and vice versa. Other factors contributing to marital satisfaction were also explored.
CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Molly, my sister, and I fell out,

And what do you think it was all about?

She loved coffee and I loved tea,

And that was the reason we couldn't agree.

(Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes, 1985).

Even simple nursery rhymes depict humankind's inclination to view the world from one perspective. As everyday life is reflected upon, it becomes apparent that we are blinded by our own views and find it difficult to see the world as another does. As a result, problems arise at the work place, in the home and within the international arena (Elkind, 1985).

This study examined how this human inclination effects relationships, in particular, the marital relationship. The purpose of this chapter is to lay a foundation for the research. A general overview of egocentrism and the factors which contribute to marital satisfaction will be presented. The hypotheses, purpose of the study and research assumptions and limitations will also be addressed. Finally, this chapter will provide definition of terms.

**Egocentrism: An Overview**

In 1926, Jean Piaget, a cognitive developmental psychologist, coined the term *egocentrism* and adopted it as a central concept in his theory. The term is not meant to imply selfishness or a keen regard for self. Instead, egocentrism may be defined as an embeddedness in one's own view (Looft, 1972a).
Although egocentrism is typical of childish thought, it can be observed across the lifespan (Cox, 1980). According to Looft (1972a), as the individual moves through the stages of development, the transition from one stage of egocentrism to another takes place. The child, in particular, is freed from lower forms of egocentrism by increased cognitive development. Ironically, it is these mental structures which entangle the child in a higher egocentric form (Elkind, 1967; Looft, 1972a). Looft (1972a) notes this newer form of egocentrism is a negative by-product of any emergent mental system, as it presents a new set of unrealistic, misrepresentations of the world.

There are two types of egocentrism which account for these misrepresentations. The first type is spatial egocentrism. Spatial egocentrism may be thought of as the inability to comprehend how different vantage points in space render various objects visible or invisible. An example of spatial egocentrism can be found in the classroom setting; the teacher sees the rear of the room and the students see the front (Stone & Church, 1984).

According to Stone and Church (1984), the second type of egocentrism, social egocentrism, breaks into two subtypes—affective and cognitive/communicative. Affective social egocentrism refers to the inability to infer the feelings of others (What does the other feel?). Unlike the related construct, empathy, it does not imply the ability to share these feelings.

Cognitive or communicative social egocentrism is the inability to be aware of the general psychological processes of others (the thoughts, motives or intentions of another) (Ford, 1979). The focus of this theses has been on social egocentrism.

Specific forms of egocentrism may be observed across the life span. According to Elkind (1967), forms of egocentrism in infancy and childhood are best understood when presented in the context of Piaget's stages of development.
During the sensorimotor stage (birth to 2 years), egocentrism is displayed by a complete lack of differentiation between the infant and objects in contact. More clearly, the infant manages objects as if their existence depended upon his or her presence (Looft, 1972b).

According to Looft (1972b), the "preoperational child" (2 to 6 years of age) adopts newer forms of egocentrism. During this period, there is a lack of clear differentiation between symbols and their referents. Therefore, egocentricity is demonstrated primarily through speech, as the child assumes words carry much more information than they actually do.

Looft (1972b) states that at the concrete operational stage of development, the school-age child (7 to 11 years) demonstrates egocentrism with the inability to differentiate between mental products and perceptual givens. The child naturally assumes hypotheses constructed internally are products of external information and not the result of his or her own cognition.

With the emergence of Piaget's final stage of development, formal operations, comes adolescence and a new form of egocentrism. Egocentrism, at this point, is marked by the inadequate differentiation between one's own thoughts and feelings and those of others (Atwater, 1988). Two related concepts, the imaginary audience and the personal fable, are associated with adolescent egocentrism. It is thought these concepts account for much of typical adolescent behavior (Elkind, 1967; Elkind & Weiner, 1978; Matter, 1982).

Since adolescents do not effectively differentiate between their own thoughts and the thoughts of others, they begin to believe others are absorbed in their thinking. As a result, they feel they are constantly on stage anticipating the reactions of others; thus the term, imaginary audience. As the adolescent anticipates the reactions
of others, self-consciousness increases.

Therefore, according to Atwater (1988), there is an increase in shame, reluctance of self, overreaction to criticism and need for privacy. The imaginary audience is manifested in typical adolescent behaviors such as being obsessed with one's appearance or continually anticipating the reaction others will have to one's demise.

At the same time, the adolescent over-differentiates one's feelings with the feelings of others. Atwater (1988) notes this leads to an exaggeration of personal uniqueness; adolescents feel more special than they really are. This subjective story is know as the personal fable. The personal fable is manifested in the belief that one is not subject to the dangers suffered by others. As a result, many adolescents neglect to drive safely or use contraceptives, as "it won't happen to me".

According to Elkind (1967), egocentrism, particularly in the imaginary audience form, begins to diminish by age 15 or 16. Elkind notes, the personal fable is most likely overcome by the progressive incorporation of intimacy into one's life. However, Elkind adds the personal fable probably never full diminishes.

Rubin's investigation of egocentrism in children supports Elkind's (1967) statement, as he found egocentrism significantly decreased with age on all measures (Rubin, 1973). According to Looft (1972b), most cognitive developmental theorists believe the individual moves from a state of total egocentricity to one of objectivity.

This state of total egocentrism is characterized by the phenomenon known as centering or centration. Looft (1972a) defines centering or centration as the child's tendency to pay attention to only one detail of an object or event. Looft also notes that as egocentrism decreases with development, perspectivism or social perspective-taking (which is the ability to differentiate between one's own point of view and that of another), increases.
Looft (1972a) states that the means in which the individual overcomes early forms of egocentrism and develops perspectivism is through the process of *decentering*. Decentering is a corrective process by which attention to other stimuli is given through systematic error correction. More clearly, the dissonant messages received from others during social interaction systematically force the individual to re-evaluate perceptions from another's point of view.

Egocentrism, like many forms of psychological functioning, has been researched minimally in adults. In fact, Looft (1972a) comments, "...within the existing notions of cognitive development it [egocentrism] is not even considered to be a concept relevant to adulthood" (p. 80).

Although egocentrism is believed to be irrelevant in adulthood, egocentric-like behavior can be observed in many adults. Looft (1972a) maintains that adult egocentric behavior most likely is found in social interactions with others. He provided the example of the middle-aged person who displays increased contemplation of inner thought and decreased reactivity to others. Looft admits his evidence for adult egocentrism is not plentiful, yet asserts it is convincing.

Elkind (1985) adds:

It is certainly true, that perspective taking does evolve with age and that our capacity to understand others who are in different emotional and motivational states than ourselves improves with age. But we all have many capacities that we do not use because they are too effortful (p.221).

Since adults choose not to make the effort, a great number of difficulties arise.

Looft (1972b) declares:

... a strong case can be made regarding the influence of egocentrism in the lives of members of the human species, both individually and collectively.... Perhaps on the larger social scale it can be argued that ego-
centricity of thought—the illusions caused by the immediate point of view—has been the central problem in the history of human affairs (p. 492-493).

Likewise, Elkind (1985) feels the real problems in the international politics derive from the unwillingness to take the view of another nation. Even more specifically, adult egocentrism can be observed as it manifests itself in everyday social interactions. Elkind notes that social interactions may be grouped into two categories—surface social interactions and deep social interactions.

Surface social interactions are the interactions we have with strangers. For instance, surface social interactions occur when we buy groceries, go to the theatre or eat in a strange restaurant. Generally, one does not take another's perspective at these times, as it is unnecessary.

Deep social interactions are interactions which we have with those we are close to—friends, parents, children, siblings, and spouses. According to Elkind (1985), even during these interactions, perspective taking is not commonplace.

Elkind (1985) continues by saying, "I would say that the inability of husbands and wives or parents and children to see the other person's point of view, or credit it with any validity, is a leading cause of marital and child mental health problems" (p. 220-221).

Ironically, no research, to date, has focused on the effect egocentrism has on the family and marriage. However, the institution of marriage and contributing factors to marital satisfaction have been investigated extensively. In order to lay a foundation for the research, a brief overview of marriage and those factors will now be presented.
Marriage and Marital Satisfaction: An Overview

Marriage may be thought of as one of the most intimate of all human interactions (Cox, 1984). One function of the institution is to fulfill both practical and emotional needs. More specifically, Cox (1984) notes, marriage may serve in meeting economic, sexual and psychological requirements. Consequently, in hope to find fulfillment, 95% of all Americans will marry sometime in their life (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1982; cited in Cox, 1984).

Historically, the family served essentially as an economic unit rather than an emotional one (Shorter, 1975; Stone, 1985; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). In fact, marriage has even been defined as "primarily an economic matter" (Sumner, in Winch, 1952: 55; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Lamanna and Riedmann (1985) note, in the past, families were virtually self-sufficient monetary units (members cooperatively produced what they consumed). In the marital context, this interdependency was reflected in mate selection; choosing a mate was equivalent to choosing a business associate. Stone (1980; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985) mentions even among the wealthy Americans and Europeans, marriage was more pragmatic than romantic; it served as a means of furthering one's economic, political and social status.

Lamanna and Riedmann (1985) distinguish contemporary marital units. They note, economic interdependency is now experienced differently. According to Lamanna and Riedmann, more than half of all married women are employed outside the home. By working, these wives and their spouses can maintain a standard of living which neither could on their own. With an increase in single-person households, marriage has become less of a financial necessity. However, Lamanna and Riedmann (1985) comment that even today marriage offers economic security and ful-
fillment of practical needs.

Not only does marriage serve in sufficing practical needs such as food, clothing and shelter, but it also functions as a means of meeting sexual wants. In fact, Cox (1984) notes sexual intercourse is a state-mandated part of marriage. He also remarks it is the only legitimate means of releasing sexual energies in American society.

Likewise, it is thought that the nuptial union provides a "social control of reproduction and child-rearing" (Cherlin, 1978, p. 634; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). According to Lamanna and Riedmann (1985), it has been assumed two parents are better than one. Moreover, Lamanna and Riedmann are not aware of any society which encourages reproduction outside the family setting.

Finally, the institution can serve as a means of fulfilling psychological needs. Ties to the neighborhood and extended family continue to weaken, and work seems to be carried out in more competitive and less personal settings. As a result, private life within the marriage has become very important in meeting needs for human contact and emotional involvement (Berger, Berger & Kellner, 1973; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Cox (1984) notes marriage is a place where love, emotional support, security and companionship may be supplied.

Realistically, however, marriage cannot gratify all emotional needs. In fact, "marriage is an institution that has been asked to carry more weight than it can bear " (Lawrence, 1974 p. 67; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). A popular misconception regarding marriage is the existence of the "ideal" marriage, in which all needs are fulfilled. The disillusionment experienced is appropriately illustrated in the following story told by American humorist George Ade:

I was sitting with a little girl of eight one afternoon. She looked up from the copy of Hans Andersen she was reading, and asked innocently, 'Does
m-i-r-a-g-e spell marriage, Mr. Ade?' 'Yes my child', said I (Ade; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985 p.11).

Besides having to bear the weight of high expectations, the institution of marriage has undergone radical changes implored by society. For instance, although most Americans marry, there seems to be more hesitation in recent years. In fact, between 1970 and 1972 there was a sharp decline in the marriage rate; 23 percent for men and 24 percent for women (U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, 1979; cited in Lamanna and Riedmann, 1985). Compared to the early seventies, there was an increase between 1977 and 1982, yet another decline occurred in 1983 (U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, 1984; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985).

Likewise, remarriages are increasingly accounting for a large proportion of all marriages. In 1982, 43 percent of all marriages were remarriages; compared to 32 percent in 1960 (Thornton & Freedman, 1983; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Moreover, the rate of cohabitation is on the rise. Almost 4 percent of all couples living together are unmarried. The number of unmarried-couple households has more than tripled between 1970 and 1982 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1983; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985).

In addition, according to Thornton and Freedman (1983), the number of mothers/wives returning to work or school has increased. Thornton and Freedman (1983) also note that although most husbands support the idea of sharing household responsibilities, actual behavior falls short of the ideal. Finally, even though the divorce rate may be leveling off (Cherlin, 1981; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985), the marriage rate has continually had to compete.

Albeit the institution of marriage has had to withstand many societal demands, its existence is strong. Some types of marriages, however, appear to be stronger than
others. According to Lamanna and Riedmann (1985), different types of marriages have been distinguished. The more practical style, the *utilitarian marriage*, is started and maintained for practical purposes. Such reasons may include economic security or career advancement (White, 1979; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Parallel or separate patterns of interaction are indications of utilitarian marriages (Bernard, 1964; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985).

_Intrinsic marriages_, on the other hand, are based more on intense emotional feelings (Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Individuals in these marriages stress the importance of personal uniqueness, affection and companionship (Bernard, 1964; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). According to Lamanna and Riedmann (1985), intrinsic marriages are more vulnerable to divorce because of their characteristically high expectations.

Realistically, most marriages fall on a continuum between the two. Lamanna & Riedmann (1985) note that an array of marital types fall between these extremes. Based on different adjustment styles and conceptions of marriage, five general categories of marital relationships have been classified (Cuber & Harroff, 1965. cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). According to Cuber and Harroff (1965), _conflict-habituated_ relationships are characterized by unresolved conflict, nagging and arguing. These relationships necessarily do not end in divorce as they fill the emotional needs of each partner (the need to engage in conflict).

_Devitalized marriages_, according to Cuber and Harroff (1965) are typically experienced by individuals in long term marriages which have lost their zest and meaning. Lamanna & Riedmann (1985) note that these marriages once intrinsic have now turned utilitarian.

Cuber and Harroff (1965) note that partners in *passive congenial marriages*
stress the importance of the "sensibility" to marry and not emotional intensity. Couples in these marriages emphasize civic and professional responsibilities, property, children and economic security. Although there is little conflict in passive-cogenial marriages, there are unexpressed frustrations. If practical needs are not being met, or if an individual wants intimacy, a divorce is likely to occur.

Vital and total are the last two types of marriages Cuber and Harroff (1956) identified. The vital marriage is one of being together, sharing and of intensity and importance. Cuber and Harroff (1965) note that ecstasy in vital marriages comes from being together; however not to the point that identities are lost. Conflict over real issues occurs, yet is settled very quickly. There are few vital marriages.

Even fewer total marriages exist. Total marriages are very similar to vital marriages, yet are much more multifaceted. Cuber and Harroff (1965) note couples in total marriages may have similar jobs, careers or even employers. Likewise, they may work on projects together or share many interests. Much time is spent alone together in these marriages. Thus, there is the danger of fostering mutual dependency. However, more positively, a wide range of fulfillment is experienced by these spouses.

Not all spouses feel a sense of fulfillment and many factors have been closely examined to find out why. According to Lamanna & Riedmann (1985), age at the time of marriage is one such factor. Statistics indicate that first marriages are more likely to be stable if partners marry at age 24, for men and 22 for women (Bernard, 1972; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985).

Lamanna & Riedmann (1985) note that late first marriages are likely to end in divorce. These individuals may be less flexible, insistent upon personal freedom, financially secure or have unrealistic expectations of marriage. On the opposite end of
the continuum, Glick & Norton (1977) mention that teenage marriages are twice as likely to end in divorce as marriages of those in their twenties. Younger spouses may lack the maturity necessary for a stable marriage. Four elements of maturity needed for a stable marriage have been identified (Knox, 1975, cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). They are emotional, economic, relationship and value maturity.

Not only is age important in considering the success of a relationship, but also are the reasons for marrying. Unfortunately, some marry for less positive motives. Being on the rebound, rebelling against one's parents and escaping from an unhappy home are some circumstances Lamanna & Riedmann (1988) attribute to less stable marriages. Lamanna & Riedmann (1985) include other reasons for marrying which lead to divorce. They are physical attraction, loneliness, feelings of obligation, social pressure and economic advancement. Cox (1984) also adds, that when marrying on the basis of sexual attraction, chances for success are greatly reduced.

Three more positive reasons for marrying are emotional security, companionship and having a desire to parent and raise children (Knox, 1975; cited in Lamanna & Riedmann, 1985). Cox (1984) notes that having similar socioeconomic backgrounds and energy levels are factors which tend to increase chances of marital success.

Cox (1984) notes various other factors which may contribute to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Such factors include personality, similarity in background, attitudes toward gender role, employment and economic status, presence of children and interaction patterns. All of these factors will be addressed more specifically in Chapter 2.

Since so many factors contribute to what makes a marriage satisfying or dissatisfying, Cox (1984) notes that active responsibility must be taken to make a marriage
work. Cox (1984) comments that many couples actively seek marital growth and fulfillment through courses on marriage and family, encounter groups, enrichment weekends, communication workshops, and bodily awareness training.

It is hoped the current study has discovered impacting findings, so individuals can continue to take charge of their marital happiness.

**Statement of the Problem**

Although an overwhelming amount of literature exists on contributing factors to marital satisfaction, no research has yet been carried out on the effect egocentrism has on the marriage. In fact, as aforementioned, the concept of egocentrism is not even considered to be relevant to adulthood. Since cognitive theorists have chosen to disregard the concept, past the early formal operations stage, many questions have been left unanswered. For instance, Elkind (1967) notes that the individual progressively is ensnared by higher forms of egocentrism. Does this include the adult? Without further investigation this question will be left unanswered. Likewise, Elkind mentions that the development of intimacy aids the individual in overcoming egocentrism. One may wonder about the degree of egocentricity in a nonintimate person. Moreover, do adults even demonstrate egocentric tendencies, and, if so, what measured factors effect the degree of egocentrism displayed? Likewise, is there a relationship between the degree of egocentric-tendencies expressed and marital satisfaction? The two ladder will be addressed in this investigation.

On the larger scale, it is disturbing that the concept has not been investigated further since, "... it can be argued that egocentricity of thought... has been the central problem in the history of humankind" (Loof, 1972b, p.493). Likewise, Elkind (1985) mentioned the difficulty is not only a problem in international politics, but also more personally, within the marriage.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study has been to break past the traditional notion that egocentrism is irrelevant to adulthood and provide research directly related to adult egocentric-like behavior. The investigation was also designed to explore the impact of egocentric tendencies on marital satisfaction. In addition, another intention was to devise an instrument to measure egocentrism in adults and lay the foundation for further research regarding egocentrism across the lifespan.

Hypotheses

The research questions that were investigated were as follows:

1. Do adults demonstrate egocentric tendencies, and, if so, what measured factors effect the degree of egocentrism displayed?
2. Is there a relationship between the degree of egocentric-tendencies expressed and marital satisfaction?

Research Assumptions and Limitations

In order for this research to be carried out, several assumptions needed to be made. First, it was assumed that egocentrism is a construct that exists and could be measured. Second, it was assumed that participants had a clear understanding of all vocabulary in the questionnaire. And finally, it was assumed that all participants answered the questions both candidly and objectively.

Several limitations were also underlying in the study. First, it was thought that most subjects may not openly admit to being egocentric. Looft (1972b) notes that individuals have the tendency to yield socially desirable responses, which could mask the effects the researcher is looking for, in studies of egocentrism beyond childhood.

Second, it is controversial whether egocentrism is relevant to adulthood. Third,
this study cannot be generalized beyond this population. Likewise, the investigation
did not examine ethnic differences, married couples (instead, individuals were exam-
ined), breaks in the marriage and previous counseling experience. Fourth, individu-
als displaying egocentric behaviors may enjoy their marriage, although their spouses
may not. Finally, the most obvious limitation was that no paper/pencil instrument
had previously been designed to measure adult egocentrism.

**Definition of Terms**

Words may be defined in many ways, therefore a definition of terms applicable
to this study is provided:

**Adult:** any individual over the age of 18.

**Centering or centration:** the tendency to pay attention to only one detail of an object
or event.

**Decentering:** a correction process by which attention is given to other stimuli
through systematic error correction (Looft, 1972a).

**Egocentrism:** an embeddedness in one's own point of view (Looft, 1972a).

**High Marital Satisfaction:** indicated by high scores on The Marriage
Rating Scale and Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale.

**Highly Egocentric Individuals:** individuals who score high on the Adult Egocentric
Tendency Scale.

**Low Egocentric Individuals:** individuals who score low on the Adult Egocentric Tendency Scale.

**Low Marital Satisfaction:** indicated by high scores on The Marriage Rating Scale
and on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale.

**Perspectivism or Perspective-taking:** the ability to differentiate between one's own
view and that of another (Looft, 1972a).
Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a theoretical base for the hypotheses under consideration. A general overview of egocentrism and contributing factors to marital satisfaction were presented. Likewise, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, hypotheses, and assumptions and limitations were discussed. Finally, definitions of terms were clarified.

In the following chapter, a review of the current literature will be presented. The review of literature will include prior empirical investigations of egocentrism through the lifespan. In addition, past research on contributing factors to marital satisfaction will also be studied.
CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The prime objective of Chapter 1 was to lay a foundation for this research. In this chapter, relevant empirical investigations will be reviewed. In particular, studies which examined egocentrism in children, adolescents and adults will be explored. Likewise, factors such as compatibility, personal characteristics, situational factors, communication skills and interaction styles, which contribute to marital satisfaction, will be examined.

Literature Review of Egocentrism in Childhood

Since egocentrism has traditionally been thought to diminish by age 15 or 16, much of the available literature focuses on studies of egocentrism in children. However, since the focus of this thesis has been on adults, only a few of these studies will be briefly highlighted.

It seems the most logical manner to recapitulate the data is by the type of egocentrism being measured. There are two main forms of egocentrism, visual/spatial and social. Social egocentrism breaks into two other subtypes--affective and cognitive/communicative (Ford, 1979). As previously mentioned (in chapter 1), the focus of this thesis has been on social egocentrism. However, some of the studies designed to measure visual/spatial egocentrism are too important to exclude.

Piaget and Inhelder's 1956 "three mountains" experiment (Piaget & Inhelder, 1956; cited in Light, 1983) stimulated the beginning of research on the ability to take another's perspective. The experiment was contrived in order to investigate how well children understand that others, literally, see things differently. The procedure of the
experiment is as follows: the child is positioned around a three dimensional model of three mountains and asked to choose pictures which depict the view a doll may have of the mountains (a doll is placed in a different position in relation to the model) (Light, 1983). Results revealed that the youngest children tested (age 4) almost all failed the task and therefore showed signs of possessing narrow and restrictive viewpoints.

According to Ford (1979), many other visual/spatial role-taking experiments have been devised on the basis of concepts involved in the "three mountains" task. Interestingly, Fishbein, Lewis and Keiffer (1972; cited in Light, 1983) and Borke (1975; cited in Light, 1983) found when the mountains were replaced by various objects, such as toys, even preschoolers did well. Similarly, Eliot and Dayton (1976; cited in Ford, 1979) developed an adaptation of the "three mountains" task by varying the shape of the stimulus. Flavell, Botkin, Fry, Wright and Jarvis (1968; cited in Ford, 1979) also asked children to re-create the visual perspective of another using similar objects. Finally, Liben (1978; cited in Ford, 1979) asked children, wearing yellow sunglasses, to describe how a white card would appear to someone wearing green sunglasses. The general findings of these studies indicate that fewer errors are made with an increase in age.

The visual/spatial measures mentioned thus far have involved how another sees something versus whether another sees something. Flavell, Shipstead and Croft (1978; cited in Light, 1983) found children (even as young as age 2) have less difficulty in distinguishing whether another sees something versus how something is seen. Likewise, in "hide and seek" games with dolls (Hobson, 1980; Hughes and Donaldson, 1979; and Light, 1979; cited in Light, 1983), high levels of success have been demonstrated amongst children 2 to 4 years of age.
Ford (1979) notes that only one estimate of reliability for visual/spatial measures is published; test-retest reliability for the Flavell et al. (1968) measure is between .85 and .95 on samples of children between 5 to 12 years old.

According to Ford (1979), affective egocentrism may be thought of as the inability to infer the feelings of another. Borke's (1971, 1973) Interpersonal Perception Test (cited in Ford, 1979) indicated children as young as three have the ability to successfully match feelings a peer may experience during emotional childhood situations, such as having a birthday party, or having a toy broken.

Rothenberg (1970; cited in Ford, 1979) developed a similar measure. However, for this measure, children were asked to judge the feelings of adults in relatively unfamiliar situations. Findings indicate this task is much more difficult for children to comprehend.

According to Ford (1979), affective measures are criticized because it is unclear whether correct responses are representative of true perspective taking; no clear criterion exists for discriminating between the child's own replies and those replies inferring emotional responses of another. Likewise, few measures of affective egocentrism report reliability. Those that do report, have dangerously low correlations (.28 - .50). Therefore, although findings indicate children have the ability to infer the feelings of others, in certain situations, further research needs to be carried out in this area.

An abundance of literature exists on cognitive/communicative egocentrism, as it is the broadest of the three categories. Ford (1979) mentions that cognitive/communicative egocentrism may be defined as the inability to infer the thoughts, motives or intentions of another.

According to Light (1983), two types of techniques have been used to distinguish
between the ability or inability to take another's cognitive perspective. The categories involve open-ended or recursive thought and privileged or "right-answer" responses. An open-ended technique would include social guessing games (I think he/she thinks that...). Miller, Kessel and Flavell (1970; cited in Light, 1983) found, through the use of their "thought balloons", that the ability to think recursively increases with age. Likewise, De Vries (1970; cited in Light, 1983) found that by age 6, children are able to outwit the experimenter in a game which involves hiding a penny in one of two fists.

The "right answer" domain tests the child's appreciation of what another does. Chandler (1972; cited in Light, 1983) asked children to retell a cartoon sequences from the viewpoint of characters in the story (who do not possess the same privileged information as the child). It was demonstrated that such techniques are unsuitable for very young children. In fact, according to Light (1983), success with cognitive perspective-taking measures with pre-school children has been limited.

Light (1983) mentions, Piaget originally introduced the concept of egocentrism in the context of ineffective verbal communication. Piaget (1926) asserted that successful communications are dependent upon the speaker's ability to take the listener's perspective into consideration when shaping utterances. Much controversy is surrounded around the notion of egocentric speech; alternative views, regarding definition, have been asserted by various researchers (Vygotsky, 1962; Werner and Kaplan, 1963; Flavell, 1966; and Kohlberg, Yeager and Hjertholm, 1968; cited in Ford, 1979).

Many other controversies exist in regard to the frequency of egocentric speech. Looft (1972a) notes that Piaget reported 40%-70% of children's speech is egocentric at age 5-6. Some agree (Smith, 1935 and Weir, 1962; cited in Looft, 1972a), while
others disagree (McCarthy, 1930; cited in Looft, 1972a).

Ford (1979) notes one of the most popular methods of determining cognitive/communicative egocentrism is by way of referential communication studies. Basically, these studies measure the listener's ability to select objects based on messages sent by the speaker. Performance on the Blocks Task (Glucksberg and Krauss, 1967; Glucksberg, Krauss and Higgins, 1975; and Glucksberg, Krauss and Weisberg, 1966; cited in Looft, 1972) improved with age and familiarity with the figures employed. Many other researchers have investigated referential communication (Piche, Muchlin, Rubin and Johnson, 1975; Shatz and Gelman, 1973; Maratos, 1973 and Hoy, 1975; cited in Ford, 1979).

Ford (1979) mentions that another method of evaluating cognitive/communicative egocentrism is through the observation of social and private speech, in naturalistic settings. Social speech is speech in which the speaker has the opportunity to modify for the listener (Garvey and Hogan, 1973; Shatz and Gelman, 1973; cited in Ford, 1979). Looft (1972a) notes that socialized speech reflects a genuine communicative orientation. Private, or egocentric speech, may or may not involve a listener, as it lacks a communicative purpose. After evaluating private speech, Kohlberg, Yaeger and Hjertholm (1968; cited in Ford, 1979) concluded that self-communication is not very different from intimate social communication. Therefore, one may wonder how effectively and genuinely we communicate with our loved ones.

Numerous studies have been carried out on the relationship between verbal communication skills and childhood egocentrism. For instance, Fry (1969; cited in Looft, 1972a) attempted to train children to give listener-appropriate communication, yet was generally unsuccessful. Botkin (1975; cited in Modgil & Modgil, 1976), however demonstrated that communication skills could be enhanced by training
role-taking skills. Similarly, Bunting (1975; cited in Modgil & Modgil, 1976) concluded that egocentrism could reoccur at different stages, yet children who were encouraged to socially interact showed a decrease in spatial egocentrism and an increase in cooperative communication. According to Light (1983), the general conclusion regarding communication effectiveness has been that it improves with age, yet is still poor in school-aged children.

Evaluation of role-taking skills is another means of assessing cognitive/communicative egocentrism. Sarbin (1954; cited in Looft, 1972a) identified the essential component of role-taking as the ability to grasp attributes of another. One of the most popular measures of role-taking ability is Feffer's Role Taking Task (Feffer, 1959, 1970; Feffer and Gourevitch, 1960; Feffer and Suchotliff, 1966; cited in Ford, 1979). This task was designed to test the ability to decenter or see an interpersonal situation from another's perspective. Feffer and Gourevitch (1960) found that role-taking ability indeed improves with age. Likewise, Rubin (1973) and Swinson (1965; cited in Modgil & Modgil, 1976) concluded role-taking ability was positively correlated with age. In addition, Flavell, (1966); Flavell et al., (1968) and Fry (1966, 1969) found that young children easily confuse their own perspective with that of the listener's. This confusion decreases with age.

This literature review has provided a brief recapitulation in regard to visual/spatial, affective and cognitive/communicative egocentrism in children. A few findings have indicated that some perspective-taking abilities are present in very early childhood. On the contrary, Light (1983) notes that other investigations have demonstrated egocentric behavior and perspective-taking failures are quite common in the preschool years. Similarly, successful perspective-taking has been found to be highly situational.
Other studies revealed that egocentrism tends to decline with age. Light (1983), however, suggests that while systematic improvement with age seems to have been established, individual differences have been noted. Therefore, Light advises that stable differences among individuals, in regard to perspective-taking tasks, may be best viewed as variations in the attention to, or sensitivity to other's viewpoints versus differences in ability.

**Literature Review of Egocentrism in Adolescence**

In contrast to egocentrism in childhood, very little empirical data exists in regard to adolescent egocentrism. According to Looft (1972a), the adolescent acquires two abilities at the beginning of formal operations. Those abilities include: 1) the skill to contemplate one's own cognition, and 2) an increased proficiency in recognizing possibilities, as well as actualities. However, it is these same abilities which account for the adolescent's engagement in higher forms of egocentrism. As a result, the adolescent fails to distinguish between the focus of another's thoughts and perceptions and one's own (Elkind, 1967).

Looft (1972a) notes that the rapid physiological changes which occur at this time also contribute to this preoccupation with self. Likewise, the adolescent assumes others are obsessed with his or her behavior and appearance. It is this obsession which constitutes egocentrism in adolescence.

According to Elkind (1967), this egocentrism can take two forms; the *imaginary audience* and the *personal fable*. Unlike the child, who is not able to take another's point of view, the adolescent takes the viewpoints of others to the extreme (Elkind, 1968). Therefore, Elkind (1967) notes, the adolescent is continuously anticipating the reactions and thoughts of others, and consequently, reacting to an imaginary audience. As a result, many adolescents feel self-conscious and are preoccupied with
shame and embarrassment (Lapsley, 1985). According to Elkind (1967), the other form of adolescent egocentrism is the personal fable. Looft (1972b) notes the personal fable stems from one's belief in his or her uniqueness. An array of consequences occur as a result of this belief in self uniqueness; an unwanted pregnancy is one example.

Some of the existing research on adolescent egocentrism is related to the self-consciousness (a direct result of the imaginary audience) felt by adolescents. For instance, Elkind and Bowen (1979) found young adolescents were much more self-conscious than children and older teens. Females were also found to be more self-conscious than males. This information was ascertained through use of the Imaginary Audience Scale (IAS). The IAS was designed to assess one's abiding (permanent characteristics) and transient (temporary characteristics) self.

Some researchers do not justify the adolescent/egocentrism relationship. For instance, Peterson (1982; cited in Lapsley, Milstead & Quintana, 1986) found no support for the formal operations and adolescent egocentrism relation, although this finding is considered to be tentative due to methodological basis. Gray and Hudson (1984) found only partial support in regard to their hypothesis that abiding transient scores were highest for those in transition to formal operations. And finally, Riley, Adams and Nielsen (1984) reported a negative correlation between the transient self scores and a paper-pencil measure of formal operational thought.

Other researchers, however, have supported adolescent egocentrism (Enright, Shulka and Lapsley, 1979; Enright, Shulka and Lapsley, 1980; cited in Lapsley, Milstead & Quintana, 1986). Unlike Elkind and Bowen (1979), Enright et al. (1979, 1980) examined both the imaginary audience and personal fable. Their findings indicate a general decline in both the imaginary audience and personal fable as adoles-
cence begins to end. Elkind (1967) also notes egocentrism tends to diminish by age 15 or 16. Adams and Jones (1981) found a linear increase in egocentrism from the start to the end of adolescence. Finally, Looft (1972a) noted adolescent egocentrism is overcome cognitively and affectively through increased social interaction. Although no clear patterns have been established in regard to the relationship between age and adolescent egocentrism, support is given for egocentrism in adolescent.

Other research has examined the effects of parenting styles (Adams and Jones, 1982; Anolik, 1981; cited in Lapsley, Milstead, & Quintana, 1986), peer relations (Simmons and Rosenberg, 1975; cited in Lapsley, Milstead, & Quintana, 1986) and school environments (Simmons, Rosenberg and Rosenberg, 1973; cited in Lapsley, Milstead, & Quintana, 1986) on egocentrism in adolescents.

Adams and Jones (1982) found males adolescents, who perceived maternal rejection, displayed higher egocentrism and both males and females, who perceived less parental affection, demonstrated increased self-consciousness. Likewise, Anolik (1981) found delinquents experienced greater egocentrism and those, who saw both parents as being non-supportive, showed even comparatively higher egocentrism for their age. Similarly, delinquents, in comparison to nondelinquents were found to have deficiencies in perspective taking skills, yet were able improve through training (Chandler, 1973). Other research (Riley, Adams and Nielson, 1984) indicates there is a positive relationship between parental rejection/control and female egocentrism, yet no significant relationship was established between parental rejection and male egocentrism.

Simmons and Rosenberg (1975) believed differences in adolescent egocentrism may be related to attitude differences toward sex roles, peer relations and feelings about physical changes occurring during adolescence. Furthermore, Simmons,
Rosenberg and Rosenberg (1973) measured different domains of self-consciousness and found the transition from a smaller elementary school to a larger junior high environment may affect one's self image.

It was proven that the highly egocentric individual would be more likely to "choke" under pressure due to self-consciousness (Tice, Buder and Baumeister, 1985; cited in De Rosenroll, 1987). Similarly, Riley, Adams and Nielson (1984) found individuals being videotaped, while taking an instrument to measure egocentrism (the IAS), yielded higher egocentric scores.

Therefore, with adolescence comes the awareness of the imaginary audience and belief in the personal fable. As a result, self-consciousness is heightened and various factors continue to influence the degree egocentrism is experienced. Based on existing empirical data, such factors include the type of self-consciousness experienced, age, parenting styles, peer relations, school environment and history of delinquency.

Some of these findings, however, do not seem to be fully established, therefore there is a need for additional research in this area.

**Literature Review of Egocentrism in Adulthood**

Less empirical investigations have been carried out on egocentrism in adults. According to Looft (1972a), egocentrism declines as the individual moves through the formal operational stage and has increased interactions in the social world. Looft (1972a), therefore, notes that many cognitive theorists consider the construct irrelevant to adulthood. In fact, much of the existing literature supports this statement. The review of adult egocentric manifestations is brief and many of the investigations are indirectly related to egocentrism. According to Looft (1972a), the research is primarily focused on adult behavior in social interactions with others and verbal
communication.

For instance, after reviewing adult conversations, it was determined that private speech is non-existent in adulthood (Soskin and John, 1963; cited in Looft, 1972a). Likewise, when asked to write notes for another's use, adults wrote more clearly and understandably for someone else (Werner and Kaplan, 1963; cited in Looft, 1972a). Even suicide notes demonstrated the ability to take another's perspective. Analysis of such notes revealed those who were serious about the action were more sensitive to the reader's viewpoint (Shneidman and Farberow, 1957; cited in Looft, 1972a). Similarly, perspective taking ability was determined to be existent in adults via color-coding tasks (Krauss, Vivekananthan and Weinheimer, 1968; cited in Looft, 1972a) and the Stack the Blocks task (Krauss and Weinheimer, 1964; cited in Looft, 1972a) which is traditionally used with children. Likewise, adults demonstrated more sensitivity in a similar task devised by Maclay and Newman (1960; cited in Looft, 1972a). This review suggests adults are quite capable of taking another's viewpoint and consequently do not appear to be egocentric.

However, Piaget himself, has recognized there are occasions when adults do not exercise this ability (Piaget, 1962). Likewise, some research (Neugarten, 1966; Birren, 1969; cited in Looft, 1972a) has suggested there is a movement towards increased inner contemplation and decreased reactivity with others during middle age. Both of these functions may be viewed as manifestations of egocentric behavior.

Looft (1971) has provided more concrete evidence in support of adult egocentrism. The intent of Looft's investigation was to determine if young and old adults engaged in egocentric tasks similarly to children. In addition, he set out to determine if egocentrism was related to intrapersonal and interpersonal functioning. During the projective task, Looft found the most common mistake, made by both young and
old adults, was the selection of patterns replicating one's own perspective instead of another's. Looft (1971) also found older adults to be more egocentric than younger adults.

However, those who did demonstrate a decreased level of decentering ability did not seem to show deficiencies in communication tasks. Looft (1971) suggests this is due to years of interacting experience. Therefore, the investigation did not indicate a relation between social interaction and egocentrism. The most significant finding of this investigation was that a test measuring egocentrism, previously conducted on children only, was able to markedly distinguish two groups of adults.

Looft's investigation does imply there is evidence of egocentrism in adulthood. However, not only is there a need for further investigations in this area, there is a general lack of evidence across the life span. For instance, Looft (1971) notes there is an abundant body of research on the aging, yet very little is directly related to egocentrism; some literature may indirectly be related, as it deals with issues such as rigidity and the disengagement process.

Modgil and Modgil (1976) also recommend further research on egocentrism be carried out from birth to maturity. One issue that has not yet been explored is the effect egocentrism has on the marriage. Thus, the need for the present study.

**Literature Review of Contributing Factors to Marital Satisfaction**

Although no previous empirical investigation has focused on the relationship between egocentrism and marital satisfaction, a great deal of literature concentrates on factors which contribute to marital success and happiness. Since there is such an accumulation of literature, only a small portion of the more recent studies will be reviewed.

"Perhaps the oldest question in the research literature on marriage is, What dis-
tinguishes a happy marriage from one that is unhappy?" (Terman, Buttenweiser, Ferguson, Johnson, & Wilson, 1938; cited in Gottman & Krokoff, 1989, p. 47). Hundreds of researchers have attempted to answer this question. As a result, the elements which constitute marital satisfaction have been researched across many domains. For instance, compatibility factors, personal characteristics of each spouse, situational factors, communication skills, and patterns of marital interaction and conflict, are some ways in which marital satisfaction has been explored.

Compatibility factors were assessed in a longitudinal study of successful, well-functioning marriages (Hine, 1980). Hine (1980) revealed that in these marriages, spouses liked each other, had similar backgrounds and compatible expectations of roles within the marriage. In addition, Hine (1980) determined that successful couples shared common goals, values, and beliefs. These findings seem to be supported, as well-adjusted couples were found to be significantly more similar in their self-descriptions than poorly adjusted couples (Creamer & Campbell, 1988). Furthermore, Creamer and Campbell (1988) comment that this finding is in line with much earlier research (Dymond, 1954; Laing et al., 1966; Newmark et al., 1977; cited in Creamer & Campbell, 1988). Likewise, others note, the notion of homogamy (like choosing like, in mate selection) has been widely accepted throughout the history of marital research (Barry, 1970; cited in Creamer & Campbell, 1988; Rubin, 1973; cited in Hine, 1980).

In considering compatibility factors further, Hine (1980) also discovered spouses in successful marriages share an average of 31 hobbies, interests and leisure time activities. Another investigation (Smith, Snyder, Trull & Monsma, 1988) has verified this finding. Smith et al. (1988) confirmed the importance of leisure activity patterns in relation to marital satisfaction. In fact, Smith et al. (1988) revealed that time spent
alone, and in activities which exclude one's spouse was significantly correlated with marital distress. Interestingly, almost twice the variance in marital distress was indicated by the wives in the study and not the husbands.

An earlier study demonstrated that couples who interacted in joint leisure patterns (requiring a great deal of interaction) had greater marital satisfaction than couples who participated in individual leisure (Orthner, 1975; cited in Holman & Jacquart, 1988). Other studies support this finding (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Holman & Epperson, 1984; Leigh, Ladehoff, Howie & Christians, 1985; Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Miller, 1976; Orden & Bradburn; 1968 and Palisi, 1984; cited in Holman & Jacquart, 1988). Similarly, Holman and Jacquart (1988), found couples who perceived communication during play, indicated higher marital satisfaction. When high levels of communication were not perceived, no relation or negative relations were found.

Intellectual ability and personality similarity are two other ways in which compatibility factors have been investigated (Lewak, Wakefield & Briggs, 1985). Lewak et al. (1985) discovered, after evaluating 81 couples, that couples did demonstrate similarities in intellect, however no significant relationship between intelligence and marital satisfaction was established. Similarly, Lewak et al. (1985), found significant congruence in certain personality variables in spouses, yet found no correlation to marital satisfaction.

Like compatibility factors, personal characteristics also play a role in how satisfied individuals are with their marriage. Personal characteristics may include temperament and attitudes. According to Gottman and Krokoff (1989), husbands who displayed characteristics such as defensiveness, stubbornness and withdrawal, during conflict engagement, showed a longitudinal decrease in marital satisfaction. However, Gottman and Krokoff (1989) note, that marital satisfaction of wives improves
for those women who openly express anger and contempt, yet declines for wives who express sadness and fear during conflict. Likewise, the investigation (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989) revealed that in terms of a husband's negative affect displayed within the home, women who are more positive and compliant show concurrent marital satisfaction. However, over time, the couple's marital satisfaction tends to deteriorate.

Similarly, both men and women who reported greater levels of effectiveness in asserting their rights, reported higher levels of marital satisfaction (Smolen et al., 1985; cited in Smolen, Spiegel, & Martin, 1986). Smolen et al. (1986) yielded similar findings in support of this investigation. To the contrary, it was determined that repressors of both sexes, or individuals who avoid conflict and threatening stimuli, experience greater marital satisfaction (Rofé, 1985; cited in Weller & Rofé, 1988).

Another study revealed depressed individuals and their spouses experienced a more negative mood after interacting (Ruscher & Gotlib, 1988). After observing depressed individuals interact with their spouses, Ruscher and Gotlib concluded, the couples were more likely to interact negatively than non-depressed couples.

Hine (1980) uncovered a different set of personal characteristics for those who were satisfied with their marriages. According to Hine (1980), people in successful, well-functioning marriages tend to be generous, unselfish, dependable, trustworthy, honest, open, warm and affectionate. Likewise, these individuals demonstrated durability, the ability to meet crises and a willingness to succeed in their marriages. Hine also notes, these individuals were found to be likeable and mentally and emotionally healthy. In addition, he observed that although spouses may be temperamentally different, they can be compatible. For example, a verbose spouse may enjoy a quiet mate and vice versa.
Individual attitudes were also explored (Bradbury & Fincham, 1988). Bradbury and Fincham (1988) explored attitudes towards sex roles, relationships and causes of marital dissatisfaction. Their investigation found that high levels of femininity, as reported by oneself and one's spouse, was significantly related to self-reports of marital satisfaction. No correlations were found between masculinity and marital satisfaction. Other findings indicate, couples, in which both partners were found to be androgynous, reported higher levels of marital satisfaction than traditional and incongruent (a sex-typed spouse paired with a non-sex-typed spouse) couples (Zammichelli, Gilroy & Sherman, 1988).

As expected, Bradbury and Fincham (1988) discovered that those who possess high levels of dysfunctional beliefs in regards to relationships experience lower levels of marital satisfaction. Likewise, lower levels of marital satisfaction were detected in individuals who attributed greater accountability and judgement to their spouses in relationship events. For instance, these individuals were less likely to view their partner's behaviors as praise-worthy, intentional and reflective of positive motivation (Fincham, Beach, & Baucom, 1987; Fincham, Beach, & Nelson, 1987; cited in Bradbury & Fincham, 1988). Interestingly, Bradbury and Fincham (1988) found no relationship between causality and marital satisfaction for husbands. This is explained by the fact that men, in the sample, were relatively less distressed than their wives.

Not only do personal characteristics and attitudes contribute to marital satisfaction, but also do situational factors. According to Hine (1980), situational factors may be thought of as properties which may effect a healthy marriage. Such factors may include educational level, economic status, vocation, number of children and length of marriage.

Surprisingly, educational level was found to be the most important factor affect-

In a general manner, Hine (1980) also refers to studies which indicate higher levels of education are positively correlated with one's success in marriage. However, he remarks that although the more educated tend to have happier marriages, they also are more apt to notice difficulties and analyze situations. Likewise, it was concluded that two highly educated individuals are at high risk due to their diverse goals, achievement needs, role responsibilities and conflicting schedules (Berman, Sacks & Leif, 1975; cited in Thomas, Albrecht & White, 1984). Berman et al. (1975, cited in Thomas et al., 1988) note that such dichotomies within the marital relationship require a great skill in dealing with conflict and negotiating compromises. Hine (1980) declares, similarity in educational level, nonetheless, seems to be an indicator of satisfaction within the marriage.

It seems economic status also has an effect on marital satisfaction. Research involving 29 farm couples, revealed that couples experiencing greater economic distress report increased patterns of blaming within their relationship (Rosenblatt, Olson & Keller, 1983). Likewise, when unemployed blue-collar men were compared with their employed peers, the unemployed reported lower marital adjustment, poorer communication skills and lower satisfaction with family relations (Larson, 1984). Another inquiry discovered that agreement over financial expenditures raises satisfaction with spouse, for both husbands and wives, and adds to income fulfillment for women (Berry & Williams, 1987); Hine (1980) agrees.

Vocation is somewhat related to economic status and therefore plays a major
role in marital satisfaction. Thomas, Albrecht and White (1984), studied dual career couples and reported several findings. First, they indicated wives in high quality, dual-career marriages reported little or no difficulty in discussing work related problems with their spouses. Second, they perceived their husbands as supportive in childrearing and household chores. Finally, they were satisfied with their current work situations.

Thomas, et al. (1984) revealed that husbands in satisfied marriages report they have experienced an increase in support of their wives' career and were in tune to their wives' overload and stress levels. When Thomas et al. (1984) examined the high quality marital dyad, they discovered couples tended to be involved in similar careers; agreed the husband's career took precedence and had older children or shared equally in child care responsibilities. Likewise, these couples were satisfied with all levels of intimacy.

Thomas, Albrecht and White (1984) also reported that job satisfaction for women may contribute to overall life quality and a sense of self-worth, which may be generalized to greater marital satisfaction. Hine (1980) notes that men who are satisfied with their jobs tend to be content with their marriage and family life. Hine (1980) observed similar findings with women.

Like all other factors, the presence and age of children may have an effect on marital satisfaction. Documentation from both longitudinal and cross-sectional investigations have reported that couples with children, especially younger children, have lower marital satisfaction, on the average, than do childless couples (Feldman, 1965, 1971; Renne, 1970; Rollins & Feldman, 1970; Ryder, 1973; Glenn & Weaver, 1978; Miller & Sollie, 1980; Rhyne, 1981; Waldron & Routh, 1981; Glenn & McLanahan, 1982; cited in Polonko, Scanzoni & Teachman, 1982).
In fact, wives in voluntarily childless couples reported, more so than mothers, a sense of higher marital cohesion and happiness, and a greater determination to continue the marriage (Houseknecht, 1979; cited in Polonko et al., 1982). Similarly, childless couples tended to have more frequent and positive marital interactions (Feldman, 1981; cited in Polonko et al., 1982). Bram (1978; cited in Polonko et al., 1982) also reported that voluntarily childless couples not only experienced more egalitarian marriages, but also were more companionate, interdependent and interactive.

Another situational factor which may contribute to marital satisfaction is length of marriage. Hine (1980) indicates that subjects in his sample suggest there is a relation between marital satisfaction and length of marriage; the better the marriage, the longer it lasts. Another investigation revealed a positive correlation between length of marriage and use of a specific form of interaction (parallel interaction) (Tyndall & Lichtenberg, 1985). However a gradual decline in companionship, affection and love has been noted in previous research (Pineo, 1961; cited in Hine, 1980).

Since adult egocentrism has traditionally been thought to be most prevalent in social interaction (Elkind, 1968), the remainder of this review will be dedicated to exploring communication skills, patterns of marital interaction and conflict, and perspective taking abilities within the marriage.

After closely evaluating long term, successful marriages, Hine (1980) concluded certain skills are essential in order to create a satisfying marriage. Among such skills is the ability to effectively communicate. Self-disclosure is one means of communicating effectively.

Generally, research investigating the relationship between marital satisfaction and self-disclosure has concluded that the greater the self-disclosure, the higher the
marital satisfaction (Hansen and Schuld, 1984). Hansen and Schuld (1984) examined self-disclosure patterns more closely and found husbands' self-disclosures are positively related to and predictive of marital satisfaction. Moreover, wives' self-disclosure was positively predictive of both husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction.

Other research found even greater levels of self-disclosure would be beneficial to the marriage, if positive regard for one's spouse was clearly expressed (Schuum, Barnes, Bollman, Jurich & Burgaghis, 1986). Thomas et al. (1984), support the need for positive regard; Thomas et al. note that the more positive regard between spouses, the higher the marital satisfaction. Likewise, Thomas et al. (1984) mention the more effective self-disclosure, empathy and frequency of communication, the greater the marital quality.

Styles of communication also seem to have an impact on marital satisfaction. For instance, well-adjusted couples were found to communicate in more direct and conventional manners. However, poorly adjusted couples communicated in a more controlling style and seemed to impute it their partner more than to themselves (Cieslak, 1986).

In fact, patterns of interaction within the marriage have been researched extensively. Gottman and Krokoff (1989) found, after conducting a longitudinal study of married couples, that negative interaction leads to a decline in marital happiness. This finding is consistent with most literature on marital interaction and marital satisfaction (Gottman, 1979; Hahlweg, Revenstrorf, & Schindler, 1984; Levenson & Gottman, 1983; Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Raush, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974; Revenstrorf, Hahlweg, Schindler Vogel, 1985; Schaap, 1982; Ting-Toomey, 1982; cited in Gottman & Krokoff, 1989).

Tyndall and Lichtenberg (1985) examined three traditional interactive pat-
terns; complementary, symmetrical and parallel. According to Tyndall and Lichtenberg (1985), complementary and symmetrical patterns tend to be more rigid means of interacting, whereas parallel interaction is thought to be a more flexible and responsive way to communicate. Findings of the investigation indicate couples who are cognitively dissimilar tend to interact symmetrically. Those who were found to be cognitively similar tend to interact in a parallel fashion. Likewise, parallel interactive styles were associated with greater degrees of flexibility in the relationship; symmetrical styles tended to be associated with instability, competition, and escalation. As aforementioned, Tyndall and Lichtenberg (1985) discovered a positive correlation between parallel interaction and length of marriage; couples married for shorter periods of time were found to have more symmetrical patterns of interacting.

Furthermore, content themes of interactions were closely observed and correlated with degree of marital satisfaction (Sillars, Weisberg, Burggraf, & Wilson, 1987). Sillars et al. (1987) examined three content themes of interaction—communal themes (i.e., togetherness, cooperation, communicative, etc.), individual themes (i.e., separateness, personality and role themes) and impersonal themes (i.e., organic, environmental themes).

Sillars et al. (1987) determined that more traditional couples tend to demonstrate communal themes, whereas separate couples emphasize more individualistic themes. Marital satisfaction was generally found to be positively correlated with communal and impersonal interactive themes. Individual themes were found to be negatively associated with marital satisfaction.

Another study on spousal interactive patterns, aforementioned, indicated higher levels of marital satisfaction were indicated by both men and women who responded effectively when their rights were infringed upon by their spouse (Smolen et al.,
1986). Furthermore, according to Smolen et al. (1986), couples who displayed high levels of transgression (rights-infringing behavior) and low levels of deterring such action were likely to be in marital therapy.

An integrative model of marital conflict examined the initiation and escalation process (Feldman, 1982). Feldman (1982) believes at the core of marital conflict is individual narcissistic vulnerability, or a diminished self-esteem and identity diffusion. The results of narcissistic vulnerability are increased sensitivity, high expectations and lower levels of empathy for one's partner. Feldman (1982) found narcissistic vulnerability (decreased self-esteem) to be associated with dysfunctional marital interaction. Likewise, spouses in these marriages perceived each other as more negative than intended.

Additional research indicates when couples are expressing emotionally impacting information, the amount of approval and caring conveyed is directly related to marital satisfaction (Cousins & Vincent, 1983). Likewise, Cousins and Vincent (1983) discovered negative behavior expressed is inversely related to adjustment. Cousins and Vincent (1983) also found couples were more likely to express negativity following focused complaints from their partners.

It would seem, then, that if a sense of empathy and understanding is conveyed, one is more likely to experience satisfaction within the marriage. For instance, a study of long term marriages determined empathy is an essential factor in successful, lasting marriages (Fields, 1983). Honeycutt (1986) mentions the great impact perceived understanding has on marital satisfaction; much more so than compatibility or communication effectiveness.

In fact, satisfaction was positively correlated with perceptual accuracy in understanding one's partner in several studies (Yelsma, 1984; Mueller & Fiebert, 1988;
Cremer & Campbell, 1988; Prendergast & Elders, 1988). Therefore, it may be hypothesized that the inability to take another's perspective may also have an effect on marital satisfaction. Thus, the need for this study.

**Summary**

This chapter has provided a literature review of both egocentrism across the lifespan and factors which contribute to marital satisfaction. The literature revealed that there is a need for the ability to take another's perspective in a satisfying marriage. Yet, the literature also revealed that egocentrism is not relevant in adulthood. Therefore, this study will exceed traditional thought and attempt to examine egocentrism past formal operations. As a result, it is hoped more satisfying marriages , and relationships in general, may be experienced. The next chapter will explore the research design and methodology of the current investigation.
CHAPTER 3
Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

This study was designed to determine if adults exhibit egocentric-like behavior, and, if so, what measured factors influence the degree of egocentrism manifested. In addition, the study investigated whether or not there was a relationship between egocentric-tendencies and marital satisfaction. Since no paper/pencil instrument has been developed to measure adult egocentric tendencies, it was necessary to devise such an instrument (the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale) based on past empirical investigations. The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and Marriage Rating Scale were used to determine the degree of marital satisfaction.

Chapter 1 served as a means of establishing a background and theoretical premise for this study. Furthermore, Chapter 2 reviewed relevant empirical literature regarding egocentrism and marital satisfaction. The focus of the present chapter will be the research design and methodology employed in this study. The sample, procedures, instrumentation, and methods of analysis will all be presented.

Description of the Sample

A total of 200 subjects were originally sought to participate in this investigation. One-hundred were male and one-hundred were female. The final sample size, however was 136. In order to qualify for participation, subjects had to be over the age of 18 and married for the first time. Individuals rather than couples were examined in order to reduce research limitations. However, couples were not excluded from the study.

Participants were recruited on a random basis through undergraduate and grad-
uate classes at a large southwestern university, two local fire departments in a south-western metropolitan area and local department stores in the same city. Changes in recruitment procedures are noted in Chapter 4.

**Procedures**

All subjects were given a brief introduction to the study by the principal investigator prior to participation. After the introduction, questionnaires along with a cover letter, which further explained the participant's rights (see Appendix A), were distributed to willing participants. Participants had the right to remain anonymous, withdraw at any time, and not respond. Anonymity was safeguarded by asking participants not to place any identifying marks on the surveys. Since questionnaires were designed to take approximately 10 minutes, many were returned at the time of testing. Additional changes in procedure are documented in Chapter 4.

**Instrumentation**

Demographic data were obtained from all participants. The following information was requested: gender, number of years married, if this is the first marriage, number of children living in the household, age, approximate combined annual income and educational level. All demographic information was gathered in order to cross-tabulate with egocentric scores and marital satisfaction scores. The first marriage question and age were also asked in order to dismiss participants who did not qualify. In addition to the demographic sheet (Appendix B) and cover letter, all participants were given the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale, the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and the Marriage Rating Scale (also in Appendix B).

**The Adult Egocentric Tendency Scale**

Since there were no previously developed measures available to assess egocen-
tric tendencies in adults, the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale (AETS) was designed for use in this research. The instrument consisted of 22 items (26 prior to the field-test) which were scored on a 6-point Likert scale. A score of one indicated the statement was least like the participant and a score of six indicated the statement was most like the participant. An even number of alternatives was provided to avoid neutral responses.

Each of the 22 items were contrived to assess either egocentric-like or nonegocentric-like behavior. Likewise, each item on the scale was contrasted with its direct opposite. Nonegocentric item points were subtracted from the egocentric item points and fifty was added in order to scale the items from 0 to 100.

A field-test was conducted so reliability and validity could be established. A sample of eleven homogeneous graduate students piloted the AETS. Scores from the field-test ranged from 29 to 46; the mean was 37. A Pearson test-retest correlation of .75 was established by testing the same sample 4 days apart (including a weekend). For purposes of clarification, some minor changes were made (including the reduction of items by 4), per suggestion of the field-test participants.

An effort was made, during the field-test, to constitute concurrent validity. In addition to the 26 item AETS, the field-test participants were asked to rate their degree of egocentricity, embeddedness in their view points and ability to take another's perspective. As expected, most participants responded in what was thought of as a socially acceptable manner. However, approximately 1/3 of the participants indicated they were embedded in their own views, yet were not egocentric. By definition these terms are synonymous. Nonetheless, concurrent validity was not fully established. Face validity, however, was clearly demonstrated.

The establishment of construct validity was the greatest concern for the princi-
ple investigator. It was hoped the AETS accurately predicted the factors which contribute to egocentric behavior. Based on statements cited in relevant literature, the content of the scale was contrived.

The 22 items were designed based on factors indicative of either egocentric or nonegocentric behavior. Factors indicative of egocentric behavior included the embeddedness in one's own views and the need to be right. Factors which were evidence of nonegocentric behavior included increased social interaction and the ability to take another's perspective. Two additional items were added to the measurement; these items were unrelated to the concept of egocentrism.

Egocentrism is defined as an embeddedness in one's own point of view (Looft, 1972a). Based simply on this definition, 6 items on the AETS were designed to detect the presence or absence of such tendencies. Examples of such items included: "I do not enjoy openly expressing my views and opinions"; "I like to do things the same way all the time"; and "When given advice, I generally do what I want anyway".

Four items on the scale served to detect the need to be right. These items were based on the belief that individuals exhibiting greater egocentric-like behavior also demonstrate the need to be right. Thus, they are less willing to accept and understand another's view. Examples of such items are: "I do not like to be told I am wrong"; and "It is not important for others to know I am right".

According to Looft (1972a), the ability to differentiate between one's own views and those of another increases as egocentrism declines. Six items on the AETS were contrived to detect the ability or inability to take another's perspective. An illustration of such items include the following: "When friends share concerns, I usually identify with them (friends)"; "I find it difficult to view life as others do"; and "Generally, I can accept and understand another's view".
Looft (1972a) also notes that the process of decentering aids in the development of perspective-taking and the decline of egocentrism. Decentering occurs when dissonant messages from others, during social interactions, systematically force individuals to re-evaluate perceptions from another's point of view. Four items in the scale were devised to measure the frequency of social interaction and hence the ability or inability to decenter. Examples of such were: "I hardly ever interact with my peers"; and "I enjoy spending my time with others".

The additional items on the instrument served two purposes. First, they served as a means of distracting the participant, since face validity was so clear. And second, they aided in testing how candidly the participant was responding. Such items included the following: "I never lie"; and "At times I am not as happy as I would like to be".

**The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale**

The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMS) was designed in order to provide a brief, yet valid and reliable means of measuring marital satisfaction. The scale consists of only three questions versus other popular marital inventories which are comprised of anywhere from 15 to 280 items (the Marital Adjustment Test and the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, respectively) (Schuum et al., 1986).

The measurement can be used in either interview or questionnaire surveys. Likewise, it has been used with four, five or seven point scales. The seven point scale, however, is most popular. Scoring is done simply by adding up points ranging from 3 to 21 (Schuum et al., 1985). For the present study, the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale was used in the form of a questionnaire with the seven point scale.

An array of research has been carried out on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (Grover et al., 1984; Schuum et al., 1983; Schuum et al., 1985; & Schuum et al.,
Both individuals and couples have completed the instrument.

After a sample of 79 mid-west couples were surveyed, Schuum et al. (1983) concluded the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale yielded Cronbach alphas of 0.89 and 0.93 for husband and wives, respectively. In 1985, Schuum et al. revealed the KMS produced Cronbach alphas of ≤0.84 and test-retest correlations of 0.71 when sample size was less than 100. Later research (Schuum et al., 1985), on samples larger than 200, established a Cronbach alpha of 0.96.

Concurrent, discriminant and criterion-related validity have been confirmed for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. According to Schuum et al. (1985), the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale correlates significantly with both Spanier's (1976; cited in Schuum et al., 1986) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) and Norton's (1983; cited in Schuum et al, 1986) Quality Marriage Index (QMI). The KMS scale did correlate more strongly with the dyadic satisfaction subscale than with any of the other three subscales on the DAS.

Schuum et al. (1985) noted it was necessary to determine discriminant validity, since the response categories of the KMS scale were entirely based on satisfaction (extremely dissatisfied to extremely satisfied). Thus, the discriminant validity was evaluated in terms of whether the KMS scale would correlate significantly with other measures with similar response categories, yet unrelated content.

The results of this evaluation held mixed support. However, despite the brevity of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, Schuum et al. (1985) note the scale displayed no worse, possible better, discriminant validity than did other more established instruments.

Finally, Schuum et al. (1985) determined there was evidence which supports the criterion-related validity of the scale. Despite its concision, the Kansas Marital Satis-
faction Scale demonstrated the ability to differentiate distressed and nondistressed wives.

Although its discriminant validity remains disputable, the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale appears to have demonstrated both concurrent and criterion-related validity. Likewise, according to Schuum et al. (1983), other marital satisfaction scales have reported over-all reliabilities no higher than those estimated by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale. Hence, the KMS scale has proven to be a brief, yet accurate measure of marital satisfaction which is suitable for basic family and marital research.

The Marriage Rating Scale

The Marriage Rating Scale is a scale which ranges from 0 to 100 and is based on self-report. Individuals are asked to rate how well their marriage is functioning (according to written interpretations of the numbers represented).

Although no written data exist on reliability and validity, concurrent validity and test-retest reliability has been observed over a 20 year period by the author (Hine, 1990). According to Hine (1990), the concurrent validity was observed with the Compatibility Test and the Marital Competence Scale.

Methods of Analysis

Originally, the data was going to be analyzed by use of $\chi^2$. The diagram below represents the model proposed:
Low, medium and high degrees of egocentric-like behavior were going to be compared with dissatisfied, neutral (neither dissatisfied or satisfied) and satisfied marriages. However, a Pearson Product Moment correlation was used instead. The change in analysis was made, in order to establish more precise findings.

In addition, egocentric-like behavior and marital satisfaction, respectively, were cross tabulated with gender, length of marriage, number of children within the household, age, economic status and educational level. Other pertinent statistical data such as frequencies, means and percentages were also examined. Likewise, concurrent validity between the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and the Marriage Rating Scale was investigated.

**Summary**

The research design and methodology applied in this study were presented in this chapter. The sample, procedures and instrumentation were all reviewed. The following chapter will present the results of this investigation. The last chapter contains the conclusions, the implications of this study, its limitations and recommendations for treatment and future research.
CHAPTER 4

Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine first, if egocentric-tendencies can be measured in adults and, if so, what factors effect the degree of egocentrism displayed. Secondly, the study was devised to determine if there is a relation between the degree of egocentric-tendencies expressed and marital satisfaction.

This chapter will present the findings of this study. A description of the demographic sample will be followed by an exploration of the first hypothesis. The relationship between the two instruments testing marital satisfaction and functioning will then be examined. Likewise, factors which were shown to contribute to marital satisfaction, in the present study, will be reviewed. Next, the findings of the second research question will be cited. And finally, the results to the Need to Be Right subscale of the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale will be presented.

Demographic Description of the Sample

One-hundred forty-eight questionnaires were completed and returned. However, twelve were discarded either because the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale (AETS) was not completed (completion is necessary for calculating the final score), or because the subject was not married for the first time (one such questionnaire was returned). Therefore, the final sample size was one-hundred and thirty-six (N=136).

Two minor changes in procedure occurred. First, actual locations for sample recruitment deviated from the original plan (see chapter 3). Participants were recruited from graduate classes at a large southwestern university, a student-family housing complex, and at a local church. Other participants were employed at a local
community service organization, two local fire departments, a government agency, a drugstore and a reprographic center. All were located in a southwestern metropolitan area. Second, most questionnaires were picked up at a later date (in an envelope) instead of at the time of testing. Likewise, the means of analysis differed from what was originally planned. Instead of using Chi², the Pearson Product Moment correlation was used for a more precise, sophisticated analysis.

Of the 136 married individuals, males accounted for 42% (N=57) of the sample, while females accounted for 57% (N=77). All questionnaires indicated subjects were married for the first time, except for one which was discarded, as mentioned. Individuals married between 0-1 year made up 8% (N=11) of the population. Those who were married between 2 and 5 years represented 17% (N=23); those married between 6 and 10 years represented 23% (N=31); those married between 11 and 15 years represented 11% (N=15); those married between 16 and 20 years represented 15% (N=20); those married between 21 and 25 years, 10% (N=13) and finally, those married 26+ years represented 16% (N=22) of the sample. One person did not indicate how many years she was married. The average number of years married ranged from 6 to 10 years, the mode was between 6 and 10 years and the median ranged between 11 and 15 years.

The number of children living in the household ranged from 0 to 3. The percentage and number within the sample for each are as follows: 38% (N=51) had no children living in the home; 23% (N=31) had one child in the home; 29% (N=40) had two and 10% (N=14) had three children. The mean and median was one child in the home and the mode was no children.

Age ranges for the participants were as follows: 1% (N=1) were those 18 years and under (this 1% may indicate an error in analysis, as participants of this age group
were purposely not tested; if someone would have checked this response, the ques-
tionnaire would have been discarded); 9% (N=12) were between 19 and 25 years of
age; 38% (N=52) were between 26 and 35 years of age; 28% (N=38) were between
36 and 45 years of age; 15% (N=20) were between 45 and 55 years of age and 9%
(N=12) were 55+ years of age. One person chose not to reveal her age. The mean
age range was 26 and 35, the mode range was also 26 and 35 and the median range
was 36-45.

Combined annual income for participants and their spouses were as follows:
11% (N=15) had an annual income of $10,000 and under; 12% (N=16) had an in-
come between $11,000 and $20,000; 19% (N=26) had an income between $21,000
and $30,000; 18% (N=24) had an income between $31,000 and $40,000; 15%
(N=21) had an income between $41,000 and $50,000 and the remainder, 24%
(N=32), earned $50,000+. Two participants chose not to indicate their income. The
average income was between $21,000 and $30,000. The median income range was
$31,000-$40,000.

Educational levels of participants also varied. Ten percent (N=13) had some
high school, a high school diploma or equivalent. Twenty-three percent (N=31) had
some college education. Thirteen percent (N=18) had an Associates degree and 30
percent (N=41) earned a Bachelor's degree. Twenty percent (N=27) were Master's
level and 4 percent (N=6) were Doctoral level participants. The average educa-
tional level was an Associates degree and both the median and mode level of educa-
tion was a Bachelor's degree. All participants indicated their educational level. The
demographic data are represented in Table I (pp. 61-62).
### TABLE I
Demographic Representation of the Sample

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TABLE I (continued)
Demographic Representation of the Sample

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<td>41</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates the range in which the mean, median and mode fell.

Findings of Hypothesis I

The first research question investigated in this study was as follows:

*Do adults demonstrate egocentric tendencies, and if so, what factors influence the degree of egocentrism displayed?*

The Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale, developed by the principle investigator, was used to make this assessment. Findings indicate scores on the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale range from 18 to 70, out of a possible range of 0 to 100. Eleven or 8% scored between 18 and 28; 50 scored between 29 and 38 (37%); 54 or 40% scored between 39 and 48; 18 or 13% scored between 49 and 58; 2 or 1% scored between 59 and 68 and 1 or 1% scored above 68. This distribution is demonstrated in the histogram in Figure I. The mean score for the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale was 40.360, the mode was 35.000 and the median was 40.000. Likewise, the standard deviation was 9.023. It can be observed that the curve for the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale is positively skewed (0.125). This slight positive skew was
expected, since it was probable that most participants responded in a socially desirable manner. The positive skew may also be accounted for by the fact that the majority of participants were female (57%); females tended to score lower than males on the instrument.

More specifically, the instrument was able to distinguish egocentric tendencies among specific groups of adults. For instance, the range of scores for men was 21 to 70, with an average score of 42.982, whereas for women, scores ranged from 18 to 57. Their average score was 38.221. The differences in the average score was 4.761 (with men scoring higher). Table II represents this information. Likewise, a Pearson Product Moment correlation indicates a significant correlation between gender and Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale scores ($r=-0.2655; p=0.001$).
Table II
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>21-70</td>
<td>42.982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>18-57</td>
<td>38.221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.761</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ r = -0.2655; p = 0.001 \]

The range and average of egocentric scores according to the number of years married follows. For individuals married between 0 and 1 year the range was from 28 to 59 and the average score was 42.363. For those married between 2 and 5 years, the range was from 21 to 52 and the average score was 38.347; for those married between 6 and 10 years the range was 18 to 70 and the average was score 43.258. The range of scores for individuals married between 11 and 15 years was 26 to 48. The average score for these people was 39.666. The range and average for individuals married between 16 and 20 years was from 29 to 49 and 39.35, respectively. For those married between 21 and 25 years, the range of egocentric scores was 19 to 48 and the average score was 36.692. Finally, those married for 26+ years the average score was 40.181 and the range was from 26 to 61. As illustrated in Table III, below, no significant relationship was found between AETS scores and number of years married.
Table III
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Number of Years Married

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years Married</th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 -1 year</td>
<td>28-59</td>
<td>42.363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 -5 years</td>
<td>21-52</td>
<td>38.347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 -10 years</td>
<td>18-70</td>
<td>43.258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 -15 years</td>
<td>26-48</td>
<td>39.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 -20 years</td>
<td>29-49</td>
<td>39.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 -25 years</td>
<td>19-48</td>
<td>36.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+ years</td>
<td>26-61</td>
<td>40.181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Egocentric scores for those with no children ranged from 26 to 70, with an average of 42.215. For those with one child, scores ranged from 19 to 59, with an average of 38.064. Ranges and averages for those with two and three children were 18 to 55 and 21 to 48, respectively. The average score for those with two children was 37.925 and for those with three children it was 37.928. Table IV represents this data. A significant relationship was established between degree of egocentrism and number of children living in the household ($r=-0.2061; p=0.008$). This indicates as the number of children living in the home increases, the degree of individual egocentrism decreases.

Table IV
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Number of Children Living in the Household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children Living in the Household</th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>26 - 70</td>
<td>42.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>19 - 59</td>
<td>38.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18 - 55</td>
<td>37.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21 - 48</td>
<td>37.928</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$r=-0.2061; p=0.008$
Egocentric scores were also distinguished by age of participants. Participants between the ages of 19 and 25 scored an average of 41.666 on the AETS; these scores ranged from 28 to 59. Those between the ages of 26 and 35 scored an average of 41.634; scores for this age group ranged from 18 to 70. Thirty-six to 45 year olds scored an average of 39.052; their scores ranged from 19 to 53. Participants between 46 and 55 years of age scored an average of 39.25; these scores ranged from 27 to 53. Finally, participants 55+ years scored an average of 39.083; scores ranged from 26 to 61. Table V illustrates these data. A negative Pearson Product Moment correlation ($r=-0.1230$) indicated an inverse relationship between Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale scores and age. Although the relationship was nonsignificant ($p=0.077$), there seems to be a trend for age to increase as egocentric-tendencies decrease (the opposite is also true).

Table V
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant</th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 to 25 years</td>
<td>29-59</td>
<td>41.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 35 years</td>
<td>18-70</td>
<td>41.634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 to 45 years</td>
<td>19-53</td>
<td>39.052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 to 55 years</td>
<td>27-53</td>
<td>39.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>26-61</td>
<td>39.083</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$r=-0.1230; \ p=0.077$

Combined annual income of the participant and participant's spouse was looked at in conjunction with the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale score. Those who earned $10,000 and under scored an average of 39.866 on the AETS; scores for this group ranged from 23 to 57. Those with combined earnings between $11,000 and $20,000 scored an average of 41.875 on the instrument; scores ranged from 29 to 57. Income earners of $21,000 to $30,000, a year, scored an average of 42.038, with scores ranging from 22 to 70. Those earning between $31,000 and $40,000 per year
scored an average of 38.625 on the AETS, with a range from 21 to 59. Participants earning a combined income of $41,000 to $50,000 a year scored an average of 40.476 and scores ranged from 28 to 61. Finally, earners of $50,000+ a year scored an average of 39.375 and their scores ranged from 18 to 53. Table VI illustrates this information. It can be observed that no significant relation between income and degree of egocentricity was found (r=-0.0817; p=0.172).

Table VI
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Combined Annual Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combined Annual Income of Participant and Spouse</th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and under</td>
<td>23-57</td>
<td>39.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11,000-$20,000</td>
<td>29-57</td>
<td>41.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000-$30,000</td>
<td>22-70</td>
<td>42.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$31,000-$40,000</td>
<td>21-59</td>
<td>38.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,000-$50,000</td>
<td>28-61</td>
<td>40.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 +</td>
<td>18-53</td>
<td>39.375</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VI: Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Combined Annual Income

Egocentric tendencies were also distinguished by education (see Table VII). The average score for those with some high school, a high school diploma or equivalent was 38.153. The range of these scores was from 27 to 70. Those with some college education scored between 18 and 57, with the average score being 39.987. Individuals possessing an Associates degree scored between 21 and 59. The average score for this group was 38.777. Participants with Bachelor's degrees scored an average of 39.536; their scores ranged from 23 to 61. Those with Master's degrees scored an average of 42.777. Their scores ranged from 19 to 57. Those subjects who held a Doctorate degree scored an average of 46.666; their scores ranged from 42 to 54. A
significant positive correlation exists between education and degree of egocentric tendencies; as level of education increases, so does degree of egocentrism and vice versa (r=0.1646; p=0.028).

Table VII
Range and Average of Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale Scores by Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level of Participant</th>
<th>Range of AETS Scores</th>
<th>Average AETS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School, High School diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>27-70</td>
<td>38.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>18-57</td>
<td>39.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates degree</td>
<td>21-59</td>
<td>38.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>23-61</td>
<td>39.536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>19-57</td>
<td>42.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>42-54</td>
<td>46.666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings of this study indicate that adults do demonstrate egocentric-tendencies, as measured by the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale. Scores of the AETS ranged from 18 to 70. As indicated in Figure I, there is a tendency towards a normal distribution, although the curve is positively skewed (0.125). In particular, the instrument distinguished significant (≤ .05) differences in egocentric tendencies between men and women. Likewise, among educational levels. Moreover, those with more children living in the home indicated a significant decrease in degree of egocentricity. There also seemed to a trend towards increased egocentricity with age. The inverse is also true, yet this finding was not significant.

Findings Indicating a Relationship Between The Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and The Marriage Rating Scale

Both the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and the Marriage Rating Scale were
used to determine marital satisfaction and functioning, respectively. The distribution of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scores was negatively skewed (-1.309), indicating more participants rated their marital satisfaction higher, than lower. For this sample the mean Kansas Marital Satisfaction score was 17.243, the mode was 18.000 and so was the median. The standard deviation was 3.683. See Figure II for this representation.

**Figure II**

*Distribution of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores*

Like the distribution of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale scores, the Marriage Rating Scale was also negatively skewed (-1.648). The mean score was 80.441 and both the mode and median were 85.000. The standard deviation was 16.290. Figure III represents one form of distribution.
Since very little statistical data was available regarding the Marriage Rating Scale, concurrent validity of the two was established. A Pearson Product Moment correlation of 0.6112 was determined. Likewise, the relationship was significant (p=.000). The negative skew in distribution, for both instruments, may be accounted for by the fact that participants may have answered in a socially desirable manner. Furthermore, these participants were volunteers. People who volunteer may have a different marital experience than those who do not.

**Findings Representing Factors Which Contribute to Marital Satisfaction**

As in the array of studies discussed in Chapter 2, the present study found some factors contribute to marital satisfaction. Gender, however, was not such a factor. Men in this study scored an average of 17.123 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale; their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Women scored an average of 17.234 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale; their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Difference in
average score was only 0.111. Table VIII illustrates. Likewise, a Pearson Product Moment correlation found no statistically significant relationship \( r=0.0150; p=0.432 \) between gender and marital satisfaction. Marriage Rating Scale scores indicated a 3.109 difference between men and women (men scoring higher), yet no significant correlation was established \( r=-0.0506; p=0.281 \). See Table IX.

**Table VIII**

**Range and Average of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores by Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table IX**

**Range and Average of Marriage Rating Scale Scores by Gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Range of MRS Scores</th>
<th>Average MRS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>40 - 100</td>
<td>82.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>25 - 100</td>
<td>79.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.109</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Length of marriage and marital satisfaction were also examined (see Table X). This study found no significant relationship \( r=-0.0192; p=0.412 \) between length of marriage and marital satisfaction. Ranges for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scores for the number of years married were as follows: 6 to 21 for those married between 0 to 1 year (the average score was 17.000); 6 to 21 for those married between 2 and 5 years (the average score was 17.782); 6 to 21 for those married between 6 and 10 years (the average score was 17.193); 6 to 21 for those married between 11 and 15 years (the average score was 16.533); 7 to 21 for those married between 16 and 20 years.
years (the average score was 17.150); 10 to 21 for those married between 21 and 25 years (the average score was 16.307); and 12 to 21 for those married 26+ years (the average score was 17.818).

Table X
Range and Average of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scores by Number of Years Married

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years Married</th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 1 year</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 5 years</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - 10 years</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 15 years</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20 years</td>
<td>7 - 21</td>
<td>17.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 25 years</td>
<td>10 - 21</td>
<td>16.307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+ years</td>
<td>12 - 21</td>
<td>17.818</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The range and average scores on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale for those without children were 6 to 21 and 17.450, respectively. For those with one child, the range on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale was 6 to 21 and the average was 16.612. For those with two and three children, respectively, the ranges were 7 to 21 and 8 to 21. The respective average scores were 17.300 and 17.714. No significant relationships were established between marital satisfaction and number of children living in the household; \( r = -0.0095; p = 0.456 \) for the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and \( r = 0.1394; p = 0.053 \) for the Marriage Rating Scale. As observed, the correlation between the Marriage Rating Scale and number of children living in the household seems to indicate a trend; as the number of children living in the home increases, so do degrees of marital functioning. Table XI represents these findings.
Table XI
Range and Average of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores by Number of Children Living in the Household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Children Living in the Household</th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7 - 21</td>
<td>17.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8 - 21</td>
<td>17.714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(r = -0.0095; p = 0.456\) (KMS)

\(r = 0.1394\) \(p = 0.053\) (MRS)

Table XII is an illustration of age as related to marital satisfaction in the current study. Those between the ages of 19 and 25 scored an average of 18.000 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale; the range of scores was from 12 to 19. Participants between 26 and 35 years of age scored an average of 17.403; the range of scores was from 6 to 21. Middle-aged participants, 36 to 46, scored an average of 16.842 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale, scores ranged from 7 to 21. Likewise, those between 46 and 55 years of age scored an average of 17.55 and the range was from 10 to 21. Subjects 55+ years scored an average of 17.833 on the KMS; their scores ranged from 12 to 21. In this investigation, no significant correlation was found between age and marital satisfaction \((r = 0.0389; p = 0.326)\).

Table XII
Range and Average of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Participant</th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 to 25 years</td>
<td>12 - 19</td>
<td>18.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 35 years</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 to 45 years</td>
<td>7 - 21</td>
<td>16.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 to 55 years</td>
<td>10 - 21</td>
<td>17.550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+ years</td>
<td>12 - 21</td>
<td>17.833</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relation between economic status and marital satisfaction was examined. In
this study, no significant relationship was found between marital satisfaction (as measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale) and income ($r=0.0295; p=0.366$). Those who earned $10,000 and under, per year, scored an average of 17.866 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction; scores ranged from 6 to 21. Participants earning between $11,000 and $20,000 a year, scored an average of 15.875 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Those in the income bracket of $21,000 to $30,000 scored an average of 16.653 and their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Those earning between $31,000 and $40,000 a year scored an average of 18.458 on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale; their scores ranged from 9 to 21. Those earning between $41,000 and $50,000 scored an average of 16.380; their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Finally, earners of $50,000+ scored an average of 17.656; their scores ranged from 12 to 21. Table XIII depicts this information.

Table XIII
Range and Average of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores by Combined Annual Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Combined Annual Income of Participant and Spouse</th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and under</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>17.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11,000-$20,000</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>15.875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$21,000-$30,000</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$31,000-$40,000</td>
<td>9 - 21</td>
<td>18.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,000-$50,000</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000+</td>
<td>12 - 21</td>
<td>17.656</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational level in relation to marital satisfaction was also explored in the present study (see Table XIV). Those with some high school education, a high school diploma or equivalent had an average Kansas Marital Satisfaction score of 16.615; scores ranged from 14 to 21. Participants with some college education scored an average of 16.774 and their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Associate degree level subjects
scored an average of 17.666; scores ranged from 9 to 21. Those participants with a Bachelor's degree scored between 7 and 21, with an average score of 17.658. Masters level subjects had a average score of 16.777 and their scores ranged from 6 to 21. Finally, those with Doctorates had scores ranging from 13 to 21, with an average score of 19.

On the Marriage Rating Scale, those with some high school education or equivalent scored an average of 68.461%, with a range from 25 to 90%. Those with some college education scored an average of 80.645% on the MRS; their scores ranged from 45 to 100%. Participants with an Associates degree scored an average of 82.777%, with a range from 50 to 100%. Bachelor level participants had scores ranging from 40 to 100%; their average score was 83.658%. Master's level subjects scored between 45 and 100%; the average score was 81.923%. Finally, those possessing Doctorates scored an average of 83.333%; scores ranged from 45 to 100%.

See Table XV.

When educational levels were compared, to Kansas Marital Satisfaction scores, no statistically significant relationship was distinguished (r=0.0784; p=0.182). However, when education was compared with Marriage Rating Scale scores, there seemed to be a tendency for marital satisfaction to rise with educational level (r=0.1321) This relationship, however was not significant (p=0.063).
Table XIV
Range and Average of Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale Scores by Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level of Participant</th>
<th>Range of KMS Scores</th>
<th>Average KMS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School, High School diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>14 - 21</td>
<td>16.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates degree</td>
<td>9 - 21</td>
<td>17.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>7 - 21</td>
<td>17.658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>6 - 21</td>
<td>16.777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>13 - 21</td>
<td>19.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table XV
Range and Average of Marriage Rating Scale Scores by Educational Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level of Participant</th>
<th>Range of MRS Scores</th>
<th>Average MRS Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School, High School diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>25 - 90%</td>
<td>68.461%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>45 - 100%</td>
<td>80.645%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates degree</td>
<td>50 - 100%</td>
<td>82.777%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>40 - 100%</td>
<td>83.658%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's degree</td>
<td>45 - 100%</td>
<td>81.923%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>45 - 100%</td>
<td>83.333%</td>
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</table>

As mentioned a significant correlation was found between the two instruments measuring marital satisfaction/functioning (r=0.6112; p=0.000). Likewise, although there were relationships between marital satisfaction and certain demographic data, the most important was that between marital satisfaction and education. As aforementioned, the higher one's education, the greater the likelihood to experience marital satisfaction.

Findings of Hypothesis II

The second research question in this study was as follows:

*Is there a relationship between the degree of egocentric-tendencies and marital satisfac-
Findings of this study indicated there is a tendency for marital satisfaction (as measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale) to decrease as the degree of egocentric-tendencies increases (as measured by the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale) and vice versa. As noted, this is only a tendency, as the relationship is nonsignificant ($r = -0.1248; p = 0.074$). However, looked if viewed in a different light, there is a 93% chance this relationship has not occurred randomly. Moreover, a similar relationship was found between egocentrism and marital functioning (as measured by the Marriage Rating Scale). A similar tendency seemed to be repeated ($r = -0.1306; p = 0.065$).

**Findings of the Need to Be Right Subscale**

As discussed in Chapter 3, four questions were put into the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale regarding the need to be right. Those questions were:

- #3 I like to let others know when I am right.
- #9 I like to be right.
- #13 It is not important for others to know I am right.
- #19 It is okay if I am not correct.

Questions #9 and #19 are inverses of #3 and #13. Findings indicate question #3 (I like to let others know when I am right) is negatively correlated with number of years married at a significant level ($r = -0.1439; p = 0.047$). This finding suggests as the number of years married increases, the score on this question (an "egocentric question") decreases. The inverse is true. There was also a significant positive correlation ($r = 0.2934; p = 0.000$) to this question with total egocentric scores; this was expected since this question is part of a subscale on the AETS. A significant positive relationship was noted between this question and question #9 (I like to be right). In this case
As expected this question was negatively correlated to questions #13 and #19 (r=-0.3021; p=0.000 and r=-0.2119; p=0.007, respectively).

Question #9 (I like to be right) was positively correlated with both education and marital functioning (as measured by the Marriage Rating Scale). Respective correlations are as follows: r=0.1301; p=0.066 and r=0.1197; p=0.083. As observed, these findings are not significant. As expected, this question significantly correlated (positively) with the AETS score (r= 0.3865; p=0.000) and negatively with response scores to questions #13 and #19.

Question #13 (It is not important for others to blow I am right) significantly correlated with gender (r=0.2140; p=0.007), and income (r=-0.1897;p=0.014). Of course, the response scores negatively correlated (at a significant level) with egocentric scores (r=-0.3142 p=0.000), and positively correlated with scores to question #19 (r=0.3361; p=0.000).

Finally, question #19 (It is okay if I am not correct) also correlated with gender positively (r=0.2221; p=0.005) at a significant level. Likewise, responses to this question were negatively related to education (r =-0.2034) at a significant level (p=0.000). Moreover, these responses were positively related to marital satisfaction and functioning as measured by both the KMS and the MRS; both at significant levels---0.041 and 0.019, respectively.

Summary

This chapter explored relevant findings of the current study. Discoveries in regard to both hypotheses were addressed along with a discussion on the relationship between the two marital assessment instruments. Likewise, the Need to Be Right subscale of the Adult Egocentrism Scale was explored. The following chapter will address conclusions and implications in relation to these findings.
CHAPTER 5
Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

As previously noted, even simple nursery rhymes depict humankind's inclination to view the world from one perspective. When one reflects upon everyday life, it becomes apparent that we are blinded by our own views and find it difficult to see the world as another does. As a result, problems arise at the workplace, in the home and within the international arena (Elkind, 1985).

The intent of this study was to examine the effect of egocentricity on marital satisfaction. However, prior to exploring that relationship, it had to be determined that adults display egocentric tendencies. This chapter will review how this determination was made, the conclusions of the study, the implications and the research limitations. In addition, recommendations for treatment and further research will be made.

An Overview of the Research

After an extensive review of the literature, the principle investigator found that the concept of egocentrism has traditionally been thought to be irrelevant to adulthood. However, this notion did not seem to make sense, as in everyday encounters we come across those who are unwilling to take another's view. Therefore, the first research question asked whether or not adults display egocentric-tendencies, and, if so, what factors influence the degree of such tendencies. Factors such as gender, number of years married, age, income, and educational level were all examined in this context.

After it had been established that adults do display egocentric-tendencies, the
relationship between marital satisfaction and egocentrism was explored. Furthermore, this study also examined other factors which contribute to marital satisfaction.

Since no instrument previously existed to measure egocentrism in adulthood, the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale (AETS) was developed by the principle investigator. The scale was piloted by eleven homogeneous graduate students in a large southwestern university. The instrument was found to have both respectable reliability (test-retest) and validity. Both the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and the Marriage Rating Scale were utilized to assess marital satisfaction and functioning.

Originally, 200 first-time married individuals were sought to participate in the research, however only 148 questionnaires were returned. Out of the 148 questionnaires, 136 were useable. Since it was hoped to gather a random sample, participants were recruited from various locations---a university, a church, a student-housing complex, fire departments and local businesses. Participants represented various age groups, economic statuses, and educational levels. Likewise, there seemed to be a mix in gender, number of years married and number of children living in individual households.

Although the questionnaire was designed to take less than ten minutes, many times the surveys were dropped off (with and envelope) and picked up at a later date. A Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to analyzed the data.

Conclusions

As a result of analysis several conclusions were drawn. It may be recalled that the first hypothesis asked the following question:

Do adults demonstrate egocentric-tendencies, and, if so, what measured factors effect the degree of egocentrism displayed?

In this sample, it was determined that egocentric-tendencies are measurable in
adults and thus manifest during adulthood. There was a distinguishable range of scores on the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale (18 to 70). As expected, however, individuals tended to respond in a socially desirable manner; the curve for Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale scores was positively skewed (0.125).

At significant levels (≤.05) egocentric-tendencies were distinguished between men and women. Not only was there a significant correlation between AETS scores and gender (r=-0.2655; p=0.001), but there was also a 4.761 difference in average AETS scores between men and women (men scoring higher).

Likewise, findings showed there was a significant relationship between degree of egocentric tendencies and educational level (r=0.1646; p=0.028). This correlation suggests that as level of education increases, so does degree of egocentrism. Similarly, as educational level decreases, so does degree of egocentrism.

In contrast to Looft's 1971 findings which indicated older adults displayed higher egocentricity than younger adults, this study identified trends for egocentrism to decrease with age. Results of the present study were found to be nonsignificant (r=0.1230; p=0.077). The present study, however, identified a significant relationship between degree of egocentrism and number of children. Findings of this investigation showed that as the number of children living in the household increases, the degree of egocentrism decreases; perhaps, one has more social interaction which has been found to decrease degree of egocentricity (Looft, 1972a). No significant relationships or trends were noted between number of years married or income and degree of egocentricity.

The second hypothesis examined the following question:

*Is there a relationship between the degree of egocentric-tendencies expressed and marital satisfaction?*
In this sample, there seemed to be a trend for marital satisfaction (as measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale) to decrease as degree of egocentrism increased. As noted, because the relationship is nonsignificant \( r=-0.1288; p=0.074 \), this is only a tendency. Similarly, when marital satisfaction/functioning was measured by the Marriage Rating Scale, a trend was discovered. Although still nonsignificant \( r=-0.1306 \ p=0.065 \), the relationship between the Marriage Rating Scale and Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale scores was found to be even closely related than Kansas Marital Satisfaction scores and Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale scores.

In addition to the two hypotheses explored, this study examined the relationship between the two marital satisfaction/functioning instruments. First, before exploring the relationship, it may be noted that both instruments (the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and the Marriage Rating Scale) were negatively skewed in the present study. For the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale the skewness was -1.309 and for the Marriage Rating Scale the skewness was -1.648. This negative skew in distribution, for both instruments may be accounted for by the fact that participants may have answered in what was thought to be a socially desirable manner. Moreover, participants were volunteers; individuals who volunteer for participation may differ from those who do not. Nonetheless, when the two instruments were examined in relation to one another, concurrent validity was established. A significant relationship was found to exist \( r=0.6112; p=0.000 \).

Not only were conclusions drawn about the relationship between the two instruments, but conclusions were also made about factors which contribute to marital satisfaction. Most conclusions found in this study differed from findings of other investigations. For instance, unlike Hine's 1980 study of well-functioning marriages, this investigation found no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and
number of years married ($r=-0.0192; p=0.412$). Hine (1980) found there was an increase in marital satisfaction with the number of years married.

Likewise, in disagreement to previous literature (Feldman, 1965, 1971; Renne, 1970; Rollins & Feldman, 1970; Ryder, 1973; Glenn & McLanahan, 1982; cited in Plonko, Scanzoni & Teachman, 1982), this investigation did not find a significant relationship ($r=-0.0095; p=0.456$) between marital satisfaction and number of children living in the household, as measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale. However, contrary to previous investigations which generally found those without children experienced greater marital satisfaction, this study found a tendency for marital functioning (as measured by the Marriage Rating Scale) to increase as the number of children increase and decrease as the number of children decrease. Note, this is only a trend as the finding was nonsignificant ($r=0.1394; p=.053$).

Moreover, unlike a previous investigation (Rosenblatt, Olsen & Keller, 1983) which determined decreased economic status is related to lower marital satisfaction, this research found no significant relationship between income and marital satisfaction ($r=0.0295; p=0.366$). In addition, relationships between age and marital satisfaction ($r=0.0389; p=0.326$) and gender and marital satisfaction ($r=0.0150; p=0.432$) were found to be nonsignificant.

This research did, however, demonstrate a tendency for marital satisfaction/functioning to rise along with educational level, and to decrease as educational level lowers. Although not statically significant, as measured by the Marriage Rating Scale ($r=0.1321; p=0.063$), this finding is consistent with previous research (Weller & Rofé, 1988; Campbell et al., 1976; Glenn & McLanahan, 1981; cited in Weller & Rofé, 1988). A much lower correlation was determined when educational level was related to marital satisfaction as measured by the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale.
Finally, as a result of this investigation, several conclusions were drawn about the need to be right. After examining the Need To Be Right subscale of the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale, it was determined that participants married for longer lengths of time expressed a lower need to be right. This finding was significant (r=0.1439; p=0.047). Likewise, there seemed to be some trends in relation to the need to be right and educational level. Although not statically significant (r=0.1301; p=0.066), this investigation found as educational level rises, so does the need to be right. The inverse is also true.

In addition, it was determined that there is a nonsignificant relationship in liking to be right and marital functioning (as measured by the Marriage Rating Scale). Although the finding is nonsignificant, there seemed to be a surprising trend (r=0.1197; p=0.083) for marital functioning to increase as participants indicated they liked to be right.

At significant levels, it was determined that gender and income were both respectively correlated with question #13 (It is not important for others to know I am right). Gender was positively correlated (r=0.2140; p=0.007) to this question. This indicates women, in this study, were more at ease than men in not letting others know they are right. Income, however, was negatively correlated (r=-0.1897; p=0.014). This indicated as income increased, it became more important for others to know they are right. Similarly, as income decreased, participants were more at ease with not letting others know they were right.

Finally, question #19 (It is okay if I am not correct) was also significantly correlated with gender (r=0.2221; p=0.005). As a result, it can be concluded that females,
in this study, are at more ease than men in not being correct. Likewise, responses to this question were negatively related to education at a significant level ($r = -0.2034; p = 0.009$). This indicates those, in this sample, who are highly educated tended to uncomfortable with the thought of not being correct. The inverse is true for those with lower educational levels.

Moreover, responses to this question (It is okay if I am not correct) were positively correlated to marital satisfaction and functioning, as measured by both the Kansas Marital Satisfaction scale and the Marriage Rating Scale. Both correlations were at significant levels—0.041 and 0.019, respectively.

**Implications**

It is all too often that we become embedded in our on views. As a result, friendships are broken, individuals remain angry and families and marriages are dissolved. However, without first acknowledging there is a problem, nothing can be changed.

Traditionally, prior to this research, the concept of egocentrism was limited to the realms of childhood. However, if one takes a closer look, egocentricity is present everywhere, yet remains ignored. This research has validated that adults, at least some adults, do indeed display egocentric tendencies. Likewise some present greater tendencies than others. It is believed, by this investigator, that if an effort is made to acknowledge this behavior and institute a change, there would be less difficulties and more harmony in marital relationships.

As indicated by this study, there is a tendency for marital satisfaction to decrease with an increase in egocentricity. The inverse is also true. Thus, if change was created at the individual level (i.e.-- becoming less egocentric), individuals could experience greater marital satisfaction. As a result, the divorce rate may lower, children could grow up in intact families, behavioral problems may decrease and money may
be saved. Elkind's 1985 statement may be recalled: "I would say that the inability of husbands and wives or parents and children to see the other person's point of view, or credit it with any validity, is a leading cause of marital and child mental health problems" (pp. 220-221).

Likewise, acknowledging additional factors which contribute to marital satisfaction, such as educational level, married individuals may feel a sense of greater control over their marital happiness. And in this case, may be encouraged to further educate themselves.

Even the conclusion that the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and the Marriage Rating Scale share concurrent validity has an implication. Since the Marriage Rating Scale now has some established validity, even more marital research could be carried out in hopes to better the lives of others.

Finally, by examining the Need to Be Right subscale more research is encouraged and a challenge is put forth to others to examine how this need effects the marriage.

Limitations

Although some pertinent findings were discovered in this study, the research did have some limitations. The most obvious limitation was that no paper/pencil instrument had previously been designed to measure adult egocentrism. Second, the results of this investigation cannot be generalized beyond this population. Third, study did not examine cultural differences, married couples, breaks in the marriage and whether there was previous counseling experience (those with counseling experience may have been trained to take another's perspective). Fourth, there was a limited sample size (N= 136). It is believed more significant findings would have been found with a larger sample. Finally, as expected, the Adult Egocentric-Tendency Scale was positively skewed, indicating participants answered in a socially de-
sirable manner. Likewise, so were both instruments rating marital satisfaction.

**Recommendations for Treatment**

Although there were some research limitations, the findings of this study could have a significant impact. One may then wonder how such change could be carried out. It is believed that education, training and prevention are the key. It seems individuals need to be taught how to openly listen and take another's perspective. Likewise, this study may have verified findings which indicate increased social interaction decreases degree of egocentricity (recall, as number of children in the home increased, degree of egocentricity decreases). Therefore, individuals should also be encouraged to participate in greater social interactions and social interest should be promoted. Education and actual training can be made available through seminars and workshops. A preventative step can be taken in the context of pre-marriage counseling groups which educate couples about this problem and train them to actively take each other's perspective and increase frequency of interaction.

At the therapeutic level, it would be particularly helpful for marriage therapists to enhance these skills themselves; not only to teach their clients, but also so clients could be better understood. Furthermore, marital therapists could apply specific techniques during sessions which could enhance the couple's understanding of each other. An example of such a technique would be *reverse role-play*. Likewise, therapists may find it helpful to be aware of special needs of certain populations. For instance, men and members of highly educated groups tend to be more egocentric, as indicated by this study. Therefore special attention may be called for when working with these groups in marital counseling. Additional research in this area can also increase the understanding of the concept of egocentrism.
Recommendations for Further Research

Since research on adult egocentrism is basically non-existent, an array of research topics are available. For instance, additional research could be carried out on those in marital relationships. One such study could be similar to the present investigation, yet involve a greater sample size. Additional research could also be carried out in regard to the Adult Egocentric-Tendencies Scale. For example, other subscales may be examined and compared to one another. Egocentric-tendencies in couples, rather than individuals could also be explored. Likewise, couples in counseling or with previous counseling experience could be compared to those without.

Furthermore, as a result of this study, there is now a great need for a training program which entails teaching perspective-taking abilities and promoting greater social interaction and interest. Not only could such a program be established, but pre- and post- assessments could be made in regard to marital satisfaction.

Finally, since this study also discovered that adults seem to demonstrate egocentric tendencies, an array of research is also needed in this area. For instance, additional research is needed for those in special groups. For example, since men and those who are highly educated tend to display greater levels of egocentricity, additional research may be carried out with those populations. Likewise, cross-cultural differences may be another interesting area to examine. Moreover, further research on related topics, such as empathy and rigidity, can be carried out in conjunction with egocentrism research. It may be concluded that the research in this area seems to be endless, yet very much needed.

Summary

Two main hypotheses were investigated throughout this study. They were 1) do
adults display egocentric-tendencies, and, if so, what factors influence such tendencies and 2) is there a relation between the degree of egocentrism and marital satisfaction. The investigation found that adults do indeed display egocentric-tendencies. In fact, some do more than others. For instance, men and the highly educated seem to be more egocentric than others. Furthermore, the research found that there was a tendency for egocentrism to effect marital satisfaction (although the finding was not significant). Likewise, this study found that other factors such as level of education appear to have an effect on the degree of marital satisfaction experienced.

Although there were limitations to this investigation, it can be safe to assume the findings could have an impact on not only marital relationships, but also other interconnections. Therefore, it is recommended that further research and training be conducted in this area.
Dear Participant:

Thank you for taking part in this study! Your cooperation will enhance our understanding of marriages. In order to insure your anonymity, please do not put your name or any identifying marks on the attached forms.

The questionnaire is designed to be quick and easy, therefore, no more than ten minutes should be spent in filling it out. Completion of this questionnaire will indicate your voluntary participation. You do have the right not to answer the questions and withdraw your participation at any time. Your complete openness and honesty would be greatly appreciated; please remember there are no right or wrong answers.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Kim Merrill
Masters Candidate
Counseling and Guidance
APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET AND QUESTIONNAIRE
Please read each question carefully and answer as appropriate.

1. Sex: ____ male ____ female

2. Number of years married
   0-1 year ____
   2-5 years ____
   6-10 years ____
   11-15 years ____
   16-20 years ____
   21-25 years ____
   26+ years ____

3. Is this your first marriage? ____ yes ____ no

4. Number of children living in the household? ____

5. Your age:
   18 and under ____
   19-25 ____
   26-35 ____
   36-45 ____
   46-55 ____
   55+ ____

6. Your approximate combined annual income:
   $10,000 and under ____
   $11,000-$20,000 ____
   $21,000-$30,000 ____
   $31,000-$40,000 ____
   $41,000-$50,000 ____
   $50,000+ ____

7. Please indicate your highest educational level:
   ____ Some High School, High School diploma or equivalent
   ____ Some College
   ____ Associates degree
   ____ Bachelor's degree
   ____ Master's degree
   ____ Doctorate
Please read each statement carefully and circle the number most appropriate for you.

1. I enjoy spending my time with others. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I do not enjoy openly expressing my views and opinions. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I like to let others know when I am right. 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. When given advice, I generally follow it. 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. At times I am not as happy as I would like to be. 1 2 3 4 5 6
6. I usually do not put myself in another's place. 1 2 3 4 5 6
7. I never lie. 1 2 3 4 5 6
8. I hardly ever interact with my peers. 1 2 3 4 5 6
9. I like to be right. 1 2 3 4 5 6
10. I like to do things the same way all the time. 1 2 3 4 5 6
11. When friends share concerns, I usually identify with them (friends). 1 2 3 4 5 6
12. It is easy for me to see the world as another does. 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. It is not important for others to know I am right. 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. I enjoy spending my time alone. 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. I like change and flexibility. 1 2 3 4 5 6
16. When given advice, I generally do what I want anyway. 1 2 3 4 5 6
17. I would enjoy being on a debate team. 1 2 3 4 5 6
18. I have frequent interactions with others. 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. It is okay if I'm not correct. 1 2 3 4 5 6
20. I find it difficult to view life as others do. 1 2 3 4 5 6
21. When others share concerns, I do not identify with them (others). 1 2 3 4 5 6
22. Generally, I can accept and understand another's view. 1 2 3 4 5 6
23. How satisfied are you with your husband/wife as a spouse?

24. How satisfied are you with your marriage?

25. How satisfied are you with your relationship with your husband/wife?

26. Using the scale below, please check the point on the scale that best describes how your marriage is functioning currently.

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Scale:

90-100: Excellent
80-89: Above average
70-79: Average
60-69: Passing but below average
50-59: Not functioning well but hoping for improvement
40-49: Not functioning well, slight hope for improvement
Below 40: Poor to completely failing
REFERENCES


Marital Satisfaction Scale: A further brief report. *Psychological Reports, 54*, 629-630.


