THE EFFECTS OF THE PRE-MARITAL ACQUAINTANCE AND ENGAGEMENT PERIOD IN MARITAL ADJUSTMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

The last major work in the area of length of pre-marital engagement and acquaintance effects upon marital adjustment was conducted approximately a quarter of a century ago. In order to bring the research up-to-date, the present study was undertaken.

The 26 couples at the University of Arizona housing project were given the questionnaire entitled "Reasons for Marital Success". The questionnaire consists of two parts: a 34-statement scale in the areas of marital adjustment and a self-evaluation section.

The hypothesis that married couples that were engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage will be better adjusted in marriage than couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage was tested by means of analysis of variance. There was no significant difference in the means of the two groups.

The areas in marital adjustment of most agreement to least agreement for both groups in descending order were as follows: mutual trust and respect, decision making, ability to share, money management, roles and responsibilities, social activities and recreation, ability to deal with conflict, sex relations, religious beliefs and practices.

INTRODUCTION

Divorce rate statistics are not decreasing nor are marital unions. In the United States, for every one thousand marriages consummated in any given year, there are approximately 250 divorce decrees. Every year, 25 percent of all marriages are involved in divorce (Scanzoni 1972, pp. 10-11). In 1963, 48 percent of the women who married below the age of 20 years were involved in divorce. For that year, statistics indicated that the median age for marriage among males was 22.8 years, and for females, 20.6 years. The probability of divorce for females who married below the age of 20.6 years was almost one out of two (Scanzoni 1972, p. 17). During the year 1974, there were 2,277,000 first-time marriages recorded and 913,000 first-time divorce ordinances (The World Almanac and Book of Facts 1974, p. 952). In the year 1973, the median age for marriage among males was 23.2 years, and for females, 21.0 years (Statistical Abstract of The United States 1974, p. 66).

Several research studies indicated that married couples with engagement periods of two years or more have a high degree of success in marital adjustment (Terman 1938, p. 199; Burgess and Cottrell 1939, p. 168; Landis and Landis 1948, p. 199; Locke 1951, p. 90). Paul Popenoe (1943, p. 176) concluded that people who were capable of maintaing a long acquaintance tend to also have a long engagement period. The long pre-marital relationship tends

to lead to an emotionally balanced relationship in marriage. Oliver Butterfield (1941, p. 126) noted that individuals who experienced a short engagement or no engagement prior to their marriage would not have married had their engagement been longer.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the length of engagement or pre-marital acquantance affected adjustment in marriage. In addition, this study explored the effects that income, areas of agreement, roles and responsibilities, and expectations and perception have on marital adjustment.

DEFINITIONS

Acquaintance

Acquaintance is a time during which each can learn the other's likes and dislikes, enter the other's circle of friends, come to know the other's family (Koos 1953, p. 64).

Engagement

Engagement is a period prior to marriage during which most couples are on record publicly or privately as intending to marry (Burgess and Wallin 1953, p. 15).

Marital Adjustment

Marital adjustment is the process of adaptation of the husband and the wife in such a way as to avoid or resolve conflicts sufficiently so that the mates feel satisfied with the marriage and with each other (Locke 1951, p. 45).

Marriage

Marriage is a socially legitimate sexual union, begun with a public announcement and undertaken with some idea of permanence; it is assumed with a more or less explicit marriage contract, which spells out reciprocal rights and obligations between spouses and between the spouses and their future children (Stephens 1963, p. 5).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Length of Pre-Marital Acquaintance and Engagement

Hirning and Hirning (1956, p. 221) expressed the opinion that time is required to achieve a qualitative relationship between the engaged persons. During the engagement the couple should achieve additional insight into the similarities and differences in their personalities, the amount and kinds of conflicts encountered, how well they are qualified to judge each other's personality and to what extent their philosophies of life coincide. Through this period, the couple should have acquired an understanding concerning the combination of their social and cultural backgrounds and their common interests (Fishbein and Burgess 1955, p. 17).

Terman's study (1938) revealed that engagements of less than six months for husbands and of less than three months for wives were unfavorable for marital adjustment. The long engagements of five years and over had the highest average happiness score (Terman 1938, pp. 198-201.) Even though Terman found the length of acquaintance and engagement associated with marital happiness, he stated two reasons why the data cannot be taken at face value:

> . . . the finding is largely contradicted by the very low relationship found to exist between happiness and total length of pre-marital acquaintance. Secondly, there is a strong ground for suspicion that a subject's answer to this question is influenced by the degree of happiness of the marriage (Terman 1938, p. 201).

Whereas Terman's study was inconclusive, Bossard and Boll (1958, p. 45), Locke (1951, p. 91), and Popenoe (1943, p. 124) took a stronger stand in concluding that a long acquaintance enabled couples to identify their individual needs. Through this recognition they would adjust to marriage faster, which would then lead to marital happiness.

Locke's study (1951, pp. 91, 93, 94) showed that a long engagement is positively associated with the probability of a good marital adjustment. The study involved the length of engagement among happily-married and divorced couples. A very short engagement was more prevalent in divorced cases than in the happily-married. The long engagement was much more prevalent among the happily-married. The happily-married men reported a 40 percent longer engagement than the divorced men. The married women reported a 69 percent longer engagement than the divorced women.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939, pp. 167-168) found that as duration of engagement increased, the proportion of couples with poor adjustment declined from 50 percent for under three months to 11 percent for 24 months and over. The percent with good adjustment increased from 25.7 for under three months to 62.6 for 24 months and over.

Burgess and Wallin (1953, p. 330) concluded from their study that adjustment in engagement forecasts adjustment in marriage.

Bayer's study (1968, pp. 628-632) implied than an extended dating experience will yield increased sophistication in choosing a compatible

mate, which will partially determine the outcome of a marital relationship. He states the following:

> . . . dating is an educational experience through which the skills required for valid mate selection and the personal growth necessary for sufficient "marriage readiness" are cumulatively acquired over time (Bayer 1968, p. 631).

Effects of Income

Roth and Peck (1951, p. 485) studied the relationship between social class mobility and marital adjustment. They found that subjects with an increase in mobility status and those that were in the upper social strata obtained the highest degree of adjustment. It was concluded that the social class level of the husband and wife was related to marital adjustment.

Williamson's study (1952, p. 301) indicated that income is a determining factor in marital adjustment. He found that low incomes were prevalent among the unhappy group and the happy group had higher incomes. More evidence showed that a secure income for the couple promotes marital adjustment.

Cutright's research (1971, pp. 291-295) revealed that removing the effect of income on marital stability resulted in an increased significance on educational level and occupation. It was also found that marital stability will usually decrease when extended educational levels are not accompanied by increased earnings. The earning levels were influenced by education and occupation which were related to marital stability. The educational level and occupation of the couple were not independent of their association with earnings.

Job Involvement

Ridley (1973, pp. 233-236) studied the effects of the spouses' job involvement in marital adjustment. His conclusions showed marital adjustment to be highest when the wife was low in job involvement and the husband was medium in job involvement. When both husband and wife were low in job involvement, marital adjustment was low. Marital adjustment suffered when either spouse became highly involved in one's job.

Areas of High and Low Marital Adjustment

Johannis' study (1956, p. 30) revealed the areas of high and low adjustment in marriage. The areas of high adjustment were found in spending family income, choice of mutual friends, and social activities and recreation. The lowest adjustment areas were in-law relationships and sexual relations.

Bowerman's research (1957, p. 263) indicated that the highest adjustment areas in marriage were religious beliefs and practices, followed by philosophy of life, then friends and in-law relationships. The lowest adjustment areas were bringing up children and choice of mutual friends.

Locke and Williamson's study (1958, p. 568) showed that the areas of most agreement in marriage were aims, goals, and things believed important in life. The area of least agreement was sex relations.

The studies above appear to be contradictory in the areas of marital adjustment. The conclusions showing no consistency imply that the areas vary with elements not controlled in the studies.

Perception and Expectation of Roles

Corsini (1956, p. 242) and Tharp (1963, p. 101) indicated in their studies that the congruency between the spouses' perception of each other was related to marital satisfaction. Corsini suggested that shared expectations of marital roles influence marital adjustment more than the couple's history of learning and encounters in marriage.

Stuckert's research (1963, pp. 415-419) suggested that the consistency of role enactments are essential for smooth adjustments in marriage. The similarity of role definitions should facilitate interaction and marital satisfaction. Also, the accuracy in perceiving the spouse's self-concept and expectations for one's own role should enhance the interaction and satisfaction in marriage. Stuckert specifies that the husband's marital satisfaction was predicted from the similarity of his and the wife's expectation. The wife's marital satisfaction was predicted from the accuracy of her perceiving the husband's expectations.

Karp, Jackson, and Lester's study (1970, pp. 269-272) found that the female's perception of her ideal traits were the same as the actual traits of the fiance. When the actual traits were different, an ideal-self fulfillment was achieved. There was a significant tendency for the fiance to possess traits of the female's ideal-self rather than her actual-self.

Burgess and Cottrell (1939) contributed an extensive study on predictions of adjustment in marriage. The following are the findings of that study:

> (1) Contrary to prevailing opinion, American wives make the major adjustment in marriage. (2) Affectional relationships in childhood, typically of the son for the mother and the daughter for the father, condition the love-object of the adult. (3) The socialization of the person, as indicated by his participation in social life and social institutions is significant for adjustment in marriage. (4) The economic factor in itself is not significant for adjustment in marriage, since it is apparently fully accounted for by the other factors (impress of cultural background, psychogenetic characteristics, social type, and response patterns). (5) With the majority of couples, problems of sexual adjustment in marriage appear to be a resultant not so much of biological factors as of psychological characteristics and of cultural conditioning of attitudes toward sex. (6) Prediction before marriage of marital adjustment is feasible and should and can be further developed through statistical and case-study methods (Burgess and Cottrell 1939, p. 349).

Extensive research has been done dealing with numerous variables that affect marital adjustment. However, there has been little research done on the effect that the length of acquaintance and/or engagement has in marital adjustment. Various researchers have indicated that married couples with engagement periods of two years or more have a high degree of successes in marital adjustment (Terman 1938; Burgess and Cottrell 1939; Landis 1955; Locke 1951). Inasmuch as the last research dealing with the effect of the length of pre-marital acquaintance on marital adjustment was conducted approximately a quarter of a century ago, the present research was undertaken to determine the present significance of this factor.

HYPOTHESIS

Married couples that were engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage will be better adjusted in marriage than married couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage.

PROCEDURE

The random sample consisted of 26 married couples obtained from The University of Arizona student housing project for married couples named Christopher City. Christopher City is comprised of 30 buildings. The apartments are sequenced in alphabetical order. For the buildings utilized in this study, a pair of questionnaires was given to the couple in every third apartment. This procedure was followed until 30 pairs of questionnaires were distributed. Each individual was given a questionnaire and was requested to fill it out with no collaboration with his or her spouse. The investigator collected the completed questionnaires two days after she distributed the. There were 60 questionnaires distributed to 30 couples, and 58 were returned. The respondents were divided into two groups. The A Group contained couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage, and the B Group consisted of those engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage. There were three more pairs of questionnaires in the A Group than the B Group. In order to match Group A to Group B, the investigator discarded three pairs of questionnaires by random means.

The instrument entitled "Reasons for Marital Success" was utilized to measure marital adjustment. This instrument was devised by Dr. James R. Hine (in press), Associate Professor in the Division of Child Development and Family

Relations, School of Home Economics at The University of Arizona. The questionnaire consisted of 34 statements and a self-evaluation of the marriage's functioning. The responses to the 34 statements were given according to a graduated scale in order to rate how those characteristics applied to marital success. The self-evaluation of the degree of marriage function was based on a scale ranging from 10-99. The respondents marked the range that expressed their estimate of how well the marriage was functioning.

The anlysis of variance test at the .05 percent level and at the .10 percent level of significance was applied to the data. The 34 statements and the self-evaluation of the marriage's functioning were analyzed separately.

RESULTS

The appendices, pages 30-41, indicate the respondents' length of acquaintance and engagement, length of marriage, age, educational level, family income, and parents' occupations. The length of acquaintance and/or engagement for respondents in Group A was 12 months or less, and for those in Group B it was two or more years. The mean length of marriage for Group A was 2.3 years, and for Group B it was 1.9 years. The age of the respondents from both groups ranged from 18-36 years. The data on educational level for both groups indicated that 40 percent hold high school diplomas and 60 percent hold undergraduate and/or graduate degrees. The mean income for both groups was the same, ranging from $3,000 to over $12,000.

The analysis of variance test was applied to the research hypothesis which stated that married couples that were engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage will be better maritally adjusted than couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage. The statistical analysis revealed that the difference between the means of the two groups was not large enough to consider that they came from two different populations. The research hypothesis can tentatively be rejected.

The instrument "Reasons For Marital Success" consisted of two sections. The first part included 34 statements which dealt with the following

characteristics in marriage: decision making, common interests and activities, money management, sex relations, roles and responsibilities, mutual trust and respect, religious beliefs and practices, ability to share, and ability to deal with conflict. Each statement was rated according to a graduated scale. The rating scale represented the following five responses: (5) an outstanding characteristic of marriage; (4) fairly successful in this area; (3) a contributing factor to a lesser degree; (2) not one of our strong characteristics; (1) not a characteristic of our marriage. The numbers in the parenthesis represented the value of the responses. The highest value or score that could be obtained was 170. The mean scores for the group that were engaged and/or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage were 130 for males and 143 for females. The range of scores for males were 65-168, and for females, 109-164. The group's mean score was 136.5. Table 1 presents the scores and means for both groups' responses to the statements dealing with areas of marital success.

Table 1. Scores and Means in Marital Success for Groups A and B.[≠]

Scores	GROUP A Male (130)[a]	GROUP A Female (143)[a]	GROUP A Group (136.5)[a]	GROUP B Male (143)[a]	GROUP B Female (143)[a]	GROUP B Group (143)[a]
65 - 77	1		1			
78 - 90					1	1
91 - 103						
104 - 116	1	2	3	1	1	2
117 - 129	1		1	2	1	3
130 - 142	4	1	5	1	2	3
143 - 155	3	4	7	2	2	4
156 - 168	2	3	5	7	4	11
Blank	1	3	4		2	2
Total	13	13	26	13	13	26

[≠]Group A = Couples engaged and/or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage. Group B = Couples engaged and/or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage.

[a]mean score

The mean scores for the group that were engaged and/or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage were 143 for males and 143 for females. The range of scores for males was 116-168, and for females, 84-162. The group's mean score was 143. The difference between the two groups was not significant at the .05 percent level or at the .10 percent level of significance.

The second part of the questionnaire was a self-evaluation of the marriage's functioning. The respondents checked the point on the scale that indicated their estimate of the marriage functioning. The scale ranged from scores of 10-100. These scores represented the following categories: 90-100 (excellent), 80-89 (above average), 70-79 (average), 60-69 (passing but below average), 50-59 (not functioning well--slight hope for improvement). The score range for the group that was engaged and/or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage was 74-99. The mean score for the males was 84, and for the females, 84. The group's mean score was 84. Table 2 presents the scores and means for the spouse's self-evaluation of the marriage's functioning.

Table 2. Scores and Means in the Self-Evaluation for Groups A and B.

Scores	GROUP A			GROUP B		
	Male (84)[a]	Female (84)[a]	Group (84)[a]	Male (84)[a]	Female (84)[a]	Group (84)[a]
50 - 59					2	2
60 - 69						
70 - 79	2	3	5	1		1
80 - 89	4	3	7	4	2	6
90 - 100	7	6	13	8	9	17
Blank	___	1	1	___	___	___
Total	13	13	26	13	13	26

[a]mean score

The score range for the group that was engaged and/or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage was 56-99. The mean score for the males was 84, and for the females, 84. The group's mean score was 84. There were no significant differences between the two groups nor between the males and females within each group.

The areas of high and low agreement in marital adjustment were determined by means of an algebraic addition method for the 34 statements. The response of (5) "an outstanding characteristic of marriage," and (4) "fairly successful in this area" were added together. Both of those responses represent the highest degree of marital success. The least degree of marital success was represented by the sum of (-2) "not one of our strong characteristics," and (-1) "not a characteristic of our marriage." The response (3) "a contributing factor to a lesser degree," was not included in the calculations since it represented a neutral value in marital success. The responses of (5) + (4) were algebraically added to (-2) + (-1). An example of this method is as follows: "We share decision making." (5) 31 (4) 16 (2) -1 (1) -2; 31 + 16 = 47, (-1) + (-2) = -3, 47 - 3 = 44. The statements possessing the highest value represented an area of high agreement in marriage. Table 3 presents the total number of responses in each of the five categories for the 34 statements. Statement numbers 3, 10, 13, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 28, and 33 were included in the marital adjustment computation because they were directly related to the adjustment areas under consideration.

Table 3. The Total Number of Responses for Each of the Five Categories In "Reasons For Marital Success" Among Spouses in Groups A and B.

Statement	5[a]	4[b]	3[c]	2[d]	1[e]	0[f]	Total
1. We both have always had a will to succeed.	27	18	4	1	1	1	52
2. We share goals which we want to achieve.	30	13	7	1	1		52
3. Each respects the privacy and independence of the other.	12	24	7	5	3	1	52
4. We give each other support and reinforcement.	33	17	1		1		52
5. Each tries to please the other.	27	21	3		1		52
6. We recognize and meet each other's needs.	21	25	5	1			52
7. We have characteristics which are different, but which complement each other.	25	15	9	1	2		52
8. We communicate effectively.	26	20	1	4	1		52
9. We are able to talk through a problem.	27	17	4	2	2		52
10. We share decision making.	31	16	2	1	2		52
11. We have empathy for each other (the ability to understand).	26	17	4	3	2		52
12. We can meet crises successfully.	24	23	3	1	1		52
13. We trust each other.	41	7	2	1	1		52
14. We share common interests and activities.	19	16	12	5			52
15. We can forgive and forget.	32	11	7	2			52

Table 3. (Continued)

Statement	5[a]	4[b]	3[c]	2[d]	1[e]	0[f]	Total
16. We practice good money management.	21	17	10	3	1		52
17. Our values are very much alike.	27	14	10	1			52
18. Our religious beliefs and practices are compatible.	20	12	8	4	8		52
19. We are excellent companions.	23	21	4	1	3		52
20. We respect each other.	34	15	2		1		52
21. We like the other as he or she is.	27	17	6	1	1		52
22. Our sexual life has been satisfying to both.	23	14	7	7	1		52
23. We know how to deal with conflict.	16	22	9	3	2		52
24. We have the ability to "give and take."	19	23	8	1	1		52
25. Our personalities are very compatible.	22	22	4	2	2		52
26. We agree on the roles and responsibilities each assumes as spouse, parent, male, female.	19	19	9	2	3		52
27. Our loyalty and faithfulness has meant a great deal to our marriage.	35	13	3		1		52
28. We have always been truthful and open.	27	21	2	2			52
29. Our backgrounds are similar.	13	9	17	9	4		52
30. Each has a good sense of humor.	25	21	4	1	1		52

Table 3. (Continued)

Statement	5[a]	4[b]	3[c]	2[d]	1[e]	0[f]	Total
31. We know how to have fun together.	29	16	5	1	1		52
32. We both have displayed unselfishness.	14	20	5	4	3	3	52
33. Our family does many things together (projects, activities, games, etc.).	17	20	5	4	3	3	52
34. We show affection to each other.	32	14	5		1		52

[a]5 = an outstanding characteristic of marriage

[b]4 = fairly successful in this area

[c]3 = a contributing factor to a lesser degree

[d]2 = not one of our strong characteristics

[e]1 = not a characteristic of our marriage

[f]0 = no response

The areas in marital adjustment of most agreement to least agreement for both groups in descending order were as follows: mutual trust and respect, decision making, ability to share, money management, roles and responsibilities, social activities and recreation, ability to deal with conflict, sex relations, religious beliefs and practices.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The data analysis revealed that there was no difference between the married couples that were engaged and/or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage and for those married couples that were engaged and/or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage. This result indicated that the length of engagement and acquaintance of two years or more does not necessarily improve marital adjustment.

The results of this study were influenced by the two groups balanced distribution in their age, family income, length of marriage, educational level and parent's occupation. The respondents possessed similar characteristics.

The respondents answered to the questionnaire similarly. In reference to the 34 statements, the majority of all respondents marked a 4 or 5 on the graduated scale of marital success. The similarity in those characteristics mentioned above and the identical responses influenced the results of this study.

The review of literature noted Cutright's suggestion that high incomes promote security in marriage. The data on income from this study did not reinforce Cutright's suggestion. The number of respondents in each earning level were more or less equally divided, and couples that earned $3,000-$5,000 were as maritally adjusted as those couples who earned $9,000-$12,000.

Johannis' study showed that the areas in marriage with the most agreement were found in money management and social activities and recreation. The area of least agreement was in sex relations. Locke and Williamson's study indicated that the area of least agreement was in sex relations. Johannis' study and Locke and Williamson's study corresponded with the results of this study in the areas of agreement in money management, social activities, and recreation.

In order to show the similarity of Corsini and Tharp's findings that the congruency between the spouses' perception of each other was related to marital satisfaction with this study, statements dealing in that area were focused on. The following statements were answered according to a graduated scale. The responses to the statements were positively rated on the marital success scale. The statement, "We like the other as he or she is" implied the marital adjustment was associated to the spouse's acceptance of one's mate's actual characteristics.

The statement "We agree on the roles and responsibilities each assumes as spouse, parent, male, female" suggested that the agreement on roles and responsibilities were associated to marital adjustment. Stuckert's study was in agreement with this study. He suggested that the consistency of role enactments are essential for marital adjustment.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study showed that there was no difference between an engagement and acquaintance of two or more years prior to marriage or an engagement and acquaintance of less than one year prior to marriage with regard to marital adjustment scores. The questionnaire comprised many general areas in marital adjustment but lacked specific aspects of the spouse's attitude in these areas. The limitations of the questionnaire's content was the reason for assuming the results to be inconclusive.

Even though Terman's study found a low but positive relationship between length of engagement and acquaintance and marital adjustment, both studies were uncertain concerning acceptance of the results due to uncontrolled variables in the sample or instrument. However, this study contributed up-to-date information on the general areas in marriage in which adjustment difficulties have been identified.

The ideal length of engagement and acquaintance may depend upon the individual. People possess differing social, biological, physical, and intellectual characteristics which affect adjustment. It is possible that a set optimal time cannot be placed on the pre-marital relationship due to those factors.

The quantity of time a couple spends together may not be as influential to a successful marriage as the quality of time shared together. Each

individual inherits and acquires unique traits which are then meshed together in the pre-marital relationship. The amount of time necessary for this adaptation cannot be stated. In essence, the length of engagement and acquaintance apparently has minimal predictive value as regards marital adjustment.

This study combined with the related research cited could be used to contribute to the educational programs in the family study area. The students, having access to data of the kind presented here would have a greater likelihood of developing a greater awareness and appreciation of the complexities of marital adjustment. The past studies as a background against which to view the present study would facilitate perspective and objectivity on the part of the student. Hopefully, the present study will interest other researchers to the point where additional research in the area of marital adjustment will be undertaken.

Some of the limitations of the present study which might be taken into account in future research, include the small sample size, the restriction of subjects to the college population, and the fact that the length of time the marriage was in force was not included as a variable. Moreover, the difficulty in locating an instrument designed to incorporate some of the contemporary values in society which influence the family was a limiting factor. The instrument used, "Reasons For Marital Success", was not designed specifically for this type of study, but it was the best suited one available. A further study which utilized a specifically designed instrument might reveal a different alignment of related variables.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the length of engagement or pre-marital acquaintance affected adjustment in marriage. Various researchers have indicated that married couples with engagement periods of two years or more have a high degree of success in marital adjustment. There has been no research undertaken in this area for a quarter of a century. This study intended to determine if the length of engagement and acquaintance was still related in a significant way to marital adjustment. The hypothesis was stated as follows: Married couples that were engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage will be better adjusted in marriage than couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage. This hypothesis was tested on a random sample consisting of 26 married couples. The respondents were divided into two groups. One group contained couples that were engaged or acquainted for less than two years prior to marriage, and the other group consisted of those engaged or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage. The respondents were given the questionnaire "Reasons For Marital Success" to measure their marital adjustment. Both of the groups' data was applied to the analysis of variance test at the .05 percent level and at the .10 percent level of significance. The statistical analysis revealed that the difference between the means of the two groups

was not large enough to consider that they came from two different populations. The research hypothesis can tentatively be rejected.

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE GIVEN TO RESPONDENTS

Please supply the information requested below.

1. Sex: Male____ Female____

2. Age: _____

3. Education:

Please indicate the highest level attained:

H.S. B.A. M.A. Ph.D.
B.S. M.S.

If currently attending school, indicate level:_____

_____

4. Yearly family income: (Circle one)

a. $3,000-$5,000 b. $6,000-$8,000 c. $9,000-$12,000

d. Over $12,000. Indicate amount:_____

5. How long have you been married? (Circle one)

1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years

If less than one year, how many months?_____
If more than 4 years, how many years?_____

6. How long were you and your spouse acquainted prior to your engagement?

1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years

If less than one year, how many months?_____
If more than 4 years, how many years?_____

7. How long were you and your spouse engaged prior to marrying?

1 year 2 years 3 years 4 years

If less than one year, how many months?_____
If more than 4 years, how many years?_____

8. Have you been married before? Yes____ No____
If yes, how long were you acquainted prior to engagement?_____
How long were you engaged?_____

9. What is your father's occupation?_____
(If deceased, please list occupation before death)

What is your mother's occupation?_____
(If deceased, please list occupation before death)

10. Are you a citizen of the U.S.? Yes____ No____

APPENDIX B

REASONS FOR MARITAL SUCCESS

The following reasons were given by 22 couples assisting Dr. James R. Hine in a research program to get additional information on why marriages succeed. Use the graduated scale to rate how these characteristics apply in your marital success.

a = an outstanding characteristic of our marriage
b = fairly successful in this area
c = a contributing factor to a lesser degree
d = not one of our strong characteristics
e = not a characteristic of our marriage

		Circle letter that applies
1.	We both have always had a will to succeed.	a b c d e
2.	We share goals which we want to achieve.	a b c d e
3.	Each respects the privacy and independence of the other.	a b c d e
4.	We give each other support and reinforcement.	a b c d e
5.	Each tries to please the other	a b c d e
6.	We recognize and meet each other's needs.	a b c d e
7.	We have characteristics which are different, but which complement each other.	a b c d e
8.	We communicate effectively.	a b c d e
9.	We are able to talk through a problem.	a b c d e
10.	We share decision making.	a b c d e

11.	We have empathy for each other (the ability to understand).	a b c d e
12.	We can meet crises successfully.	a b c d e
13.	We trust each other.	a b c d e
14.	We share common interests and activities.	a b c d e
15.	We can forgive and forget	a b c d e
16.	We practice good money management.	a b c d e
17.	Our values are very much alike.	a b c d e
18.	Our religious beliefs and practices are compatible.	a b c d e
19.	We are excellent companions.	a b c d e
20.	We respect each other.	a b c d e
21.	We like the other as he or she is.	a b c d e
22.	Our sexual life has been satisfying to both.	a b c d e
23.	We know how to deal with conflict.	a b c d e
24.	We have the ability to "give and take".	a b c d e
25.	Our personalities are very compatible.	a b c d e
26.	We agree on the roles and responsibilities each assumes as spouse, parent, male, female.	a b c d e
27.	Our loyalty and faithfulness has meant a great deal to our marriage.	a b c d e
28.	We have always been truthful and open.	a b c d e
29.	Our backgrounds are similar.	a b c d e
30.	Each has a good sense of humor.	a b c d e

31.	We know how to have fun together.	a b c d e
32.	We both have displayed unselfishness.	a b c d e
33.	Our family does many things together (projects, activities, games, etc.)	a b c d e
34.	We show affection to each other.	a b c d e

As a summary evaluation, check the point that best describes how you believe your marriage is functioning.

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Scale:

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

Note: Intermediate points may be checked for a closer evaluation.

Example: Checking point 88 would indicate an above average marriage near excellent. Checking 72 would indicate low average.

APPENDIX C

LENGTH OF ACQUAINTANCE AND ENGAGEMENT PRIOR TO MARRIAGE FOR GROUPS A AND B≠

Length of Acquaintance and Engagement	Group A	Group B
Less than 1 year	7	
1 year	6	
2 years		3
3 years		3
4 years		4
More than 4 years	—	3
Total of Couples	13	13

≠Group A = Couples that were engaged and/or acquainted for less than one year prior to marriage. Group B = Couples engaged and/or acquainted for two or more years prior to marriage.

APPENDIX D

LENGTH OF MARRIAGE FOR GROUPS A AND B

Length of Marriage	Group A	Group B
Less than one year	3	3
1 year	2	4
2 years	2	3
3 years	1	
4 years	3	1
More than 4 years	2	2

Group A mean 2.3

Group B mean 1.9

APPENDIX E

THE AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS FROM GROUPS A AND B COMBINED

Age	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (Percent)
18	2	3.8
20	2	3.8
21	4	7.7
22	3	5.8
23	9	17.3
24	7	13.5
25	3	5.8
26	5	9.6
27	4	7.7
28	9	17.3
30	1	1.9
31	2	3.8
36	1	1.9
Total	52	100.0

APPENDIX F

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL FOR GROUPS A AND B COMBINED

Educational Level	Absolute Frequency	Adjusted Frequency (Percent)
High School	21	40.4
Bachelor of Arts	7	13.5
Bachelor of Science	11	21.2
Master of Arts	2	3.8
Master of Science	3	15.4
Associate of Arts	3	5.8
Total	52	100.0

APPENDIX G

YEARLY FAMILY INCOME FOR GROUPS A AND B

Family Income	Group A	Group B
$3,000-$5,000	4	4
$6,000-$8,000	3	5
$9,000-$12,000	5	3
Over $12,000		1
Blank	1	—
Total of Couples	13	13

Group A mean 2.0

Group B mean 2.0

APPENDIX H

THE PARENTS' OCCUPATIONS FOR GROUPS A AND B

Occupation[≠]	Mother	Father
Professional	6	19
Proprietor and Manager		4
Business man and woman	1	9
Clerk	13	4
Manual worker	2	11
Protective and Service worker		2
Farmer		2
Housewife	28	—
Total	52	52

[≠] Warner's Revised Scale for Rating Occupations (Warner, Mecker, and Eells 1960).

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