

Appendix of Some Constructs and Articles Related to Use and Measurement

I will try to update this document from time to time. This was last updated 5-24-09.

This work represents the appendix from this citation:

Stanley, S. M. (2003, November). *Assessing Couple and Marital Relationships: Beyond Form and Toward a Deeper Knowledge of Function*. Paper presented at Healthy Marriage Interventions and Evaluation symposium of the Measurement Issues in Family Demography Conference, Washington D.C.

The published version of that work is a chapter that can be cited as follows: Stanley, S. M. (2007). *Assessing couple and marital relationships: Beyond form and toward a deeper knowledge of function*. In S. Hofferth & L. Casper (Eds.), *Handbook of Measurement Issues in Family Research* (85 – 99). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associations.

For those interested in assessing outcomes in couples' education, there are various measures here that can be of use. Also, I have noted below that we have developed a package of measures in brief format that can be used to assess outcomes in such work. If you are interested in that packet, please either email me (sstanley@du.edu) or email the folks at PREP (info@prepinc.com).

* * *

The measures, constructs, and references used here cover a range of types that I and many colleagues I know well or work with regularly have used. There are many other measures available, including widely used measures of overall marital adjustment (such as the Dyadic Adjustment Scale) and scores of speciality measures related to basic science endeavours. Generally, I do not include information on scales that must be purchased with a couple of notable exceptions.

- What I have included here is by no means exhaustive. I have not included a variety of important outcomes that might be assessed such as mental health and substance abuse.
- I have included constructs and references related to their use OR related to measure development. Hence, I am not making an attempt here to have consistency in the references at the level of discussions of measurement or use of the construct, but am citing examples of both.
- For a number of the constructs mentioned, I solicited input from colleagues from the psychological side of the marital research field. I invited many of them to send key abstracts and references to me which I have organized. Therefore, what is included here is not necessarily a list of what I think is most important, but rather, a list of things that evaluators might consider as important given the specific nature of the research questions and sample opportunities they have before them.
- Not all constructs here would be desirable for measurement in all contexts. Some might not be desirable for use in evaluation of most any evaluations of community based interventions.
- I have not attempted to provide actual measures or sample questions. Rather, I am providing references for measures and examples of research using them so that one might easily follow-up on determining suitability in a given project.
- In our group (e.g., I and Howard Markman, Galena Rhoades, Sarah Whitton, Natalie Jenkins, Elizabeth Allen, and others) we have a long interest in measurement of constructs we think can be

very important for understanding couples. I have placed samples of measures that we have used in various projects in the mix here because it was easy to do. Specifically, I have provided examples of brief versions of measures of some key constructs that we (our team) have come to believe are crucial in measuring couple functioning. There are longer versions (e.g., negative interaction) and more multi-faceted versions (e.g., commitment) available for those constructs.

Construct: Attachment security in adult romantic relationships

[Comment: If there is any theory that will become the theory of everything in psychology, it is attachment theory. The construct and measures of adult attachment security or insecurity are making increasingly regular appearances in the marital literature. I am not aware, however, of attempts as yet to employ the construct in outcome research, though doing so seems wise and only a matter of time.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Davila, J., & Bradbury, T. N. (2001). Attachment insecurity and the distinction between unhappy spouses who do and do not divorce. Journal of Family Psychology, *15*, 371-393.

We tested the hypothesis that attachment insecurity would be associated with remaining in an unhappy marriage. One-hundred seventy-two newly married couples participated in a 4-year longitudinal study with multiple assessment points. Hierarchical linear models revealed that compared to spouses in happy marriages and divorced spouses, spouses who were in stable but unhappy marriages showed the highest levels of insecurity initially and over time. Spouses in stable unhappy marriages also had lower levels of marital satisfaction than divorced spouses and showed relatively high levels of depressive symptoms initially and over time. Results suggest that spouses at risk for stable unhappy marriages can be identified early and may benefit from interventions that increase the security of spouses' attachment to one another.

Davila, J. (2003). Attachment processes in couples therapy: Implications for behavioral models. In S. Johnson & V. Whiffen (Eds.), Attachment: A perspective for couple and family intervention. Guilford.

The goal of this chapter was to discuss why attachment processes can be an important focus in couples treatment and to describe the role of attachment processes in romantic relationships. Because a behavioral approach to treatment has been the most dominant of the empirically supported treatments, this chapter was written with more behaviorally oriented practitioners in mind and pays particular attention to what an attachment perspective has to offer to them. The chapter describes three ways in which attachment theory can inform behaviorally oriented models of relationships and couples therapy. It is suggested that an attachment perspective can shed light on why problems emerge in relationships, on why people behave the way they do in relationships, and on who is at most risk for relationship problems. Suggestions for intervention are discussed.

Some Citations about Measures and/or Research on Construct

Bartholomew, K. (1990). Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, *7*, 147-178.

Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *61*, 226-244.

- Brennan, K. A., Clark, C. L., & Shaver, P. R. (1998). Self-report measurement of adult attachment: An integrative overview. In J. A. Simpson & W. S. Rholes (Eds.), Attachment theory and close relationships (pp. 46-76). New York: Guilford Press.
- Ceglian, C. P., & Gardner, S. (1999). Attachment style: A risk for multiple marriages? Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, *31*, 125-139.
- Cobb, R., Davila, J., & Bradbury, T. (2001). Attachment security and marital satisfaction: The role of positive perceptions and social support. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, *27*, 1131-1144.
- Collins, N. L., & Read, S. J. (1990). Adult attachment, working models and relationship quality in dating couples. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *58*, 644-663.
- Davila, J. (2003). Attachment processes in couples therapy: Implications for behavioral models. In S. Johnson & V. Whiffen (Eds.), Attachment: A perspective for couple and family intervention. Guilford.
- Davila, J., & Bradbury, T. N. (2001). Attachment insecurity and the distinction between unhappy spouses who do and do not divorce. Journal of Family Psychology, *15*, 371-393.
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *52*, 511-534.
- Johnson, S. M., Hunsley, J., Greenberg, L., & Schindler, D. (1999). Emotionally focused couples therapy: Status and challenges. Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, *6*, 67-79.
- Johnson, S. M., Makinen, J. A., & Millikin, J. W. (2001). Attachment injuries in couple relationships: A new perspective on impasses in couples therapy. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, *27*, 145-155.
- Johnson, S. M., & Whiffen, V. E. (1999). Made to measure: Adapting emotionally focused couple therapy to partners' attachment styles. Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice, *6*, 366-381.
- Kobak, R. R., & Hazan, C. (1991). Attachment in marriage: Effects of security and accuracy of working models. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *60*, 861-869.
- Kobak, R. R., Ruckdeschel, K., & Hazan, C. (1994). From symptom to signal: An attachment view of emotion in marital therapy. In S. Johnson & L. Greenberg (Eds.), The heart of the matter: Perspective on emotion in marital therapy (pp. 46-71). NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Construct: Attributions

[Comment: Here is another area that I think holds great potential for adding to our knowledge about relationships. As with attachment, attributions have not been assessed significantly in outcome research that I am aware of, but should be. We also need research testing the degree to which it is possible to teach people to make better, less negative attributions and interpretations of their partner's behavior, though we think there is conceptual and plausible reasons for attempting to do this regardless (e.g., Markman, Stanley, & Blumberg, 2001).]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Bradbury, T.N., Beach, S.R.H., Fincham, F.D., & Nelson, G. (1996). Attributions and behavior in functional and dysfunctional marriages. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *64*, 569-576.

The study examined whether spouses' attributions for partner behavior are related to their own behavior by assessing their attributions and observing the problem-solving discussions of couples in which (a) neither spouse was depressed or maritally distressed, (b) the wife was depressed and both spouses were maritally distressed, and (c) the wife was not depressed and both spouses were maritally distressed. To the extent they made maladaptive attributions, wives displayed less

positive behavior and more negative behavior. Husbands' attributions and behavior were unrelated, and associations between attributions and behavior were not moderated by marital distress and depression. These results highlight the need to clarify how partner behavior contributes to the attributions spouses make and to reexamine interventions designed to modify attributions in marital therapy.

Bradbury, T.N., & Fincham, F.D. (1992). Attributions and behavior in marital interaction. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63, 613-628.

To examine whether spouses' attributions for events in their marriage are related to their behavior in interaction, spouses were asked to report their marital quality, to make attributions for marital difficulties, and to engage in problem-solving discussions. Study 1 demonstrated that spouses' maladaptive attributions were related to less effective problem-solving behaviors, particularly among wives. Study 2 showed that spouses' maladaptive attributions were related to higher rates of negative behavior and, for wives, to increased tendencies to reciprocate negative partner behavior. In both studies attributions and behavior tended to be more strongly related for distressed than nondistressed wives. These results support social-psychological models that posit that attributions are related to behavior and models of marriage and close relationships that assume that maladaptive attributions contribute to conflict behavior and relationship dysfunction.

Fincham, F.D., & Bradbury, T.N. (1992). Assessing attributions in marriage: The Relationship Attribution Measure. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62, 457-468.

A brief, simple measure of different types of attributions for partner behavior was examined in 3 studies of married couples. Reliability was established by high internal consistency and test-retest correlations. Causal and responsibility attribution scores correlated with marital satisfaction, attributions for marital difficulties, and attributions for actual partner behaviors generated by spouses. Responsibility attributions were related to (a) reported anger in response to stimulus behaviors used in the measure and (b) the amount of anger displayed by wives during a problem-solving interaction with their partner. The extent to which husbands and wives whined during their discussion also correlated with their responsibility attributions. The results address several problems with existing assessments, and their implications for the measurement of attributions in marriage are discussed.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Baucom, D., & Epstein, N. (1990). Cognitive Behavioral Marital Therapy. New York: Brunner/Mazel.
- Bradbury, T.N., Beach, S.R.H., Fincham, F.D., & Nelson, G. (1996). Attributions and behavior in functional and dysfunctional marriages. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 64, 569-576.
- Bradbury, T.N., & Fincham, F.D. (1992). Attributions and behavior in marital interaction. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 63, 613-628.
- Fincham, F.D., & Bradbury, T.N. (1992). Assessing attributions in marriage: The Relationship Attribution Measure. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62, 457-468.

Construct: Commitment

[I have done a good deal of work in terms of assessment of commitment and related constructs. There are longer measures, encompassing many sub-constructs available and very brief measures, such as a four item measure of dedication commitment that has shown excellent characteristics. If you are interested in

various forms of the longer measures and scales, including measures of constraint commitment, please email me. The references highlighted here with abstracts do not necessarily use the short form of the dedication measure, but they are all useful works showing the construct being used in basic research.]

Sample of four item measure of dedication:

Please answer each of the following questions by indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with the idea expressed.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

- 1 2 3 4 5 My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything else in my life.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I may not want to be with my partner a few years from now.
- 1 2 3 4 5 I like to think of my partner and me more in terms of "us" and "we" than "me" and "him/her."
- 1 2 3 4 5 I want this relationship to stay strong no matter what rough times we may encounter.

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Johnson, M. P., Caughlin, J. P., & Huston, T. L. (1999). The tripartite nature of marital commitment: Personal, moral, and structural reasons to stay married. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *61*, 160-177.

Assessed the empirical viability of M. P. Johnson's (1991) commitment framework. The core principle is that commitment, rather than comprising a unitary phenomenon, involves 3 distinct experiences: wanting to stay married, feeling morally obligated to stay married, and feeling constrained to stay married. Using data from a sample of married couples (91 couples and 5 women in their 13th yr of marriage), the present authors show that direct measures of the 3 experiences are not highly correlated with each other; that a measure of so-called global commitment is a function primarily, if not exclusively, of personal commitment; that the 3 direct measures of the experiences of commitment are associated for the most part with the components of each type as hypothesized in the commitment framework; and that the 3 types of commitment and their components are not associated in the same way with other variables.

Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). *Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS)*. Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

From the executive summary:

- Despite higher divorce rates, married Oklahomans are more likely to say they are very happily married than couples nationally.
 - Among married persons, those who were most satisfied and least likely to have thought or talked about divorce reported:
 - Less frequent negative communication and conflicts
 - Higher levels of commitment to their partners
 - More frequent talking as friends and more frequent going out on dates

- Negative interaction was, by far, the most potent discriminator of who was satisfied or not in marriage.
- Those who reported being more religious—and especially those who were most frequent in attending religious services—reported higher average levels of marital satisfaction, less frequent conflicts, and a lower likelihood of having thought about divorce.
- Women and men were not found to differ in their ratings of marital satisfaction, commitment, or in feelings of being trapped in their marriages.
- Cohabitation outside of marriage is accepted by many Oklahomans:
 - Thirty-eight percent (38%) believe it is acceptable for a man and woman who are not married to live together, with men (44%) more likely than women (33%) to approve.
 - While the majority of Oklahomans (54%) reject the notion that living together outside of marriage has all the advantages of marriage without the legal details, 36% believe nonmarital cohabitation has all the benefits of marriage.
 - Fifty-nine percent (59%) of those who are cohabiting outside of marriage believe that their parents approve of their living together, and only 14% believe that their parents disapprove.
- Those who lived with their spouses before marriage reported, on average, lower levels of satisfaction, lower levels of commitment, higher levels of negative interaction, and a greater average tendency to think about divorcing, compared to those who did not live together prior to marriage.

Stanley, S.M. & Markman, H.J. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. Journal of Marriage and The Family, 54, 595-608.

A model for conceptualizing relationship commitment is presented and the development of a measure corresponding to this model described. Commitment is considered as two constructs: Personal Dedication and Constraint Commitment. In study one, items developed for the Commitment Inventory (CI) were given to a sample of 141 subjects. Item analyses resulted in selection of the items for the measures. In study two, 279 subjects yielded data used in further testing of the CI. Tests were conducted on the reliability of the subscales, the factor structure of the CI, and the associations between the CI and various other measures of commitment. Further, the CI was examined in relation to various demographic variables and various measures of other relationship constructs. Overall, the research demonstrated that the CI shows promise as a reliable and valid instrument for measuring commitment. Implications are discussed for both the CI and the concept of commitment.

Stanley, S. M., Whitton, S. W., & Markman, H. J. (2004). Maybe I do: Interpersonal commitment and premarital or nonmarital cohabitation. *Journal of Family Issues*, 25, 496-519.

Explanations for the risks associated with premarital and non-marital cohabitation (e.g., higher rates of break-up and divorce, lower relationship satisfaction, and greater risk for violent interaction) have focused on levels of conventionality, including attitudes about commitment to the institution of marriage. However, relatively little attention has been paid to the role of interpersonal, not institutional, commitment. In a national random sample (U.S.), premarital and non-marital cohabitation was associated with lower levels of interpersonal commitment to partners, suggesting links to further understanding of risk in these relationships. Premarital cohabitation was particularly associated with less committed and less religious males. Prior findings associating cohabitation with lower levels of happiness and religiosity, and higher levels of negative interaction (for men), were replicated.

Whitton, S. W., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2008). Effects of parental divorce on marital commitment and confidence. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *22*, 789-793.

Research on the intergenerational transmission of divorce has demonstrated that compared with offspring of nondivorced parents, those of divorced parents generally have more negative attitudes toward marriage as an institution and are less optimistic about the feasibility of a long-lasting, healthy marriage. It is also possible that when entering marriage themselves, adults whose parents divorced have less personal relationship commitment to their own marriages and less confidence in their own ability to maintain a happy marriage with their spouse. However, this prediction has not been tested. In the current study, we assessed relationship commitment and relationship confidence, as well as parental divorce and retrospectively reported interparental conflict, in a sample of 265 engaged couples prior to their first marriage. Results demonstrated that women's, but not men's, parental divorce was associated with lower relationship commitment and lower relationship confidence. These effects persisted when controlling for the influence of recalled interparental conflict and premarital relationship adjustment. The current findings suggest that women whose parents divorced are more likely to enter marriage with relatively lower commitment to, and confidence in, the future of those marriages, potentially raising their risk for divorce.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Beach, S.R.H., & Broderick, J.E. (1983). Commitment: A variable in women's response to marital therapy. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, *11*, 16-24.
- Johnson, D.J., & Rusbult, C.E. (1989). Resisting temptation: Devaluation of alternative partners as a means of maintaining commitment in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *57*, 967-980.
- Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). *Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce* (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
- Johnson, M.P. (1973). Commitment: A conceptual structure and empirical application. *Sociological Quarterly*, *14*, 395-406.
- Johnson, M.P. (1982). The social and cognitive features of the dissolution of commitment to relationships. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Personal relationships: Dissolving personal relationships*. New York: Academic Press.
- Johnson, M. P., Caughlin, J. P., & Huston, T. L. (1999). The tripartite nature of marital commitment: Personal, moral, and structural reasons to stay married. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *61*, 160-177.
- Jones, W., & Adams, J. (1999). *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability*. New York: Plenum.
- Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2009). The pre-engagement cohabitation effect: A replication and extension of previous findings. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *23*, 107-111.
- Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J. (2006). Pre-engagement cohabitation and gender asymmetry in marital commitment. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *20*, 553-560.
- Rusbult, C.E. (1980). Commitment and satisfaction in romantic associations: A test of the investment model. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *16*, 172-186.
- Rusbult, C.E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *45*, 101-117.
- Rusbult, C. E., & Buunk, B. P. (1993) Commitment processes in close relationships: An interdependence analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *10*, 175-204.

- Rusbult, C.E., Zembrodt, I.M., & Gunn, L.K. (1982). Exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect: Responses to dissatisfaction in romantic involvement. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *43*, 1230-1242.
- Stanley, S.M., Lobitz, W.C., & Dickson, F. (1999). Using what we know: Commitment and cognitions in marital therapy. In W. Jones & J. Adams (Eds), *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp. 411-424). New York: Plenum.
- Stanley, S.M. & Markman, H.J. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. *Journal of Marriage and The Family*, *54*, 595-608.
- Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., & Whitton, S. (2002). Communication, Conflict, and Commitment: Insights On The Foundations of Relationship Success from a National Survey. *Family Process*, *41*(4), 659-675.
- Stanley, S. M., Whitton, S. W., & Markman, H. J. (2004). Maybe I do: Interpersonal commitment and premarital or nonmarital cohabitation. *Journal of Family Issues*, *25*, 496-519.

Construct: Confidence

[We have been measuring confidence in various projects for the past few years. There is not a lot of published literature to refer to with regard to the construct, but we have been continually impressed with the things the construct does when measured, including as an outcome in couple interventions and as a theoretical variable, such as in the understanding of the linkages between marital dynamics and depressive symptomatology in women.]

Sample of four item measure of confidence:

Answer each question below by indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with the idea expressed. Circle any number from 1 to 7 to indicate various levels of agreement or disagreement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree or Disagree				Strongly Agree

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I believe we can handle whatever conflicts will arise in the future. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I feel good about our prospects to make this relationship work for a lifetime. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | I am very confident when I think of our future together. |
| 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 | We have the skills a couple needs to make a marriage last. |

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Kline, G. H., Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., St. Peters, M., Whitton, S. W., & Prado, L. (2004). Timing is everything: Pre-engagement cohabitation and increased risk for poor marital outcomes. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *18*, 311-318.

Data from a longitudinal study were used to examine differences among couples that cohabited before engagement, after engagement, or not until marriage. Survey data and objectively-coded

couple interaction data were collected for 136 couples (272 individuals) after engagement (but prior to marriage) and nine months into marriage. At both time-points, the before-engagement cohabiters (N = 59 couples) had more negative interactions, lower interpersonal commitment, lower relationship quality, and lower relationship confidence than those who did not cohabit until after engagement (N = 28 couples) or marriage (N = 49 couples), even after controlling for selection factors and duration of cohabitation. Our findings suggest that those who cohabit before engagement are at greater risk for poor marital outcomes than those who cohabit only after-engagement or marriage, which may have important implications for future research on cohabitation, clinical work, and social policy decisions.

Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Saiz, C. C., Schumm, W. R., Bloomstrom, G., & Bailey, A. E. (2003). Building Strong and Ready Families: Interim Report. Washington D. C.: SAIC, Inc.

From the executive summary:

Army couples showed gains on most measures of couple functioning from pre-BSRF to post-BSRF and at the one month follow-up. Of note is the finding that couples who came into BSRF relatively less happy in their relationships than others demonstrated the strongest positive gains following BSRF. The following are key findings within this study:

- BSRF couples reported increases in relationship satisfaction and confidence.

Whitton, S. W., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., Stanley, S. M., Prado, L. M., Rhoades, G. K., St. Peters, M., & Markman, H. J. (2007). Depressive symptoms in early marriage: Predictions from relationship confidence and negative marital interaction. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 21, 297 – 306.

The authors proposed a model of depressive symptoms in early marriage in which relationship confidence, defined as perceived couple-level efficacy to manage conflicts and maintain a healthy relationship, mediates the effect of negative marital interactions on depressive symptoms. The model was tested in a sample of 139 couples assessed prior to marriage and 1 year later. As predicted, relationship confidence demonstrated simple negative associations with negative marital interaction and depressive symptoms for all participants. Longitudinal path analyses supported the mediational model for women only. In women but not men, negative marital interaction indirectly had an impact on depressive symptoms through the mediator of relationship confidence. Findings suggest that relationship confidence may be important to understanding links between marital distress and depressive symptoms, especially in women.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Doherty, W. J. (1981). Cognitive processes in intimate conflict: II. Efficacy and learned helplessness. *American Journal of Family Therapy*, 9(2), 35-44.

Kline, G. H., Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., St. Peters, M., Whitton, S. W., & Prado, L. (2004). Timing is everything: Pre-engagement cohabitation and increased risk for poor marital outcomes. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 18, 311-318.

Notarius, C. & Vanzetti, N., (1984). The Marital Agenda Protocol. In E. Filsinger (ed), Marital and Family Assessment. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Saiz, C. C., Schumm, W. R., Bloomstrom, G., & Bailey, A. E. (2003). Building Strong and Ready Families: Interim Report. Washington D. C.: SAIC, Inc.

Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., Prado, L.M., Olmos-Gallo, P.A., Tonelli, L., St. Peters, M., Leber, B.D., Bobulinski, M., Cordova, A., & Whitton, S. (2001). Community Based Premarital Prevention: Clergy and Lay Leaders on the Front Lines . *Family Relations*,50, 67-76.

- Stanley, S., Prado, L., St. Peters, M., Olmos-Gallo, P.A., Whitton, S., Markman, H., & Baucom, B. (2000, November). The development of female depression early in marriage: a path analysis looking at the role of commitment variables and female relational confidence. Paper presented at the 34th Annual Meeting for the Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy. New Orleans, La.
- Whitton, S. W., Olmos-Gallo, P. A., Stanley, S. M., Prado, L. M., Rhoades, G. K., St. Peters, M., & Markman, H. J. (2007). Depressive symptoms in early marriage: Predictions from relationship confidence and negative marital interaction. *Journal of Family Psychology, 21*, 297 – 306.
- Whitton, S. W., Rhoades, G. K., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2008). Effects of parental divorce on marital commitment and confidence. *Journal of Family Psychology, 22*, 789-793.

Construct: Demand-Withdraw Interaction

[Comment: This is a rich and useful construct for which excellent measurement exists. There is significant overlap with the general category of negative interaction.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Overview by Andrew Christensen: In this pattern of interaction, one partner initiates conversation about a problem and pressures for change on it while the other avoids discussion of the problem or withdraws during discussion of the problem. Both cross-sectional and longitudinal research, using self-report as well as observational data, has shown that this pattern of interaction is strongly associated with relationship satisfaction and that there is a gender linkage in the pattern, with men more likely to be in the withdraw role and women more likely to be in the demand role. Recent research suggests that these findings are replicable cross-culturally. Recent research also indicates that the pattern of interaction accounts for variance in relationship satisfaction beyond that accounted for by simple negative affect or affection. Furthermore, the pattern may be linked to violence in couples.

Heavey, C. L., Larson, B., Christensen, A., & Zumtobel, D. C. (1996). The communication patterns questionnaires: The reliability and validity of a constructive communication subscale. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 58*, 796-800.

This study provides evidence for the reliability and validity of a 7-item constructive communication subscale of the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (CPQ-CC, A. Christensen and M. Sullaway, 1984). Seventy married couples completed the CPQ and participated in videotaped problem-solving discussions. The constructiveness of spouses' behavior during the videotaped problem-solving discussions was rated by trained observers. The CPQ-CC had high internal consistency and moderately high agreement between spouses. The CPQ-CC also was strongly associated with observer ratings of the spouses' constructiveness during videotaped problem-solving discussions. Finally, the CPQ-CC was strongly associated with spouses' self-reported marital adjustment. These data support the reliability and validity of this brief self-report measure of constructive communication.

Heavey, C. L., Christensen, A., Malamuth, N.M. (1995). The longitudinal impact of demand and withdrawal during marital conflict. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 63*, 797-801.

Forty-eight couples completed a measure of relationship satisfaction and participated in 2 videotaped problem-solving interactions, 1 focused on an issue identified by the woman and 1 focused on an issue identified by the man. Thirty-six men and 36 women completed the satisfaction measure again 2.5 years later. Demandingness, and to a lesser extent withdrawal,

during the interactions showed many significant associations with both Time 1 and Time 2 satisfaction. The relationship of demandingness and withdrawal to change in satisfaction was also examined using both change scores and partial correlations. Withdrawal by men and woman demand-man withdraw during discussions of issues identified by the women reliably predicted change (decline) in wives' relationship satisfaction.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Babcock, J. C.; Waltz, J., Jacobson, N. S.; Gottman, J. M. (1993). Power and violence: The relation between communication patterns, power discrepancies, and domestic violence. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, *61* (1), 40-50
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Construct: Divorce Proneness (Thinking, Talking, or Planning about Divorce)

[Comment: This is a construct that has been used extensively in the sociological literature and is being used in the psychology literature as well. It has the advantage of getting at stability likelihood in situations where measuring eventual, actual divorce may be difficult or may not unfold for years.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

From the executive summary:

- Despite higher divorce rates, married Oklahomans are more likely to say they are very happily married than couples nationally.
 - Among married persons, those who were most satisfied and least likely to have thought or talked about divorce reported:
 - Less frequent negative communication and conflicts
 - Higher levels of commitment to their partners
 - More frequent talking as friends and more frequent going out on dates
- Those who reported being more religious—and especially those who were most frequent in attending religious services—reported higher average levels of marital satisfaction, less frequent conflicts, and a lower likelihood of having thought about divorce.
- Those who lived with their spouses before marriage reported, on average, lower levels of satisfaction, lower levels of commitment, higher levels of negative interaction, and a greater average tendency to think about divorcing, compared to those who did not live together prior to marriage.

Booth, A., Johnson, D., & Edwards, J. N. (1983). Measuring marital instability. *Journal of Marriage & the Family*, 45(2), 387-394

Describes the development of a scale specifically designed to assess instability among intact couples. Marital instability denotes affective and cognitive states along the related actions that are precedent to terminating a relationship. Instability also refers to a situation in an intact dyad, not to ones that already have been disrupted. The measure, a Marital Instability Index, was shown to be a reliable and valid indicator. Scale scores among a national sample of 2,034 currently married men and women (under 55 yrs of age) varied with the known incidence of divorce among subgroups of the population. An abbreviated form of the index is also presented.

Weiss, R. L. & Cerreto, M. C. (1980). The Marital Status Inventory: Development of a measure of dissolution potential. American Journal of Family Therapy, 8(2), 80-85.

The Marital Status Inventory (MSI) forms a Guttman-like scale to measure likelihood of marriage dissolution. Preliminary discriminant validity data are presented indicating that the 24 couples presenting with marital problems scored significantly higher than did the 32 couples seeking parent-child related therapy. The predictive validity of the scale remains to be demonstrated.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Booth, A., Johnson, D., & Edwards, J. N. (1983). Measuring marital instability. Journal of Marriage & the Family, 45(2), 387-394

Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., & Whitton, S. (2002). Communication, Conflict, and Commitment: Insights On The Foundations of Relationship Success from a National Survey. Family Process, 41(4), 659-675.

Construct: Domestic Violence

[Comment: Domestic violence can be conceptualized and measured very complexly or rather simply. Even simple assessments based on one or two items (I have pushed shoved or slapped my partner in the past year.) yield useful results. I think it would be very valuable to have measures of richer conceptions such as Holtzworth-Munroe's available for use in outcome research. In addition to advance in typological thinking, other works are advancing understanding of differentiating dangerousness (Heyman, Slep and colleagues) or understanding of the dyadic nature of some forms of violence (Kim, Laurent, & Capaldi).]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Holtzworth-Munroe, A., Meehan, J.C., Herron, K., Rehman, U., & Stuart, G.L. (2003). Do subtypes of maritally violent men continue to differ over time? Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 71, 728 - 740.

Among over 20 published batterer typology studies, only one (Gottman et al., 1995) gathered longitudinal data, and in that study, only relationship stability was examined longitudinally. Thus, virtually no data exist regarding the question of whether subtypes of maritally violent men continue to differ from one another over time. The present study was designed to address this

issue. We predicted that, at 1.5 and 3 year follow-up assessments, the subtypes identified, at Time 1, in Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (2000; i.e., Family Only, Low Level Antisocial, Borderline/Dysphoric, and Generally Violent/Antisocial) would continue to differ in their levels of husband violence and on variables theoretically related to their use of violence (e.g., generality of violence, psychopathology, jealousy, impulsivity, attitudes toward violence and women; Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). Many group differences emerged in the predicted direction; however, perhaps due to relatively small sample sizes at follow-ups, not all reached statistical significance. The implications of these findings for understanding husband violence (e.g., not all violent men escalate their marital violence; possible overlap of the Borderline/Dysphoric and Generally Violent/Antisocial subgroups) are discussed, as are methodological issues in this type of research (e.g., the need for more assessments over time, the instability of violent relationships, sampling concerns).

Straus, M.A., Hamby, S.L., Boney-McCoy, S. & Sugarman, D.B. (1996). The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2). *Journal of Family Issues*, 17, 283-316.

Conflict Tactics Scale: The Conflict Tactics (CT) Scale was designed to measure the use of reasoning, verbal aggression, and violence within family conflict. Items range from low in coerciveness (such as discussing an issue) to high in aggressiveness (such as hit, kicked, threatened with weapon). In recent years the CTS has been used in research with high school populations (see O'Keefe, M. (1997). Predictors of dating violence among high school students. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12, 546-568).

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Heyman, R. E., & Slep, A. M. S. (in press). Creating and field-testing diagnostic criteria for partner and child maltreatment. *Journal of Family Psychology*.
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Construct: Interspousal Criticism

[Comment: Measures such as this have not been used much in outcome research, but clinical utility is clear and the concept would certainly be consistent with what interventionists would likely want to impact.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

[Summary provided by David Smith]

Inter-Spousal Criticism. Studies of Expressed Emotion (EE) and relapse following recovery from mood disorders provide perhaps the most direct empirical link to inter-spousal criticism (e.g., Hooley, Orley, & Teasdale, 1986; Vaughn & Leff, 1976a). EE research is concerned with the extent to which relatives of psychiatric patients (viz. schizophrenic, depressed, and borderline; Butzlaff & Hooley, 1998); a) express hostility toward the patient, b) evidence emotional overinvolvement, and c) display warmth when talking about the patient during an extensive standardized interview, the Camberwell Family Interview (CFI; Vaughn & Leff, 1976b). In an investigation by Hooley, Orley, and Teasdale (1986), 39 depressed patients were followed for 9 months following hospital discharge. Although there was a 59% rate of relapse among patients discharged to homes with high-EE spouses (viz. more than 2 critical comments expressed), none of those discharged to low-EE spouses relapsed. This study replicated a previous one by Vaughn and Leff (1976a) and has itself been replicated cross-culturally (Okasha et al., 1994) and in studies of bipolar disorder (e.g., Miklowitz et al., 1988). Interestingly, Vaughn and Leff (1976a) and Hooley, Orley, and Teasdale (1986) found that the levels of spousal criticisms associated with relapse in depressed patients were lower than the levels associated with relapse in schizophrenic patients, suggesting a particular sensitivity to criticism among depressed people.

Despite empirical progress in establishing the association between EE and relapse following recovery from depression, Wearden et al. (2000) have pointedly noted that "no theoretical rationale for carrying out EE research in depression has been expounded in the literature" (p. 643, emphasis added). They go on to suggest that theoretical efforts might fruitfully be directed at the known tendency for people with depression to attribute negative events to internal causes (e.g., Brewin, 1985). On this view, inter-spousal criticism is thought to be especially depressogenic because it supports and validates self-criticism, which is itself a symptom of depression. Theoretical considerations of this sort strongly suggest that spousal criticism is particularly worthy of study, striking as it does at a special vulnerability. It is also worth considering the depression-amplifying possibility that, as observed in the medical literature (e.g., Manne, 1999; Manne & Zautra, 1989), important inter-spousal criticisms may be illness-directed. Analogous investigations of criticisms centered on spousal mental illness have yet to be undertaken, though it is not difficult to envision the depressing vicious cycle that gets started when depressive symptoms are themselves criticized by a close intimate partner of the depressed person. Prospective longitudinal studies and experimental analogue studies would be required to test models such as these.

Accuracy. Gauging the accuracy of perceived inter-spousal criticism requires knowledge of actual inter-spousal criticism. This has been indirectly tested by EE researchers who observe interactions

between people with schizophrenia and their relatives. In these interactions, highly critical relatives engage in greater negative reciprocity of communication and make more critical comments (Hahlweg et al., 1989; Miklowitz, Goldstein, Falloon, & Doane, 1984; Strachan, Leff, Goldstein, Doane, & Burt, 1986). In the sole interaction study of depressed married people to date, high EE spouses made more critical remarks, disagreed with patients more frequently, and were less likely to accept what their depressed partner said (Hooley, 1986).

Although these studies suggest an association between actual and perceived spousal criticism, they are only indirectly related to fundamental questions about accuracy of perceived criticism among depressed spouses. First of all, only one of these studies (Hooley, 1986) was of depressed patients; the others concerned schizophrenia. Secondly, spousal criticism was inferred from observed behavior and was not confirmed via self-reported critical intentions on the part of the purportedly critical spouse. Finally, the perception of criticism itself was inferred from critical comments made during EE interviews in the patient's absence not via patient reports of criticism actually perceived. Hence, both criticism perceived and criticism expressed were assessed via "outside" observers. While outside observers provide a valuable perspective on interactional behavior, the "insider" perspective is at least as important, particularly when the phenomenon under investigation is a perceptual one.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Hooley, J.M., & Gotlib, I.H. (2000). A diathesis-stress conceptualization of expressed emotion and clinical outcome. *Applied and Preventive Psychology, 9*, 135-151.

Riso, L.P., Klein, D.N., Anderson, R.L., Crosby Ouimette, P., Lizardi, H. (1996). Convergent and discriminant validity of perceived criticism from spouses and family members. *Behavior Therapy, 27*, 129-137.

Hooley, J.M., & Licht, D.M. (1997). Expressed emotion and causal attributions in the spouses of depressed patients. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 106*, 298-306.

Construct: Forgiveness

[Comment: A growing area with growing options for measurement.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Gordon, K. C. & Baucom, D. H. (under review). Forgiveness and marriage: Preliminary support for a measure based on a model of recovery from marital betrayal. Unpublished manuscript, University of Tennessee.

Forgiveness is an issue that recently has received increasing attention in the psychological literature, yet little empirical research has been conducted on this topic. This paper presents initial support and validation of an inventory based upon Gordon and Baucom's (1998) three-stage synthesized model of forgiveness in marital relationships. This model places forgiveness in the framework of a reaction to a traumatic interpersonal event. One hundred seven community couples completed several measures of marital functioning, along with the new measure of forgiveness. The measure achieved internal reliability, and a confirmatory factor analysis suggests that the resulting subscales are a good fit with the data. Further results offered preliminary support for the inventory's validity and its relation to various aspects of marital functioning. Individuals placed into groups based upon their scores on this measure reported expected levels of global forgiveness, relationship power and closeness, and assumptions about

themselves and their partners. The limitations of the study are identified, and clinical and research implications of these findings are discussed.

Gordon, K.C., Baucom, D. H., & Snyder, D. K. (In press). An integrative intervention for promoting recovery from extramarital affairs. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy.

The discovery or disclosure of an extramarital affair can have a devastating impact on partners, both individually and on their relationships. Research suggests that affairs occur relatively frequently in relationships and are a common presenting problem in couple therapy. However, despite their prevalence, there is little empirical treatment research in this area, and most therapists describe this problem as one of the more difficult to treat. This study used a replicated case study design to explore the efficacy of an integrative treatment designed to help couples recover from an affair. Six couples entered and completed treatment. The majority of these couples were less emotionally or maritally distressed at the end of treatment, and the injured partners reported greater forgiveness regarding the affair. Details of the intervention, suggested adaptations of the treatment, and areas for future research are discussed.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Fincham, F.D. (2000). The kiss of the porcupines: From attributing responsibility to forgiving. Personal Relationships, 7, 1-23.

Gordon, K. C. & Baucom, D. H. (under review). Forgiveness and marriage: Preliminary support for a measure based on a model of recovery from marital betrayal. Unpublished manuscript, University of Tennessee.

Gordon, K.C., Baucom, D. H., & Snyder, D. K. (In press). An integrative intervention for promoting recovery from extramarital affairs. Journal of Marital and Family Therapy.

Gordon, K. C., & Baucom, D. H. (2003). Forgiveness and marriage: Preliminary support for a synthesized model of recovery from a marital betrayal. American Journal of Family Therapy, 31, 179-199.

McCullough, M.E., Worthington, E.L., Jr., & Rachal, K.C. (1997). Interpersonal forgiving in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73, 321-336.

Construct: Negative Interaction (self-reported)

[Comment: Negative interaction in various forms has a rich tradition of explaining differences in distressed and non-distressed couples, and in classifying couples with regard to eventual outcomes (so called prediction studies). When measured even simply, negative interaction often explains more variance in other indices of couple functioning than anything else measured. This is perhaps the case because negativity is both a very potent corrosive force on the positive bond between partners, and it is also very likely a marker for other things like overall level of commitment (dedication) reflected in a willingness to inhibit negative responses in response to frustration.

The Abstracts here refer to research using very brief assessment comprised of four items tapping escalation, invalidation, negative interpretation, and withdrawal.]

Sample of four item measure of negative interaction:

Little arguments escalate into ugly fights with accusations, criticisms, name calling, or bringing up past hurts. Is that...

1. never or almost never
2. once in a while
3. frequently

My spouse/partner criticizes or belittles my opinions, feelings, or desires. Is that...

1. never or almost never
2. once in a while
3. frequently

My spouse/partner seems to view my words or actions more negatively than I mean them to be. Does that happen...

1. never or almost never
2. once in a while
3. frequently

When we argue, one of us withdraws...that is, does not want to talk about it anymore, or leaves the scene. Does that happen...

1. never or almost never
2. once in a while
3. frequently

Abstract(s) of representative research using the brief measure of the construct:

Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., & Whitton, S. (2002). Communication, Conflict, and Commitment: Insights On The Foundations of Relationship Success from a National Survey. Family Process, 41(4), 659-675.

The key relationship dynamics of communication, conflict, and commitment were investigated using data from a randomly sampled, nationwide phone survey of adults in married, engaged, and cohabiting relationships. Findings on communication and conflict generally replicated those of studies using more in-depth or objective measurement strategies. Negative interaction between partners was negatively associated with numerous measures of relationship quality and positively correlated with divorce potential (thinking or talking about divorce). Withdrawal during conflict by either or both partners, though quite common, was associated with more negativity and less positive connection in relationships. The most frequently reported issue that couples argue about in first marriages was money, and for re-marriages it was conflict about children. Overall, how couples argue was more related to divorce potential than was what they argue about, although couples who argue most about money tended to have higher levels of negative communication and conflict than other couples. Further, while male's divorce potential was more strongly linked to levels of negative interaction, female's was more strongly linked to lower positive connection in the relationship. Consistent with the commitment literature, higher reported commitment was associated with less alternative monitoring, less feeling trapped in the relationship, and greater relationship satisfaction.

Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

From the executive summary:

- Among married persons, those who were most satisfied and least likely to have thought or talked about divorce reported:
 - Less frequent negative communication and conflicts
 - Higher levels of commitment to their partners
 - More frequent talking as friends and more frequent going out on dates
- Negative interaction was, by far, the most potent discriminator of who was satisfied or not in marriage.
- Those who lived with their spouses before marriage reported, on average, lower levels of satisfaction, lower levels of commitment, higher levels of negative interaction, and a greater average tendency to think about divorcing, compared to those who did not live together prior to marriage.

Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Saiz, C. C., Schumm, W. R., Bloomstrom, G., & Bailey, A. E. (2003). Building Strong and Ready Families: Interim Report. Washington D. C.: SAIC, Inc.

From the executive summary:

Army couples showed gains on most measures of couple functioning from pre-BSRF to post-BSRF and at the one month follow-up. Of note is the finding that couples who came into BSRF relatively less happy in their relationships than others demonstrated the strongest positive gains following BSRF. The following are key findings within this study:

- BSRF couples reported increases in relationship satisfaction and confidence.
- BSRF couples reported reductions in various patterns of negative interaction that are associated with marital distress and divorce.

Stanley, S. M., Amato, P. R., Johnson, C. A., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Premarital education, marital quality, and marital stability: Findings from a large, random, household survey. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20, 117-126.

One of the limitations of experimental studies on the effectiveness of premarital education is the reliance on samples of mostly White, middle-class couples. In contrast, although survey methods allow only weak inferences about causal relations, representative surveys can yield important information about use and estimated effects across a diverse population. Using a large random survey of 4 middle American states, the authors found that participation in premarital education was associated with higher levels of satisfaction and commitment in marriage and lower levels of conflict—and also reduced odds of divorce. These estimated effects were robust across race, income (including among the poor), and education levels, which suggests that participation in premarital education is generally beneficial for a wide range of couples.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Bradbury, T. N., Beach, S. R. H., Fincham, F. D., & Nelson, G. M. (1996). Attributions and behavior in functional and dysfunctional marriages. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 64, 569-576.

Bradbury, T.N., & Fincham, F.D. (1990). Attributions in marriage: Review and critique. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107, 3-33.

- Gottman, J. M. (1993). The roles of conflict engagement, escalation or avoidance in marital interaction: A longitudinal view of five types of couples. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *61*, 6-15.
- Gottman, J. (1994). What Predicts Divorce? The Relationship Between Marital Process and Marital Outcomes. Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.
- Gottman, J.M., & Krokoff, L.J. (1989). Marital interaction and satisfaction: A longitudinal view. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *57*, 47-52.
- Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
- Markman, H.J., & Hahlweg, K. (1993). The prediction and prevention of marital distress: An international perspective. Clinical Psychology Review, *13*, 29-43.
- Markman, H. J. & Kraft, S. A. (1989). Men and women in marriage: Dealing with gender differences in marital therapy. The Behavior Therapist, *12*, 51-56.
- Matthews, L.S., Wickrama, K.A.S., & Conger, R.D. (1996). Predicting marital instability from spouse and observer reports of marital interaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *58*, 641-655.
- Notarius, C., & Markman, H.J. (1993). We can work it out: Making sense of marital conflict. New York: Putnam.
- Stanley, S. M., Amato, P. R., Johnson, C. A., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Premarital education, marital quality, and marital stability: Findings from a large, random, household survey. Journal of Family Psychology, *20*, 117-126.
- Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Saiz, C. C., Schumm, W. R., Bloomstrom, G., & Bailey, A. E. (2003). Building Strong and Ready Families: Interim Report. Washington D. C.: SAIC, Inc.
- Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., & Whitton, S. (2002). Communication, Conflict, and Commitment: Insights On The Foundations of Relationship Success from a National Survey. Family Process, *41*(4), 659-675.
- Stanley, S.M., Markman, H.J., Prado, L.M., Olmos-Gallo, P.A., Tonelli, L., St. Peters, M., Leber, B.D., Bobulinski, M., Cordova, A., & Whitton, S. (2001). Community Based Premarital Prevention: Clergy and Lay Leaders on the Front Lines . Family Relations, *50*, 67-76.

Construct: Negative Interaction (objectively coded)

[Comment: Objective coding of couple interaction requires video-taping couples, training coders, and a lot of time and energy. It is expensive, but generally produces rich findings.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Johnson, M. D. (2002). The observation of specific affect in marital interactions: Psychometric properties of a coding system and a rating system. Psychological Assessment, *14*, 423-438.

The Specific Affect Coding System (SPAFF; J. M. Gottman & L. J. Krokoff, 1989) has led to conclusions about which types of dyadic affect predict positive and negative outcomes in marriage, yet the lack of information about collinearity among the codes limits interpretation of SPAFF results. Psychometric properties of SPAFF were examined by assessing the interactions of 172 newlywed couples with SPAFF and with an affect rating system developed for this study. For husbands and wives, factor analysis indicated 4 distinct factors of affect, representing anger/contempt, sadness, anxiety, and humor/affection. Anger/contempt and humor/affection were associated with marital satisfaction, relationship beliefs, and appraisals of the interactions.

Correlations were in the expected directions. The strengths, limitations, and implications of the data are discussed.

Notarius, C. I. & Markman, H. J. (1989). Coding marital interaction: A sampling and discussion of current issues.

Special Issue: Coding marital interaction. Behavioral Assessment, 11(1), 1-11.

Discusses some of the concerns facing the observational study of marital and family interaction and presents examples of the conceptual and methodological gains that can be made through observational research. Issues facing the field include naive reliance on observational methods, the emergence of global coding systems, the need to assess the impact of individual factors on interaction, selection of the coding unit, selection of the research task and appropriate statistical analyses, and conceptualization of key findings. Recommendations for future progress are offered. (PsycINFO Database Copyright 1989 American Psychological Assn, all rights reserved)

Julien, D., Markman, H.J., & Lindahl, K.M. (1989). A comparison of a global and a microanalytic coding system: Implications for future trends in studying interactions. Behavioral Assessment, 11, 81-100.

Presents initial data concerning the criterion validity of a new global measure of couples' interactions, the Interactional Dimensions Coding System (IDCS). 59 premarital couples (males aged 18-32 yrs, females aged 18-35 yrs) completed the Marital Adjustment Test and the Relationship Problem Inventory. Their conflict-resolution discussions were videotaped and coded using the IDCS, the affect codes of a microanalytic system (Couples Interaction Scoring System (CISS)), and an insider's rating procedure (Communication Box). Results reveal that 4 of the 5 negative IDCS dimensions were significantly correlated with the negative CISS affect codes, but positive codes of the 2 systems did not converge. The IDCS showed an association with males' but not females' reports of marital quality. The global and microanalytic measures of escalation were predictive of future relationship satisfaction.

Heyman, R. E. (2001). Observation of couple conflicts: Clinical assessment applications, stubborn truths, and shaky foundations. Psychological Assessment, 13(1), 5-35.

The purpose of this review is to provide a balanced examination of the published research involving the observation of couples, with special attention toward the use of observation for clinical assessment. All published articles that (a) used an observational coding system and (b) relate to the validity of the coding system are summarized in a table. The psychometric properties of observational systems and the use of observation in clinical practice are discussed. Although advances have been made in understanding couple conflict through the use of observation, the review concludes with an appeal to the field to develop constructs in a psychometrically and theoretically sound manner.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Cordova, J. V., & Dorian, M. (in press). Observing intimacy in couples' interactions. In P. K. Kerig & D. Baucom (Eds.), Couple observational coding systems. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Bradbury, T. N., Beach, S. R. H., Fincham, F. D., & Nelson, G. M. (1996). Attributions and behavior in functional and dysfunctional marriages. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *64*, 569-576.
- Bradbury, T.N., & Fincham, F.D. (1990). Attributions in marriage: Review and critique. Psychological Bulletin, *107*, 3-33.
- Gottman, J. M. (1993). The roles of conflict engagement, escalation or avoidance in marital interaction: A longitudinal view of five types of couples. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *61*, 6-15.
- Gottman, J. (1994). What Predicts Divorce? The Relationship Between Marital Process and Marital Outcomes. Lawrence Erlbaum, New Jersey.
- Gottman, J.M., & Krokoff, L.J. (1989). Marital interaction and satisfaction: A longitudinal view. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, *57*, 47-52.
- Heyman, R. E. (2001). Observation of couple conflicts: Clinical assessment applications, stubborn truths, and shaky foundations. Psychological Assessment, *13*(1), 5-35.
- Julien, D., Markman, H.J., & Lindahl, K.M. (1989). A comparison of a global and a microanalytic coding system: Implications for future trends in studying interactions. Behavioral Assessment, *11*, 81-100.
- Karney, B.R., & Bradbury, T.N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability: A review of theory, method, and research. Psychological Bulletin, *118*, 3-34.
- Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
- Markman, H.J., & Hahlweg, K. (1993). The prediction and prevention of marital distress: An international perspective. Clinical Psychology Review, *13*, 29-43.
- Markman, H. J. & Kraft, S. A. (1989). Men and women in marriage: Dealing with gender differences in marital therapy. The Behavior Therapist, *12*, 51-56.
- Matthews, L.S., Wickrama, K.A.S., & Conger, R.D. (1996). Predicting marital instability from spouse and observer reports of marital interaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *58*, 641-655.
- Noller, P. (1981). Gender and marital adjustment level differences in decoding messages from spouses and strangers. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *41*, 272-278.
- Notarius, C., & Markman, H.J. (1993). We can work it out: Making sense of marital conflict. New York: Putnam.

Construct: Sacrifice

[Comment: I think this construct has excellent potential to illuminate differences between men and women in terms of how commitment impacts behavior in relationships.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Van Lange, P. A. M., Rusbult, C. E., Drigotas, S. M., Arriaga, X. B., Witcher, B. S. & Cox, C. L. (1997). Willingness to sacrifice in close relationships. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *72*, 1373-1395.

The authors advance an interdependence analysis of willingness to sacrifice. Support for model predictions was revealed in 6 studies (3 cross-sectional survey studies, 1 simulation experiment, 2 longitudinal studies) that used a novel self-report measure and a behavioral measure of willingness to sacrifice. Willingness to sacrifice was associated with strong commitment, high satisfaction, poor alternatives, and high investments; feelings of commitment largely mediated the

associations of these variables with willingness to sacrifice. Moreover, willingness to sacrifice was associated with superior couple functioning, operationalized in terms of level of dyadic adjustment and probability of couple persistence. In predicting adjustment, willingness to sacrifice accounted for significant variance beyond commitment, partially mediating the link between commitment and adjustment; such mediation was not significant for persistence.

Whitton, S.W., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2007). If I help my partner, will it hurt me? Perceptions of sacrifice in romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 26*, 64-92.

We proposed and tested a theory of the associations among relationship commitment, perceived harmfulness of relationship sacrifices to the self, and relationship- and individual- well-being. Results from a cross-sectional study of 145 couples provided reliability and validity data for a measure of the extent to which relationship sacrifices are perceived to be harmful to the self. As predicted, greater perceived sacrifice harmfulness was associated with lower relationship commitment, poorer couple functioning, and higher depressive symptomatology. However, commitment was more robustly predictive of perceived sacrifice harmfulness for males than females; in women, the association was weaker and could be accounted for by partner commitment and relationship satisfaction. Perceived sacrifice harmfulness partially mediated the association between commitment and relationship functioning in males.

Stanley, S. M., Whitton, S. W., Low, S. M., Clements, M. L., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Sacrifice as a predictor of marital outcomes. *Family Process, 45*, 289-303.

We investigated the prospective associations between attitudes about sacrifice and marital outcomes in 38 married couples. Specifically, a measure of satisfaction with sacrifice was proposed to be a potent longitudinal predictor of marital adjustment and distress based on existing cross-sectional studies, and also to mediate the association between commitment and marital adjustment. Results demonstrated that attitudes about sacrifice discriminated between couples who would become distressed vs. nondistressed over time. Sacrifice attitudes also predicted the maintenance of relationship adjustment over time even better than earlier relationship adjustment. Finally, sacrifice attitudes mediated the link between commitment and relationship adjustment for husbands, but not wives. Implications for intervention are discussed.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Stanley, S.M. & Markman, H.J. (1992). Assessing commitment in personal relationships. *Journal of Marriage and The Family, 54*, 595-608.

Stanley, S. M., Whitton, S. W., Low, S. M., Clements, M. L., & Markman, H. J. (2006). Sacrifice as a predictor of marital outcomes. *Family Process, 45*, 289-303.

Van Lange, P. A. M., Agnew, C. R., Harinck, F. & Steemers, G. E. M. (1997). From game theory to real life: How social value orientation affects willingness to sacrifice in ongoing close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73*, 1330-1344.

Van Lange, P. A. M., Rusbult, C. E., Drigotas, S. M., Arriaga, X. B., Witcher, B. S. & Cox, C. L. (1997). Willingness to sacrifice in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 72*, 1373-1395.

Whitton, S.W., Stanley, S. M., & Markman, H. J. (2007). If I help my partner, will it hurt me? Perceptions of sacrifice in romantic relationships. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 26*, 64-92.

Wieselquist, J., Rusbult, C. E., Foster, C. A., & Agnew, C. R. (1999). Commitment, pro-relationship behavior, and trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *77*, 942-966.

Construct: Satisfaction and Quality and Adjustment (a measurement problem)

[Comment: The problem I refer to here is that many measures commonly used to measure “relationship satisfaction” actually measure a good deal more, such as conflict, commitment, and problem solving (e.g., Locke-Wallace MAT). This is a serious problem because means that a measure ostensibly of satisfaction actually sucks up variance across a range of constructs, muddling interpretation of results and understanding. I personally now prefer measures such as Schumm’s mentioned below for their simplicity and unity in assessing pure and global satisfaction.

NEW 2009: See the entries later in this document based on the extensive work of Doug Snyder in assessing marital quality. While some of his measures of marital quality (Marital Satisfaction Index) are something that must be purchased from Western Psychological Press, the work is stellar and is already translated and validated in various languages. He and colleagues have also been doing work on assessing marital discord at a taxonic level suitable for use in diagnostic settings.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1987). The assessment of marital quality: a reevaluation. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *49*, 797-809.

Contents that attempts have been made to measure and explain variance in marital quality, using self-reports, without adequate understanding specification of the construct of marital quality. It is suggested that the inability to establish unambiguous empirical relationships among relevant constructs severely limits theory development and that one means of avoiding these problems is to treat marital quality solely as the global evaluation of marriage. The implications of this strategy are examined in regard to 3 issues: (a) the association between empirical and conceptual dependence, (b) the interpretation of responses to self-report inventories, and (c) the consideration of the purpose for which marital quality is measured. The advantages of this approach and the conditions under which it is most appropriate are also outlined.

Fincham, F. D., & Linfield, K. J. (1997). A new look at marital quality: Can spouses feel positive and negative about their marriage? *Journal of Family Psychology*, *11*, 489-502.

Marital quality is examined as a 2-dimensional construct comprising positive and negative evaluations. Assessments of marital quality, behavior, attributions, and general affect were completed by 123 couples. Confirmatory factor analysis supported the existence of positive and negative marital quality dimensions. These dimensions also explained unique variance in reported behavior and attributions beyond that explained by a conventional marital quality measure and by positive and negative affect. Ambivalent (high-positive and high-negative) and indifferent (low positive and low-negative) wives differed in reports of behaviors and attributions but did not differ in scores on the conventional marital quality test. The implications of a 2-dimensional analysis of marital quality for theory and research are outlined.

Mattson, R. E., Paldino-Martin, D., Frame, L. E., Collins, Z. R., & Johnson, M. D. (2003, November). The role of affective behaviors and attributions on positive and negative marital quality. To be presented at the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy, Boston.

Marital satisfaction is commonly conceptualized such that positive and negative evaluations of a marriage are two points on a single dimension of marital quality. That is, marital satisfaction reflects an evaluation such that positive features are prominent relative to an absence of negative features within the marriage. Conversely, evaluations that are indicative of marital dissatisfaction will typically reflect prominent negative features with a dearth of positive features. Measurements based on this conceptualization have yielded tests that provide single-score global evaluations of marital quality. However, a study by Fincham and Linfield (1997) demonstrated that this conceptualization of marital quality might not be sensitive enough to differentiate between all types of couples. They believed that negative and positive evaluations of marital quality are two separate, albeit related, dimensions. Using a simple measure based on this two-dimensional conceptualization called the Positive and Negative Quality in Marriage Scale (PANQIMS), they found that the separate dimensions have different behavioral and cognitive correlates that would be indistinguishable through the use of the traditional omnibus assessment measures. While these findings provide an interesting new insight into the measurement and conceptualization of marital quality, the study by Fincham and Linfield (1997) had several limitations which include: self-reports of behavior instead of more objective measures of spousal behavior, a single measure of marital satisfaction, and the use of a cross-sectional methodology.

The purpose of the proposed article is to systematically examine the psychometric properties of the PANQIMS and expand upon the finding that measures of positive and negative marital quality are assessing distinct dimensions of marital satisfaction. We hypothesize that the PANQIMS will demonstrate satisfactory concurrent validity through its relationship with known measures of marital satisfaction, as well as adequate discriminant validity in its ability to account for unique variance over measures of marital satisfaction in observed couple behavior. This study will also examine the inter-item and test-retest reliability of the PANQIMS. In addition to these hypotheses, this study will also be providing valuable psychometric data on the PANQIMS using a population that is transitioning from engaged to married. Lastly, due to the multiple time points, this study will be able to provide new data concerning the test-retest reliability of this measure.

Schumm, W. R., Bollman, S. R., Jurich, A. P., & Hatch, R. C. (2001). Family strengths and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale: A factory analytic study. Psychological Reports, 88(3,Pt2), 965-973.

20 new items were developed to measure six concepts of family strengths and were administered, along with the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale, to over 266 married subjects as part of a larger survey of current and former members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). A common factor analysis suggested that most of the items were associated with their expected factors, while reliability analyses indicated that most of the scales had acceptable estimates of internal consistency. The marital satisfaction items clearly were associated with their own factor and not other factors, providing support for the unidimensional nature of the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale and for its construct validity.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

Busby, D. M., Crane, D. R., Larson, J. H., & Christensen, C. (1995). A revision of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for use with distressed and nondistressed couples: Construct hierarchy and multidimensional scales. Journal of Marital & Family Therapy, 21(3), 289-308.

Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1987). The assessment of marital quality: a reevaluation. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 49, 797-809.

Locke, H.J., & Wallace, K.M. (1959). Short marital adjustment and prediction tests: their reliability and validity. Marriage and Family Living, 21, 251-255.

Mattson, R. E., Paldino-Martin, D., Frame, L. E., Collins, Z. R., & Johnson, M. D. (2003, November). The role of affective behaviors and attributions on positive and negative marital quality. To be presented at the Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy, Boston.

Schumm, W. R., Bollman, S. R., Jurich, A. P., & Hatch, R. C. (2001). Family strengths and the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale: A factory analytic study. Psychological Reports, 88(3,Pt2), 965-973.

Spanier, G. B. (1976). Measuring dyadic adjustment: New scales for assessing the quality of marriage and similar dyads. Journal of Marriage & the Family, 38(1), 15-28.

Construct: Changes Resulting from Relationship/Marriage Education

[In our work, we have found it useful to use very specific questions about the kinds of changes couples see occurring as a result of taking relationship education classes. Such measures can be idiosyncratic to the curricula’s targets. The advantage of such measures is that they provide one window into the types of content that couples find most useful. They also can be devised to be sensitive to short-term changes when other types of outcomes one is interested in may be necessarily long-term.

I have greatly expanded on measurement packages for assessing couples’ education programs. If you are interested in a package of measures that are ready to use, please email me.]

Examples from our work with the Army:

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I am satisfied with the concern and support the Army or Army Leaders show for my family.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 We have the skills we need to make a life in the Army.
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 I am comfortable talking with my spouse about Army-related concerns.

As a result of taking the BSRF program, _____

- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 “I know how to handle relationship conflicts better than I did before.”
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 “I have a better idea what to do when my spouse is upset.”
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 “I feel more confident we will stay together in the years to come.”
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 “We are more likely to stick with the Army and re-enlist.”
- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 “I have training that will help me make my marriage better.”

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Stanley, S. M., Markman, H. J., Saiz, C. C., Schumm, W. R., Bloomstrom, G., & Bailey, A. E. (2003). Building Strong and Ready Families: Interim Report. Washington D. C.: SAIC, Inc.

Sample from the report:

As this example portrays, couples were far more likely to say impacts of BSRF were likely on their relationship than on their involvement with the Army. This is not surprising, since the specific targets of BSRF are mostly about couple and individual functioning and less directly

about specific attitudes and beliefs about the Army. BSRF is conceptualized as program that improves and sustains the institutional strength of The Army by strengthening the newly forming marriages of its first-term soldiers. Data presented previously indicate BSRF impacts well-being through improvements in couple's positivity about family life in the army, couple's ability to talk about Army life, and in their perceptions of command support. It is hoped that research in the future can track actual long-term Army involvement outcomes such as re-enlistments and early return of dependents.

The questions asked about what impacts were most likely can be analyzed in different manners, with differing impressions resulting. The preceding analyses are based on the average ratings given by participants to the statements presented, with the "most likely" and "least likely" rankings being based on those averages. Such items can also be analyzed simply from the perspective of whether or not a respondent says a statement is more likely, less likely, or no change.

Construct: Support (Supportiveness between partners)

[Comment: This is a great example of the new emphasis on positive constructs in understanding couple dynamics.]

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

Dehle, C., Larsen, D., & Landers, J. E. (2001). Social Support in Marriage. The American Journal of Family Therapy, 29, 307-324.

The current study examines the role of perceived adequacy of social support provided by spouses for both marital and individual functioning. Married individuals from a college sample (N = 177) recorded the adequacy of specific supportive behaviors provided by the spouse on a daily basis for seven days. Perceived support adequacy was correlated in the expected direction with marital quality, depressive symptomatology and perceived stress. Further, hierarchical multiple regressions indicated that perceived support adequacy accounts for significant unique variance in marital quality, depressive symptomatology and perceived stress, even after controlling for social desirability. Discussion focuses on limitations of the study and implications of the findings for clinical work with couples.

Dehle, C. You can't always get what you want, but can you get what you need? Personality traits and social support in marriage. Manuscript under review.

The current study examines associations among personality traits, social support behavior in marital interactions, and perceptions of partner social support provided during marital interactions. Sixty-six married couples participated in the study. Couples completed two measures of personality traits, and participated in two support-focused interactions. Each spouse completed ratings of satisfaction with the partner's support following discussion of an achievement related stressor. Frequencies of four types of social support behavior were observationally coded for each spouse during his/her turn as support provider. Results indicated that spouses within couples demonstrated similarity in support behavior, but dissimilarity in personality traits. Patterns of associations among personality traits, support behavior provided by the spouse, and satisfaction with support varied across husbands and wives. Husbands with higher levels of neuroticism and/or lower levels of conscientiousness receive more esteem

support from wives. Husbands with low levels of conscientiousness also receive more informational support from wives. In addition, associations between husband conscientiousness and satisfaction with support, and husband neuroticism and satisfaction with support were moderated by the amount of the esteem support provided by wives. For wives, conscientiousness and neuroticism predicted satisfaction with support from husbands. The moderating effect for wives indicated that the association between conscientiousness and satisfaction with support depended on the amount of informational support provided by husbands.

Pasch, L. A., & Bradbury, T. N. (1998). Social support, conflict, and the development of marital dysfunction. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *66*, 219-30.

Nearly all research on marital interaction has focused on the behaviors spouses exchange when attempting to resolve marital conflicts. The present study adopts the view that the manner in which spouses help each other contend with personal, rather than marital, difficulties is an unexplored but potentially important domain for understanding how marital distress develops. Newly-married couples participated in two interaction tasks: the standard marital problem-solving task in which spouses discussed an area of conflict in their marriage, and a social support task, in which spouses took turns discussing personal, non-marital, difficulties. Results showed that (1) support solicitation and provision behaviors were associated concurrently with marital satisfaction, as were problem-solving behaviors; (2) wives' support solicitation and provision behaviors also predicted marital outcomes two years later, independent of either spouses' negative behaviors during problem-solving discussions; and (3) support behaviors moderated the effect of negative problem-solving behavior on marital outcomes such that couples who exhibited relatively poor skills in both behavioral domains were at particular risk for later marital discord or instability. Results have implications for expanding models designed to understand the development of distress in marriage, and they suggest that support solicitation and provision skill training be added to prevention programs currently aimed at teaching couples conflict resolution skills.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Barry, R.A., Bunde, M., Brock, R.L., Lawrence, E. (in press). Validity and utility of a multidimensional model of received support in intimate relationships. *Journal of Family Psychology*.
- Cutrona, C. (1996). *Social support in couples*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dehle, C., Larsen, D., & Landers, J. E. (2001). Social Support in Marriage. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, *29*, 307-324.
- Fincham, F. D. (2003). Marital conflict: Correlates, structure, and context. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *12*(1), 23-27.
- Lawrence, E. Bunde, M., Barry, R.A., Brock, R.L. (in press). Partner support and marital satisfaction: Support amount, adequacy, provision, and solicitation. *Personal Relationships*.
- Pasch, L. A., & Bradbury, T. N. (1998). Social support, conflict, and the development of marital dysfunction. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *66*, 219-30.

Construct: Religiosity and a Specific Construct of Sanctification of Marriage

[Comment: There are various ways to measure religiosity, and even quite simple measures often produce meaningful findings (see Johnson et al, 2002; report on Oklahoma survey). Here below is an example of a richer construct that may have great value in understanding how religious faith and practice play protective roles for some couples. I think the study below by Mahoney et al. in 1999 is the best ever

conducted in advancing the understanding of how religious faith functions protectively for couples. Such measures and ways of thinking might be well utilized in some intervention research, even to the point of treating joint religious belief and involvement as an outcome for couples in some evaluations.]

Example of simple measures we have used.

All things considered, how *religious* would you say that you are?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all		Somewhat religious				Very religious

Please answer each of the next four questions by indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with the idea expressed.

1 = Strongly Disagree
 2
 3
 4 = Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 5
 6
 7 = Strongly Agree

1 2 3 4 5 6 7	What religion offers me most is comfort in times of trouble and sorrow.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	My whole approach to life is based on my religion.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	I go to church or synagogue mainly because I enjoy seeing people I know there.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Life has no real meaning apart from a relationship with God.

Abstract(s) of research on or using the construct:

[2 subscales to assess: Manifestation of God in Marriage (theistic sanctification) & Sacred Qualities in Marriage (non-theistic sanctification)]

Mahoney, A., Pargament, K.I., Jewell, T., Swank, A.B., Scott, E., Emery, E., & Rye, M. (1999). Marriage and the spiritual realm: The role of proximal and distal religious constructs in marital functioning. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *13* (3), 321-338.

Ninety-seven couples completed questionnaires about their involvement in joint religious activities and their perceptions regarding the sanctification of marriage, including perceived sacred qualities of marriage and beliefs about the manifestation of God in marriage. In contrast to individual religiousness and religious homogamy (distal religious constructs), these proximal religious variables directly reflect an integration of religion and marriage, and they were associated with greater global marital adjustment, more perceived benefits from marriage, less marital conflict, more verbal collaboration, and less use of verbal aggression and stalemate to discuss disagreements for both wives and husbands. The proximal measures also added substantial unique variance (adjusted R-2 change ranged from .06 to .48) to specific aspects of marital functioning after controlling demographic factors and distal religious variables in hierarchical regression analyses.

Some Citations about Measures or the Construct or that use the Construct

- Allport, G. W. & Ross, J. M. (1967). Personal religious orientation and prejudice. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *5*, 432-443.
- Call, V.R. & Heaton, T.B. (1997). Religious influence on marital stability. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, *36*, 382-392.
- Gorsuch, R. L. & McPherson, S. E. (1989). Intrinsic/extrinsic measurement: I/E revised and single item scales. Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, *28*, 348-354.
- Heaton, T.B. (1984). Religious homogeneity and marital satisfaction reconsidered. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *46*, 729-733.
- Heaton, T.B., Albrecht, S.L., & Martin, T.K. (1985). The timing of divorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, *47*, 631-639.
- Heaton, T.B. & Pratt, E.L. (1990). The effects of religious homogeneity on marital satisfaction and stability. Journal of Family Issues, *11*, 191-207.
- Johnson, C. A., Stanley, S. M., Glenn, N. D., Amato, P. A., Nock, S. L., Markman, H. J., & Dion, M. R. (2002). Marriage in Oklahoma: 2001 baseline statewide survey on marriage and divorce (S02096 OKDHS). Oklahoma City, OK: Oklahoma Department of Human Services.
- Mahoney, A., Pargament, K.I., Jewell, T., Swank, A.B., Scott, E., Emery, E., & Rye, M. (1999). Marriage and the spiritual realm: The role of proximal and distal religious constructs in marital functioning. Journal of Family Psychology, *13* (3), 321-338.
- Mahoney A, Pargament KI, Murray-Swank A. B., Murray-Swank, N. (2003). Religion and the sanctification of family relationships, *REV RELIG RES*, *44*, 220-236.

Constructs: Disharmony and Disaffection

Abstract of research on or using the constructs:

Herrington, R. L., Mitchell, A. E., Castellani, A. M., Joseph, J. I., Snyder, D. K., & Gleaves, D. H. (2008). Assessing disharmony and disaffection in intimate relationships: Revision of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory factor scales. *Psychological Assessment*, *20*, 341 – 350.

Previous research has identified two broad components of distress in intimate relationships: overt conflict or *disharmony*, and emotional distance or *disaffection*. Using confirmatory factor analysis, the present study derived two broad-band scales of disharmony and disaffection from the Marital Satisfaction Inventory – Revised (*MSI-R*; Snyder, 1997), building upon previous measures of these constructs derived from the original instrument (Snyder & Regts, 1982). The new scales demonstrated high internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as discriminative validity and convergent validity with independent criteria of relationship functioning. Distinct distributions of these scales in community and clinical samples suggest their complementary role in research on intimate relationships and assessment of couples in treatment.

Some Citations about Measures and/or Research on Construct

Snyder, D. K. (1997). *Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Revised (MSI-R) manual*. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.

- Snyder, D. K., Cepeda-Benito, A., Abbott, B. V., Gleaves, D. H., Negy, C., Hahlweg, K., et al. (2004). Cross-cultural applications of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory - Revised (MSI-R). In M. E. Maruish (Ed.), *Use of psychological testing for treatment planning and outcomes assessment* (3rd ed., pp. 603-623). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Snyder, D. K., & Regts, J. M. (1982). Factor scales for assessing marital disharmony and disaffection. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 50*, 736-743.

Sample items (using True/False response format):

- My partner and I need to improve the way we settle our differences. (T; Disharmony)
There is a great deal of love and affection expressed in our relationship. (F; Disaffection)

Constructs: Discord

Abstract of research on or using the constructs:

- Whisman, M. A., Snyder, D. K., & Beach, S. R. H. (2008). Screening for marital discord. *Journal of Family Psychology, 23*, 247 – 254.

Based on recent findings suggesting that marital discord is taxonic (i.e., that couples in discordant relationships differ qualitatively, and not just quantitatively, from couples in nondiscordant relationships), this study was designed to develop a brief screening measure for detecting the relationship discord taxon. A national, representative sample of 1,020 married couples completed the Marital Satisfaction Inventory – Revised. Data from this sample were used to create a 10-item screening measure. Using the cutoff scores from the original study that found evidence of taxonicity as a point of reference the 10-item screen demonstrated good diagnostic performance in assessing the marital discord taxon. Taxon classification based on the brief scale demonstrated good short-term stability. The scale is easily administered and scored, making it appropriate for use in clinical and research settings.

Some Citations about Measures and/or Research on Construct

- Snyder, D. K. (1997). *Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Revised (MSI-R) manual*. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.
- Snyder, D. K., Cepeda-Benito, A., Abbott, B. V., Gleaves, D. H., Negy, C., Hahlweg, K., et al. (2004). Cross-cultural applications of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory - Revised (MSI-R). In M. E. Maruish (Ed.), *Use of psychological testing for treatment planning and outcomes assessment* (3rd ed., pp. 603-623). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Whisman, M. A., Beach, S. R. H., & Snyder, D. K. (2008). Is marital discord taxonic and can taxonic status be assessed reliably? Results from a national, representative sample of married couples. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 76*, 745-755.

Sample items (using True/False response format):

- There are some serious difficulties in our relationship. (T)
Just when I need it the most, my partner makes me feel important. (F)

Constructs: Satisfaction

Abstract of research on or using the constructs:

Snyder, D. K. (1997). *Marital Satisfaction Inventory, Revised (MSI-R) manual*. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory - Revised (MSI-R) is a multi-scale inventory composed of 150 True/False items designed to identify both the nature and intensity of relationship distress in distinct areas of interaction. The MSI-R includes two validity scales, one global scale, and ten specific scales assessing relationship satisfaction in such areas as affective and problem-solving communication, aggression, leisure time together, finances, the sexual relationship, role orientation, family of origin, and interactions regarding children. More than 20 years of research have supported the reliability and construct validity of the MSI-R scales (cf., Snyder & Aikman, 1999). The instrument boasts a large representative national sample, good internal consistency and test-retest reliability, and excellent sensitivity to treatment change. Recent studies suggest the potential utility of Spanish and German adaptations of the MSI-R for cross-cultural application with both clinic and community couples, as well as use of the original English version with nontraditional (e.g., gay and lesbian) couples.

Some Citations about Measures and/or Research on Construct

- Hoover, D. W., & Snyder, D. K. (1991). Validity of the computerized interpretive report for the Marital Satisfaction Inventory: A customer satisfaction study. *Psychological Assessment, 3*, 213-217.
- Means-Christensen, A. J., Snyder, D. K., & Negy, C. (2003). Assessing nontraditional couples: Validity of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised (MSI-R) with gay, lesbian, and cohabiting heterosexual couples. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 29*, 69-83.
- Snyder, D. K., & Aikman, G. G. (1999). The Marital Satisfaction Inventory - Revised. In M. E. Maruish (Ed.), *Use of psychological testing for treatment planning and outcomes assessment* (pp. 1173-1210) (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Snyder, D. K., Cepeda-Benito, A., Abbott, B. V., Gleaves, D. H., Negy, C., Hahlweg, K., et al. (2004). Cross-cultural applications of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory - Revised (MSI-R). In M. E. Maruish (Ed.), *Use of psychological testing for treatment planning and outcomes assessment* (3rd ed., pp. 603-623). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Sample items (using True/False response format):

- My partner has too little regard sometimes for my sexual satisfaction. (T)
Our daily life is full of interesting things to do together. (F)

Note: The *Marital Satisfaction Inventory-Revised* is published and distributed by Western Psychological Services, 12031 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, 90025, USA, www.wpspublish.com.