

16PF Couples Counseling Report:
Predictors of Marital Satisfaction, Personality Similarity, and
Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy

by

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We the undersigned committee
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Abstract

TITLE: 16PF Couples Counseling Report: Predictors of Marital Satisfaction, Personality Similarity, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy

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In the 1960's-1970's, the science and history of marital satisfaction was linked to ethnic, religious, and racial similarity. Previous research has administered new psychological and sociological tests, which were believed to predict marital satisfaction. Divorce rates started to rise in the 1980s in the United States. Difficulties surrounding companionate marriage revealed anxieties about the expansion of women's legal rights, educational and employment opportunities, and interfaith or interracial marriage. Society, views on marriage, and differences between couples have contributed to difficulties in marriage. Further, research on predictors of marital satisfaction, personality similarity, and relationship adjustment was limited.

The present study utilizes the 16 Personality Factor Couple's Counseling Report (16PF CCR) variables of overall Marital Satisfaction, Personality Similarity, and Relationship Adjustment of Males in Marital Therapy. Results demonstrated a positive significant relationship between Overall Marital Satisfaction and two of the individual item satisfaction areas, including Time Together and Problem-Solving Communication Relationship Adjustment had a

positive significant relationship with four personality variables, emotional stability, rule-consciousness, apprehension, and openness to change. Relationship Adjustment and Personality Similarity were individually significantly and positively correlated with Overall Marital Satisfaction. Additionally, males who were in a relationship for 0-2 years were overall more satisfied than males in a relationship for 8-14 years and 25 or more years. The limitations, implications, and arguments for further research of the current study are discussed.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	iii
List of Tables.....	vi
Acknowledgments.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	3
Statement of Purpose.....	26
Hypotheses.....	27
Method.....	28
Results.....	29
Discussion.....	34
References.....	44

List of Tables

Table 1 - Personality Scale Factor Descriptions

Table 2 - Descriptive Frequencies for Males in Marital Therapy

Table 3 - Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables

Table 4 - Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction Ratings

Table 5 - Summary of the Marital Satisfaction and Individual Satisfaction

Table 6 - Descriptive Statistics for Personality Factors

Table 7 - Personality Factors Mean and Standard Deviations

Table 8 - Summary of Marital Satisfaction and Personality Factors

Table 9 - Personality Scores Mean and Standard Deviations

Table 10 - Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Relationship

Adjustment Scores and the Primary Personality Factors

Table 11 - Correlations between Satisfaction, Adjustment, and Similarity

Table 12 - Means and Standard Deviations Marital Satisfaction and Length of
Relationship

Table 13 - ANOVA for Marital Satisfaction and Length of Relationship

Table 14 - Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Children

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Introduction

Marriage is an intimate companionship between two individuals. Unfortunately, along the path of marriage, complications can emerge. Estrangement in a marriage has been a long-standing problem. Broderick and Schrader (1991) stated, in 1930, the first two marriage counseling centers opened in the United States, (as cited in Hecker & Wetchler, 2003). As early as 1942, Dr.'s Lester Dearborn, Robert Laidlaw, Earnest and Gladys, Emily Mudd, Abraham Stone, Robert Dickenson, and Valerie Parker gathered together to organize what would become the American Association for Marriage Counseling (AAMC); this organization became reality in 1945, (Wetchler & Hecker, 2003). Unfortunately, although marriage therapy had a bright beginning, the development was slow as a profession. In the 1960's, Gurin, Veroff, and Feld found that over 40 percent of all people seeking psychological help viewed the nature of their problem as marital (as cited in Gurman & Fraenkel, 2002). These findings exhibit the length of time since awareness of dissatisfaction in marriage became noticed.

Among the recent research of couples and marriage, there is a considerable amount focusing on divorce and the negative factors. Much has been focused on how personality factors negatively affect the relationship contributing to marital conflicts. However, there has also been a focus on personality characteristics and traits that positively impact relationships, although, this research is limited.

There is limited research on male's personality similarity, marital satisfaction, and relationship adjustment, however, there is a reasonable amount of research that focuses on marital therapy with males. Previous literature on marital therapy for males with Adlerian marriage therapy as a focus, has evolved with an understanding of the individual male's behavior. Further, marital therapy has shown an increase in treatments and strategies used over history. With this knowledge, this author finds it compelling to focus on factors that contribute to marital satisfaction. Knowledge of influences related to marital satisfaction can provide awareness to couples on what to incorporate in their relationship.

The present study uses the 16 Personality Factor Couple's Counseling Report completed by couples in outpatient marital therapy to identify personality factors, individual areas of satisfaction, and demographic variables that influence marital therapy and marital satisfaction. To reduce variability due to gender differences, males will be the primary focus for the present research.

Literature Review

Marital Dissatisfaction

The American Psychological Association reports 40-50% of couple's divorce in the United States, (as cited in Kazdin, A.E., 2000). The National Center for Health Statistics reported in 2014, the number of marriages is 2,140 with the marriage rate at 6.9 per 1,000 total population. The number of divorces is 813,862 with the divorce rate at 3.2 per 1,000 population (2015). Due to the high percentage divorce rate, research has focused on factors that contribute to marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction. In discussing factors influencing dissonance in marriage, one must first understand marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Cattell and Schuerger (2003) suggested that partners who differ in terms of emotional stability, perfectionism, vigilance, and sensitivity, among other personality factors, exhibit significantly more dissatisfaction in their relationship, (as cited in Knabb, J.J., & Vogt, R.G. 2011).

factors leading to divorce. Dissonance involves conflicting attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that contribute to divorce. Previous research tends to focus on couples who have considered divorce and factors that contribute to marital problems, identifying communication as a leading factor. One of the few studies that examined the hypothesis that divorce is associated with premarital communication quality was by Markman, Ragan, Rhoades, Stanley, and Whitton (2010). They found that the overall level of negative communication in the first five years of marriage is a leading cause to potential divorce. The

findings show that the non-distressed couples' negative communication declined more than the distressed couples' negative communication, suggesting that the quality of communication is an important factor in determining the course of a couple's relationship over time. Couples who begin marriage with lower levels of negative communication and maintain high levels of positive communication are at a lower risk for divorce. With the male population, Gottman (1994) reported that males are more likely to withdraw from discussion about relationship problems, (as cited by Amato & Previti, 2003), reinforcing women to initiate divorce, (Albrecht, Bahr, & Goodman, 1983; Goode, 1956; Kitson, 1992). Haase and Levenson's (2013) study supports the notion that there is an important developmental shift in the way conflict is handled over time. Demand-withdraw communication is a set of conflict-related behaviors in which one partner blames or pressures and the other partner withdraws or avoids, (Haase & Levenson, 2013). Dissatisfied marital relationships were often marked by demand/withdrawal patterns of conflict when one partner became more demanding. Previous research by Amato and Previti, 2003; Gigy & Kelly, 1992; Ponzetti et al., 1992 has found a consensus of reasons for divorce including infidelity, physical separation or loss of closeness, discovering differences in marital expectations, incompatibility, lack of communication, conflicts regarding children, health problems, and individual spouse behavior, (as cited in DeFrain & Skogrand, 2011). There is evidence that shows marital distress negatively affects physical health, such as the immune system functioning.

Knowing that there are a variety of factors that lead to dissolution, individuals generally experience a greater number of health problems and a higher risk of mortality (Aldous & Ganey, 1999). Moreover, social isolation and a lower standard of living are likely to increase.

History of Marital Dissatisfaction Research. Dr. John Gottman is known for his work on marital stability with a foundation of innovative and diverse research, although he follows a trend focusing on the negative aspects of the relationship, rather than the positives. Gottman (1993) developed and described theories of factors that lead to marital dissolution. According to Gottman, couples begin their marriage satisfied and happy, become unhappy, and remain unhappy. The dissatisfied couple considers separating and eventually divorces. Based on Gottman's previous empirically based research, he found four signs of the increased likelihood of divorce. The first sign is the way the couple approaches one another. Approaching the conflict with negative, accusatory statements corresponds with negative relationship outcomes, however, soft approaches tend to have a better outcome for the argument and the relationship. Gottman explains the second sign is called, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse;" criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. Criticism occurs when complaints turn into attacks on the character and personality of the other person. Criticism escalates into contempt, expressing disgust with the other person, including sarcasm, hostile humor, and name calling. The third horsemen, defensiveness, is when the individual responds in a

defensive manner, rather than productively problem-solving. The fourth horseman, stonewalling, is a defense against being emotionally flooded by the escalating conflict, which was found to be more common in males. The third sign Gottman found that has an increased likelihood of divorce is flooding, which occurs when the individual is highly overwhelmed by their spouse's negativity. This transpires when the partner is physiologically aroused with anxiety, fear, or anger. Due to the increase in arousal, they are unable to process information, be empathetic, and tend to respond in a panicked fight or flight response mode. The fourth sign is bad memories, when the partner continues to re-think of the negativity experienced in the past, rather than focusing on the positive memories.

In a study on marriage counselor's perspectives, they found that distressed couples were found to have a characteristic of attachment avoidance. Attachment systems are activated during stressful life events. In Abdolvahab, S., Ghazavi, Z., and Mohammadi, K.'s study on attachment avoidance and marital satisfaction, they found individuals with insecure attachment styles, such as avoidant, are usually afraid of rejection and loneliness. The individuals with low self-worth and decreased self-confidence experience psychological distress when dealing with stressful situations, increasing anxiety, and feelings of inferiority. These issues increase the likelihood of marital dissatisfaction in insecure people. They have negative attitudes toward their partner. As a result, they get involved with counterproductive communicational methods. Thus,

certain behaviors may be expressed in conflicting situations for each one of the attachment styles, (Abdolvahab, S., Ghazavi, Z., & Mohammadi, K., 2016).

With knowledge of negative communication and how it contributes to separation in accordance to negative behaviors, increases potential for divorce.

marital dissatisfaction and behavior. Significant areas of focus in the previously mentioned studies on communication are tied with the individual's behaviors. Previous research, stated by Gardner and Wampler (2008) reported the presence of dominance in dissatisfied couples, such as high levels of dominant behavior in men, were associated with lower marital satisfaction. Negative affect, such as contempt or disgust seemed to predict future marital distress, (as cited by Mada, 2016). When the couple is unable to solve the problem appropriately, they tend to use indirect negative tactics; such as avoidance and insinuation. Trust also affects the quality of marital relationships by creating a context of negative behaviors. The more newlyweds are suspicious or distrustful, the more they will behave negatively toward each other. Factors with a high contribution to marital dissatisfaction include communication styles, as discussed previously, mistrust, infidelity, and negative behaviors in response to these thoughts and feelings. In 2011, DeFrain, J., Skogrand, L., and Tulane, S.'s studied couples with a strong marriage that considered divorce and found distance occurs with poor communication, eventually leading to other problematic areas such as infidelity.

Marital Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction, defined by Abdolvahab, S., Ghazavi, Z., and Mohammadi, K., is the pleasure derived from awareness of a comfortable situation, usually tied with satisfaction with marital longing. Couples experience marital satisfaction due to conscious feelings, such as friendship and rational efforts. Karney and Bradbury, 1995; Malouff, Thorsteinsson, Schutte, Bhullar, and Rooke, 2010 defined a satisfied marriage as increased marriage longevity, and improved physical and psychological health of spouses and their children, (as cited by Gur-aryeh, S.M., 2010). A variety of studies have demonstrated people are generally more satisfied, happy, and healthier when they are married, (Gottman, 1994; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Orbuch & Custer, 1995; White, 1994 (as cited by Rosen-Grandon, Myers, & Hattie (2004). Moreover, Rosen-Grandon, Myers, and Hattie (2004) identified three paths to marital satisfaction. The three paths were identified as having loving relationships, loyal relationships, and relationships with shared values. Loving relationships consisted of respect for one another, forgiveness, romance, support, and sensitivity. Loyal relationships were defined as devotion to their spouse. Relationships with shared values portrays conflict management, traditional gender roles, and priority of religiosity and parenting, (Rosen-Grandon, Myers, & Hattie, 2004). Knowing that there are a variety of satisfied couple types, one would then wonder how couples remain satisfied, in equilibrium and stability. Relationship satisfaction entails a relationship that is stable and the couple can

work through problems and disagreements. Fenell (1993) studied long-term relationships and concluded the ten most important marital characteristics include, lifetime commitment to marriage, loyalty to spouse, strong moral values, respect for spouse as a friend, commitment to sexual fidelity, desire to be a good parent, faith in God and spiritual commitment, desire to please and support spouse, good companion to spouse, and willingness to forgive and be forgiven, (as cited in Rosen-Grandon, Myers, & Hattie, 2004).

Positive communication is essential for couples to maintain a satisfied marriage. Understanding each other is beneficial to feeling connected, such as communicating emotions. For the male population, Carpenter and Addis (2000), found that males have difficulty identifying and communicating emotions, and Fischer and Good (1997) found that men with greater gender role conflict report greater fear to express intimacy (as cited in Cordova, J.V., Gee, C.B., & Warren, L.Z., 2005). Males have a higher satisfaction rate when they can communicate their intimacy safely, in other words, when they are able to communicate their own emotions. In addition, identification of emotions facilitates intimacy by contributing to a person's ability to effectively communicate their feelings.

To maintain a stable relationship, the couple has effective communication, problem solving skills, and understands compromise. Couples experience increased marital satisfaction when they can communicate love and affection. Marital communication has been associated with numerous positive outcomes in marital relationships, including sexual satisfaction, a couple's ability to

effectively cope with a spouse's psychological or mental illness, and marital satisfaction, Sharlin, Kaslow, and Hammerschmidt (2000). To obtain a bigger picture of the factors related to marital satisfaction overall, Sharlin, Kaslow, and Hammerschmidt (2000) completed a multinational study on long-term marriages. They identified marital satisfaction factors as ability to effectively problem-solve, effective communication skills, presence, self-disclosure, joint-decision-making, reciprocity, mutual support, shared leadership, use of compromise to manage differences, spending quality time together, and a value of the sexual aspect of the relationship. From this research, communication, cooperation, compromise, and an overall sense of mutuality relates to marital satisfaction. Incorporating the positive traits to a satisfied and healthy marriage has benefits for the future well-being of the individual. Regarding the male population, research has found many factors that are positively affected by marital satisfaction. The literature indicates that males in healthy marriages tend to have greater physical and emotional health, greater wealth and higher wages, decreased drug and alcohol abuse, better relationships with their children, and they tend to live longer and are less likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases, (Gur-Aryeh, 2010).

partner-support. Previous studies on marital satisfaction suggested individuals with high levels of marital confidence spend more time together and have higher levels of satisfaction in their marriage. Regarding partner support, the husband's support was found to be significantly predictive of both the

husbands' and wives' marital satisfaction. Burgess and Wallin (1953), summarized their own findings, the findings of Terman et al. (1938) as well as Terman and Oden (1947) and concluded that satisfied married couples are more emotionally stable, considerate of others, yielding, companionable, self-confident and emotionally dependent than those who were dissatisfied in their marriage, (as cited in Noll, D.A., 1994). In a study on marital satisfaction, Rosen-Grandon, J.R., Myers, J.E., and Hattie, J.A. (2004) found that males determine a loving and loyal relationship based more on communication than by expressing affection. Further, males who were more satisfied with their marriages were more traditional and satisfied by conflict management. Couples who engage in external relationships, such as, family rituals, celebrations, traditions, and interactions influence the level of satisfaction. On the other hand, if family rituals are negative, rigid, hollow, or oppressive, they may impact marital satisfaction and lead to increased toxicity, stress, pathology, and dissatisfaction, (Giblin, 1995).

marital satisfaction and personality similarity. Previous research findings have been inconsistent regarding personality characteristics and relationship satisfaction. Some research had difficulty identifying which characteristics led to satisfaction, (Caughlin et al., 2000; Gattis et al., 2004; Kim et al., 1989; Rosowsky et al., 2012; Shiota & Levenson, 2007), as cited in Mada, R. 2016). Other researchers concluded there was an effect which supported dissatisfaction and satisfaction resulting from personality dimensions when using the Big Five

model of personality. Additionally, researchers Kim, Martin, and Martin (1989) found that certain personality traits played an essential role in marital satisfaction using the primary instrument, the 16PF.

“The Five Factor Model,” a term coined by Lew Goldberg is a framework that describes five personality traits; Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, and Openness/Intellect, and is often examined in terms of gender differences. Although, the five-factor model is not designed to measure dysfunction, certain personality traits appear to be related to marital dissatisfaction, (Berns, S., Christensen, A., Gattis, K.S., & Simpson, L.E., 2004). In a study that used the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI), (as cited in Altmann, T., Roth, M., & Sierau, S., 2013) Watson et al. (2000a) found that low values on neuroticism and moderate to high values on the other four Big Five dimensions (extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) predicted marital satisfaction. Highly satisfied males were significantly more warm, conscientious, bold, conservative, group oriented and controlled than unhappy male’s (Noll, D.A., 1994). Extraversion relates to positive emotionality, sociability, and assertiveness. While males tend to be more extroverted than females in stable marriages, males’ marital satisfaction tends to be associated with lower levels of their own extroversion, (Levenson, R.W & Shiota, M.N., 2007; Noll, D.A., 1994). Agreeableness relates to altruism and includes individuals who are more empathetic. Individuals who score high on agreeableness tend to act considerate towards others, cooperate, and maintain

social harmony. Conscientiousness involves active self-discipline, awareness, concern, and meticulousness. Agreeableness and conscientiousness appear to have positive relationships and increase marital satisfaction with both males and females. Botwin et al. (1997) found that high conscientiousness in either males or females was associated with higher levels of marital satisfaction, (as cited in Berns, S., Christensen, A., Gattis, K.S., & Simpson, L.E., (2004). Singh et al. (1976) found that satisfied males are more tender minded, or sensitive, and less apprehensive, intense, (as cited in Noll, D.A., 1994).

Pervious results from a study that used the 16PF, found that individuals in relationships with similar traits reported more stability and satisfaction in their marriage, (Kim et al., 1989, as cited in Mada, R., 2016). The traits that were found included intelligence, guilt proneness, dominance, ego strength, and self-concept control. Couples who appeared balanced in personality and abstract thinkers reported higher levels of satisfaction. Notably, persons whose traits also included being tender-minded, trusting of each other, accepting of others and enthusiastic reported greater marriage stability and satisfaction (Kim et al., 1989 as cited in Mada, R., 2016). Noll, D.A. studied 20 couples who reported marital dissatisfaction and 20 others who reported marital satisfaction by administering Cattell's 16PF questionnaire. The satisfied males' scores on the scale of apprehensiveness indicated that they tended to be self-assured, secure, guilt free, untroubled and satisfied with themselves, whereas the dissatisfied males tend to be more guilt prone, self-blaming, insecure and worrying. The satisfied males

scores on the scale of tenseness indicated that they tended to be relaxed, tranquil, and composed, whereas the unsatisfied males tend to be more frustrated and overwrought. A previous study by Kim et al., 1989, used the 16PF as the primary instrument, instead of the Big Five and found that individuals in relationships with similar source traits reported more marital stability and satisfying marriages. These traits included intelligence, guilt proneness, dominance, ego strength, and self-concept control. Couples who appeared more balanced in personality and abstract thinkers reported higher levels of satisfaction. Further, individuals whose traits included similarities in tender-mindedness, trusting each other, accepting of others and enthusiastic reported greater marriage stability and satisfaction, (as cited in Mada, R., 2016). The research is clear that marital satisfaction is most highly correlated with similarity in personality, specifically for conscientiousness and intellect/openness and for agreeableness and openness, (as cited in Mada, R., 2016). The relationship between match on extraversion and marital satisfaction has not been extensively studied. Males who experience their wives as warm, outgoing, and attentive reported marital satisfaction. This finding suggests that males in the study seemed to be the beneficiaries of the interpersonal warmth emanating from their wives, (Cattell, 1989). Moreover, males that were happily married had personality traits that indicated feeling secure with themselves and minimal levels of apprehension, which is one of Dr. Cattell's components of personality. Highly satisfied males in marriage were significantly more warm, conscientious,

bold, conservative, group oriented and controlled.

Marital Dissatisfaction and Personality Similarity. Within the Big Five personality domains, neuroticism is defined as the tendency to experience negative emotionality. Individuals with high levels of neuroticism react quickly when faced with threat. Neuroticism "is the primary personality factor responsible for dissatisfied or failed marriages according to most researchers, (Noll, D.A., 1994). Regarding gender effects, males have been found to be less satisfied in their marriage when the female is high in neuroticism. The male's impulsiveness, neuroticism of both spouses, low extraversion in males, and low agreeableness in males are predictors of negative marital outcomes, (Conley, J.J. & Kelly, E.L., 1987). In previous research, neuroticism and extraversion are associated with low marital satisfaction, whereas openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness tend to be positively associated with marital satisfaction and well-being, (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly, E.L. & Conley, 1987; Kosek, 1996; Robins, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2000) as cited in Berns, S., Christensen, A., Gattis, K.S., & Simpson, L.E., (2004). Anxiety is related to neuroticism and in Noll's study, the findings concluded dissatisfied males' scores indicated that they were significantly more insecure and apprehensive than males from satisfied marriages. High levels of neuroticism on either partner could result in dysfunctional behavior exchanges in distressed couples. When individuals respond in a neurotic way, they are over-reacting to external stimuli. A great deal of previous research has shown that if one partner in the relationship has a

tendency to react with neuroticism, there is marital dissatisfaction. E.L. Kelly and Conley (1987) found that high extraversion in males, but not females, predicted divorce, (as cited in Berns, S., Christensen, A., Gattis, K.S., & Simpson, L.E., (2004). E.L. Kelly and Conley (1987) found that low agreeableness with males, but not females was associated with divorce. In a study that used the 16PF as a measure found that males who are more bold and tough-minded tended to be married to females who were dissatisfied in their marriage resulting in marital dissatisfaction for each partner, (Noll, D.A., 1994). Dissatisfied males indicated they were more insecure and apprehensive, (Noll, D.A., 1994). This is important to note since apprehension, or guilt proneness, is one of the important components of Cattell's second order factor of anxiety, (Noll, D.A., 1994).

Relationship Adjustment and Marital Satisfaction

The concept of marital and relationship adjustment has been a predominant factor in research contributing to marital satisfaction, (Moore, K.M., 2015). Marital adjustment appears to improve over the years when certain behaviors are performed. Gottman found that behaviors, such as, low levels of stress in the couple's daily conversation, awareness of where their spouse is during the day, offering affection with forgiveness, going on a weekly date, and expressing appreciation at least once daily contribute to marital satisfaction, (Duncan, G.D., 2008). Further, relationship adjustment is defined as adapting to the partner's behaviors, desires, and needs. Knabb and Vogt (2011) found that personality traits not only affect a person's own marital adjustment but also

contribute to their partners, (as cited in Moore, K.M., 2015). Relationship adjustment includes the ability to manage emotions, accept compromise, and use effective communication skills. Murstein (1986) developed a three-stage theory of marital choice, considering the stimulus-value-role. This theory postulates that intimate relationships develop from first encounters through progressive stages. For instance, the factors in the progressive stages include, value satisfaction, values appreciated through verbal interaction, and the ability of the couple to function in mutually assigned roles. Thus, Murstein found that stimuli, values, and roles contribute to marital adjustment, (Duncan, G.D., 2008).

Marital Therapy and Marital Satisfaction

Christensen, A., Doss, B.D., and Simpson, L. E. (2004) did a study on why couples initially seek marital counseling and results indicated the most common problems include interpersonal difficulties, especially communication problems and lack of emotional affection. Couples therapy patient satisfaction or “success” rates are discouragingly low, (Solomon, S.D. & Teagno, L.J., 2012). Gottman acknowledged that the way couples deal with their conflict is more significant than the couples actual problems. Emotionally focused couples therapy helps establish or re-establish emotional safety and a secure bond, (Buss, J. & Weiss-Wisdom, D., 2012). When individuals feel understood, protected, trusted, and safe by their partner, they have ability to grow together. Emotionally focused therapy offers a theory of love that provides a guidance to couples regarding the power of their emotions.

factors affecting males in marital therapy. Establishing a safe and secure bond entails use of emotional affection. The traditional male gender role tends to restrict male's openness to the therapy process, as the majority tend to lack the skill of emotional self-awareness. It has generally been found that males are reluctant to engage in marital therapy. Overall, they have been found to have a lack of awareness of problems within the marriage, which increases their reluctance to attend and can be generally discouraging. Masculine identity includes qualities such as success, self-reliance, and aggressiveness among others. Masculine role conflict, as discussed by Good and Sherrod (1989), referred to the amount of strain that males encounter in their attempts to live up to the standards of society increasing distress experienced that leads to emotional restriction, (as cited in McCarthy, J. & Holliday, E.L. (2004). However, these results do not apply to all men. Doss, Atkins, and Christensen (2003) offer a detailed analysis of male's tendencies to "drag their feet" in seeking therapy, (as cited by Adams, J. & Moynehan, J., 2007). They completed a study and found that the three steps that cause problems for males in marital therapy are recognizing problems, considering treatment, and seeking treatment. Males have reluctance on awareness of the problem, making them emotionally unsophisticated. With that said, males do not see the need for change and feel as if they are being persuaded to attend marital therapy. Such reluctance is thought to impair any future progress, increase marital satisfaction for the male partner, and limits to the long-term effectiveness, Doss et al., 2003, (as cited by Adams,

J. & Moynehan, J., 2007). However, the study did find that once males were able to engage in the therapy process, they are just as likely to benefit from therapy as females.

addressing males in marital therapy. In addressing the counseling needs of adult males, therapists need to be aware of the gender discrepancy. Good, Dell, and Mintz (1989) proposed that adherence to the male gender role may be a source of hesitation in using mental health services and later found a correlation between the male gender role and their attitudes. The authors concluded, as the males' values regarding the male role became less traditional, their view on therapy became more positive. These researchers have suggested that to increase the likelihood of a male feeling comfortable to attend therapy, the therapist should not try to change the individual to feel comfortable in a therapeutic environment, rather, change the environment to decrease the thoughts associated with lowered masculinity.

Demographics and Marital Satisfaction

Studies have repeatedly found that similarity between couples in domains such as Socio-economic status, educational background, age, ethnicity, religion, physical attractiveness, intelligence, attitudes and values predicts higher levels of marital satisfaction and lower likelihood of separation and divorce. The rationale for studying marital satisfaction stems from the well-being of the individual and the family and for the need to develop strong interventions to prevent marital distress. There are multiple factors that differ

across cultures. As for the United States, Shek (1998) noticed that the parents and children's view of family functioning was related to marital life satisfaction and self-esteem, (as cited in Alfons, V. & Jose, O., 2007).

number of years of marriage and children. There have been mixed findings in research on the length of time in marriage and marital satisfaction. A study conducted by Jose and Alfons (2007) reported findings of intact (first) marriages to decline in the level of satisfaction compared to re-married adults. Similarly, first-married adults had a higher rate of adjustment problems. In the late years, almost 30-years of marriage, there is a decline in the marital adjustment problems, increasing marital satisfaction. The absence of children has a positive effect on marital happiness. Researchers have noted the "empty-nest" stage in adult life has a significant effect on marital satisfaction. The number of children and length of marriage in Jose and Alfons (2007) study indicated a significant positive correlation with marital and sexual adjustment problems. However, number of children and length of marriage had a positive correlation with general life adjustment, Gottman, Levenson, & Cartensen (1993).

Age. Similarity in conscientiousness was significantly associated with middle-aged couples with more negative marital satisfaction. Lehrer found that increased age at marriage has a strong effect on the success of the marriage until the late twenties and then the effects tend to level off as they are counterbalanced by the increased likelihood of settling for bad matches. Jose

and Alfons (2007) found that age has a significant negative effect on the sexual adjustment and marital adjustment of the first-married adults. Middle-aged adults seem to have a greater difficulty with adjusting than young or elderly adults on this current study.

16PF Report

The 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) is a psychological assessment of 16 personality characteristics and five global factors of personality. The assessment includes 185 multiple choice questions to assess an individual's personality. This assessment is non-clinical nature. It is published by the Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, Inc. (IPAT) and can be used in settings where there is no concern for a clinical personality disorder. Dr. Raymond Cattell published the first edition of the 16PF Questionnaire in 1949. In the decades since, more than 2,700 peer-reviewed research articles have authenticated the tool. The current edition has been enhanced and updated and is available in more than 20 languages. The 185 multiple-choice questions take approximately 30 minutes to complete and are designed to comply with Enforcement Guidance (EEOC) requirements.

The 16PF measures 16 different traits that influence the way an individual interacts with others. These 16 traits include Warmth (A), Reasoning (B), Emotional Stability (C), Dominance (E), Liveliness (F), Rule-Consciousness (G), Social Boldness (H), Sensitivity (I), Vigilance (L), Abstractedness (M), Privatness (N), Apprehension (O), Openness to Change (Q1), Self-Reliance (Q2),

Perfectionism (Q3), and Tension (Q4). Each of the 16 personality traits measured by the 16PF are divided, such that they have two opposing definitions for each dimension of personality. Each trait is scored on a 10-point scale with scores of one to three being attributed to the definition of the trait on the left side and scores eight to ten being attributed to the definition of the trait on the right side. Scores of four through seven are considered “average” and suggest that this trait is not strongly fixed to the individual.

These 16 traits are grouped together into five global factors, which is considered “The Big Five.” “The Big Five” includes extraversion, tough mindedness, self-control, anxiety, and independence. The 16PF also includes three Response Style Indices that assess the reliability and validity of an individual’s responses. These indices include Impression Management (responding in a socially desirable manner), Infrequency (random responding), and Acquiescence (agreement with all-true or all-false responses). Finally, the 16PF inquires about demographic variables, such as level of education, ethnicity, household income, and current employment status.

The 16PF Couple’s Counseling Report

The 16PF Couple’s Counseling Report (16PF CCR) was specifically designed to compare couple’s personality traits. This assessment helps identify where the couple is experiencing significant differences in their personality and helps to determine if the difference is causing distress. The 16PF CCR includes a Relationship Satisfaction Rating section that the 16PF alone does not. In this area,

there are eleven areas of satisfaction on a nine-point scale of totally satisfied to totally unsatisfied, including Alcohol or Drug Use, Division of Roles, Time Together, Children, Sex, Extended Family, Caring and Affection, Finances, and Communication, overall Marital Satisfaction, and a presumption of the partner's overall satisfaction. The 16PF CCR includes two additional scores on a scale of 1 to 10. The Personality Similarity score calculates the similar personality factors of couples to develop a score from 1 (low similarity) to 10 (high similarity). Also, the Relationship Adjustment score for each partner uses individual personality factors of Emotional Stability (C), and Openness to Change (Q1) to calculate a score from 1 (low adjustment) to 10 (high adjustment). This score suggests the couple's adaptability.

In marital therapy, the 16PF Couple's Counseling Report is a non-clinical assessment of personality features, areas of marital satisfaction, relationship adjustment, and personality similarity. Due to the extensive nature of this measure, it unfolds difficult, problematic areas that are likely to take long periods of time in therapeutic counseling sessions. By using this measure, awareness to behaviors is identified and opens communication for discussion. To further enhance the usefulness of the 16PF CCR, Jones (1976) suggests having partners also complete 16PF CCR in terms of their perception of the others partner's view of him/herself (the test-taker) to more clearly identify the behaviors that are causing inconsistencies and miscommunications. Furthermore, Jones (1976) notes that

basic research on the personality dynamics that contribute to successful marital relationships is insufficient and greatly needed.

Replicated Doctoral Research Projects

The present study will be investigating the predictors of marital satisfaction, personality similarity and relationship adjustment of males in marital therapy. This is a replicated study from previous Doctoral Research Projects. The previous dissertations found that the overall satisfaction level of couples were positively correlated with levels of emotional stability. Results found that individual satisfaction areas contributed to marital satisfaction and the overall level of satisfaction was explained by the amount of time together, finances, and caring and affection in both males and females, (Weinstein Arnett, S.M., 2008 & Field, S.L., 2013). Regarding only the male population, Garofalo, A. 2014, found that males endorsed significantly more overall marital satisfaction and are significantly more satisfied than females on the individual satisfaction items including division of roles, finances, and caring and affection. Further, a previous dissertation that focused on gay and lesbian couples found that emotional reactivity was related to poor adjustment, (Shah, K.B., 2009).

Results from a study with the focus on marital satisfaction among male combat veterans following deployment found a significant relationship between overall marital satisfaction, three individual satisfaction areas, personality, and openness to change, (Moore, K.M., 2015). Regarding female combat veterans following deployment, Mulholland, M.F., (2015) found that there is a positive

significant relationship between overall personality similarity and the individual satisfaction areas of emotional stability, openness to change, and social boldness. Regarding the gender differences among male and female veterans following deployment, Alexander, D., (2015), found that combat deployed males rated themselves higher in dominance and social boldness while combat deployed females rated themselves higher in abstract reasoning. Combat deployed males also rated themselves as more independent than combat deployed females. Overall, the previous dissertations found similar findings regarding marital satisfaction and emotional stability, as well as similar personality similarity and individual satisfaction areas. Further, these previous findings are beneficial to our future research, however, this present study is focusing on the male clinical population in marital therapy to see what the predictors are of marital satisfaction, personality similarity, and relationship adjustment and results are to be determined after analysis.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research is to clarify the factors that contribute to and affect marital satisfaction and relationship adjustment among males in marital therapy. Also, contributing to the limited research on males in marital therapy will increase understanding of unique factors that influence personality characteristics and their impact on marital satisfaction. Increased knowledge of the inherent and extrinsic factors that affect an individual's likelihood for relationship satisfaction will assist in marital therapy. Specifically, awareness of

personality domains that contribute to marital dissatisfaction can direct individuals toward behaviors that lead to satisfaction. Furthermore, understanding how demographic factors contribute to the awareness of risks and benefits of marital satisfaction or dissolution can allow for preventative measures. Finally, knowledge on male personalities and satisfaction in specific life areas that contribute to overall satisfaction can help marital therapists understand how to effectively work with the male population. Overall, this research should assist with identifying a variety of factors that contribute to satisfied and dissatisfied males in marital therapy.

Hypotheses

Based on the findings from the literature, the following hypothesis are proposed:

1. A significant relationship between overall Marital Satisfaction scores and nine individual item Satisfaction scores will exist.
2. There will be a significant relationship between overall Marital Satisfaction score and the sixteen Primary Personality Factors.
3. There will be a significant relationship between the Personality Similarity Score and the sixteen Primary Personality Factors.
4. There will be a significant relationship between the Relationship Adjustment Scores and the sixteen Personality Factors.

5. There will be no significant relationship between the scores on the overall Marital Satisfaction scores, Personality Similarity scores, and Relationship Adjustment scores.
6. There will be a significant relationship between demographic variables of length of relationship, children, and marital satisfaction.

Method

Participants

All data used for the current research were archival from the office of Richard T. Elmore, Jr., Ph.D. Participants for this research entered marital therapy and completed the 16PF CCR as an introductory requirement for treatment. To control for variables related to gender and sexuality, only heterosexual males were analyzed. The sample includes 82 males.

Instruments/Measures

The 16 Personality Factor Couples Counseling Report Questionnaire (16PF CCR), a non-clinical personality measure, was utilized for this research. For all participants, the 16PF CCR was a required introductory component for marital therapy. Because age is not calculated on the 16PF CCR, the demographic forms were completed to obtain accurate demographic data.

Design/Plan of Analysis

There is a significant amount of information and variables to be analyzed in this research, so it was perceived as an exploratory analysis. Multiple

regression, analysis of variance, independent t-test, and Pearson correlation analyses were used to test the hypotheses.

Procedure

Approval from the Florida Institute of Technology Institutional Review Board was obtained prior to data collection. Participants were recruited from a private practice. Participants were instructed to complete the informed consent form, demographic form, and 16PF CRR. Participants were provided with the 16PF CCR test booklet and answer sheets during their marital therapy intake. They were instructed to complete the 16PF CCR independent from their spouses. Once the testing was completed by both members of the couple, they were asked if they would like to receive the feedback regarding awareness of personality factors and how they may interfere with certain areas of functioning and satisfaction.

Results

Descriptive Frequencies

Personality factor scale descriptions can be found in Table 1. The descriptive frequencies and statistics of the sample demographics are displayed in Table 2 and Table 3. A total of 80 males completed the 16PF CCR. Majority of the sample identified as Caucasian/White (78.0%), 11.0% endorsing as Hispanic or Latino/Latina, 6.1% identifying as African/American/Black, 3.7% endorsing as (“other”) race, and 1.2% identifying as Native American. Of the 80 participants, much of the sample also endorsed that they were married or

assumed the responsibilities and commitment of marriage (62.2%), while 20.7% were cohabitating, 11.0% were separated, 4.9% were engaged, and 1.2% were divorcing or divorced. For relationship length, 19.5% of the males had been with their current partner for 0 to 2 years, 22.0% were in the current relationship for 3 to 7 years, 18.3% were together for 8 to 14 years, 20.7% had been together for 15-25 years, and 19.5% has been in the present relationship for 25 years or longer. For most of the males, the present relationship was their first (36.6%) or second (35.4%) committed relationship. This was the third commitment for 22.0% of the males, fourth commitment for 4.9%, and fifth or more for 1.2%.

In terms of education, 24.4% had their Associate's or Technical degree, 22.0% completed high school or GED, 20.7% had a graduate degree, 20.7% had their Bachelor's degree, 9.8% had some graduate-level coursework without a degree, and 2.4% of the males endorsed their highest level of education as grade school. Regarding occupation, much of the males worked full-time (56.1%), were retired (26.8%), worked part-time (6.1%), while others were unemployed (4.9%), identified with ("other") line of work (3.7%), or reported they were the homemaker (2.4%). For income, 1.2% of males made \$0 to \$9,999, 2.4% made \$10,000 to \$19,999, 7.3% made \$20,000 to \$39,999, 11.0% made between \$40,000 to \$59,999, 20.7% made between \$60,000 and \$79,999, and 56.1% made \$80,000 or more. Regarding children, majority of the males had children (74.4%) and (20.7%) did not have children.

Hypothesis 1

This study hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between the overall Marital Satisfaction scores and the nine individual item Satisfaction scores. Means and standard deviations for the satisfaction areas can be found in Table 4. A multiple regression was conducted to examine the relationship between overall Marital Satisfaction scores and nine individual item satisfaction scores. When all nine predictors were entered into the model at the same time, they explained a significant amount of the variance in the overall Marital Satisfaction scores ($R^2 = .65$, $F(9,70) = 14.42$, $p < .001$). Sixty-five percent of the variance in the overall level of marital satisfaction is explained by the individual satisfaction areas all together. This hypothesis was supported, with two of the individual satisfaction items being significant predictors of overall Marital Satisfaction scores. Both Time Together ($b = .288$, $p < .001$) and Problem-Solving Communication ($b = .301$, $p < .001$) were significant predictors of perceived marital satisfaction and can be found in Table 5.

Hypothesis 2

For the present study, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between the overall Marital Satisfaction score and the 16 Primary Personality Factors. Means and standard deviations for the personality factors can be found in Table 6 and Table 7. A multiple regression analysis was calculated to examine if the 16 Primary Personality Factors predicted overall marital satisfaction. The overall model can be found in Table 8 and was not

significant, therefore, the hypothesis was not supported, ($R^2 = .23$, $F(16,65) = 1.23$, $p = .273$).

Hypothesis 3

It was hypothesized that this study would find a significant relationship between the Personality Similarity scores and the 16 Primary Personality Factors. The hypothesis was not supported; the means and standard deviations of Personality scores can be found in Table 9. A multiple regression analysis was calculated to analyze the relationship between the Personality Similarity scores and the 16 Primary Personality Factors, and the model was not significant ($R^2 = .19$, $F(16,65) = .95$, $p = .518$).

Hypothesis 4

For the present study, it was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between the Relationship Adjustment scores and the 16 Primary Personality Factors. The hypothesis was supported. A multiple regression analysis was calculated to analyze the relationship between the Relationship Adjustment scores and the 16 Primary Personality Factors, the relationships can be found in Table 10. This model supports the notion that emotional stability, rule consciousness, lowered levels of apprehension, and openness to change contribute to relationship adjustment for males in marital therapy. The model was significant ($R^2 = .831$, $F(16,64) = 19.61$, $p < .001$). Eighty-three percent of the variance in relationship adjustment was accounted for by the 16 primary personality factors all together. Four personality traits were significant

predictors of relationship adjustment, including Emotional Stability ($b = .871, p < .001$), Rule Consciousness ($b = .168, p < .05$), a negative relationship with Apprehension ($b = .215, p < .01$), and Openness to Change ($b = .261, p < .001$).

Hypothesis 5

For the present study, it was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference among the scores on the overall Marital Satisfaction scores, Personality Similarity score, and Relationship Adjustment scores. This hypothesis was not supported, as there was a significant relationship between two of the variables. A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationship among scores of Overall Marital Satisfaction ($M = 5.21, SD = 2.254$), Personality Similarity ($M = 6.83, SD = 2.142$), and Relationship Adjustment ($M = 4.46, SD = 1.924$). There was a significant, weak positive relationship between Overall Marital Satisfaction and Relationship Adjustment, $r(81) = .230, p < .05$, indicating the higher relationship adjustment is associated with greater overall marital satisfaction. There was also a significant relationship between Overall Marital Satisfaction and Personality Similarity, $r(82) = .225, p < .05$, however, there was no significant relationship between Personality Similarity and Relationship Adjustment. This relationship can be found in Table 11.

Hypothesis 6

Analyses were conducted to explore relationships between overall Marital Satisfaction and various demographic variables. The demographic variables that

were analyzed include length of relationship and existence of children.

length of relationship. A one-way analysis of variance was utilized to compare the length of relationship and overall Marital Satisfaction ratings. Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 12. For overall Marital Satisfaction, there was a significant effect due to the length of relationship, $F(4, 77) = 3.64, p = .009$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test ($p = .05$) indicated that males who had been in a relationship for 0 to 2 years ($M = 6.56, SD = 1.63$) were significantly more satisfied overall compared to males who were in a relationship for 8 to 14 years ($M = 4.33, SD = 2.06$). Males who had been in a relationship for 0 to 2 years were also significantly more satisfied overall compared to males who were in a relationship for 25 years or more, ($M = 4.44, SD = 2.34$). This relationship can be found in Table 13.

children. To correct for unequal group sizes, two groups were created to identify whether one had a child or not, regardless of whether the child lived in the home, whether it was the partner's child from a previous relationship, the individual's partner from a previous relationship, or a child with the current partner. An independent t-test was calculated to compare overall Marital Satisfaction mean score differences between males who have children to those who do not. The analysis revealed no significant difference in the overall Marital Satisfaction scores for males who have children ($M = 5.23, SD = 2.11$) and males who do not ($M = 4.88, SD = 2.64$). Means and standard deviations can be found in Table 14. Thus, there is no significant impact regarding the existence of

children on overall Marital Satisfaction, $t(76) = .062, p > .05$.

Discussion

The present study investigated the predictors of overall marital satisfaction, personality similarity between partners, and relationship adjustment among males who engaged in marital therapy. With a limited clinical research base on couple's therapy and relationship dynamics, this study aimed to serve as a launch pad for future research using the 16PF CCR in couple's therapy. Multiple significant findings from this study can be added to an otherwise limited research base, while even the non-significant results can be continued sources for further study. The following includes a review and discussion of the results, limitations of the present study, and areas for future research.

For males in couple's therapy, the most significant satisfaction factors that are positively related to overall satisfaction include time together and problem-solving communication, respectively. This is commensurate with some of the literature, explaining that overall level of negative communication in the first five years of marriage is a leading cause to potential divorce. The findings show that the quality of communication is an important factor in determining the course of a couple's relationship over time, Markman, Ragan, Rhoades, Stanley, and Whitton (2010). In 2011, DeFrain, J., Skogrand, L., and Tulane, S.'s studied couples with a strong marriage who considered divorce pertaining to poor communication, which eventually lead to other problematic areas such as infidelity.

In the present study, males perceived problem-solving communication and time-together with overall Marital Satisfaction, which is consistent with the findings from previous literature. Previous research on time spent together by Amato & Previti, 2003; Gigy & Kelly, 1992; Ponzetti et al., 1992, found that physical separation or loss of closeness is a factor that leads to divorce.

In terms of personality factors, there were no significant findings related to Marital Satisfaction among the 16 Primary Personality Factors of the 16PF CCR. This along with previous DRP's suggests that, of the 16PF CCR personality factors, no personality trait is related to or predictive of satisfaction within a marriage, (Moore, 2015). The literature is comparatively weak determining personality variables in relation to overall marital satisfaction (Barton & Cattell, 1972). Future studies with different personality measures should be conducted with use of a personality measure other than the 16PF CCR.

For males in couple's therapy, in terms of the personality similarity scores and the 16 primary personality factors, there was no significance. In the present study, there was no relationship found between an individual's personality traits and his similarity score (i.e. how similar he is to his partner). On the contrary, previous research has suggested that individuals in relationships with similar traits reported more stability and satisfaction in their marriage, (Kim et al., 1989, as cited in Mada, R., 2016). The traits that were found included intelligence, guilt proneness, dominance, ego strength, and self-concept control, however, this research is limited. This study also revealed that there were no personality

characteristic differences between males and females. This may indicate that couples have a better chance of finding their marriage satisfactory if spouses have similar source traits. Further, couples may be more satisfied if the spouse is not extreme in his or her personality traits. Thus, the study seems to indicate that choosing a partner with similar personality traits may minimize selection of a "wrong" partner, (Martin, D., Martin, M., & Kim, A., 1989).

The Relationship Adjustment Score is statistically derived from the 16PF Primary Personality Factors of Factor C (Emotional Stability) and (Factor Q1) Openness to Change, therefore, it is not unexpected that Openness to Change and Emotional Stability were related to relationship adjustment in the present study. There is a considerable lack of literature on relationship adjustment from which to compare to the present findings. High scores on Openness to Change define an individual who is looking to improve operations, they enjoy improving new and better ways of operating. Moreover, low scorers prefer a familiar and predictable life. Emotional Stability is equivalent to an individual's ego strength; therefore, it is hypothesized that those who have low scores on ego-strength are more susceptible to psychological problems, symptoms, and adjustment problems integrating direct implications for the stability to the relationship. Those with higher scores on Emotional Stability have been found to regulate their emotions in a balanced and adaptive manner. Ability to balance emotions is an essential component to maintain one's own viewpoint and emotions, while accepting and compromising with their partner's differences. Interestingly, there was a positive

relationship between Factor G (Rule-Consciousness) and Relationship Adjustment. The Rule-Consciousness can be explained by the ability to follow the rules and similarly behave in expected ways by one's partner, which in turn, allows for greater relationship adjustment. Further, this can also be explained by respecting the values of one's rules. Additionally, there was a negative relationship between Factor O (Apprehension) and Relationship Adjustment. It might be expected that when an individual displays low levels of apprehension such as, little self-doubt, less likely to feel worry, little discomfort, feelings of guilt, and reactions to criticism, they are likely to be more able to adapt to the relationship, presenting with self-assured traits, unworried, and complacent behavior. When the individual experiences low apprehension, their relationship adjustment is high, suggesting that males have a higher relationship adjustment when they have low levels of apprehension. With consideration to the findings, the negative correlation is directly consistent with previous research. Noll (1994) found that dissatisfied males indicated they were more insecure experiencing apprehensive feelings. This is important to note since apprehension, or guilt proneness, is one of the important components of Cattell's second order factor of anxiety, (Noll, D.A., 1994). These findings are assumptions based on beliefs and observations and more research regarding these variables is recommended to analyze relationship adjustment with these factors.

The present study provided support for a positive relationship between Relationship Adjustment and Marital Satisfaction. This is comparable with the

literature, as this suggests that those highly satisfied in their relationship are well adjusted within their relationship.

There was also a positive relationship between Personality Similarity and Marital Satisfaction, supporting that males who have an increased ability to adjust and adapt in their relationships are likely to have more similarity to their partners. In previous literature, this is controversial. Some research had difficulty identifying which characteristics led to satisfaction, (Caughlin et al., 2000; Gattis et al., 2004; Kim et al., 1989; Rosowsky et al., 2012; Shiota & Levenson, 2007), as cited in Mada, R. 2016). Other researchers concluded there was an effect which supported dissatisfaction. Researchers Kim, Martin, and Martin (1989) found that certain personality traits played an essential role in marital satisfaction using the primary instrument, the 16PF. Highly satisfied males were significantly more warm, conscientious, bold, conservative, group oriented and controlled than unhappy males (Noll, D.A., 1994). Extraversion relates to positive emotionality, sociability, and assertiveness. While males tend to be more extroverted than females in stable marriages, males' marital satisfaction tends to be associated with lower levels of their own extroversion, (Levenson, R.W and Shiota, M.N., 2007; Noll, D.A., 1994).

In consideration of the demographic variables and overall marital satisfaction, the existence of children does not impact a male's overall satisfaction in a relationship in the present study. This finding is inconsistent with previous literature. Blum and Mehrabian (1999) found that the impact of children tends to

be a more complicated relationship, as relationship satisfaction has been found to fluctuate depending on age of children, number of children, and the period close to the birth of a child and when the child leaves the home. Additionally, they also found that the existence of children produced greater stress levels and as a result, marital satisfaction decreased over-time in studies with men and women.

Moreover, Gottman, Levenson, and Cartensen (1993) provided literature on the number of children and length of marriage with general life adjustment that effects marital satisfaction. To merely identify the existence of children does not allow for investigation of the meaningful impact of children on a relationship and therefore future studies with a larger sample size may prove beneficial to analyze this relationship, perhaps women are more affected by children than men.

The Length of the Relationship is related to Overall Marital Satisfaction with findings suggesting that males involved in a 0-2-year relationship have increased satisfaction than 8-14 years and 25 or more years, suggesting that male's overall satisfaction decreases over time. In the late years, almost 30-years of marriage, there is a decline in the marital adjustment problems, increasing marital satisfaction, (Alfons 2007). However, without further categorization of the demographic factors on the 16PF CCR, this pattern was inconsistent with the present study's findings. The previous findings suggest that men are more satisfied in the first two years of the relationship, however, the satisfaction has shown a decrease between 8-14 years and 25 years or more. This is inconsistent

because this research does not suggest that after a long-period of time within the marriage, the male's satisfaction starts to increase again.

The limitations of this present study are related to the variables measured. The first limitation is based on the recruitment of the participants. All participants entered voluntarily marital therapy, likely experiencing marital distress and/or dissatisfaction prior to completing this assessment. Literature on males in couples counseling and overall marital satisfaction, personality similarities, and relationship adjustment is limited. Therefore, there is a strong need for future research focusing on overall marital satisfaction, personality similarity, and relationship adjustment to understand more about couples and how these factors influence each other. An additional limitation in the present study is the focus on the male population, rather than the couple, therefore, it is possible that the interactions between the two individuals may have a stronger impact on the dependent variables. There is also a limitation in research between couples from a clinical and non-clinical population.

The assessment of the male may also prove to be a limitation of the study, as a responder bias must be considered. A male who agrees or chooses to participate in marital therapy, likely identifies with experiencing marital conflict. This is taken as the benefit of participating in gaining knowledge about one's own marriage. Previous literature has supported the reluctance of male's participation and engagement in marital therapy, therefore, understanding the traits that contribute to engagement in participation in this present study should be

considered. Males have been found to have a lack of awareness of problems within the marriage, which increases their reluctance to attend and can be generally discouraging. Masculine identity including qualities such as success, self-reliance, and aggressiveness among others also contribute to reluctance to attend marital therapy. This is a limitation, in such, that the traditional male gender role tends to restrict male's openness to the therapy process with a tendency to show inadequacy in emotional self-awareness, leading to further problems. Moreover, the failure to consider and examine the interactions and behaviors of the couple and the relationship does not provide an understanding of the dynamics. The interactions may yield significant influence on the dependent variables more so than the individual's independent variables.

Also consider some individuals are reluctant and hesitant to endorse extremes, including always and never, which may affect the results. Some people are likely to try to obtain a score they perceive as "good," to present themselves in a positive light, due to a fear of being judged. As the literature has pointed out, assessing overall marital satisfaction is difficult. It is not only the individuals that factor in, but rather the system that is being analyzed plays a major role as well.

Clinical Implications and Directions for Future Research

Although the literature has limitations; the present study provides understanding on the male population in marital therapy when factoring in personality that predicts overall satisfaction and adjustment in the relationship. Incorporating these known variables into a marriage can provide couples with a

better understanding of each other's personality, increasing insight into each other's needs, and working to make compromises based on knowledge of the other partner. The present study's significance can help prepare and maintain marital outcomes. As Markman, Ragan, Rhoades, Stanley, and Whitton (2010) explained that divorce is associated with premarital communication quality. They found that the overall level of negative communication in the first five years of marriage is a leading cause to potential divorce. The understanding and knowledge of the partner's personality found in this study can contribute to opening the door for communicating needs and expectations, increasing adjustment in the relationship, and leading to overall satisfaction.

Overall, future research in the areas related to satisfaction and adjustment is needed to help determine factors that contribute to overall satisfaction with couples. Moreover, clinical studies are also scarce, providing limited research on other mental health factors as well. The present study findings could also be strengthened in future research by comparing heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual outcomes. This would provide more information regarding the different dynamics among sexually diverse individuals. Future research related to these specific populations should focus on increasing participant numbers and looking at the difference in divorce rates after treatment is implemented over a length of time. Additionally, possible options to adjust for the previous limitations include educating the males on the therapeutic process, as well as the therapists approach to treatment. Regardless, all findings, significant and otherwise, are a positive contribution to the

sparse quality and quantity of clinical research involving couple's therapy, and more so, on the extremely limited research related to the male population.

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Table 1
Personality Factor Scale Descriptions

Factor	Lower Scores (1 - 3)	Higher Scores (8 - 10)
A: Warmth	Reserved, Impersonal, Distant	Warm, Outgoing, Attentive to Others
B: Reasoning	Concrete	Abstract
C: Emotional Stability	Reactive, Emotionally Changeable	Emotionally Stable, Adaptive, Mature
E: Dominance	Deferential, Cooperative, Avoids Conflict	Dominant, Forceful, Assertive
F: Liveliness	Serious, Restrained, Careful	Lively, Animated, Spontaneous
G: Rule-Consciousness	Expedient, Nonconforming	Rule-conscious, Dutiful
H: Social Boldness	Shy, Threat-sensitive, Timid	Socially Bold, Thick-skinned, Venturesome
I: Sensitivity	Utilitarian, Objective, Unsentimental	Sensitive, Aesthetic, Sentimental
L: Vigilance	Trusting, Unsuspecting, Accepting	Vigilant, Suspicious, Skeptical, Wary
M: Abstractedness	Grounded, Practical, Solution-focused	Abstracted, Idea-oriented, Imaginative
N: Privatness	Forthright, Genuine, Artless	Private, Discreet, Non-disclosing
O: Apprehension	Self-assured, Unworried, Complacent	Apprehensive, Self-doubting, Worried
Q1: Openness to Change	Traditional, Attached to Familiar	Open to Change, Experimenting
Q2: Self-Reliance	Group-oriented, Affiliative	Self-reliant, Solitary, Individualistic
Q3: Perfectionism	Tolerated Disorder, Unexacting, Flexible	Perfectionistic, Organized, Controlled
Q4: Tension	Relaxed, Placid, Patient	Tense, High Energy, Impatient, Driven
EX: Extraversion	Introverted	Extroverted
AX: Anxiety	Low Anxiety	High Anxiety

TM: Tough-Mindedness	Receptive, Open-Minded	Tough-Minded, Resolute
IN: Independence	Accommodating, Agreeable	Independent, Persuasive
SC: Self-Control	Unrestrained	Self-Controlled

Note: Adapted from the *16PF Couple's Counseling Report Administrator's Manual* (p.18) by M.T. Russell and D.L. Karol, 1994, Champaign, IL: The Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, Inc. Copyright by IPAT, Inc.

Table 2
Descriptive Frequencies for Males in Marital Therapy

Race	Frequency	Percent
African American	5	6.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	1.2%
Caucasian	64	78.0%
Hispanic or Latino	9	11.0%
Other	3	3.7%
Relationship Length		
0-2 years	16	19.5%
3-7 years	18	22.0%
8-14 years	15	18.3%
15-25 years	17	20.7%
25+ years	16	19.5%
Number of Past Relationships		
1	30	36.6%
2	29	35.4%
3	18	22.0%
4	4	4.9%
5+	1	1.2%
Children		
Yes	61	74.4%
No	17	20.7%
Level of Education		
Grade School	2	2.4%
High School/GED	18	22.0%
Associate's Degree	20	24.4%
Bachelor's Degree	17	20.7%

Graduate Course Work without Degree	8	9.8%
Graduate Degree	17	20.7%
Employment		
Full-time	46	56.1%
Part-time	5	6.1%
Homemaker	2	2.4%
Unemployed	4	4.9%
Retired	22	26.8%
Other	3	3.7%
Income		
\$0-9,999	1	
\$10,000-\$19,999	2	
\$20,000-\$39,999	6	
\$40,000-\$59,999	9	
\$60,000-\$79,999	17	
\$80,000+	46	

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Range
Overall Marital Satisfaction	5.21	2.25	
Personality Similarity	6.83	2.14	
Relationship Adjustment	4.46	1.92	

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics for Satisfaction Ratings

Satisfaction Area	Mean	SD
Time Together	5.30	2.39
Communication	3.90	2.31
Caring and Affection	4.90	2.45
Division of Roles	5.76	2.19
Finances	5.35	2.54
Sex	4.75	2.84
Extended Family	5.20	1.99
Children	5.88	2.29
Alcohol or Drug Use	6.68	2.33

Table 5
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Overall Marital Satisfaction Scores and 9 Individual Item Satisfaction Scores

Variable	R	R ²	SE of the Estimate	b	SE	t
Model 1	.81	.65	1.42			
Time Together				.288	.098	2.78*
Problem Solving				.301	.096	3.06*
Communication				.096	.119	.743
Caring and Affection				.095	.117	.835
Division of Roles				.066	.080	.729
Finances				.185	.077	1.90
Sex				.000	.092	.003
Extended Family				-	.076	-.207
Children				.016	.076	.695
Alcohol or Drug Use				.054		

* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for Personality Factors

Descriptive Statistics for Personality Traits for Men

Personality Trait	Mean	SD
GLOBAL		
Extraversion (EX)	4.67	2.06
Anxiety (AX)	6.50	1.87
Tough-mindedness (TM)	6.33	1.57
Independence (IN)	5.43	1.78
Self-Control (SC)	5.33	1.60

Table 7

16 Primary Personality Factors	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Overall Satisfaction Score	5.21	2.25
2. Warmth	4.56	1.61
3. Reasoning	5.11	1.67
4. Emotional Stability	4.68	1.81
5. Dominance	5.29	2.11
6. Liveliness	5.01	1.82
7. Rule-Consciousness	4.83	1.74
8. Social Boldness	5.50	2.11
9. Sensitivity	4.57	1.32
10. Vigilance	5.99	1.98
11. Abstractedness	5.52	1.58
12. Privatness	6.22	1.85
13. Apprehension	5.72	1.68
14. Openness to Change	5.28	1.72
15. Self-Reliance	6.32	2.11
16. Perfectionism	5.41	1.78
17. Tension	6.04	1.54

Table 8
Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Overall Marital Satisfaction and the 16 Primary Personality Factors

Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>SE</i> of the Estimate	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Model 1	.481	.232	2.205		3.94	.468
Warmth				-.065	8	
Reasoning				-.056		
Emotional Stability						
Dominance				.341		
Livliness				.043		
Rule-Consciousness				-.183		
Social Boldness				-.064		
Sensitivity				.032		
Vigilance				.067		
Abstractedness				.056		
Privateness				.178		
Apprehension				.080		
Openness to Change				.307		
Self-Reliance				.019		
Perfectionism				-.193		
Tension				.268		
				-.298		

p* < .01, *p* < .001.

Table 9

16 Primary Personality Scores	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Warmth	4.56	1.61
2. Reasoning	5.11	1.67
3. Emotional Stability	4.68	1.81
4. Dominance	5.29	2.11
5. Livliness	5.01	1.82
6. Rule-Consciousness	4.83	1.74
7. Social Boldness	5.50	2.11
8. Sensitivity	4.57	1.32
9. Vigilance	5.99	1.98
10. Abstractedness	5.52	1.58
11. Privatness	6.22	1.85
12. Apprehension	5.72	1.68
13. Openness to Change	5.28	1.72
14. Self-Reliance	6.32	2.11
15. Perfectionism	5.41	1.78
16. Tension	6.04	1.54

Table 10

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Relationship Adjustment Scores and the 16 Primary Personality Factors

Variable	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>SE</i> of the Estimate	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Model 1	.81	.65	1.42			
Warmth				-0.58	.087	-.797
Reasoning				-0.50	.067	-.861
Emotional Stability				.871	.075	12.403**
Dominance				-0.14	.062	-.208
Livliness				-0.11	.082	-.142
Rule-Consciousness				.168	.075	2.478*
Social Boldness				-.126	.079	-1.460
Sensitivity				.108	.088	1.785
Vigilance				-0.18	.068	-.253
Abstractedness				-0.45	.095	-.575
Privateness				-0.17	.097	-.180
Apprehension				.215	.079	3.128*
Openness to Change				.261	.076	3.835**
Self-Reliance				-.103	.076	-1.238
Perfectionism				.008	.076	.114
Tension				-.109	.084	-1.623

* $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$.

Table 11

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for All Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Overall Satisfaction Score	5.21	2.25	-		
2. Similarity Score	6.83	2.14	.225*	-	
3. Relationship Adjustment Score	4.46	1.92	.230*	-.065	-

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Overall Satisfaction = participant's overall marital satisfaction, Similarity = participant's personality similarities, Relationship Adjustment = Adjustments in relationship

Table 12

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Length of Relationship

Length of Relationship	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. 0-2	6.56	1.63
2. 3-7	5.94	2.10
3. 8-14	4.33	2.06
4. 15-25	4.65	2.37
5. 25+	4.44	2.34
Total	5.21	2.25

Table 13

One-Way Analysis of Variance of Overall Marital Satisfaction and Length of Relationship

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
Between groups	4	65.440	16.360	3.640**
Within groups	77	346.035	4.50	
Total	81	411.476		

** $p < .01$

Table 14

Children	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Yes	5.23	2.11
2. No	4.88	2.64