THE EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE OF SATISFACTION, CONFLICT, ANGER, AND VIOLENCE FOR WOMEN IN LOVE RELATIONSHIPS

DISSERTATION

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The problem of this study addressed how women experience the conflict variables of beliefs about conflict, anger arousal, conflict styles, and received and expressed violence as partners in love relationships and how these factors affect their reported satisfaction.

Graduate women (*N* = 186) from University of North Texas completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS), a subscale of Relationship Beliefs Inventory (RBI), the Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI), and Interpersonal Conflict Tactics and Strategies Scale (ICTAS), and the Severity of Violence Against Women scale (SVAW). Data were analyzed using MANOVAs with ANOVAs to examine significant differences. Multiple regression procedures were used for the exploratory questions.

Women reporting less satisfied relationships were expected to believe that disagreement was more destructive and to report higher anger arousal than those who were more satisfied. The hypotheses were supported. Women who were less satisfied also reported using less constructive conflict tactics and more destructive and avoidant tactics as well as
receiving some forms of violence. Expressed violence was not significantly related to low satisfaction.

Results suggested that these conflict variables are highly interrelated. Strong feedback loops may develop. Strongly held conflict beliefs may affect the use of destructive and avoidant conflict strategies and increase anger which may reinforce the conflict beliefs.

Women who have received violence may use both destructive and avoidant tactics. Use of tactics that escalate then de-escalate conflict suggests that conflict strategies may not be mutually exclusive. However, when a woman is low in anger and has previously received violence from a partner, she may use more avoidant tactics. In contrast women who express violence to their partners may use all three conflict tactics including constructive tactics. This finding suggested that women may express violence as a last resort to get a reaction from their partners.
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The subject of happiness and satisfaction in love relationships has become a popular issue in social and psychological research. As early as the 1930s research was conducted to determine the dimensions of satisfaction, particularly in marital relationships (Burgess & Cotrell, 1939; Terman, Buttenweiser, Ferguson, Johnson, & Wilson, 1938). Findings revealed that the main threats to marital happiness relate to expectations about arguing (Terman, et al., 1938), conflict resolution, and communication between the partners (Burgess & Cotrell, 1939). Surprisingly, the first research project addressing violence between spouses (i.e., the extreme of the conflict variable) did not appear until the early 1970s (O'Brien, 1971). Studies involving the entire continuum from relational satisfaction to relational distress have identified varied theories and treatment approaches for use in marital therapy. Such variables as beliefs about conflict, expressions of anger, conflict styles, and violence are important factors in understanding relational difficulties. Since these difficulties are some of the most common problems for which people seek psychological help (Veroff, Kulka, and Douvan, 1981), the
evolving study of such variables combined in innovative ways is important to the growing base of knowledge of marriages in psychology and sociology.

The most frequently studied topic in marital research is variously labeled marital success, adjustment, happiness, satisfaction, or some synonym reflective of the quality or ideal state of a marital relationship (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987; Spanier and Lewis, 1980). Other terms found throughout this body of research express a less-than-ideal state of relationship (e.g., marital maladjustment, distress, discord; Gottman, 1979; Jacobson & Margolin, 1979; Yelama, 1981). Attention has also been paid to relationships between unmarried individuals using these same terms. Spanier (1976) generalized methods for assessing relationship adjustment to include nonmarital dyads when developing his Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). Current demographic studies show that couples marry less, divorce more, and still suffer from relationship difficulties (Glenn and Weaver, 1988). Consequently, it is important to study relationship and satisfaction components with nonmarital dyads as well as married couples. Various instruments have been used to identify those variables which contribute, or are a threat, to a desired state of intimate relationships. Marital quality is represented in global evaluations in order to correlate the adjustment or satisfaction construct with other variables (Fincham & Bradbury, 1987).
One of the most important variables in predicting satisfaction is the couple's ability to resolve differences (Gottman, 1979). Resolving differences may result in conflict. Conflict is defined as a perceived incompatibility between individuals which may develop into an emotionally upsetting interaction aimed at resolving differences in individuals involved in intimate relationships (Deutsch, 1969; Doherty, 1981). Early studies (Terman, et al., 1938; Uhr, 1957) indicated that it is the avoidance of conflict which endangers happiness. David (1967), who studied families with marital and parent-child problems, found that it was not a couple's differences but the inconsistency in communication about those differences which was a detriment to marital satisfaction. Individual differences in expectations versus actual behavior may result in a conflict of interest. Anger is the socially negative emotion that individuals most commonly feel as a result of a conflict of interest (Averill, 1983). Anger is a message communicated to let someone know that a problem exists (Lerner, 1985; Tavris, 1982). The expression of anger and its impact on satisfaction in a relationship are important elements in understanding a couple's ability to resolve conflict.

Bach and Wyden (1969) presented a landmark work regarding the perception of conflict between intimates. They suggested that avoiding conflict is detrimental to a relationship and argued that constructive fighting enhances a
relationship. Since that time, various authors have either concurred (Averill, 1983; Margolin, 1985; Vuchinich, 1987) or have contested this assertion (Berkowitz, 1983; Mace, 1976; Straus, 1974). The important factor may be whether couples consider conflict as good or bad for the relationship (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). The literature continues to address primarily the attribution of causal cognitive processes regarding conflict rather than the belief of whether conflict has a positive or negative effect on dyadic relationships. There is a vast difference between issues of who is the cause of the anger, and whether conflict should occur. The latter conceptualization is addressed here.

Affect associated with conflict is critical to understanding the impact disagreements have on the satisfaction level of the relationship (Margolin, John, & Gleberman, 1988). Anger is the primary emotion experienced in conflict (Averill, 1983). Averill's studies (1982, 1983) address the everyday experience of anger in which most people report becoming mildly to moderately angry anywhere from several times a day to several times a week. The expression of anger is more likely to be directed at either a loved one or someone well-known and liked by the individual. Anger is a response to some perceived difference between expected and actual behavior. In relationships, Averill found that most episodes of anger were evaluated positively by individuals.
Also, the target reported that the relationship was likely to be strengthened rather than weakened by the angry expression.

All couples may encounter problems at some point in their relationship. One major difference between happy and unhappy couples is how they resolve the problems they encounter with each other (Markman, Floyd, Stanley, & Jamieson, 1984). Couples who have difficulty with problem solving and communication may encounter problems as sources of conflict, negative interactions, and unhappiness with their relationship (Markman, et al., 1984). The style each person uses to communicate about conflict is important to identify (Margolin, 1985). Predictable preferences of behavior or styles and strategies of conflict (Merrell & Reid, 1981) have been described by various theorists and researchers (Bach & Wyden, 1969; Cupach, 1981; Guerin, Fay, Burden, & Kauto, 1987; Margolin, 1985; Margolin, et al., 1988; Satir, 1972; Wile, 1979). Although everyone has a predominant conflict style, a person's style can vary from one relationship or issue to another (Guerin, et al., 1987). There may also be an identifiable cycle of conflict between two particular individuals in an intimate relationship. These patterns of conflictual communication may be symmetrical or complementary (Watzlavick, Jackson, & Beavin, 1967), or integrative, distributive, or avoidant (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Canary & Spitzberg, 1987). Additionally, conflict styles may be identified as physically abusive,
verbally abusive, withdrawing, or nondistressed, nonabusive when intimates are in conflict with each other (Margolin, 1985; Margolin, et al., 1988). Since research shows that relationship satisfaction is closely correlated with effective communication skills (Reuben, Wiech, & Zimmer, 1984; Zimmer, 1983), it is important to determine whether particular styles or patterns of conflict are related to relational quality.

The escalation from expressing anger in conflict to the more severe forms of verbal and physical aggression and violence between intimates is of utmost importance to this study. Although no research has shown the exact mediator between healthy and hurtful conflict, much can be learned about severe conflict from the research on spouse abuse. Research on why the partner stays in an abusive relationship may have special relevance for satisfaction and conflict in intimate relationships. Marital adjustment, communication problems, and affective responses have been studied as factors contributing to marital violence (Hudson & McIntosh, 1981; Margolin, et al., 1988; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980; Telch & Lindquist, 1984). Dutton and Painter (1981) suggested that "traumatic bonding" may occur where strong emotional ties result when one person intermittently abuses (e.g., beats, threatens, or intimidates) the other. Further, they suggested that attachments formed in such situations create positive
feelings and attitudes in the abused person. The idea is that when violence is not occurring, the relationship seems relatively positive. The literature does not as yet yield research supporting the idea that a positive relationship may exist between abusive relationships and dyadic satisfaction.

Love relationships involve varying degrees of adjustment and satisfaction with one's partner. Factors such as beliefs about conflict and angry expressions impact on the couple. Additionally, identifying one's style of expressing anger whether in a constructive, destructive, or abusive way provides opportunities for evaluation of the relationship itself.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study addressed how women experience the conflict variables such as beliefs about fighting, anger arousal, conflict styles, and received and expressed violence as partners in love relationships and how these factors affected her reported satisfaction.

Related Literature

The review of the relevant literature focuses on the primary area of satisfaction in intimate relationships and four related areas: cognitions about conflict, expression of anger, conflict styles, and violence.

Satisfaction

The quality of a relationship is the focus of much family research. Related concepts of adjustment, happiness,
and satisfaction may be the most frequently studied variables in the field (Lewis & Spanier, 1979; Fincham & Bradbury, 1987). Although diversity exists between the use of several labels, the primary terms "adjustment" and "satisfaction" are most often used in the global evaluation of a couple's relationship. To Locke and Wallace (1959) "adjustment" included the dimensions of conflict resolution, satisfaction and happiness, as well as companionship and consensus between two people. Spanier (1976) proposed that adjustment is a process the outcome of which can be measured by the degree of troublesome differences, tensions and anxiety between the couple, satisfaction, cohesion, and agreement on matters important to dyadic functioning.

The term "satisfaction" is used by Snyder (1979) as a global evaluation of the overall relationship. Satisfaction in a relationship is variously defined as a comparison between what one expects and what actually exists (Lenthall, 1977), an overall feeling of happiness and contentment based on an evaluation of the relationship (Hawkins, 1968), and as a subjectively experienced inner reaction (Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine, 1979). The definitions of adjustment and satisfaction are obfuscated in the literature (Spanier & Cole, 1976). Overall, it appears that dyadic satisfaction is the major dimension of dyadic adjustment.

In conducting the earliest studies about threats to marital satisfaction, Terman, et al. (1938) set out to dispel
some of the myths about marital happiness. To their surprise they found no relationship between the frequency of sexual intercourse and marital happiness. Their study showed that 1133 married couples considered the biggest threat to marital happiness to be avoiding arguments. This was especially true of couples in which one spouse liked to argue and the other disliked arguing. Findings in a study by Burgess and Cottrell (1939) were largely consistent with Terman, et al. Their findings helped to dispel the myth that an economic factor (i.e., insufficient income) is not important for adjustment in marriage. Burgess and Cottrell identified temperamental compatibility as a major feature of marital adjustment. In the 1950s, research began addressing ways that couples settle their disagreements in order to maintain their satisfaction with each other. Locke (1951) studied both a happily married group and a divorced group using interview methods. He found that the married group was more likely to use a "mutual give and take" as a conflict resolution style, and divorced couples were more likely to have walked out on their spouse during a fight.

These early studies provided the impetus for the identification of variables that contribute to dyadic satisfaction or dissatisfaction relative to dyadic conflict. Some of the most important variables have been identified as beliefs or cognitions about conflict, dimensions of anger,
conflict styles, and violence. How these variables relate to dyadic satisfaction are discussed below.

Cognitions about Conflict

The cognitive aspect of conflict and satisfaction in dyads relates to intrapersonal processes used by each partner to interpret the communication received and decide how to respond. Distressed couples appear to be affected by a perceptual bias which serves as a filter through which they tend to distort the intent of their partner's message and the impact of their message on their partner (Gottman, Notarious, Markman, Bank, Yoppi, & Rubin, 1976). Cognitive variables such as perceptions, beliefs, expectations, and attribution affect the quality of a relationship (Epstein & Eidelson, 1981). It is commonly accepted that cognitions play a role in couples therapy and much cognitive research addresses the cognitive attributions that couples place on the cause of conflict (Doherty, 1981; Fincham, 1985; Fincham, Beach, & Baucom, 1987; Fincham & O'Leary, 1983). Additionally, marital theorists have posited that, as in other relationships, spouses have specific irrational beliefs that contribute to their perceptual biases about their partners' behaviors as well as their own (Ellis, 1976; Ellis & Harper, 1961). Researchers have attempted to identify common perceptions and beliefs about anger and conflict that relate to relationship satisfaction or dissatisfaction.
The Relationship Beliefs Inventory (RBI; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982; Epstein & Eidelson, 1981) identifies five common dysfunctional beliefs, each of which is a subscale of the inventory. All are negatively correlated with adjustment. Epstein and Eidelson (1981) conducted a study to determine if the irrational belief that disagreements between spouses are destructive to a relationship would affect a spouse's expectations about potential changes in therapy. They administered the RBI and the Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959) as well as other self-report measures to 47 couples in therapy. They found that irrational beliefs about relationships were negatively correlated with marital satisfaction and affected the couple's expectations and goals for therapy. Indeed, these couples indicated a preference for individual therapy.

In a similar study, Eidelson and Epstein (1982) compared 48 couples who were beginning marital therapy with 52 couples recruited from the community who had never been involved in therapy. There was a higher significant negative correlation between a belief that disagreement is destructive to a relationship and the relationship satisfaction for the marital therapy couples than for nonclinical couples. The authors suggested that a spouse who has such a belief may attribute more negative intentions to a disagreeing partner than one who does not have such a belief. The lower correlation for nonclinical couples suggests that a person
who is successfully adjusted in a relationship may be flexible enough to withstand the damage from an irrational belief. The scores on the RBI were not particularly high (i.e., high represents strong irrational beliefs) for either group, which the authors attribute to wording on the inventory. They suggest that while the RBI may be useful in assessing particular cognitive components of relationship dysfunction and the couple's resistance to conjoint therapy, the RBI can be considered only an initial step toward a more comprehensive inventory of relationship beliefs and perceptions.

Averill (1982) tested the hypothesis that anger and conflict is maintained within the social system because it has both positive and negative consequences. As a part of a larger study, 160 subjects described their own experience of anger and 80 subjects responded as targets of angry episodes using self-report measures. It was found that angry persons perceive the consequences of anger as negative in terms of continuing affective reactions to the episode (e.g., tend to feel irritable, depressed, and/or anxious). However, a majority of the targets indicated that anger could be positive since they considered the relationship strengthened more often than it was weakened (in 48% versus 35% of the episodes). Also the targets more often gained than lost respect for the angry person (in 44% versus 29% of the episodes). Seventy-six percent of the targets gained insight
into their own faults as a result of their partners' anger. Averill believes that the immediate consequences of anger as experienced by the angry person are not the important perceptions; he suggests a broader perspective in which the outcome of a typical angry episode is often considered more beneficial than harmful.

Expectations affect one's perception about the outcome of conflict. Koren, Carlton, and Shaw (1980) conducted a study concerning the conflict behavior of 30 distressed and 30 nondistressed couples (e.g., their inquiries, responsiveness, criticisms, and solutions proposals) and the prediction of conflict outcomes on the basis of behaviors. Couples were differentiated based on MAT scores. Each couple was asked to role play common problem situations from different viewpoints after which each spouse responded to three questions that assessed the satisfaction with the outcome. Finally, each spouse was asked how representative their behavior was of comparable interactions at home. Responses showed that 72% of the situations were judged to be very or moderately representative of comparable behavior. Results revealed that the distress measure is a strong predictor of conflict outcomes. Distressed couples were more likely to use criticism to resolve conflict and nondistressed couples were more likely to use responsiveness in their disagreement. This finding supports the theory that these behaviors carry relationship messages which convey negative
feelings in the case of criticism, and positive feelings with responsiveness. Prediction about the outcomes of conflict may be based on one's overall perception of satisfaction with the relationship and the potential of helpfulness that the conflict may serve. The more satisfied a person is with the relationship, the more likely positive behaviors will be used in resolving conflict, and thus, a more beneficial conflict outcome will result.

In a similar study, Weiss (1984) found connections between a couple's satisfaction level and subjective expectations about conflict process and outcomes. In response to an advertisement about a marital communications research project, 25 couples who were judged not to be in need of marital therapy were selected for the study. Measures used to determine marital satisfaction and/or "closeness to divorce" included the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), the Marital Status Inventory (MSI; Weiss & Cerreto, 1980), and Rubin's Loving-Liking Scale (L-L; Rubin, 1970). Expectation or perceived competence measures were designed to assess the expectations about likely outcomes of conflict-resolving interactions. Expectations that a conflict would be resolved and the severity of the conflict were measured with the Problem Intensity Form (PIF; Gottman, 1979). Over a six-week period couples were asked to role play conflict situations and to evaluate the possible outcome prior to the exercises and their perception of actual
outcome immediately afterwards. Results showed a significant positive relationship between couples rating a high level of satisfaction and high expectations about outcome of their conflict. Additionally, those couples who were strongly considering terminating the relationship had very low expectations of the positive benefit of the conflict. This was also found in ratings done after the role play. Weiss suggested that couples perceptively get the outcomes they expect to get. Additionally, those couples who expect to work well together and to feel understood by each other, emit more positive behaviors.

Thus, the literature shows an attempt to validate the assumption that cognitions play a major role in determining whether conflict can be helpful or hurtful to the relationship. One's expectations about conflict outcomes is an important determinant in both process behavior and actual outcomes. Concomitantly, one's current level of relational satisfaction may also predict the engagement or avoidance of conflict as well as the outcome of attempts at conflict resolution.

Anger

Interactions between people, especially in intimate relationships, involve all aspects of experience. The emotional aspect plays a major role in the relationship experience. The establishment of a close relationship necessarily involves some loss of autonomy and freedom, and
requires tolerance for the negative as well as the positive attributes of the other person. Anger is one way of expressing the conflict generated by accommodations which are necessary to establish and maintain a close relationship. Anger is a message communicated to one's partner to let it be known that some misdeed has been done or conflict of interest exists (Lerner, 1985; Tavris, 1982). The function or purpose of showing anger within a relationship is to influence a loved one to change the way he or she behaves (Averill, 1983). According to Averill (1982), anger is a frequently experienced emotion; it is a strong emotion (i.e., rating a 6.7 on a 10-point scale), and it is an emotion with interpersonal consequences in that 89% of the time the target of anger is usually human. It is also an emotion which is considered subjectively and socially overwhelmingly negative (Averill, 1982; Siegel, 1986).

Marital conflict research about the expression of anger may be somewhat confusing (Margolin, 1985). Some researchers and therapists indicate that expressions of anger are inappropriate and destructive to the relationship (Mace, 1976). Therapists holding this view would show couples how to eliminate or dissipate angry feelings before getting to outright conflict (Ellis, 1976; Mace, 1976). In contrast, other therapists believe that hostile feelings can be overtly expressed in secure relationships, and they encourage its expression in a structured, clarified, and positive manner.
Averill (1983) conducted a study to describe the everyday experience of anger. Subjects included two groups, 80 students and 80 community residents, who described their own experiences of anger. Self-report measures assessed nearly all aspects of an angry episode including how it began; the relationship between the angry person and the target; thoughts, feelings, and responses during the episode; and the short-term and long-term consequences. Averill found that most people become mildly to moderately angry anywhere from several times a day to several times a week. In comparing the angry impulses felt to the responses exhibited, angry persons said that in 40% of the episodes, they felt like being physically aggressive but took action on this impulse only 10% of the time. The largest proportion of respondents felt like aggressing verbally (82% of angry episodes), but actually were verbally aggressive only 49% of those times. Averill's results also showed that in more than half of the angry episodes people became angry with either a loved one or someone well-known and liked. Acquaintances accounted for another 25% of the targets and in only 8% of the episodes was the target someone who was well-known and disliked. Strangers accounted for only 13% of the targets. Thus, intimate partners are likely to be frequent targets of anger.
Much of the marital research literature attempts to separate affect in two dimensions: positive and negative (Birchler, Weiss, & Vincent, 1975; Gottman, 1979; Margolin & Wampold, 1981; O'Leary, Fincham, & Turkewitz, 1983; Vuchinich, 1987). Using these global discriminators, distressed couples showed more negative affect and nondistressed couples displayed more positive affect (Gottman, 1979). In coding different affect displayed by 28 couples who responded to an ad about mutually satisfied married couples, Gottman, Markman, and Notarious (1977) defined negative facial cues, negative voice cues, and negative body cues. The investigation was conducted to determine whether negative listening, negative "mindreading" (i.e., making attributions of emotions, opinions, states of mind, etc., to a spouse) and negative responding were consistent with distressed relationships. Findings supported previous outcomes that distressed couples were more likely to express their feelings about a problem, to mindread, and to disagree, all with negative nonverbal behaviors. These coding variables were able to account for most of the variance in the classification of distressed and nondistressed couples.

The predominant finding in the literature regarding affect continues to be that distressed couples are predominantly negative in their attitudes and behavior, and nondistressed couples are likely to be positive. These
attitudes have been observed in the couples' verbal and nonverbal behavior. Affect has been measured in their emotional expression, behavior exchange, and problem-solving behavior. More specifically, nondistressed couples are more likely to display more positive affect cues (Gottman, 1979), social reinforcement (Birchler, et al, 1975), reconciling acts (Vuchinich, 1987), and supportive behaviors (Sprenkle & Olson, 1978) than distressed couples. Additionally, nondistressed couples may display more closeness by sitting closer together than distressed couples do (Beier & Sternberg, 1977).

Distressed couples, on the other hand, are more likely to manifest their negative affect with negative behaviors (Gottman, 1979), more coercive acts (Vuchinich, 1987), more negative social reinforcement (Birchler, et al, 1975), and more defensive behaviors (Sprenkle & Olson, 1978). Distressed couples may exhibit more silence (Birchler, et al., 1975), and in other studies they are shown to talk more and speak more loudly (Beier & Sternberg, 1977). They may also use less eye contact (Beier & Sternberg, 1977; Birchler, 1972; Vincent, 1972), and keep more interpersonal distance from their partners (Beier & Sternberg, 1977). The distressed partner is more likely to negatively code the behavior of their spouse than the nondistressed partner (Gottman, 1979).
There is a great deal of support for the manifestation or communication of negative affect in distressed couples. Concomitantly, research shows support for the communication of positive affect as a predictor of nondistress in couples. For purposes of this study, the negative aspect of anger has been concentrated on in the review of the literature.

**Conflict Styles**

Efforts to understand intimate relationships have produced an increase in research about the complicated communication patterns that develop between partners (Gaelick, Bodenhausen, & Wyer, 1985; Gottman, 1979; Hahlweg & Jacobson, 1984). The way one conveys feelings and thoughts may affect a wide range of interactions between two people and influence the way they feel about each other and their relationship. An inability to communicate accurately has been implicated as a primary feature of unhappy relationships (Gaelick, et al., 1985; Markman, et al., 1984; Noller, 1980; Stuart, 1969). Identifying the pattern or style of communication is critical to understanding potential mutual satisfaction for a couple so that appropriate therapy can occur (Margolin, 1985).

Various researchers have studied dyadic communication. Two communication patterns, or cycles of communication, have been termed symmetrical or reciprocal and complementary (Hinde, 1978; Watzlavick, et al., 1967). In a symmetrical cycle of competitive exchange, conflict may escalate, but in
a complementary (dominant/submissive) interaction, one partner gives in to the other. Further, communication occurs both verbally and nonverbally. According to Watzlavick, et al. (1967), couples establish patterns of these interchanges which usually occur as uninterrupted sequences. The positive or negative interchanges as communication patterns are reinforced between the senders and receivers so that feedback loops are developed (Jackson, 1965). It is this patterned habitual interchange that maintains a balance in order to keep the couple from destroying the relationship (Watzlavick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974). The pathways connecting the communications between senders and receivers may imply a reciprocity rule (i.e., a hypothesis that people reciprocate the affect that they believe others express toward them; Leary, 1955). From this view, the effectiveness of a couple's communication depends on the congruence of each person's inner feelings, thoughts, and external expressions of such (Yelsma, 1981).

Gottman (1979) conducted a series of inquiries about couple communication and conflict resolution. Fourteen clinical couples were referred by marital counseling agencies and 14 couples responded to an advertisement for happily married couples. Through use of an intricate coding system nondistressed couples were found by observers to be more positive verbally than distressed couples. Nondistressed wives were more likely to agree with their husbands than were
distressed wives. Gottman found that distressed couples exhibited negative nonverbal behaviors when expressing their feelings about a problem, "mindreading", and disagreeing. He concluded that nonverbal behavior, when analyzed separately, may be a better discriminator of marital satisfaction or distress than is verbal behavior.

Yelsma (1981) investigated the impact of values and behaviors on the functional or dysfunctional ways couples manage conflicts. Twenty-three clinical couples were referred from five marital counseling agencies and another 23 couples were classified as "happily married." Subjects were given two self-report measures to establish a marital adjustment score and to assess internal behaviors and values that influence the way a person manages conflicts. The findings indicated that distressed and nondistressed couples manage their conflict differently. Differences between nondistressed spouses occur because of their attempts to understand rather than try to control each other. These couples appeared to approach conflict with a win-win manner (e.g. neither spouse wins the argument, both equally share in a positive resolution). They seemed happier with themselves and saw differences between them and their spouses as sources of growth for themselves and the relationship. The conflict of distressed couples tended to be more severe and less productive. These spouses reported more negative feelings about life and about each other. Yelsma indicated that
intrapersonal tensions usually stimulate aggressive conflict behavior. Aggressively predisposed individuals who seem not to have developed behavior and value orientations for controlling self and others in a positive and productive way, may hurt others and even themselves. Overall, this study showed that couples whose style is predisposed to look for understanding in each other are more likely to be happily married. In contrast, couples in which one spouse with an aggressive style and a view that conflicts are to be controlled and won, are more likely to have a distressed relationship.

Gaelick, et al. (1985) studied the emotional communication patterns between partners focusing on the perceptions and intentions that mediate partners' overt responses to each other. Ratings of conflict discussion were done by 29 distressed and nondistressed couples who rated communications by the feelings the communicator intended to convey and the recipient's reactions. Although partners tried to reciprocate positive and negative feelings, only the negative feelings were actually reciprocated. It appeared that partners were able to correctly identify and respond to negative feelings. Positive feelings were incorrectly interpreted. The authors found that men typically interpret a woman's failure to express love as a hostile indication. Concomitantly, women tend to interpret their partners' lack of hostility as an indication of love. Couples were also
asked about conflict beliefs. Women's beliefs that disagreement is destructive to a relationship was highly correlated with their perceptions of negative affect. With regard to satisfaction, women in dissatisfied relationships were more likely to perceive that their partners were conveying negative feelings. Another indication of dissatisfaction for women was their belief that their partners perceived them to be hostile. The authors concluded that women have developed patterns of communication in which they are more strongly influenced by hostility than are men.

Bach and Wyden's (1969) research identified three distinct groups by conflict style. Of the 50 couples, the largest group was characterized by couples who did not fight and were lacking in intimacy. The second group was somewhat more intimate but were held together by outside pressures. The last group, called "true intimates," contained only two couples who had a high degree of intimacy. These couples indicated they argued constantly, but did not know the secret of their successful marriages. Bach and Wyden proposed that constructive fighting enhanced the marital relationship with an emotional bonding occurring when healthy couples engage in conflict in a constructive manner. They further suggested that when couples avoid fights an intimate relationship cannot exist since honest intimates cannot ignore their inevitable hostile feelings. Bach and Wyden believe that there are several easily identifiable conflict styles which
people display. Aggressors are called "hawks" and non-fighters are called "doves." "Gunnysackers" store up grievances against their partners for a period of time before expressing them explosively. In a "Vesuvius" style, a person expresses anger in an eruptive way with a spontaneous unleashing of emotion.

Several other theorists have delineated conflict styles. Satir (1972) described similar styles of conflict expression. The "placator" tries to avoid conflict at all costs. "Distractors" use a confusion technique to distract the intimate person from conflict. The term "blamer" describes a person who is never responsible for conflict but blames others. Wile (1979) describes the styles above as universal patterns. He describes three patterns which encompass styles described in the literature. First is mutual withdrawal whereby each of the spouses chooses not to engage in conflict. Second is mutual accusation where each blames the other. Finally, there is the demanding-withdrawn style where one aggresses and the other withdraws from the conflict. The latter style is also described by Guerin, et al. (1987) as a "pursuer-distancer" style. This operational style has several components. Desiring more intimate time denotes a pursuer and desiring more alone time denotes a distancer. The spouse who expresses more affect and personal thoughts is the pursuer and the distancer avoids those expressions. The pursuer moves through life at extremes of high speed and a
dead stop, and the distancer is more deliberate and structured. The idea of using conflict in a particular pattern to effect intimacy is also addressed by Dutton (1988), who suggests that abusers use conflict to regulate intimacy.

Canary and Spitzberg (1987) identified three styles of exchanges that communicators use in conflict. In an integrative style each spouse offers disclosure and cooperation. With the distributive style each spouse is competitive and antagonistic. The avoidance style identifies a spouse who attempts to diffuse the conflict by withdrawing from the discussion. In their evaluation of effectiveness of each communication style, 361 undergraduate students were asked to review four conflict scripts and answer questions about them. Findings revealed that integrative tactics were perceived as the most appropriate and effective across episodes. Distributive tactics were seen as less appropriate than avoidant tactics. Although the authors stated that effective communication accomplishes the goals, objectives, or intended functions of the communicator, it is possible that partners rely heavily on their assessment of the relationship in order to determine the probable outcomes of conflict processes.

Margolin, et al. (1988) explored intrapersonal and interpersonal factors associated with constructive and destructive modes of handling marital conflict with a focus
on violence in marital relationships. Four conflictual couple types were discriminated as physically aggressive, verbally aggressive, withdrawing, and nondistressed-nonaggressive couples. By delineating satisfaction and conflict styles, 78 couples were identified for the four groups of conflictual typologies mentioned above. Couples identified two major conflict issues for 10-minute discussions which were videotaped. After the discussion, each spouse was asked to complete a questionnaire about the physiological symptoms and emotional reactions experienced. The data were examined to determine if typical outcomes (i.e., the four conflict styles) are reflected in moment-to-moment affective reactions during conflictual interactions. Those couples in the three distressed groups exhibited predominantly negative affect and behavior. The nondistressed group in this study, as in other studies (Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Gottman, 1979), was found to exhibit more positive than negative behaviors in both sexes.

Gottman and Krokoff (1989) conducted longitudinal research to determine not only the differences between happy and unhappy marriages, but also what distinguishes satisfying relationships over time from long-term relationships that are unhappy. Over a three-year period, 25 couples were studied using the Locke-Wallace (1959) marital adjustment scale and three observational coding systems: the Couples Interaction Scoring System (CISS; Gottman, 1979), the Marital Interaction
Coding System (MICS; Weiss & Summers, 1983), and the Specific Affect Coding System (SPAFF; Gottman & Kroloff, 1989). The researchers found that interaction patterns, such as disagreement and anger exchanges, may not be harmful to a marriage. Although these exchanges are usually considered harmful, they may only contribute to short-term dissatisfaction but enhance long-term satisfaction. That is, conflicts that are resolved through expressions of anger and constructive conflict may, over the long term, contribute to a better relationship. Gottman and Kroloff identified three destructive conflict styles that tend to worsen the relationship when used for conflict resolution. These patterns are defensiveness (which includes whining), stubbornness, and withdrawal from interaction. The authors also suggested that anger, which heretofore has been considered a negative affect, may be positive in that venting anger in constructive conflict resolutions may enhance longitudinal satisfaction.

Various therapeutic methods include communication skills training (Bach & Wyden, 1969; Guerin, et al., 1987; Stuart, 1980). Effective communication has been found to correlate with marital satisfaction as well as with a higher frequency of sexual interaction (Zimmer, 1983). One experimental study (Reuben, et al., 1984) showed that learning how to communicate better increased the level of satisfaction. These researchers also commented that improvement in such
skills often leads to heightened willingness to deal with problems that could not otherwise have been discussed. Thus, couples may appear to be more conflictual while using their new skills to discuss important issues about which they disagree.

Violence

Prior to the 1970's, literature regarding violence in the family was scant. An article by O'Brien (1971), began an empirical base of knowledge regarding this important subject. In reviewing the current literature about family violence, it is important to describe the prevalence and levels of incidence as well as to identify risk factors associated with family violence. Several studies relate to the current research effort. The particular focus here is on spousal violence, hostile communication and the impact on satisfaction in dyadic relationships.

Although wives are physically violent to husbands (Straus & Gelles, 1980), most researchers have focused on the abuse of women for several reasons. For example, when only one member of the couple expresses violence, it is much more often the husband (Steinmetz, 1977-78). Thus, violent acts by the woman may be in self-defense (Makepeace, 1986). Moreover, probably due to the average size difference between males and females, women are more likely to be physically harmed and hurt more seriously than men (Pleck, Pleck, Grossman, & Bart, 1978; Berk, Berk, Loseke, & Rauma, 1981).
For these reasons, most of the research has focused on wife abuse.

The incidence of wife abuse has been identified in two ways: crime victim surveys and conflict resolution surveys which identify levels of abuse. The National Crime Survey (U.S. Dept of Justice, 1980) shows a level of reportable victimization of 1,058,500 incidences reported in 136,000 random interviews nationwide. Of those incidents, injuries resulted in 56.8% of the cases but only 55% were reported to the police. However, one problem with such surveys is that many incidences of abuse are not considered criminal by the victim (Dutton, 1988), and may never be reported to researchers interested in crime. Nevertheless, rates of wife abuse are relatively high in comparison to other types of assault. Surveys of conflict resolution focusing on spousal violence (Schulman, 1979; Straus & Gelles, 1986) reveal that only 14.5% of serious assaults are reported to the police. These surveys found rates of 8.7% (Schulman) and 12.6% (Straus & Gelles) for severe husband-to-wife violence. Rates including any violent husband-wife acts throughout the entire marriage reveal that abuse occurs in 21% (Schulman) and 27.8% (Straus & Gelles) of those responding. Additionally, these two studies estimate that severe repeated violence is likely to occur in 12.6% (Schulman) and 8.9% (Straus & Gelles), or an average of 6.8% of all marriages.
Straus and Gelles (1986) conducted a national telephone survey to determine the incidence of spouse abuse. In comparing their results to those of a similar survey conducted in 1975, they reported a decline in husband-to-wife abuse. Rates on the violence subscale of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979) dropped from 12.1 to 11.3, and rates for the severe violence dropped from 3.8 to 3.0. Straus and Gelles reported a nonsignificant increase in wife-husband violence. Decreases were explained by the authors as a difference in methodology of the two surveys (e.g., the earlier research utilized face-to-face interviews and the 1985 survey was done by telephone). Straus and Gelles speculate that the decrease could have been even greater since people may more readily respond to an anonymous telephone interview. They also argued that a decreased incidence of spouse abuse may be attributed to a higher level of public awareness about family violence. These arguments, however, suggest the possibility that, due to public awareness of the inappropriateness of the behaviors, people may less readily report such acts, but privately engage in them nonetheless. Such problems can occur because the research uses self-reports of respondents' own and their partners' behavior. Reports by husbands of their wives' behavior show that women may overreport and men may underreport abuse (Jouriles & O'Leary, 1985; Arias & Berch, 1987). The validity of this explanation is increased by
realizing that only eight items were used in these studies.
A more sensitive instrument, listing more behaviors with a
greater range of coercive force, would likely obtain
different results.

Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) reviewed 52 case-comparison
studies to evaluate potential risks of husband to wife
violence. In 15 studies an association was found between a
woman having witnessed violence between parents or caregivers
while growing up and being physically abused by her husband.
Contradictory evidence was found for the association of abuse
and experiencing violence as a child or adolescent and for
acceptance of traditional sex roles and male-dominant family
relationships. There was little evidence that women with
particular personality characteristics contribute to their
own victimization. The review identified three factors found
in 20 out of 22 studies which are associated with men who use
violence against their wives: the use of violence toward
their children, sexual aggression toward wives, and
witnessing parental violence. Abusers are typically
aggressive inside and outside the family and have been reared
in a violent family atmosphere. In several studies, alcohol
usage was related to the use of violence. Interestingly,
three of four studies found abusive men to be significantly
less assertive than nonviolent counterparts.

There were five couple-level variables consistently
found in Hotaling and Sugarman's review. Physical violence
was positively related to verbal argument and conflict frequency, higher levels of religious incompatibility, and lower levels of marital satisfaction. Support was found for social learning theory which would predict that witnessing and experiencing violence in childhood is an important determinant of abusing and being abused. The theory that women cause their own abuse was not supported. Hotaling and Sugarman argued that personality and symptomological differences are a consequence of abuse. It appears that the most important factor in female victimization is being female and the abuse is perhaps best understood as the outcome of male behavior. The psychiatric model was perhaps the most congruent with several factors associated with abusive men. Clinical descriptions of males with borderline or antisocial personality disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 1987) are very similar to the risk factors identified in this comparison study (e.g., cross-situational violence, adult adjustment, an inability to sustain consistent work behavior, failure to maintain interpersonal relationships). Additional support for this theory is in findings on low assertiveness, low self-esteem and alcohol abuse among abusers. This review did not find support for a sex role inequality interpretation of husband-to-wife abuse. Hotaling and Sugarman have contributed a most valuable resource in deciphering those theories and suppositions that either have, or have not, been supported in the professional literature.
It is important to consider psychological as well as physical abuse. However, although writers have long pointed out that psychological abuse is probably more harmful than physical abuse, little research has been done to describe or document the former (Marshall, 1987). Dutton and Painter (1981) reviewed the psychological development of the emotional bonds between two people in an abusive relationship to develop their theory of traumatic bonding. They proposed a psychological and situational explanation for women remaining in an abusive relationship. Traumatic bonding refers to the development of strong emotional ties that result when one person intermittently abuses (e.g., beats, threatens, or intimidates) the other. The partners become counter-dependent on each other. The abuser develops an overgeneralized sense of power and dominance and the victim develops an overgeneralized sense of powerlessness or submissiveness. The submissive person usually develops a lowered self-esteem and is thus dependent on the more powerful person. The intermittent nature of the abuse serves as a powerful reinforcement keeping both partners in the relationship. The power imbalance fuels the arguments that lead to violence, and keeps the couple locked in this emotional bond. Dutton (1988) argued that this traumatic bonding is the main factor that keeps an abused woman from leaving the relationship.
Abusive and hostile communication cycles were also addressed by Gaelick, et al. (1985) in their study of emotional communication patterns between partners. The authors focused on the reciprocity rule of communication in which people reciprocate the affect they believe others are expressing toward them. Results showed that reciprocity occurred only in the case of hostility. The authors concluded that men tend to negatively distort their partners' message in a negative direction and may interpret a failure to convey positive affect as an indication of hostility. Women, on the other hand, tend to interpret their partners' lack of hostility to be an indication of positive feelings. The authors argued that since partners most accurately reciprocate one another's emotions only in the case of hostility, an escalating spiral of negative affect may occur. Expressions of love, on the other hand, are not likely to be accurately perceived and thus may not escalate. Three other findings were important in this study. Women were more accurate than men in perceiving differences in their partners' hostility. Results showed that the higher the level of hostility expressed, the more likely a woman is to believe that disagreement is destructive to a relationship. Finally, dissatisfied women were more likely to perceive their partners as hostile and to believe that their partners perceived them as hostile. This research supports the notion
that women are more strongly influenced by hostility than are men.

Other researchers have studied marital adjustment, communication problems, and affective responses as factors contributing to marital violence. Margolin, et al. (1988) examined factors associated with constructive and destructive modes of handling conflict. The primary factors separating physically aggressive couples from those who were verbally aggressive, withdrawing, and nondistressed-nonaggressive were found in the husbands who exhibited more instances of negative voice and overtly negative behaviors. Physically aggressive husbands also reported more sadness, fear, anger, and feeling attacked as well as more physiological arousal. These men exhibited a distinctive conflict style involving high rates of subtle anger cues that were indicative of nonconstructive approaches to conflict. Wives of physically aggressive men showed a greater escalation of offensive negative behaviors during the middle portions of discussions and greater deescalation in the final part of the discussion than did wives in the other groups. The authors suggested that self defense and retaliation were the primary motives for escalation. Physically aggressive couples also tended to rate high in the withdrawing and/or verbal aggression categories. Those couples in the three distressed groups exhibited predominantly negative affect and behavior. The nondistressed group in this study, as in other studies
(Margolin & Wampold, 1981; Gottman, 1979), was found to have more positive than negative behaviors exhibited by both sexes.

Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1981) investigated the relationship between abusive/nonabusive couples and marital satisfaction. Subject groups included 52 abused wives, 20 abusive husbands, 20 couples identified as having satisfactory marriages, and 20 couples who were nonviolent but dissatisfied. Surprisingly, satisfaction did not differ between the abused group and the nonviolent dissatisfied group. There were no correlations between the degree of marital dissatisfaction and either the severity or frequency of violence. However, when the total sample was considered, violence was clearly a predictor of marital dissatisfaction among the abused wives.

In a similar study, Telch and Lindquist (1984) attempted to distinguish 19 violent couples from 7 distressed, nonviolent couples in therapy, and 24 nonviolent, nontherapy couples on the basis of variables including anger, communication skills, and marital adjustment. Subjects completed a questionnaire battery including an anger scale, a communication questionnaire, and an adjustment measure. Results showed that abusive couples have characteristics similar to those of other couples in therapy. Compared to satisfied couples, they exhibit greater difficulty with communication and experience greater dissatisfaction and
disagreement. There was no difference in intensity of anger for violent and nonviolent distressed couples. The authors suggested this could be explained in that these couples may have different means for expressing their anger rather than possessing more intense anger. As expected, the nonviolent, nontherapy couples reported the highest levels of satisfaction.

Summary of Related Literature

The literature reflects that dyadic satisfaction is a popular subject of research. It also indicates that one of the most common problems bringing people into counseling is conflict in the relationship. Conflict impacts the satisfaction of each partner. Four factors have been shown to discriminate satisfied and dissatisfied relationships: beliefs about conflict, expression of anger, conflict styles, and violence.

Theorists have suggested that people generally experience disagreement as a function of interacting with each other. However, there are contradictory studies about whether conflict is helpful or hurtful to the relationship and if the expression of anger can enhance or inhibit satisfaction. Similarly, one's own beliefs about conflict impacts satisfaction. One of the primary irrational beliefs is that disagreements are destructive. Spouses who hold this belief may attribute more negative intentions to their disagreeing partners. In contrast, some people believe that
angry episodes can actually strengthen the relationship. Studies have shown that satisfied partners are more likely to expect conflict outcomes to be positive and unhappy partners to expect negative outcomes. In addition, the avoidance of conflict endangers the quality of the relationship.

Socially, anger is considered to be negative, yet some studies argue that anger can be positive and strengthening to a relationship and other research shows that anger is negative and abusively escalating. Most people report that they get angry often and usually direct their anger to a target with whom they have an intimate relationship. Anger serves to bring attention to some perceived misdeed, and can be very mild to very intense. Although a person may feel like expressing anger in a more violent way, generally a less intense manifestation is acted on due to some inhibiting factor. Emotional interaction is identified as positive and negative. In fact, these two dimensions may also discriminate the relationship quality. Happy couples typically interact more positively while distressed couples tend to be more negative.

Critical to a couple's happiness is how they resolve conflict. The literature shows that people have predictable styles of interacting with each other and various researchers have theorized about the most effective style for enhancing the quality of a relationship. Effective communication skills have been shown to be important to happy relationships.
but such studies address affect rather than strategy or style. An integrative conflict strategy (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987; Cupach, 1982) has been identified as an effective tactic to use in conflict. However, no study was found that identifies those styles associated with dyadic satisfaction.

Research supports the idea that negative escalation can spiral into violence for some couples. Indeed, the severe conflict styles may serve as significant emotional experiences which bond two people in a counterdependent relationship. The literature shows that negative communications (e.g., expressions of hostility and anger) are more likely than positive expressions to escalate in a spiral with the potential for violence. Aggressive men tend to show more negative affect. Violence is typically considered a discriminating factor for distressed relationships. However, research has shown that abusive couples are very similar to other distressed couples in therapy. Both abusive and nonabusive distressed couples experience communication difficulties, greater dissatisfaction than satisfied couples, and similar anger intensity. Nonviolent, nontherapy couples experience the most satisfaction, as shown in the literature. There is a dearth of research which investigates how much violence, if any, can be tolerated in satisfied relationships.

Overall, the literature revealed that satisfied couples may consider conflict helpful, display a lower level of anger
arousal, have effective conflict styles, and have negligible levels of violent behaviors. Variable support was found to show that distressed couples can be expected to believe that disagreements are destructive, show more negative affect with each other, have non-constructive conflict styles and higher levels of abusing behaviors. None of the literature reviewed showed all these factors considered simultaneously.
CHAPTER II

METHODS

Purpose of the Study

The study investigated the relationship between dyadic satisfaction and conflict variables in a love relationship from the perspective of women. Since research indicates that the primary problem encountered in marital counseling is conflict, women were expected to have an ongoing experience of such issues regardless of their relationship satisfaction. This investigation was designed to contribute a better understanding of the everyday experience of conflict, anger, and violence between intimates.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The literature is sufficiently developed to form two hypotheses. Main effects for satisfaction were predicted such that:

1. Women reporting satisfied relationships would tend to believe that disagreement was less destructive than would those in dissatisfied relationships.

2. Women reporting satisfied relationships would report lower anger arousal than those in dissatisfied relationships.

Although various theoretical suppositions have been suggested, the literature was found to lack development in
certain areas sufficient to form other specific hypotheses. Since some of the variables have not been examined together before, this study addressed several research questions:

1. Do women perceive conflict between intimates to be negative?
2. What is the relationship between specific conflict styles and levels of satisfaction?
3. What is the relationship between satisfaction and received and expressed violence?
4. What is the relationship between anger, the receipt of violence from a partner, and conflict styles?
5. What is the relationship between anger, expressing violence, and conflict styles?

Definition of Terms

Several terms have restricted meaning for this study.

Anger Arousal: the frequency, duration, and magnitude of feeling communicated from one partner to another regarding some misdeed, conflict of interest, or some loss of autonomy or freedom. Operationally defined, anger arousal was the score a subject obtained on the Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI; Siegel, 1986). On this scale, a high score indicated high anger arousal.

Conflict Style: the predictable preferences for behavior used as tactics or strategies to communicate during conflict. The three conflict styles are identified as
integrative, distributive, and avoidant (Canary & Cupach, 1988). The integrative style was constructive, involving cooperation and a mutual rather than individual focus. The distributive style, focusing on personal rather than couple goals, was considered competitive and destructive. The avoidant strategy minimizes opportunities for conflict. For this study each style was operationally defined by scores obtained on each of the three dimensions as measured by the Interpersonal Conflict Tactics and Strategies scale (ICTAS, Cupach, 1982).

Love Relationships: a relationship between two people who typically have daily contact, which is of a heterosexual non-familial nature, and in which there are opportunities for sexual expression to the exclusion of others. The terms love relationship and intimate relationship are used interchangeably. For purposes of this study a love relationship was identified as having a duration of at least one year. If the relationship had ended, termination occurred within the past 12 months.

Satisfaction: an overall feeling of happiness based on an evaluation of the functioning of a relationship between intimates. Satisfaction was measured by assessing troublesome differences, tensions and anxiety, cohesion, and agreement on matters important to dyadic functioning. For this study, satisfaction was operationally defined as the
score received on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976) with higher scores indicating increasing satisfaction.

Violence: the mistreatment women either received from their partner or expressed to their partner which included threats of physical violence, actual physical violence, and sexual violence. The six forms of violence as identified by the Severity of Violence Against Women Scale (SVAW; Marshall, 1989) were symbolic, mild threats, threats, moderate violence, serious, and sexual violence. Operationally defined, each form of violence was the score a woman received on a dimension.

Subjects

One hundred and eighty-six female volunteers from graduate classes in three colleges at the University of North Texas provided responses to a questionnaire packet. Several requirements were made for participation. Women must have been in an intimate heterosexual relationship for at least one year. If they were not currently in a relationship, it must have ended within the preceding 12 months.

Instruments

The instruments used in this study included a demographic inquiry, the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), the Relationship Beliefs Inventory (RBI; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), the Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI; Siegel, 1986), the Interpersonal Conflict
The questionnaire was introduced by a request for demographic information (See Appendix A). Each woman was asked to give the last four digits of her social security number which allowed the investigator to eliminate duplication but precluded identifying any individual. Other demographic questions included age, ethnicity, marital status, the length of the current or most recent relationship, when the relationship began and ended. Additional items addressed religiosity, divorce of parents, number of siblings, birth order, seriousness of relationship, loving and liking for the partner, and whether there were children born in association with the relationship.

**Dyadic Adjustment Scale**

Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale (See Appendix B) was designed to measure adjustment and satisfaction in an intimate relationship. The DAS is a 32 item self-report measure. It yields a global score that indicates satisfaction consisting of dyadic satisfaction, consensus, cohesion, and affectional expression. Modifications to this instrument for purposes of this study included eliminating a zero by changing the scale from one to six. Two affectional items (sex and liking) were omitted. Global scores ranged from 75 to 173 (M = 136.96, S.D. = 17.90). To use this
satisfaction score as an independent variable with MANOVA procedures, the median split method was utilized. Respondents scoring above and below 141 were grouped to differentiate between those who were high and low in dyadic satisfaction.

Original content validity for the DAS was evaluated by three judges who insured that each item relevantly measured dyadic adjustment, maintained a consistent definition (Spanier and Cole, 1974), and was worded with specific fixed choice responses (Spanier, 1976). Concurrent validity was supported by Spanier (1976), who administered the scale to married and divorced individuals. On each item there was a significant difference ($p < .001$) between the two groups. Scores differed significantly for the married ($M = 114.8$) and divorced ($M = 70.7$) groups. To evaluate construct validity, Spanier utilized the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (1959). With a correlation of .86 for the married group and .88 for divorced respondents, he concluded that the DAS measured the same general construct as the MAS.

The original reliability estimates were measured by Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (Spanier, 1976). The scale was originally found to be internally consistent ($\alpha = .96$). For females in the current sample, strong reliability ($\alpha = .94$) was evident.

Spanier and Thompson (1982) reevaluated the scale with a population similar to that used by Spanier (1976). The DAS
was again found to be a valid and reliable instrument. The scale has been used primarily as a global assessment of relationships. Sharpley and Cross (1982) agreed that the DAS was reliable but found that most of the items were unnecessary. Only eight items were needed for global satisfaction, and a quick screening could be gained by asking only the final question.

The DAS has continued to be a popular research instrument. Smolen, Spiegel, Bakker-Rabdau, Bakker, and Martin (1985) used the DAS in their study of 115 married women. They found that assertive behavior was adaptive in marriage but it had less impact on marital satisfaction than factors such as frequency of spouse transgression (i.e., a feeling that the husband has invaded the woman's rights) and situational resentment, both of which were inversely related.

Margolin, et al. (1988) explored intrapersonal and interpersonal affective factors associated with constructive versus destructive modes of handling marital conflict. They used the DAS and a conflict tactics scale to differentiate between physically abusive, verbally abusive, withdrawing, and nondistressed/nonabusive. Physically abusive husbands exhibited more overtly negative behaviors and reported more negative emotions and negative physiological arousal. Wives of physically abusive husbands differed from other groups in their escalating and then de-escalating patterns of overt negative behaviors. Nondistressed husbands and wives showed
less negative affect, more positive affect, and lower physiological arousal than the three conflictual groups.

Sillars, Pike, Jones, and Redmon (1983) studied the effect of communication patterns on the satisfaction of 40 married couples in three different groups: traditional (i.e., holds a conventional set of beliefs about marriage and confronts rather than avoids conflict), independent (i.e., emphasizes growth and closeness, confronts conflict, but rejects traditional marital beliefs), and separate (emphasizes autonomy and conflict avoidance) couples. Couples completed a 10-item version of the DAS. Couples were distinguished as having avoidance (i.e., avoids conflict), distributive (i.e., is verbally competitive and individualistic), or integrative (i.e., uses verbally disclosive and supportive acts) communication patterns. Results showed that the traditional and independent groups were most satisfied with distributive and integrative patterns. Separates were the least satisfied and were found to use primarily avoiding tactics. The authors concluded that good communication among independents was tantamount to a good marriage including open discussion of conflict. A traditional's view of good communication may consist of being nice and respectful of prenegotiated roles. To the separates, satisfaction meant keeping conflict to a minimum.
The Relationship Beliefs Inventory (RBI; Eidelson & Epstein, 1982) was developed to assess five dysfunctional beliefs about intimate relationships: disagreements are destructive; spouses should know each other's feelings and thoughts without asking; relationships cannot be changed; sexual perfectionism is necessary in a marriage; and differences between the sexes cause marital conflict. The five subscales each have eight items. To alleviate some problems associated with response bias, half the items were negatively worded. After reversal of these items, a higher score indicated greater adherence to a particular dysfunctional belief. For purposes of this study, only one subscale (See Appendix C), Disagreement is Destructive, was used. Respondents rated the degree to which they believed statements were true or false on a six-point scale. With a range of scores from 8 to 34, the mean was 19.43 and the standard deviation was 5.59. The relatively low median (19) indicated only moderate endorsement for items on this scale, which is consistent with published results (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). The median split method differentiated those who more strongly believed that disagreement is destructive from those whose beliefs were less strong.

The RBI was developed by pooling 128 items gathered from 20 marital therapists and the literature (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). The inventory was administered to 47 couples and was
reduced to 12 items per subscale. Subsequent administration to 100 couples resulted in a final reduction to eight items per subscale. Validation procedures were conducted with 48 clinical and 52 nonclinical couples, who also completed the MAS (Locke & Wallace, 1959) and the Irrational Beliefs Test (Jones, 1968). Construct validity was supported by significant negative correlations between the MAS and each of the RBI scales. The Disagreement is Destructive subscale showed the strongest correlation ($r = -0.57$, $p < 0.05$). Convergent validity was found for all the RBI subscales except the Sexes are Different subscale. The other four scales showed significant positive correlations with the Irrational Beliefs Test. Again, the Disagreement is Destructive subscale showed the strongest relationship ($r = 0.31$, $p < 0.05$). The Cronbach Alpha Coefficients used for internal consistency ranged from 0.72 to 0.81 with the Disagreement is Destructive subscale showing the highest reliability. In the present study, the alpha for this scale was 0.78.

Gaelick, et al. (1985) studied emotional communication patterns characterizing interactions between partners. In addition to observational techniques, 29 couples completed the RBI and a satisfaction inventory. Women's beliefs were strongly correlated with both their own and their partners' expressions and perceptions of negative affect. That is, the more strongly hostility was expressed, the stronger was a
woman's belief that disagreement is destructive. Men's beliefs were not related to their own hostility or to that of their partners. The authors concluded that men may be more comfortable with assertive and aggressive behavior, viewing it as normal. In contrast, women may be socialized to adopt an affiliative role in which assertiveness and hostility are discouraged.

**Multidimensional Anger Inventory**

Siegel (1986) developed the Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI) to assess anger. The MAI (See Appendix D) is a 38-item inventory including subscales which address six dimensions of anger: frequency, duration, magnitude, mode of expression, hostile outlook, and range of anger-eliciting situations. Ratings are made on five-point scales from completely undescrptive to completely descriptive. The scale was modified to pertain to love relationship issues. The Anger Arousal Subscale, which includes frequency, duration, and magnitude of anger, was used in this study. Summed scores ranged from 17 to 50 (\( M = 29.12, S.D. = 7.33 \)). A median split at 28 differentiated those reporting high anger arousal from those who reported low anger arousal.

The MAI was developed from pooled items selected from existing anger inventories and conceptually based items with face validity (Siegel, 1986). Validation procedures were conducted with 198 college students and 288 factory workers, who also completed the Anger-In/Anger-Out Scale (Harburg,
Erfurt, Jauenstein, Chape, Schull, & Schork, 1973), and the Novaco Anger Inventory (Novaco, 1975). Construct validity of the Anger Arousal subscale was supported by significant correlations with duration and magnitude ($r = .23$ and .34, respectively, $p < .01$) on the Anger-In/Anger-Out Scale and with the Novaco Anger Inventory ($r = .27$, $p < .01$). The Anger Arousal factor accounted for 63.7% of the variance in scores on the instrument. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient used for internal consistency was .83 for the Anger Arousal subscale, which showed the highest reliability of all the subscales. For the present sample the obtained alpha was .83.

A range of use for this new instrument has not been reported in the literature. However, Sharkin (1988) suggested that while the scale attempts to measure anger as multi-dimensional, it may represent the assessment of too many aspects of anger in one measure. Consequently, only the Anger Arousal subscale was chosen for use in this study.

**Interpersonal Conflict Tactics and Strategies Scale**

Cupach (1980, 1981, 1982) developed the Interpersonal Conflict Tactics and Strategies Scale (ICTAS) to distinguish between integrative (a constructive style), distributive (a destructive style), and avoidant conflict strategies in interpersonal relationships. The ICTAS (Appendix E) is a 55-item self-report inventory descriptive of a person's typical behavior. Each item was rated in terms of the frequency with
which the subjects use a tactic during conflict on four-point scales ranging from never to often. To obtain scale scores, items on the three sets were summed so that each individual had a constructive, destructive, and avoidant score.

The ICTAS was developed from a pool of items having face validity (Cupach, 1980). The items were subjected to factor analysis with orthogonal rotation. Criteria for each factor were based on a minimum eigenvalue of 1.0, and a scree procedure. Four factors were originally identified. Factors one and two were interpreted as destructive and constructive tactics, respectively. Factors three and four were labeled active and passive avoidance, respectively. Since factors three and four were conceptually related, a three-factor scale was retained for the sake of parsimony and maximal factor reliability. Those items receiving the highest factor loadings were analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The destructive factor consisting of 14 items obtained a reliability of .86; the avoidant factor with six items achieved an alpha of .71; and the constructive factor having seven items demonstrated a .75 reliability. The present sample revealed a similar reliability alpha for the first two factors with .86 for the destructive scale and .80 for the constructive scale. An adequate alpha coefficient of .61 was obtained for the avoidant factor.
Canary and Cupach (1986) studied relationship and conflict episode variables as they related to communication competence and satisfaction. Communication satisfaction was defined as a positive emotional reaction to a communication episode with competence as a consequence. Subjects (N = 244) completed questionnaires after recalling a particular conflict episode. The use of integrative tactics (i.e., a style that includes use of compromise, negotiation, and expressions of trust in the partner) produced communication satisfaction and partner communication competence. The authors concluded that communication satisfaction and competence may lead to relationship satisfaction. Conversely, distributive tactics such as faulting the partner, hostile questioning, presumptive attribution, demands, and threats were inversely related to communication satisfaction and perceived communication competence.

Severity of Violence Against Women Scale (SVAW)

L. L. Marshall (1989) is currently developing the SVAW to measure physical violence in intimate relationships. Currently the scale taps six forms or types of violence: symbolic violence (e.g., hitting a wall), use of mild and moderate threats of violence, use of moderate and serious physically violent acts, and sexual violence.

The items for this scale were derived from research on abuse. The SVAW represents several improvements on the most widely used instrument, the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS;
Straus, 1979). The CTS has only ten items to measure physical violence and several items include more than one act which may vary in intensity or consequence (e.g., pushed, grabbed or shoved; hit or tried to hit with an object). To develop the SVAW, female students (n = 701) and community members (n = 236) rated each of the 47 behaviors for seriousness, aggressiveness, abusiveness, and the physical and emotional harm associated with a male doing the acts to a female. Additionally, the students rated how threatening and violent the acts were. All ratings were made on a ten-point scale. Thus, results using the SVAW represent an improvement in that women's perceptions of the severity of the violence were incorporated into its development.

The results from the student sample were submitted to factor analysis in which the scores for each item (behavior) were averaged across the ratings into a severity score. Ten factors emerged representing symbolic violence, three levels (mild, moderate, and serious) of threats of violence, five levels of actual violence (ranging from mild to life-threatening acts), and sexual violence. Ratings from the community sample were used in a confirmatory factor analysis. The same 10 dimensions emerged. Moreover, when factor scores were used, four higher-order factors emerged representing threats, attention-getting violence (e.g., grabs, pins down), physical and sexual violence.
In past research using similar students (Marshall, 1988; Marshall & Rose, 1987) few of the respondents had experienced the most serious forms of violence, but threats of differing severity could be discerned. Thus, for this study, the acts were combined to form six dimensions: use of symbolic violence, threats of mild violence, threats of serious violence, moderate physical violence, serious and life-threatening violence, and sexual violence. These new dimensions combined the 10 factors in logical ways (e.g., moderate violence included acts loading on the mild and moderate violence factors).

Respondents in the current sample rated the frequency of the 47 behaviors on four-point scales (from never to often). Females first completed the list describing how often their partners had done the act to them (See Appendix F). Then they described how often they had done each act to their partner (See Appendix G). The frequency ratings for the acts within each of the six dimensions were summed and a subscale mean was obtained. This resulted in respondents' having six scores describing their partners' use of violence (i.e., received or experienced) and six scores for their own use of violence (i.e., expressed).

Chronbach Alpha Coefficients were calculated which indicated (with one exception) acceptable internal consistency for the subscales. For the partner's acts, correlations were .68 (symbolic violence), .79 (mild
threats), .86 (moderate or serious threats), .87 (moderate violence), .54 (serious violence), and .82 (sexual violence). The coefficients for the woman's own use of violence were .75, .77, .62, .78, .52, and .02 respectively. The lower coefficient for serious violence was probably due to the inclusion of very serious and life threatening acts which were seldom endorsed. Note that the sexual violence scale for females' own behavior was totally unacceptable. This was probably because the only act females reported was having sex while they were angry. Another study (Parra, personal communication, 1989) found that both sexes reported that males exhibited sexual violence, but neither sex reported female use of the acts included in the subscale. Therefore, no analyses used self-reported sexual violence.

Procedures

Procedures for the use of human subjects were approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of North Texas. The primary investigator requested permission from professors to seek volunteers from their graduate classes. When permission was granted, the investigator visited each class. Each volunteer was given an Informed Consent Form (Appendix H) and a survey packet including a demographic section and the five instruments. The Informed Consent Form also provided a way for each person to request a summary of the results. The research was described as examining the positive and negative aspects of communication patterns, the
emotional effects of those patterns, and the very common occurrence of conflict a partner experiences regardless of the level of satisfaction. Respondents were told that their anonymity would be protected and that there were no right or wrong answers. They were advised to take the packet home, complete it, and return it to the investigator at the next designated class. Follow-up was made by returning a second time for collection of completed packets and by providing stamped and addressed envelopes for the convenience of those volunteers who still wished to complete the packet.

Explanatory paragraphs were used throughout the questionnaire to facilitate accurate completion. The paragraphs were designed to elicit a maximum of forthrightness and honesty (Rose & Marshall, 1985; Marshall & Rose, 1987). After answering the descriptive questions, the respondents were asked to complete the DAS (Spanier, 1976), and the RBI subscale (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). In subsequent sections, subjects described their behavior as they responded to items on the ICTAS (Cupach, 1982) and the MAI (Siegel, 1986), and their own as well as their partner's behavior on the SVAW (Marshall, 1988). A copy of the full questionnaire can be found in Appendix I.

Data Analysis

After collection of the data, the processing and analyses were conducted. Reliability analyses were conducted to evaluate scores on the modified instruments. Appropriate
analyses were used to evaluate the demographics, the two hypotheses, and the five research questions. The .05 level of significance was used for the inferential analyses throughout the study. Statistical analysis was conducted on the dependent variables (satisfaction, beliefs, anger, conflict styles, and forms of violence) using means, medians, and standard deviations. The demographic data are reported using frequencies and percentages.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were analyzed using a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with ANOVAs used to examine significant differences. For use as independent variables in MANOVA procedures, subjects were grouped by median-split methods on satisfaction, beliefs that conflict is destructive, and anger arousal. Research Question 1 was addressed using simple statistical frequencies.

Because of the exploratory nature of this study, especially since some of these variables have not been previously combined in an inquiry, additional procedures were used to gain understanding regarding the remaining research questions. In addition to MANOVAs, multiple regression procedures were used to answer Research Questions 2 through 5. In these analyses, each variable was allowed to enter in order of the contribution it made to explaining the variance in a dependent variable.

Research Questions 4 and 5 required that the six forms of violence show three distinct groups: no violence, threats
only, and violence. The SVAW is flexible enough statistically to allow collapsing of six factors into three. For Research Question 4 regarding received violence, subjects were classified into a no-violence group based on their reports of never receiving threats or physical violence from their partners (n = 61, 32.8%). These participants scored 1 indicating never having received any of the six forms of violence. A threats-only group was created by participants reporting they had received threats of physical violence from their partners (n = 39, 21%). This group reported scores greater than 1 on three of the six dimensions which indicated threats of violence or symbolic violence, and scores of 1 on the dimensions indicating that they had never received actual physical violence. Finally, a group of women (n = 86, 46.2%) were classified as having received actual physical violence from their partners. These participants gave scores of greater than 1 on any dimensions indicating having received actual physical violence from partners. For grouping purposes, the sexual violence dimension was ignored. Similarly, for women reporting their own violence against partners, women were separated into three groups for Research Question 5. The no-violence group (n = 71, 38.2%) consisted of those women who had never expressed threats or physical violence against their partners. In the threats-only group (n = 48, 25.8%) were women who indicated using threats or symbolic violence against their partner, but never using
violence. The physically violent group (n = 67, 36.0%) included those women who reported using actual physical violence against their partners.
CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between satisfaction and conflict for women in love relationships. The results section provides a sample description followed by findings related to the hypotheses and research questions. Since the primary goal was to answer the a priori questions as well as add to knowledge through interrelated variable themes, results of exploratory analysis are described. The results section is followed by a discussion of implications of the findings.

Results

Sample Description

Participants (N = 186) ranged in age from 22 to 55 with a mean of 34.19, standard deviation of 8.2, and a median of 34.5. The majority were of Anglo/White ethnicity (n = 169, 90.9%). There were few Asian (n = 1, .5%), Black (n = 5, 2.7%), and Hispanic (n = 7, 3.8%) women in the sample. Four women (2.2%) did not list their ethnicity. Most of the respondents considered themselves moderately religious (n = 128, 69.2%), but others were not religious at all (n = 19, 10.3%) or very religious (n = 39, 20.5%).
Respondents also described their family of origin. Most of the women reported that their parents had not divorced (n = 159, 85.9%). Among those whose parents had divorced (n = 27, 14.1%), the mean age at the time was 9.8 years. The number of siblings ranged from 0 to 6. Birth order data revealed that 15 women (8.1%) were the only child in their family of origin, 79 (42.5%) were oldest, 38 (20.4%) were somewhere in the middle, and 54 (29%) were youngest children. Most of the subjects (n = 114, 61.3%) reported that substance abuse had not been a problem in their family. However, for others, substance abuse had been a minor (n = 48, 25.8%) or serious (n = 24, 12.9%) problem.

Women's most recent relationships had ranged from 1 to 36 years with a mean of 9.97 and a median of 7 years. Most participants indicated that they liked (n = 158, 84.9%) or loved (n = 166, 89.2%) their partners very much. The number of women having children within the context of their current relationship was smaller (n = 77, 41.4%) than those who did not have children (n = 109, 58.6%).

Hypotheses and Effects of Satisfaction

The two hypotheses were addressed using an ANOVA with high and low satisfaction as the independent variable. Along with each hypothesis described below is information found using additional variables in MANOVA form. When the results of MANOVAs were significant, univariate analysis was used to determine which particular relationships were significant.
Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that women in satisfied relationships would believe that disagreement was less destructive than would those reporting less satisfaction. The hypothesis was supported by an ANOVA, $F(1,168) = 10.61$, $p < .002$. Participants who were more satisfied with their relationships believed less strongly that conflict was destructive ($M = 18.15$) than did those who were less satisfied ($M = 20.89$).

A MANOVA used to determine main effects of satisfaction and believing that disagreement is destructive on demographic variables revealed a main effect for satisfaction, Pillais $F(7,150) = 6.41$, $p < .001$, and a borderline effect for beliefs, Pillais $F(7,150) = 2.00$, $p < .06$. The beliefs effect was found on religiosity, $F(1,156) = 5.69$, $p < .01$. Those who believed more strongly that conflict is destructive reported more religiosity ($M = 2.19$) than did those whose beliefs were less strong ($M = 2.00$).

The main effect for satisfaction was found on several items. Univariate analysis revealed that satisfaction was related to age, $F(1,156) = 12.30$, $p < .001$, length of relationships, $F(1,156) = 8.20$, $p < .005$, liking, $F(1,156) = 28.44$, $p < .001$, and loving, $F(1,156) = 15.61$, $p < .001$. Those who were more satisfied were younger ($M = 32.48$), in shorter relationships ($M = 8.71$ years), liked ($M = 2.99$) and loved ($M = 3.00$) their partners more than those who were less satisfied ($M = 36.55$, 12.40, 2.67, and 2.76, respectively).
There was also a significant interaction between beliefs and satisfaction on demographic variables, Pillais $\eta^2(7,150) = 2.71, \ p < .02$. Univariate analysis revealed that the interaction was on reports of parental substance abuse, $\eta^2(1,156) = 9.22, \ p < .01$. Thus, none of the main effects were modified. Those with weakly held beliefs that conflict is destructive reported the least substance abuse by parents if they were also satisfied with their relationship ($M = 1.31$). In contrast, with the same belief strength, those who were less satisfied reported the most parental substance abuse ($M = 1.78$). Participants with strong beliefs that conflict is destructive reported moderate amounts of substance abuse in their families whether they were high ($M = 1.67$) or low ($M = 1.46$) in satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. It was predicted that women in satisfied relationships would report less anger arousal than would those in dissatisfied relationships. The hypothesis was supported in an ANOVA, $\eta^2(1,156) = 61.66, \ p < .001$. Participants who were more satisfied with their relationships reported less anger arousal ($M = 25.28$) than did those who were less satisfied ($M = 33.14$).

An ANOVA addressed the effects of satisfaction and beliefs about conflict on anger arousal. Results showed that both satisfaction, $\eta^2(1,153) = 54.57, \ p < .001$, and beliefs about conflict, $\eta^2(1,153) = 23.24, \ p < .001$, had a main effect. The effect of satisfaction was reported above.
Subjects who more strongly believed that conflict was destructive reported more anger arousal (M = 32.14) than did those whose beliefs were less strongly held (M = 26.27).

Research Questions

Research Question 1. This question addressed whether women perceive conflict between intimates to be destructive to relationships. The median of 19 on the RBI subscale (range = 8 to 34, M = 19.43) indicated that this sample did not hold strong beliefs that conflict was harmful. The highest score was 34 out of a possible 48. Seven women with scores of 8 to 10 tended to disagree with all 8 statements regarding the destructiveness of conflict. In fact, 90.3% of the women scored below the scale's midpoint of 24. By and large for this sample, beliefs that conflict is destructive were held weakly at best.

Research Question 2. The second research question addressed the relationship between specific conflict styles and satisfaction. In a stepwise multiple regression procedure using satisfaction as the dependent variable with the three conflict styles and beliefs about conflict as explanatory variables, the independent variables were allowed to enter and are reported in order of importance. Dyadic satisfaction was partially explained by destructive, constructive, and avoidant conflict styles, $R = .43$, $F(3,162) = 12.51$, $p < .001$, but not by beliefs about conflict. Thus, use of fewer destructive (beta = -.295) and avoidant tactics
(beta = -.150) and using more constructive tactics (beta = .184) explained 18.8% of the variance in dyadic satisfaction.

In a MANOVA addressing the effects of beliefs about conflict and satisfaction on conflict styles, results revealed main effects for satisfaction, Pillais $\mathcal{E}(3,160) = 8.14$, $p < .001$, and beliefs about conflict, Pillais $\mathcal{E}(3,160) = 13.22$, $p < .001$. Main effects for satisfaction were found on destructive, $F(1,162) = 18.97$, $p < .001$, and avoidant tactics, $F(1,162) = 4.71$, $p < .03$, and a borderline effect was found on constructive tactics, $F(1,162) = 3.47$, $p < .06$. These results revealed a relationship between satisfaction and conflict styles. Those reporting less satisfaction reported a higher use of destructive ($M = 34.57$) and avoidant tactics ($M = 11.09$), and a lower use of constructive tactics ($M = 21.84$). Those reporting higher satisfaction used less destructive ($M = 29.64$) and avoidant tactics ($M = 9.93$) and more constructive tactics ($M = 23.28$). Thus, the use of destructive and avoidant conflict strategies was associated with low satisfaction and a constructive conflict style was associated with high satisfaction in two different types of statistical procedures (multiple regression and MANOVA). These relationships held whether satisfaction was the dependent variable to be explained or the independent variable affecting use of conflict tactics.

The main effect for beliefs was found on destructive, $F(1,162) = 14.72$, $p < .001$, constructive, $F(1,162) = 21.57$, $p$
Participants whose beliefs about the destructiveness of conflict were not strongly held reported less use of destructive ($M = 29.84$) and avoidant tactics ($M = 9.90$), and more use of constructive tactics ($M = 23.86$) than did participants whose beliefs were held more strongly ($M = 34.35$, $M = 11.13$, and $M = 21.19$, respectively). There was no significant interaction between beliefs and satisfaction.

In a MANOVA addressing anger and satisfaction on conflict strategies, a main effect for satisfaction was again found, Pillais $\varepsilon(3,148) = 3.50$, $p < .01$. Anger arousal also had a main effect, Pillais $\varepsilon(3,148) = 4.37$, $p < .001$. These main effects were only found on destructive conflict tactics, $F(1,150) = 7.44$, $p < .01$, $F(1,150) = 11.32$, $p < .001$, respectively. Participants who were lower in anger arousal used destructive conflict tactics less ($M = 29.70$) than did those with higher anger arousal ($M = 34.28$). Women who were less satisfied used destructive tactics more ($M = 34.64$) than did those who were more satisfied ($M = 29.86$). The main effects for satisfaction on constructive and avoidant tactics were not replicated in this analysis. There was no significant interaction between satisfaction and anger arousal.

**Research Question 3.** The study investigated the relationship between dyadic satisfaction and violence. Both received and expressed violence are discussed with reference
to satisfaction, beliefs about conflict, and anger arousal. For use as an independent variable in MANOVA procedures, participants were grouped by whether they had received or expressed no violence, threats only, or actual physical violence. When used as a continuous variable, scores on the six forms of received and five forms of expressed violence were utilized. (Note that females did not report expressing behaviors on the sexual violence subscale.) Additionally, for two regression procedures, the forms of violence were summed so that the total amount of received and expressed violence could be examined.

In a regression procedure, satisfaction was used as the dependent variable with all six forms of received violence as explanatory variables. Although each independent variable was allowed to enter in order of importance, only partners' mild threats emerged to explain almost 14% of the variance, $R^2 = .37$, $F(1,167) = 26.88$, $p < .001$, in dyadic satisfaction. Thus, partners' increasing use of mild threats to women in this sample was associated with lower satisfaction ($\beta = -.372$).

When beliefs about conflict and satisfaction were used as independent variables to determine effects on the six forms of violence done by women's partners, only satisfaction produced an effect, Pillai's $F(6,160) = 2.79$, $p < .02$. This was found in the univariate analysis on women receiving symbolic violence, $F(1,165) = 10.32$, $p < .01$, mild threats,
£(1,165) = 9.36,  \( p < .01 \), moderate violence, £(1,165) = 12.46,  \( p < .001 \), and sexual violence, £(1,165) = 6.22,  \( p < .02 \), from their partners. Women reporting less satisfaction also reported receiving more violence (\( M = 1.51, 1.49, 1.16, 1.09 \), respectively) than did those who were more satisfied (\( M = 1.21, 1.21, 1.05, 1.02 \), respectively). No effects were found on threats of moderate violence or serious violence. There was no effect for beliefs about conflict, and there were no interactions on the violence women had received from their partners.

A second MANOVA was conducted to determine whether satisfaction and anger arousal interacted affecting the receipt of violence from partners. The effect of satisfaction was replicated, Pillais £(6,148) = 2.77,  \( p < .01 \), on the same four forms of violence. There was no effect for anger arousal, and no significant interaction was found.

In a multiple regression for women's expression of violence, satisfaction was used as a dependent variable and the five forms of expressed violence were used as independent variables. None of the variables emerged as a significant predictor of women's satisfaction.

When beliefs about conflict and satisfaction were used as independent variables in MANOVA procedures, there were no significant main effects on a woman's expressing violence toward her partner. However, there was an interaction, Pillais £(5,161) = 2.67,  \( p < .03 \). Univariate analysis
revealed that the interaction was on women's use of mild threats $\chi^2(1,165) = 9.32, p < .003$, and serious violence $\chi^2(1,165) = 4.17, p < .05$. Interestingly, those subjects who were low in satisfaction and believed less strongly that conflict is destructive reported using mild threats most often ($M = 1.38$). Those who reported high satisfaction and believed more strongly that conflict is destructive used the second highest level of mild threats ($M = 1.30$). Those reporting low satisfaction with relatively stronger beliefs used a moderate amount of mild threats ($M = 1.23$) against their partners. Women high in satisfaction with weak beliefs that conflict is destructive reported using the least amount of mild threats ($M = 1.11$). Thus, use of mild threats was associated with low satisfaction and weak beliefs that disagreement is destructive and with high satisfaction and more strongly held beliefs.

Results showed a different pattern for the interaction on women's use of serious violence. Participants reported using the most serious violence ($M = 1.07$) when satisfaction was high and they strongly believed conflict was destructive. The least amount of serious violence ($M = 1.01$) was reported by subjects with high satisfaction with weak beliefs that conflict is destructive. When subjects reported low satisfaction with either weak or strong beliefs about conflict, a moderate amount of serious violence was expressed ($M = 1.04, 1.03$, respectively). Thus, serious violence was
associated with high satisfaction and strongly held beliefs that conflict is destructive as well as with low satisfaction with either weak or strong beliefs about conflict.

In a MANOVA with anger arousal and satisfaction on expressed violence, there was a significant interaction, Pillais $F(5,149) = 2.45, p < .04$, but no main effects. Univariate analysis revealed that the interaction was found only on participants' use of serious violence against their partners, $F(1,153) = 6.17, p < .02$. Serious violence was reported most ($M = 1.08$) by women high in satisfaction and anger arousal. In contrast, serious violence was reported least ($M = 1.02$) by participants with high satisfaction and low anger arousal. Women whose relationships were lower in satisfaction and who were low ($M = 1.05$) or high ($M = 1.03$) in anger arousal, reported using moderate amounts of serious violence against their partners. Thus, serious violence was associated with satisfaction, but the direction of the impact depended upon the women's anger arousal.

**Research Question 4.** This question addressed the relationship between violence received from a partner, anger arousal, and conflict styles. First, multiple regression procedures were conducted using total received violence as the dependent variable with satisfaction, beliefs about conflict, anger arousal, and conflict tactics as independent variables. The receipt of violence was partially explained by satisfaction, avoidance conflict tactics, and beliefs that
conflict is destructive, $r = .50$, $F(3, 150) = 17.02$, $p < .001$. Thus, low satisfaction (beta = -.267), avoidance tactics (beta = .270), and strongly held beliefs that conflict is destructive (beta = .178) explained nearly 26% of the variance in women receiving violence from their partners.

To determine whether women in any of three groupings (those who had received no violence, threats, or violence) differed in their use of conflict tactics, a MANOVA was conducted in which anger arousal was the second independent variable. An effect for anger arousal, Pillais $F(3, 151) = 6.31$, $p < .001$, replicated the finding described above on use of destructive tactics. Additionally, a main effect for received violence was found, Pillais $F(6, 304) = 5.88$, $p < .001$. Univariate analysis revealed that women who had received physical violence used more destructive tactics ($M = 34.84$) than did those who received threats ($M = 32.06$) or no violence ($M = 27.78$) from their partners, $F(2, 153) = 14.09$, $p < .001$. The physical violence group also reported using more avoidant tactics ($M = 11.41$) than did those who had only received threats ($M = 9.76$) or no violence ($M = 9.76$), $F(2, 153) = 6.62$, $p < .002$. These results show that the use of destructive and avoidant tactics was associated with receiving physical violence from a partner.

There was also a significant interaction between the violence grouping and anger arousal, Pillais $F(6, 304) = 2.35$, $p < .04$. This interaction did not modify the earlier effect
for anger arousal on destructive tactics. Univariate analysis revealed that the interaction was found on avoidance tactics, $F(2,153) = 4.59, p < .02$. With low anger arousal, women who had received physical violence reported the highest use of avoidance tactics ($M = 12.14$). With low anger arousal, those who had received threats reported less use of avoidant tactics ($M = 8.84$) than did women reporting no violence ($M = 9.49$). With high anger arousal, a moderate use of avoidance tactics was reported by those who had received no violence ($M = 10.40$), threats ($M = 10.93$), or physical violence ($M = 10.98$). Avoidant tactics, then, were associated with all three groups at a moderate amount when they were high in anger arousal. However, with lower anger arousal, avoidant tactics were most closely associated with receiving physical violence and least associated with having received threats.

**Research Question 5.** The final question addressed the relationship between a woman's use of violence toward her partner, anger arousal and conflict styles. Multiple regression procedures used expressed violence as the dependent variable and satisfaction, beliefs about conflict, anger arousal, and conflict styles as independent variables. A woman's expression of violence against her partner was partially explained by destructive, constructive, and avoidant conflict strategies and beliefs that conflict is destructive, $R = .63, F(4,149) = 24.18, p < .001$, but not by
satisfaction or anger arousal. Thus, the use of destructive (beta = .479), constructive (beta = .321), and avoidant tactics (beta = .155), as well as stronger beliefs that conflict is destructive (beta = .162) explained more than 39% of the variance in a woman’s expression of violence.

A MANOVA was used to examine the effects of the groups associated with expressing violence and anger arousal on conflict strategies. The MANOVA revealed a main effect for anger arousal, Pillais $\mathcal{E}(3,151) = 6.81$, $p < .001$. In addition to the effect for higher anger arousal on the use of destructive tactics described earlier, univariate analysis showed an effect on constructive tactics, $\mathcal{E}(1,153) = 5.96$, $p < .02$. Those lower in anger arousal used more constructive tactics ($M = 23.23$) than did women higher in anger arousal ($M = 21.77$). There was also a main effect for violence group, Pillais $\mathcal{E}(6,304) = 14.59$, $p < .001$, on destructive tactics, $\mathcal{E}(2,153) = 50.40$, $p < .001$. Those who had expressed physical violence reported more usage of destructive tactics ($M = 36.93$) than did women reporting that they had used threats ($M = 32.51$) or no violence ($M = 26.60$) against their partners. These findings show that low anger arousal is sometimes associated with the use of constructive tactics. Also, expressing physical violence was associated with the use of destructive tactics. There was no significant interaction between violence group and anger arousal.
Discussion

The results provided support for the hypotheses. Additionally, exploratory analysis of the data regarding the research questions led to several expected and reasonable conclusions and implications as well as counterintuitive findings with unclear or surprising implications for therapy. Before discussing specific results, several limitations of the research must be addressed.

The satisfaction grouping should be regarded with some caution. Overall, women in this sample described their relationships as highly satisfying. This is evident when recognizing that the halfway point (or potential median) for the scale was 105, but the median for the sample was 141. Thus, even women scoring below the median were relatively satisfied in spite of being assigned to the low satisfaction group. Perhaps a more accurate view of the relationship between satisfaction and other variables in this study would have been obtained with a three-way grouping for satisfaction (low, medium, and high) rather than the two-way grouping reported here. It is likely that women who seek therapy would have a much lower level of satisfaction than that of this sample. Thus, tendencies found in the analyses could be exacerbated among women who would be seen in therapy. Due to this practical implication, the discussion is presented from the perspective of women who were in the low satisfaction group.
Several difficulties arose from the beliefs-about-conflict variable. First, the results related to this variable were cumbersome to discuss. For example, ratings were made on a scale from strongly believing the statement was false to strongly believing the statement was true. Low scores on an item indicated disagreement with a statement which supported the idea that disagreement is destructive. Thus, lower scores on the scale indicated that women believed less strongly that disagreement is destructive than those with higher scores. The two groups were formed based upon the median. Therefore, it was necessary to use the terminology of strongly held beliefs versus less strongly held beliefs or strong versus weak beliefs to describe the groups. This wording is awkward and might be confusing at times.

Another difficulty with the beliefs-about-conflict variable relates to the relatively low median of 19. In comparison, the scale's midpoint was 28. Therefore, in this study, even women who scored higher than the actual median reported only a moderate endorsement of statements indicating that disagreement is destructive. Thus, there was a relatively low agreement with the items among both groups. Although this is consistent with published findings (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), weakly holding beliefs that conflict is destructive is the desired end of the scale. It is also the desired outcome of relationship therapy. Nonetheless, the
results provide information about the potential importance of this variable.

A further caution about the beliefs-about-conflict variable is in order. Low scores may be partially an artifact of sampling. About one-third to one-half of the sample came from graduate classes in Counselor Education and Psychology. Due to their training, these women probably recognize the inevitability of conflict and its potential for improving as well as destroying a relationship. Thus, results might be different for a less therapeutically sophisticated sample. Again, however, in spite of the shortcomings, the results yield some insight. Women entering relationship counseling might be expected to have a stronger endorsement of such beliefs. Anecdotal evidence from therapy supports this view. For example, some clients may believe that they should not be arguing at all and appear to resist the idea that conflict is inevitable and can be constructive. Thus, this limitation should be regarded similarly to the satisfaction results in that effects that would be encountered in a therapy setting could be stronger.

A third limitation of the study is associated with the violence variables. Although there was some violence reported by women in this sample, the means on the subscales indicate that, overall, women reported very little violence in their relationships. However, the means should not be considered meaningful. It has been pointed out in the
violence literature that a woman being hit twice in six months and never before could rate that "often," whereas, if a different woman had been hit many times before but only twice in the last six months, she might rate it as "rarely" (Marshall and Rose, 1987). In spite of the low absolute level of violence reported, it was still clear that there was some violence in the relationships of most women in this sample. It could be expected that women entering therapy would be experiencing more violence (Telch & Lindquist, 1984; Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981) than were those in this study. This is not an unreasonable expectation given the prevalence of intimate physical violence in this culture (Straus & Gelles, 1986). Thus, findings from this study relating to violence can be expected to apply to the general population as well as to people in dysfunctional relationships.

Even with the problems, the results support and extend the previous knowledge base about relevant therapeutic issues and provide tentative descriptions of women who come to therapy. Findings regarding satisfaction, beliefs about conflict, anger arousal, and conflict styles are discussed more thoroughly in the following paragraphs. These are followed by a discussion of the relationship of received and expressed violence with the primary variables.

Analysis of the demographic data suggested that a female client with low satisfaction would be older, would have been in a relationship for a longer time, and would both like and
love her partner less than this sample of nonclinical women. These factors cannot be changed by a therapist but may give clues for treatment planning in order to improve satisfaction. For example, the longer a woman is in a relationship, the more deeply established are her communication patterns and the more difficult the patterns are to change. If such patterns are dysfunctional, feelings about her partner may be affected (Gaelick, et al., 1985; Markman, et al., 1984; Noller, 1980) and less liking and loving of a partner could result. Thus, the length of women's relationships can be an indicator that treatment should include addressing the habitual patterns so that loving and liking her partner could be increased.

Collectively, the findings show that women who reported lower satisfaction also reported more strongly held beliefs that conflict is destructive, higher anger arousal, and less use of constructive strategies with more use of destructive and avoidant tactics. Some of these factors may represent the most common symptoms presented in counseling (Veroff, et al., 1981). Each finding is discussed below.

It was not surprising that low satisfaction was associated with strongly held beliefs that conflict is destructive. One of the main threats to relationship happiness has been identified as holding irrational conflict beliefs (Ellis, 1976). It is reasonable to expect that women who enter therapy may hold such beliefs. Although therapy
may be entered in order to improve relational satisfaction, lack of improvement has been associated with maintaining such beliefs (Eidelson & Epstein, 1981). Consequently, it would be reasonable for the therapist to challenge such beliefs. A woman could be helped to consider the possibility that conflict could be helpful if attempts at resolution were done in a constructive manner.

Regression analysis procedures showed that satisfaction could be partially explained by use of all three conflict tactics. That is, use of more destructive and avoidant tactics and fewer constructive tactics were predictors of lower satisfaction. This finding supports other research indicating that low satisfaction is associated with dysfunctional conflict styles (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987; Gottman, 1979; Margolin, et al., 1988). Further, it is reasonable to expect that use of constructive tactics may increase relational satisfaction and destructive and avoidant tactics may hinder such satisfaction (Averill, 1983; Bach & Wyden, 1969; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Margolin, 1985). Implications for therapy are clear. In order for a woman's relational happiness to be increased, the therapist could teach her new strategies for resolving conflict in a constructive manner (Gottman, 1979; Stuart, 1980). When a woman uses such constructive strategies, she may enhance her own relationship satisfaction.
For women in this study, strongly held beliefs that disagreement is destructive was associated with the use of more destructive and avoidant conflict strategies. The strategies a person uses to communicate may depend on congruence with inner beliefs (Yelsma, 1981); that is, behavior may correspond with cognitions. Therefore, if a woman believes that conflict is constructive, she may be more likely to use constructive tactics. However, when a woman believes that conflict is destructive, she may be more likely to use destructive and avoidant tactics. Additionally, the use of destructive and avoidant tactics is less likely to be effective in resolving conflict. The lack of resolution could increase the strength of the negative beliefs about conflict which, in turn, could exacerbate the use of destructive and avoidant tactics. In this way, a strong feedback loop may be developed. Therapeutic intervention to change the beliefs could result in the decreased use of ineffective strategies which might increase the likelihood of resolution. Experience in the resolution of conflict would strengthen the new beliefs that conflict could be constructive and reinforce the use of effective strategies. The earlier dysfunctional feedback loop would thus be replaced with a functional feedback loop supporting the use of effective behaviors.

It was not surprising that strongly held conflict beliefs were associated with higher anger arousal. It was
also not surprising that a woman with higher anger arousal would be more likely to use destructive conflict tactics. Women with strongly held conflict beliefs may show more hostility to their partners (Gaelick, et al., 1985) and may do so using destructive tactics (Gottman, 1979; Gottman, et al., 1972). If a woman believes disagreement is destructive, conflict may not get resolved. It is likely that unresolved conflict would lead to frustration when the content of the conflict is encountered. Such frustration may strengthen the initial beliefs and lead to increased anger. Increased anger arousal may then result in use of destructive tactics in order that the woman may address her anger. Thus, another strong feedback loop may have developed. From a therapeutic view, expressing anger in a cathartic manner would be unacceptable and may be destructive to the relationship. Catharsis could increase in intensity or lead to aggression (Berkowitz, 1983; Straus, 1974). However, it has been shown that expressing one's anger in a constructive manner can actually be helpful (Averill, 1982; Coser, 1956; Margolin, 1985; Raush, et al., 1974). Thus, teaching constructive methods of resolving conflict and challenging beliefs could both be important therapeutic interventions. When beliefs are challenged so that a woman can begin to believe that conflict is permissible and functional, she could then be taught to resolve conflict in a constructive manner, and thereby decrease her frustration and anger. Again, it can be
It has been argued that high anger arousal expressed in destructive ways can be harmful to a relationship in part because of the potential for anger and aggression to escalate and for violence to ensue (Berkowitz, 1983; Mace, 1976; Straus, 1974). Therefore, it is important to address violence factors as well.

It was expected that all forms of violence received from a partner would impact a woman's satisfaction. Surprisingly, when using multiple regression procedures, only receiving mild threats and not the more serious forms of violence were associated with low satisfaction. However, results from the MANOVA showed that women who were lower in satisfaction had received more symbolic violence, mild threats, moderate and sexual violence. Receiving physical violence has been positively related to conflictual episodes and low satisfaction in the literature (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). In a therapeutic setting, low satisfaction for those in violent relationships may not differ from that of conflictual but nonviolent partners (Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1981). This suggests that a therapist may use interventions with a violent couple similar to those used with other distressed couples. However, it would be most important to determine whether the woman had received violence. If violence exists, the therapist would be able to contract with her partner to
stop such violence, or provide ways for the woman to keep herself safe from it.

Violent couples have additional characteristics which are similar to those of other couples in therapy (e.g., dissatisfaction, disagreement, and communication problems; Telch & Lindquist, 1984). In the present study, low satisfaction was only one of several variables related to receiving violence. A partner's violence was also related to women's use of avoidant tactics and stronger beliefs that conflict is destructive. Once again, the impact of beliefs about conflict and particular tactics was found in the results.

It was surprising that women who had received physical violence used more destructive tactics than did those receiving no violence or threats of violence. The reason for the finding that these women used avoidant tactics was more obvious. It would be expected that a woman who had previously received physical violence would attempt to avoid conflict perhaps to decrease her chances of getting hurt. It would seem that using destructive strategies could escalate the potential for receiving further violence (Straus, 1974). Women who had previously received physical violence reported using both tactics more. This suggests the possibility that the use of these two tactics may not be mutually exclusive. Such a finding may be similar to results from a study conducted by Margolin, et al., (1988) in which wives of
physically aggressive men initially escalated negative behaviors in an offensive way, then decreased them over time, attempting to avoid further escalation. This escalation/de-escalation behavior using first engaging then avoidant tactics was equated by the authors to Walker's (1984) tension-building stage of the violence cycle. Women may first try to resolve a disagreement through use of destructive tactics (i.e., use of offensive negative behaviors). However, when recognizing the growing tension from her partner, a woman may try to prevent his further aggravation by shifting to avoidant tactics.

Margolin, et al. (1988) further suggested that the wives' "backing down" behavior (i.e., use of avoidant tactics) after having escalated conflict may provide negative reinforcement to partners and inadvertently increase the likelihood of receiving violence. This view may appear to place responsibility for victimization on the woman. That is, since women reported using both destructive and avoidant tactics when previously having received violence from their partners, they may have inadvertently reinforced their partner and increased the likelihood of violence occurring. Systemic theorists suggest that such a duality of responsibility exists for the escalation and maintenance of occurring violence (Cook & Cook, 1984; Margolin, 1979; Watzlavick, et al., 1974). If this view is adopted, therapists would include couple therapy rather than
individual therapy in their treatment plan. In contrast, Walker (1979) suggested that the abusive partner should accept full responsibility for the violence and that women as victims were not a party to inducing the violence. She further argued that individual therapy should be the treatment of choice. Since there are clearly two views of responsibility and appropriate treatment, it would be important for therapists to be aware of their own philosophy.

Some women may use only avoidant tactics when receiving violence rather than using both destructive and avoidant tactics. Such behavior could be associated with the woman's own low anger arousal. In this study, the use of avoidant tactics was modified by an interaction between anger arousal and experiencing violence from a partner. With high anger arousal, whether a woman received violence or not had little effect on her use of avoidant tactics. With low anger arousal and no violence or threats from partners, women used fewer avoidant tactics. But if a woman was low in anger arousal and had previously received physical violence, she used more avoidant tactics than any other group. Perhaps women who feel little anger themselves are more fearful (and hence avoidant) because of a history of receiving violence. If such a woman does seek therapy, she may not initially identify the abuse for fear of further violence (Lawson, 1989). If the violent spouse attends the initial therapy session with her, anecdotal evidence shows that their
The presenting problem usually concerns some other aspect of their relationship (e.g., children, in-laws, or finances). The woman may use avoidant tactics even in a therapy session by being vague, quiet, or fearful when the therapist asks about how the couple resolves conflict. If this occurs, it would be useful for the therapist to elicit information from the client to determine whether violence has occurred. The therapist should target violence as an issue when it has been present or is suspected in a relationship.

In contrast to receiving violence, women who express violence to their partners appeared to use all three conflict tactics (destructive, avoidant, and constructive). Women may use any strategy available to them when trying to resolve conflict with their partners. It could be that women use all available strategies before resorting to violence. This raises the possibility that, for women, violence may be a tactic of "last resort." Violence by women may occur when all other strategies have failed.

Additionally, using violence as a last resort may strengthen a woman's strongly held beliefs that conflict is destructive. The results showed that expressed violence was explained in part by such strongly held beliefs. If after using several conflict tactics, including constructive tactics, there has been no improvement or resolution, beliefs that conflict is destructive may be reinforced. This finding supports other results which suggests that the more violence
that occurs between partners, the more women believe that disagreement is destructive (Gaelick, 1985).

What was surprising was that neither anger arousal nor satisfaction were related to women's own use of violence. Also, regression analysis showed that none of the forms of expressed violence were related to satisfaction. Thus, for these women, satisfaction and their own anger arousal was independent of their use of violence. This again implies that women may use violence as a conflict strategy of last resort rather than because they are angry or dissatisfied.

Even though forms of expressed violence did not explain satisfaction or anger arousal, these factors had impact on two forms of violence. The resulting interactions were counterintuitive. Women used more mild threats or serious violence when they strongly believed that conflict is destructive or if they were lower in anger arousal when they were relatively high in satisfaction. It was surprising that satisfaction was associated with the use of threats and serious violence particularly with low anger arousal. This finding does not support the view that as anger increases so does the likelihood of violence (Straus, 1974). Women reported that they expressed serious violence even though they were low in anger arousal and high in satisfaction. Perhaps such incidents are isolated, and for the most part a woman does not use violence with her partner. Alternatively, although low in anger she may be frustrated by her partner's
unresponsiveness, and may express violence in order to elicit a reaction (Margolin, 1985). It may also be argued that hostile expressions (violence) are used more easily when a woman is more satisfied with her relationship (Raush, et al., 1974). In such a situation, women may trust that their partners will not retaliate by harming them. There are no clear explanations for this finding.

Therapeutic implications for women who express violence include assessing the beliefs about conflict and the dysfunctional conflict tactics (Margolin, 1985) and subsequently using the appropriate treatment interventions. The assessment should include determining the strategy a woman might use as a last resort—effort to resolve conflict. If the partner is included in the session, similar assessment applies. If violence is identified, the therapist could contract with the partners to stop the violence. Therapeutic interventions suggested by these findings include challenging beliefs and teaching constructive conflict skills in a manner similar to that used with nonviolent partners.

It would seem important for both partners in a violent relationship to appear in session because of the likely unsuccessfulness of a woman's use of constructive tactics otherwise. The therapist could train both partners to use constructive conflict resolution tactics rather than the woman only. If such a change could occur, last-resort methods involving her use of violence with him might be
avoided. Additionally, the therapist could challenge both partners' beliefs about conflict. The couple could understand that it is permissible to fight using constructive tactics.

Conclusions

The four primary variables (satisfaction, conflict beliefs, anger arousal, and conflict styles) appear to be highly interrelated, with each affecting the other. These relationships may be multiplicative in nature. For example, satisfaction had both direct and indirect effects on conflict tactics. Low satisfaction and conflict beliefs directly affected the conflict styles. Low satisfaction also directly affected the beliefs which in turn indirectly affected the tactics. Low satisfaction also directly affected anger arousal which directly affected the tactics. Received and expressed violence were also related to the other variables. The results suggest that the variables used in this study should be examined through the use of a path analytic model designed to determine joint causality as well as direct and indirect effects of the variables on each other and their relationships to functional or adaptive dyadic relationships.

Results of the study also suggest that it is logical to expect a woman who seeks relationship counseling to be low in satisfaction, have strongly held beliefs that disagreement is destructive, use more destructive and avoidant tactics and fewer constructive tactics, have a higher level of anger
arousal, and perhaps have received or expressed one or more forms of violence. Certain therapeutic techniques available for relationship counselors are strongly indicated from the results. However, the therapist should first decide whether to see a woman individually, or the couple together. The cognitive-behavioral techniques of contracting to stop violence if it exists, challenging beliefs about conflict, and teaching constructive conflict methods could then be used regardless of the treatment modality. These techniques could assist a partner(s) in increasing relational satisfaction, decreasing anger arousal, and stopping the violence.
APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INQUIRY
APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAPHIC INQUIRY

___ Last 4 digits of social security number

___ Age

___ Ethnicity:  
1 = Anglo/White
2 = Asian
3 = Black
4 = Hispanic
5 = Other

___ Were you born in the United States?
1 = No
2 = Yes

___ How religious do you consider yourself to be?
1 = Not religious at all
2 = Moderately religious
3 = Very religious

___ Were your parents divorced during the time you were growing up?
1 = No
2 = Yes

___ If so, how old were you when they divorced?

___ How many brothers and sisters did you have?

___ What was your birth order?
1 = Only
2 = Oldest
3 = Somewhere in middle
4 = Youngest

___ As a child, was substance abuse (alcohol or drugs) a problem for anyone in your family?
1 = No
2 = Yes

___ Currently:
1 = Not in relationship now
2 = In a relationship now

___ Length of your most recent relationship (in years)

___ If your most recent relationship has terminated, did it end in the last 12 months?
1 = No
2 = Yes
How serious was (is) that relationship?
1=Not serious
2=Moderately serious
3=Very serious

How old were you when this relationship started?
(Number of years)

How much did (do) you like your partner in your most recent relationship?
1=Very little
2=An average amount
3=Very much

How much did (do) you love your partner in your most recent relationship?
1=Very little
2=An average amount
3=Very much

Did you have any children with your partner in this relationship?
1=No
2=Yes
APPENDIX B

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE
**APPENDIX B**

**DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE**

Please select the number corresponding with the description which best describes the agreement or disagreement between you and your partner on each issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Almost</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Almost</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Handling family finances
- Matters of recreation
- Religious matters
- Demonstrations of affection
- Friends
- Sex relations
- Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)
- Philosophy of life
- Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws
- Aims, goals, and things believed important
- Amount of time spent together
- Making major decisions
- Household tasks
- Leisure time interests and activities
- Career decisions

Using this scale, please respond to the following questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the time</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>More often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?
- How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?
- In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?
- Do you confide in your mate?
- Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)
- How often do you and your partner quarrel?
- How often do you and your mate "get on each other’s nerves"?
- Do you kiss your mate?
Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

The numbers below represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the number which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Extremely Fairly A little Happy Very Extremely Perfect
Unhappy Unhappy Unhappy Happy Happy

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Less than Once Once Once More
once a or twice or twice a day Often
month a month a week

___ Have a stimulating exchange of ideas
___ Laugh together
___ Calmly discuss something
___ Work together on a project

___ Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

1=I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
2=I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
3=I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
4=It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
5=My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.
APPENDIX C

RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS INVENTORY
APPENDIX C

Relationship Beliefs Inventory

Disagreement is Destructive Subscale

The following statements describe ways a person might feel in a relationship. Please mark the space next to each statement according to how strongly you believe it is true or false for you. The meaning of each number is as follows:

1 = I strongly believe that the statement is false.
2 = I believe that the statement is false.
3 = I believe that the statement is probably false, or more false than true.
4 = I believe that the statement is probably true, or more true than false.
5 = I believe that the statement is true.
6 = I strongly believe that the statement is true.

If my partner expresses disagreement with my ideas, he probably does not think highly of me.

I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me.

I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine.

I like it when my partner presents views different from mine.

I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way.

I cannot tolerate it when my partner argues with me.

When my partner and I disagree, I feel like our relationship is falling apart.

I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we argue.
APPENDIX D

MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANGER INVENTORY
APPENDIX D
MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANGER INVENTORY

Read each statement and select a number to place in the blank that is most descriptive of you. There are no right or wrong answers.

Completely undescriptive 1 2 3 4 5 Completely descriptive of me

I tend to get angry at my partner more frequently than most people do at theirs.

Other people seem to get angrier at their partner than I do at mine.

I harbor grudges that I don't tell him about.

I try to get even when I'm angry with him.

I am secretly quite critical of my partner.

It is easy for him to make me angry.

When I am angry with my partner, I let him know.

I have met people who are supposed to be experts who are no better with their partners than I am with mine.

I get angry with my partner almost every day.

I often feel angrier than I think I should.

I feel guilty about expressing my anger to my partner.

When I'm angry with my partner, I take it out on whoever is around.

My partner has habits that annoy and bother me very much.

I am surprised at how often I feel angry at him.

Once I let him know I'm angry, I can put it out of my mind.

My partner talks about me behind my back.

At times I get angry at him for no specific reason.

I can make myself angry about something he did in the past just by thinking about it.

Even after I have expressed my anger, I have trouble forgetting about it.
When I hide my anger from my partner, I think about it for a long time.

My partner bothers me by just being around.

When I get angry at him, I stay angry for hours.

When I hide my anger from my partner, I forget about it pretty quickly.

I try to talk over problems with my partner without letting him know I'm angry.

When I get angry at my partner, I calm down faster than most people I know.

I get so angry with my partner, I feel like I might lose control.

If my partner really knew how I felt, I would be considered a hard person to get along with.

I am on my guard when he is friendlier than I expect.

It is difficult for me to let my partner know that I'm angry.

I get angry when:

- my partner lets me down.
- he is unfair.
- my plans get blocked.
- he delays me.
- he embarrasses me.
- he gives me orders.
- he acts incompetent.
- I do something stupid.
- he gives me no credit for something I've done.
APPENDIX E

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT TACTICS AND STRATEGIES SCALE
APPENDIX E

INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT TACTICS AND STRATEGIES SCALE

Please use the following response scale when responding:

1  2  3  4
Never  Once or A Few Often
rarely times

HOW OFTEN IN CONFLICT WITH YOUR PARTNER DO YOU:

Provide information.

Try to change the subject.

Passively comply.

Cry.

Insult the other person.

Calmly discuss the issue.

Avoid the other person.

Plead with the other person.

Pout.

Use threats.

Throw something.

Use humor.

Get information from the other person.

Shout.

Compromise with the other person.

Be sarcastic.

Avoid the issue.

Hit the other person.

Discuss procedures for handling the dispute.

Lay hints.

Trick the other person.

Explore alternative solutions.

Show affection by holding or kissing the other person.

Make the other person feel guilty.

Try to embarrass the other person.

Pretend to be hurt by the other person.

Try to postpone the issue as long as possible.

Seek a mutually beneficial solution.

Act defensive.

Tease the other person.

Punish the other person.

Cooperate with the other person.

Attempt to win the argument at all costs.

Ignore the issue.

Give in and let the other person win.

Bargain with the other person.

Exploit the other person.

Discuss the matter openly.

Be hostile.

Reward the other person.

Get angry.

Try to make the other person jealous.

Flatter the other person.
Lose your temper.
Establish rules for arguing.
Escalate the issue.
Negotiate with the other person.
Criticize the other person.
Seek areas of agreement.
Intimidate the other person.
Call the other person vulgar names.
Express your trust in the other person.
Leave the room or area.
Use a calm, quiet voice to tone the dispute down.
Use evidence or outside sources to support your position.
Ask him to explain his position.
APPENDIX F

SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SCALE (RECEIVED)
APPENDIX F

SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SCALE (RECEIVED)

For each behavior below write a number from 1 to 4 to indicate how often in this relationship your partner has done this to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Once or rarely</td>
<td>A few times</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MY PARTNER HAS:

- acted like he wanted to kill me
- shaken his fist at me
- thrown objects at me
- slapped me around on my face and head
- threatened to harm or damage things I care about
- slapped me with the palm of his hand
- hit me with an object
- used a club-like object on me
- used an object on me in a sexual way
- threatened me with knives or guns
- burned me with something
- scratched me
- grabbed me suddenly or forcefully
- demanded sex whether I wanted to or not
- thrown, smashed, or broken an object
- driven dangerously with me in the car
- kicked me
- made me have anal sex against my will
- pushed or shoved me
- shaken or roughly handled me
- made threatening gestures or faces at me
- bitten me
- threatened to kill himself
- threatened to destroy property
- hit or kicked a wall, door or furniture
- choked me
- threatened to hurt me
- held me down, pinning me down
- physically forced me to have sex
- stomped on me
- threatened to kill me
- threatened me with a club-like object
- shaken his finger at me
- threatened me with a weapon
- twisted my arm
- acted like a bully toward me
- threatened someone I care about
- destroyed something belonging to me
- had sex with me while he was angry
- slapped me with the back of his hand
- beaten me up
- made me have oral sex against my will
- punched me
- spanked me
- used a knife or gun on me
- made me have sexual intercourse against my will
- pulled my hair
APPENDIX G

SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SCALE (EXPRESED)
APPENDIX G

SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SCALE (EXPRESSED)

For each behavior below write a number from 1 to 4 to indicate how often you have done this to your partner.

1  2  3  4
Never  Once or A few Often
rarely times

WITH MY PARTNER I HAVE:
- acted like I want to kill him
- shaken my fist at him
- thrown objects at him
- slapped him around his face and head
- threatened to harm or damage things he cares about
- slapped him with the palm of my hand
- hit him with an object
- used a club-like object on him
- used an object on him in a sexual way
- threatened him with a knife or gun
- burned him with something
- scratched him
- grabbed him suddenly or forcefully
- demanded sex whether he wanted to or not
- thrown, smashed, or broken an object
- driven dangerously with him in the car
- kicked him
- made him have anal sex against his will
- pushed or shoved him
- shaken or roughly handled him
- made threatening gestures or faces at him
- bitten him
- threatened to kill myself
- threatened to destroy property
- hit or kicked a wall, door or furniture
- choked him
- threatened to hurt him
- held him down, or pinned him down
- physically forced him to have sex
- stomped on him
- threatened to kill him
- threatened him with a club-like object
- shaken a finger at him
- threatened him with a weapon
- twisted his arm
- acted like a bully toward him
- threatened someone he cares about
- destroyed something belonging to him
- had sex with him while I was angry
- slapped him with the back of my hand
- beaten him up
- made him have oral sex against his will
- punched him
- spanked him
- used a knife or gun on him
- made him have sexual intercourse against his will
- pulled his hair
APPENDIX H

INFORMED CONSENT FORM
APPENDIX H

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The focus of this research examines aspects of individuals and relationships that have not been looked at together before. The study deals with positive and negative aspects of communication patterns and the emotional effects of those patterns. It also examines the very common occurrence of conflict that couples experience regardless of their level of satisfaction. It is possible that thinking about such things and trying to describe your feelings, perceptions, and behaviors, as well as those of your partner, may result in both negative and positive feelings. For example, while completing the questionnaire, you may feel sad, angry, or irritated at times, or you may feel good. In either case, you are free to withdraw at any time.

You are eligible for participation in this research if you have been a partner in a heterosexual love relationship lasting at least one year and which has occurred within the past 12 months. This relationship will have been one of a non-familial nature, where there were opportunities for sexual expression, and where mostly there was an opportunity for daily contact. Please be sure not to identify yourself in any way on the questionnaire. Great care will be taken to ensure your confidentiality. A numbering system will be used to protect your anonymity. The information gathered from you will be combined with that of others in the reporting of results.

Should you have any questions concerning the procedures used in the study or your feelings about answering the questions, please call Lee Smith, Dr. Byron Medler, or Dr. Linda Marshall at the numbers given below.

Please sign below to indicate your consent to participate voluntarily in this research study.

Signature of Participant: ____________________________
Date: ____________________________

If you would like a summary of the results, please print your name and address below.

For questions or concerns please call:
Lee Smith 214/373-2266
Dr. Byron Medler 817/565-2913
Dr. Linda Marshall 817/565-2649

THIS RESEARCH HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS HUMAN SUBJECT'S REVIEW BOARD.

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APPENDIX I

FULL QUESTIONNAIRE
Please answer the following descriptive questions as completely as possible. Please remember that your answers are confidential and your anonymity has been protected.

- Last 4 digits of social security number
- Age
- Ethnicity: 1=Anglo/White 2=Asian 3=Black 4=Hispanic 5=Other
- Were you born in the United States? 1=No 2=Yes
- How religious are you? 1=Not religious at all 2=Modestly religious 3=Very religious
- Were your parents divorced during the time you were growing up? 1=No 2=Yes
- If so, how old were you when they divorced? (In years)
- How many brothers and sisters did you have?
- What was your birth order? 1=Only 2=Oldest 3=Somewhere in middle 4=Youngest
- As a child, was substance abuse (alcohol and/or drugs) a problem with anyone in your family? 1=Not at all 2=Occasionally/Minor problem 3=Serious problem
- Currently: 1=Not in a relationship now 2=In a relationship now
- Length of your most recent relationship (in years)
- If your most recent relationship has terminated, did it end in the last 12 months? 1=No 2=Yes
- How serious was (is) that relationship? 1=Not serious 2=Modestly serious 3=Very serious
- How old were you when this relationship started? (In years)
- How much did (do) you LIKE your partner in your most recent relationship? 1=Very little 2=An average amount 3=Very much
- How much did (do) you LOVE your partner in your most recent relationship? 1=Very little 2=An average amount 3=Very much
- Did you have any children with your partner in this relationship? 1=No 2=Yes

In the rest of this questionnaire, you are asked to answer questions about your own and a partner’s feelings and behavior in your most recent relationship. Try to answer all the questions in reference to that relationship and that particular partner even if that relationship has ended.

Your honesty is vital and appreciated. Please try to answer all questions giving your own opinion, and without talking to anyone else.

This research has been approved by the University of North Texas Human Subjects Review Board.
Please select the number corresponding with the description which best describes the agreement or disagreement between you and your partner on each issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>Almost</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Almost</td>
<td>Always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(29) Handling family finances  (37) Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws
(30) Matters of recreation  (38) Aims, goals, and things believed important
(31) Religious matters  (39) Amount of time spent together
(32) Demonstrations of affection  (40) Making major decisions
(33) Friends  (41) Household tasks
(34) Sex relations  (42) Leisure time interests and activities
(35) Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)  (43) Career decisions
(36) Philosophy of life

Using this scale, please respond to the following questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the Time</td>
<td>Most of the Time</td>
<td>More Often Than Not</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(44) How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?

(45) How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

(46) In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

(47) Do you confide in your mate?

(48) Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)

(49) How often do you and your partner quarrel?

(50) How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"

(51) Do you kiss your mate?

(52) Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

(53) The numbers below represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please write in the blank the number which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Unhappy</td>
<td>Fairly Unhappy</td>
<td>A little Unhappy</td>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>Very Happy</td>
<td>Extremely Happy</td>
<td>Perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How often would you say the following events occur between you and your partner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Less Than Once or</td>
<td>Once or Twice a Month</td>
<td>Twice a Week</td>
<td>a Day</td>
<td>More</td>
<td>Often</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(51) Have a stimulating exchange of ideas
(55) Laugh together
(56) Calmly discuss something
(57) Work together on a project

Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship? Select a number for the blank on the left.

1 = I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
2 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
3 = I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
4 = It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
5 = My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

The next statements describe ways in which a person might feel in a relationship. Please mark the space next to each statement according to how you believe that it is true or false for you. The meaning of each number is as follows:

1 = I strongly believe that the statement is false.
2 = I believe that the statement is false.
3 = I believe that the statement is probably false, or more false than true.
4 = I believe that the statement is probably true, or more true than false.
5 = I believe that the statement is true.
6 = I strongly believe that the statement is true.

(59) If my partner expresses disagreement with my ideas, he probably does not think highly of me.
(60) I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me.
(61) I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine.
(62) I like it when my partner presents views different from mine.
(63) I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way.
(64) I cannot tolerate it when my partner argues with me.
(65) When my partner and I disagree, I feel like our relationship is falling apart.
(66) I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we argue.
Read each statement below and select a number to place in the blank on the left that is most descriptive of you. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completely Descriptive</th>
<th>Completely Undescriptive</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of Me</td>
<td>Of Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) I tend to get angry at my partner more frequently than most people do at theirs.
(3) Other people seem to get angrier at their partners than I do at mine.
(4) I harbor grudges that I don't tell him about.
(5) I try to get even when I'm angry with him.
(6) I am secretly quite critical of my partner.
(7) It is easy for him to make me angry.
(8) When I am angry with my partner, I let him know.
(9) I have met people who are supposed to be experts who are no better with their partners than I am with mine.
(10) I get angry with my partner almost every day.
(11) I often feel angrier than I think I should.
(12) I feel guilty about expressing my anger to my partner.
(13) When I'm angry with my partner, I take it out on whomever is around.
(14) My partner has habits that annoy and bother me very much.
(15) I am surprised at how often I feel angry at him.
(16) Once I let him know I am angry, I can put it out of my mind.
(17) My partner talks about me behind my back.
(18) At times I get angry at him for no specific reason.
(19) I can make myself angry about something he did in the past just by thinking about it.
(20) Even after I have expressed my anger, I have trouble forgetting about it.
(21) When I hide my anger from my partner I think about it for a long time.
(22) My partner bothers me by just being around.
(23) When I get angry at him, I stay angry for hours.
(24) When I hide my anger from my partner, I forget about it pretty quickly.
(25) I try to talk over problems with my partner without letting them know I'm angry.
(26) When I get angry at my partner, I calm down faster than most people I know.
(27) I get so angry with my partner, I feel like I might lose control.
(28) If my partner really knew how I felt, I would be considered a hard person to get along with.
(29) I am on my guard when he is friendlier than I expected.
(30) It is difficult for me to let my partner know that I'm angry.

I get angry when:
(31) my partner lets me down.
(32) he is unfair.
(33) my plans get blocked.
(34) he delays me.
(35) he embarrasses me.
(36) he gives me orders.
(37) he acts incompetent.
(38) I do something stupid.
(39) he gives me no credit for something I've done.
The next section asks that you consider the extent to which you use certain types of behavior in your interactions with the other person in this relationship. We are particularly interested in the ways you handle conflict, "fights," and/or arguments. Some of the items may seem similar, strange, or highly personal. Please respond to each item. Use the following response scale to describe how often you do each of the behaviors in this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOW OFTEN IN CONFLICT WITH YOUR PARTNER DO YOU?</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) Provide information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Try to change the subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Passively comply.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) Cry.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) Insult the other person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(7) Calmly discuss the issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Avoid the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(9) Plead with the other person.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Pout.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(11) Use threats.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(12) Throw something.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) Use humor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) Get information from the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) Shout.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(16) Compromise with the other person.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) Be sarcastic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(18) Avoid the issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19) Hit the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20) Discuss procedures for handling disputes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21) Lay hints.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(22) Trick the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(23) Explore alternative solutions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(24) Show affection by holding/kissing him.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(25) Make the other person feel guilty.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(26) Try to embarrass the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(27) Pretend to be hurt by the other person.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28) Try to postpone the issue as long as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(29) Seek a mutually beneficial solution.  
(30) Act defensive.  
(31) Tease the other person.  
(32) Punish the other person.  
(33) Cooperate with the other person.  
(34) Attempt to win the argument at all costs.  
(35) Ignore the issue.  
(36) Bargain with the other person.  
(37) Exploit the other person.  
(38) Discuss the matter openly.  
(39) Be hostile.  
(40) Reward the other person.  
(41) Get angry.  
(42) Try to make the other person jealous.  
(43) Flatter the other person.  
(44) Lose your temper.  
(45) Establish rules for arguing.  
(46) Escalate the conflict.  
(47) Negotiate with the other person.  
(48) Criticize the other person.  
(49) Seek areas of agreement.  
(50) Intimidate the other person.  
(51) Call the other person vulgar names.  
(52) Express your trust in the other person.  
(53) Leave the room or area.  
(54) Use a calm, quiet voice to tone down dispute.  
(55) Ask him to explain his position.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY PARTNER HAS:</th>
<th>I HAVE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) __acted like he wanted to kill me</td>
<td>(2) __shook my finger at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) __shook his fist at me</td>
<td>(3) __scratched him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) __threw objects at him</td>
<td>(4) __threw objects at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) __slapped me around on my face and head</td>
<td>(5) __acted like I wanted to kill him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) __threatened to harm/damage things I care about</td>
<td>(6) __shook my fist at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) __slapped me with the palm of his hand</td>
<td>(7) __threatened someone he cares about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) __hit me with an object</td>
<td>(8) __pulled his hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) __used a club-like object on me</td>
<td>(9) __threatened to harm/damage things he cares about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) __used an object on me in a sexual way</td>
<td>(10) __threatened him with a knife or gun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) __threatened me with a knife or gun</td>
<td>(11) __grabbed him suddenly or forcefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) __burned me with something</td>
<td>(12) __threatened to destroy property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) __scratched me</td>
<td>(13) __threatened to hurt him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) __grabbed me suddenly or forcefully</td>
<td>(14) __made threatening gestures or faces at him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) __demanded sex whether I wanted to or not</td>
<td>(15) __threatened to kill myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(16) __thrown, smashed, or broken an object</td>
<td>(16) __threatened to kill him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) __drove dangerously with me in the car</td>
<td>(17) __threatened with a club-like object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(18) __kicked me</td>
<td>(18) __threatened with a weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19) __made me have anal sex against my will</td>
<td>(19) __threatened to destroy him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20) __pushed or shoved me</td>
<td>(20) __grabbed him suddenly or forcefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21) __shook or roughly handled me</td>
<td>(21) __threatened to destroy property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(22) __made threatening gestures or faces at me</td>
<td>(22) __threatened to kill him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(23) __bitten me</td>
<td>(23) __threatened with a weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(24) __threatened to kill himself</td>
<td>(24) __used a club-like object on him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(25) __threatened to destroy property</td>
<td>(25) __used an object on him in a sexual way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(26) __hit or kicked a wall, door, or furniture</td>
<td>(26) __burned him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(27) __choked me</td>
<td>(27) __hit or kicked a wall, door, or furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(28) __threatened to hurt me</td>
<td>(28) __choked him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(29) __held me down, pinning me down</td>
<td>(29) __slapped around his face and head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(30) __physically forced me to have sex</td>
<td>(30) __slapped him with the palm of my hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(31) __stamped on me</td>
<td>(31) __hit him with an object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(32) __threatened to kill me</td>
<td>(32) __demanded sex whether he wanted to or not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(33) __threatened me with a club-like object</td>
<td>(33) __punched him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(34) __shook his finger at me</td>
<td>(34) __spanked him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(35) __made me have oral sex against my will</td>
<td>(35) __acted like a bully toward me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(36) __punched me</td>
<td>(36) __had sex with him while I was angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(37) __slapped him with the back of his hand</td>
<td>(37) __slapped him with the back of my hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(38) __threatened someone I care about</td>
<td>(38) __used a club-like object on him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(39) __destroyed something belonging to me</td>
<td>(39) __used an object on him in a sexual way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(40) __hit sex with me while he was angry</td>
<td>(40) __burned him with something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(41) __slapped me with the back of his hand</td>
<td>(41) __held him down, pinning him down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(42) __physically forced him to have sex</td>
<td>(42) __physically forced him to have sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(43) __stamped on him</td>
<td>(43) __stamped on him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(44) __twisted his arm</td>
<td>(44) __twisted his arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(45) __beaten him</td>
<td>(45) __beaten him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(46) __used a knife or gun on him</td>
<td>(46) __used a knife or gun on him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(47) __made me have sexual intercourse against my will</td>
<td>(47) __used a knife or gun on him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(48) __pulled my hair</td>
<td>(48) __pulled my hair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your help with this research project is very much appreciated. Please return this form to the researcher at the next available class meeting or mall in the envelope provided.
REFERENCES


women and other relationships of intermittent abuse. 

Victimology: An International Journal, 6(1-4), 139-155.


Miller, S., Corrales, R., & Wackman, D. B. (1975). Recent progress in understanding and facilitating marital communication. The Family Coordinator, 24(2), 143-152.


