A STUDY OF THE DIFFERENCES IN VALUES AND MARITAL READINESS BETWEEN ENGAGED AND DATING COUPLES

THESIS

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The study consisted of five chapters: Introduction, Review of the Literature, Method and Procedure, Results and Discussion, and Summary.

Following an introduction of the problem, a comprehensive review of the literature on the theories of complementarity, similarity, and interpersonal attraction was made. This review pointed out the complexities and disparities in present research on factors in mate selection. Promising research on value consensus, the properties of reinforcement, a formula for interpersonal attraction, the perception of similarity and the self-concept of the individuals involved was emphasized. Theories encompassing both theoretical viewpoints of similarity and complementarity were discussed with the possibility noted that complementarity may be just a special aspect of similarity.

Three hypotheses were considered: Hypothesis I: engaged couples will score significantly higher on the California Marital Readiness Evaluation than the dating couples group; Hypothesis II: engaged couples will score significantly higher on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values than the dating
couples group; Hypothesis III: there will be a significant
difference in the scores between engaged couples and dating
couples on the six value areas of the Study of Values:
Theoretical, Aesthetic, Economic, Social, Political, and
Religious.

The subjects included two groups of couples, engaged
couples and dating couples. The engaged couples consisted
of thirty-five engaged male and female dyads who were
students either at North Texas State University, Denton,
Texas, or Austin College, Sherman, Texas. The dating couples
consisted of thirty-five male and female dyads who were stu-
dents either at North Texas State University, Denton, Texas,
or Austin College, Sherman, Texas. All subjects were volun-
teers, had never been married, divorced, or separated, and were
between the ages of seventeen and twenty-six. To alleviate
some intervening variables, the engaged couples were match-
paired with the dating couples on the basis of length of
acquaintance, age, and educational level.

The importance of value consensus and marital readiness
was suggested in preparation for the marital dyad. The
Allport-Vernon-Lindzey. Study of Values was employed to test
for value consensus, the California Marriage Readiness
Evaluation was used to measure marital readiness.

A statistical analysis was made of the results of the
difference scores obtained from the engaged couples and the
dating couples on the two above mentioned tests. The three
hypotheses were rejected when the means of the two groups were not significantly different. The results of this study indicates that marital readiness and value consensus may be as relevant to dating couples as these factors are to engaged couples. The results also make obvious the importance of reinforcement in the interpersonal attraction relationship as it may be assumed that the reinforcing property is the similarity the couples share in marital readiness and value consensus.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Presentation of the Problem

Research in the field of interpersonal relationships is of particular importance in view of the all-encompassing effect this research has on the society as a whole. The basic unit of society is the family, the root or base of which is the marital dyad. Thus, it follows that success or failure of the dyad has tremendous ramifications for the success or failure of the society as a whole. The fact that out of every four marriages consummated in America, one ends in divorce is reason enough for empirical investigation into this area of interpersonal relationships. Mate selection, it would appear, has particular bearing on the marital success, for the manner through which a mate is selected, the preparedness for marriage that the couples possess, and their ability to grow and develop together, all have a bearing on the success of the unit.

The more scientific information that men have available in conjunction with how best to prepare themselves for marriage, the more individuals can objectively prepare for this very vital experience, and it would seem, the greater chance they will stand for success. To have objective information available for individuals and couples would be an ideal
preparation for such a highly emotional experience, marriage. Society as a whole would benefit with a more well balanced and stable citizenry.

Much research has been done in the field of mate selection, and as a result, there are many theories regarding the whys and wherefores of selecting one's mate. Eckland (5) divides these theories into two main classifications: individualistic theories, and sociocultural theories. Individualistic theories have evolved as a result of the evolution in western societies from kinship control over mate selection to freedom of choice by the individual. The resulting state of freedom has brought about a tremendously complex system. Of course, many qualities, characteristics, and drives of the individual enter into the choosing of one's partner, and these all have bearing on the theories.

A psychoanalytic view of mate selection, the parent-image theory, is an individualistic theory. This states that one's ideal mate is very similar in physical appearance and personality makeup to one's parent. In effect, a man would be looking for a mother substitute in a wife, and vice-versa.

The unconscious archetype was one of the earliest individualistic theories of mate selection. Promoters of this theory believed that instinct guided a man to choose a woman. The romantic belief that there is only one "right" partner for each person and that one must search and find this "ideal mate" arose from this theory. Another rendition of this
belief is Carl Jung's belief that falling in love is being caught by one's "anima". Better explained, a part of every man is his anima, which is an "archetypal form" which shows a specific female image he carries within his genes (5).

The principle of complementarity is yet another individualistic theory. This will be researched more thoroughly later in this paper, but can be summarized as expecting the personality and need pattern of each partner to complement those of the other.

Lastly, the theory of similarity of partners or, "like attracts like", is of particular interest to many researchers today. This theory will be developed in the section on Research in the Theory of Similarity.

Sociocultural theories of mate selection are varied, and include propinquity and interaction, exchange, values and beliefs, social stratification and class endogamy, and ethnic solidarities (5). These are important in understanding mate selection, for they help integrate the family and the individual with social institutions and particulars of society. Indeed, one can more fully understand marriage and the reasons for the selection of the individuals in light of the society and its effects on and connections with the marriage.

That partners are chosen from those living near, and with whom there is frequent interaction, is authenticated in several studies of propinquity and interaction (2, 3, 4).
An economic view of mate selection, the exchange theory, involves the assets and liabilities one brings into a marriage. Reciprocity occurs, and each partner "trades" qualities, social standing, attractiveness, etc., for other desired benefits in the union.

That values and beliefs affect mate selection is readily apparent. An example is that many American men were raised on fairy tales idolizing beautiful women with long golden hair (Cinderella, Goldilocks, Alice in Wonderland, Rapunzel, etc.), and this might be seen as a belief that would affect a man's preferences and bring forth a colloquialism, "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (and also affect women, "Blondes have more fun").

Social stratification and class endogamy are important in that they may explain why similarity of values and beliefs seems to crop up with married and engaged couples. That individuals often marry within their class and social stratification could explain their similarly held beliefs. Schellenberg (8) feels that this is a main explanation for the similarity theory.

Ethnic solidarities have been more strictly observed in the past, but are still important in the understanding of mate selection. Discrimination and prejudice have encouraged individuals to seek marital partners within their own ethnic group, thus affecting marital choices.
With this brief overview in mind, one can begin to conceptualize the complexity researchers are faced with in determining factors which enter into mate selection.

Purpose of This Study

This study was undertaken in an attempt to clear up some of the complexity and conflicting data on interpersonal attraction. In essence, this study attempts to examine the relationship between value consensus and marital readiness in the premarital period, between engaged couples and dating couples, in view of the theories of homogamy, complementarity, and selected theories of interpersonal attraction. Thus, the purpose of this investigation is to determine if there are significant differences of values and marital readiness between engaged couples and dating couples. In exploring this area of interpersonal relationships, it is hoped that different depths of relationships will be discovered between the engaged couples and the dating couples with respect to these two variables, and consequently that these two important variables will be delineated, at least in part, in respect to interpersonal relationships.

It is supposed that the engaged couples will be more similar in marital readiness and values than the dating couples, thereby testing the theory that states that similarity of personality is a necessary part of serious interpersonal attraction. The first hypothesis is that the
degree of value consensus between the individuals comprising the engaged couples will be significantly higher than that between the individuals comprising the dating couples. The second hypothesis to be tested is that engaged couples will be more similar in marital readiness than dating couples. This could be due to the fact that marital readiness is more relevant. These two hypotheses are augmented by a third one that states that there will be a significant difference in the six value areas on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values (1) between the engaged and dating couples. The three hypotheses to be tested in this study are formally stated below.

**Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis I**—Engaged couples will score significantly higher on the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation than the dating couples group.

**Hypothesis II**—Engaged couples will score significantly higher on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values than the dating couples group.

**Hypothesis III**—There will be a significant difference in the scores between engaged couples and dating couples on the six individual value areas of the Study of Values: Theoretical, Aesthetic, Economic, Social Political, and Religious (1).
In testing for these hypotheses, this study attempts to further determine whether individuals who are attracted to one another and engaged in casual dating are the same individuals who would be attracted to one another in selecting a mate. Factors that may enter into serious interpersonal attraction (i.e., engagement) may thus be different from casual interpersonal attraction (dating couples). Two of these factors could be value consensus and marital readiness; and therefore one might expect the dating couples and engaged couples in this study to score significantly differently on these two variables. That value consensus is important as an underpinning of a serious relationship can be seen in the Kerckhoff and Davis (6) study on "Value Consensus and Need Complementarity in Mate Selection". The two researchers found that "...value consensus was related to progress toward permanence (of the relationship) for the sample as a whole...", (6, p. 303). Additionally, marital preparedness of the engaged couples would appear more relevant to the individuals who are planning a lifetime together than to those individuals who are spending time in each other's company more casually, with no such definite goal in mind. One would assume, thus, that engaged couples would value marital preparedness and strive for such in anticipation of the union to be.

The method and procedure of this study are outlined in the following chapter on Method and Procedure.
Definition of Terms

Allport Study of Values (ASV)--an objective forced-choice value test which measures the relative emphasis of an individual's values in six areas of values: Theoretical, Economic, Aesthetic, Social, Political and Religious (1).

California Marriage Readiness Evaluation (CMRE)--conceived by Morse P. Manson, the CMRE is a self-administered marital readiness test with 110 objective True-False questions and five sentence-completion items. The five sentence completion items were not used in this study (7).

Dating couples (DC)--operationally defined as a male and female dyad who classify themselves as a couple, are dating and spending time in each other's company.

Engaged couple (EC)--operationally defined as a male and female dyad who have publicly announced their intention to marry.

Similar marital readiness--similar scores on the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation.

Value consensus or similar values--similar scores on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Further exploration in the field of mate selection is direly needed, as inconclusive and opposed findings are the rule rather than the exception. A review of the pertinent research in the field of mate selection is attempted, to help further define the problems and areas of importance in mate selection. Specifically, a great deal of research in this area has been done along two major points of view: complementarity and similarity. That these may be both important in the picking of a marital partner will be developed more completely.

The idea of being able to describe the relation between the personalities of two interacting individuals by a single overall characteristic has been an interesting and intriguing one. Mate selection studies, however, have revealed inconsistent findings. Of vital interest today to psychologists and laymen, this area of interpersonal attraction and involvement is currently split into two camps. One theoretical group contends that "birds of a feather flock together"; the other argues that "opposites attract". Specifically in the field of serious interpersonal attraction--marriage--do the theories of similarity of mates versus complementarity of
mates come to a head. Though for seventy years psychologists and sociologists have investigated this subject, there still remains an aura of mystery around the specific interpersonal choice of a marital partner. Empirical evidence seemingly at odds with itself has been brought forth to give credence to both theoretical groups.

Research in the Theory of Complementarity

Complementarity of individuals—an intriguing view—was brought to the forefront by its publicizer—Winch—in the 1950's (55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60). This view of interpersonal attraction is based on individuals complementing one another along a long list of emotional needs. Ohmann (40) suggested that we fall in love with those whom we need to complete ourselves emotionally. This view was further expanded by Murray (37), who theorized that complementary needs are the determining factor in mate selection and are understood in terms of the lovers' emotional makeup and need pattern. Winch (55, 56, 57) later expounded on this fascinating treatise of mate selection, using Murray's (37) list of needs, to theorize that there is a bipolar dimension in connection with each partner of the marital dyad. This dimension is composed of receptive needs at one end and assertive traits and needs at the other end. The theory that "opposites attract" was defined by Winch as
When two persons, A and B, are interacting, we consider the result gratification of both to be 'complementary' if one of the following conditions is satisfied: (1) the need or needs in A which is or are being gratified are different in kind from the need or needs being gratified in B; or (2) the need or needs in A which are being gratified are very different in intensity from the same needs in B, which are also being gratified (58, p. 243).

This proposed symbiotic relationship between two members of a dyad has, of course, been studied and analyzed by many researchers since Winch's proposal of the complementarity theory.

Bowerman and Day (5) used dating and engaged couples in an attempt to expound on Winch's hypothesis. The two researchers administered the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule to sixty college couples, and the resulting correlations between the needs of couples did not substantiate the theory of complementarity.

In like manner, Thomas J. Banta's and Mavis Hetherington's 1963 (1) study of engaged couples and their friends explored the place of complementarity in understanding the interpersonal relationship. Banta's and Hetherington's findings were significant in that they found no evidence to support complementarity among the engaged couples studied.

Lossner (35) studied homogeneity and heterogeneity of affiliativeness, assuming that the former would be conducive to a stable marriage and the latter would be disruptive to marital stability. Using the complementarity/similarity
theory altogether, he additionally assumed that homogeneity in dominance-submissiveness would be disruptive of the marital stability, and heterogeneity of the same would be conducive to marital stability. Generally, his hypotheses were supported, thus weakening the case for the theory of complementarity. It would appear from Lossner's results that one could hypothesize that similarity of traits engenders more stability in the marital dyad.

The studies of the role of complementarity have pointed the way to the importance of research in other fields of interpersonal attraction, in an attempt to better understand the factors which enter into the mate selection process. Among the widely held recommendations for the further study of complementarity among these researchers are (a) that the complementarity hypothesis is not relevant to marriage research (34, 51); (b) that needs are not relevant material for marriage research (52); (c) that a more explicit theoretical base for the selection of the complementary needs should be developed (34); (d) that other methodological considerations need to be resolved (60); and (e) that a more integrated theory of interpersonal attraction to marriage is needed (5, 32, 34).

Research in the Theory of Similarity

The similarity hypothesis of mate selection, or, "birds of a feather flock together", has been a part of informal
observation and remark for many years by laymen and psychologists alike. In fact, Francis Galton (19) seems to have done the first work on assortative marriage. The area of interest generated by the phenomena of assortative mating is impressive. Post (42), a biologist, defined assortative mating as "The tendency of marriage partners to resemble one another as a result of preference or choice" (42, p. 41). Clearly the similarity hypothesis is a vital part of this "tendency".

Perhaps the first complete statement of the similarity hypothesis was published by Leon Festinger (17). In his theory of social comparison processes, attraction is a positive function of personality similarity.

Of course, similarity must be taken in context and must be treated with respect to particular variables which have bearing on the marital dyad. One can limit the field of variables which have such bearing on similarity, thus cutting out some of the enormous complexity associated with this hypothesis. In addition, similarity is relevant to the two interacting individuals only if the characteristics are perceived by each to be similarly held and if the observed characteristics are valued as important to the couple.

Throughout the past seventy years, the question of similarity versus complementarity has been researched, and the mass of evidence accumulated by sociologists and psychologists indicates that husbands and wives do indeed resemble each other along a wide range of variables. These results tend
to give support to the homogeneity hypothesis by stating that it represents the major basis for mate selection.

Social and cultural characteristics of married individuals perhaps give the greatest support for the similarity hypothesis. Many studies have shown that persons tend to marry other persons of similar age (6, 46), environmental proximity (4, 14), religious affiliations (31, 53), backgrounds (25), occupational levels (33), intelligence (7, 30, 54, 46), visual acuity (46), even height and weight (46). That these characteristics may be a result of the partner's "field of eligibles" instead of interpersonal selection was explored by Schellenberg (44).

Thus there seems to be an important unresolved issue concerning the interpretation of homogamy. Does homogamy, particularly in dominant interests and values, exert a decisive force in interpersonal attraction towards a perspective mate, or is it chiefly a residual effect of broader social categories? (44, p. 159).

Schellenberg, using the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values and controlling for homogamy factors in social backgrounds, found that a great deal of the homogamy characteristics can be explained by the social and cultural forces present in the "field of eligibles"; however he went on to state that,

The second main finding, however, points to the considerable amount of homogamy which is left unexplained by controlling for such background characteristics. The convergency scores of both the married and the pre-married groups of natural couples were significantly above those of the artificially-matched couples (44, p. 161).
It is to this "considerable amount" of unexplained homogamy that this study is directed, in an attempt to delineate the importance of marital readiness and value consensus.

An interesting study (11) on the effects of physical attractiveness, sex, and attitude similarity on interpersonal attraction found that a subject's expectations influence attraction. Byrne, London and Reeves found that (1) interpersonal attraction was greater toward physically-attractive strangers, regardless of sex, and (2) both attitude similarity-dissimilarity (p > .001) and physical attractiveness (p > .05) influenced responses.

Unfortunately, similarity in personality characteristics has not been as concretely settled as has that of social and cultural characteristics. Much research has explored the area ranging from values and interests to opinions and neurotic tendencies. Some sound evidence of similarity of personality characteristics has been presented, but these research findings conflict directly with the theory of complementary motivation and are thus more apt to be discredited. A review of the studies of personality characteristics reveal that mates are similar in neurotic tendencies (46, 50), extroversion-introversion (45), self-sufficiency (24, 50), values (44, 46), interest constellations, and interest maturity (50).

Research in the Theories of Interpersonal Attraction

Theories of interpersonal attraction could enhance understanding in the complex area of mate selection by helping to
determine why individuals are first attracted to each other and second, why continued attraction takes place. In addition, the similarity hypothesis of mate selection could be better understood in terms of the attraction process itself.

The similarity hypothesis pervades theories of interpersonal attraction. Interpersonal attraction itself has been the subject of continued research, and this important facet of mate selection will therefore be given separate focus. As one may conclude from similar findings in studies of mate selection, interpersonal attraction has been found to depend, to a great extent, on similarity of the individuals involved.

As stated by Leon Festinger in his theory of social comparison processes, "A person will be less attracted to situations where others are very divergent from him than to situations where others are close to him for both abilities and opinions" (17, p. 123). This hypothesized positive relationship between similarity and interpersonal attraction has been upheld with respect to self description (22), economic status (8), opinions (12), emotional states (62), evaluations of the subject's performance (15), abilities (61), personality traits (10, 29, 43), personality similarity--economic factors and intelligence (3), attitude similarity (2, 11), physical attractiveness (11), behavioral similarity (28), and occupational prestige (2). By the sheer weight of evidence in regard to similarity in interpersonal attraction one can assume that these two are so connected.
These studies can be understood in that

... the behavior of another individual is positively reinforcing to the extent that it is similar to one's own behavior. Behavioral similarity to self, whether involving attitudes or values or abilities or emotional responses or tastes or adjunctive responses or worries or need hierarchies or whatever, provides evidence that one is functioning in a logical and meaningful manner (Byrne, 1961; Cohen, Statland and Wolfe, 1955), and it makes one's interpersonal environment more predictable and understandable (Brim and Hoff, 1957; Pervin, 1963) (10, pp. 82-83).

Several researchers, attempting to more completely define the myriad of factors entering into the relationship of the two reacting individuals, further developed and expanded the similarity hypothesis of interpersonal attraction. Some promising hypotheses have arisen out of this research, including positive attraction which results from drive reduction, the importance of reinforcement in continued attraction, self-concept of the individuals involved and the part it plays in the drama of interaction, a formula for interpersonal attraction, a stimulus-response (S-R) framework explanation for the attraction, and the importance of awareness of similarity in the interaction.

Stapert and Clore (49) explored the effect of disagreement-produced arousal on attraction. Using the influence of attitudes of bogus strangers on the subjects, they obtained a measure of attraction. "The findings appear to indicate that positive attraction toward another may result from his association with drive reduction and negative attraction from
association with drive arousal" (49, p. 64). This association interpretation states that

...disagreement produces a state of tension or drive arousal, and that one source of attraction toward another person is his association with drive reduction. The primary finding that attraction to agreeers is intensified after disagreement is consistent with this hypothesized process. ...(49, p. 68).

Like assumptions have been made, in part, by Byren and Clore (8) and Lott and Lott (36).

Reinforcement as an important factor in continuing attraction has been explored by Lott and Lott (36). Lott and Lott, using ninth-grade students who worked on a discrimination problem, found that they performed "...differentially as a function of their positive or negative attraction to the peer whose photograph was presented contingent upon a particular response" (36, p. 136). Lott and Lott went on to state that reinforcement appeared to be vital, for

It seems reasonable to conclude that the obtained data support the general proposition tested by the experiment, that liked persons can function as effective positive reinforcers while disliked persons can produce the same effects as negative reinforcers (36, p. 136).

A later study by Griffitt (23) brought in the idea that the crucial determining factor in interpersonal attraction could be the extent to which reciprocal awards are present in the interpersonal interaction. Thus, "Positive attraction responses are directed toward a person who provides any type of interpersonal reward; whereas negative attraction responses are engendered by a punishing individual" (23, p. 145).
Neal S. Smalley (47), in two studies of married couples, tested a set of hypotheses dealing with reinforcing self and mirror self constructs, and all were confirmed. These results lend further support to the idea of reinforcement as a part of continued attraction. Some theorists have developed this concept even further, hypothesizing that liked persons function as positive reinforcers, and vice versa (36, 21). This theory would go along well with a theory of interpersonal attraction, in that the stimulus-response framework—derived from the Hull-Spence reinforcement theory—could be made to fit an elusive human quality. Lott and Lott (36) see

A liked person (or any liked object) is conceptualized as one who evokes implicit anticipatory goal responses \( r_g - s_g \) primarily as a result of previous association. It follows, then, that liked persons can be classed as secondary reinforcement stimuli since such are said to derive their acquired reinforcement properties from their capacity to evoke fractional goal responses which have been conditioned to them (36, p. 129).

The concept of self with which one enters into a relationship has a great bearing on the success or failure of that relationship. Wilfred A. Peterson (41) stated, "Be gentle with yourself, learn to love yourself, to forgive yourself, for only as we have the right attitude toward ourselves can we have the right attitude toward others" (41, p. 15). Similarly, Erich Fromm (18) believes that only as we learn to love ourselves can we reach out to others and love them. The importance of self-concept is therefore
self-evident. Several studies have tied self-concept and personality features together. For example, Marvin Goodman's hypotheses that (1) high self-accepting (SA) individuals are attracted to persons like themselves and (2) low SA persons are attracted to individuals unlike themselves linked self-concept and personality features together by confirming these hypotheses along three different needs measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (20). William Griffitt (22) completed an exploration into self-concept as a determinant of interpersonal attraction and found that interpersonal attraction was a positive function of the similarity of a stranger's self-concept to the subject's self-concept (p > .02) and a positive function of the similarity of a stranger's self-concept to the subject's ideal-self concept (p > .01) (22).

Another variable in the interpersonal attraction theories is an intriguing, empirically derived linear relationship which was postulated by Byrne, Griffitt, and Stefaniak (10), "...law of attraction: attraction toward X is a positive linear function of the proportion of positive reinforcement received from X: \( A_x = mPR_x + k \)" (10, p. 82). Byrne et al. went on further to state the importance of reinforcement to this law of attraction, thus including reinforcement as an important premise for the formula,

The applicability of this formulation to personality similarity is theoretically contingent on the positive or negative reinforcing properties of information about another individual's personality characteristics (10, p. 82).
An integral part of the "law of attraction" is the presence of reinforcement. Thus, impetus is added to the importance of reinforcement.

Some theorists, in an effort to structure the complex interaction of individuals in interpersonal attraction, have translated the concept of interpersonal attraction into stimulus-response (S-R) terminology. Using an S-R interpretation, some recent studies have found attraction to be a function of similarity with regards to economic status (8), self-concept (22), and personality traits (10). Such studies have usually proposed that similarity between persons was the UCS, and that interpersonal attraction is thus a classically conditioned evaluative response. A recent study by Stalling (48) throws new light on this area by proposing—and proving—that the UCS is in reality not similarity but evaluative meaning, as similarity is merely a correlate of the latter. This interesting "formula" for interpersonal attraction again assumes both reinforcement and similarity as vital parts of attraction.

The role of awareness of similarity is self-explanatory, for only those things perceived by the individual are "real" to him. Byrne and Griffitt (9) explored personality similarity as a determinant of attraction and with respect to the role of awareness. The two researchers found that attraction was influenced by similarity and that the two measures
of awareness of similarity were each influenced by the actual similarity created in the environment. It was further shown that awareness of stimulus conditions contributed to the usual similarity in attraction relationship, but that awareness was not a necessary component of the relationship. In like manner, Newcomb's (39) emphasis on "perceived similarity" is in agreement:

In short, I am attempting to defend the thesis that interpersonal attraction always and necessarily varies with perceived similarity regarding important and relevant objects (including the persons themselves). While I regard similarity of attitudes as a necessary rather than a sufficient condition, I believe that it (perceived similarity) accounts for more of the variance in interpersonal attraction than does any other single variable. (39, p. 579).

The theory of perceived similarity may be a factor in marital integration, as explored by Bernard Faber (16). He found that marital integration varied (positively) with the degree of identity (perceived similarity) of the husband and wife.

Theories Encompassing Both the Similarity and Complementarity of Mates Theories

Reviewing the research in the area of interpersonal attraction and mate selection along the lines of results, informal observation and analysis, several theorists have come to the conclusion that the two supposedly polar views of similarity and complementarity are not, in fact, so
divergent. An emerging view seems to be that these two theories are not necessarily antithetical (34, 60). Attempting to resolve the dilemma between the two theories, a few investigators have suggested theories which encompass both theoretical positions.

An example of these arbitrators is Murstein (38), who, after finding inconsistent results on tests given to marital partners, suggested that each marital unit should be viewed individually.

The assumption seems far more plausible, thus, that for adequate marital adjustment some needs require complementary components in the marital partner, while others necessitate homogamous need patterns. A proper test of this view requires replicative studies on individual needs, not overall tests of two theories (38, p. 196).

That the study of needs is not totally relevant to the study of mate selection today has been stated by many researchers. It may appear that the desire for one "label" or characteristic to view the interpersonal attraction relationship may be folly, for other researchers in the field of mate selection have confirmed Murstein's doubts. For example, Bowerman and Day (5) suggest,

... further efforts in this research area would be most effective if not started in with a theory of needs, but with a general theory of mate selection and marital adjustment. This theory should specify the personality variables which are theoretically relevant to the situations being studied, not limiting the variable to a needs formulation.(5, p. 605).
This theory would also indicate the kinds of relationships which we would expect to find among the variables. These relationships might be complementary in some instances and homogamous in others, and would probably be in terms of patterns of personality characteristics rather than single variables (, p. 605).

On the other hand, Theodore M. Newcomb neatly tied a knot between the two theories when he expressed the thoughts that

In my own view, however, they are not in opposition; indeed, I regard the thesis of complementarity as a special case of similarity. Suppose, as Winch's data may indicate, that an assertive person is more likely to be attracted toward a receptive person, as a marriage partner. It is my guess that this would most probably occur if they have similar attitudes to the effect that one of them should be assertive and the other receptive, (39, p. 579).

A similar analysis was made by Robert F. Holz (26). In amassing empirical evidence to support his theory, he found that

Married couples who adhere to a 'traditional' ideology in terms of role-expectation—a viewpoint characterized by a hierarchical conception of family relationships—will reflect complementarity between their needs. Those couples who adhere to an 'egalitarian' ideology—a viewpoint characterized by a 'companionante' relationship between husband and wife—will reflect similarity between their needs (26, p. 2618-B).

Holz's results did support his theory.

In a similar fashion, Marvin Goodman (20), in his analysis of "Expressed Self-Acceptance and Interpersonal Needs: A Basis for Mate Selection", speculated that high self-accepting (SA) individuals were attracted to persons like themselves (similarity), whereas low SA persons were
attracted to those different from themselves (complementarity). Using the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, Goodman found that

(a) Mates in high SA couples were similar in dominance (p > .05), nurturance (p > .01) and succorance (p > .05); (b) Mates in low SA couples were complementary in dominance (p > .05), dominance and deference (p > .05); nurturance (p > .01) and nurturance and succorance (p > .01); (c) The highest degrees of relationship between spouses was on nurturance and succorance for both high and low SA couples; and (d) The difference in SA mean scores for persons in high SA couples was significant at the .0001 level of confidence, whereas a comparable difference in low SA couples was negligible (20, p. 129).

Bernard Murstein (38) attempted to answer Winch's criticisms of the Bowerman and Day study, which would not confirm Winch's theory of complementarity of needs in marital partners. Selecting two groups of subjects, newlyweds and middle-aged married couples, Murstein administered the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS), Famous Sayings Test, and a marriage adjustment scale devised by Wallace. His results favored a homogamous theory of need patterns for the non-newlyweds but totally inconclusive results for the newlyweds, in that neither the similarity or complementarity of needs was supported.

Homans (27) put forth an interesting theory, "If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases, the degree of their liking for one another will increase" (27). This could apply to couples with a long period of propinquity
(marriage). Thus, there appears to be positive reinforcement for the idea that similarly held views would increase and the couples would become more homogamous in needs.

Thomas Coates and Stanley Mazur (13) studied fifty male students' close interaction and then analyzed their responses to the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule and a sociometric test. Their results produced a theory which follows along the lines of Newcomb's proposal of complementarity operating within and facilitating the framework of similarity.

Coates and Mazur perceived that

.. actual and perceived similarity operate in the relationship to establish identification with the other and agreement on the nature and expression of the relationship. At the same time the mechanism of complementary personality characteristics facilitates mutual admiration and respect, mutual growth and development, and mutual gratification in the living out of the relationship (13, p. 8).

Alan Kerckhoff and Keith Davis (32) interpreted the interesting results of their study of couples with the idea that "filtering factors" operate in mate selection. Social status variables are effective early in the relationship, consensus on values somewhat later, and lastly, need complementarity enters into the picture. Kerckhoff and Davis felt that these different "stages" of the selection process were a result of ".. unrealistic idealization of the loved one in the early stages of courtship" (32, p. 303).

The purpose of this study is not to validate any of the foregoing theories, but instead, to shed some much needed
light on the theories of mate selection and interpersonal attraction with regard to differing variance between dating couples and engaged couples; or, what features in the relationship of the engaged couple are different from those in the dating couple and are thus representative of a more serious dyad. The significance of this knowledge to premarital counselors and couples alike is readily perceivable. In addition, some misconceptions could be cleared up regarding interpersonal attraction and factors which enhance a relationship and continued serious interaction.
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CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

This chapter consists of an explanation and discussion of the subjects, apparatus, procedure and design of the study.

Subjects

One hundred and forty Caucasian individuals were the subjects of this investigation. The seventy couples were students at North Texas State University and Austin College. Group I consisted of thirty-five engaged couples (EC) and Group II consisted of thirty-five dating couples (DC). Each couple was composed of a male and a female. The seventy couples were contacted by the tester and volunteered to participate in the study. All 140 individuals were between the ages of seventeen and twenty-six; none were married, divorced or separated at the time of testing.

In this study engagement or dating status was the independent variable, the dependent variable being responses made on the ASV and the CMRE. Holding the independent variable constant, any significant difference in the dependent variables would indicate that these differences are inherent in the status of the couples themselves.
To alleviate some intervening variables, the thirty-five EC were match-paired with the thirty-five DC on the basis of age, educational level and length of acquaintance.

Apparatus

The Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values was chosen as the instrument to test for similar values. That value patterns are important in the selection of a mate has been previously substantiated (4). In addition, this instrument has been shown in measure a more stable aspect of personality than most other such measures (2). The ASV was employed in this study to measure the value consensus of the engaged and dating couples. Value consensus was seen as the difference score of the couple, whether engaged or dating. A single difference score for each couple on each test was obtained by subtracting the two individual scores from each other (the female score was subtracted from the male score) on the tests. To alleviate the negative signs, and because the difference scores were usually small, the scores were then squared.

The ASV measures the values of an individual in six areas: Theoretical, Economic, Aesthetic, Social, Political, and Religious (1).

The California Marriage Readiness Evaluation is a self-administered four-page form composed of 110 objective
multiple choice questions and five projective sentences to complete. Only the 110 objective questions were used in this study. The CMRE was developed to be used primarily in connection with pre-married individuals (3) and thus was employed in this study. Eight basic areas of relevance in marriage adjustment after marriage are covered in the CMRE. These eight areas are grouped into three major categories (3). A breakdown of these important categories is in Table I.

**TABLE I**

CATEGORIES AND AREAS OF THE CALIFORNIA MARRIAGE READINESS EVALUATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Number</th>
<th>Category Name</th>
<th>Area Name</th>
<th>Area Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Character Structure</td>
<td>CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Emotional Maturity</td>
<td>EM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Marriage Readiness</td>
<td>MR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Preparation for Marriage</td>
<td>Family Experiences</td>
<td>FX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Preparation for Marriage</td>
<td>Dealing with Money</td>
<td>DM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Preparation for Marriage</td>
<td>Planning Ability</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Interpersonal Compatibility</td>
<td>Marriage Motivation</td>
<td>MM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Interpersonal Compatibility</td>
<td>Compatibility</td>
<td>CO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personality, Category I of the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation, is composed of "...personality dynamics,
character structure, emotional maturity and maturity in other areas" (3). These variables contribute much toward making a marriage effective and satisfying and are thus important in the evaluation of marital readiness. Likewise, Category II--Preparation for Marriage--the obtaining of various family experiences, learning to deal with money and developing the ability to plan ahead, is important in a total assessment of marital readiness. Category II includes physical, emotional, and cultural compatibilities which are vital to the success of the marital unit.

The CMRE was utilized in this study to measure marital readiness. The total scores obtained by the two individuals in each of the seventy couples were subtracted from each other to secure a single difference score on the CMRE for each couple. The score was obtained by subtracting the female score from the male score. This difference score was treated as a single score on the CMRE for the couple whether engaged or dating. To facilitate easy handling of the scores, as they were often quite small, and to alleviate negative signs, the scores were squared.

Procedure and Design

The data for this investigation was obtained from the CMRE and the ASV. The data was collected within a period of two months. It usually took from forty-five minutes to one hour for the subjects to fill out both of the tests. The standard testing procedure was to pass out a short intake
page, the ASV and the CMRE; then to read the instructions. Pencils were available on the desks and tables.

Instructions

"Please follow the instructions printed on the front of each copy of the Study of Values and the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation. Notice that the Study of Values is on top, please complete this form first, after you have finished the short intake cover sheet. If anything is not clear, please raise your hand and I will help you. Please do not talk to each other after you begin. Please complete all the items. There is no time limit, so take your time."

The short intake page consisted of personal information about each testee, including name, address, school classification, phone, age, sex, birthdate, date engaged (for EC), length of acquaintance, and date of marriage (for EC). In addition, the intake page had three multiple choice questions which inquired the birth order of the individuals, whether they remembered their childhood as happy, and whether their parents had a happy marriage. To facilitate truthful and complete answering of the tests, the short intake form stated that the results were strictly confidential. In addition, the subjects were advised before the testing began that their results would be available to them only and that this information could be used for their personal growth in needed areas.

In all instances, particularly because all subjects were volunteers seeking information to aid them in their
personal growth, full cooperation was received from the subjects.

Means, standard deviations, analysis of variance, Fisher's $t$, and Hotelling's T-Square were applied to the data. All of these statistics were calculated at the North Texas State University Computer Center. The results of this analysis of data follow in the next chapter.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A statistical analysis of the data obtained on the CMRE and the ASV for engaged couples and dating couples was made in order to test the significance of the three hypotheses originally stated. Results of that analysis follow.

**Hypothesis I:** The mean of the difference scores for the engaged couples on the CMRE was 20.686, with a standard deviation of 16.151. The mean of the difference scores for the dating couples was 24.886, with a standard deviation of 16.290. The Fisher $t$ value of 1.068 was obtained, and using 68 degrees of freedom gave no significant difference results, therefore not confirming Hypothesis I.

**Hypothesis II:** The mean of the difference scores for the engaged couples on the Study of Values was 45.286, with a standard deviation of 15.244. The mean of the difference scores for the dating couples was 46.743, with a standard deviation of 14.667. The Fisher $t$ value of 0.402 with 68 degrees of freedom was not significant, not confirming Hypothesis II.

**Hypothesis III:** The mean for the Theoretical Value area of the ASV for the engaged couples was 7.8000,
with a standard deviation of 6.3507; the mean for the dating couples was 8.5714, with a standard deviation of 6.7972.

2. The mean for the Economic value area for engaged couples was 8.6000, with a standard deviation of 5.5302; for the dating couples the mean was 7.0571, with a standard deviation of 4.4845.

3. The mean for engaged couples on the Aesthetic value area of the Study of Values was 9.1714, with a standard deviation of 5.4641; the mean for the dating couples was 8.4286, with a standard deviation of 5.7086.

4. The mean on the Social value area of the Study of Values was 6.1714, for engaged couples with a standard deviation of 4.8077; for the dating couples the mean was 7.8286, with a standard deviation of 5.1073.

5. The mean on the Political value area for the engaged couples was 6.6286, with a standard deviation of 6.0996; for the dating couples the mean was 7.8571, with a standard deviation of 5.4988.

6. The mean on the Religious value area of the ASV for the engaged couples was 7.7714, with a standard deviation of 5.7920; for the dating couples the mean was 6.9143, with a standard deviation of 5.0504.

Hotelling's T-Square value for these areas was 5.9426, with an F value (degrees of freedom 6, 63) of 0.9176, which is not significant, thus not confirming Hypothesis III.
Discussion

Hypothesis I, which stated that engaged couples and dating couples would score significantly different on the variable of marital readiness, was not confirmed. This result is very important, for it brings into question whether individuals engaged in serious interpersonal involvement (engaged couples) are indeed significantly different in marital readiness than are individuals involved in more casual involvement (dating couples). The results of the statistical analysis are recorded in Table II, and although there appears to be slight difference in the two groups on the basis of marital readiness, the difference is not significant. Theories of interpersonal attraction could figure in, for it would appear from this result that individuals attracted to one another are attracted to those of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sums of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>308.700</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>308.700</td>
<td>1.140</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>18417.086</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>270.840</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18725.786</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE II
SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF MARITAL READINESS DIFFERENCE SCORES OF ENGAGED AND DATING COUPLES
like marital readiness. Also, an assumption may be made that the individuals who are spending time in each other's company may continue to do so because of the reinforcing properties of the homogamous situation. The assumption may also be made, therefore, that marital readiness is as relevant to dating couples as it is to engaged couples.

In another sense, dating couples could be dating with thoughts of marriage, and therefore be similarly attracted to those of life marital readiness qualities. Also, the reverse may be true in these data, for as difference scores of the couples were employed, those individuals who have no value for marital readiness would hence score low on the CMRE, and could be attracted to and enjoy the company of similarly inclined individuals.

TABLE III

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF VALUE CONSENSUS DIFFERENCE SCORES OF ENGAGED AND DATING COUPLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sums of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>37.155</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>37.155</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>15661.828</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>230.321</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15698.983</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>..</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Likewise, Hypothesis II, that engaged couples would score significantly higher than dating couples on value consensus, was not confirmed. The results of the test of analysis of variance are presented in Table III. The means, standard deviations, and Fisher's t values are displayed in Table IV. Schellenberg (6) found in a similar study on value consensus that pre-marital couples and married couples did not score significantly different on value consensus than did artificially matched couples.

### Table IV

**Means, standard deviations and results of t tests of the difference scores of engaged couples and dating couples on marital readiness and value consensus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital Readiness EC</td>
<td>20.686</td>
<td>16.151</td>
<td>1.068</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Readiness DC</td>
<td>24.886</td>
<td>16.290</td>
<td>. .</td>
<td>. .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Consensus EC</td>
<td>45.286</td>
<td>15.244</td>
<td>0.402</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Consensus DC</td>
<td>46.743</td>
<td>14.667</td>
<td>. .</td>
<td>. .</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, one can assume that value consensus is not only an important variable to engaged couples but also to dating couples, and that again the theory of reinforcement, which is tied to the theory of homogamy, that like not only attracts
like but that "like reinforces like", is supported.

Hypothesis III, that engaged and dating couples would differ significantly on the six different value areas of the Allport-Lindzey-Vernon *Study of Values*, was not confirmed. Thus, again, the assumption was put forth that individuals who are engaged and individuals who have known each other for approximately the same length of time and are not engaged do not differ significantly on the six areas of values on the *Study of Values*. A breakdown of the means

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Couples</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>7.800</td>
<td>6.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>8.571</td>
<td>6.797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>8.600</td>
<td>5.530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>7.057</td>
<td>4.485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>9.171</td>
<td>5.464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>8.439</td>
<td>5.709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>6.171</td>
<td>4.808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>7.829</td>
<td>5.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>6.629</td>
<td>6.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>7.857</td>
<td>5.499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>7.771</td>
<td>5.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>6.914</td>
<td>5.050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and standard deviation scores for the engaged couples and the dating couples is presented in Table V. Each individual value area has been computed separately.

The theory of reinforcement present in the homogamous situation is also indirectly confirmed. It appears it may be that homogamy present in the dating couples, as well as the engaged couples, is in itself a reinforcing property and enhances continued interaction and involvement. Lott and Lott's (3) premise that reinforcement is an important factor in continuing attraction and that the liked person is associated with reward by reinforcing one's own characteristics and beliefs is substantiated. Thus, the liked person acts as a secondary reinforcing stimuli. A later study by Griffitt (2) stressed that the determining factor in a relationship could be the reciprocal rewards present in the interpersonal attraction interaction. Therefore, positive attraction results from the reinforcing properties of the reciprocal rewards present. Likewise, Festinger's (1) theory of social comparison processes suggested that behavioral similarity to one's self is positively reinforcing.

The automorphic process described by Preckner (4) may be in effect in the dating relationship as well as in the engaged relationship. Specifically, this is a process by which "We tend to attribute to objects of our choice those characteristics which we ourselves possess and those valuings which are a characteristic of ourselves" (4, p. 412).
Preckner's results further imply that in the homogamous situation, identification and projection take place. The process of identification is more likely to take place when the individual possesses characteristics, values and marital readiness, for example, which are valued by the individual. From this point, identification, the individual assumes further similarity to the object and projects qualities into the situation. That the close similarity of values and marital readiness of the engaged and dating couples alike could be easily explained by these principles: automorphism, projection and identification, coupled with the process of reinforcing properties of attraction and similarity itself, is readily apparent.

The significance of the results of this study could be very important to the pre-marital counselor and to those studying the relationship between two interacting individuals. That individuals appear to date the same individuals that they become engaged to, and supposedly later marry, is thought-provoking. Careful choice of those individuals the person is attracted to and dates, and analysis by him of the individuals would greatly facilitate later adjustment as an engaged couple or a marital dyad. In conclusion, it appears that the inconclusive results of this study are in actuality very far-reaching and in turn, important in themselves. The trend that appears in the results is that
dating couples and engaged couples are alike in their difference scores on value consensus and marital readiness—two important variables in their continued growth and relevance as a couple to each other.
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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

A comprehensive review of the literature on the theories of complementarity, similarity and interpersonal attraction was made. This review pointed out the complexities and disparities in present research on factors in mate selection. Promising research on value consensus, the properties of reinforcement, a formula for interpersonal attraction, the perception of similarity and the self-concept of the individuals involved were emphasized. Theories encompassing both theoretical viewpoints of similarity and complementarity were discussed, with the possibility noted that complementarity may be just a special aspect of the similarity hypothesis.

Three hypotheses were considered:

Hypothesis I: Engaged couples will score significantly higher on the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation than the dating couples group.

Hypothesis II: Engaged couples will score significantly higher on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey, Study of Values than the dating couples.

Hypothesis III: There will be a significant difference in the scores between engaged couples and dating couples on the
six individual value areas of the Study of Values: Theoretical, Aesthetic, Economic, Social, Political, and Religious.

The engaged and dating couples were students at North Texas State University, Denton, Texas, and Austin College, Sherman, Texas. All subjects were volunteers, had never been married, divorced, or separated, and were between the ages of seventeen and twenty-six. To alleviate some intervening variables, the engaged couples were match-paired with the dating couples on the basis of length of acquaintance, age, and educational level.

The importance of value consensus and marital readiness was suggested in preparation for the marital dyad.

The Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values was employed to test for value consensus; the California Marriage Readiness Evaluation was used to measure marital readiness.

A statistical analysis was made of the results of the difference scores obtained from the engaged couples and the dating couples on the two above mentioned tests. The three hypotheses were rejected when the means of the two groups were not significantly different.

The results of this study indicate that the factors of marital readiness and value consensus may be as relevant to dating couples as to engaged couples. The results also make obvious the importance of reinforcement in the interpersonal attraction relationship, as it may be assumed that the
reinforcing property is the similarity the couple shares in marital readiness and value consensus.
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