

COGNITION IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

Development of the Relationship Success Belief Scale

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of Master of Arts in Psychology

by

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CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTION.....	1
Cognition in Close Relationships.....	1
Bradbury and Fincham's Contextual Model	1
General Relationship Beliefs	2
Current Measures of Relationship Beliefs.....	3
<i>Relationship Belief Inventory</i>	4
<i>The Beliefs about Marriage Scale</i>	6
<i>The Romantic Belief Scale</i>	7
Rationale for the Present Study.....	7
Overview of Research Programme	9
CHAPTER II	
STUDY ONE: SCALE DEVELOPMENT.....	11
Determining the Categories	11
Item Generation.....	13
Pilot Testing.....	13
CHAPTER III	
STUDY TWO: RELIABILITY	15
Method.....	15
<i>Subjects and Procedure</i>	15
<i>Relationship Success Belief Scale</i>	16
Results and Discussion.....	16
<i>The Individual Items</i>	16
<i>Reliability and Factorial Structure of the Sub-scales</i>	17
<i>Correlations among Factor totals</i>	21
<i>Application of the Scale across Relationship Type and Gender</i>	22
CHAPTER IV	
STUDY THREE: CONVERGENT AND DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY	23
Discriminant Validity.....	23
Convergent Validity	24
Method.....	26
<i>Subjects and Procedure</i>	26
Results and Discussion.....	27
<i>Discriminant Validity</i>	27
<i>Convergent Validity</i>	27

CHAPTER V	
STUDY FOUR: PREDICTIVE VALIDITY.....	29
Method.....	30
<i>Subjects and Procedure</i>	30
<i>Coding</i>	30
Results and Discussion.....	31
CHAPTER VI	
STUDY FIVE: PREDICTIVE VALIDITY	33
Method.....	34
<i>Subjects and Procedure</i>	34
<i>Behavioural Questionnaire</i>	34
Results and Discussion.....	36
CHAPTER VII	
GENERAL DISCUSSION.....	39
Summary of Findings.....	39
Suggested Follow-up Psychometric Research	41
Clinical Implications.....	42
Future Research with the Scale.....	43
<i>Relationship Success and Dysfunction</i>	43
<i>Extension of the Contextual Model</i>	44
CONCLUSION	47
REFERENCES.....	48
APPENDICES	
A: Instructions to Respondents.....	51
B: Scenarios.....	53
C: Relationship Success Belief Scale.....	54
D: Attachment Style Questionnaire.....	61
E: Love Attitudes Scale.....	62
F: Social Desirability Scale	65
G: Relationship Behaviour Questionnaire	67
H: Relationship Satisfaction Scale.....	71
I: Instructions for Self-report Exercise.....	73
J: Relationship Belief Inventory	74

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Factors Considered Important in Relationship Success Across Relationship Type.....	12
Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of the Individual Items Organised by Sub-scale	18
Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas, and Factor Loadings of Sub-scales as Organised by Factors	20
Table 4: Alphas and Test-retest Correlations for the Five Sub-scales.....	21
Table 5: Correlations among the Five Sub-scales	21
Table 6: Correlations of Various Scales with the Sub-scales of the Relationship Success Belief Scale	28
Table 7: Correlations between the Sub-scales, Satisfaction and Relationship Focus in a Free Response Task	32
Table 8: Correlations between the Belief and Behaviour Sub-scales, and Relationship Satisfaction	37
Table 9: Correlations between Behaviour and Relationship Satisfaction for Strong and Weak Relationship Beliefs	38

ABSTRACT

This thesis details the construction of a scale to measure beliefs that people have about successful relationships - the Relationship Success Belief Scale. In Study 1, 100 respondents provided a pool of statements from which 18 basic factors for relationship success were derived. The scale was constructed, and pilot tested on 287 subjects. Study 2 conducted with 451 respondents established that the scale can be used across different relationship types and genders, and showed that the scale has adequate internal and test-retest reliability. The factor analysis revealed a meaningful five-factor structure. Study 3 examined the convergent and discriminant validity of the five sub-scales. As expected, relationship success beliefs were not related to social desirability or relationship satisfaction, but aspects of the scale were positively associated with a secure attachment style and certain attitudes about love. Evidence for the predictive validity of the scale was provided in Studies 4 and 5. In Study 4 a focus on the relationship, as opposed to the self or the partner, was associated with harmonious beliefs. Study 5 showed that specific relationship behaviours and relationship satisfaction are more closely linked in people who have strong beliefs in these areas, than in those who have weaker beliefs. Clinical implications of the scale are examined and suggestions for future research into the psychometric properties of the scale are outlined. In addition, a research programme exploring the linkage between relationship success beliefs and other elements of a contextual model of relationships is detailed.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. COGNITION IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

In the past decade social psychologists have shown great interest in the role of cognition in close relationships. Research has focussed, in particular, on the role of attributions in relationships (eg. Berley & Jacobson, 1984; Fincham, 1985; Holtzworth-Munroe & Jacobson, 1985; Fletcher, Fincham, Cramer & Heron, 1987; Fletcher, Fitness & Blampied, in press). Other cognitively-oriented research has examined attitudes which people hold about love (eg. Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986) and sex (eg. Hendrick, Hendrick, Slapion-Foote & Foote, 1985; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987). In addition, the impact of "rules" has been explored in the context of relationships (eg. Argyle & Henderson, 1985; Argyle, Henderson & Furnham, 1985; Argyle, 1986), along with a limited analysis of the importance of scripts and prototypes to relationship behaviour (Ginsburg, 1988). Finally, several attempts have been made to examine the beliefs which people hold with respect to marriage (Noller, Dixon & Limerick, 1989), romance (Sprecher & Metts, 1989), and dysfunction in relationships (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). In this thesis I outline a new scale that measures relationship beliefs in the context of intimate sexual relationships.

II. BRADBURY AND FINCHAM'S CONTEXTUAL MODEL

Recently, Bradbury and Fincham (1988, 1989) presented a useful framework within which to examine the role of cognition in close relationships. Their Contextual Model of Marriage appears to have direct relevance to other intimate relationships, such as dating and cohabitation. Further, it provides

a comprehensive account of the way in which cognitions, behaviour, and other mediating variables impact on a relationship.

Essentially, the model considers the context within which a particular dyadic interaction occurs. "Context", here, refers to the psychological conditions or variables that influence the processing of behaviours in a relationship. Thus, the context is composed of both *proximal* and *distal* elements.

The proximal context comprises the flow of affect and cognitions experienced by a person immediately prior to the processing of a partner's behaviour, the setting of the interaction, and the actual behaviour of the partners. In contrast, the distal context includes the more stable psychological variables, such as personality traits, goals and chronic mood states, as well as general beliefs and memories concerning relationships, which are likely to operate across many relationship situations.

These contextual features influence what is attended to by the individual, both in terms of primary or automatic processing, and what is processed in the in-depth, controlled or secondary stage of cognitive analysis. However, these contextual factors not only impact on the cognitive processing of a behavioural sequence, but also interact with each other to update the content of the proximal context. Moreover, the nature of the elements in the distal context may also change over time. Thus, the model provides a dynamic account of relationship processes.

III. GENERAL RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS

Bradbury & Fincham (1988) specifically highlight relationship beliefs as an important distal variable within their Contextual Model. Beliefs are

generally considered to be cognitive structures which organise information, and thus affect the way people interpret events (Noller et al., 1989). Further, "beliefs ... are actively involved in initiating and guiding the course and outcome of social interaction " (Snyder, 1987, p. 292). Therefore, beliefs people hold about relationships exert a powerful influence on the actual relationships people have.

While many relationship beliefs may be acquired or influenced by personal experience in relationships, it is likely that a significant proportion of these beliefs are also learned in the socialisation process (eg. through exposure to the media). These relationship beliefs may be considered "shared knowledge structures" (Morgan, 1986) or "social constructions" (Gergen, 1988). It is the socially shared nature of these general relationship beliefs which makes possible an examination of the structure of such beliefs. However, because every relationship is unique (Hendrick, 1988), and because socialisation backgrounds vary to some extent, there are also individual differences in how strongly these beliefs are held.

IV. CURRENT MEASURES OF RELATIONSHIP BELIEFS

There have been at least three previous attempts made to present individual difference measures of relationship beliefs: Eidelson and Epstein's (1982) Relationship Belief Inventory; Noller, Dixon and Limerick's (1989) Beliefs about Marriage Scale; and Sprecher and Mett's (1989) Romantic Beliefs Scale. As I will show, all of these scales suffer from serious deficiencies or limitations.

Relationship Belief Inventory

This 40-item scale purports to measure general unrealistic expectations and dysfunctional beliefs about intimate relationships and contains five sub-scales: Disagreement is destructive, Mindreading is expected, Partners cannot change, Sexual perfectionism, and the Sexes are different. Although relatively little attempt has been made to validate this scale, this scale has been used quite extensively in published research in prestigious journals (eg. Bradbury & Fincham, 1988; Fincham & Bradbury, 1989; Gaelick, Bodenhausen & Wyer, 1985). Eidelson and Epstein (1982) do cite significant negative correlations with a measure of relationship satisfaction (the Marital Adjustment Test, Locke & Wallace, 1959) as evidence for the construct validity of their scale. Upon further examination, however, it becomes clear that of the 40 items presented in the Inventory, 20 statements (marked with an * in Appendix J) are worded so that the response is contingent on specific events within the relationship (eg. partner's disagreement with important ideas, difficulties in sexual performance, partner's inability to change, or that the relationship is, in fact, falling apart). This problem is the most acute with the sub-scales that attained the highest negative association with satisfaction, that is: Disagreement is destructive, $r = -.57, p < .05$, and Partners cannot change, $r = -.38, p < .05$).¹ The items in these sub-scales are listed below to illustrate the central problem with this scale.

Disagreement is destructive

Item 1: If your partner expresses disagreement with your ideas, s/he probably does not think highly of you.

Item 6: I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me.

¹ Bradbury and Fincham (1988) report similar findings.

Item 11: I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine.

Item 16: I like it when my partner presents views different from mine.

Item 21: I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way.

Item 26: I cannot tolerate it when my partner argues with me.

Item 31: When my partner and I disagree, I feel like our relationship is falling apart.

Item 36: I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we argue.

Partners cannot change

Item 3: Damages done early in a relationship probably cannot be reversed.

Item 8: My partner does not seem capable of behaving other than s/he does now.

Item 13: A partner can learn to become more responsive to his/her partner's needs.

Item 18: Just because my partner has acted in ways that upset me does not mean that s/he will do so in future.

Item 23: A partner who hurts you badly once probably will hurt you again.

Item 28: If my partner wants to change, I believe that s/he can do it.

Item 33: If you don't like the way a relationship is going, you can make it better.

Item 38: I do not expect my partner to be able to change.

As can be seen, many of these items require the reporting of attitudes, affect, or behaviour and often with respect to the subjects' current relationship. In sum, this scale shows poor construct validity, as it apparently measures relationship problems or satisfaction with an actual relationship situation as much as it measures beliefs. The Relationship Belief Inventory is thus not a valid measure of dysfunctional relationship beliefs, and conclusions based

on research utilising the scale (eg. Bradbury & Fincham, 1988) must be treated with caution.

The Beliefs about Marriage Scale.

This is a 40-item, unpublished scale with a four-factor structure labelled: Mutual supportiveness, Traditional sex roles, Institutional commitment to Marriage, and Interpersonal commitment (Noller, Dixon & Limerick, 1989). A representative statement from each sub-scale is presented below.

Mutual supportiveness: "It is important that a couple strive to understand each other". Traditional sex roles: "It is better for the husband to be the dominant partner, the wife subordinate". Institutional commitment to marriage: "A marriage is a failure if one partner is unfaithful".

Interpersonal commitment: "A marriage is a success if both partners care about and love each other".

While this scale does not show such a basic face validity problem as the Relationship Belief Inventory, it has a rather limited focus. For a start, the stimulus material from which the items were generated were marital interactions from recent movies. I would question the range and accuracy of celluloid portrayals of marital interaction, and suggest that Noller et al's Factor 3 'Institutional commitment to marriage' and perhaps even the emphasis on Factor 2 'Traditional sex roles' are produced only because of the over-representation in the media of issues concerning marital infidelity and male dominance. Hence, this biased focus may have produced a scale artificially slanted towards these areas. The scale has received little validation and, in addition, is specifically concerned with marital relationships only, which limits the scope of its use.

The Romantic Belief Scale

This is a recent 15-item measure of romanticism in relationships. The scale consists of four sub-scales designed to explicate the level of romantic ideology individuals possess, under the following labels: Love finds a way, One and only, Idealization, and Love at first sight. An example of each sub-scale is given below. Love finds a way: "If I love someone, I will find a way for us to be together regardless of the opposition to the relationship, physical distance between us or any other barrier". One and only: "There will be only one real love for me". Idealization: "The relationship I will have with my 'true love' will be nearly perfect". Love at first sight: "I am likely to fall in love almost immediately if I meet the right person".

While this scale appears to be methodologically sound, and though romanticism may be an important component of research into relationships, it seems rather narrow in its point of reference. In fact, an emphasis on the ideology of love alone ignores the more basic issues in day-to-day relationships which a more general relationship belief scale would need to explore.

It can be seen, then, that methodological and conceptual restrictions limit the suitability of currently available scales for the study of relationship beliefs within the distal context.

V. RATIONALE FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Given the importance of relationship beliefs in Bradbury and Fincham's Contextual Model, and with due consideration to the deficiencies of the available measures of relationship beliefs, I would argue that a new

measure of relationship beliefs is required. Such a scale would, ideally, be applicable to any close, romantic/sexual relationship; that is dating, cohabitation or marriage (unlike Noller et al.'s, 1989, scale). In addition, the scale would focus on a range of relationship beliefs, rather than a single issue within a specific relationship context, in order to most fully access the distal features of the belief structure. However, while the measure should not be too narrow in its point of reference (as the Romanticism scale is), it is necessary to provide a scale that is useful for research purposes.

An important area of research, within which development of a scale would be useful, concerns relationship success. Much research in social psychology has focussed on the differences between non-distressed (presumably successful) and distressed (presumably unsuccessful) marital relationships (eg. Fincham, Beach & Baucom, 1987; Fincham, Beach & Nelson, 1987; Holtzworth-Munroe & Jacobson, 1985; Jacobson, McDonald, Follette & Berley, 1985; Margolin & Wampold, 1981). However, these studies focus solely on attributions and conflict within the marital setting.

Therefore, the development of a scale to measure beliefs concerning what makes an intimate relationship (not necessarily marital) successful, would provide a useful tool in a range of research projects. Further, such a scale would allow an examination of the impact of relationship success beliefs (in the distal context) in Bradbury and Fincham's Contextual Model of relationship interaction.

Thus, I decided to construct a scale to measure people's beliefs concerning what makes relationships successful - the Relationship Success Belief Scale.

VI. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Because a good measure must perform reliably and function in a way consistent with the purpose for which it was designed, a carefully devised research programme was followed in order to establish the reliability and validity of the scale.

In Study 1, I detail the construction and pilot testing of the Relationship Success Belief Scale. The reliability and factor structure of the scale are examined in Study 2. Reliability is the degree to which the scale evokes consistent responses that is, it does not fluctuate greatly as a result of random error or chance factors. Reliability may be one of two types: Internal consistency, where each of the individual items fits correctly into the overall pattern of the scale, and temporal stability, which is when results derived from the measure over time are stable. The next study (Study 3) explores the discriminant and convergent validity of the scale. Convergent validity requires that the scale converges (or correlates positively) with other supposed measures of the same construct. In this instance, there are few overlapping constructs, though I expected there to be some association with certain love attitudes. In contrast, discriminant validity is where the scale discriminates (or shows a low correlation) between constructs which are theoretically distinct, such as relationship satisfaction.

Finally, Studies 4 and 5 provide evidence towards the predictive validity of the scale. Basically, administration of the scale should provide information which can be used to predict future behaviour which is related conceptually to the construct measured by the scale, namely relationship success beliefs. In these studies, the scale is used to predict both the way people think about their relationships, and also the strength of the link between behaviour and relationship satisfaction in close relationships.

In summary, this thesis details the development of the Relationship Success Belief Scale, and presents evidence as to the reliability and validity of the scale.

CHAPTER II

STUDY ONE: SCALE DEVELOPMENT

I. DETERMINING THE CATEGORIES

The initial study was conducted in April 1989 with 100 first year psychology students at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand (67 women; 33 men). Of these 100 respondents, 60 were currently involved in a romantic/sexual relationship. The majority of respondents were single (68 never married; 7 separated/divorced; 6 living with partner) and 19 respondents were married. The average age was 23.4 years with an *sd* of 6.1 years.

Respondents were recruited during ordinary laboratory class-time and allocated one of two scenarios: a 'dating' scenario ($n = 49$) and a 'married' scenario ($n = 51$). (Appendix B). Each respondent received a booklet of blank pages (on which to write their descriptions) with a cover page for demographic information, and one other page printed with the appropriate scenario. The two scenarios differed only on the first line which, for the 'dating' scenario, was that Karen and Mark had been in an unmarried relationship (not living together) for two years. The 'married' scenario informed respondents that Karen and Mark had been married for ten years and had two children.

Both scenarios then proceeded as follows:

They love each other very much and have an extremely happy and successful relationship. We are interested in what you believe are the important factors in producing such a successful relationship. Mention as many factors as you think are important - be as specific or as general as you wish. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your own beliefs. Please describe each factor that you believe leads to a successful relationship, such as Karen and Mark's. Write each description separately on the slips of paper provided.

Respondents were given as much time as they required to complete the task and thanked for their participation

Each response was then categorised, in a Q-sort procedure, according to similarity of meaning by myself. Eighteen categories were found within which the majority of statements could be placed. These were checked for content and face validity by an independent rater, and subsequently revised. The revised categories are shown in Table 1. Responses were examined across the two scenarios and no significant differences were found from a series of Chi-square analyses ($X^2 < 3.84$).

Table 1: Factors Considered Important in Relationship Success Across Relationship Type

Category	<u>Scenario</u>		
	dating <i>n</i> (%)	married <i>n</i> (%)	total (%)
Communication	27 (55)	35 (69)	(62)
Love	13 (27)	17 (33)	(30)
Trust	34 (69)	35 (69)	(69)
Independence	27 (55)	25 (49)	(52)
Support	22 (45)	34 (67)	(56)
Acceptance	14 (29)	11 (22)	(25)
Sex	29 (59)	24 (47)	(53)
Equity	12 (25)	16 (31)	(28)
Compromise	15 (31)	12 (24)	(27)
Relationship Vitality	20 (41)	18 (35)	(38)
Commonality	31 (63)	29 (57)	(60)
Personal Security	4 (8)	6 (12)	(10)
Friendship	16 (33)	17 (33)	(33)
Finance	8 (16)	3 (6)	(11)
Children	2 (4)	9 (18)	(11)
Important Others	5 (10)	2 (4)	(7)
Coping	12 (25)	12 (24)	(24)
Respect	14 (29)	16 (31)	(30)

Note : The *n* s and % s refer to the number of subjects mentioning each category at least once.

These results, then, indicated that there is little difference in what people believe makes for a successful unmarried or marital relationship. The same factors seem to apply across relationship type. These findings give initial support to the feasibility of constructing a questionnaire to assess the structure of general relationship beliefs across relationship types.

II. ITEM GENERATION

Four items for each category were generated. The item generation process took account of the most representative statements in the categories and resulted in a 76-item questionnaire.

All the statements are worded in the same direction (agreement with the statement indicates a positive emphasis on relationship success) as it was found that with reversal of half of the items (a common practice in scale development) it was difficult to retain the intended focus on relationship success.

III. PILOT TESTING

Between June and August, 1989, two pilot tests were conducted on the questionnaire. These examined the comprehensibility and face validity of each of the items, the internal reliability of the sub-scales and established a provisional factorial structure.

The first pilot study involved 128 first year psychology students, the second used 61 second year chemistry and 98 second year psychology students at the University of Canterbury. It was decided to include the chemistry students in an attempt to achieve a more heterogeneous sample.

After each pilot study the questionnaire was revised according to the means and variances attained by each item, and items were accordingly reworked or deleted from the questionnaire. In addition, the item-total correlations and factor loadings were examined, and the best three items were selected from each of the sub-scales for the final scale. The final questionnaire (The Relationship Success Belief Scale) comprised 18 sub-scales, giving a total of 54 items, and is presented in Table 2.

CHAPTER III

STUDY TWO: RELIABILITY

This second study examined the internal reliability of the sub-scales, the factorial structure, and the test-retest reliability of the Relationship Success Belief Scale. In addition, I decided to test the prediction (derived from Study 1) that the scale could be applied across different types of relationships. I expected that there would be little or no differences in the way non-dating, dating or married people completed the scale. In terms of gender differences, I had no specific predictions about the different ways that men and women would complete the scale.

I. METHOD

Subjects and Procedure

The Relationship Success Belief Scale (Appendix C) was administered to 451 students (241 female and 210 male) at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, in September 1989. Two hundred and twenty nine of these students were from a second year business administration class, while the remaining 222 students were from the second year General Psychology class and the third year Social Psychology class. Respondents filled out the questionnaire in class time. Fifty two of the Social Psychology students also filled out the questionnaire two weeks after the first administration so the test-retest reliability of the scale could be assessed.

Of these respondents, 221 were currently in a romantic/sexual relationship, while 230 were not in such a relationship. Thirty eight respondents were married, 12 were separated/divorced, 21 were living with their partner, and the remaining 380 were single-never-married. Ages ranged between 18 and 53 years, with a mean of 22.6 years ($sd = 6.0$ years).

Relationship Success Belief Scale

Each of the 54 items had a scale below it ranging from +1 to +6 (+1 = do not hold this belief at all; +2 = slightly hold this belief; +3 = moderately hold this belief; +4 = quite strongly hold this belief; +5 = strongly hold this belief; and +6 = very strongly hold this belief). All items were worded such that the meanings of the statements were positive; that is, as factors leading to relationship success.

The first page of the questionnaire thanked respondents for agreeing to participate in a study on relationships and requested specific demographic information. (Appendix A). The second page presented the following instructions:

We are interested in what you believe are the important factors in determining whether long-term heterosexual relationships are successful. The kind of relationships we are referring to could be long-term stable unmarried relationships, long-term relationships in which people are living together, or married relationships. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your own *general* beliefs about such relationships.

The rating procedure was then described, and respondents instructed to indicate the extent to which they *presently* believed each statement by circling one number on each scale.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Individual Items

As can be seen in Table 2, only seven items had a mean greater than 5.0 (items 3, 13, 19, 36, 39, 40,44), and of these seven only two had standard deviations less than 1.0. These were items 36 ('Mutual respect is the foundation for the best relationships') and 44 ('The best relationship is one in which the partners take equal responsibility for its maintenance') which

indicates that most people agree with these statements. One other item, 41 ('Partners must provide practical support for each other to the utmost of their capabilities') had an *sd* of .9 and thus showed limited variance. Overall, however, given that the items were expected to be generally endorsed, the means and standard deviations for the individual items are acceptable.

Reliability and Factorial Structure of the Sub-scales

From Table 3, it can be seen that the sub-scales showing the greatest variance are Sex (*sd* = 3.4) and Children (*sd* = 3.2). Least variance was shown by Respect (*sd* = 2.24) and Support (*sd* = 2.32). No sub-scales had *sd* s less than 2.0 (range = 2.24 to 3.40), and means ranged between 7.08 and 15.03 (the maximum mean score possible is 18.0).

Adequate internal reliability was shown by all sub-scales: Cronbach alpha coefficients ranged from .33 (Coping) to .77 (Sex). These alphas are acceptable given that alpha levels are artificially depressed with fewer items in the set.

The sub-scale totals were factor analysed by a principal components analysis, with both the orthogonal and oblique rotations producing the same factorial structure with similar loadings. Results will be reported from the orthogonal rotation. Five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 accounted for 59 % of the variance. These factors appear meaningful and were termed: Intimacy, External factors, Passion, Individuality, and Harmony. These factors are presented with their belief factor loadings in Table 3. All remaining analyses refer to scores derived from these five factors.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of the Individual Items Organised by Sub-scale

Scale Item	M	SD
<i>Communication</i>		
1 People must always listen to their partner's underlying messages.	4.7	1.1
19 Partners must be able to speak freely with each other on any topic no matter how distressing.	5.2	1.0
37 It is essential for partners to express all their feelings in relationships.	4.3	1.3
<i>Love</i>		
2 In successful relationships partners constantly show how much they love one another.	4.0	1.2
20 Close relationships cannot work without love.	4.4	1.4
38 Love between partners is enough to ensure a successful relationship.	2.7	1.4
<i>Trust</i>		
3 There must be complete honesty between partners.	5.1	1.0
21 The best relationships depend on being absolutely loyal to one another.	4.9	1.1
39 Partners must be completely faithful to one another in close relationships.	5.1	1.2
<i>Independence</i>		
4 Each partner has a right to absolute personal privacy.	4.0	1.4
22 Partners in close relationships must have time apart from each other.	4.8	1.2
40 It is essential for partners to remain individuals no matter how close they are.	5.2	1.0
<i>Support</i>		
5 Partners must support one another completely in close relationships.	4.8	1.1
23 In the best relationships partners work hard at satisfying each other's needs.	4.2	1.2
41 Partners must provide practical support for each other to the utmost of their capabilities.	4.8	.9
<i>Acceptance</i>		
6 In happy relationships partners totally accept each other.	4.7	1.2
24 Partners in the best relationships have unconditional approval of one another.	3.9	1.3
42 If partners do not accept each other, they cannot really love each other.	4.5	1.3
<i>Sex</i>		
7 The best relationships are built on strong sexual attraction.	2.9	1.4
25 Without good sex relationships do not survive.	3.2	1.5
43 Sexual compatibility is essential to good relationships.	3.9	1.3
<i>Equity</i>		
8 Men and women must equally share household chores.	4.7	1.4
26 Without equality between partners, relationships die.	4.0	1.5
44 The best relationship is one in which the partners take equal responsibility for its maintenance.	5.2	.8

Scale Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Compromise</i>		
9 Both partners must make sacrifices in relationships.	5.0	1.1
27 Partners must be prepared to compromise for the sake of a relationship.	4.7	1.1
45 Within a healthy relationship partners accommodate each others' needs, even if this involves self-denial.	3.9	1.3
<i>Relationship Vitality</i>		
10 Relationships must be full of laughter.	4.3	1.3
28 Relationships must be exciting.	4.2	1.2
46 Romance is an essential element of a relationship.	4.5	1.2
<i>Commonality</i>		
11 Sharing interests and hobbies keeps relationships healthy.	4.3	1.1
29 Partners must share the same beliefs and values.	3.6	1.4
47 The more time partners spend together the better.	3.4	1.2
<i>Personal Security</i>		
12 People from similar backgrounds will have more successful relationships.	3.6	1.4
30 To have a good relationship each individual must feel secure within him/her self.	4.8	1.1
48 If both partners come from secure and caring families the relationship is much more likely to succeed.	3.8	1.5
<i>Friendship</i>		
13 Partners must be best friends as well as lovers.	5.2	1.0
31 Your partner should be your best friend.	4.7	1.3
49 Relationships cannot survive without a very close friendship between partners.	4.8	1.1
<i>Finance</i>		
14 Financial problems wreck relationships.	3.2	1.4
32 Close relationships depend on economic security.	2.6	1.2
50 Money is as important as love in a relationship.	2.0	1.1
<i>Children</i>		
15 Having children brings couples together.	2.8	1.4
33 Long-term relationships are shallow without children.	1.9	1.2
51 Having children leads to total fulfilment in close relationships.	2.3	1.3
<i>Important Others</i>		
16 Not getting on with each other's friends or families wrecks relationships.	3.5	1.2
34 Having friends in common cements relationships.	3.9	1.1
52 Your own friends must be your partner's friends.	2.5	1.3
<i>Coping</i>		
17 A good relationship is strong enough to survive anything.	3.5	1.5
35 Conflict in a relationship must be confronted directly.	4.7	1.1
53 The success of a relationship depends on how well any conflict is dealt with.	4.6	1.0
<i>Respect</i>		
18 In the most successful relationships partners are completely sensitive to each others feelings.	4.5	1.1
36 Mutual respect is the foundation for the best relationships.	5.2	.9
54 Courtesy towards the partner is one of the most important factors in the success of the best relationships.	4.5	1.1

An analysis of the internal reliability of the summed constructs in the factors produced alpha coefficients greater than .5 in all cases, with a range between .55 and .84. The test-retest correlations ($n = 52$), measured over a period of at least two weeks, ranged from .66 to .86, and were all highly significant to $p < .005$. (See Table 4.) The five factors (or sub-scales) therefore seem to show good internal reliability and test-retest reliability.

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviations, Alphas, and Factor Loadings of Sub-scales as Organised by Factors

Category	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Alpha	Factor loading
<i>Intimacy</i>				
1. Coping	12.78	2.37	.33	.74
2. Respect	14.14	2.24	.58	.71
3. Communication	14.13	2.48	.57	.67
4. Trust	15.03	2.65	.72	.64
5. Acceptance	13.11	2.74	.51	.61
6. Friendship	14.78	2.68	.70	.53
7. Love	11.16	2.76	.47	.51
<i>External Factors</i>				
1. Finance	7.80	2.98	.74	.74
2. Important Others	9.91	2.65	.57	.69
3. Personal Security	12.19	2.85	.49	.69
4. Children	7.08	3.20	.74	.54
5. Commonality	11.22	2.49	.40	.49
<i>Passion</i>				
1. Sex	10.05	3.40	.77	.73
2. Rel.ship Vitality	12.96	2.71	.61	.69
<i>Individuality</i>				
1. Independence	13.92	2.52	.47	.70
2. Equity	13.88	2.67	.52	.67
<i>Harmony</i>				
1. Compromise	13.60	2.58	.60	.82
2. Support	13.75	2.32	.56	.58

Note : Only loadings over .40 were selected for each factor.

Table 4: Alphas and Test-retest Correlations for the Five Sub-scales

Sub-scale	Alpha	Test-retest correlation
Intimacy	.84	.86*
External	.81	.69*
Harmony	.67	.84*
Individuality	.55	.66*
Passion	.72	.80*
* $p < .005$		

Correlations among Factor totals

As shown in Table 5, there are moderate positive correlations between some factor totals, with four out of the ten correlations over .30. This indicates that beliefs about relationship success are to some extent inter-related, which is perhaps not surprising. The belief in individuality attained the lowest correlations with the other sub-scales.

Table 5: Correlations among the Five Sub-scales

Sub-scale	1	2	3	4	5
1. Intimacy	-	.47*	.50*	.17*	.28*
2. External Factors		-	.40*	.02	.38*
3. Harmony			-	.13*	.19*
4. Individuality				-	.22*
5. Passion					-
* $p < .005$					

Application of the Scale across Relationship Type and Gender

A series of 2 (gender) x 3 (relationship type) ANOVAs revealed no significant differences in the way people filled out the scale according to the type of relationship they were in ($F < 1$). Hence, people's strength of relationship beliefs did not vary according to whether they were married, dating, or non-dating.

Gender produced two significant main effects. The first was with Individuality, where women ($M = 28.66$) had stronger beliefs in general than men ($M = 27.11$) ($F(1,404) = 19.2, p < .005$). This result is perhaps not surprising given that it has been a struggle for women to attain equity in our society (and Equity is one of the major components of Individuality). The second main effect was with Passion ($F(1,404) = 5.3, p < .05$). Here, in contrast, the men ($M = 22.98$) had slightly higher scores in general than the women ($M = 22.71$). The difference suggests that men place a greater emphasis on sex in a relationship than women, a result in line with other research (eg. Kelley, 1979; Fletcher, 1983).

In summary, Study 2 has established that the scale shows adequate internal and test-retest reliability. In addition, there seems to be a meaningful five-factor structure to relationship success beliefs. Although men and women vary somewhat in the strength of certain beliefs, there was no evidence that relationship status has any association with how strongly these beliefs are held.

CHAPTER IV

STUDY THREE: CONVERGENT AND DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

In this study, the convergent and discriminant validity of the Relationship Success Belief Scale was examined.

I. DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

Given that the Relationship Success Belief Scale is a self-report measure of people's beliefs about what makes for a successful relationship, it might be thought that the scale would be contaminated by social desirability biases. It was decided, therefore, to administer a social desirability scale to determine respondents' tendencies to produce socially desirable responses and then correlate these scores with those gained from the Relationship Success Belief Scale.

It could also be argued that a measure of people's beliefs about successful relationships is simply an indicator of how successful people see their own relationships as being (either potentially or in actuality). As already pointed out, other relationship belief scales (especially the Relationship Belief Inventory, Eidelson & Epstein, 1982) are suspect because they appear to be confounded with attitudes, expectations or behaviours that are components of relationship satisfaction. Accordingly, I thought it important to establish that relationship beliefs as measured by my scale, are not strongly related to relationship satisfaction. In the current study, relationship satisfaction was measured in a sample of subjects currently in close relationships.

In summary, then, I predicted that there would be no significant correlations between relationship success beliefs and social desirability or relationship satisfaction.

II. CONVERGENT VALIDITY

It seems likely that the relationship success belief sub-scales are associated with a number of other constructs, such as attachment styles and love attitudes.

For example, it might be expected that beliefs about relationship success are associated in some way with patterns of affectional bonding formed in infancy. Hazan and Shaver (1987) have determined three major styles of romantic attachment, derived from Bowlby's work. These attachment styles (Secure, Avoidant, and Anxious/Ambivalent) are characterised by different ways of approaching relationships with others. Secure lovers have happier, more friendly and trusting relationships. In contrast, Avoidant lovers are more jealous, fearful of intimacy and have emotional highs and lows. Anxious/ambivalent lovers have emotional highs and lows, and jealousy. However, this last group is also more obsessive, desires union and reciprocation, and reports extreme sexual attraction. Of particular relevance to this study is Hazan and Shaver's (1987) finding that:

people with different attachment orientations entertain different beliefs about the course of romantic love, the availability and trust-worthiness of love partners, and their own love-worthiness. These beliefs may be part of a cycle (a vicious cycle in the case of insecure people) in which experience affects beliefs about self and others and these beliefs in turn affect behaviour and relationship outcomes. (p. 521)

In relation to the Attachment Style scale (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) it seems plausible that a more Secure attachment style should be associated more

with the Intimate and Harmony sub-scales of the Relationship Success Belief Scale. The basic components of Intimacy (eg. Coping, Respect, Communication, Trust, Acceptance, Friendship, and Love), and Harmony (eg. Compromise, Support) are such that we would expect more secure individuals to endorse these items more positively than less secure people. In contrast, I predicted that the Avoidant and Anxious/ambivalent attachment styles would produce the opposite set of findings; namely that individuals endorsing these attachment styles would have lower scores on the Intimacy and Harmony sub-scales than those people not endorsing these particular styles.

The second hypothesis explored here is that certain aspects of people's attitudes about love may be associated with the Relationship Success Belief sub-scales. Hendrick and Hendrick (1986) present developments on Lee's (1973) theory of the six basic love styles which people tend to adopt. The love styles identified by Lee are somewhat overlapping constructs, where individuals may be categorised according to the central tendency of their attitudes about love. These two researchers have constructed a 42-item Love Attitudes Scale which serves to differentiate between the six love styles of Eros (passionate love), Ludus (game-playing love), Storge (friendship love), Pragma (logical love), Mania (possessive, dependent love), and Agape (selfless love). While these attitudes focus on identifiable features of these love styles, there would seem to be some overlap in several of the constructs being examined by the Love Attitude Scale and this Relationship Success Belief Scale. Specifically, it is likely that there are aspects of the pragmatic love style in the External factors sub-scale because of its focus on practical considerations such as finance, important others, etc. It also seems likely that the ludic and erotic love styles (both with significant physical or sexual components) will be associated positively with the Passion sub-scale, that the storgic love style will be negatively associated with Passion (because of a non-

sexual orientation), and that the agapic love style will be positively associated with both the Intimacy and Harmony sub-scales (through their focus on support and acceptance, etc.).

To summarise, I predicted that people's attachment styles and attitudes about love would have some association with beliefs about what makes for a successful relationship.

III. METHOD

Subjects and Procedure

75 second year business administration and psychology students were brought to a classroom, in groups of 2-6 over a period of two weeks. These respondents had all previously filled out the Relationship Success Belief Scale at least two weeks previously, and agreed to participate further in the study (with the added incentive of a \$100 lottery) (See Appendix A).

A series of questionnaires was administered to these participants: The Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) (Appendix F), Hendrick and Hendrick's (1986) Love Attitude Scale (Appendix E), and Hazan and Shaver's (1987) Attachment Scale (Appendix D). In addition, the 50 people within this group who were in close relationships completed the relationship satisfaction measure developed by Fletcher (Fletcher, Fitness & Blampied, in press) (Appendix H). This 6-item scale was specifically designed for use with either married or unmarried subjects. The scale shows good reliability and predictive validity. Once the respondents had completed the questionnaires, I debriefed them thoroughly.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discriminant Validity

As can be seen in Table 6, there were no significant correlations between the five sub-scales and the social desirability scores. Hence there is no evidence of a social desirability bias in the scale.

Overall, there is also little evidence of an association between relationship success beliefs and relationship satisfaction, which indicates that the beliefs tapped by the scale are distinct from relationship satisfaction. The one exception was the Intimacy sub-scale which correlated .26 with satisfaction ($p < .05$). Beliefs about intimacy, then, appear to be somewhat associated with the actual level of satisfaction attained in a relationship.

Convergent Validity

As predicted, a Secure attachment style was in fact associated more strongly with the Intimacy and External factors, than the Anxious and Avoidant styles ($p < .05$). (Refer to Table 6.) Against expectations, however, the correlation between Harmony Beliefs and the Secure attachment style did not reach statistical significance. A larger sample might ensure significance of this correlation in another study. To add further convergent validity, the Anxious/ambivalent attachment style was associated negatively with the Harmony and External Beliefs ($p < .05$). This is not surprising as the anxious person is likely to hold weak Harmony Beliefs (through a jealous and extreme nature) and is less likely to endorse beliefs concerning Important others and Personal security, given that s/he does not have easy relationships with people and has a less secure background.

The correlations between the Relationship Success Belief sub-scales and the love styles were mainly as expected. Pragmatic love and the External Beliefs

were positively associated ($p < .005$); Agapic love was positively associated with the Intimacy ($p < .01$) and Harmony relationship beliefs ($p < .05$); as was Ludus with Passion ($p < .005$). As predicted, Storge was negatively associated with Passion ($p < .005$). However, the expected association of Eros with Passion did not eventuate, while a strong, unexpected association with Intimacy did occur ($p < .005$). It is not clear why there was no significant correlation between the Passion sub-scale and the erotic love style.

Table 6: Correlations of Various Scales with the Sub-scales of the Relationship Success Belief Scale

Construct	Sub-scales of RSBS				
	Intimacy	External	Harmony	Individuality	Passion
1. <i>Social Desirability</i>	.15	.11	.01	.03	-.02
2. <i>Love Style</i>					
Eros	.34***	.06	-.15	-.10	.12
Ludus	-.10	.09	.05	.06	.36***
Storge	-.04	-.07	.07	.09	-.37***
Pragma	.13	.49***	.07	-.09	.01
Mania	.01	-.01	.09	-.09	.08
Agape	.27**	.17	.21*	-.10	.00
3. <i>Attachment Style</i>					
Avoidant	-.18	-.04	-.12	-.12	-.13
Anxious	-.18	-.25*	-.23*	-.06	-.07
Secure	.21*	.21*	.18	.09	-.08
4. <i>Relationship Satisfaction</i>	.26*	.00	.16	-.06	-.13

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .005$

To summarise, the general pattern of convergent and discriminant associations was as expected with a number of exceptions.

CHAPTER V

STUDY FOUR: PREDICTIVE VALIDITY

The next two studies were designed to examine the predictive validity of the Relationship Success Belief Scale.

In this study I examined how the way in which people describe their own relationships is related to the sub-scales of the Relationship Success Belief Scale. It has been found that people will talk about their relationships in different ways depending on the state of their relationship. For instance, Fletcher, Fincham, Cramer and Heron (1987) reported that happy subjects described their relationships in more interpersonal terms. Specifically, subjects who described their relationship in more interpersonal terms in the free-response relationship descriptions reported more happiness, more commitment, and more love.

It seems plausible that there is some association between relationship beliefs and the way in which people think about their relationship. Hence the sub-scales of the Relationship Success Belief Scale which concern interpersonal beliefs, namely the Intimacy and Harmony sub-scales, would be expected to correlate positively with a greater interpersonal emphasis in the relationship. In contrast, endorsement of beliefs concerning the welfare of the individual, as exemplified by the Individuality sub-scale, should correlate negatively with an interpersonal (or relationship) focus.

I also expected that a focus on the relationship rather than the self or the partner, would be associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction, or happiness, as was found by Fletcher et al. (1987).

To sum up, I expected a stronger relationship focus in close relationship descriptions to be positively correlated with Harmony and Intimacy relationship beliefs, and negatively correlated with Individuality beliefs.

I. METHOD

Subjects and Procedure

Respondents in this study were 50 stage two business administration, and stage two and three psychology students, who had agreed to participate in an ongoing study on relationships (Appendix A). They had filled out the Relationship Success Belief Scale at least two weeks previously.

Participants were administered two questionnaires: the Fletcher, Fitness and Blampied (in press) Relationship Satisfaction scale, followed by a free response task (Appendix I). This task was one outlined by Fletcher, Fincham, Cramer and Heron (1987) and requested that subjects:

... describe your own relationship in your own words. Include whatever you think is important, but make the description as full as you are able to. This information will be strictly confidential and your partner will not see it or know of it, so please feel free to be completely honest and candid.

Respondents were then thoroughly debriefed.

Coding

The relationship descriptions were sub-divided into semantic units and coded by two independent raters for the incidence of referral to the 'self', the 'partner', the 'relationship' or 'other factors'. A total score was calculated for each of these four categories; however the 'other' category showed so few responses that it was dropped from further analysis. In order to establish

the respondents' relative focus on the relationship, "self", "partner", and "relationship" percentage values were calculated for each variable with the total number of units as the denominator.

An inter-rater agreement rate of 90% was achieved. My coding was used throughout the analyses.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An examination of the correlations between the sub-scales and the Self, Partner or Relationship focus (Table 7) revealed the predicted pattern in one out of the three cases. As predicted, Harmony with its emphasis on interpersonal matters, was strongly associated with an interpersonal cognitive focus ($p < .005$), and indeed was negatively associated with a cognitive focus on the Self and the Partner ($p < .05$ in both cases). Against predictions, however, no significant correlations were found with Intimacy or Individuality beliefs. Overall, this pattern of results changed very little when relationship satisfaction was controlled for (see Table 7).

As expected (see Table 7) a focus on the Relationship was positively associated with relationship satisfaction ($p < .005$). On the other hand, a focus on the Self or the Partner was negatively associated with relationship satisfaction ($p < .05$ in both cases). These results replicate previous findings (Fletcher, et al., 1987).

In general, then, a focus on the relationship is associated with relationship satisfaction and harmonious relationship beliefs, although several other predictions were disconfirmed.

Table 7: Correlations between the Sub-scales, Satisfaction and Relationship Focus in a Free Response Task

Focus	<u>Construct</u>					Relationship Satisfaction
	Intimacy	External	Harmony	Individuality	Passion	
Self	-.16	-.03	-.33*	-.03	.09	-.33*
Partner	-.09	-.09	-.28*	.21	.13	-.29*
Relationship	.16	.07	.37***	-.09	-.13	.38***
<i>Controlling for Relationship Satisfaction</i>						
Self	-.08	-.04	-.30*	-.06	.05	
Partner	-.02	-.09	-.25*	.20	.10	
Relationship	.07	.07	.34**	-.07	-.09	
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .005$						

CHAPTER VI

STUDY FIVE: PREDICTIVE VALIDITY

Presumably, people prefer to maintain some consistency between their cognitions, emotions and behaviours (Berscheid, 1985). However, a strong specific belief about what makes a relationship successful (eg. independence) should result in a strong connection between relationship satisfaction and behaviour which is specifically related to this belief (eg. independence-related behaviour). In contrast, people who have weak beliefs concerning the importance of a particular factor would not be expected to evince such a strong association between relationship satisfaction and those beliefs. To give another example, if a person held a strong belief about the importance of intimacy in a relationship, then the resultant association between the individual's intimate relationship behaviour and relationship satisfaction should be higher than if the person held only a weak belief.

An important point, related to the discriminant validity of this scale, is that there should be no strong associations between relationship success beliefs and relevant relationship behaviour, otherwise it could be claimed that the scale measures behaviour rather than related cognitive constructs.

To test these hypotheses, 18 items were created to measure specific exemplars of relationship behaviours, being representative of the 18 relationship success belief sub-scales. For example: "Are you able to express your private thoughts and feelings to your partner?" was formulated to represent the communication item. Seventeen behavioural items were worded both with reference to the self and the partner, while the eighteenth item dealt with the level of equity in the relationship as a whole.

I. METHOD

Subjects and Procedure

The 50 respondents were the same as those in Study 4. At least two weeks previously subjects had completed the Relationship Success Belief Scale, and had agreed to participate further. Because both scales (belief and behaviour) involved self-report measures, a two week time lag between the measurement of these two constructs was obtained to eliminate any demand characteristics for subjects to consciously present consistent beliefs and behaviour. In this study, respondents completed the behavioural questionnaire described above, filled out the Relationship Satisfaction scale (Fletcher et al., in press), and were then thoroughly debriefed.

Behavioural Questionnaire

The final behavioural questionnaire was comprised of 35 items (Appendix G). Each question had a scale ranging from +1 to +6 below it (+1 = never; +2 = rarely; +3 = sometimes; +4 = often; +5 = mostly; and +6 = always).

The instructions on the first page, referring to the respondent, read as follows:

The following questions relate to specific aspects of your relationship with your partner. The first set deals with *your own* behaviour. Please indicate (by circling a number on the scale below each question) how often *you* exhibit each of these behaviours within your relationship.

The second set of questions related to how the partner acted in the relationship, while the final question dealt with both the respondent's and their partner's behaviour.

The behavioural items referring to self, and the equity question, are presented below.

Communication: Are you able to express your private thoughts and feelings to your partner?

Love: Do you cuddle, or express affection readily to, your partner?

Trust: Are you sexually faithful to your partner?

Independence: Does it upset you if your partner wants time to him/herself?

Support: Do you provide lots of practical support for your partner?

Acceptance: Do you show approval for your partner, even when he/she acts unwisely or badly?

Sex: Do you sexually satisfy your partner?

Compromise: Do you make compromises for the sake of your relationship?

Relationship Vitality: Do you do things to make your relationship exciting?

Commonality: Do you share in your partner's interests and hobbies?

Personal Security: Is your family background secure and caring?

Friendship: Is your partner your best friend?

Finance: Do you have financial problems?

Children: Do you want children? (Note: if you have children and were given the chance again, would you still want them?)

Important Others: Do you get on well with your partner's friends and family?

Coping: When conflict emerges in your relationship do you confront it directly?

Respect: Do you show respect for your partner's attitudes and beliefs?

Equity: Do you and your partner have equal say in what you do socially?

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, the respondents' reports of self and partner behaviour were correlated. Thirteen of these self-partner correlations were significant, with a mean r of .45. Accordingly, the self and partner scores were summed to produce 18 separate scores. Next, these combined scores were summed to mirror the structure of the five belief sub-scales. For example, the Intimate behaviour score represented the total of the Communication, Love, Trust, Acceptance, Friendship, Coping, and Respect scores. Therefore, there was a summed behaviour score for each of the five belief sub-scales. As expected, it was found (see Table 8) that relationship satisfaction was strongly associated with Intimate, Harmonious and Passionate behaviours ($p < .005$ in all instances). Externally oriented behaviour was also moderately associated with relationship satisfaction ($p < .05$), though Individuality behaviour was not associated with satisfaction at all. These results give support to the validity of the behavioural questionnaire. Actual relationship behaviours (as derived from beliefs about relationship success) are, by and large, strongly associated with relationship satisfaction in the expected fashion.

However, to reinforce the point that relationship success beliefs and behaviours are relatively independent, out of the set of five relevant belief-behaviour correlations where the highest positive correlations would be expected (that is, Passionate beliefs with Passionate behaviour, Intimate beliefs and behaviour, Harmonious beliefs and behaviour, Individuality beliefs and behaviour, and External beliefs and behaviour), only two were correlated positively (Intimacy ($p < .01$), and Harmony ($p < .05$)). Indeed, Individuality beliefs and behaviour were negatively correlated ($p < .01$).

When relationship satisfaction was controlled, the same basic pattern emerged save for a few minor exceptions.

For the major analysis, a median split was used to divide the sample into those with strong beliefs and weak beliefs on each of the five sub-scales. The results, as shown in Table 9, strongly confirm my predictions. In all cases, subjects with strong beliefs on each of the dimensions had stronger associations between their actual behaviour and relationship satisfaction, than those with weaker beliefs. Although only two of the differences in correlations were statistically significant (for External $z = 1.75, p < .05$, and for Harmony $z = 1.70, p < .05$) (Cohen and Cohen, 1983), the trend is the same in all cases. Given the relatively low n and low power associated with the use of median splits, these results can be considered strong.

Table 8: Correlations between the Belief and Behaviour Sub-scales, and Relationship Satisfaction

Behaviour Category	<u>Belief Constructs</u>					Relationship Satisfaction	
	Intimacy	External	Harmony	Individuality	Passion		
Intimate	.35**	.08	.08	-.17	-.04	.86***	
External	.09	.22	.14	-.05	-.04	.33*	
Harmonious	.20	-.02	.25*	.05	-.14	.63***	
Individual	-.15	-.24*	-.14	-.34**	-.27*	.18	
Passionate	.39***	-.02	.08	-.14	.14	.51***	
<i>Controlling for Relationship Satisfaction</i>							
Intimate	.27*	.18	-.11	-.23	.13		
External	.01	.24*	.10	-.03	.01		
Harmonious	.05	-.02	.20	.12	-.07		
Individual	-.21	-.25*	-.18	-.33*	-.25*		
Passionate	.31*	-.02	.00	-.12	.24*		
					* $p < .05$	** $p < .01$	*** $p < .005$

One artifactual explanation for these findings might be in terms of the variances within the weak belief intensity group being considerably reduced as compared to the strong belief intensity group. Such a pattern would produce a 'restriction of range' problem which would artificially depress the size of the correlation. However, it can be seen in Table 9 that this is not the case, as the *sd* s are not greatly different between comparison groups. The findings, therefore, cannot be explained by this possibility.

Table 9: Correlations between Behaviour and Relationship Satisfaction for Strong and Weak Relationship Beliefs

Behaviour	<i>r</i>	<u>Belief Intensity</u>		<i>r</i>	<i>(n)</i>	<i>sd</i>
		Strong	Weak			
		<i>(n)</i>	<i>sd</i>		<i>(n)</i>	<i>sd</i>
Intimate	.87***	(22)	7.2	.83***	(25)	8.9
External	.56***	(23)	6.5	.10	(26)	6.1
Harmonious	.74***	(23)	3.5	.41*	(27)	1.9
Individual	.33	(24)	1.7	.10	(26)	1.7
Passionate	.71***	(23)	3.5	.52***	(26)	2.9

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .005$

In summary then, these results support the hypothesis that relationship behaviours and relationship happiness are more closely linked in people who have strong beliefs with respect to those areas. The linkage is not as strong, with the exception of Intimacy, in the case of those with weaker beliefs.

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of this thesis, outlines suggestions for research into the psychometric properties of the Relationship Success Belief Scale and considers some clinical implications of the scale. In addition, it highlights areas of future research made possible by the construction of this scale, with particular emphasis on Bradbury and Fincham's (1988, 1989) Contextual Model.

I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of these studies provide useful support for the reliability and external validity of the Relationship Success Belief Scale.

Study 1 showed that people structured their beliefs about relationship success around 18 basic dimensions. The Relationship Success Belief Scale was constructed on the basis of statements made by respondents pertaining to these 18 factors.

Study 2 established that the scale had adequate internal reliability and test-retest reliability. Factor analysis revealed a meaningful five-factor structure, with the relationship success belief factors labelled as Intimacy, Harmony, Passion, Individuality, and Equity. In addition, it was discovered that relationship status (non-dating, dating or married) was not related to how strongly these beliefs were held. However, several gender differences were found suggesting that women have stronger beliefs than men concerning the importance of individuality, and weaker beliefs than men concerning the importance of passion, in a relationship.

Study 3 examined the discriminant and convergent validity of the scale. As expected, relationship success beliefs were not related to social desirability or relationship satisfaction. In contrast, as predicted, beliefs concerning Intimacy were positively related to a Secure attachment style, and Harmony beliefs were inversely associated with an Anxious attachment style. Moreover, Passionate beliefs were strongly and positively related to a game-playing love style (Ludus), but negatively associated to the friendship-based love style (Storge). Intimacy and Harmony beliefs were also positively related to the selfless love style (Agape), and beliefs about External matters were, not surprisingly, associated with the pragmatic love style (Pragma). Against predictions, however, Passionate beliefs were not associated with the Erotic love style, but the Erotic style was related to Intimate beliefs. Given the nature of the Erotic love style (quite physical in orientation), it is difficult to explain why there was no association with Passionate beliefs concerning Sex and Relationship vitality. Just as puzzling is the strong relationship between Intimate beliefs (concerning Communication, Respect, Trust, Acceptance, Friendship, Coping and Love) and the predominantly passionate, Erotic love style.

Studies 4 and 5 provided evidence for the predictive validity of the scale. It was shown, in Study 4, that a focus on the relationship (for example, talking of 'we') as opposed to the self or the partner, was associated with greater relationship satisfaction and also with Harmony beliefs.

Study 5 found that there was a closer link between specific relationship behaviours and relationship satisfaction in subjects with strong beliefs in the relevant areas, than in those subjects with weaker beliefs.

II. SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP PSYCHOMETRIC RESEARCH

Replicability of the Factor Structure

A basic requirement for the validity of any scale is that the same factor structure is found consistently in different studies. Therefore, the next step in examining the validity of the scale would be to apply the scale to another sample. If the factor structure from this additional sample replicates that found in Study 2, then we can assume that the scale accesses a stable belief structure. In fact, initial support is given to the stability of the factor structure by the consistency of the factorial results found between the pilot studies and Study 2.

Development of a Short-version of the Scale

It is possible that a shorter version of the scale would be just as reliable and valid as this current scale. To this end, further studies could be conducted using the items which show the highest item-to-total correlations. A point to watch for, however, is that researchers do not delete items from the scale which are important for adequate coverage of the constructs. It may be a matter, then, of working through the items deciding which items are most necessary to the sub-scales on the basis of face validity rather than the item-total correlations.

Generalisability of the Scale

A further issue concerns the generalisability of the Relationship Success Belief Scale to the population in general. This scale was validated on a student sample, and though every effort was made to achieve a heterogeneous mix of ages (18-50+ years) and interests (chemistry,

psychology and business administration), and to develop short, easily readable items, it remains to be demonstrated that equivalent results are obtained with a non-university sample. This is a matter for future research to determine.

However, this scale would appear to have accessed a widely shared construct which is highly salient and relevant to New Zealand society. Conversely, it is likely that non-western cultures consider a different set of factors to be important for relationship success. Indeed, Argyle (1986) presented a study showing that there are different rules concerning social relationships in different cultures, and Dion and Dion (1988) found that Western and Eastern conceptions of romantic love differ. Therefore, a useful cross-cultural study could explore the structure of the relationship success beliefs which operate in Eastern and Polynesian cultures, for example.

III. CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

While this Relationship Success Belief Scale was not constructed with a clinical application in mind, the scale may be useful as a diagnostic tool in a relationship counselling situation. In the dyadic context, a counsellor could use the scale to stimulate discussion of the specific issues on which a couple show disagreement. Indeed, the scale could serve a useful purpose in premarital counselling to make a couple aware of the issues which could potentially cause problems later in their relationship. It may even be that identification and discussion of the issues is enough to prevent the manifestation of such problems.

IV. FUTURE RESEARCH WITH THE SCALE

Relationship Success and Dysfunction

A common assumption made by psychologists is that the factors causing distress, and subsequent dissolution of the relationship, are not distinct from the factors causing a relationship to be successful. However, if we look at the factors which Eidelson and Epstein (1982) put forward as causes of relationship dysfunction (disregarding the issues of validity concerning their measure of these constructs), we find these to be quite distinct from the factors considered to lead to relationship success identified in this study. Eidelson and Epstein's dysfunctional factors focus on disagreement, mindreading, partner change, sexual perfectionism, and sex roles. The important constructs found in Study 1 in this research, range from issues of trust and acceptance through to love and friendship. While this study also finds communication, coping, independence, equity, sex and acceptance to be important, showing some degree of overlap with the dysfunction constructs, it does not appear that success beliefs are mere reversals of dysfunctional beliefs. Relationship success does not therefore, necessarily represent the 'flip-side' of relationship distress, but may have a distinct focus of its own.

To substantiate this proposition, it would be useful to take a measure of people's dysfunctional beliefs (using a better-validated instrument than the Relationship Belief Inventory) and examine the association between this measure and the Relationship Success Belief Scale. If the association was not simply an inverse copy of the relationship success beliefs, then this would provide evidence that relationship success beliefs are distinct relationship constructs.

Extension of the Contextual Model

In this thesis, I have presented findings which have implications for Bradbury and Fincham's (1988, 1989) Contextual Model. I have shown that relationship success beliefs, as one set of distal variables, mediate the association between relationship satisfaction (another distal variable) and relationship behaviour. In addition, Study 4 provided an indication of how relationship beliefs may impact on the proximal context. Recall that I found that these beliefs (in the distal context) affect the way in which people think about their relationships at a particular point in time (in the proximal context) in terms of how people described their relationships.

While this research presents evidence which is consistent with the Contextual Model, the link between proximal variables (such as the way an individual is thinking about his/her relationship) and distal variables (such as general relationship beliefs) requires further elaboration. The Relationship Success Belief Scale would be a useful tool for investigating the causal association between different elements in the Contextual Model; specifically, relationship-related cognitions, affect, and behaviour within the proximal and distal contexts. In particular, the scale could be used to examine the effects of holding various strengths of the relationship success beliefs on the primary processing of behavioural interactions in relationships. For instance, the strength of a belief is likely to affect what is attended to in an interaction. Since a strong relationship belief will make relevant relationship behaviours salient, these behaviours are more likely to be attended to in primary processing and thus interpreted in greater depth in the secondary processing stages. Therefore, more cognitive work should be carried out concerning behaviour which is associated with strong beliefs.

One other way of examining this association would be to study the attributions people produce for their partners' behaviour as a function of whether they hold strong or weak relationship beliefs. As previously noted, it might be expected that for people with strong beliefs, a partner's belief-relevant behaviour will be more closely attended to than non-belief-relevant behaviour, which would be reflected in more detailed attributions being produced for that behaviour. In addition, negative behaviour is more likely to be attended to by people who are unhappy with their relationship, and positive behaviour is more likely to be attended to by happy people (eg. Fincham & Bradbury, 1989; Fincham et al., 1987). Relationship success beliefs, then, are likely to act as conceptual filters helping determine which events are analysed in greater depth.

While relationship beliefs may filter what is attended to, and how events are interpreted, the beliefs themselves will also be moulded by relationship experiences and socialising influences, such as the media. Future research could examine the impact that different sorts of relationship events have on people's relationship beliefs. For example, it is probable that if certain problems caused a previous relationship to end (perhaps sexual infidelity on the part of the partner), then an individual is more likely to hold strong beliefs concerning that issue. Hence the slightest hint of a partner's sexual boredom, in a new relationship, may cause an emotional reaction and in-depth analysis which the partner may not comprehend. In turn, this sensitisation to certain issues is likely to affect decisions made concerning the relationship, for example: "Should we stay together or not?".

In addition, since this thesis has been concerned with general relationship success beliefs, it would be interesting to consider how these general beliefs are associated with an individual's specific relationship success beliefs that are confined to a particular relationship. In fact, general and specific beliefs

are probably closely connected within a person's relationship schema. However, it would be valuable to determine to what extent general success beliefs overlap with beliefs concerning a particular relationship.

Finally, Bradbury and Fincham's (1988, 1989) Contextual Model of Marriage appears to be applicable to non-marital relationships, such as dating and cohabitation. Since the Relationship Success Belief Scale focusses on a wide variety of romantic/sexual relationships, it could prove useful in the extension of the Contextual Model to non-marital close relationships.

In summary, it can be seen that the Relationship Success Belief Scale may have a useful role to play in future research concerned with cognition in close relationships.

CONCLUSION

Within our society there is a set of widely held beliefs about what make relationships successful. This thesis has detailed the basic structure of these success beliefs and presented evidence for the reliability and validity of a scale to measure these beliefs - The Relationship Success Belief Scale.

The scale shows adequate reliability and validity, and would appear to be a useful psychometric tool. However, continuing research is needed to establish its relevance to non-student and non-western populations. In addition, a longitudinal research programme focussing on the links between relationship success beliefs and other elements of Bradbury and Fincham's Contextual Model of relationships is recommended.

Given that the maintenance of successful close relationships represents one of the major aims of most people in everyday life, the Relationship Success Belief Scale should be a useful tool in future research into close relationship processes.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS (STUDIES 1 - 2)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on relationships. Could you please fill in the information requested below, then turn the page and begin the survey.

Sex: M/F (circle one of these options)

Age (in years):

How many different individuals have you dated in the last year? (indicate the number here:) ---

Are you currently in a romantic/sexual relationship? Y/N
(circle Y or N)

If you answered 'Yes' to the question above, please indicate the length of time you have been involved in this relationship:

.... years months weeks

Current marital status: (tick one of the categories below)

Single - never married	---
- living with partner	---
- separated/divorced	---
Married	---

PLEASE TURN OVER AND BEGIN THE SURVEY

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS (STUDIES 3 - 5)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the second phase of this study on relationships. Could you please fill in the information requested below, then turn the page and begin the survey.

Code number (same as used previously): _____

Are you currently in a romantic/sexual relationship? Y/N
(circle Y or N)

If you answered 'Yes' to the question above, please indicate the length of time you have been involved in this relationship:

..... years months weeks

Current marital status: (tick one of the categories below)

Single - never married	--
- living with partner	--
- separated/divorced	--
Married	--

There are several sets of tasks required of you which should not take longer than one hour to complete. Each task has its own set of instructions. Please work individually, and complete each of the tasks carefully and as accurately as possible.

PLEASE TURN OVER AND BEGIN THE SURVEY

APPENDIX B

DATING SCENARIO

Karen and Mark have been in a premarital relationship for two years. They love each other very much and have an extremely happy and successful relationship.

We are interested in what you believe are the important factors in producing such a successful relationship. Mention as many factors as you think are important - be as specific or as general as you wish. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your own beliefs.

Please describe each factor that you believe leads to a successful relationship, such as Karen and Mark's.

Write each description separately on the slips of paper provided.

MARRIAGE SCENARIO

Karen and Mark have been married for ten years and have two children. They love each other very much and have an extremely happy and successful relationship.

We are interested in what you believe are the important factors in producing such a successful relationship. Mention as many factors as you think are important - be as specific or as general as you wish. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your own beliefs.

Please describe each factor that you believe leads to a successful relationship, such as Karen and Mark's.

Write each description separately on the slips of paper provided.

APPENDIX C

RELATIONSHIP SUCCESS BELIEF SCALE

We are interested in what you believe are the important factors in determining whether long-term heterosexual relationships are successful. The kind of relationships we are referring to could be long-term stable premarital relationships, long-term relationships in which people are living together, or married relationships. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in your own general beliefs about such relationships.

Each statement in the questionnaire is accompanied by a scale. You are to indicate the extent to which you presently believe each statement by circling one number on each scale. The numbers on each scale represent the following degrees of belief.

- 1 - Do not hold this belief at all
- 2 - Slightly hold this belief
- 3 - Moderately hold this belief
- 4 - Quite strongly hold this belief
- 5 - Strongly hold this belief
- 6 - Very strongly hold this belief

1. People must always listen to their partner's underlying messages.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

2. In successful relationships partners constantly show how much they love one another.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

3. There must be complete honesty between partners.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

4. Each partner has a right to absolute personal privacy.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

5. Partners must support one another completely in close relationships.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

6. In happy relationships partners totally accept each other.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

7. The best relationships are built on strong sexual attraction.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

8. Men and women must equally share household chores.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

9. Both partners must make sacrifices in relationships.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

10. Relationships must be full of laughter.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

11. Sharing interests and hobbies keeps relationships healthy.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

12. People from similar backgrounds will have more successful relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

13. Partners must be best friends as well as lovers.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

14. Financial problems wreck relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

15. Having children brings couples together.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

16. Not getting on with each other's friends or families wrecks relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

17. A good relationship is strong enough to survive anything.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

18. In the most successful relationships partners are completely sensitive to each others feelings.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

19. Partners must be able to speak freely with each other on any topic, no matter how distressing.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

20. Close relationships cannot work without love.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

21. The best relationships depend on being absolutely loyal to one another.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

22. Partners in close relationships must have time apart from each other.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

23. In the best relationships partners work hard at satisfying each other's needs.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

24. Partners in the best relationships have unconditional approval of one another.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

25. Without good sex relationships do not survive.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

26. Without equality between partners, relationships die.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

27. Partners must be prepared to compromise for the sake of a relationship.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

28. Relationships must be exciting.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

29. Partners must share the same beliefs and values.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

30. To have a good relationship each individual must feel secure within him/her self.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

31. Your partner should be your best friend.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

32. Close relationships depend on economic security.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

33. Long-term relationships are shallow without children.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

34. Having friends in common cements relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

35. Conflict in a relationship must be confronted directly.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

36. Mutual respect is the foundation for the best relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

37. It is essential for partners to express all their feelings in relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

38. Love between partners is enough to ensure a successful relationship.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

39. Partners must be completely faithful to one another in close relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

40. It is essential for partners to remain individuals no matter how close they are.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

41. Partners must provide practical support for each other to the utmost of their capabilities.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

42. If partners do not accept each other, they cannot really love each other.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

43. Sexual compatibility is essential to good relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

44. The best relationship is one in which the partners take equal responsibility for its maintenance.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

45. Within a healthy relationship partners accommodate each others' needs, even if this involves self-denial.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

46. Romance is an essential element of a relationship.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

47. The more time partners spend together the better.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

48. If both partners come from secure and caring families the relationship is much more likely to succeed.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

49. Relationships cannot survive without a very close friendship between partners.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

50. Money is as important as love in a relationship.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

51. Having children leads to total fulfilment in close relationships.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

52. Your own friends must be your partner's friends.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

53. The success of a relationship depends on how well any conflict is dealt with.

Do not hold this 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold
belief at all this belief

54. Courtesy towards the partner is one of the most important factors in the success of the best relationships.

Do not hold this belief at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very strongly hold this belief

APPENDIX D

ATTACHMENT STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please rate each of the following three statements on the degree to which they fit your feelings and experiences in love relationships. Please circle ONE number from the scale beneath each statement.

1= Strongly Disagree 2= Moderately Disagree 3= Slightly Disagree 4= Slightly Agree 5= Moderately Agree 6=Strongly Agree

1. I am somewhat uncomfortable being close to others; I find it difficult to trust them completely, difficult to allow myself to depend on them. I am nervous when anyone gets too close, and often, love partners want me to be more intimate than I feel at all comfortable being.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

2. I find that others are reluctant to get as close as I would like; I often worry that my partner doesn't really love me or won't stay with me. I want to get very close to my partner, and this sometimes scares people away.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

3. I find it relatively easy to get close to others and am comfortable depending on them. I don't often worry about being abandoned or about someone getting too close to me.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 Strongly Agree

APPENDIX E

LOVE ATTITUDES SCALE

This research is about love. All questionnaires are totally confidential, so please don't feel shy about answering how you really feel.

For the following three questions, please circle the appropriate letter or number:

How many times have you been in love? 0 1 2 3-5 5+

Are you in love now? Y/N

The way I feel about myself generally is:

1	2	3	4	5
very positive	positive	neutral	negative	very negative

Please respond to the following statements by writing a number corresponding to your level of agreement or disagreement with them, based on the following scale. If you are not currently involved with anyone, remember your last relationship. If you have never been in love, imagine how you would feel.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
strongly disagree	moderately disagree	slightly disagree	neutral	slightly agree	moderately agree	strongly agree

1. My lover and I were attracted to each other immediately after we first met. ---
2. I try to keep my lover a little uncertain about my commitment to him/her. ---
3. It is hard to say exactly where friendship ends and love begins. ---
4. I consider what a person is going to become in life before I commit myself to him/her. ---
5. When things aren't going right with my lover and me, my stomach gets upset. ---
6. I try to always help my lover through difficult times. ---

7. When my love affairs break up, I get so depressed that I have even thought of suicide. ---
8. I try to plan my life carefully before choosing a lover. ---
9. Genuine love first requires caring for awhile. ---
10. I believe that what my lover doesn't know about me won't hurt him/her. ---
11. My lover and I have the right physical 'chemistry' between us. ---
12. I have sometimes had to keep two of my lovers from finding out about each other. ---
13. I expect to always be friends with the one I love. ---
14. It is best to love someone with a similar background. ---
15. Sometimes I get so excited about being in love that I can't sleep. ---
16. I would rather suffer myself than let my lover suffer. ---
17. Our lovemaking is very intense and satisfying. ---
18. I cannot be happy unless I place my lover's happiness before my own. ---
19. When my lover doesn't pay attention to me, I feel sick all over. ---
20. A main consideration in choosing a lover is how he/she reflects on my family. ---
21. The best kind of love grows out of a long friendship. ---
22. I can get over love affairs pretty easily and quickly. ---
23. I feel that my lover and I were meant for each other. ---
24. I am usually willing to sacrifice my own wishes to let my lover achieve his/hers. ---
25. My lover would get upset if he/she knew of some of the things I've done with other people. ---
26. Our friendship merged gradually into love over time. ---
27. An important factor in choosing a partner is whether or not he/she will be a good parent. ---
28. When I am in love, I have trouble concentrating on anything else. ---
29. Whatever I own is my lover's to use as he/she chooses. ---
30. My lover and I became emotionally involved rather quickly. ---

31. My lover and I really understand each other. ---
32. When my lover gets too dependent on me, I want to back off a little.---
33. Love is really a deep friendship, not a mysterious mystical emotion. ---
34. One consideration in choosing a partner is how he/she will reflect on my career. ---
35. I cannot relax if I suspect that my lover is with someone else. ---
36. When my lover gets angry with me, I still love him/her fully and unconditionally. ---
37. My lover fits my ideal standards of physical beauty/handsomeness. ---
38. I would endure all things for the sake of my lover. ---
39. If my lover ignores me for a while, I sometimes do stupid things to get his/her attention back. ---
40. Before getting involved with anyone, I try to figure out how compatible his/her hereditary background is with mine in case we ever have children. ---
41. My most satisfying love relationships have developed from good friendships. ---
42. I enjoy playing the 'game of love' with a number of different partners. ---

APPENDIX F

SOCIAL DESIRABILITY SCALE

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it pertains to you personally. Place T or F after each statement to indicate your agreement or disagreement.

1. Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates. -----
2. I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble. -----
3. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged. -----
4. I have never intensely disliked anyone. -----
5. On occasion I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life. -----
6. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way. -----
7. I am always careful about my manner of dress. -----
8. My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant. -----
9. If I could get into a movie without paying for it and be sure I was not seen, I would probably do it. -----
10. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability. -----
11. I like to gossip at times. -----
12. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right. -----
13. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener. -----
14. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something. -----
15. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone. -----
16. I'm always willing to admit when I make a mistake. -----
17. I always try to practice what I preach. -----

18. I don't find it particularly difficult to get along with loud mouthed, obnoxious people. -----
19. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forgive and forget. -----
20. When I don't know something I don't at all mind admitting it. -----
21. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable. -----
22. At times I have really insisted on having things my own way. -----
23. There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things. -----
24. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings. -----
25. I never resent being asked to return a favour. -----
26. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own. -----
27. I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car. -----
28. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others. -----
29. I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off. -----
30. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favours of me. -----
31. I have never felt that I was punished without cause. -----
32. I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved. -----
33. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings. -----

APPENDIX G

RELATIONSHIP BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions relate to specific aspects of your relationship with your partner. The first set deals with *your own* behaviour. Please indicate (by circling a number on the scale below each question) how often *you* exhibit each of these behaviours within your relationship. The scale is as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Mostly	Always

1. Are you able to express your private thoughts and feelings to your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

2. Do you cuddle, or express affection readily to, your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

3. Are you sexually faithful to your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

4. Does it upset you if your partner wants time to him/herself?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

5. Do you provide lots of practical support for your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

6. Do you show approval for your partner, even when he/she acts unwisely or badly?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

7. Do you sexually satisfy your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

8. Do you make compromises for the sake of your relationship?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

9. Do you do things to make your relationship exciting?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

10. Do you share in your partner's interests and hobbies?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

11. Is your family background secure and caring?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

12. Is your partner your best friend?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

13. Do you have financial problems?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

14. Do you want children? (Note: if you have children and were given the chance again, would you still want them?)

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

15. Do you get on well with your partner's friends and family?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

16. When conflict emerges in your relationship do you confront it directly?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

17. Do you show respect for your partner's attitudes and beliefs?

1 2 3 4 5 6
Never Always

The following set of questions relates to how *your partner* acts in your relationship. Please circle the number below each question which relates to how often *your partner* exhibits these behaviours.

18. Is your partner able to express private thoughts and feelings to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

19. Does your partner cuddle or express affection readily to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

20. Is your partner sexually faithful to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

21. Does it upset your partner if you want time to yourself?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

22. Does your partner provide lots of practical support for you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

23. Does your partner show approval of you, even when you act unwisely or badly?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

24. Does your partner sexually satisfy you?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

25. Does your partner make compromises for the sake of your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

26. Does your partner do things to make your relationship exciting?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

27. Does your partner share in your interests and hobbies?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

28. Is your partner's family background secure and caring?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

29. Are you your partner's best friend?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

30. Does your partner have financial problems?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

31. Does your partner want children? (Note: if you have children, and were given the chance again, would he/she still want them?)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

32. Does your partner get on well with your friends and family?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

33. When there is conflict in your relationship, does your partner confront it directly?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

34. Does your partner show respect for your attitudes and beliefs?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

The final question here deals with *both* you *and* your partner's behaviour.

35. Do you and your partner have equal say in what you do socially?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never					Always

APPENDIX H

RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION SCALE

Please answer the following questions about your relationship by putting a circle around the number that best describes your opinion. The key to the numbers is as follows:

- 1 = not at all
- 2 = very little
- 3 = not very much
- 4 = moderately
- 5 = quite a lot
- 6 = very much
- 7 = extremely

- A) How much do you love your partner?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- B) How happy are you in your relationship?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- C) In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- D) How serious are the problems in your relationship?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- E) Overall, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- F) Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship? Please mark the statement with a tick.
- a) I want desperately for my relationship to succeed and would go to almost any lengths to see that it does.
 - b) I want very much for my relationship to succeed and would try very hard to see that it does.

- c) I am very keen for my relationship to succeed and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- d) It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I cannot do any more than I am doing now to make it succeed.
- e) It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep it going.
- f) My relationship is unlikely to succeed, and there is no more I can do to keep it going.
- g) My relationship can never succeed and I do not wish to keep it going.

APPENDIX I

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SELF-REPORT EXERCISE

We want you to describe your relationship in your own words. Include whatever you think is important, but make the description as full as you are able to. This information will be strictly confidential and your partner will not see it or know of it, so please feel free to be completely honest and candid.

APPENDIX J

RELATIONSHIP BELIEF INVENTORY

The statements below describe ways in which a person might feel about a relationship with another person. Please write a number next to each statement according to how strongly you feel that it is true or false for you. Please respond to every statement. Write in 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 to stand for the following answers:

- 1: I strongly feel that the statement is false
- 2: I feel that the statement is false
- 3: I feel that the statement is probably false, or more false than true
- 4: I feel that the statement is probably true, or more true than false
- 5: I feel that the statement is true
- 6: I strongly feel that the statement is true

-
1. If your partner expresses disagreement with your ideas, s/he probably does not think highly of you. _____
 2. I do not expect my partner to sense all my moods. _____*
 3. Damages done early in a relationship probably cannot be reversed. _____
 4. I get upset easily if I think I have not completely satisfied my partner sexually. _____*
 5. Men and women have the same basic emotional needs. _____
 6. I cannot accept it when my partner disagrees with me. _____*
 7. If I have to tell my partner that something is important to me, it does not mean that s/he is insensitive to me. _____
 8. My partner does not seem capable of behaving other than s/he does now. _____*
 9. If I'm not in the mood for sex when my partner is, I don't get upset about it. _____*
 10. Misunderstandings between partners generally are due to inborn differences in psychological makeups of men and women. _____
 11. I take it as a personal insult when my partner disagrees with an important idea of mine. _____*
 12. I get very upset if my partner does not recognise how I am feeling and I have to tell him or her. _____*

13. A partner can learn to become more responsive to his/her partner's needs. _____
14. A good sexual partner can get himself/herself aroused for sex whenever necessary. _____
15. Men and women probably will never understand the opposite sex very well. _____
16. I like it when my partner presents views different from mine. _____*
17. People who have a close relationship can sense each other's needs as if they could read each other's minds. _____
18. Just because my partner has acted in ways that upset me does not mean that s/he will do so in the future. _____*
19. If I cannot perform well sexually whenever my partner is in the mood, I would consider that I have a problem. _____*
20. Men and women need the same basic things out of a relationship. _____
21. I get very upset when my partner and I cannot see things the same way. _____*
22. It is important to me for my partner to anticipate my needs by sensing changes in my moods. _____
23. A partner who hurts you badly once probably will hurt you again. _____
24. I can feel OK about my lovemaking even if my partner does not achieve orgasm. _____*
25. Biological differences between men and women are not major causes of couples' problems. _____
26. I cannot tolerate it when my partner argues with me. _____*
27. A partner should know what you are thinking or feeling without you having to tell. _____
28. If my partner wants to change, I believe that s/he can do it. _____*
29. If my sexual partner does not get satisfied completely, it does not mean that I have failed. _____*
30. One of the major causes of marital problems is that men and women have different emotional needs. _____
31. When my partner and I disagree, I feel like our relationship is falling apart. _____*

32. People who love each other know exactly what each other's thoughts are without a word ever being said. _____
33. If you don't like the way a relationship is going, you can make it better. _____
34. Some difficulties in my sexual performance do not mean personal failure to me. _____*
35. You can't really understand someone of the opposite sex. _____
36. I do not doubt my partner's feelings for me when we argue. _____*
37. If you have to ask your partner for something, it shows that s/he was not "tuned into" your needs. _____
38. I do not expect my partner to be able to change. _____*
39. When I do not seem to be performing well sexually, I get upset. _____*
40. Men and women will always be mysteries to each other. _____