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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOUCH BEHAVIOR AND MARITAL
SATISFACTION IN STABLE MARRIAGES

DISSERTATION

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The relationship between touch behavior, marital satisfaction, and touch expectation in stable marriages was explored. Subjects included 41 couples, married a minimum of seven years, chosen at random from a community of middle-class families.

Spanier's Dyadic Adjustment Scale, Jourard's Body-Accessibility Questionnaire, and a touch expectation question on the data sheet were utilized to measure each subject's level of marital satisfaction, touch behavior, and touch expectation. These instruments were hand-delivered to each couple and returned by mail to the experimenter.

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine if a relationship existed between marital satisfaction and the amount of touch behavior expected and received from the spouse. Results showed significant correlations between the wife's marital satisfaction and amount of touch expected and received from her husband. No statistically significant difference was found between husband's marital satisfaction and the amount of touch he received from his wife. The canonical correlation was then employed

to determine whether or not there was a relationship between the following two sets of variables: (a) marital satisfaction as reported by husband and wife; and (b) frequency of touch as reported by husband and wife; frequency of being touched as reported by husband and wife; and touch expectation as reported by husband and wife. Statistically significant correlations were found for all touch behavior variables between husbands and wives and also between marital satisfaction of husbands and marital satisfaction of wives.

The following conclusions were drawn:

1. Marital satisfaction for the wife is related to how well the touch behavior of her husband meets her expectations.

2. Men state a wish to be touched frequently by their wives in an ideal relationship, but touch by their wife is not a criterion for their marital satisfaction.

3. Husbands and wives tend to share norms of tactuality. Findings reveal essentially no sex differences in touch behavior.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOUCH BEHAVIOR AND MARITAL SATISFACTION IN STABLE MARRIAGES

Many poorly adjusted marriages remain intact or stable. Because "stable" primarily means that the couple has stayed together over a period of time, these marriages are considered stable even though the satisfaction within the marriages range from low to high. A search of the literature revealed a paucity of research on how marital stability relates to marital satisfaction (Lewis & Spanier, 1979). Some of the marriages that have been studied were categorized as being highly stable yet low in satisfaction. These marriages have been described as devitalized, or having conflict-habituated relationships (Cuber & Harroff, 1965).

Studies focusing on these devitalized couples, as well as on couples with high marital satisfaction, isolated four significant variables: communication, self-esteem, self-disclosure, and emotional support (Haley, 1976; Levinger & Senn, 1967; Navran, 1967; Renne, 1970). In addition, touch behavior was found to be positively related to each of these variables in highly satisfactory marriage relationships (Jourard, 1966, 1971).

The first of these variables, communication, was found to be an effective way to strengthen common bonds and build closer, more supportive relationships. The communication

process involved the sharing, or disclosing of self in a mutual exchange that enabled individuals to develop a greater understanding of each other. Logically, literature related to the study of marital satisfaction contended that communication was a highly significant factor in determining the success or failure of a marital relationship (Carter, 1980).

The second variable, self-esteem, was necessary for high marital satisfaction. A spouse having a poor image of self tended to feel responsible for the stress of the other spouse. Ables and Brandsma (1977) suggested that when one or both spouses suffered from feelings of inadequacy, there was a tendency to draw unnecessarily bleak conclusions about oneself if one's mate was not fully satisfied.

Self-disclosure, the third variable, was studied by Luckey (1966) to determine the relationship between disclosure and marital happiness. Through analyzing the questionnaire scores and direct observation of the couples' interaction styles, Luckey concluded that self-disclosure does have a direct relationship to marital satisfaction. The strongest positive association between marital satisfaction and disclosure was directly related to a couple's discussion of desired time spent together and the kinds of activity in which they wished to engage.

The fourth variable, emotional support, was analyzed by Fiore and Sevensen (1977). Married couples with marital

satisfaction ranging from low to high were compared for expression of emotional support in their relationships. Couples with high marital satisfaction were found to express more affection and to provide more support for each other than the couples with low marital satisfaction.

Another variable, touching, was also supported by the literature as significant in marital satisfaction. Touching, in a marital relationship, is more than a sexual experience (Simon, 1976). Rather, touching serves as an affirmation of each partner that boosts self-esteem (Symonds, 1951). This increased self-esteem permits the establishment of satisfying marital relationships because it fosters feelings of security, allowing full disclosure of feelings.

Furthermore, touch is also crucial to effective communication within the marital relationship. Not only does touch serve to reassure and to convey affection, it also serves to emphasize verbal communication in a more intimate and personal way (Alagna, 1978).

In spite of this apparent relationship among the variables of communication, self-esteem, self-disclosure, emotional support, and touch (Jourard, 1966, 1971; Levinger & Senn, 1967; Mendelson, 1970; Satir, 1967), no research was found that assessed marital satisfaction in regard to touch behavior. Therefore, this study investigated the relationship between affirming, supportive touch and marital satisfaction of couples within a stable relationship. As a result, this

study provides a clearer understanding of touch behavior and marital satisfaction to aid counselors and family life educators in evaluating and enhancing interpersonal relationships.

Synthesis of Related Literature

Because of the rise in the divorce rate and the corresponding increase in the number of couples seeking marriage counseling, it was important to explore the factors that contributed to marital satisfaction within a stable marriage. The review of literature pertaining to this study included: marital stability, marital satisfaction, and touch behavior.

Marital Stability

In 1968 the average length of marriage at the time of divorce was 7.0 years; by 1975 it was 6.5 years (Levinger & Moles, 1979). In the divorce statistics for 1978, the median duration of marriages ending in divorce was 6.6 years (Butts, 1981).

There is a clear distinction between marital satisfaction and marital stability. Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggested that marital stability is a straightforward concept indicating whether or not a marriage is intact. According to this concept, marital stability is determined by several factors: the attractiveness of existing alternatives or lack of preferable alternatives, the barriers to marital

dissolution, and external pressures (Lewis & Spanier, 1979). Since a stable marriage does not necessarily imply high quality or satisfaction, Dean and Lucas (1974) concluded that a marital partnership could be assessed and judged to be in three different categories. Marriages could be classed as high quality and high stability, high quality and low stability, or low quality and high stability.

Although there is evidence (Bartz & Nye, 1970; Burr, 1973) that indicators of marital quality are strongly correlated with marital stability, Spanier (1976) and Dean and Lucas (1974) states that social scientists and family clinicians are cognizant that many marriages with average or even relatively good adjustment may be terminated by divorce.

Cattell and Nesselroade (1967) used 37 couples with high quality marriages and 37 couples with low quality marriages to research interpersonal variables associated with satisfaction. Members of both groups reported marital satisfaction on the basis of their spouses' willingness to change their behavior.

Clements (1967) confirmed the basis for marital satisfaction as the willingness to alter behaviors that are upsetting to one's spouse. Apparently, this willingness to change involves a flexibility based on the existence of behavioral alternatives in the individual's repertoire,

and on the individual's ability to visualize the alternatives as satisfying.

It should be noted, however, that even among couples who express a willingness to change, marriage was not necessarily stable, and that stable marriages are not necessarily characterized by spouses who are willing to change. Cuber and Harroff (1963), in their study of couples married at least ten years, who had never considered divorce or separation, discovered that this stability was due to fulfillment of the spouses, or due to feelings of entrapment and resentment by the spouses.

Although recent research (Lewis & Spanier, 1979) has indicated that marital stability and marital satisfaction are two distinct states, the general literature has tended to present the two constructs interchangeably. Therefore, further research on satisfaction within a stable marriage is indicated. Hicks and Platt (1970) and Spanier and Lewis (1980) have reported that little or no attention has been given to the low-happiness--high-stability marriages.

Marital Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction has been defined as the degree to which marital partners believe their marriage relationship is meeting their needs and expectations for marriage. Furthermore, marital satisfaction is based on the ability of marital partners to communicate their needs and expectations as well as to accommodate each other's requests.

Whether or not a marital partner responds consistently to the expectations of the husband or wife depends on the perception of the spouse's expectations and the degree of communication about their differing role expectations. If role perception is accurate, each partner is better able to anticipate the other's feelings and gear his or her response to the expectation of the other. Stuckert (1963) used 100 couples who were interviewed concerning role expectations. Results showed that the accuracy with which the wife perceived the marital expectations of her husband was related to her marital satisfaction. Interestingly, the accuracy of the husband's perception of his wife's views was not associated with marital satisfaction.

Communication and marital satisfaction have been commingled to the degree that any event having an effect on one will have a similar effect on the other (Navran, 1967). Mendelson (1970) examined the direct relationship between marital communication patterns and marital satisfaction. Using the Marital Adjustment Test, he selected thirty couples as participants in the experiment, fifteen of which were characterized by high marital satisfaction and fifteen by low marital satisfaction. Marital communication between spouses was recorded on video-tape and communication patterns were measured by two judges, with interrater agreement being 85 percent. The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine if there was a significant difference

between the two groups of subjects with respect to their communication patterns. There was a significant difference between the rigidity of communication in the emotional relationship of low and high maritally adjusted couples. Mendelson concluded that a couple would be less likely to achieve marital satisfaction if the communication process was not mutually satisfying. He stated, "Special attention must be paid to the ways that emotions are communicated, both verbally and non-verbally" (Mendelson, 1970, p. 46).

Several theorists have concluded that self-esteem and communication are consistently related to marital adjustment (Ables & Brandsma, 1977; Haley, 1976; Satir, 1967; Skynner, 1976). Murstein and Beck (1972) conducted a study designed to test the hypothesis that high self-esteem contributes to marital adjustment because there is less strain in relating to another person when an individual feels adequate. The researchers enlisted 60 volunteer couples, all of whom had been married for more than one year, and all having at least a high school education. Each subject was administered the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test, the Edmond's Marital Conventionalization Scale, and the Morman's Bipolar Adjective List. Correlations among the test scores showed a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and marital satisfaction, and revealed that a couple need not be highly compatible in their personal

interests to have a well-adjusted marriage. The authors concluded that as couples felt more comfortable about themselves in their role as husband or wife, they would be more likely to demand less from their spouse, causing a more pleasant atmosphere to exist in the home.

Levinger and Senn (1967) found a high correlation between marital satisfaction and disclosure of feelings. In their study of 32 couples, 15 indices of marital satisfaction and reported amount of couple self-disclosure were measured. Fifteen of these couples were in marital counseling and 17 couples were selected from the community. According to the authors, disclosure of feelings tended to be positively correlated with general marital satisfaction, but self-disclosure was even more positively correlated with good feelings about the other person in the relationship.

Affection was found to be another influential variable in marital satisfaction, with affectionate behavior defined as positive emotion, tender endearment, and expression of affection. Hawkins (1968) reported that marital satisfaction is the degree of mutual expression of affectionate behavior. Hicks and Platt (1970) and Lawson(1981) described marital satisfaction as a deep, sharing type of communication in which satisfaction is contingent on feelings, affection, love and regard.

This relationship of affection to marital satisfaction was further confirmed in a study by Luckey (1964). For

this study, Luckey identified 80 married couples of similar age, number of years married, education, occupation, number of children, residence and income. These couples were asked to respond to the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test and to Terman's self-rating Happiness in Marriage Scale. After a time lapse of approximately one month, the subjects were asked to describe the personalities of their spouses by marking the 128 descriptive phrases contained in the Interpersonal Check List. The scores on the Locke-Wallace and Terman scales were combined and correlated with the phrases marked on the Interpersonal Check List. Positive correlations indicated that subjects who were well satisfied with their marriage felt their spouses were considerate, tender, helpful, and big-hearted, as well as cooperative, friendly, and warm. The highest positive correlation was found on the adjectives: affectionate, understanding, and warm.

In theorizing about the quality of marriage, Lewis and Spanier (1979) summarized a review of articles relating to marital satisfaction with the following major proposition, "the greater the rewards from spousal interaction, the greater the marital quality" (Lewis & Spanier, 1979, p. 292). Restated, the primary factor in marital satisfaction was mutual interaction between spouses (Spanier & Lewis, 1980).

The social exchange view of human interaction, by Thibaut and Kelley (1959), presupposed that if the personal

profit from interaction is rewarding, there is a building up of positive sentiments, and the relationship continues to grow. However, if the costs of interaction are greater than the profits, the relationship will slow in its development. The satisfactions of interactions are based not only upon reward and cost experiences in the past but also upon anticipation of rewards and costs in future interaction.

Touch Behavior

One type of spouse interaction is the touch behavior between husband and wife. For instance, touch enables couples to enhance verbal communication, to convey intensity, and to affirm each other within the marital relationship (Alagna, 1978). Also, touching is seen as the means of establishing contact (Frank, 1957). Navran (1967) concluded that the positive association between non-verbal touch and marital satisfaction has important research implications.

Nguyen, Heslin, and Nguyen (1975) gave 41 male and 40 female unmarried undergraduate students a modified form of the Body-Accessibility Questionnaire and asked, "What does it communicate to you when a close person of the opposite sex touches different areas of your body in different ways" (p. 56)? The study revealed that most of the respondents associated most body areas and tactile modalities with the meanings of playfulness, warmth, love, friendship, sexual desire, and pleasantness. These results indicated

That touch was interpreted by most of the participants as positive and affirming.

It can also be concluded that touch is an end in itself. It is a primary form of communication, a silent voice that avoids the pitfalls of words while expressing the feelings of the moment (Masters & Johnson, 1972).

One important variable related to touch is self-esteem (Silverman, Pressman, & Bartel, 1973). Being touched in the early years of life is a factor in the development of self-esteem, or how one sees oneself as a physical person (Symonds, 1951). Even in marriage, where sexuality is a significant consideration, touch means different things. For instance, sometimes touch shows care and regard for the partner without involving sexual connotations. This type of affirming touch affects the recipient's self-esteem and not necessarily the sexual self (Simon, 1976).

The amount of touching that can be expected from a person is also correlated with self-esteem. There appears to be a positive relationship between high self-esteem and readiness to touch others when communicating positive emotions. Silverman et al. (1973) asked 80 male and female undergraduates to complete Pederson's (1969) Semantic Differential Inventory as a measure of self-esteem. When the subjects were asked to express a positive affect, those with high self-esteem used more intimate touch behavior,

communicated the emotions with greater clarity, and found the task easier than did subjects with low self-esteem.

This affirming, esteem-building quality of touch has been confirmed by recent research. Fisher, Rytting, and Heslin (1976) demonstrated that physical contact which occurred within the context of checking a book from the library favorably affected the self-esteem and behavior of the touch recipient. Clerks in a library purposely touched some of the people when they handed over their library card. Females who were touched were more likely to report positive feelings and to give the clerk a better rating than females who were not touched. However, the male response to touch was more ambivalent.

Another variable related to touch was self-disclosure. Several authors have studied the relationship of touching to self-disclosure behavior (Jourard, 1971; Pattison, 1973; Pederson, 1973). Using Jourard's Body-Accessibility Questionnaire (1966) and the Jourard Self-Disclosure Questionnaire (1964), Pederson (1973) found that male college students having a greater body contact with another person tended to have greater self-disclosing behavior toward that person. Pattison (1973) in a study of touch and self-exploration found a relationship between warmth and touching. Cooper and Bowles (1973) conducted small groups in which touch was manipulated according to participation or non-participation in encounter group exercises. Using Jourard's (1964) Self-

Disclosure Questionnaire, they found that subjects in the touch participation exercises were more willing to self-disclose. Jourard (1971) asked 100 undergraduates, 50 male and 50 female, to react to 21 self-disclosure items. Results showed that touching the subjects, in combination with the experimenter's self-disclosure, resulted in more disclosure from the subjects than either touching alone, or experimenter's disclosure alone.

The fourth variable that was important in its relationship to touching was emotional support. Touching, for emotional support, left the individual freer and better emotionally able to deal with the more remote, impersonal moments of life (Morris, 1971). Hollender and his associates (Hollender, Luborsky & Harvey, 1970; Hollender & McGehee, 1974) have studied the desire of women to be held. They found that women were able to derive feelings of security, protection, and contentment from being held. Gunther (1973) agreed with the idea that touching was important for emotional support. He stated, "Touch is one of the basic languages of muscles, nerves, and love. For adults, to be held is support; to be touched is contact; to be touched sensitively is to be cared for" (p. 55).

Emotional support conveyed through touching is also important for children. Burt (1980) stated that in developmental play therapy, touch was regarded as the most potent way of experiencing another's presence and was the

major avenue to establishing attachment and emotional support between the child and significant adults.

Jourard (1966) administered the Body-Accessibility Questionnaire to 168 male and 140 female unmarried college students. His aim was to determine the extent to which college students permit their parents and closest friends of each sex to see and touch their bodies, and the extent to which they have seen and touched the bodies of these specific people. He found that college students touch and are touched far more by their best friend of the opposite sex than they are by their parents or their best friend of the same sex.

Also, there was evidence of touching as a response to liking and liking as a response to touching. Klienke, Meeker, and LaFong (1974) found that engaged couples who touch one another often expressed a greater liking for each other than those who did not touch very often. During a pilot study of body accessibility, Jourard (1966) made a series of observations of pairs of people engaged in conversation in coffee shops in various parts of the world. He noted that the happily married couples seemed to touch more frequently than the unhappily married couples, which further suggests that touch is associated with liking one another.

Although several studies have emphasized specific

variables associated with touch behavior and the correlation of these variables with marital satisfaction, there is a marked lack of research considering the relationship of marital satisfaction and the touch behavior of husbands and wives. However, because marriage is a dominant life-style choice and marital satisfaction is a changing factor within marriage (Knox, 1970; Knox, 1980; Neiswender, et al., 1975; Orlinsky, 1972), research on the relationship of marital satisfaction and touch behavior is clearly needed.

Method

Subjects

The subjects for this study were obtained from a directory which listed a total of 120 families from a middle-class neighborhood. Each family received a letter explaining the study (see Appendix D). All subjects were volunteers, and no compensation was offered for their participation. Subjects were accepted on the basis that they had been married for a minimum of seven years and both husband and wife were willing to participate in the study. All subjects were Caucasian.

This community was located within a north central Texas city of over 100,000 population. Prospective participants, chosen at random by using the table of random numbers,

were contacted by telephone and received an explanation concerning the purpose of the study. Telephone contacts were made until 60 couples agreed to participate. An appropriate time to deliver the questionnaires was determined during this initial contact. Although 60 couples agreed to participate, only 41 couples mailed their questionnaires back to the experimenter within the allotted two-week period. All of the instruments returned met the criteria for the study. Two other couples returned their instruments after the data were computed; therefore their scores were not used in the study. No follow-up procedure was conducted on the remaining 17 couples because the minimum number of questionnaires had been attained.

The means and ranges of subjects' age, length of marriage, and number of children are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Means and Ranges of the Subjects: Age, Length of Marriage, and Number of Children

Demographic Data	N	Means	Range
Age	82	45.0	25-61 yrs.
Length of Marriage	82	22.1	7-38 yrs.
Children	82	2.4	0-6 children

Ranges of education of subjects are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Ranges of Education of Subjects

Demographic Data	N	High School	College	Graduate or Professional Training
Education	82	82	47	27

Twenty-seven subjects have a mean of 2.1 years of training beyond the college level.

Instruments

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976) is a 32-item instrument designed to measure the quality of adjustment in marital relationships (Appendix E). It includes subscales which measure four empirically verified components: dyadic satisfaction, dyadic consensus, dyadic cohesion, and affectional expression. The subscales can be used alone without losing confidence in the reliability or validity of the measure (Spanier, 1976). Therefore, the 10-item subscale, dyadic satisfaction, was used to measure marital satisfaction.

Normative data on the instrument were obtained from a sample of 218 married persons who were primarily working- and middle-class residents of central Pennsylvania. Using the Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, the total scale reliability is .96 (Spanier, 1976). Criterion-related validity was correlated significantly with the external criterion of

marital status. Determining construct validity, the correlation between the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and the Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test was .86 among married respondents. Items included in the DAS were evaluated by three judges for content validity. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale is not weighted, but coded according to interval continuums ranging from zero to one less than the number of fixed choices.

The range of total possible scores on the DAS subscale of dyadic satisfaction is 0 to 50 points. A higher score indicates good marital adjustment and, according to Spanier (1976), there is no exact cut-off point.

The Body-Accessibility Questionnaire (BAQ), (Appendix F), is a modification of Jourard's Body-Accessibility Questionnaire (Jourard, 1966), with 24 numbered areas. The instrument is designed to measure body contact, the frequency of touching and being touched that occurs in one's relationships. Odd-even reliability coefficients were calculated for the responses of 50 male and 50 female students in order to ascertain the internal consistency of the questionnaire (Jourard, 1966). The split-half r 's were .89 and .89 for males and females respectively, for frequency of being touched by opposite-sex friend. Since the scores of touching and being touched were correlated around .98, it was deemed adequate to compute r 's only for the being touched scores.

Only the part of the questionnaire that dealt with touch behavior relating to the opposite sex was administered for this study. A test-retest reliability procedure was used to insure that modifying the test by deleting some portions did not affect the instrument's reliability. The subjects used in this procedure were 50 married individuals who were currently enrolled in the graduate education program at North Texas State University. The test was administered on the week of April 7, 1981, and again on the week of April 21, 1981. The test-retest reliability was a Pearson Product Moment Correlation of .89 (Cronbach, 1951). A correlation of this magnitude indicates that the scale had sufficiently high reliability to justify its use.

The BAQ is basically a straightforward information-gathering device that relies on face validity. No additional validity information is reported on this questionnaire and no similar measures are available. Alagna (1978) used the questionnaire in his research of body-accessibility toward opposite-sex friend and scores were calculated using an n of 81. The mean recorded was 35.31 with a standard deviation of 26.18. The range of possible scores was 0-72 points.

The range of total possible scores on the BAQ is 0 to 36 points in each column, making the total number 72 points. A higher score indicates frequent touch behavior, and no

exact cut-off point is indicated by Jourard (1966).

In addition to the questionnaire, a data sheet (Appendix G) was used to gather demographic data to insure that the criteria for the study had been met and also to gather information for future publishing purposes. Question nine on the data sheet was used to calculate the individual touch expectations of the husband and wife. Expected touch behavior was important in determining the amount of touch behavior needed for the marital satisfaction of each individual.

Procedure

The instruments were hand-delivered to each couple by the experimenter. Brown envelopes that were addressed, stamped, and could be sealed were provided for each couple in order for them to mail the tests back to the experimenter at a post office box number.

Couples were asked not to discuss their answers with their spouse until they had put their questionnaire in the mail. The instruments were coded for sex before delivery and the couple number was added in the left-hand corner of each instrument after it was received by the experimenter. Twenty couples received their instruments on three consecutive nights until a total of 60 couples had received packets.

The order of presentation of the questionnaires was

counterbalanced by having one-half of the spouse population instructed to respond to the DAS first and the other half respond to the BAQ first. Upon receipt of the DAS and BAQ, the answer sheets were hand scored by the experimenter. All scores were transferred to worksheets for computer analysis.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this investigation the following definitions were used:

1. Stability of marriage was defined as couples who had been married a minimum of seven years.

2. Touch behavior was defined as the readiness of individuals to permit their spouse to touch their body and their willingness to touch their spouse's body.

Limitations

This study was limited to volunteer subjects obtained from a neighborhood that was primarily composed of white, middle-class families.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for this study:

1. The frequency of the husband's touch behavior as perceived by the wife and the touch expectation of the wife will each make a unique, significant contribution to the wife's marital satisfaction.

2. The frequency of the wife's touch behavior as

perceived by the husband and the touch expectation of the husband will each make a unique, significant contribution to the husband's marital satisfaction.

3. There will be a significant relationship between the following two sets of variables: (a) the marital satisfaction as reported by the husband and wife; and (b) the frequency of touch as reported by the husband and wife; the frequency of being touched as reported by the husband and the wife; and the touch expectation as reported by the husband and the wife.

Results

Hypothesis 1 was tested by multiple regression analysis to determine if a relationship exists between the marital satisfaction of the wife and the perceived amount of touch she received and expected from her husband. Hypothesis 2 was tested by multiple regression analysis to determine if a relationship exists between the marital satisfaction of the husband and the perceived amount of touch he received from his wife.

The canonical analysis was employed to test Hypothesis 3 to determine whether or not there was a relationship between husbands' and wives' scores on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale and husbands' and wives' scores on the Body-

Accessibility Questionnaire and the touch expectation question. A Pearson correlation matrix was constructed to determine intergroup relationships between husband and wife scores when an overall significant difference was established. The .05 level was used as the basis for ascertaining which relationships and differences were considered significant.

Hypothesis 1 stated that the frequency of the husband's touch behavior as perceived by the wife and the touch expectation of the wife will each make a unique, significant contribution to the wife's marital satisfaction.

The unique contribution of an independent variable is defined as the variance attributed to it when it is entered last in the regression equation (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973). The techniques of multiple regression enable the experimenter to use the knowledge of two variables to predict scores on a single dependent variable with greater success than is possible with a knowledge of a single independent variable or from either variable taken alone (Roscoe, 1969).

Table 3 shows the F value obtained in the full model multiple regression for Hypothesis 1.

Table 3

Full Model Multiple Regression Analysis of Wife's
Marital Satisfaction, Touch by Husband, and
Touch Expectation of Wife

	df	F value	p
Full Model regression	2,38	10.18	< .01

Full model multiple regression analysis in Table 3 reveals a significance of $F(2,38) = 10.18$, $p < .01$; therefore Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Table 4 shows the F value obtained by multiple regression analysis in revealing the degree that touch by husband and touch expectation variables contribute to the wife's marital satisfaction.

Table 4

Multiple Regression Analysis of Wife's
Marital Satisfaction

Variable	df	b	F value	p
Touch by Husband	1,38	.3437	9.59	< .01
Touch Expectation	1,38	4.7088	9.16	< .01

The multiple regression analysis in Table 4 reveals that the frequency of the husband's touch behavior as perceived by

the wife, $F(1,38) = 9.59$, $p < .01$ and the touch expectation of the wife, $F(1,38) = 9.16$, $p < .01$ each made a significant contribution in the marital satisfaction of the wife.

Hypothesis 2 stated that the frequency of the wife's touch behavior as perceived by the husband and the touch expectation of the husband will each make a unique, significant contribution to the husband's marital satisfaction.

Table 5 shows the F value obtained in the full model multiple regression for Hypothesis 2.

Table 5

Full Model Multiple Regression Analysis of Husband's Marital Satisfaction, Touch by Wife, and Touch Expectation of Husband

	df	F value	p
Full Model regression	2,38	5.31	< .01

Although the full model multiple regression in Table 5 reveals a significance of $F(2,38) = 5.31$, $p < .01$, data in Table 6 reveal that only the touch expectation of the husband makes a significant contribution to the marital satisfaction of the husband, while no significant contribution is made by the frequency of the wife's touch behavior as perceived by the husband.

Table 6 shows the F value obtained by multiple regression analysis in revealing the degree that touch by wife and touch expectation variables contribute to the husband's marital satisfaction.

Table 6
Multiple Regression Analysis of Husband's
Marital Satisfaction

Variable	df	b	F value	p
Touch by Wife	1,38	.6862	.560	
Touch Expectation	1,38	4.2381	9.698	< .01

Therefore, the variable of touch expectation of the husband supports Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 3 stated that there will be a significant relationship between the following two sets of variables: (a) the marital satisfaction as reported by the husband and wife; and (b) the frequency of touch as reported by the husband and wife; the frequency of being touched as reported by the husband and the wife; and the touch expectation as reported by the husband and the wife. Table 7 reports means and standard deviations for husbands' variables.

Possible scores on the Marital Satisfaction subscale range from 0 to 50 with 50 indicative of an ideal relationship.

Possible scores on the Touch by Spouse variable of the BAQ range from 0 to 36 with 36 indicative of the highest amount of touch behavior. Possible scores on the touch expectation question range from 0 to 4 with 4 indicative of highest frequency of touch expected.

Table 7

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Marital Satisfaction Subscale of DAS, Touch by Spouse Variable of BAQ, and Touch Expectation Question for Husbands

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Marital Satisfaction	37.4390	6.5462
Touch	25.7805	10.8732
Touch by Spouse	20.7805	10.2628
Touch Expectation	3.1463	.6914

Table 8 reports means and standard deviations for wives' variables.

Table 8

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Marital Satisfaction Subscale of DAS, Touch by Spouse Variable of BAQ, and Touch Expectation Question for Wives

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Marital Satisfaction	35.9512	8.1913
Touch	24.8049	14.5279
Touch by Spouse	23.3171	9.6913
Touch Expectation	3.1278	.7003

The basic idea of canonical correlation is that, through least squares analysis, two linear composites are formed, one for the independent variables, and one for the dependent variables. The correlation between these two composites is the canonical correlation. Table 9 presents the canonical correlations obtained between the Marital Satisfaction subscale scores of the DAS and the BAQ and touch expectation scores. The scores are combined in order to find the maximum correlation possible between the canonical variate scores which include both husbands and wives. Canonical variable 1 is the result of a linear combination of husbands' and wives' scores on the DAS, BAQ, and touch expectation question. Canonical variable 2 is the maximum amount of relationship left unaccounted for by the first canonical variables.

Table 9

Overall Canonical Correlation Analysis of the
Marital Satisfaction Subscale of DAS, Touch
by Spouse Variable of BAQ, and Touch
Expectation Question for Husbands
and Wives

Canonical Variable	Canonical Correlation	Chi-square	df	p
1	0.7592	41.2924	12	0.001
2	0.5121	10.7960	5	0.056

The canonical correlation coefficient for canonical variable 1 is significant at the .01 level; therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

Correlation coefficients between marital satisfaction for husbands and wives and touch behavior and touch expectation for husbands and wives are presented in Tables 10 and 11. Canonical correlation simultaneously creates two linear composites, one from each set of variables, that maximizes the correlation between the two sets. This enables the experimenter to correlate two or more predictor variables with two or more criterion variables by looking at the overall relationship in order to prevent Type I error before examining the matrix.

Table 10
Coefficients for the Canonical Variables of Marital
Satisfaction for Husbands and Wives

<u>Canonical Variates</u>	<u>Canonical Coefficients</u>
Marital Satisfaction (Husbands)	-0.5773
Marital Satisfaction (Wives)	1.3026

Table 11
Coefficients for the Canonical Variables of Touch
Behaviors and Touch Expectations for
Husbands and Wives

<u>Canonical Variates</u>	<u>Canonical Coefficients</u>
Perceived Touch by Wives	-0.0379
Perceived Touch by Husbands	1.0233
Reported Touch (Husbands)	-1.0307
Reported Touch (Wives)	0.4408
Touch Expectation (Husbands)	0.2930
Touch Expectation (Wives)	0.0271

The variables in Table 10 reveal that the marital satisfaction of wives makes a major contribution for the first set of variables and Table 11 reveals that perceived touch by husbands makes a major contribution for the second set of variables.

Because there was a significant relationship for canonical coefficient 1 (Table 9), a Pearson product moment correlation matrix was constructed to ascertain significant intragroup relationships between the variables. These findings are presented in Table 12.

Table 12
 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficients for
 Husbands (H) and Wives (W)

	MS(H)	MS(W)	PTBW(H)	PTBH(W)	RT(H)	RT(W)	TE(H)	TE(W)
MS(H)								
MS(W)	0.6848*							
PTBW(H)	0.1380	0.1414						
PTBH(W)	0.1144	0.4379*	0.6552*					
RT(H)	-0.0369	-0.0793	0.8009*	0.6377*				
RT(W)	-0.1279	0.0667	0.6934*	0.7647*	0.8613*			
TE(H)	0.4549*	0.4206*	0.0681	-0.0556	-0.2550	-0.3157		
TE(W)	0.4494*	0.4295*	0.1737	0.0787	-0.1752	-0.1987	0.6862*	

*Significant at .005

Variables:

Marital Satisfaction (H) or (W)

Reported Touch (H) or (W)

Perceived Touch Behavior of Wife (H)

Touch Expectation (H) or (W)

Perceived Touch Behavior of Husband (W)

Discussion

This study explored the relationship between touch behavior and marital satisfaction in stable marriage. Multiple regression analysis revealed a significant relationship between the husband's touch behavior and marital satisfaction for the wife (see Table 4). Although Stembridge (1973) suggested that the greatest frequency of touch may take place during the engagement period or the first one or two years of marriage, the data from this study imply that being touched by her husband remains important to the wife who has been married for several years.

Because findings of the study do not indicate which came first, marital satisfaction or touching, it cannot be determined whether low touch behavior interferes with the attainment of marital satisfaction for the wife, or whether the lack of marital satisfaction results in low touch behavior. It seems entirely reasonable to suggest, however, that low touch behavior can be both a result of and a cause of a less than satisfying marital relationship.

On the other hand, according to the findings of the present study, the touch behavior of the wife does not contribute to the marital satisfaction of the husband (see Table 6). This finding suggests that, even though the wife may touch her husband as often as the husband touches his wife, touch behavior is not as important a factor in the marital satisfaction of the husband as it is for the wife.

Nevertheless, a significant relationship was found between marital satisfaction and touch expectation of both the husband and the wife (see Tables 4 and 6). Frank (1957) and Montagu (1971) emphasized that patterns of touching received in infancy and childhood determine the touch expectations expressed in adulthood. Even though touch expectation was significantly correlated with marital satisfaction, caution must be exercised when interpreting its relationship with the other variables. This touch expectation variable was presented as a desire rather than a perceived reality; therefore, touch expectation was included primarily to interpret scores which revealed high marital satisfaction-low touch behavior relationships. Touch may have different emotional meanings for different people and, therefore, individual touch expectations and needs will vary. For some people, a large amount of touching from the spouse may represent intrusiveness, while for others, such touching may be perceived as affection and support. Also, men and women with varying perceptions of the meaning of touch would be expected to vary in their touching of others in accordance with their own interpretations.

The canonical correlation which includes the variables of marital satisfaction for husband, marital satisfaction for wife as one set of variables and perceived touch by wife, perceived touch by husband, reported touch by wife,

reported touch by husband, touch expectation of husband, and touch expectation of wife as the other set of variables also reveals that marital satisfaction of wives relates to the touch behavior of their husbands (see Tables 10 and 11).

The Pearson product moment correlation coefficient re-reveals that all touch behavior variables between husbands and wives are significantly related: (a) the marital satisfaction of one spouse is related to the marital satisfaction of the other spouse; (b) the perceived touch of the husband is related to the perceived touch of the wife; (c) the reported touch behavior of the husband is related to the reported touch behavior of the wife; and (d) also, the perceived touch by spouse of both the husband and the wife relates to the reported touch behavior of both the husband and the wife. These results support the assumption of Jourard (1966) that touching behavior between males and females is reciprocal and a person allows oneself to be touched to the same extent that one touches others. The present findings do not support Montagu (1971), who indicated that males do more touching than females, nor Masters and Johnson (1972), who stated that women are more inclined to let themselves be touched than to do the touching, based on cultural conditioning toward passivity as the proper female role.

Findings of the present study show a significant relationship between reported touch behavior and perceived touch

behavior for both husbands and wives. Therefore, it can be speculated that an investigator could predict the touch behavior of one spouse by obtaining touch behavior information from the other spouse. This finding has implications for collecting data on couples in future research.

These findings concerning the reciprocal touch behaviors between husbands and wives support Frank's (1957) conclusion that each person sends out a variety of cues, both visual and auditory, which others have learned to recognize as indicative of either touch avoidance or touch invitation. In addition, these findings support Stenbridge's (1973) findings that frequency of touch is a personality trait that is influenced by the spouse even though it is also broadly characteristic of the individual. Not only is touch behavior reciprocal for husbands and wives in the present study, but the level of marital satisfaction of both spouses is significantly related (see Table 12), suggesting they perceive the quality of their marriage in a similar way.

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Marital satisfaction for the wife is related to how well the touch behavior of her husband meets her expectations.

2. Men state a wish to be touched frequently by their wives in an ideal relationship, but touch by their

wife is not a criteria for their marital satisfaction.

3. Husbands and wives tend to share norms of tactuality. Findings reveal essentially no sex differences in touch behavior.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations seem warranted. Knowledge of touch behaviors between spouses should become a part of counselor education programs. For students interested in marriage and family therapy, counselor supervisors should provide skill training that focuses on the touch behavior of couples.

Also, therapists should consider teaching touch behaviors to promote feelings of warmth and caring within marriages with low marital satisfaction. Whitehouse (1981) claims that most people have intimate knowledge of only one other marriage, their parents', and many couples need help in learning to meet each other's needs. Perhaps couples who have high stability-low satisfaction marriages can be taught to incorporate a new philosophy of touch into their relationship. Being touched by another human being can imply warmth, support, affirmation, regard, affection, caring, tenderness, approval, and happiness. Counselors can help couples understand that touching, along with verbal communication, self-esteem, self-disclosure, and emotional support, is important to the marital relationship.

Another area where it would be appropriate to consider the importance of touch behavior is with those couples contemplating marriage. Glendening and Wilson (1972) conducted sessions in group premarital counseling that provided touching techniques for maintaining and enriching relationships and at the conclusion of the weekend when the couples reevaluated the experiences, their opinions were positive. Premarital counselors could teach the importance of touch behavior in strengthening relationships and in helping to prevent unsatisfying relationships with their future spouses.

Another group that could be affected by information about touch behavior for married couples is the elderly. Those counseling and working with elderly couples can become aware of the importance of touch behavior in providing for the emotional needs and enhancing the quality of the lives of the elderly. Gilbert (1977) has indicated that more satisfying touching between spouses serves to promote adjustment and achieve contentment within themselves.

Future research could explore the extent to which individuals of differing personalities either protect, or make accessible to touch, different regions of their bodies. Another recommendation for further research would be to include in the survey instrument a question that asks subjects who expressed high marital satisfaction and high touch expectation, but reported low touch behavior by the spouse, how they get their touching needs met. This question might

include, "I get most of my touching needs met (a) from my children (b) from sex with my spouse (c) from sources outside my marriage (d) other ways, please specify_____."

In summary, this study explored the relationship between touch behavior and marital satisfaction in stable marriages. The results of this study revealed that the touch behavior of the husband makes a significant contribution to the marital satisfaction of the wife. Although husbands indicated no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the touch behavior of their wife, both husbands and wives indicated a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and touch expectations. In addition, the findings in this study revealed significant relationships between the touch behavior of husbands and wives, suggesting that touching is practiced equally by both spouses.

APPENDIX A

FORM 3

USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTSCOMMITTEE ACTION

1. Activity Director Suzy Gallehugh
2. Activity Title The Relationship Between Touch
Behavior and Marital Satisfaction
in Stable Marriages
3. Department Grad. School, Counselor Education
4. Phone 788-2231
5. Date Submitted May 15, 1981

XXX The statement submitted for this activity conforms to the University policy on the protection of Human Subjects and the activity is approved.

 The statement submitted for this activity does not conform to the University policy on the protection of Human Subjects and the activity is disapproved for reasons stated on the attached sheet(s).

/s/ R.W. Gracy
Signature of the Committee
R.W. Gracy, Chairman
Institutional Review Board

June 10, 1981

APPENDIX B

ANTOINETTE R. JOURARD

May 14 1981

Suzy Gallehugh
2303 Lakeside Dr.
Arlington Texas
76013

Dear Ms. Gallehugh,

This letter is to grant you permission to use my late husband's Body-Accessibility Questionnaire. I do not charge for the use of it. I will be interested in knowing the results of your study when it is completed. Good luck.

Sincerely,

/s/ Antoinette R. Jourard

Antoinette R. Jourard

1506 SOUTHWEST 35th PLACE GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA 32608

APPENDIX C

2303 Lakeside Dr.
Arlington, TX., 76013
May 4, 1981

Dear Dr. Spanier,

My doctoral dissertation needs a measure for marital satisfaction and I would like to use your Dyadic Adjustment Scale. I called Pennsylvania State University and your secretary told me there would be no charge to use the scale. For my committee, I need your approval in written form. I will mail you the results of my study and I thank you very much for your generosity.

Sincerely,

/s/ Suzy Gallehugh

Suzy Gallehugh

(Date seal)

"Permission Granted"

/s/ G.B. Spanier 5/8/81

APPENDIX D

Dear Neighbors,

I am presently completing my doctoral degree in counseling at North Texas State University. As part of my degree requirements, I am conducting a study of marital satisfaction. This study necessitates administering a questionnaire to couples who have been married for a minimum of seven years. The questionnaire takes approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Anonymity of each participant is guaranteed by requiring that no person write their name on the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be coded by a couple number after I receive it from you in the mail. The number will be used by the computer when analyzing the data. I will be contacting many of you by telephone in the near future to ask for your participation in my study. Your cooperation will really be appreciated.

Thank you,

/s/ Suzy Gallehugh

Suzy Gallehugh

2303 Lakeside Dr.

APPENDIX E

Couple number_____

Sex_____

DYADIC ADJUSTMENT SCALE

Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

Scale: (5) Always Agree (4) Almost Always Agree
 (3) Occasionally Disagree (2) Frequently Disagree
 (1) Almost Always Disagree (0) Always Disagree

	AA	AAA	OD	FD	AAD	AD
1. Handling family finance	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstrations of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decision	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0

Please continue the test on the following page.

Scale: (0) All of the time (1) Most of the time (2) More often than not (3) Occasionally (4) Rarely (5) Never

16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?

0 1 2 3 4 5

17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

0 1 2 3 4 5

Scale: (5) All of the time (4) Most of the time (3) More often than not (2) Occasionally (1) Rarely (0) Never

18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your mate are going well?

5 4 3 2 1 0

19. Do you confide in your mate?

5 4 3 2 1 0

Scale: (0) All of the time (1) Most of the time (2) More often than not (3) Occasionally (4) Rarely (5) Never

20. Do you ever regret that you married?

0 1 2 3 4 5

21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?

0 1 2 3 4 5

22. How often do you and your mate get on each other's nerves?

0 1 2 3 4 5

23. Do you kiss your mate?

Every day	Almost every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
4	3	2	1	0

24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?

All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them
4	3	2	1	0

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

(0) Never (1) Less than once a month (2) Once or twice a month (3) Once or twice a week

(4) Once a day (5) More often

25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

0 1 2 3 4 5

26. Laugh together
 0 1 2 3 4 5
27. Calmly discuss something
 0 1 2 3 4 5
28. Work together on a project
 0 1 2 3 4 5

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometimes disagree. Indicate if either item below caused some differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks.

- Yes No
29. 0 1 Being too tired for sex
30. 0 1 Not showing love
31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy" represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

Extremely Fairly A Little Happy Very Extremely Perfect
 Unhappy Unhappy Unhappy Happy Happy

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?
 (Circle one)

- 5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and I would go to almost any length to see that it does.
- 4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all that I can to see that it does.
- 3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- 2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
- 1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- 0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

APPENDIX F

Couple Number_____

Date_____

Sex_____

BODY-ACCESSIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

S. Jourard

INSTRUCTIONS: In the diagram, the human figure has been marked off into 18 areas. We want to find out the touching behavior between spouses. In the spaces provided, will you make entries as follows:

- A = if the area is never touched meaningfully and purposefully
- B = if contact occurs but only rarely--not as a regular part of your relationship
- C = if contact is often part of your relationship with your spouse

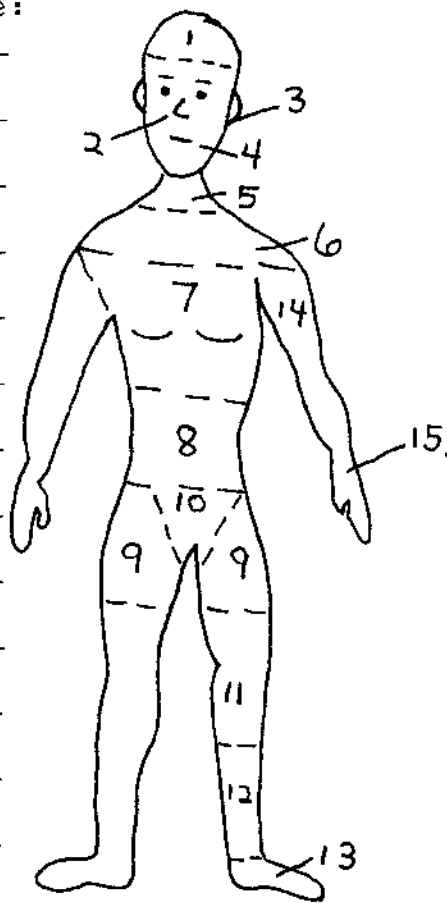
Note that you are asked to indicate, in the left hand column, if you touch that person; in the right hand column, you are asked to indicate if that person touches you. Do NOT count touching which is part of or leads to sexual intercourse. Please fill in ALL the blanks. Thank you.

FRONT

BACK

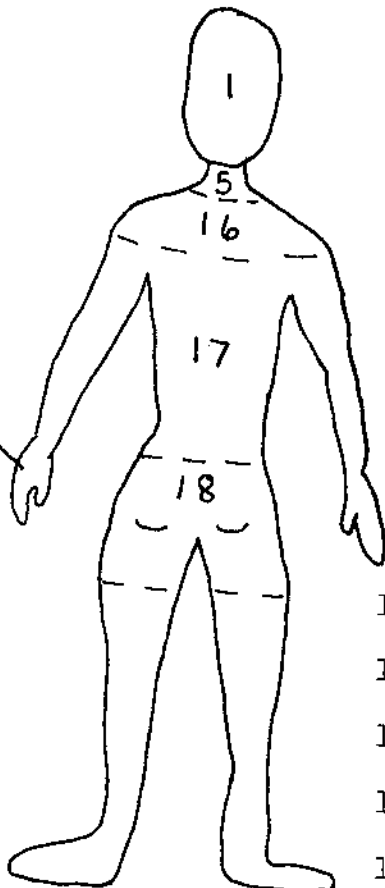
You Touch Spouse:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____
- 11 _____
- 12 _____
- 13 _____
- 14 _____
- 15 _____
- 16 _____
- 17 _____
- 18 _____



Touched by Spouse:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____
- 11 _____
- 12 _____
- 13 _____
- 14 _____
- 15 _____
- 16 _____
- 17 _____
- 18 _____



A = Area NEVER touched meaningfully and purposefully

B = Area contacted but only RARELY

C = Area contacted OFTEN

APPENDIX G

Couple number_____

DATA SHEET

This study is being conducted to investigate touch behavior and how it may affect marital satisfaction. By answering all of the following questions, you can help. THERE ARE NO "RIGHT" OR "WRONG" ANSWERS. Please complete the questionnaires without discussing them with anyone, especially your mate. We want only what you think. It is important that you answer every question. If you are uncertain of the answer, mark your first impression or best guess. Answers will be kept strictly confidential. The tests are number coded for matching in the computer. DO NOT SIGN YOUR NAME. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. Your sex M_____ F_____
 2. How many years have you been married?_____
 3. Have you been married before? _____ If "yes," how many times? _____ Previous marriage(s) terminated by: Death_____ Divorce_____
 4. How many children do you have?_____
 5. How old are you?_____
 6. Please check your race (optional):
 Mexican-American_____ Black American_____
 Anglo-American_____ Other(specify)_____
 7. Circle the number which represents the highest grade of schooling which you have completed to the present time.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
Grade school	High School	College	Post-Graduate
 8. Occupation_____
 9. In an ideal marriage relationship, how often should partners touch:

Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always
-----------------	--------	-----------	------------	------------------
-
10. Please rate how you perceive your own bodily appearance:

Ugly	Plain	Average	Attractive	Very Attractive
------	-------	---------	------------	--------------------
-

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