Five Types of Marriage: An Empirical Typology Based on ENRICH

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This study identified five distinct types of married couples from a sample of 6,267 couples, using the marital inventory ENRICH. Profiles were derived using a three-stage cluster analytic procedure, including an exploratory cluster analysis, a replication of the exploratory results, and a cross-validation. The five-cluster solution was robust. "Vitalized" couples (12%) reported high relationship quality on all dimensions. "Harmonious" Couples (11%) had relatively high relationship quality. "Traditional" couples (16%) had scores that were slightly above average with markedly higher scores on parenting and religious scales. "Conflicted" couples (25%) were characterized by moderately low scores on all but the roles scale. The "Devitalized" group (36%) had the lowest scores on every ENRICH dimension.

There is a relatively long tradition of interest in typologies of marriage. This approach to understanding marriage has the advantage of recognizing that marital relationships are multidimensional and cannot be adequately described on any single dimension. Attempts to view couples on a single continuum, however well-informed, may tend to trivialize the important differences in their approach to living.

A well-founded typology of marriage has a great deal of potential usefulness. Developing a reliable typological model is one way to bridge the gaps between theory, research, and practice (Olson, 1981). Empirical typologies can provide direction for theory regarding which combinations of variables are most relevant in understanding differences in how marriages are constituted. Another advantage is that typologies apply a multivariate approach, which can more adequately capture the complexity of dyadic relationships than research focusing on one or two traditional dimension of marriage (e.g., global satisfaction or power). This approach to research is more clinically useful because typologies are derived on the basis of relevant differences between couples rather than relying on aggregate analyses which examine differences between variables. Typological research can assist clinicians in organizing the patterns of differences

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between the couples they see. Empirically based classification can guide the development of different approaches to couples based on their differential relationship patterns (Fowers & Olson, 1992.)

Interest in developing typologies of marriage was evident several decades ago. The majority of the early attempts were intuitively oriented and were not verified quantitatively (e.g., Cuber & Haroff, 1965; Lederer & Jackson, 1968). These intuitive approaches did not provide the basis for developing a stable, useful, and reliabe, classification system for marriages.

There were two early quantitative typologies that utilized factor analytic methods to derive four patterns of marriage with a small sample of newlywed couples (Goodrich, Ryder, & Rausch, 1968; Ryder, 1970). These early efforts have been improved upon in several recent studies that used more sophisticated cluster analytic methods with larger samples. These studies have derived marital typologies based on observational data (Gottman, 1979), the Inventory of Marital Conflict (Miller & Olson, 1990), the Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder & Smith, 1986), the marital inventory ENRICH (Lavee & Olson, in press), and the premarital inventory PREPARE (Fowers & Olson, 1992).

Although typologies of marriage can be very useful in both theory and practice, a major criticism of typological studies is that the results are often overly dependent on the sample and methods used to derive the typology. There are four ways to deal with this problem. First, classificatory analyses can be performed with multiple samples to determine which couple types are stable and reliable. Second, different methods of analysis can be utilized to avoid overdependence on a particular method. Third, replication or cross-validation designs can support the validity of a given typology. Fourth, the validity of the cluster model can be assessed with external validity criteria in order to show that it has real world meaning.

Previous cluster analytic studies have used these methods to validate their findings to a greater or lesser degree. Gottman (1979) derived six couple types based on observational data. This study used the Couples Interaction Scoring System, which has well-defined criteria and procedures. This strength also limits the clinical utility of the study because assignment of couples in this typology would involve the use of this complex scoring system which is not available in most clinical settings.

Snyder and Smith's (1986) typology dealt with this problem by using the readily available self-report Marital Satisfaction Inventory (Snyder, 1981). They used individual scores and replicated four of the five marital types they found across gender. They also included external validity criteria that supported the cluster model. While the replication used by Snyder and Smith (1986) is helpful, it is not a very strong indicator of the model's validity because husband and wife data are clearly correlated. A stronger design would include separate groups of couples for replication.

Lavee and Olson (in press) developed a marital typology with the widely used self-report ENRICH marital inventory. They derived couple scores by computing the

spouses' average score and then correcting this average with a proportion of the discrepancy between the partners' scores. They found seven marital types. This study used a larger sample than any previous research and included some supportive external validity data. Although this study used a very large sample, it did not include a replication design. In addition, the couple score they used is not available in the normal scoring for ENRICH, thus limiting the clinical utility of this research.

The purpose of this study was to develop an empirically derived typology of couples using the Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) scores from the multidimensional ENRICH inventory. This study was designed to address some of the criticisms of typological research and contribute to the marital classification literature in three ways. First, ENRICH PCA scores provide a measure of the couple's relationship that is derived from a combination of the partner's responses. Moreover, the interpretation and use of the ENRICH Inventory is focused on the PCA scores. This will make this typology both more relevant and more accessible to clinicians.

Second, this study includes a cross-validation design that will allow an assessment of the cluster model's dependence on a particular sample. Some assessment of external validity will also be conducted.

Third, by using a different couple scoring procedure with a different sample, this study offers a multi-method, multi-sample comparison with the findings of Lavee and Olson (in press). The results of this study will also be compared with Snyder and Smith's (1986) classification model based on the Marital Satisfaction Inventory, which is a similar, but distinct, marital scale. These comparisons will continue the development of the marital classification literature that is needed for a reliable and stable approach to identifying and accounting for marital types in theory, research, and practice.

METHOD

Participants

A national sample of married couples (6,267 couples) who completed the ENRICH Inventory between January, 1983 and June, 1985 were included in this study. In order to broaden the sample, 675 couples were included from the research sample described by Olson, McCubbin, Barnes, Larsen, Muxen, and Wilson (1989). These couples were a randomly recruited national sample that included couples from all stages of the life cycle. The total sample included 6,942 couples.

The inventory was administered to the first (clinical) group of married couples by counselors or clergy because the couple was seeking marital counseling or marital enrichment. Their scores were obtained from the computer records of PREPARE/ENRICH Inc. The research sample completed ENRICH as part of a larger study of normal family functioning (Olson et al., 1989).

The mean age for the men was 33 with a range of 18 to 68 years old. The average female was 32, with a range of 18 to 65 years old. The participants' educational level included 45% who had obtained a college degree, 33% with some college education, 19% completed high school, and 3% who did not finish high school. The couples had been married and average of 9.7 years and had an average of 2.9 children. Ethnically, the participants were 94% non-Hispanic Caucasians, 2% Blacks, 2% Hispanic, 1% Asian American, and 1% other. The majority of the couples were in their first marriage (78%).

Instruments

The ENRICH Inventory contains 125 items in 14 scales (Olson, Fournier, & Druckman, 1987). The inventory is designed to identify relationship strengths and work areas in 11 relationship domains: Marital Satisfaction, Personality Issues, Communication, Conflict Resolution, Financial Management, Leisure Activities, Sexual Relationship, Children and Parenting, Family and Friends, Equalitarian Roles, and Religious Orientation (Olson et al., 1987). Each of these scales has 10 items. In addition, ENRICH has three other scales which assess Idealistic Distortion and the couple's Cohesion and Adaptability. These scales were not included in the study. The Marital Satisfaction scale was also excluded from the analyses because it is an overall summary measure of satisfaction that contains items from the other scales.

The couple scores were used throughout this study. Thus, the couple was the unit of analysis. These scores are called Positive Couple Agreement (PCA) scores because they measure the couple's agreement in describing their relationship in positive terms with respect to each scale. The actual PCA score is the percentage of items on a given scale in which the couple agree in characterizing that aspect of their relationship in positive terms. Thus, PCA scores range from 0% to 100%, depending on the number of items in the scale on which both partners described their relationship in positive terms.

The ENRICH inventory has been validated in several studies. Coefficient alpha reliabilities of the scales vary from .68 (Equalitarian Roles) to .86 (Marital Satisfaction), with a mean of .79. Test-retest reliabilities over a 4-week period ranged from .77 (Leisure Activities) to .92 (Sexual Relationship), with a mean of .86 (Olson et al., 1987). A study of 1,200 couples found moderate correlations between ENRICH scales and measures of family satisfaction (ranging from .41 to .60) and life satisfaction (ranging from .32 to .41), which support the inventory's construct validity (Olson et al., 1989). Its criterion validity was supported in a recent study demonstrating that all of the ENRICH scales discriminated between satisfied and dissatisfied couples (Fowers & Olson, 1989).

Two single item measures were included in the study as indicators of the external validity of the typology. A one-item measure of marital satisfaction was included that asks "How satisfied are you with your marriage?" The responses range from extremely satisfied to dissatisfied. A single-item measure of divorce potential was used as an indicator of marital distress. The item asks "Have you ever considered separation or

divorce?" This item has been found to have a strong relation to marital distress (Fowers & Olson, 1989).

Analyses

The typology of couples was developed in five stages. The PCA scores were used in all analyses so that the couple is the unit of analysis. First, an exploratory sample of 434 couples was randomly selected to seed structure of similarities. A hierarchical agglomerative cluster of analysis was used to explore the "natural" number of clusters. This was followed by a series of k-means cluster anaylses with relocation to further assess the goodness of fit by setting the number of clusters at two levels above and below the number indicated by the original analysis.

The second stage of the typology analysis involved randomly dividing the remaining sample in half. The first set of couples (N=3,260 couples) was subjected to a hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis to assess the fit of the number of clusters developed with the exploratory sample. This analysis produced initial seeds for the k-means cluster analysis, which was conducted next. The k-means analysis was conducted with relocation to assign couples to clusters. Differences between clusters on the ENRICH scores were assessed for adequate separation with analyses of variance.

The third stage of the analysis used the second large group of couples (N=3,218 couples) as a cross-validation sample. Cross-validation is very important in cluster analysis since all cluster analysis procedures maximize the distance between clusters based on the sample. This is analogous to the maximization of fit for regression analyses. The cross-validation was conducted by assigning the couples in the cross-validation sample to clusters using the cluster seeds developed with the primary sample. This allowed a comparison of the goodness of fit of the cluster solution for the two large samples.

The fourth stage of the analysis involved assessing the external validity of the derived typology with the single-item measures of consideration of divorce and overall satisfaction. The partners' marital status (current provides separation and previous divorce) also shows some indication of the validity of the cluster model. The fifth set of analyses involved comparing the derived couple types on other demographic variables such as education, income, years married, and number of children. This allows a more complete picture of the couples in the various types.

RESULTS

Exploratory Analysis

The exploratory structure seeking hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis (N=434 couples) was conducted using average linkage within groups with Euclidean distance for computing (dis) similarity between cases. Because Euclidean measure is sensitive to the variables' units of measurement, the variables were standardized to avoid possible biasing effects of differences in variance across scales. The pseudo T^2 statistic

was used as the criterion for deciding how many cluster best fit the data (Cooper & Milligan, 1984; Milligan & Cooper, 1985). Pseudo T^2 provides an indication of the appropriate number of clusters through local troughs in its value. This is seen by a small value of the pseudo T^2 statistic for a given cluster level followed by a larger pseudo T^2 value for the next cluster fusion. The five cluster solution in this analysis had a pseudo T^2 value of 5.11 followed by a value of 23.31 for a four cluster solution. Thus, five clusters seemed to represent the data well in this procedure.

A series of k-means cluster analyses was conducted to further assess the appropriateness of a five cluster solution. Cluster numbers were set at 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Larger numbers of clusters resulted in an unacceptable level of overlap between clusters while smaller numbers of clusters resulted in the loss of substantive differences due to

Table 1

ENRICH PCA Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Analysis of Variance Between Marital Types

	Marital Types											Multiple Range Test[a]
	Devitalized		Conflicted		Traditional		Harmonious		Vitalized			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	*F**	
Personality Issues	8.3	9.4	17.4	12.9	34.0	17.0	42.1	18.2	67.8	18.4	707.1	12345
Communication	8.4	10.0	15.8	12.4	36.0	16.4	53.1	16.6	71.3	16.4	975.9	12345
Conflict Resolution	8.0	10.4	15.3	13.1	37.9	19.8	52.5	21.9	75.2	16.4	891.8	12345
Financial Management	14.8	15.3	34.3	23.2	45.3	23.6	52.5	22.5	68.3	20.9	273.2	12345
Leisure Activities	19.5	13.3	35.1	16.4	49.3	17.8	57.1	18.3	70.6	17.8	435.6	12345
Sexual Relationship	18.9	17.4	32.9	22.2	53.8	23.1	67.5	21.4	80.1	18.4	433.5	12345
Children and Marriage	17.9	17.2	31.2	21.3	68.4	15.7	21.3	17.0	66.9	27.1	409.8	14253
Family and Friends	16.7	14.0	37.0	19.0	49.3	19.8	55.8	21.6	70.5	18.4	391.6	12435
Equalitarian Roles	41.5	20.1	60.7	19.0	55.8	19.6	58.6	19.8	64.6	19.3	84.5	12345
Religious Orientation	32.3	21.3	54.1	23.7	75.4	21.8	64.8	27.6	82.3	18.8	236.4	12345

[a] Clusters are shown in ascending order of scale means. Underlining indicates significant differences between the respective means (Scheffe range test, *p*<.05)

*p<.001 for all *F* tests.

combination of clusters. Multivariate analysis of variance indicated significant overall differences between the five groups on the clustering variables (F=55.23, p<.001). Univariate analyses of variance conducted with each PCA score showed that there were significant differences on all of the ENRICH scales (p<.001 for all analyses).
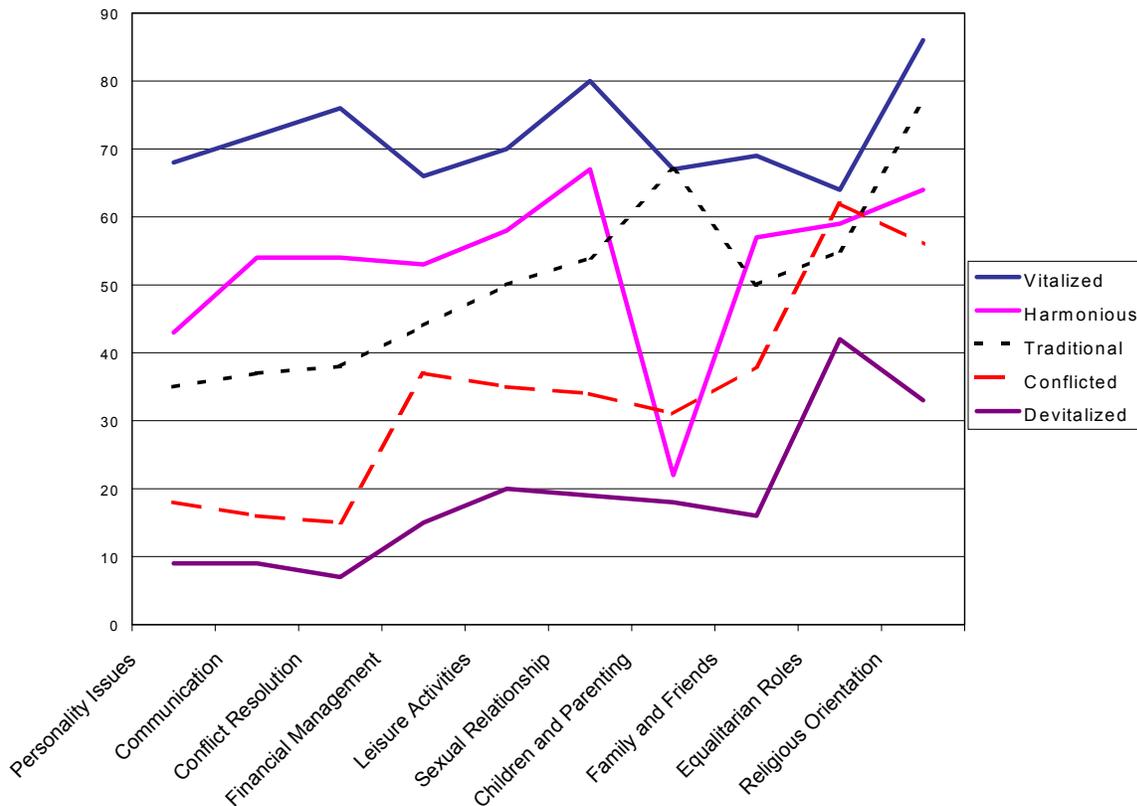
Primary Sample Cluster Analysis

The second stage of the analysis began with a hierarchical agglomerative cluster analysis of the primary sample (N=3,260 couples) with average linkage and Euclidian distance measure. The variables were again standardized. The pseudo T2 statistic once again indicated the appropriateness of a five cluster solution with a value of 2.22 for five clusters followed by a value of 253.81 for four clusters.

A k-means cluster analysis was then conducted with the number of clusters set at five. The initial seed for the clusters were pre-defined based on the means of the groups found in the agglomerative cluster results with this sample. Given these initial cluster centers, each case was assigned to the group with the closest center. The analysis proceeded to recompute the center and reassign cases iteratively to the newly formed clusters in order to maximize the appropriateness of couple assignment to clusters.

Multivariate analysis of variance suggested that there are significant differences between the five clusters on the PCA scores (F=461.7, p<.001). Follow-up univariate analyses showed that the clusters had significant differences on all of the clustering variables (p<.001). Scheffe Range Tests indicated that of the 60 comparison

FIGURE 1 ENRICH PCA Means for Couple Types

pairs, only three were not significantly different. The complete results of these univariate analyses of the PCA scores are available in Table 1. The profiles of the five clusters are presented with PCA scores in Figure 1.

Primary Sample Cluster Descriptions

The first marital type included 31% (*N*=1,004 couples) of the primary sample and had the lowest scores on all of the ENRICH scales. These couples were designated "devitalized."

The second cluster contained 28% (*N*=918) of the couples in the primary sample. These couples' lowest scores were found on the Personality Issues, Communication, and Conflict Resolution Scales. This group of couples was called "conflicted." These couples had somewhat higher scores on Financial Management, Leisure Activities, Sexual Relationship, Children and Marriage, and Family and Friends. They had relative peaks on Equalitarian Roles and Religious Orientation.

Slightly more than 15% (*N*=504) of the couples were classified in the third type. These couples reported levels of marital satisfaction that were slightly above average on the scales that focus on the marital relationship itself such as Personality Issues,

Communication, Leisure Activities, and Sexual Relationship. They had the highest scores on the Children and Parenting scale of any couple cluster and had relatively high PCA scores on Religious Orientation. This set of couples was named "traditional" to match the combination of their moderate interpersonal satisfaction and high scores on parenting and religion scales.

There were 12% (*N*=407) of the couples in the fourth cluster. These marriages were characterized by relatively high scores on the marital relationship scales, and a dramatic trough on the Children and Parenting scale. They were termed "harmonious" marriages.

The final group of couples comprised 13% (*N*=427) of the sample. These couples were called "vitalized" due to the high level of satisfaction across the ENRICH scales. They had particularly high scores on the Personality Issues, Communication, Conflict Resolution, and Sexual Relationship scales.

Cross-Validation of Marital Types

The cross-validation of the cluster analysis was conducted with a separate of 3.248 couples. A k-means cluster analysis was conducted with the number of clusters set at five. Couples in the cross-validation sample were assigned to clusters in this analysis using the means of the k-means cluster analysis of the primary sample as pre-defined cluster seeds. To effectively assess the similarity between the primary and cross-validation samples, there were no iterations involving recomputation of cluster means following case assignment or relocation of cases. This provided an assessment of the cluster structure produced with the primary sample (in which cluster differences were maximized) with the second sample of couples. In other words, there was no increase in data-dependent goodness of fit based on the characteristics of the cross-validation sample because the cluster structure was not modified in this procedure.

There are two criteria that can be used to assess the cross-validation: the pseudo F statistic and the approximate expected overall R^2 (Cooper & Milligan, 1984; Milligan & Cooper, 1985). The stability of these criteria between the two samples can serve to assess the cross-validation in much the same way that the stability of R^2 allows a test of the adequacy of cross-validations of regression analyses.

The pseudo F statistic for the primary sample was 875.3 and for the cross-validation 855.7. In addition, the approximate R^2 of the k-means cluster analysis with the primary sample was .22. The cross-validation analysis produced an identical R^2. These results indicate that the five cluster solution provided a good fit with the cross-validation sample and support that cluster structure as a well-founded basis for a typology of

Table 2

Summary of Group Size in the Primary, Cross-Validation, and Total Samples

	Primary Sample		Cross-Validation Sample		Total Sample	
Variable	N	%	N	%	N	%
Devitalized	1,004	31	1,271	39	2,275	36
Conflicted	918	28	732	23	1,650	25
Traditional	504	15	556	17	1,060	16
Harmonious	407	12	314	10	721	11
Vitalized	427	13	375	12	802	12
Total	3,260	100	3,248	100	6,508	100

married couples. Table 2 summarizes the number of couples in each type in the primary and cross-validation samples.

External Validation of the Typology

Three indicators of marital quality were included in the study that can provide a limited evaluation of the external validity of this typology. The first is a single item that asked the respondents if they had considered divorcing their partner. The couples were divided into three groups following the procedure used by Fowers and Olson (1989): (1) those in which both partners have considered divorce; (2) those in which neither partner had considered divorce; and (3) couples in which only one partner had considered divorce. A chi-square analysis indicated that the marital types are represented differentially in these three groups (x^2=1109.4, df=8, p<.001). This analysis supports the typology in that vitalized, harmonious, and traditional couples were seldom inclined toward divorce while the majority of devitalized and a plurality of conflicted couples had considered divorcing. More complete results are available in Table 3.

The second external validity criterion was a single-item measure asking how satisfied each respondent was with the marriage overall. The couples were again divided into three groups following the procedure used by Fowers and Olson (1989): (1) couples in which both partners indicated dissatisfaction; (2) those in which both partners responded that they were satisfied overall; and (3) couples with one satisfied and one dissatisfied partner. A chi-square analysis suggested that the types were significantly different on this summary measure as well (x^2=1270.8, df=8, p<.001). As expected, the overwhelming majority of vitalized, harmonious, and traditional couples indicated general satisfaction. Both partners were dissatisfied in a plurality of conflicted couples and a majority of devitalized couples indicated overall dissatisfaction. Table 3 contains more detailed results.

Marital status was the third method of evaluating the typology. It was expected that different proportions of couples in the five types would: (1) be currently separated (a

strong indication of disaffection); and (2) have a history of divorce (an indicator of potential marital instability). Marital status was indeed found to differ among the types for both men (x^2=100.5, df=12, $p<.001$) and women (x^2=127.4, df=12, $p<.001$). Of the 93 separated couples in the sample, none was in the vitalized group, two

Table 3

External Validation Criteria for the Typology Percentages of Couples in Each Type and Criterion

Variable	Devitalized	Conflicted	Traditional	Harmonious	Vitalized	Total
			Marital Types			
Considered Divorce						
Both spouses	61.4	41.7	17.0	10.1	6.3	35.3
Neither spouse	11.5	27.5	62.9	72.4	85.5	41.3
Couple Satisfaction						
Both spouses dissatisfied	69.9	46.0	4.2	1.4	0.5	30.8
Both spouses satisfied	14.0	34.7	87.6	93.9	97.8	57.9
Marital Status						
Separated	5.4	2.3	0.6	0.5	0.0	2.5
Men previously divorced	18.4	14.6	8.0	13.0	12.7	14.3
Women previously divorced	19.7	16.6	7.7	12.0	11.2	14.9

were in the harmonious cluster, and 3 were traditional couples. Devitalized couples were far more frequently separated than expected by chance. Men, in devitalized couples were more often previously divorced and husbands in traditional couples were less frequently previously divorced. Among women the devitalized group had more previously divorced and fewer first marriages than expected by chance. Wives in vitalized and traditional couples were less often previously divorced. Moreover, 92% of traditional couples were in their first marriage (compared to 84% for the remainder of the primary sample). See Table 3 for more detailed comparisons.

Demographic Comparisons Between Marital Types

Analyses of variance and chi-square analyses were conducted to further examine differences between types in demographic characteristics. One way ANOVAs were conducted with the continuous demographic variables of age, months known partner, and months until marriage. The types differed on the age of both men (F=18.05, $p<.001$) and women (F=21.58, $p<.001$). Post hoc Scheffe Range Tests revealed that both men and women tended to be younger in the devitalized, conflicted, and harmonious couples and older in the vitalized and traditional couples. There was a significant group difference for the length of marriage (F=29.31, $p<.001$). Traditional and vitalized couples had been married longer, while conflicted, devitalized, and harmonious couples had been married fewer years. There was an overall difference in the length of time that the partners had known each other prior to marriage (F=11.68, $p<.001$). Post hoc tests indicated that devitalized couples had known each other for a shorter period than any of the other couple types.

Demographic variables that are coded in categorical form on ENRICH were examined with chi-square analyses. The marital types were significantly different in education for both men (x^2=484.1, df=24, p<.001) and women (x^2=270.6, df=24, p<.001). The pattern of frequencies indicates that both husbands and wives in vitalized, harmonious, and traditional couples tend to be more educated and devitalized couples had less education in general. The pattern of occupations also differed among the types (men, x^2=361.6, df=32, p<.001; women, x^2=157.2, df=32, p<.001). The vitalized and harmonious groups tended to have professional positions with greater frequency, while devitalized and conflicted couples had clerical, skilled labor, and service-orientated occupations more often. There were also differences in the partners' income across types for men ($x2$=65.6, df=32, p<.001) and women ($x2$=77.1, df=32, p<.001). The major differences in income for men was that men in vitalized and traditional couples tended to have higher incomes than men from the devitalized and harmonious groups. A different pattern emerged for female income with women from traditional, harmonious, and vitalized couples earning more than women in devitalized and conflicted couples. See Table 4 for more detailed results.

Employment status was examined and there were differences among the groups for both men (x^2=66.3, df=12, p<.001) and women (x^2=51.2, df=12, p<.001). While the vast majority of men in this sample (78%) worked full-time, men in vitalized

Table 4

Analyses of Categorical Demographic Variables by Marital Types

Variable	Marital Types					
	Devitalized	Conflicted	Traditional	Harmonious	Vitalized	χ^2
Education (% with college degree)						
Men	28.0	45.4	66.9	63.7	76.8	484.1
Women	21.8	33.5	45.7	53.8	53.9	270.6
Occupation (% professional)						
Men	40.0	52.1	66.1	57.1	73.7	361.6
Women	24.4	29.8	34.8	43.2	37.4	157.2
Income (% more than $20,000)						
Men	52.1	58.4	63.7	53.3	62.7	65.6
Women	24.3	29.9	34.1	33.9	33.0	77.1
Employment Status (% full-time)						
Men	77.3	80.1	80.6	73.1	78.9	66.3
Women	43.3	42.0	36.9	53.6	39.1	51.2
Religious Homogamy	85.2	85.6	94.9	90.3	94.8	55.1
Racial Homogamy	92.2	94.0	95.4	95.8	96.0	11.1
Number of Children	2.8	2.7	3.2	2.0	2.9	411.5

couples had both full- and part-time jobs less frequently and worked part-time only more often than expected. Devitalized husbands had the opposite pattern. Women in traditional couples were less often employed full-time, whereas women in harmonious couples worked full-time more often and were unemployed less frequently.

The homogamy of the couples in terms of religion and race was also examined. Devitalized and conflicted couples were more often religiously heterogamous while the vitalized and traditional clusters had similar religious background more frequently (x^2=55.1, df=4, p<.001). Although 94% of the couples in the sample were racially homogamous, devitalized couples were found to be somewhat more likely to be racially heterogamous than other types (x^2=11.3, df=4, p<.05).

The marital types differed in the number of children they had (x^2=411.5, df=32, p<.001). Harmonious couples tended to have the fewest children, while the traditional group had between three and five children with greater frequency.

DISCUSSION

This study used a three-stage cluster analytic procedure to derive five marital types. This cluster structure was arrived at through an initial exploratory analysis, supported by the cluster analysis of the primary sample, and further confirmed with cross-validation. The five marital types were also found to have significant differences in how often they had considered divorce, how satisfied they were overall, and in terms of marital status.

The findings in this study have both similarities and differences with the other marital typologies that used self-report measures. Each of the clusters in the current study will be described in terms of its ENRICH profile, its demographic characteristics, and compared with the types found in the other two marital satisfaction typology studies (Lavee & Olson, in press; Snyder & Smith, 1986).

Descriptions of the Types

Devitalized Couples. These couples had the lowest scores on all of the ENRICH scales. These couples seemed to be pervasively dissatisfied with their marriages. This was also the largest group, most likely due to the fact that many of the couples in the sample completed the inventory as part of marital therapy or enrichment. The individuals in these couples tended to be younger, less educated, have lower status occupations and incomes, and husbands had two jobs more frequently. The couples were also married for a shorter period of time, they had a shorter acquaintance prior to marriage, and had a higher incidence of racial and religious heterogamy. These characteristics are commonly associated with lower marital satisfaction. The external validity of this couple type was confirmed in that both partners in a majority of the couples had considered divorce and were dissatisfied overall. In addition, they were twice as likely to be separated as the

conflicted group and 10 times more likely to be separated than the other couple types. In addition, one in five of the partners had been previously divorced.

The devitalized profile is very similar to a group of couples identified by the same name by Lavee and Olson (in press). Both groups indicated pervasive dissatisfaction that did not seem to vary greatly across scales. (This is seen more clearly with standardized scores.) There are some similarities with Snyder and Smith's (1986) Type V, but their most dissatisfied couples were less troubled with their sexual relationship, extended families, and roles.

Conflicted Couples. This group had moderately low scores overall with relatively greater consensus on having egalitarian roles and making religion an important part of their relationship. Their lowest scores were on marital relationship scales reflecting difficulties in communication and resolving conflict. These couples were demographically similar to the devitalized couples with less education, lower income and job status, and more religious heterogamy than expected by chance. They also tended to be younger, and to be married more recently. The external validity of this moderately dissatisfied cluster was supported in that in a plurality of the couples, both partners had considered divorce and were dissatisfied with their marriages overall, but they were no more likely to be separated or previously divorced than the overall sample.

This couple type has a profile that is very similar to Lavee and Olson's (1993) conflicted couples. The conflicted couples have a lower overall profile than Lavee and Olson's couples, and the relative peak on the extended family is more exaggerated in their sample. A general similarity with Snyder and Smith's Type IV couples is apparent. Both groups have problems communicating and solving problems and have somewhat better scores in area reflecting activities and relationships outside the marriage.

Traditional Couples. The profile for traditional couples is characterized by scores slightly above average on scales assessing satisfaction with marital interaction. They were the most satisfied of all groups in how they are handling their children and parenting duties. These couples also had a relative high on their agreement about the place of religion in their marriages. Examination of the individual scores indicates that they see religion as an important aspect of their marriage. This group tended to be younger, but married longer and have more children than the other types. They tended to have more education and higher incomes than the less satisfied couple types. The wives were less frequently employed full-time. These couples appeared to be traditional in their approach to marriage as seen by their relatively greater frequency of being in their first marriage, and less than 1% of them were separated. They married younger, had more children, and the wives tended to work less than in other couples. In addition, neither partner had considered divorce in the majority of couples and both reported being satisfied in the vast majority of cases.

This couple type is similar to Lavee and Olson's (in press) traditional couples in their relative peaks on the children and religion scales. Lavee and Olson's traditional type had a relative high on Leisure Activities absent in the current sample. The

traditional type in this study has a somewhat higher level of satisfaction than traditionals in Lavee and Olson's study. There is no apparent parallel type in the Snyder and Smith study.

Harmonious Couples. These couples had moderately high scores on the scales assessing marital interaction, second only to vitalized couples. This group had a drastically lower level of consensus on issues involving parenting. The couples in this group tended to be older, married for a shorter period of time, and have the fewest children of any group. They tended to be more educated and have higher status jobs. The men have lower incomes more frequently than expected and women earned more money with greater than expected frequencies. The wives in this group worked full-time more than in other groups and were less often unemployed. The indicators of external validity show that neither partner in three fourths of the couples in this group had considered divorce and 94% considered themselves satisfied overall. In addition, less than 1% were separated.

It is worth noting that these couples had significant dissatisfaction with their parenting, yet very often had only one child. It is difficult to identify the specific source of this dissatisfaction with any certainty because the scale items cover areas such as discipline, time with children, triangulation with children, and decisions about how many children to have.

Lavee and Olson (in press) found a couple type they termed harmonious that had a very similar pattern of scores except that the harmonious couples in this sample were somewhat more satisfied with their extended family and friend relationships. The Snyder and Smith (1986) study did not present a type that resembles the harmonious group in this study.

Vitalized Couples. The highest levels of satisfaction across all of the domains of marriage were found among the vitalized couples. They had particularly high scores on marital interaction scales. This means that these couples were particularly comfortable with their spouse's habits and personality, felt comfortable with their ability to communicate, and were able to resolve conflict successfully. The couples in this group tended to be older, married longer, were more educated, and had higher incomes and job status. Husbands tended to have two jobs less frequently and to be working part-time more often. All of these indicators are typically associated with higher marital satisfaction and less stress on the relationship. The validation criteria were striking in this group, with neither partner having considered divorce in 86% of the couples, virtually all of them reporting satisfaction overall, and none being separated.

Snyder and Smith (1986) found two clusters with high overall satisfaction and they were differentiated by marital conventionalization scores. There is no couple score for the conventionalization scale in ENRICH, therefore it was not included in the analyses. Otherwise, these two couple types are quite similar to the vitalized cluster in this study. Lavee and Olson (in press) also named the most satisfied couple type in their study vitalized. The profiles of these two couple types are extremely similar.

The comparison of the results of these three studies indicates that very strong confidence can be placed in the existence of identifiable couple types resembling the vitalized, conflicted, and devitalized clusters in this study. Their characteristics have been identified in three separate studies utilizing different samples, indices of satisfaction, and clustering methods. In addition, the harmonious and traditional couples were reasonable replicas of two of Lavee and Olson's types.

Implications for Practice

It is clearly unlikely that vitalized couples will present themselves for marital or family therapy unless some extrarelationship issue pushes them to seek professional assistance. The existence of this couple type is important for clinicians to keep in mind, however, because it is all too easy to become cynical and despondent regarding the prospects of satisfying marriage when one sees so many unhappy couples.

Couples similar to the harmonious type are also unlikely to present for marital therapy. At the same time, they may seek assistance with problems with children, parenting, or decision making regarding how many children to have. There is a very strong tendency among marital and family therapists to assume that problems with children are almost always a reflection of disguised marital difficulties. The results of this study and the very similar pattern found by Lavee and Olson (in press) would indicate caution about how strongly this assumption should be held.

Traditional couples may also be unlikely to present for marital or family therapy. Yet they may be very amenable to marital enrichment, particularly if it is conducted in a pastoral context. Similarly, vitalized and harmonious couples might be interested in marital enrichment.

Conflicted and devitalized couples are the most likely to seek therapeutic services. In working with conflicted couples, it may be quite helpful to recognize and capitalize on their relative strengths in education and finances, and their agreement regarding extended family and religion. These external resources may be of substantial assistance in helping these couples to become more satisfied with their marriages.

When a devitalized couple seeks marital or family therapy, there is a high likelihood that the difficulties in the relationship are longstanding and pervasive. An initial assessment of their marital instability would be particularly important given how frequently they have considered divorce and their general history of previous divorce. These couples will be more likely to require intensive therapeutic attention to improve their marital relationship. Assessment results such as these can help clinicians to avoid underestimating the couple's difficulties and assist in realistic treatment planning. Addressing some of the stressors identified in this study may also be of some assistance. Longer work hours, lower income, less education, and more heterogamy place significant demands even on strong marriages. Dealing constructively with these issues could have great benefits.

Implications for Research

There is significant concordance between this study and two previous empirical typologies based on self-report marital satisfaction inventories. Three of the types in this study were clearly replicated (vitalized, conflicted, and devitalized) and two other types were moderately similar to previous findings (harmonious and traditional). This indicates the presence of three robust couple types, since the three studies used two different measures, both couples and individuals as units of analysis, and different cluster analytic procedures. The results of this line of research strongly suggest that adequate theories of marriage must include some means of accounting for dramatically different couple types.

One limitation of this study is that the external validation of the couple types is limited. Future typological research could attempt to address this issue more fully. This might include broader indices of marital quality, other indicators of individual well-being, and interactional data.

A second limitation of this study is that the current sample is not representative. It consists of a large number of couples who completed ENRICH as part of marital therapy or enrichment. A substantial subset of the couples was obtained from a separate study of nonclinical couples, but this does not constitute a representative sample. Therefore, the relative percentages of couples in the types cannot be taken to reflect the general population. Moreover, it is possible that there could be some differences in the couple types if a truly representative sample were used.

Another important area for research would include the development of cross-method replication of typological research. For example, comparing the level of concordance between couple types derived using Gottman's (1979) observationally based typology and a self-report based classification could add to our confidence in classifying couples.

Finally, longitudinal studies are needed to investigate the degree to which couple types are stable and / or evolving. A recent study of engaged couples (Fowers & Olson, 1992) found four couple types that had marked similarities to the vitalized, harmonious, traditional, and conflicted groups in this study. At present there are no data that can shed light on the degree to which these similarities reflect a tendency for couples to persist in a given type over time. Longitudinal investigations could also explore whether couples who are conflicted tend to deteriorate into devitalized marriages, eventually divorce, or improve. Information could be obtained about the extent to which the birth of a child, changes in occupation, or other changes in life circumstances alter couple types.

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