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EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MARITAL EXPECTATIONS AND
MARITAL SATISFACTION BETWEEN MARRIED AFRICAN IMMIGRANT COUPLES
AND UNITED STATES BORN MARRIED COUPLES

by

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is still considered a universal institution in many countries worldwide. Marriage provides benefits for wives, husbands, children, families, and communities. *Why Marriage Matters* (Wilcox et al., 2005), outlined the benefits of marriage, including improved physical and mental health, biological and social benefits for husbands, wives, children and families in America. In sub-Saharan Africa benefits emanating from marriage included increased survival rates for young children (Omariba & Boyle, 2007); reduced maternal morbidity and mortality rates for women due to reduced risks from self-inflicted abortions (Garenne, Tollman, Kahn, Collins, & Ngwenya, 2001); and improved economic management in homes due to exchanging gender-specific tasks within households (Gezon, 2002). Despite these benefits, approximately half the marriages in the United States end in divorce (Raley & Bumpass, 2003; Smith, 2007). Reduced marital satisfaction leads to dissolution of marriages in the U. S. Marital expectations were associated with marital satisfaction (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States born married couples. The independent variable was marital expectations, measured with the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ, Ngazimbi & Daire, 2008). The dependent variables were marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS, Hendrick, 1988), and the Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS, PAIRS Foundation, 1993).

The participants were recruited from nine sites in six states located in three geographical regions. The regions were the Midwest, the West and the Pacific Northwest. They were recruited through faith-based leaders. Participants consisted of 87 couples and 35 individuals who participated without their spouses. This was a mixed methods design. In the quantitative section,

three instruments were used to collect data: the MEQ, the RAS, and the RPS. The first section of the MEQ contained four open-ended questions which were used to collect qualitative data. Significant differences were found in the relationships between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrants and non-immigrants. Qualitative differences and similarities were found between African immigrant and U. S. born married couples. Implications of the findings are discussed for research, counselor education and clinical practice.

For my father, my mother, my husband Royal, and my children Makho, Thulie, Busie, and MaDewa. Thank you all for believing in me, and for your support. I love you.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Many countries around the world still regard marriage as a universal institution. In the United States over 80% of Americans will eventually marry at some point during their lifetime (Raley & Bumpass, 2003). Of this percentage, approximately 93% of Whites born between 1960 and 1964 will marry, compared to only 64% of African Americans who were born during the same period (Goldstein & Kennedy, 2001). In sub-Saharan countries marriage is still considered as a universal institution, despite the fact that those individuals marry later. Marriage occurs later for men due to acquisition of educational and professional qualifications in order to survive in an increasingly monetized society (Mokomane, 2006; Mensch, Grant, & Blanc, 2006). Girls also marry at a later age due to longer periods required for school attendance and subsequent acquisition of professional qualifications in changing societies (Bongaarts, 2007; Coast, 2006).

Marriage continues to provide benefits to husbands, wives, and children. In the United States, Wilcox et al. (2005) reviewed in their publication *Marriage Matters* findings from a number of studies. The findings suggested that despite declining rates of marriage, marriage still benefits minorities, children benefit from the nurturing they receive from both parents, husbands live longer than those who are not married, and society benefits from the stability marriages bring to communities. In sub-Saharan African countries marriage provides exchange of labor within the relationship for gender-based tasks (Gezon, 2002), provides women with safety and status that allows them to own immovable property (Gezon; Hunter, 2005), and benefits children through providing a safe environment in which care is available, thus reducing child morbidity and mortality (Omariba & Boyle, 2007; Lindstrom & Berhanu, 1998).

Reduced marital satisfaction contributes to marital dissolution. In spite of the fact that the rates of divorce in the United States have reached a plateau at 50%, this percentage excludes college educated women, the whites, and those who did not cohabit prior to getting married. Schoen and Standish (2001) found that divorce literature over the past 20 years indicated that about half of the marriages would end in divorce. A literature search revealed a paucity of research in the area of marital dissolutions in sub-Saharan Africa. This was due to the lack of archival data that is used to estimate divorce rates (Smith, 2007).

Problem Statement

Marriage is still considered a universal phenomenon around the world, in spite of the fact that 50% of marriages terminate during the first five years of the unions, and that marriages occur later in sub-Saharan African countries. In the United States the government identified the high social and personal costs of failing marriages. In addition the Institute for American Values published *Why Marriage Matters* (Wilcox et al., 2005). This research brief outlined the benefits of marriage in five areas: Family, economics, physical health and longevity, mental health and emotional well-being, and crime and violence.

Marriages are likely to end in divorce for a number of couples in diverse circumstances. Studies conducted in the United States had findings which suggested that 50% of marriages end in divorce within the first five years; additionally, 60% of marriages fail among women without high school diplomas, compared 34% of those with college education; and 60% of marriages which occur in couples younger than the age of 20 fail, compared to those occurring in 40% in couples older than the age of 22 (Raley & Bumpass, 2003). Further, research in the United States suggested that there are race-ethnic differences in marital quality and divorce (Bulanda & Brown, 2007). Using data from the National Survey of Families and Households, Black couples

exhibited lower marital happiness and interaction, with higher marital problems, more arguments, and perceived instability than White couples. Black couples were also more likely to divorce than White couples. Mexican American couples seemed to have equivalent marital quality and divorce outcomes as White couples, despite that they were part of a minority group that was economically disadvantaged (Bulanda & Brown). Structural variables such as education and employment, and cultural factors such as the importance of family in Mexican American marriages, seemed to affect the quality of marital happiness and satisfaction among the respondents.

Research on marital relationships suggested that African Americans have different expectations about marriage. More Whites expect to marry than African Americans (Goldstein & Kennedy, 2001). Forry, Leslie, and Letiecq (2007) found that African American women have egalitarian expectations of the marital relationship, while European American women have traditional expectations in which the husband is responsible for taking care of the family. This implies that African American women have to be able to carry out the traditional roles of being wife and mother, as well as holding down one or two more jobs outside the home in order to sustain the family.

In their study on interracial and intraracial patterns of mate selection among the diverse black populations in the U.S. Batson, Qian, and Lichter (2006), found that the newer black immigrants were quite different from the native-born African Americans in a number of ways. The newer Black immigrants comprised West Indians, Africans, and non-Whites from Puerto Rico. Batson et al. found that despite their higher levels of education, the new Black immigrant groups tended to be less likely to form marital and cohabiting unions with Whites than African Americans. Although education provided opportunities for interracial unions to occur, the racial

factor overshadowed the education factor. This confirmed that social distance is still wide between the Whites and all the Black groups in the U.S. Intramarriage between the different Black groups were higher than intermarriage between African Americans and Whites. Batson et al.'s study confirmed findings from previous studies in which Black men were more likely to be involved in interracial marital or cohabiting unions than Black women.

Marriages in the United States

Although marriage is still considered to be beneficial to individuals, wives, husbands, children, families and communities, about half the total number of marriages end in divorce in the U. S. (Raley & Bumpass, 2003). Research on Americans and other westerners suggest that reduced marital satisfaction contributes to marital dissolution. Some of the factors that lead to reduced marital satisfaction include poor communication behavior between spouses (Rehman & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2007), lack of sacrifice in the relationship (Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry, Clements, & Markman, 2006), lack of emotional support in the relationship (Cramer, 2006), lack of forgiveness (McNulty, 2008), and marital infidelity (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997).

Karney and Bradbury (1995) reviewed a number of studies whose findings suggested many of the prominent theories of marriage underline the importance of the role of communication behavior in marital functioning. In a cross-cultural study which involved American, Pakistani, and Pakistani immigrant couples Rehman and Holtzworth-Munroe (2007) demonstrated the cultural generalizability of findings by showing a strong association between communication behaviors and marital satisfaction. The findings of this study suggested that despite the cultural differences between couples residing in Pakistani, Pakistani immigrant couples in the United States and American couples, the marital satisfaction models that center on

marital communication behaviors are strong and potent models of marriage that can be used in many different cultures.

Various studies (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003; and Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry, Clements, & Markman, 2006) had findings which suggested that the willingness to sacrifice was an essential ingredient to achieving marital satisfaction. Findings from Stanley et al. suggested that attitudes about sacrifice predicted marital success and the maintenance of marital adjustment in the early years. This higher satisfaction with sacrifice within the marriage also predicted that the couple would not show signs of distress over the next year or two. Rusbult and Buunk identified willingness to sacrifice as one of the important relationship maintenance mechanisms for stable marital relationships.

Forgiveness impacted marital relationships positively. Forgiveness had at least two benefits to marital relationships over time: it reduced marital conflict, and was shown to be associated with more positive behaviors in marriage (Fincham, Beach & Davila, 2004). Suggestions abound that forgiveness was associated with positive attributions that are related to more satisfying marriages (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990).

In a study in which participants were involved in romantic relationships, Cramer (2006), found that emotional support broke down into two factors, care and listen. The findings suggested that care is the emotional kind of support which was most strongly associated with relationship satisfaction. Additionally, Cramer suggested that the results implied that the development of relationship satisfaction could depend on being both supportive and the ability to handle conflict more constructively. Dissatisfaction with a romantic relationship may be due to lack of emotional support. Consequently, dissatisfaction could have implications for interventions that target relationship enhancement and relationship counseling in that preventive

measures could be directed at teaching couples to show caring behaviors towards each other (Cramer).

Attributions are crucial in shaping marital quality. This led to clinical interventions for marital dysfunction to target changing spousal attributions (Baucom, Sayers, & Sher, 1990). Bradbury and Fincham (1990) proposed a theoretical framework which linked attributions, satisfaction and behavior in close relationships. This framework suggested that attributions and satisfaction can be linked indirectly due to the impact of attributions on the perceiver's behavior towards the partner. Attributions are related to perceptions of the partner's behavior which may affect short-term satisfaction. Attributions made by spouses affect marital satisfaction, while marital satisfaction also affects attributions. In a longitudinal study of marital couples for both husbands and wives, Fincham, Harold and Gano-Phillips (2000) showed that there were longitudinal relationships between attributions and marital satisfaction, and they demonstrated the importance of how attributions are conceptualized when investigating the relationship between attributions and marital satisfaction.

Marriage, family and couples therapists identified marital infidelity as one of the most destructive occurrences in relationships, and some of the most difficult problems to help the couple work on (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). In a review of ethnographic studies done in over 160 countries, Betzig (1989), found that infidelity was the most common cause of marital dissolutions. Partners who participated in marital infidelity had the following predisposing factors in their personality traits: higher neuroticism that increased the likelihood of having an affair (Buss & Shackelford, 1997) and higher self-esteem among men who participated in extramarital affairs (Buunk, 1980). Marital dissatisfaction has also been identified as a predisposing factor associated with marital infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Treas

& Giesen, 2000). Marital infidelity was also associated with transition to parenthood (Pittman, 1989). Whisman and Gordon (2007) confirmed a number of findings from previous studies in a study of predictors of 12-month prevalence of sexual infidelity in a population-based sample of 2,291 individuals. Infidelity was predicted by decreased marital satisfaction (consistent with Atkins et al., 2001; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Neuroticism was positively and significantly associated with infidelity (similar to the findings of Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Religiosity was found to act as a buffer that reduced the association between infidelity and marital dissatisfaction. This suggested that religiosity was a reliable buffer between marital dissatisfaction and infidelity, leading to couples maintaining their marriages (consistent with findings by Atkins et al., 2001). Finally, the last variable that predicted the probability of infidelity beyond the effects of marital dissatisfaction and demographic variables was the variable of wives' pregnancy status (Whisman & Gordon). The probability of infidelity was greater for husbands whose wives were pregnant in the past 12 months, as well as having marital dissatisfaction.

The demographics of the United States are dynamic. The population will constitute more minorities by 2020 (U. S. Census Bureau, 2008). For marriage, couples and family counselors to be more effective in their practice, they will need to have multicultural competences. This is stipulated by the American Counseling Association (ACA Code of Ethics, 2005) and the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009). CACREP goes further to stipulate the conditions that institutions need to meet to ensure diversity among the faculty and students, which would result in students and faculty experiencing cultural diversity. This research will be a resource for faculty, students and counselors to help them to work with African immigrant married couples.

Marriages in the U. S. are affected by factors discussed above. They include poor communication between spouses, lack of sacrifice, lack of emotional support, lack of forgiveness and marital infidelity which also leads to lowered marital satisfaction. Reduced marital satisfaction may in time lead to dissolution of marriages. However, a literature search revealed that there is paucity of research in the area of how personal values of couples affect marital satisfaction. Additionally, it is probable that personal values could affect marital expectations and marital satisfaction.

Marriages in African

A number of socio-cultural factors affect the marriage institution negatively in sub-Saharan Africa. These include polygamy, early marriage for young girls, increase in cohabitation, the practice of *Lobola*, and the unequal power between genders in marriages. The increase in HIV infection, especially within marriages is another factor that negatively affects the marriage institution in sub-Saharan Africa.

Many cultures in sub-Saharan Africa still support the practice of one husband having multiple wives. Polygamy, in which one husband marries more than one wife at a time, is mainly prevalent in West and North Africa where the Muslim faith is widely practiced (Al-Krenawi, 1999). In most sub-Saharan African countries, polygyny, a form of polygamy is more widely practiced (Cook, 2007; Timaeus & Reymar, 1998). In polygyny, the husband consults with his first wife and her kin to acquire a second or subsequent wife. Polygyny is practiced in countries where wives and their children provide the bulk of the agricultural labor for subsistence farming (Boserup, 1970; Timaeus & Reymar).

The practice of early marriage for young girls is still prevalent in North and West Africa. Usually the marriage is arranged by the parents of the girl with, most of the time, a much older

man, but the girl is not consulted during this arranged marriage (Ouattara, Sen, & Thomson, 1998; Clark, 2004). Due to the gender imbalance in favor of men, and also because of the age of young girls, they are placed at a disadvantage in that their negotiating powers are considerably reduced. This leads young girls to experience such problems as low levels of education, low levels of power that women generally possess in Africa, and the inability to negotiate for the use of condoms within marriages. These factors lead to high levels of infection with Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) among women of child-bearing age (15 – 49) (Bongaarts, 2007; Ouattara et al.). The young girls also suffer from physical and emotional complications as a result of being pregnant and having babies during early adolescence when they are neither physically or emotionally ready to undertake the rigors of motherhood (Ouattara et al.).

In sub-Saharan Africa marriage has always been encouraged, especially in patrilineal cultures. However, cohabitation is more prevalent in Botswana. Marriage is encouraged because if a child is born out of wedlock, then it becomes more challenging for the mother of that child to find a suitable marriage partner. Additionally, the biological father of the child cannot claim the child as his own. That child assumes the mother's last name, and the father cannot expect the same kind of relationship with the child as those children whose parents are married.

Cohabitation is increasing in only one sub-Saharan country – Botswana. Due to higher levels of education among Botswana women, they cannot find suitable men for marriage, thus leading to a marriage squeeze (Mokomane, 2006). In contrast to findings from U. S. studies (Brown & Booth, 1996) children born out of these unions seem to benefit similarly to those born in marriages, due to the acceptance of this lifestyle as a norm. There was also an imbalance between the sexes within communities due to the migrant patterns of men working away from home initially in the mines of South Africa. Recently men have been transferred to other districts

within the country due to the government's policy of decentralization for government workers (Mokomane).

Due to the unequal power of negotiation between spouses as a result of the factors discussed previously (gender imbalance within marriages, the effects of *Lobola*, young girls marrying older men, the acceptance of polygamy) and the social acceptance of marital infidelity by husbands within marriage, HIV infection continues to proliferate within marriages. Women are likely to be infected with the HIV from their husbands (Parikh, 2007). The HIV is spread through liaisons with both prostitutes and with those women who are not prostitutes but are instead permanent partners with who married men conduct their extramarital sexual relations, in exchange for maintaining their households. There are double standards of morals between husbands and wives (Smith, 2007). In South Africa, for example, men can have many sexual partners before marriage as proof of their virility. On the other hand, women should preserve their virginity until marriage (Hunter, 2005). Due to failing economies and high levels of unemployment in most sub-Saharan countries, men seek work far away from home in jobs such as mining or truck driving. These jobs necessitate husbands to be away from their wives for ten weeks or more at a time, during which time the men may engage the services of commercial sex workers (Gysels, Pool, & Bwanika, 2001). Thus the risk of exposure to HIV infection increases.

The factors highlighted above pose a significant amount of stress to marital couples in sub-Saharan Africa. Recent immigrants to the U. S. may still be dealing with some of the socio-cultural effects related to marriage in their home countries when they arrive in the country, and these may continue to affect their marriage. Some of these factors, such as polygyny, or early marriages for young girls, may not be socially acceptable in the new communities in which the new immigrants live. This may increase the stress associated with living in a foreign country.

In sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, research has not used marital satisfaction as a measure for marital continuity. Women have poor negotiating powers due to gender status imbalance, the expectations from their original families on their staying in marriages due to the relationships based on *Lobola* that was exchanged between the two extended families, and the societal norms of remaining in unsatisfying marriages. These conditions lead to marriages that are stable, but the wives may have reduced marital satisfaction. As a sub-Saharan African native residing in the United States, the researcher was motivated to contribute to the area of marital satisfaction. To accomplish this, the researcher investigated the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction and compared African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples.

Social Significance

Marriage Patterns in the United States

The Institute for American Values published *Why Marriage Matters* (Wilcox et al., 2005). This research brief outlined the benefits of marriage in five areas: Family, economics, physical health and longevity, mental health and emotional well-being, and crime and violence. Additionally, Wilcox et al. identified five themes, three fundamental conclusions and 26 general conclusions. The five themes were: The first theme was despite the fact that the rate of marriage has decreased among minorities, marriage is still valued. Next, benefits extend to the poor and disadvantaged Americans, even though they are less likely to enter or stay in marriage. Then marriage helps married men to be more nurturing towards their families and stay away from antisocial activities.

Fourth, marriage positively influences the biological functioning of children and adults in ways that could have social consequences. Finally, the relationship quality of intimate partners is

related to marital status and the degree to which each individual in the marriage is committed to staying married (Wilcox et al., 2005).

Marriage Patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa

Since this study was delimited to include only Black African immigrants, this excludes the White immigrants who are from the countries of North Africa that are not part of the sub-Saharan Africa region. Also excluded are other White Africans, mainly from South Africa, who immigrated to the U. S. after Apartheid fell. Sub-Saharan Africa lies south of the Sahara Desert. It excludes six countries of North Africa: Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. Although research is scanty on the benefits of marriage in Africa, some research exists on the benefits of marriage in Africa to husbands, wives, children, families, and communities. Similar to Wilcox et al.'s (2005) *Why Marriage Matters*, in sub-Saharan Africa there are some socio-cultural influences that affect marital and cohabiting relationships differently from those in such unions in the U.S. Although individuals marry later in sub-Saharan Africa, people still consider marriage as a universal institution (Diop, 2000).

Generally, marriage is desirable for women because it helps improve their social status. For example, in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa women generally cannot own land or other immovable property on their own (Gezon, 2002). Conversely, marriage provides them with this ability, and marriage protects them from exploitation or other injustices to which they might be exposed. Marriage also protects women from self-inflicted abortions if they get pregnant outside wedlock. When women have children before marriage, it reduces their chances to get married in the future. Self-inflicted abortions increase maternal morbidity and mortality, thus allowing children to be born into marriages (Garenne, Tollman, Kahn, Collins, and Ngwenya, 2001).

Children are highly valued in sub-Saharan Africa, and they strengthen marriages. Consequently childless marriages do not last as long as those in which there are children. Conversely, husbands in childless marriages tend to enter into polygynous marriages more often than those in which there are children (Timaeus & Reymar, 1998). Children in married households have greater survival rates than those born to single mothers. In a household with multiple wives children have improved chances of survival because of constant supervision and care of children by other co-wives (Lindstrom & Berhanu, 2000) and because of the availability of financial resources for healthy child upbringing (Basu, 2000).

Lobola or bride wealth has been an integral part of the marriage institution since the early times of African ancestors. Generally, the families of the two individuals who want to marry negotiate and settle on an amount for the bride wealth, and the bride wealth is later transferred to the family of the bride (Goody, 1973; Mamwenda & Monyooe, 1997). *Lobola* is described as a means of distributing scarce resources within society. It is also a means of establishing ties between two extended families (Ansell, 2001; Mbiti, 1969). John Mbiti is one of the African scholars who has researched and written extensively about African philosophy and religions. The *Lobola* transaction may be in the form of cattle, money, or both. Cattle are equated with money since they are used for ploughing the land in most countries of sub-Saharan Africa (Ansell). In marriage, there is exchange of gender-specific labor between husbands and wives. Wives have free access to male labor (for tasks such as roofing, mending broken fences in the fields), while husbands have free access to female labor, such as sowing and winnowing grain. Such an economic partnership removes the need to hire outsiders to help the family (Gezon, 2002). Dual career households contribute to the family's income, although they may also contribute to marital problems such as marital discord (Nwoye, 2000) or problems emanating

from the absence of one spouse from home for long periods of time, which can lead to infidelity (Rabe, 2001; Smith, 2007). With changing economies, the form of *Lobola* has been equated as one cow to specific amounts of money. However, commercialization of *Lobola* resulted in a girl's worth being judged against the level of education she has, consequently raising *Lobola* to levels that few young men can afford (Ansell). Thus older wealthier men, who might even be married, may become more available to young unmarried women. Although some African countries have enacted laws to provide equality in marriages, traditions are still strong and the norms and beliefs are based on strong traditions which guide the communities' ways of life.

Marriage also protects women from violence especially when it is related to sex in as rape, and from being forced to engage in sex for monetary exchange between men and women. This was especially pertinent for unemployed or poorly paid women in South Africa (Hunter, 2005). Thus marriage helped to protect the woman as other men knew that attacking her meant that the attacker would have to contend with the husband.

Gender Roles among African Immigrants

Gender roles are learned by children from the time they are young. Children go through apprenticeship in their socialization for gender roles within their families and within communities through role modeling from their parents, uncles, aunts and the extended family system (Nwoye, 2000). Most sub-Saharan African countries have patrilineal systems, in which the bride sets up the home with her groom on the father-in-law's land. Women's status is lower than that of men, and women cannot own land or property without having a male relative or spouse vouch for them. In order to have access to property the easiest way is to get married, and marriage for women is desirable in these cultures (Gezon, 2002).

Marriages are not egalitarian, as husbands have more power. Since this is how young women are socialized, they do not question the husband's autonomy. The low status of women leads to low negotiating power in relationships, leading to issues such as forced sex and inability to use condoms consistently (Pettifor, Measham, Rees, & Padian, 2004). Additionally, early marriage to older men with sexual experience leads to loss of negotiating power in adolescent women. Due to poverty they rely on these older men for their sustenance. Not surprisingly young women are unable to negotiate for safe sex practices within marital relationships, and this leads to increased risk to HIV infection. In South Africa in the KwaZulu-Natal region, masculinity was defined by the number of sexual partners a male had before they settled down to marry (Hunter, 2005). This increased risk of HIV transmission to all subsequent sexual partners the man had. However, if a woman was known to have a sexual partner before marriage, she was described as loose, and no self-respecting man would ask for her hand in marriage. All these examples serve to show how gender roles disadvantage women and increase their inability to have equal relationships in marriages in sub-Saharan Africa.

Need for the Study

As a sub-Saharan native living in the United States as a married student, wife, and mother, the researcher noticed that the expectations she had of her marital partner changed when the family arrived in the United States. The changes were due to the new life (the parents and children were going to school full time). This necessitated changes in marital expectations in order to accommodate the new reality of living in the United States. The researcher's interest in marital expectations and marital satisfaction emanated from the experiences of navigating a marriage and family, while both spouses were full time graduate students. The researcher identified research gaps that exist in examining marital satisfaction and marital expectations in

general, in the United States. Additionally, the researcher identified research gaps that exist in examining sub-Saharan African marriages and relationships. The researcher hopes that the knowledge gleaned from this study will further knowledge to contribute to strengthening marriages for sub-Saharan Africans and Americans. Further, the researcher hopes that the knowledge gleaned from this study will be a resource for counselor educators and counselors in their work with clients from sub-Saharan Africa.

Challenges Related to Conducting this Research in Africa

There are a number of challenges related to conducting this study in Africa. The challenges include the inability to travel to Africa due to visa problems, the high cost of flights to Africa, and lack of transport and bad roads in most of sub-Saharan Africa. The second major group of challenges is associated with conducting the research: The research agenda carried out is usually that of the developed countries which fund it, thus giving more decision-making power to the funders, and the concepts that are used in the research are based on western models, which may not be applicable to the localities in which they are used (Reddy, Taylor, & Sifunda, 2002). Finally, the multiplicity of cultures poses a big challenge to researchers, even the natives of the sub-Saharan region.

Although Africa has a large pool of educated people, a lot of them immigrate to the more developed countries, contributing to the brain drain. The brain drain is the export of intellectual and professional people from developing countries, such as Africa, to more developed countries, such as the United States. Capacity to carry out research is lacking in most African countries. To address this need, collaboration between northern and southern nations takes place. Reddy, Taylor, and Sifunda (2002) examined the challenges and the opportunities for knowledge and skills exchange through capacity building and partnership strategies between South African and

American partners. HIV/AIDS was the focus of research, and the aims were to conduct a survey of prison health services in South Africa, to develop and replicate interventions for inmates in the correctional system, and to conduct capacity building workshops for the South African Department of Corrections staff.

Reddy, Taylor, and Sifunda (2002) faced many challenges during their research. One was that most of the concepts used in the study were based on the western biomedical model, and added to the problems associated with translation of some concepts. To overcome this challenge, members of the research team conducted translation and back translation from English to Zulu (the language predominantly spoken in the areas). Another problem surfaced as a result of the assumption that Zulu was the main language spoken in that area, because there were some inmates who did not speak Zulu. Since Zulu belongs to the Nguni group of languages which are closely related, the interpreters were able to communicate with the inmates.

Although the principle of collaboration was good, the geographic distance between the researchers in South Africa and in the U. S. prevented the researchers from using opportunities which could benefit the research agenda. They had to utilize technology such as email which sometimes was not reliable. Decision-making had to be shared equally among the collaborators in order for all players to feel a sense of ownership in the study. Decisions had to be made about sharing tasks equally, such as writing and dissemination of information from both the South African and American partners.

Additionally, some other authors identified other challenges related to conducting research in Africa. One such challenge was that funding of research also determines the amount of power each partner has, and this could adversely affect the relationship if not handled appropriately. Edejer (1999) indicated that although sub-Saharan Africa bears 90% of the global

burden of HIV/AIDS, the allocation is 10% of the global funding for research. This statistic is similar for all other kinds of research. Edejer asserts that this inequitable funding hampers research initiatives in developing countries like the sub-Saharan African countries, resulting in reduced research initiatives and capacity building.

Costello and Zumla (2000) argued that research remains semi-colonial in developing countries, in that the partners from developed countries set the agenda of the research regardless of what the local people need. Because of this attitude, they suggest that the partners from developed countries do not pay much attention to ownership, sustainability and the development of research capacity among the locals. Costello and Zumla gave examples of how collaboration research models in developing countries benefited the northern countries because the researchers from those countries either obtained the data through postal means or visited the developing countries only long enough to collect the data and return to their home countries. The developing countries did not benefit from the data collection in any way. To counter these problems, Costello and Zumla proposed the use of partnership models in which there were equal forms of research with equal division of labor in all areas of the research process, such as decision-making, the use of research skills, writing of manuscripts and presentations at conferences.

Hardon et al. (2007) documented the problems related to transport in Africa, which may affect research or any other projects in which the clients have to be reached. Due to the vast geographical areas that must be covered, especially in rural communities, transportation must be available that is reliable, accessible, and affordable. Researchers face the challenges of transport costs which are unaffordable for potential participants, as well as the lack of transport in certain remote parts of sub-Saharan African countries. Consequently researchers are sometimes

pressured to conduct research in sites that are easily accessible for the populations they need to study.

The multiplicity of cultures in sub-Saharan Africa poses further challenges for researchers. Tomlinson, Swartz, and Landman (2006) found that the dynamics within the research area were influenced by perceived differences, such as cultural differences, or by phenomena such as insiders or outsiders. Consequently the dynamics affect the relationships of the research team and the population under study. With reference to the phenomenon of insiders versus outsiders, conducting the study in the United States reduces some of the differences that would be perceived by the African immigrants in the United States between the researcher and the participants. The dynamics would have been different if the researcher had visited other parts of sub-Saharan Africa to conduct the research. The travel arrangements would have been cumbersome due to the various visas needed to traverse sub-Saharan Africa. Conducting the study in the U. S. reduces most of the challenges discussed above, as well as providing a lingua franca, English, which is spoken by many African immigrants.

Due to the challenges outlined above that are associated with conducting research in Africa, the researcher decided to conduct the study in the United States. Most of the challenges were overcome by conducting the research in the U. S. United States born married couples were compared with Africans who immigrated to the United States to find out if there was a relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction.

African Immigrants

African immigrants comprise Blacks primarily from sub-Saharan countries (including South Africa which has a large population of White Africans) and Whites predominantly from North African countries such as Egypt. African immigrant population figures increased for the

Blacks versus Whites between the 1980 census and the 1990 census in the United States. In 1980 60% were classified as White, while 29% were classified as Black. However, in 1990 the figure for those classified as White fell 16 percentage points to 44%, while the figure for those classified as Black rose 18 percentage points to 47% (Djamba, 1999).

When classified according to immigration status in the U. S., immigrants are classified as temporary migrants, permanent residents, naturalized citizens, exiles, or refugees (Okome, 2002). Okome defined these immigration statuses as the following: Immigrants moved from their home countries to settle in the U. S. Migrants moved from their home countries to find temporary employment in the U. S., and intend to go back after specific time periods. Exiles were forced to leave their home countries due to political reasons or due to decrees by their governments. Refugees are covered by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees parameters which define a refugee “as a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” (UNHCR, 1967). Professional, Technical, and Kindred Immigrants (PTK) are those immigrants who are highly trained, and they migrate to the U. S. because of the inability of their home countries to support their skills due to deteriorating economies. This situation is also referred to as the brain drain (Okome, 2002).

It is necessary to outline these differences in the status of African immigrants in order to facilitate the reader’s understanding of the reasons that lead to immigration of Africans in such numbers to the U. S., especially with the introduction of the 1965 family reunification and refugee law, which made it easier for families to be united (Djamba, 1999). The sample in this

study consisted of African immigrants living in the United States, and United States born married individuals.

Theoretical Foundations

In order to provide a sound theoretical background for this research, the researcher discusses the following theories: the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations, the Interdependence Theory, and the Migration Systems Theory. In the discussion the researcher shows how the theories are linked, and how they will contribute to understanding how marital expectations and marital satisfaction are related.

Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations

The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations theory is based on the biological principle that the human individual is developed by the predetermined elaboration of an unstructured egg. This understanding has been extrapolated to social systems and applied to the emergence of social systems in society. The theory applied to the development of basic social systems such as marriage, starting at its inception and going through its different stages of the life cycle (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006). The model explores the various types of expectations, based on the individuals in the marriage, the family of origin, the institution of marriage, and the image of the ideal partner.

Interdependence Theory

Interdependence theory focuses on the interaction between the two marital partners in providing outcomes in the form of rewards and costs in the relationship. Examples of rewards are pleasure and gratification, while examples of costs are embarrassment, and distress (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In common with other social exchange theories, the basic premise they share is that people initiate and maintain relationships partially because of the anticipated benefits that

will accrue from the interactions in the relationship (Blau, 1967). Additionally, the commitment couples invest in their relationship is demonstrated by sacrifice in their day to day living (Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry, Clements, & Markman, 2006).

Interdependence theory describes the structure of interdependence between two partners in a relationship which includes the degree of dependence of each partner, the mutuality of dependence of both partners, the correspondence of outcomes (whether the outcomes for each individual correspond, and if the outcomes will cause conflict) and the basis of dependence (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). The theory also explains how the interaction between the two partners is guided by more global considerations such as long-term goals and concern for each other's interests (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2002). An individual evaluates the outcomes of the interactions that occur in a relationship, and decides whether or not he or she is satisfied (Rusbult & Buunk). This implies that the individual has set standards based on what he or she defines as the level of satisfaction with the relationship. The interdependence theory serves as a bridge to link the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations and marital satisfaction construct which this research explored.

The Migration Systems Theory

The Migration Systems Theory (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, & Taylor, 1993) explains the intense exchange of goods, capital, and people between certain countries, and it explains the less intense exchange of the same among other countries. An international migration system consists of a set of sending countries (which in this case are the sub-Saharan African countries sending immigrants) and the core receiving country being U. S. This theory also informs that there are push and pull factors. The push factors induce professionals to leave poverty-stricken countries to settle in richer countries such as the U. S. At the same time, the

wealthier countries pull professionals from developing countries to live and work there. In a study to describe the numbers, characteristics and trends in the migration of physicians to the United States, Hagopian, Thompson, Fordyce, Johnson, and Hart (2004) found that the majority (64%) of physicians attended medical school in low-income or developing countries, while a total number of 5334 physicians are from sub-Saharan Africa. This situation contributed to a brain drain of professionals from the poor to the rich countries, thus contributing to the depletion of health services in the sending countries. Another source of sub-Saharan immigrants is the refugees from war-torn countries such as the Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, and Somalia.

Since the United States passed a law on family reunification which makes it easy for families to join the spouse who is offered a work visa or is granted asylum, the rest of the family can join the husband within a reasonable amount of time. Thus initially, it might be the husband who arrives first, and then he sends for the wife and the rest of the family. Immigration to the United States has become a common event in most sub-Saharan African families in most countries. A number of studies describe the following events: the brain drain of physicians from sub-Saharan Africa (Hagopian, Thompson, Fordyce, Johnson, & Hart, 2004), and the immigration of refugees and those seeking asylum in the United States. Thus the theory of immigration thus described is applicable to the African immigrants in the United States. It explains how families move from Africa to the United States in search of better lives for the immigrants.

The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations, the Interdependence theory, and the Immigration theory will provide the theoretical background to understand how the expectations married couples bring into their relationship affect their marital satisfaction. Marital expectations

also influence a couple's decision to move from one part of the world to another, and the migration systems theory will provide the theoretical understanding to the decision-making process. The interdependence theory will assist with the understanding of what keeps a couple together, and this includes their values and decision-making processes.

The Purpose of the study

Even though marriages ending in divorce have reached a plateau at 50% in the U. S., Blacks, those with low educational levels and those couples who cohabit before marriage make up the greater percentage of those whose marriages eventually dissolve (Wilcox et al., 2005). Reduced marital satisfaction leads to the termination of some marriages. Some of the factors that lead to reduced marital satisfaction include poor communication behavior between spouses (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997), lack of emotional support in the marital relationship (Cramer, 2006), lack of forgiveness (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004), and marital infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001). The entry of African immigrants into the U. S. includes families from different cultures, with different values. Although there might be reduced marital satisfaction among married African immigrants, because of their values they stay in their marriages, implying that their marriages are stable. Studies both in the U. S. and in Africa have demonstrated that marriage is still considered a universal institution, although people are getting married later in life. Marriage has benefits for all family members, the communities and the nations. However, there has been a paucity of studies that investigated the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction. A few studies explored the relationship between marital stability and premarital education in the U. S. (Stanley, Amato, Johnson, & Markman, 2006), and childhood socio-emotional characteristics as antecedents of marital stability in

Finland (Kinnunen & Pulkkinen, 2003). Nonetheless these studies did not clarify what factors in the marriages under study contributed to the stability of the union.

The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between immigrant Africans and native born Americans, and to explore the nature of marital expectations. This study was conducted among American born married couples and African immigrant married couples, to find out if there were differences among the two population samples. The researcher hoped that the study results would contribute to a better understanding of how marital expectations influence marital relationships in general, and marital satisfaction in particular. Through the exploration of the nature of marital expectations, the researcher hoped that the results would elucidate the effect of marital expectations on marital satisfaction and also that the results of the study would help explain marital stability. Consequently, the results would contribute to the research on marital satisfaction, especially with reference to married African immigrants and U. S. born married couples.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between married African immigrants and U. S. born married couples. Research questions would be answered to address this study's goals.

Research Question I

The first research question asks: What relationships exist between marital expectations and marital satisfaction? Previous research on expectations in relationships investigated convenience samples of dating couples in colleges (Barich & Bielby, 1996; Cramer, 2004). Since

previous research on marital expectations investigated mainly dating couples and not married couples, null hypotheses were explored to answer this question focused on married couples.

Hypothesis 1A

No relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale, for United States born married participants.

Hypothesis 1B

No relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale, for African immigrant married participants.

Research Question II

What differences exist among marital expectations and marital satisfaction between United States born and African immigrant married participants?

Hypothesis 2A

No difference exists between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital satisfaction measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and marital expectations as measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire.

Hypothesis 2B

No difference exists between United States born and African immigrant married participants in relationship satisfaction measured by the Relationship Pleasure Scale and marital expectations as measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire.

Research question III

The research question asks: What are the qualitative similarities and differences between the marital expectations possessed by African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples? The goal of the qualitative aspect was to further understand the expectations possessed by both groups along with an explanation of the qualitative similarities and differences in marital expectations the two participant groups. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire contained four open-ended questions to enquire about marital expectations.

Research Design

The researcher chose a mixed methods cross-sectional research design. The rationale for choosing mixed methods research design was to use triangulation to investigate the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married participants and United States born married participants. Literature search revealed paucity of research in the area of marital expectations in married couples utilizing mixed methods research. One of the advantages of using mixed methods design is to facilitate a better understanding of the research problem. This is achieved through uniting numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005). The researcher selected three instruments to collect quantitative data. The instruments were the following: The Marital Expectations Questionnaire, the Relationship Pleasure Scale, and the Relationship Assessment Scale.

Measurement Instruments

The Marital Expectations Questionnaire

The researcher utilized the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ) to collect qualitative data using four open-ended questions in section one, collected quantitative data through 10 five-item Likert Scale questions in section two, collected marital expectations ranking data in section three, and collected demographic information about the participants in section four. Section IV contained demographic information about the participants, for example, information about ethnicity, age, length of time in the present marriage, number of times the participant had been married and religious affiliation. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire was constructed by the researcher based on the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006).

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) Self-Report

The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS, Hendrick, 1988) is a seven-item relationship global satisfaction measure which yields a total satisfaction score. This instrument can be used for marital and cohabiting relationships, as well as for various age groups and ethnicities. The RAS correlated well with the 32-item Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1989). Correlation coefficients with the DAS subscales were .83 for satisfaction, .62 for consensus, .57 for affection, and .80 overall (Hendrick). Test-retest reliability was good, and the internal validity was reported to be .86 (Hendrick).

Relationship Pleasure Scale

The Relationship Pleasure Scale (PAIRS Foundation, 1993) is a self-report six-item instrument which identifies six resources of relationships. The respondent is asked to rate each of

the resources of the relationship from 0 to 4, with 0 being no satisfaction, and 4 being very satisfied. The resources are Sensuality, Sexuality, Intellectuality, Emotionality, Friendship/Trust/Shared Interests, and What Has Been Built Together. This instrument has been used by the PAIRS Foundation training for married couples for the past 15 years. Together with the Relationship Assessment Scale, the Relationship Pleasure Scale would provide a more balanced measure of marital satisfaction, as each of the instruments provides a different perspective of the marital satisfaction construct. The Relationship Pleasure Scale was validated and has sound psychometric properties (Daire & Strampach, 2008).

Methodology

Institutional Research Board approval was sought before starting the research. A description of the study was attached, as well as a copy of the waiver of informed consent form read by the participants, copies of the three research instruments, copies of the letters that had been written to the faith – based leader for support to find participants, and a letter to participants.

Selection of Participants

Nine research sites were identified in different parts of the country: the West (which included the Pacific Northwest), and the Midwest regions. These regions were identified because they had sizeable numbers of African immigrants as well as non-immigrants, and the availability of married participants was assured through their church attendance. The researcher had contacts with the identified congregations. U. S. born married couples also were available in churches in the same geographical area. The research was advertised by using flyers, through local churches. Local contact persons were identified and the researcher communicated with the faith-based

leaders through them. Through liaison with the faith-based leaders, the researcher set appointments for dates and times to meet with those who were willing to participate in the study. The researcher traveled to the various sites to collect the data from groups of participants. The participants were religious, and most had membership in the Seventh – Day Adventist Church.

Data Analysis

The researcher used linear regression analysis to find out if there was a relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction. Data was entered into the SPSS program, and linear regression analysis was run. To find out if there were differences between the two groups on the variables, MANOVA was conducted, and the results were analyzed. ATLAS Ti, a software program, was utilized to analyze the data to identify themes, patterns, and commonalities, and to report on them.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of readers to have a common understanding of terms that will be used in the study, the researcher provided some definitions:

African immigrant. This term generally includes White Africans (mostly from Egypt and South Africa) and Black Africans who immigrated to the United States (Djamba, 1999; Okome, 2007). In this study, the term African immigrant was confined to first generation Black Africans who had immigrated to the United States of America.

Interracial married couples. This term includes couples whose spouse is a member of another racial or ethnic group.

Marital couples. This term described heterosexual marital couples as these are the participants in this study.

Marital expectations. These are expectations each of the spouses bring into the marital relationship. They may be based on childhood experiences from original families, or they might have evolved over time before or after marriage.

Marital satisfaction. Research in the United States has focused on marital satisfaction to judge the level of happiness or commitment in marriages. Despite this, high rates (50%) of divorce occur. On the other hand, studies in sub-Saharan Africa revealed marital infidelity among husbands. In spite of this, marriages are stable and divorce rate has been estimated at the rate of 21%. The challenge was based on comparing U. S. born married couples (who understand how marital satisfaction contributes to happiness in marriage) with African immigrants who will have lifelong marriages, even if marital satisfaction may be absent.

Marital stability. Marital stability is one other variable that was explored qualitatively with the objective of finding out if there were differences in perception between the married African immigrant and the United States born married couples. Marital stability was defined as that enduring quality of a marital relationship which leads to lifelong marriage.

Other immigrants. First generation immigrants from all the other parts of the world are included in this group. This includes immigrants from the different parts of Europe, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, the Americas (to include Central, South, and the islands of the Caribbean) and the islands of the Pacific.

United States born married couples. This group included all racial and ethnic groups of individuals who were born in the United States, and the group definitions were based on the United States Bureau of Statistics. These include European Americans, African Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans.

Limitations

The first limitation was that participants used a self-report measuring instrument. It is possible that participants might respond in ways that increase their social desirability, which might not reflect their behavior in real life (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The second limitation was related to the researcher's lack of control in soliciting for participants, thus contributing to the reduced generalizability of the study. The sample included participants with homogenous religious beliefs, and this raised threats to external validity. The other limitation was that the African immigrants who participated in the study may not have been representative of immigrants from different parts of Africa. Since the population sample was drawn from churches, the researcher would not be able to generalize the findings to the wider population of the United States as the sample was homogenous. The sample consisted of 200 participants. Only 43 were African immigrants, compared to 157 United States born participants. This is a limitation in that the groups are not equal, and this could affect the statistical analyses. Concern for anonymity prevented the researcher from checking surveys for completeness and accuracy at the data collection sites. This led to the existence of outliers and incomplete data which the researcher excluded during the preliminary data analysis stage.

Summary

In this chapter the statement of the problem, the social significance and the purpose of the study were outlined. The state of the marriage institution was described based on research that was conducted in the United States and in sub-Saharan Africa. Although there were some fundamental differences, some similarities emerged as far as benefits of marriage are concerned for husbands, wives, children, families and society. The factors leading to reduced marital

satisfaction were identified in the U. S., while the socio-cultural factors that impact marriages were also identified, and discussed.

The three theoretical foundations that were utilized in this research were briefly discussed. The theoretical foundations were the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations, the Interdependent theory of relationships and the Migratory Systems theory. The links between these theories and the constructs under study (marital expectations and marital satisfaction) were identified. The research questions, the hypothesis and the analysis were defined for each question. The research design was highlighted, including the population sample. The definition of terms was explained. The limitations of the study were also highlighted. The researcher will discuss literature review in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is a review of literature related to the institution of marriage, especially with reference to the state of marriages in the United States and in sub-Saharan Africa. This chapter has nine sections.

- (a) Exploration of the benefits of marriage in the United States and in sub-Saharan Africa;
- (b) Discussion of studies on marital expectations and marital satisfaction;
- (c) Analysis of the major factors affecting marital satisfaction;
- (d) Discussion on the instruments used to measure marital satisfaction, including their psychometric properties;
- (e) Challenges related to conducting research in Africa;
- (f) African immigrants in the United States;
- (g) Seventh – day Adventist beliefs;
- (h) Theoretical orientation; and
- (i) Research design.

The Institution of Marriage

Marriage Patterns in the United States

People around the world still consider marriage a universal phenomenon. In the United States the government identified the high social and personal costs of failing marriages. In addition, in 2005, the Institute for American Values published *Why Marriage Matters* (Wilcox et

al., 2005). This research brief outlined the benefits of marriage in five areas: Family, economics, physical health and longevity, mental health and emotional well-being, and crime prevention.

Additionally, Wilcox et al. identified five themes, three fundamental conclusions and 26 general conclusions. The five themes were:

1. Despite the fact that the rate of marriage has decreased among minorities, marriage is still valued;
2. Research shows the benefits for poor and disadvantaged Americans, even though they are less likely to enter or stay in marriage;
3. Marriage helps married men to be more nurturing towards their families and stay away from antisocial activities;
4. Marriage positively influences the biological functioning of children and adults in ways that could have social consequences; and
5. The relationship quality of intimate partners is related to marital status, and the degree to which each individual in the marriage is committed to staying married (Wilcox et al., 2005).

Further, research in the United States suggested that there are race-ethnic differences in marital quality and divorce (Bulanda & Brown, 2007). Using data from the National Survey of Families and Households, Black couples exhibited lower marital happiness and interaction, with higher marital problems, more arguments, and perceived instability than did White couples. Black couples were also more likely to divorce than White couples. Mexican American couples seemed to have equivalent marital quality and divorce outcomes as White couples, in spite of the fact that they were a minority group who were economically disadvantaged (Bulanda & Brown). Structural variables such as education and employment,

and cultural factors such as the importance of family in Mexican American marriages, seemed to affect the quality of marital happiness and satisfaction among the respondents.

Research on marital relationships suggested that African Americans had different expectations about marriage. Goldstein and Kenney (2001) estimated that approximately 93% of Whites born between 1960 and 1964 will marry, compared to 64% of African Americans who were born during the same period. This gap was explained by the gender imbalance resulting from higher rates of mortality and incarceration among young Black males, as well as poorer economic opportunities, compared to White males (Lichter, McLaughlin, Kephart, & Landry, 1992). Studies showed that African American women had egalitarian expectations of the marital relationship, while European American women had traditional expectations in which the husband was responsible for taking care of the family. This difference could be explained by the fact that African American men had higher chances of being under employed and being incarcerated more frequently and also of having lower education than European American males, thus propelling the African American females to be strong and more self-sufficient within marriages (Forry, Leslie, & Letiecq, 2007). This implied that African American women had to be able to carry out the traditional roles of being wife and mother, as well as hold down one or two more jobs outside the home in order to sustain the family.

In their study on intercultural and intracultural patterns of mate selection among the diverse Black populations in the U. S. Batson, Qian, and Lichter (2006), found that the newer Black immigrants were quite different from the native born African Americans in a number of ways. The newer Black immigrants were comprised of West Indians, Africans, and non-Whites from Puerto Rico. Batson et al. found that despite their higher levels of education the new Black immigrant groups tended to be less likely to form marital and cohabiting unions with Whites

than African Americans. Although education provided opportunities for interracial unions to occur, the racial factor overshadowed the education factor. This confirmed that social distance is still wide between the Whites and all the Black groups in the U. S. Intramarriages between the different Black groups were higher than intermarriages between African Americans and Whites. Batson et al.'s study confirmed findings from previous studies in which Black men were more likely to be involved in interracial marital or cohabiting unions than Black women.

Marriage Patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa

Since this study has been delimited to include only Black African immigrants, this excludes the White immigrants who are from the countries of North Africa which are not part of the sub-Saharan Africa region, and other white Africans mainly from South Africa who immigrated to the U. S. after Apartheid fell. Sub-Saharan Africa lies south of the Sahara Desert. It excludes six countries of North Africa: Western Sahara, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt. Although research is scanty on the benefits of marriage in Africa, some research exists on the benefits of marriage in Africa to husbands, wives, children, families, and communities. Similar to Wilcox et al.'s (2005) *Why Marriage Matters*. In sub-Saharan Africa there are some socio-cultural influences that affect marital and cohabiting relationships differently from those in such unions in the U. S. Although individuals marry later in sub-Saharan Africa, people still consider marriage as a universal institution (Diop, 2000).

Generally, marriage is desirable for women because it helps improve their social status. For example, in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa women generally cannot own land or other immovable property on their own (Gezon, 2002). Thus marriage provides them with this ability, and marriage protects them from exploitation or other injustices to which they might be exposed. Marriage also protects women from self-inflicted abortions [if they get pregnant outside

wedlock, as this will reduce their chances of getting married in future (Calves, 1999)] which increase maternal morbidity and mortality. The protection of women from self-inflicted abortions allows children to be born into marriages (Garenne, Tollman, Kahn, Collins, & Ngwenya, 2001).

Children are highly valued in sub-Saharan Africa, and they strengthen marriages. Consequently, childless marriages do not last as long as those in which there are children. Conversely, husbands in childless marriages tend to enter into polygynous marriages more than those in which there are children (Timaeus & Reymar, 1998). Children in married households have greater survival rates than those born to single mothers. In a household with multiple wives children have improved chances survival because of constant supervision and care of children by other co-wives (Lindstrom & Berhanu, 2000), and the availability of financial resources for healthy child upbringing (Basu, 2000).

Lobola or bride wealth has been an integral part of the marriage institution for as long back as the times of African ancestors (Mamwenda & Monyooe, 1997). Generally, the families of the two individuals who want to marry negotiate and settle on an amount for the bride wealth, and the bride wealth is later transferred to the family of the bride. *Lobola* is a means of distributing scarce resources within society. It is also a means of establishing ties between two extended families (Mbiti, 1969). John Mbiti, one of the African scholars, has researched and written extensively about African philosophy and religions. The *Lobola* transaction may be in the form of cattle, money, or both. Cattle are equated with money since they are used for ploughing the land in most countries of sub-Saharan Africa (Ansell, 2001). In marriage, there is exchange of gender-specific labor between husbands and wives: wives have free access to male labor (for tasks such as roofing, mending broken fences in the fields), while husbands have free access to female labor, such as sowing and winnowing grain. This economic partnership removes

the need to hire outsiders to help the family (Gezon, 2002). Dual career households contribute to the family's income, although they may also contribute to marital problems such as marital discord (Nwoye, 2000) or problems emanating from the absence from home of one spouse for long periods of time, leading to infidelity (Rabe, 2001; Smith, 2007). With changing economies, the form of *lobola* is equated as one cow to so much money. However, commercialization of *Lobola* resulted in a girl's worth being judged against the level of education she has, consequently raising it to levels that few young men can afford (Ansell). Thus older wealthier men, who might even be married, may become more available to young unmarried women. Although some African countries enacted laws to provide equality in marriages, the norms and beliefs are based on strong traditions which guide the communities' ways of life.

Marriage also protects women from violence, especially when it is related to sex as with rape, and from being forced to engage in sex for monetary exchange between men and women.. Unemployed or poorly paid women in South Africa were victims of this kind of violence (Hunter, 2005). Thus marriage helped to protect the woman as other men knew that attacking her meant that the attacker would have to contend with the husband.

Gender Roles among African Immigrants

Children learn gender roles from the time they are young, usually from their parents and extended family. Children go through apprenticeship in their socialization for gender roles within their families and within communities through role modeling from their parents, uncles, aunts and the extended family system (Nwoye, 2004). Most sub-Saharan African countries have patrilineal systems, in which the bride sets up the home with her groom in the groom's father's land. Women's status is lower than that of men, and women cannot own land or property without

having a male relative or spouse vouch for them. The easiest way to gain access to property is to get married, and marriage for women is desirable in these cultures (Gezon, 2002).

Marriages are not egalitarian, as husbands have more power. Since this is how young women are socialized, they do not question the husband's autonomy. The low status of women leads to low negotiating power in relationships, leading to issues such as forced sex and inability to use condoms consistently (Pettifor, Measham, Rees, & Padian, 2004). Additionally, early marriage to older men with sexual experience leads to loss of negotiating power in adolescent women, and also due to poverty they rely on these older men for their sustenance. Not surprisingly the young women are unable to negotiate for safe sex practices within marital relationships, and this leads to increased risk to HIV infection. In South Africa in the KwaZulu-Natal region, the number of sexual partners a male had before they married defined their masculinity (Hunter, 2005). This increased the risk of HIV transmission to all subsequent sexual partners for the man. However, if people knew that a woman had a sexual partner before marriage, she was described as loose, and no self-respecting man would ask for her hand in marriage. All these examples serve to show how gender roles disadvantage women and increase their inability to have equal relationships in marriages.

Major Factors that Affect Marital Satisfaction in the United States

Although marriage is still considered to be beneficial to individuals, wives, husbands, children, families and communities, about half the total number of marriages end in divorce in the U. S. (Wilcox et al, 2005). Research on Americans and other westerners suggest that reduced marital satisfaction contributes to marital dissolution. Some of the factors that lead to reduced marital satisfaction include poor communication behavior between spouses (Rehman & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2007), lack of sacrifice in the relationship (Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry,

Clements, & Markman, 2006), lack of emotional support in the relationship (Cramer, 2006), lack of forgiveness (McNulty, 2008), and marital infidelity (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). Karney and Bradbury (1995) reviewed a number of studies whose findings suggested many of the prominent theories of marriage underline the importance of the role of communication behavior in marital functioning. In a cross-cultural study with American, Pakistani, and Pakistani immigrant couples Rehman and Holtzworth-Munroe (2007) demonstrated the cultural generalizability of findings about the existence of a strong association between communication behaviors and marital satisfaction. The findings of this study suggested that despite the cultural differences between couples resident in Pakistani, Pakistani immigrant couples in the United States and American couples, the marital satisfaction models that center on marital communication behaviors are strong and potent models of marriage that can be used in many different cultures.

Various studies (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003; and Stanley, Whitton, Sadberry, Clements, & Markman, 2006) had findings which suggested that the willingness to sacrifice was an essential ingredient to achieving marital satisfaction. Stanley et al. had findings that suggested that attitudes about sacrifice predicted marital success and the maintenance of marital adjustment in the early years. Higher satisfaction with sacrifice within the marriage also predicted that the couple would not show signs of distress over the next year or two. Rusbult and Buunk identified willingness to sacrifice as one of the important relationship maintenance mechanisms for stable marital relationships. Additionally, there are emerging trends in marital studies, in that research now includes transformative processes. Examples of emerging foci include the concepts that marital quality could be viewed in two dimensions: positive and negative; that forgiveness is essential for a successful marriage; commitment and sacrifice may

have high symbolic value in relationships; and that religion provides the medium in understanding marital functioning and outcomes. This is a shift from previous research that focused on conflict in marital research (Fincham, Stanley, & Beach, 2007).

Forgiveness impacted marital relationships positively. Forgiveness exhibited at least two benefits to marital relationships over time: reduced marital conflict, and more positive behaviors in marriage (Fincham, Beach & Davila, 2004). Forgiveness is also associated with positive attributions that are related to more satisfying marriages (Bradbury & Fincham, 1990).

Cramer (2006) investigated participants who were involved in romantic relationships and found that emotional support broke down into two factors, care and listen. The findings suggested that care is the emotional kind of support which was most strongly associated with relationship satisfaction. Additionally, Cramer suggested that the results implied that the development of relationship satisfaction could depend on being both supportive and able to handle conflict more constructively. Dissatisfaction with a romantic relationship may be due to lack of emotional support, which may have implications for interventions that target relationship enhancement and relationship counseling in that preventive measures can be directed at teaching couples to show caring behaviors towards each other (Cramer).

Attributions are crucial in shaping marital quality. This led to clinical interventions for marital dysfunction to target changing spousal attributions (Baucom, Sayers, & Sher, 1990). Bradbury and Fincham (1990) proposed a theoretical framework which linked attributions, satisfaction and behavior in close relationships. This framework suggested that attributions and satisfaction can be linked indirectly, due to the impact of attributions on the perceiver's behavior towards to the partner. These attributions are related to perceptions of a partner's behavior which may affect short-term satisfaction. Attributions made by spouses affect marital satisfaction,

while marital satisfaction also affects attributions. In a longitudinal study of marital couples for husbands and wives, Fincham, Harold, and Gano-Phillips (2000) showed that there were longitudinal relations between attributions and marital satisfaction, and demonstrated the importance of how attributions are conceptualized when investigating the relationship between attributions and marital satisfaction.

Marriage, family and couples therapists identified marital infidelity as one of the most destructive occurrences in relationships, and some of the most difficult problems to help the couple work on (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). In a review of ethnographic studies done in over 160 countries Betzig (1989) found that infidelity was the single most common cause of marital dissolutions. Partners who participated in marital infidelity exhibited the following predisposing factors in their personality traits: higher neuroticism that increased the likelihood of having an affair (Buss & Shackelford, 1997), and higher self-esteem was found among men who participated in extramarital affairs (Buunk, 1980). Marital dissatisfaction was identified as a predisposing factor associated with marital infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Marital infidelity was also associated with transition to parenthood (Pittman, 1989). Whisman and Gordon (2007) confirmed a number of findings from previous studies in a study of predictors of 12-month prevalence of sexual infidelity in a population-based sample of 2,291 individuals. Decreased marital satisfaction predicted infidelity (consistent with Atkins et al., 2001; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Neuroticism was positively and significantly associated with infidelity (similar to the findings of Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Religiosity acted as a buffer that reduced the association between infidelity and marital dissatisfaction. This suggested that religiosity was a reliable buffer between marital dissatisfaction and infidelity, leading to couples maintaining their marriages (consistent with findings by Atkins et al., 2001). Finally, the last

variable that predicted the probability of infidelity beyond the effects of marital dissatisfaction and demographic variables was the variable of wives' pregnancy status (Whisman & Gordon). The probability of infidelity and marital dissatisfaction was greater for husbands whose wives were pregnant in the past 12 months.

Marriages in the U.S. are affected by these factors discussed above. They include poor communication between spouses, lack of sacrifice, lack of emotional support, lack of forgiveness and marital infidelity which lead to lowered marital satisfaction. Reduced marital satisfaction may in time lead to dissolution of marriages. Unfortunately, a literature search revealed that there is paucity of research in the area of how marital expectations of couples affect marital satisfaction. However, it is probable that marital expectations affect marital satisfaction. Additionally, there could be a relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction.

Marriages in Africa

There are a number of socio-cultural factors that affect the marriage institution negatively in sub-Saharan Africa. Many cultures in sub-Saharan Africa still support the practice of one husband having multiple wives. Polygamy, in which one husband marries more than one wife at a time, is mainly prevalent in West and North Africa where the Muslim faith is widely practiced (Al-Krenawi, 1999). In most sub-Saharan African countries, polygyny, a form of polygamy is more widely practiced (Cook, 2007). In polygyny, the husband consults with his first wife and her kin to acquire a second or subsequent wife. Polygyny is practiced in countries where wives and their children provide the bulk of the agricultural labor for subsistence farming (Boserup, 1970; Timaeus & Reymar, 1998).

The practice of early marriage for young girls is still prevalent in North and West Africa. Frequently the girl's parents arrange the marriage with usually a much older man, but the girl is

not consulted during this arranged marriage (Ouattara, Sen, & Thomson, 1998). Due to both their age and the gender imbalance in favor of men, young girls are at a disadvantage in that their negotiating powers are considerably reduced. This leads young girls to experience such problems as low levels of education, low levels of power women generally have in Africa, and the inability to negotiate for the use of condoms within marriages, which leads to high levels of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) among women of child-bearing age (15 – 49) (Ouattara et al.). The young girls also suffer from physical and emotional complications as a result of being pregnant and having babies during early adolescence when they are neither physically or emotionally ready to undertake the rigors of motherhood (Ouattara et al.).

In sub-Saharan Africa marriage is always encouraged, especially in patrilineal cultures. This is because if a child is born out of wedlock, it becomes harder for the mother of that child to find a suitable marriage partner, and also because the biological father of the child cannot claim the child as his own. That child assumes the mother's last name, and the father cannot expect the same kind of relationship with the child as those children whose parents are married. On the other hand, cohabitation is increasing in only one sub-Saharan country – Botswana. Due to higher levels of education among Botswana women, they cannot find suitable men for marriage, thus leading to a marriage squeeze (Mokomane, 2006). In contrast to findings from U. S. studies (Brown & Booth, 1996), children born out of these unions seem to benefit similarly to those born in marriages, due to the acceptance of this lifestyle as a norm. There was also an imbalance between the sexes within communities due to the migrant patterns of men working away from home initially in the mines of South Africa. Recently the government's policy of decentralization for government workers encouraged the transfer of men to other districts within the country, thus increasing the gender imbalance (Mokomane).

Due to the unequal negotiating power between spouses as a result of the factors discussed previously (gender imbalance within marriages, the effects of *lobola*, young girls marrying older men, the acceptance of polygamy) and the social acceptance of marital infidelity by husbands within marriage, HIV infection continues to proliferate within marriages. Women are likely to get HIV infection from their husbands (Parikh, 2007). The HIV is spread through liaisons with both prostitutes and with those women who are not prostitutes, but instead are permanent partners with whom married men conduct their extramarital sexual relations, in exchange for maintaining their households (Smith, 2007). There are double standards of morals between husbands and wives. In South Africa, for example, men can have many sexual partners before marriage as proof of their virility. On the other hand, girls should preserve their virginity until marriage (Hunter, 2005). Due to failing economies and high levels of unemployment in most sub-Saharan countries, men seek work far away from home, in jobs such as mining or truck driving. These necessitate their being away from their wives for up to 10 weeks or more at a time, during which time the men may engage the services of commercial sex workers (Gysels, Pool, & Bwanika, 2001). Thus the risk of exposure to HIV infection increases.

The factors highlighted above pose a significant amount of stress on marital couples in sub-Saharan Africa. Recent immigrants to the U. S. may still be dealing with some of the socio-cultural effects related to marriage in their home countries when they arrive in the country, and these may continue to affect their marriage. Some of these factors, such as polygyny, or early marriages for young girls, may not be socially acceptable in the new communities in which the new immigrants live. This may increase the stress associated with living in a foreign country. In sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, research has not used marital satisfaction as a measure for marital continuity. Women have poor negotiating powers due to gender status imbalance, to

the expectations from their original families on their staying in marriages because of the relationships based on *Lobola* exchanged between the two extended families, and to societal norms of remaining in unsatisfying marriages. These conditions lead to marriages that are stable, but the wives may have reduced marital satisfaction. The values African immigrants bring to the United States are related to their culture, and they influence their decision-making, as well as their behavior.

According to Schwartz (2006), values have the following attributes:

1. Values are beliefs, and they are tied to emotions.
2. Values are related to the goals that people aspire for.
3. Values are abstract goals. They change depending on specific actions, objects, and situations.
4. Values serve as criteria for choosing certain behaviors, people or events.
5. Values are hierarchical in nature. Each individual prioritizes values according to their needs.

Consequently, values can change, as well as the way the individual prioritizes them.

Marital Expectations

Definition of marital expectations

According to the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations, marital expectations evolve from five different sources (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006). They are based on the development of individuals through the life cycle. The expectations are from the spouse, from the marriage, from the partner's family of origin, from the institution of marriage, and from the concept of an "ideal partner" (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006, p. 66). Marital expectations exist at the socio-cultural level, and they are tangible and can be expressed by marital partners.

During the early part of the marriage, libidinal satisfaction occurs before social and intellectual pursuits are followed. The expectations from each spouse are acceptance of each other, and marital equality. Expectations from the marriage include the fulfillment of social, physical, emotional and financial security needs. The achievement of social status as a married person is given a lot of importance in some societies which are collectivistic, such as in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the married woman might welcome the new status as a married woman, it is not all married women who desire to continue traditional role. Modern married women may want to combine the new role with career (Juvva & Bhatti).

Marriage in the United States facilitates the establishment of nuclear families. In areas like sub-Saharan Africa, however, married couples are expected to live with the parents of the husband (Mbiti, 1967). Marital expectations are thus related to what the in-laws want. Expectations from the institution of marriage include such issues as growing old together, loyalty, respect to each other; the reproduction and nurturing of children; the establishment and maintenance of the home, the shared roles in running the household, and the evolution of a woman within the marriage.

The concept of an ideal partner depends on the environment. In sub-Saharan Africa, the concept of the ideal partner is one who will fit into the family constellation, since the marriage involves more than the two individuals as it is a unity between two families. In the U. S. on the other hand, marriage is between two individuals, and it is understood that the concept of the ideal partner is based on the individual. Thus disruptions in the marriage will be based on changes in expectations between the individuals. The Epigenetic Model can be used as a guide to understand to understand the problems couples bring to counseling, and to help in planning interventions.

Assessing Marital Satisfaction

Family scholars have engaged in an ongoing debate about how to measure and define marital satisfaction. The debate emanates from two sources: how to define the marital satisfaction construct and whether to utilize a specific or global measure. Marital satisfaction and marital quality seemed to have overarching constructs.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1989).

This was the first such measure that researchers used. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) is a 32-item rating instrument to measure the rate of adjustment between partners in a dyadic relationship or marriage. Respondents indicate the level of agreement or disagreement with their partner or spouse to some items, and rate the frequency with which they participate in various activities with their partners on other items. The DAS has an outcome of total adjustment score and four subscales. The four subscales are Dyadic Consensus, Dyadic Satisfaction, Dyadic Cohesion, and Affectional Expression (Stuart, 1989). The DAS was normed on 109 lower-middle class couples residing in rural Pennsylvania. This sample was not comparable to the U. S. population demographic profile. Researchers who use the DAS assume that couples whose scores are 100 or more are well adjusted.

Alpha reliabilities of .90 have been found with the DAS. The DAS has a high test-retest reliability of .96 after 11 weeks. The four subscales are not independent (Sabatelli, 1988; Sharpely & Cross, 1982). For example, the Affectional Expression subscale consists of only four items which refer to physical affection, and one “not showing love” refers to it obliquely. Consequently, Fowers (1990) emphasized that the DAS was a lengthy measure of relationship satisfaction.

Relationship Assessment Scale (Hendrick, 1988).

Vaughn and Baier (1999) examined the criterion validity of Hendrick's Relationship Assessment Scale with Spanier's Dyadic Scale (1989) using a clinical population of 55 men and 63 women. Findings from a zero order and partial correlations and a multiple regression suggested a high degree of convergence between the two instruments. Vaughn and Baier found the highest correlations between the RAS total score and the DAS total score, and the RAS total score and the DAS Satisfaction subscale score. These findings suggested that the RAS could be used as an assessment of one's attitudes towards the relationship. Single items in the RAs can also be used to obtain information in relationship areas such as problems and expectations (Vaugh & Baier). The RAS can also be used to assess other close relationships.

The Relationship Pleasure Scale. (PAIRS Foundation, 1993).

The PAIRS Foundation has used the Relationship Pleasure Scale as a pre-post assessment for relationship and marriage education courses. Participants are asked to rate their relationships in the following areas: Sensuality, Sexuality, Intellectuality, Emotionality, Friendship and Trust, and What Has Been Built Together. Responses are given to a zero to four Likert scale items for the first four questions, and responses are given on a zero to five Likert Scale for the last item. Extensive literature review identified the importance of each of the following areas in relationship quality and satisfaction: Sensuality (Guerrero & Anderson, 1991); Sexuality (Joanning & Keoughan, 2005); Intellectuality (Meeks, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998); Emotionality (Croyle & Waltz, 2002); Friendship and Trust (Johnson, Amoloza, & Booth, 1992); What Has Been Built Together (Hatch & Bulcroft, 2004). A single factor solution was confirmed, and it accounted for 62.71% of the explained variance. The results confirmed strong support for the existence of a single structure factor for the Relationship Pleasure Scale.

Cronbach's alpha for the RPS revealed an overall coefficient of .88. Bivariate correlations established concurrent validity with the DAS. Correlations with the DAS total and subscale scores were all significant at the $< .01$ level, with the Dyadic total score of .80. All these findings suggested that the Relationship Pleasure Scale was reliable and valid measure for relationship satisfaction and pleasure.

Challenges Related to Conducting Research in Africa

Challenges Related to Conducting this Research in Africa

Conducting research in Africa poses a number of challenges. They include the ability to travel to Africa due to visa problems and the high cost of flights to Africa. Although Africa has a large pool of educated people, a lot of them immigrate to the more developed countries, contributing to the brain drain. The brain drain is the export of intellectual and professional people from developing countries such, such as sub-Saharan Africa countries, to more developed countries, such as the United States. Capacity to carry out research is lacking in most African countries. To address this need, collaboration between northern and southern nations takes place. Reddy, Taylor, and Sifunda (2002) examined the challenges and the opportunities for knowledge and skills that exchange through capacity building and partnership strategies between South African and American partners. The focus of research on HIV/AIDS was to conduct a survey of prison health services in South Africa, to develop and replicate interventions for inmates in the correctional system, and to conduct capacity building workshops for the South African Department of Corrections staff.

Some of the challenges Reddy, Taylor, and Sifunda (2002) faced included the following:

1. Most of the concepts used in the study were based on the western biomedical model, and this added to the problems associated with translation of some concepts. The researchers

conducted the process of translation and back translation from English to Zulu (the language predominantly spoken in the areas in which the research was carried out) to overcome the challenge related the translation of some concepts.

2. Another problem surfaced as a result of the assumption that Zulu was the main language spoken in that area, because there were some inmates who did not speak Zulu. This problem was overcome because Zulu belongs to the Nguni group of languages which are closely related, and the interpreters were able to communicate with the inmates.
3. The principle of collaboration was good, but it was threatened by the geographic challenge of one team member being in the U. S. and the other two team members being in South Africa. The team did not have the benefit of proximity to take advantages of opportunities to advance the research agenda, but instead had to use technology such as email which sometimes was not reliable.
4. Decision-making among the collaborators had to be shared equally in order for all players to feel a sense of ownership in the study. Decisions had to be made about sharing tasks equally, such as writing and dissemination of information from both the South African and American partners.

Additionally, some other authors have identified the following challenges related to conducting research in Africa:

5. Funding of research also determines the amount of power each partner has, and this could adversely affect the relationship if not handled appropriately. Edejer (1999) indicated that although sub-Saharan Africa bears 90% of the global burden of HIV/AIDS, the region only gets 10% of the global funding for research. This statistic is similar for all other kinds of research. Edejer asserts that this inequitable funding hampers research initiatives

in developing countries like the sub-Saharan African countries, resulting in reduced research initiatives and capacity building.

6. Costello and Zumla (2000) argued that research remains semi-colonial in developing countries, in that the partners from developed countries set the agenda of the research regardless of what the local people need. Because of this attitude, they suggest that the partners from developed countries do not pay much attention to ownership, sustainability and the development of research capacity among the locals. Costello and Zumla gave examples of how collaboration research models in developing countries benefited the northern countries because the researchers from those countries either obtained the data through postal means or visited the developing countries only long enough to collect the data and return to their home countries. The developing countries did not benefit from the data collection in any way. To counter these problems, Costello and Zumla proposed the use of partnership models in which there were equal forms of research with equal division of labor in all areas of the research process, such as decision-making, the use of research skills, writing of manuscripts and presentations at conferences.
7. Hardon et al. (2007) documented the problems related to transport in Africa, which may affect research or any other projects in which the clients have to be reached. Due to the vast geographical areas that must be covered, especially in rural communities, reliable, accessible, and affordable transportation must be available. Researchers face the challenges of transport costs that are unaffordable for potential participants, as well as the lack of transport in certain remote parts of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Consequently researchers are sometimes pressured to conduct research in sites that are more accessible for the populations they need to study.

8. The multiplicity of cultures in sub-Saharan Africa poses further challenges for researchers. Tomlinson, Swartz, and Landman (2006) found that the dynamics within the research area were influenced by perceived differences, such as cultural differences, or by phenomena such as insiders or outsiders. Consequently the dynamics affect the relationships of the research team and the population under study. With reference to the phenomenon of insiders versus outsiders, conducting the study in the United States reduces some of the differences that would be perceived by the African immigrants in the United States between the researcher and the participants. The dynamics would have been different if the researcher had visited other parts of sub-Saharan Africa to conduct the study. The travel arrangements would have been cumbersome due to the various visas needed to traverse sub-Saharan Africa.

Conducting the study in the U. S. reduced most of the challenges discussed above, as well as providing a lingua franca, English, which is spoken by many African immigrants.

Due to the challenges outlined above which are associated with conducting research in Africa, the researcher decided to conduct the study in the United States, with Africans who have immigrated to the United States and U. S. born married couples.

African Immigrants

African immigrants are composed of Blacks primarily from sub-Saharan countries (including South Africa which has a large population of White Africans) and Whites predominantly from North African countries such as Egypt. African immigrant population figures have increased for the Blacks versus Whites between the 1980 census and the 1990 census. In 1980 60% were classified as White, while 29% were classified as Black. However, in 1990 the figure for those classified as White fell 16 percentage points to 44%, while the figure

for those classified as Black rose 18 percentage points to 47% (Djamba, 1999). When classified according to immigration status in the U. S., immigrants are classified as temporary migrants, permanent residents, naturalized citizens, exiles, and refugees (Okome, 2002). Okome defined these immigration statuses thus:

- a) Immigrants are those who move from their home countries to settle in the U. S.
- b) Migrants are those who moved from their home countries to find temporary employment in the U. S., and intend to go back after specific time periods.
- c) Exiles are those who are forced to leave their home countries due to political reasons or due to decrees by their governments.
- d) Refugees are those who are covered by the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees parameters which state that a refugee “as a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a certain social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” (UNHCR, 1967).
- e) Professional, Technical, and Kindred Immigrants (PTK) are those immigrants who are highly trained, and they migrate to the U. S. because of the inability of their home countries to support their skills due to deteriorating economies. This situation has also been referred to as the brain drain (Okome, 2002).

It is necessary to outline these differences in the status of African immigrants in order to facilitate the reader’s understanding of the reasons that lead to immigration of Africans in such numbers to the U. S., especially with the introduction of the 1965 family reunification and refugee law, which made it easier for families to be united (Djamba, 1999).

Seventh – day Adventists

The Seventh-day Adventist Church originated from the Millerite Movement during the middle of the nineteenth century in North America. It has evolved into a worldwide church under the leadership of the General Conference of Seventh – day Adventists, with its headquarters in Silver Springs, Maryland. The church has an extensive educational network of schools (elementary and secondary) and universities globally. The church also runs an extensive hospital network of hospitals both in the United States and abroad. Their hospitals are prominent in medical research and treatment (General Conference of Seventh – day Adventists, 2008; Rayburn, 2000).

Beliefs

Seventh – day Adventists are conservative Christians who celebrate their Sabbath on the seventh day of the week (Saturday). They believe in the imminent second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The General Conference of the Seventh – day Adventist Church (2008) outlined some of their beliefs:

1. The Holy Scriptures: SDAs believe that the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given to holy men of God by divine inspiration. The recipients of the Holy Scriptures wrote and spoke after being moved by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures reveal God’s will, and are used to guide humanity. They are a true record of the acts of God in history.
2. The gift of the Spirit of Prophecy: Seventh – day Adventists (SDAs) believe in the gift of prophecy in modern times, especially associated with end times before the coming of Christ. Ellen G. White is considered as a prophet who had this gift during the formation of the church during the 1800’s.

3. The state of the dead: SDAs believe that the dead know nothing and are in a state of deep sleep. During the second coming of Christ, the righteous dead will awake and be taken up with the living to immortality, while the unrighteous dead will return to life for a short period during the final battle between good and evil. The unrighteous dead will die a second final death after the defeat of evil.
4. Baptism by immersion: SDAs believe that baptism is symbolized by immersion in a watery grave with Christ, and rising victorious with the Lord, in a pool of water or baptistry.
5. Tithing: SDAs believe that one tenth of their income belongs to God, and returning tithe is an act of worship. Therefore they deduct and give one-tenth of their earnings to the church.
6. Healthy living and modest dress: SDAs believe that the human body is the temple of God. Therefore it should be kept pure, healthy and holy. Consequently they practice abstinence from foods, drinks, activities and associations that interfere with their beliefs. Examples are refraining from eating unclean meats as described in the Old Testament book of Leviticus, abstaining from alcohol and habit – forming drugs, as well as participating in health – promoting activities such as exercise.
7. Divorce and remarriage: SDAs believe that divorce is not part of God’s plan for the human race. However, due the dynamics of changing society, the church has recognized the need to have some guidance for church members in regard to divorce and remarriage. The only acceptable exception for marriage dissolution is adultery. The church protects the “innocent” victim in the divorce, in that the “guilty” party cannot marry while the “innocent” party is still alive, unmarried, or not involved romantically

with another person. If the person who is considered to have caused the divorce marries someone else while the previous spouse is single, he or she might be disfellowshipped by the church. This means that by all intents and purposes this person ceases to participate as a full member of the church.

Theoretical Foundations

The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations

The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations theory is based on the biological principle that the human individual is developed by the predetermined elaboration of an unstructured egg. This understanding has been extrapolated to social systems and applied to the emergence of social systems in society. The theory applied to the development of basic social systems such as marriage, starting at its inception and going through its different stages of the life cycle (Juvva & Bhatti, 2006). The model explores the various types of expectations, based on the individuals in the marriage, the family of origin, the institution of marriage, and the image of the ideal partner.

Interdependence Theory

Interdependence theory focuses on the interaction between the two marital partners in providing outcomes in the form of rewards and costs in the relationship. Examples of rewards are pleasure and gratification, while examples of costs are embarrassment, and distress (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). In common with other social exchange theories, the basic premise they share is that people initiate and maintain relationships partially because of the anticipated benefits that will accrue from the interactions in the relationship (Blau, 1967).

Interdependence theory explores the structure of interdependence between two partners in a relationship: the degree of dependence of each partner, the mutuality of dependence of both

partners, the correspondence of outcomes (whether the outcomes for each individual correspond and whether the outcomes will cause conflict) and the basis of dependence (Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). The theory also explains how more global considerations such as long-term goals and concern for each other's interests guide the interaction between the two partners (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2002). An individual evaluates the outcomes of the interactions that occur in a relationship, and decides whether or not he or she is satisfied (Rusbult & Buunk). This implies that the individual has set standards based on which he or she defines the level of satisfaction with the relationship. The interdependence theory serves as a bridge to link the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations and the marital satisfaction construct in this research.

The Migration Systems Theory

The Migration Systems Theory (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino, & Taylor, 1993) explains the intense exchange of goods, capital, and people between certain countries, and it explains the less intense exchange of the same among other countries. An international migration system consists of a set of sending countries (which in this case are the sub-Saharan African countries sending immigrants) and the core receiving country which is the U. S. This theory also informs that there are push and pull factors: the push factors induce professionals to leave poverty-stricken countries to settle in richer countries such as the U. S. At the same time, the wealthier countries pull professionals from developing countries to live and work there. In a study to describe the numbers, characteristics and trends in the migration of physicians to the U. S., Hagopian, Thompson, Fordyce, Johnson, and Hart (2004) found that that the majority (64%) of physicians attended medical school in low-income or developing countries, while a total number of 5334 physicians are from sub-Saharan Africa. This situation contributed to a brain drain of professionals from the poor to the rich countries, thus contributing to the depletion of

health services in the sending countries. Another source of sub-Saharan immigrants is the refugees from war-torn countries such as the Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Somalia.

Since the United States passed a law on family reunification which makes it easy for families to join the spouse who is offered a work visa or is granted asylum, the rest of the family can join the husband within a reasonable amount of time. Thus initially, it might be the husband who arrives first, and then he sends for the wife and the rest of the family. Immigration to the United States has become a common event for most sub-Saharan African families in the majority of countries. A number of studies described the following events: the brain drain of physicians from sub-Saharan Africa (Hagopian, Thompson, Fordyce, Johnson, & Hart, 2004), the immigration of refugees and those seeking asylum in the United States (Djamba, 1999). Consequently the theory of immigration described is applicable to the African immigrants in the United States. It explains how families move from Africa to the United States in search of better lives for the immigrants.

The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations explained how marital expectations develop. Marital expectations also influence a couple's decision to move from one part of the world to another, and the migration systems theory provided the theoretical understanding to the decision-making process. The interdependence theory assisted with the understanding of what keeps a couple together, and this includes their values and decision-making processes.

Research Design

Mixed methods research is emerging as a method that utilizes mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in data collection and data analysis. Quantitative designs seek to explain phenomena using numbers to explain relationships among subjects under study. Qualitative

designs, on the other hand, seek to explain phenomena through the use of words, capturing the essence of what was said by the participants. Qualitative researchers identify their positionalities in studies, and thus may be seen to adopt a subjective stance. On the other hand, quantitative researchers only report what they find from the analysis of numbers, so they may be seen as entirely objective. Using mixed methods research is a way of understanding the phenomenon under study from two very different viewpoints with the objective of improved understanding (Creswell & Clark, 2006).

Mixed methods designs may be used to (a) facilitate increased understanding of a research problem through joining both numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data; (b) identify variables or constructs to be measured subsequently using existing instruments or future ones; (c) acquire statistical data and results in a study of a sample population, and use it to choose participants who will provide rich and thick qualitative data and results; (d) make the voices of underrepresented minorities heard through this process (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska, & Creswell, 2005).

Although mixed methods research design involves similar steps as traditional research (purpose of study, research question, and type of data to be collected), it also involves at least three more steps (Creswell, 2002). These steps consist of deciding whether to use a philosophical paradigm, identifying data collection procedures, and identifying the data analysis and integration procedures.

1. The assumptions a researcher brings into a study influence the methodology and methods used, and how the findings of the study will be used.

2. The second step consists of deciding how data collection will be carried out and prioritized. Quantitative and qualitative data may be collected at the same time, or sequentially.
3. The third step constitutes making decisions about when data analysis and integration will occur. This could take place in one of three ways: (a) conducting the analysis of data separately, then integrating the results; (b) transforming the data from qualitative to quantitative and analyzing it; or (c) embedding one data set into another so that together the two data sets provide a more complete description of the problem than either data set alone (Creswell & Clark, 2006).

Summary

In the literature review, the theoretical background was provided for the study. This included the Epigenetic Model for Marital Expectations; the Migrations Systems Theory which explained the movement of families from sub-Saharan African countries to the United States and the Interdependence Theory which explained why married couples maintain their marriages. The major research associated with significant factors that affect marital satisfaction and marital expectations were highlighted. The researcher outlined the beliefs of Seventh – day Adventists, including their beliefs concerning marriage and divorce. The rationales and basic steps for using mixed methods designs were outlined.

Chapter 3 will address the methodology of the study. The methodology will describe the population, the sampling procedure, the procedures undertaken to prepare to conduct the study, measurement instruments, and the data collection procedures.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study investigated the relationships among marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States-born married couples. The research gap that existed about marital challenges sub-Saharan African immigrants face served as a primary motivator for this study. The literature review revealed the following as some of the major factors that lead to reduced marital satisfaction: poor communication behavior between spouses (Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997), lack of emotional support in marital relationships (Cramer, 2006), lack of forgiveness (Fincham, Beach, & Davila, 2004), and marital infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001). Although the divorce rate appears low in Africa, a paucity of research existed on marital satisfaction. Additionally, few studies explored the relationship between marital stability and premarital education in the U. S. (Stanley, Amato, Johnson, & Markman, 2006) and childhood socio-emotional characteristics as antecedents of marital stability in Finland (Kinnunen & Pullkkinen, 2001). However these studies failed to clarify factors that contributed to the stability of the union. The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction married African immigrants and U. S. born married couples.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study aimed to investigate three research questions.

Research Question I

The first research question asked: What relationships exist between marital expectations and marital satisfaction? Previous research on expectations in relationships investigated

convenience samples of dating couples in colleges (Barich & Bielby, 1996; Cramer, 2004). Since previous research on marital expectations investigated mainly dating couples and not married couples, null hypotheses were explored to answer this question focused on married couples.

Hypothesis 1A

No relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale for United States born married participants.

Hypothesis 1B

No relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and Relationship Pleasure Scale for African immigrant married participants.

Research Question II

What differences exist among marital expectations and marital satisfaction between United States born and African immigrant married participants? Previous research on marital expectations and marital satisfaction utilized convenience samples from dating couples in colleges (Cramer, 2006). Paucity of research existed on married couples. Additionally, paucity of research also existed on marital satisfaction in sub-Saharan African countries.

Hypothesis 2A

No differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale.

Hypothesis 2B

No differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Pleasure Scale.

Research question III

The third research question asked: What are the qualitative similarities and differences between the marital expectations possessed by African immigrant married participants and U. S. born married couples? The goal of the qualitative aspect was to further understand the expectations possessed by both groups along with an explanation of the qualitative similarities and differences in marital expectations between the two participant groups. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire contained four open-ended questions that enquired about marital expectations.

Research Design

This study utilized a cross-sectional mixed methods design. Mixed methods research has philosophical assumptions and focus. Philosophical assumptions guide collection and data analysis, mixing qualitative and quantitative data in many phases during the research process. As a mixed method design, it centers on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or a series of studies. The main argument is that the conjoint use of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches provides a better understanding of the phenomenon under study (Cresswell & Clark, 2006). Since previous research was found to be scarce in this area, the researcher was motivated to use a mixed methods design to investigate

the relationship between marital satisfaction and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States born married couples.

The researcher gave equal priority to quantitative and qualitative data, and collected the data at the same time. Integration of data can occur in one of three ways:

- a) Conduct data analysis separately, and integrate the results;
- b) Transform data from qualitative to quantitative data, then analyze; or
- c) Embed data sets into each other. Two mixed methods used together lead to a richer understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Clark, 2002).

Due the availability of approaches listed above, the researcher chose the first option in which data analysis was conducted separately, and integration occurred during the discussion of the results in chapter five.

The method was cross-sectional because measurement occurred at one point in time. The cross-sectional aspect of this mixed methods design allowed for greater explanation of any relationships found between marital expectations and marital satisfaction in married African immigrant and married U. S. born participants. Use of quantitative and qualitative methods to address the research questions, characterized the mixed design (Creswell & Clark, 2006). This study utilized purposive sampling to locate African immigrants (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Additionally, faith-based organizations facilitated contact with such groups through their designated leaders. To collect the data, the following survey and evaluation instruments were used: The Relationship Pleasure Scale (Appendix G), The Relationship Assessment Scale (Appendix F), and the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (Appendix E). Open-ended questions in the Marital Expectations Questionnaire facilitated qualitative data collection. The researcher

used SPSS 17 to examine the quantitative hypotheses to answer the first and second questions. Atlas Ti was used to examine the third research question, which was qualitative.

Measurement Instruments

This study examined the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between two groups of married persons, African immigrants and non-immigrants. The following section will present and discuss the three instruments used in this study: Marital Expectations Questionnaire, Relationship Assessment Scale, and Relationship Pleasure Scale.

The Marital Expectations Questionnaire

The Marital Expectations Questionnaire, a researcher designed tool, consisted of four sections. The first section asked four open-ended questions related to marital expectations. The questions were (1) What expectations do you have of a marriage partner? (2) Describe your perceptions of the marital expectations your parents had for each other. (3) Briefly describe the similarities and differences between your relationship/marriage and that of your parents. (4) How does meeting the expectations of your spouse promote happiness in your marriage? This provided data for the qualitative inquiry.

The second section presented 10 questions related to marital expectations each with a five-item Likert scale response set. The 10 areas for the questions were: Love and affection, sex and intimacy, companionship, joint decision-making, equitable distribution of household work, marriage as a source of financial, and of emotional security, care and socialization of children, similar beliefs about morals/religion, and establishment and maintenance of a home. The Likert Scale ranged from 1 to 5, representing Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). The participants were instructed to place an X in the box that most

closely matched how the participant felt about the statement. The corresponding numbers were summed that resulted in possible range from 10 to 50, with lower scores reflecting lower levels of agreement with expectation statements. This sum of the response values for the 10 questions reflected the marital expectations variable. The alpha reliability for the MEQ with this population was .76. Values of Cronbach's alpha above .7 suggest that the internal consistency reliability of the scale is acceptable. However, values above .8 are desirable (Pallant, 2007).

The third section of the Marital Expectations Questionnaire asked participants to rank the ten marital expectations (Love and affection, sex and intimacy, companionship, joint decision-making, equitable distribution of household work, marriage as a source of financial security, marriage as a source of emotional security, care and socialization of children, similar beliefs about morals/religion, and establishment and maintenance of a home) from one to 10, according to the level of importance. The fourth section of the Marital Expectations Questionnaire collected information on the demographics of the participants, such as the gender, level of education, the number of years married, and how many times the participant has been married. Since the population under study was obtained from faith-based samples, questions existed on the religious affiliation of participants.

The Relationship Assessment Scale

The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS, Hendrick, 1988) was a seven-item global assessment of relationship quality. The scale had a five-point Likert Scale from A (denoted by poor quality, infrequency of occurrence, lack of satisfaction, or very few in number), B, C (denoted by average), D or E (denoted by extremely good quality, very frequent occurrence, extremely satisfied, or plentiful). The questions concerned global measures such as the comparison of the relationship compared to most, the general level of satisfaction with the

relationship, and to what extent the relationship met the original expectations. The RAS exhibited a high correlation (.87) with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Vaughn & Baier, 1999). The RAS proved effective as a discriminator to predict couples at risk for relationship dissolution (Hendrick, 1988). Vaughn and Baier (1999) examined the criterion-related validity of the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) by comparing the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) to a clinical population of 63 females and 55 males. Internal consistency of the RAS was .86, and represented by a one factor model (Hendrick, 1988). Earlier research on dating couples established high correlations (.83 to .51) between the RAS and the DAS, and they were all significant ($p < .05$, Hendrick, 1988). The high correlation for the RAS and the DAS suggested that both instruments measured a similar characteristic of the relationship quality (Vaughn & Baier). The alpha reliability for the RAS with this population was .92. This suggested strong internal consistency of the scale, based on criterion established by Pallant (2007).

The Relationship Pleasure Scale

The Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS, PAIRS Foundation, 1993) was a six-item self-report measure of general satisfaction and pleasure in relationships. The PAIRS Foundation used the RPS as a pre- and post-test in marriage and relationship education. Each question asks the participant to rate their relationship satisfaction in the following areas: Sensuality, Sexuality, Intellectuality, Emotionality, Friendship and Trust, and What Has Been Built Together (PAIRS Foundation). A Likert Scale has five options (zero to four) for the first five questions, and six options (zero to five) for the last item. The researcher multiplies by four the total sum of the resulting scores. The range of the result is from zero to 100 – the higher the score, the higher is the level of relationship pleasure and satisfaction.

Between 2006 and 2009, the University of Central Florida (UCF) Marriage and Family Research Institute conducted an extensive process to evaluate the PAIRS Marriage Relationship education classes, including a validation of the RPS. Results of the RPS validation were disseminated in an unpublished research brief (Daire & Strampach, 2008). An extensive literature review supported the relevance of the RPS Questionnaire: Sensuality (Guerrero & Anderson, 1991; Joanning & Keoughan, 2005); sexuality (Sprecher, Mettes, Burleson, Hatfield, & Thompson, 1995); intellectuality (Ketchler, 2006; Meeks, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1998); emotionality (Croyle & Waltz, 2002); Friendship and trust (Erickson, 2001); What Has Been Built Together (Hatch & Bulcroft, 2004). Next Daire and Strampach conducted a principal component factor analysis on a sample of 1,387 participants which confirmed a one factor solution using a varimax rotation. The solution accounted for 62.71% of the explained variance. The results strongly supported the one factor structure of the RPS. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .88 evaluated the internal structure of the RPS. Additionally, a concurrent validity was established between the RPS and the DAS for the Dyadic total score (Daire & Strumpack). Subsequently, this research suggested the Relationship Pleasure Scale was a valid and reliable measure of relationship satisfaction and pleasure (Daire & Strumpack, 2008). RPS alpha reliability was .86 with this population. This value suggests a strong internal consistency of a scale (Pallant, 2007).

Population

The inclusion criteria for this study's participants were as follows: African immigrant and U. S. born individuals, above 18 years old. Recruited from six cities in the Midwest, West, and Pacific Northwestern United States, the selection criteria were based on the demographic representation of African immigrant families. U. S. born married couples could be easily found

in any part of the country. Faith-based organizations represented organizing bodies for African immigrants and facilitated the data collection process. In order not to undermine the generalizability of this study, the study also utilized these faith-based organizations to identify U. S. born participants.

Procedures

Before data collection for the study began, the researcher obtained Institutional Review Board approval through the University of Central Florida, Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research Committee (Appendix H). Data collection for this study began during the fall 2008 semester and continued into the spring 2009 semester. To locate the African immigrant participants, the researcher identified faith-based leaders with large African immigrant congregations in Indiana and Michigan. The researcher also identified faith-based leaders in six churches in Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho with predominantly U. S. born congregations. The researcher then sent a letter to each faith-based leader to inquire about their interest to help identify potential participants in their respective congregations. The researcher communicated with interested faith-based leaders who showed interest, and discussed the dates and venues for data collection. The researcher sent a letter to those faith-based leaders who expressed interest in helping to identify potential participants. The letters (Appendix B) outlined the purpose of the research, confidentiality and anonymity issues, and the date and time of collection of the data, which took place in the respective church halls. The primary researcher traveled to the various sites, and distributed research packets. Each packet contained Informed Consents and survey instruments (Marital Expectations Questionnaire, Relationship Assessment Scale and Relationship Pleasure Scale).

Each plain envelope contained a coded envelope within each containing two sets of research instruments – one for each spouse. The researcher gave each couple a plain envelope, from which they extracted the coded envelope and removed the two sets of instruments. Each spouse took one set, and one spouse also kept the coded envelope. Husbands picked up the set of instruments marked with a .1, while wives picked up the set marked with a .2. The researcher asked each spouse to go to a pre-determined section of the room (either male or female section). Couples were separated according to gender in order to minimize the chances of collaboration between spouses. The researcher used coded envelopes to facilitate anonymity.

The researcher instructed participants to fill in surveys in the following order: The Marital Expectations Questionnaire (Appendix E), the Relationship Assessment Scale (Appendix F), and finally, the Pleasure Scale (Appendix G). When spouses completed filling in the set of instruments, each spouse placed their set in the coded envelope. The couple returned the instruments to the researcher in the coded envelopes.

Participants

The primary researcher identified nine sites in six states where participants resided. The states were Indiana (one site) and Michigan (one site) in the Midwest, Utah in the West with one site, Oregon (two sites), Washington (two sites), and Idaho (two sites) in the Pacific Northwest. The researcher chose the states of Indiana and Michigan because there were large numbers of African immigrants. The participants were identified through faith-based leaders. The non-immigrant participants in the West and Pacific Northwest were identified through faith-based leaders. The site in Utah was a large metropolitan area, located in a middle class neighborhood. Both Oregon sites were small towns. One was in a middle class neighborhood, and the other in a lower middle class neighborhood. Washington sites were in rural areas in the Yakima Valley,

close to a large Native American reservation. Idaho sites were in university towns: one a metropolitan area, and the other a medium size town.

The sample in this study originally consisted of 209 individuals: there were 87 couples, and 35 individuals who participated without their spouses. The researcher removed data for nine immigrants from other parts of the world, leaving 200 participants. Table 1 presented the sample's demographics, as well as key information for African immigrants and U. S. born married couples. Equal gender distribution existed for all participants with 50% for males and females. However, for African immigrants, gender distribution was 55.8% and 44.2%. The immigrant status distribution for African immigrants was 20.6% for African immigrants while that for non-immigrants was 75.1%. Other immigrants from other parts of the world constituted 4.3% of the sample.

Table 1: Frequency Table for Demographics for African Immigrants and U. S. Born Participants

	Frequency	%
<i>Ethnicity</i>		
<i>White</i>	135	67.5
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	4	2.0
<i>Black/Non Hispanic</i>	47	23.5
<i>Native American</i>	14	7
<i>Region</i>		
<i>Midwest</i>	38	19
<i>West/Pacific Northwest</i>	162	81
<i>Immigrant Status</i>		
<i>African Immigrant</i>	43	21.5
<i>U. S. Born</i>	162	81
<i>Religious Affiliation</i>		
<i>Baptist</i>	3	1.5
<i>Catholic</i>	4	2.0
<i>Evangelical Christian</i>	1	0.5
<i>Mormon</i>	12	6.0
<i>Protestant</i>	7	3.5
<i>Seventh- Day Adventist</i>	164	82.0
<i>Other</i>	9	4.5

The geographic distribution of the sample (for all participants) was 19% from the Midwest and 81% for the West. The West was made up of the West and the Pacific Northwest. The geographic distribution of the sample by immigration status for the U. S. born participants was 2.5% from the Midwest and 97.5% from the Pacific Northwest and West. The geographic distribution for the African immigrant participants was 79.1% from the Midwest and 20.9% from the Pacific Northwest and the West. The disparity in numbers between United States born and African immigrants was due to the number of African immigrant married participants available to participate in the study. The researcher identified the participants through faith-based leaders. The numbers might reflect those African immigrant participants associated with faith-based organizations. The geographical distribution of African immigrant married participants was associated with the geographical location of private higher education institutions attended by international students affiliated with a specific religious institution.

Ethnic demographic distribution for all participants was 67% White/Non-Hispanic, 4% Hispanic/Latino, 23.5% Black/non-Hispanic, and 7% Native American. Frequency distribution by ethnicity is presented in Table 1. The demographic item for the level to which spouses shared cultural beliefs, 90.9 of the sample indicated that this was rated well or very well. This figure was 91% for the U. S. born while it was 95.3% for the African immigrants. It appears that African immigrant married couples had the higher mean of completed years of education (Table 2).

Table 2: Demographic Data

	<i>All Participants</i>		<i>U. S. Born Married Participants</i>		<i>African Immigrant Married Participants</i>	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
<i>Duration of Marriage</i>	19.311	14.461	20.59	15.19	14.46	10.10
<i>Completed Years of Education</i>	15.22	2.95	14.92	2.83	16.33	3.16
<i>Age</i>	46.1	14.55	47.48	15.31	40.65	9.75

Variables

Independent Variable

The review of literature guided the selection of variables for this study. There was one independent variable in this study. For the independent variable marital expectations, the researcher utilized the Marital Expectations Questionnaire. The independent variable is located in section II of the MEQ, in which the researcher calculated the sum of the total score of the 10 Likert scale items. The Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations provided the foundation for this independent variable, marital expectations.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable was marital satisfaction. The Relationship Assessment Scale, which measures the global relationship of a couple, measured the dependent variable of marital satisfaction. The researcher used the total score from the seven items of the RAS, which indicated the level of marital satisfaction. The Relationship Pleasure Scale measures relationship satisfaction and pleasure. The researcher used the total score from the six items of the RPS, which indicated the level of marital satisfaction. Having the two measures measure diverse aspects of the relationship gives a clearer understanding of marital satisfaction.

The researcher used data from responses to the first question in section I of the Marital Expectations Questionnaire to answer the third research question of the study. Responses to the other three questions in section I of the MEQ did not answer research question III. Consequently, they were set aside for data analysis later. Initially, the researcher conducted semantic analysis of frequently recurring words used by respondents to identify their expectations. This resulted in the researcher identifying the emerging codes. The researcher color-coded responses to question I in

the MEQ and entered this data into Atlas Ti. The researcher utilized the identified codes to analyze the data.

Data Analysis

The researcher developed three research questions for this study. The researcher answered these questions through the investigation of two hypotheses each for the first two questions, utilizing quantitative methods. The researcher answered the third question through using open-ended questions to gather qualitative data.

Research Question I

The first research question asked: What relationships exist between marital expectations and marital satisfaction? Previous research on expectations in relationships investigated convenience samples of dating couples in colleges (Barich & Bielby, 1996; Cramer, 2004). Since previous research on marital expectations investigated mainly dating couples and not married couples, null hypotheses were explored to answer this question focused on married couples.

The first hypothesis purported that no relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale for United States born married participants. To investigate this relationship, a regression analysis was run.

The second hypothesis stated that no relationship exists between marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale for African immigrant married participants. A regression analysis was conducted to investigate this relationship.

Research Question II

The second research question asked what differences exist among marital expectations and marital satisfaction between United States born and African immigrant married participants. Two hypotheses were investigated. The first one stated that no differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale.

A MANOVA was conducted to investigate this difference.

The second hypothesis purported that no differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Pleasure Scale. This hypothesis was investigated using a MANOVA.

Research Question III

The research question asked: What are the qualitative similarities and differences between the marital expectations possessed by African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples? The goal of the qualitative aspect of the research was to further understand the expectations possessed by both groups along with an explanation of the qualitative similarities and differences in marital expectations the two participant groups. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire was used to collect qualitative data. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire contained four open-ended questions to enquire about marital expectations.

The qualitative data analysis included the following seven phases: organizing data, immersion in data, generating categories and themes, coding data, offering interpretations

through analytic memos, searching for alternative understandings, and writing the report or other method for presenting the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Organizing the data consisted of consisted of three steps. The first step was to transcribe the data. The second step was to assemble the data and color code it according to geographical regions where participants lived. The third step was to remove data for participants who were involved in the study without their spouses.

The second phase was immersion into data. Three steps constituted this phase. First, the researcher searched data for frequently recurring words participants used to identify marital expectations from their spouses. The researcher counted the frequencies of each word. Third, the researcher conducted semantic analyses to classify the words. Three researchers met in order to conduct triangulation in understanding classification of words.

The third phase consisted of generating categories and themes. Examination of semantic relationships resulted in creation of taxonomies. At that time the researcher observed and recorded themes as they emerged. Triangulation also occurred among the three researchers, linking the research question with the data.

The fourth phase, the fifth phase, the sixth phase and the seventh phase will be described in chapters IV and V.

Summary

There were three research questions which the researcher used to address the investigation of the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States born married couples. The research design was mixed methods: the first two research questions addressed the quantitative part, while the third question addressed the qualitative part of the design. The researcher identified potential participants for

the study through faith-based leaders in six states – Indiana, Michigan, Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The population sample constituted 87 married couples and 35 individuals who participated without their spouses. The sample was made up of African immigrants, non-immigrants, and immigrants from other countries. Eighty – one percent of the sample lived in Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, while 19% lived in Indiana and Michigan. The independent variable was marital expectations, measured with the Marital Expectations Questionnaire. The dependent variable was marital satisfaction, measured with the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale. The researcher reported the results of the data analysis in chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of the research was to explore the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples. The researcher, as a sub-Saharan African, was motivated to study the differences in marital expectations and marital satisfaction between the two groups to understand the marital challenges faced by both groups in this country. The researcher was also motivated to find out how marital expectations alter based on changes in life experiences as African immigrant married participants moved from their countries of origin to the United States. Understanding of the challenges faced by each group would enable counselors to provide useful interventions in their work with couples. In view of the changing demographics in this country, and in line with CACREP standards (2009) and American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2005), it is crucial that counselors, counselor educators and counseling students be competent in multicultural competences. Additionally, the region could benefit from greater understanding of marital and family issues. Findings from this study will contribute to the knowledge base on multicultural skills.

The goal of the study was to investigate the relationships that exist among marital expectations and marital satisfaction, for African immigrant and U. S. born married couples. The researcher formulated three questions for investigating relationships. The first question inquired about the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and U. S. born married participants, using the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ) and Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), and the Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS). The second research question inquired about the existence of differences among marital

expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and U. S. born married participants. The MEQ measured marital expectations, while the RAS and RPS measured satisfaction. Regression analyses and MANOVA were conducted to explore the variables of interest for the African immigrant married participants and the United States born married participants.

Mixed methods cross-sectional research design was used. The quantitative section investigated the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and U. S. born married participants. The researcher used SPSS program version 17 to run MANOVA to see if there were differences in marital expectations and marital satisfaction between the two groups. The researcher also used the SPSS program to conduct linear regressions to see if there were relationships between marital expectations and marital satisfaction among the African immigrants and the U. S. born married participants. The MEQ measured marital expectations, and the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) and Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS) measured marital satisfaction. The first section of the MEQ constituted the qualitative method. Four open-ended questions in section I of the MEQ were used to collect data for analysis. Only responses to the first question answered research question two. Research question two inquired about the qualitative similarities and differences in marital expectations between African immigrant and U. S. born married couples. The first question in section one of the MEQ asked: What are the expectations you have of a marriage partner? The answers to this question were entered into the Atlas Ti software program and analyzed to identify codes, themes and patterns. Similarities and differences were identified among couples, and also between African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples.

Results of Data Analysis

Two hundred participants contributed to the data for this study. During the preliminary analysis, the researcher identified and removed outliers for data from United States born married participants using SPSS.

Testing for Research Questions

Research Question I

The first research question asked: What relationships exist between marital expectations and marital satisfaction for the United States born and African immigrant participants? To answer this question, this study examined two null hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1A

No relationship exists between marital expectations (measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire), the independent variable, and marital satisfaction (measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and the Relationship Pleasure Scale), the dependent variables, for United States born married participants.

A preliminary analysis was conducted with the data and two outliers with $dB > 3$, which exerted excessive influence on the findings, were identified and removed. No missing data was found. Additionally, no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity existed. Table 3 presented the means and standard deviations and Table 4 presented the bivariate correlations both for the variables of interest for United States born married participants.

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations for U. S. Born Participants

Descriptive Statistics for U. S. Born			
Married Participants			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
MEQ Total	41.084	4.679	154
RAS Total	29.43	4.666	152
RPS Total	75.347	16.99	147

Results for the linear regression analysis showed that there was no relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction, measured by the RAS, for the U. S. born participants [$F(1, 149) = 3.23, p = .074$].

Results for the linear regression analysis showed that there was no relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction, measured by the RPS, for the U. S. born participants [$F(1, 144) = 2.408, p = .123$].

Table 4: Correlation Table for U.S. born Participants

		MEQ Total	RAS Total	RPS Total
MEQ Total	Pearson	1.000	.146	.128
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.074	.123
	N	154	151	146
RAS Total	Pearson	.146	1.000	.749**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.074		.000
	N	151	152	146
RPS Total	Pearson	.128	.749**	1.000
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.123	.000	
	N	146	146	147

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 1B

No relationship exists between marital expectations (measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire), the independent variable, and marital satisfaction (measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale and Relationship Pleasure Scale), the dependent variables, for African immigrant married participants. Preliminary analysis did not reveal any outliers or

missing data. Table 5 presented the bivariate correlations, and Table 6 presented the means and standard deviations for the variables of interest.

Results of Hypothesis 1B

Results for the linear regression analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between marital expectations (measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire) and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale, for the African immigrant participants [$F(1, 39) = 4.551, p = .039$].

Results for the linear regression analysis showed that there was no relationship between marital expectations (measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire) and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Pleasure Scale, for the African immigrant participants [$F(1, 39) = 2.361, p = .132$].

Table 5: Correlations for MEQ and RPS for U. S. Born Married Participants

		RPS Total	MEQ Total
<i>RPS Total</i>	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.128
<i>MEQ Total</i>	Pearson Correlation	.128	1.000
<i>RPS Total</i>	Sig. (1-tailed)	.061	
<i>MEQ Total</i>	Sig. (1-tailed)	.061	
<i>RPS Total</i>	N	146	146
<i>MEQ Total</i>	N	146	146

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics for African Immigrant Participants

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
<i>MEQ Total</i>	43.209	3.991	43
<i>RAS Total</i>	28.15	4.897	41
<i>RPS Total</i>	71.32	18.263	41

Table 7: Correlations for African Immigrant Married Participants

		MEQ Total	RAS_TOTAL	RPS Total
<i>MEQ Total</i>	Pearson	1.000	.323*	.239
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.039	.132
	N	43	41	41
<i>RAS Total</i>	Pearson	.323*	1.000	.769**
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039		.000
	N	41	41	40
<i>RPS Total</i>	Pearson	.239	.769**	1.000
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.132	.000	
	N	41	40	41

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) .

Question II

What differences exist among marital expectations and marital satisfaction between United States born and African immigrant married participants?

Testing for Research Question II

Hypothesis 2A

No differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Assessment Scale.

Results of Hypothesis 2A

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of immigrant status (African immigrant or non-immigrant) on marital expectations (measured with the Marital Expectations Questionnaire) on the dependent variable marital satisfaction (measured with the Relationship Assessment Scale). Preliminary analysis testing, which included an analysis for violation of assumptions, was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity. There were no violations noted.

Multivariate tests for significance of the overall model were significant [$F(2, 191) = 5.034, p = .007$] for all tests. Pillai's Trace was .05; Wilk's Lambda was .95; Hotelling's Trace was .053; and Roy's Largest Root was .053. The results of the follow up univariate ANOVA indicated significant results for MEQ [$F(1, 192) = 7.549, p = .007$], but not for RAS [$F(1, 192) = 1.211, p = .273$]. Based on the mean scores, this suggests that African immigrant married participants had significantly higher mean MEQ scores than U.S. born married participants but no significant differences in the RAS scores. The means and standard deviations appear in Table 8.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics

	Immigrant Status	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
	African Immigrant	43.2439	4.04834	41
<i>MEQ Total</i>	Not an Immigrant	41.0392	4.68885	153
	Total	41.5052	4.63960	194
	African Immigrant	28.15	4.897	41
<i>RAS Total</i>	Not an Immigrant	29.14	5.161	153
	Total	28.93	5.110	194

Hypothesis 2B

No differences exist between United States born and African immigrant married participants in marital expectations, measured by the Marital Expectations Questionnaire, and marital satisfaction, measured by the Relationship Pleasure Scale.

Results of Hypothesis 2B

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of immigrant status (African immigrant or non-immigrant) on marital expectations (measured with the Marital Expectations Questionnaire) on the dependent variable marital satisfaction (measured

with the Relationship Assessment Scale). Preliminary analysis testing, which included an analysis for violation of assumptions, was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity. There were no violations noted.

Multivariate tests for significance of the overall model were significant [$F(2, 186) = 4.771, p = .010$] for all tests. Pillai's Trace was .049; Wilk's Lambda was .951; Hotelling's Trace was .051; and Roy's Largest Root was .051. The results of the follow up univariate ANOVA indicated significant results for MEQ [$F(1, 187) = 7.479, p = .007$], but not for RPS [$F(1, 187) = 1.048, p = .307$]. Based on the mean scores, this suggests that African immigrant married participants had significantly higher mean MEQ scores than U.S. born married participants but no significant differences in the RPS scores. The means and standard deviations appear in Table 9.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics

	Immigrant Status	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
<i>MEQ Total</i>	African Immigrant	43.2927	4.05736	41
	Not an Immigrant	41.1149	4.62840	148
	Total	41.5873	4.58942	189
<i>RPS Total</i>	African Immigrant	71.3171	18.26258	41
	Not an Immigrant	74.5946	18.11146	148
	Total	73.8836	18.14619	189

Testing for Research Question III

The research question asked: What are the qualitative similarities and differences between the marital expectations possessed by African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples? The goal of the qualitative research was to further explain the similarities and differences in marital expectations of the two participant groups. Additionally,

the goal of the qualitative research was to further understand the expectations possessed by both groups. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire contained four open-ended questions that enquired about marital expectations.

The researcher analyzed the qualitative data from couples only. Data from married participants who participated individually was not analyzed. The researcher transcribed and organized data according to regions, using color codes. Initially the researcher examined the qualitative data to identify recurring words. The researcher observed frequencies of word recurrences, and the recurring words contributed to the setting up of taxonomies. Taxonomies were created from the recurring words by exploring the relationships between the words and higher order ideas. This process is called semantic analysis.

Data was entered into Atlas Ti, a software program, as quotations from the couples. Because taxonomies were created earlier during the semantic analysis process, the researcher was able to use the labels of the taxonomies as codes. The researcher analyzed the codes in order to identify emerging themes. Because the focus of this study was on identifying the similarities and differences in marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States born married couples, only Question 1 from the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ) was analyzed. The researcher analyzed data from only Question 1 because this question answered Research Question III, which asked about the similarities and differences in marital expectations possessed by the United States born and African immigrant married couples. The other three questions were set aside for analysis at a later time. Question 1 in the MEQ asks: What expectations do you have of a marital partner?

Qualitative Results

Organization of Data

The goal of the qualitative aspect of the research was to further understand the expectations possessed by both groups along with an explanation of the qualitative similarities and differences in marital expectations between the two participant groups. First of all, the researcher transcribed the data, and color coded it according to regions from which the data was collected. Red represented the Midwest, green the West (Utah), and blue the Pacific Northwest. Second, the researcher removed the data for participants who participated in the study without their spouses. Data was analyzed for 87 couples. Data indicated the participant's individual code number (e.g. 1.1 for a male, and 1.2 for the female, for couple number 1), as well as the immigrant status and ethnicity of the participant. This information was shown in the following manner - Immigrant status: for example, African immigrant, Black; or Non-immigrant, White, African American, Native American, Hispanic American, or Asian American; Other immigrant, English, White. This data was color coded according to the geographical region of the participant.

Immersion into Data

The Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ) was used to collect qualitative data. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire consisted of four sections. Section I contained four open-ended questions which inquire about marital expectations of the marriage partner, perceptions the individual had of their parents' marital expectations, a description of how the individual compares the similarities and differences between their own marriage and that of their parents', and how meeting their marital partner's expectations contribute to happiness in marriage.

The researcher searched for frequently recurring words used by participants in answering the question about their expectations of a marital partner. These words were written on chart paper and color - coded according to the geographical regions of the participants. The researcher counted frequencies of words used, and patterns of codes began to emerge. At this point the researcher discussed the emerging codes with a second researcher to obtain insight about the second researcher's understanding of emerging themes. After discussions with two other researchers who assisted with triangulation, a decision was made to utilize only question 1 in the Marital Expectations Questionnaire. This question asked: What expectations do you have of a marriage partner? This question was the only one directly related to Research Question III. Research Question III asked: What are the qualitative similarities and differences between the marital expectations possessed by African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples?

The researcher analyzed qualitative data from couples only, and there were 87 couples. Data from married participants who participated individually was not analyzed. Data was transcribed and organized into regions. Initially the researcher examined the qualitative data to identify recurring words. The researcher observed frequencies of word recurrences, and they contributed to the setting up of taxonomies. The researcher established taxonomies from the recurring words through exploring the relationships between the words and higher order ideas. The researcher identified emerging codes from taxonomies.

The researcher entered data as quotations from couples into Atlas Ti, a software program. Because taxonomies were established during the preceding process, the researcher was able to use the taxonomy labels for the codes. The program reduced the data into manageable chunks and linked quotations to codes.

The sample from the Midwest consisted mainly of African immigrant married couples (about 90%), while that of the West (Utah) was made up of about 98% United States born White participants. Samples from the Pacific Northwest were made up of 80% non-immigrants, mostly White, but with 14% Native American and 6% Hispanic American participants.

Generating Categories and Themes

From the process of examining semantic relationships, the following words, which were later used as labels for codes, emerged:

1. Caring
2. Loving
3. Friend
4. Good character
5. Common values
6. Loves God
7. Long-lasting relationship
8. Raise children together
9. Loyalty
10. Good communicator
11. Teamwork and Joint decision-making
12. Romantic partner

These were the codes that represented the marital expectations participants had of their marital partner. The participants' answers to the question "What are your expectations of a marital partner?" were entered into Atlas Ti in hermeneutic text files as quotations. The codes assigned earlier to the responses during the semantic analysis process were entered next to the

quotes, to code what the participant said. For example, the code *caring* as a marital expectation for a marital partner would be related to the following words or statements: supportive, help around the house, fix things, puts a smile on my face, provider, and friend. Table 3 illustrates the connections between assigned codes and the frequencies of marital expectations according to immigrant status.

Table 10: Frequencies for Marital Expectations Codes

Code Name	African Immigrant Married Couples	U. S. Born Married Couples	Other Immigrant Married Couples
<i>Caring</i>	27	72	6
<i>Loving</i>	20	54	4
<i>Friend</i>	15	49	5
<i>Good Character</i>	16	43	4
<i>Good Communication</i>	12	44	3
<i>Loyalty</i>	7	26	1
<i>Loves God</i>	7	25	2
<i>Long-Lasting Relationship</i>	6	21	0
<i>Raise Children Together</i>	8	15	1
<i>Romantic Partner</i>	7	17	1
<i>Common Values</i>	4	25	0
<i>Joint Decision-Making</i>	3	14	0

The code *common values* was connected to the following words or statements: worshipping the same God, spiritual leader of the family, having similar goals in life, and having a common understanding about similar ideas concerning marital partner’s role in marriage. A *long-lasting relationship* as an expectation of a marital partner related to the use of these words or statements: life-long commitment to the relationship; commitment to work things out always;

to work on growing closer and more in love with each passing year; someone I can be best friends with and spend the rest of my life with; to be faithful forever; I expect we will love each other deeply and for eternity; and marriage is not just living together but a passionate union of two best friends who share the joys and sorrows of life each step of the way.

Good character as a code was linked to the following words or statements: kind and gentle; respect me and my family; uphold marital vows; honest and trustworthy; tenacious; humble; stick with me through thick and thin; independent; selflessness; and responsible. The code *loving* related to the following words or statements: loving father and husband; love me; I expect my spouse to love me above all others, to work on growing closer and more in love with each passing year; to love me no matter what; have a loving relationship between us; and love our children and be affectionate towards them.

The code *friend* connected to the following words and statements: be my friend and be someone to engage with, play and travel together; a confidant and close friend; friendship and companionship; I expect him to be a friend; I expect a long-term; long-lasting friendship; not to be feared by her (my wife) but to have a lifetime friend that is always there for me and I for her; trustworthy companion; life partner; be my best friend; and kind loving friend. The code *loyalty* correlated to the following words and statements: to remain faithful; to uphold marital vows; I expect my spouse to be faithful; loyal; someone who is honest and always there for you; I expect my partner to commit to me as their most important human relationship; fidelity; faithfulness and love; faithful; devotion; marital fidelity; love me unconditionally; mutual faithfulness to marriage vows; spend time with me and sleep in our bed; and no polygamy.

Raise the children together linked as a code to the following words and statements: willing to raise a family; take care of my children; love our children and be affectionate towards

them; to be a good father; share similar values to raise kids; good mother to our children; co-parent; co-sharing of parenting and household duties; active member in caring for and raising the family; child rearing; and to help with the care and training of the children. The code *good communicator* related to the following words and statements: communicative; collaboration; open communicator; being fair and admitting wrong-doing; understand each other and solve our problems; good listener; open-mindedness; demonstration of caring; willingness to talk through problems; to discuss everything even if we don't agree and come to some type of agreement, encouragement; work through tough times; empathy; to share joys and trials of life; understanding each other's differences; husband who does not yell; and open to sharing thoughts and feelings.

The code *teamwork* connected to the following words and statements: do things together, share common goals, major decisions are discussed and an agreement reached between the partners; to share the responsibilities of parenting; to be a co-partner in all areas; willing to work with me to solve any problems; help with income; we are a team; her willingness to carry her share of life's burdens; physical upkeep of the car and house are a joint responsibility; and equal partner. Joint decision-making was assigned as a code in relation to the following words and statements: equal partner; to be a true partner; support when making decisions; to see me as an equal; equal partnership in every aspect of a marriage; be an equal partner in ideas and running our household, and agree in decision-making. Finally the code *romantic partner* related to the following words or statements: be intimate with me; be romantic; sexual partner; mutual enjoyment and intimacy; a bit of romance and a sexual relationship are part of the formulas as well; to provide with emotional love and care; have sex any time I like, willing to satisfy in a sexual relationship; keep dating, close and intimate; emotional and physical intimacy; we share

equally in the bedroom, and seek new ways to show love to their partner including intimate and sexual pleasure for their partner. The next stage of the data analysis involved using the software program Atlas Ti to group the codes into families.

Table 7 shows four themes that emerged from data analysis of the initial transcripts, from which 12 codes were assigned based on the semantic analysis. The verbatim transcripts from couples were color coded according to regions. The Midwest (Indiana and Michigan) was color coded red, the West (Utah) was color-coded green, and the Pacific Northwest was color coded blue. The transcripts also indicated the immigrant status and ethnicity of the respondent. These were indicated as non-immigrant, Native American, African immigrant, Black, or European immigrant, White. The code numbers were used for anonymity. Male participants were indicated by X.1, while female participants were indicated by X.2. X stands for the given number between 1 and 220. Table 3 shows the frequencies of codes according to the immigrant status and the ethnicity of the participants. This table helps the reader to understand the participants' expectations of a marital partner.

After identifying the codes through the process of semantic analysis, codes were assigned to quotations for each participant using Atlas Ti program. Twelve codes were identified. They will be discussed under the themes in which they were grouped. The reader will note that a quotation would capture more than one code. Therefore a quotation may be used more than once to illustrate different codes.

Verification

The researcher verified trustworthiness throughout the study using a variety of approaches. They included using verbatim transcripts, using semantic analysis to visually chart relationships between words and creating taxonomies. They also included coding checks with

three other researchers, and checking the emerging themes with three other researchers. The final product was the existence of reduced data, which is illustrated in Table 7.

Table 11: Four Themes of Marital Expectations with Related Codes

Themes	Codes
Care and Support	Caring and Nurturing Friend Raise Children Together
Love and Affection	Romantic Partner Loyalty Loving
Commitment	Long-Lasting Relationship Good Communication Joint Decision-Making and Teamwork
Shared Values	Loves God Good Character Common Values (Religion, Culture, & Beliefs)

Care and Support

Caring and nurturing, friend, and raise children together constituted the theme Care and Support. The most recurring code among all participants was *caring and nurturing*. African immigrants said some of the following quotations which were related to the caring code:

1. "Puts a smile on my face".
2. "He is supportive".
3. "I expect her to cook for me and be hospitable".
4. "A caring, and supportive partner".
5. "Meeting family needs".
6. "He should be my helper and my pillar".
7. "Taking care of family, especially bigger (extended family)".
8. "One who helps me grow spiritually and emotionally".
9. "Family provider".
10. "Clean and help in the house, pay bills".

Most of the African immigrant participants were from the Midwest.

U. S. born White participants said some of the following quotations, which are related to the *caring and nurturing* code:

1. "Caring".
2. "Devotion".
3. "Empathy, kindness, and responsibility".
4. "Helping each other with household duties and family matters".
5. "Take care of our family as protector and provider".
6. "Active member in caring for and raising the family".

7. "Being there for one another in times of sadness and happiness".
8. "A spouse that is supportive in everything and helps me grow".
9. "A husband who does not yell or strive his wife".
10. "Maintain a clean home".
11. "I expect him to be kind to his mother".
12. "Help around the home and with discipline of children".
13. "Be financial provider and share work around the house".
14. "To share the responsibilities of parenting".
15. "Concern for my welfare".
16. "Kind, considerate".
17. "Keep each other happy".

Native Americans said the following, related to *caring and nurturing*:

1. "Kindness and compassion".
2. "Emotionally supportive".
3. "Cleanliness".
4. "Helps around the house and with discipline of children".

Finally, Hispanic Americans said the following quotations related to *caring and nurturing*:

1. "Caring".
2. "Willing to do yard work and provide for the family".

The code *friend* had the following quotations associated with the code among African immigrants:

1. "A person that is supportive".
2. "I expect him to be a friend".

3. "I expect long-term, long-lasting, friendship".
4. "Need to live happily and respect each other".
5. "One who is interested in my well-being".
6. "Companionship and friendship".

Among non-immigrant White participants the code *friend* was related to the following quotations:

1. "Companionship and shared interests".
2. "Life partner who shares joys and trials of life".
3. "Be my best friend".
4. "Friend".
5. "Someone who is fun, caring, humorous, and interesting".
6. "Marriage is not just living together, but a passionate union of two best friends who share the joys and sorrows of life each step of the way".
7. "Friendship, life-long companionship, interest in each other".
8. "Sharing life's journey, doing fun things together".
9. "Someone I can be best friends with".
10. "Someone to pray and study with, share thoughts and dreams with, and do things with".
11. "Best friend".

The code *raise children together* was connected to the following quotations among the African immigrant participants.

1. "Have children, especially boys".
2. "Be willing to raise a family".
3. "Love our children and be affectionate towards them".

4. “Be a good provider for the family”.

Among the non-immigrants, White participants had the following quotations for the code *raise children together*:

1. “Co-sharing of parenting and household duties”.
2. “Active member in caring for and raising the family”.
3. “Help me with life and child-rearing”.
4. “Interested in what I enjoy and willing to spend quality time with me and the children.
Share responsibility of children’s education”.
5. “To share the responsibilities of parenting”.
6. “To be a good mother”.
7. “Share similar values to raise kids”.
8. “Good with children”.
9. “I always wanted several kids”.
10. “To help with the care and training of the children”.

Among the Native American participants, these were the quotations which were related to the code *raise children together*:

1. “Teach our children to love and respect God”.
2. “Help around the home and with discipline of children”

Love and Affection

The theme Love and Affection was made up of the following codes: *romantic partner*, *loyalty*, and *loving*. *Loving* was the second most frequently recurring code among all participants.

The quotations associated with *loving* among African immigrants were the following:

1. “He loves me”.

2. “Lover”.
3. “Loving”.
4. “Love our children”.

Among non-immigrant White participants, the code *loving* was associated with the following quotations:

1. “My partner has chosen to enter into the deepest relationship between two humans”.
2. “This relationship requires emotional and physical intimacy”.
3. “Loving”.
4. “Love me”.
5. “Intimacy and companionship”.
6. “Love is very important”.
7. “Life partner to share love, kids, and God”.
8. “Lover”.
9. “Loves his wife as God loves the church”.
10. “I expect my spouse to love me above all else”.
11. “Unconditional love”.
12. “To love and respect me as a woman”.
13. “Love me unconditionally”.
14. “Love and adore me”.

Native Americans and Hispanic Americans used the quotation “Loving” mostly, and this was related to the code *Loving*.

Among the African immigrant participants the code *romantic partner* was connected to the following quotations:

1. "Continue having dates after marriage".
2. "Have sex any time I like".
3. "A person that is supportive, understanding, patient, respects me, and most of all, loves me".
4. "A lover".
5. "Willing to satisfy in a sexual relationship".
6. "Loving and intimate".
7. "Relationally satisfying".
8. "Close and intimate".

Non-immigrants had the following quotations associated with the code "romantic partner" among White participants:

1. "I expect my partner to plan their life around our union".
2. "Sexual partner".
3. "We share equally in the bedroom".
4. "I expect that love will mature as we grow older".
5. "Love and adore me. Be intimate with me".
6. "Pretty and romantic".
7. "Of course a bit of romance and a sexual relationship are part of the formula as well".
8. "To provide emotional love and care".

The code *loyalty* was related to the following quotations among African immigrants:

1. "I expect long-term, long-lasting relationship".
2. "I expect to have a lifetime friend who is always there for me, and I for her".
3. "Faithfulness".

4. “Be faithful, mutual faithfulness to marriage vows”
5. “Loyalty”.

Among the non-immigrant White participants, these are some of the quotations they gave:

1. “Loyal”.
2. “Someone who is honest, and always there for you”.
3. “I expect my partner to plan their life around our union”.
4. “Fidelity”.
5. “Faithfulness and love”.
6. “Marital fidelity”.
7. “To be faithful forever”.
8. “To remain faithful”.
9. “To uphold marital vows”.
10. “I expect my spouse to be faithful”.
11. ”Stand beside me through the rough times”.

The Native Americans had the following quotations related to the code *loyalty*:

1. “Honest, loyal, spend time with me and sleep in our bed”.
2. “Marriage partners keep themselves and their sexuality for their partner, and only their partner, no matter what!”, and “Faithful to God, faithful to spouse”.

Commitment

The codes classified under this theme were *long-lasting relationship, good communication, joint decision-making and teamwork*. Among the African immigrant participants the code “long-lasting relationship” was linked to the following quotations:

1. “Not to be feared by her, but have a lifetime friend that is always there for me”.

2. "Happy financially stable, lasting relationship till death do us part".
3. "Commitment to working things out".

Among the non-immigrants, the White participants had the following quotations connected to the code *long-lasting relationship*:

1. "Commitment".
2. "Be best friend and permanent partner".
3. "Long-term commitment".
4. "Life-long companionship".
5. "Sharing life's journey".
6. "Commitment to the relationship".
7. "Grow together".
8. "To be faithful forever and to work on growing closer and more in love with each passing year".
9. "Commitment and unconditional love".
10. "Committed to family and unconditional love".
11. "I hoped for a good friend and life-long partner that would be interested in similar things and enjoy talking about them".

Among Native Americans, quotations associated with the code *long-lasting relationship* were the following:

1. "Someone to plan the future with".
2. "Share common goals and enjoy spending life together".

A Hispanic American participant had the following quotation related to the code "long-lasting relationship": "Life-long partner".

The quotations associated with the code *good communication* among African immigrants included the following:

1. “Supportive and understanding”.
2. “I expect to build a good relationship with my wife, not to be feared by her, but have a lifetime relationship with her”.
3. “Understands me and realizes if he is wrong, and apologizes”.
4. “Be emotionally, intellectually and relationally satisfying”.
5. “Open communication, commitment to working things out”.
6. “To understand one another and agree in decision-making”.
7. “That we allow each other to be their own person”.

Among non-immigrant White participants, the following were the quotations associated with *good communication*:

1. “Communicate openly”.
2. “Communication”.
3. “My partner has chosen to enter into the deepest relationship between two humans”.
4. “Encouragement”.
5. “Cooperation and understanding”.
6. “Be a best friend and listen”.
7. “Willing to listen”.
8. “Understanding each other’s differences, accept criticism”.
9. “Will desire to have a mutually satisfying relationship – when our relationship is static or when problems arise my wife will communicate with me to work together in solving problems, moving our relationship to where it is not static”.

10. “Confidant, open to sharing thoughts and feelings”.
11. “To be available to talk, and confide in. To put energy and work into the success and/or closeness of the relationship”.
12. “Willingness to compromise, ability to listen with an open heart and mind”.
13. “Good communication skills”.
14. “Grow together, share similar thoughts and ideas, but stay unique individuals”.
15. “I expect my partner to share feelings with me, good and bad; to share ideas and decisions with me; to discuss finances with me and share information”.
16. “Being fair and admitting when wrong”.
17. “Open-mindedness, honesty”.
18. “Demonstration of caring”. “Acceptance, willingness to talk through problems, support when making decisions”.
19. “Discuss everything, even if we don’t agree, and come to some type of agreement”.

Finally, the least frequently occurring code among all participants was *Joint Decision-Making and Teamwork*. Only three African immigrant participants had quotations associated with this code, and the quotations are:

1. “I expect my partner to support me fully and to share with me and consult with me in most big decisions in the family”.
2. “Be an equal partner in running our house”.

Shared Values

The codes classified under this theme were *loves God*, *good character*, and *common values*. African immigrant participants had the following quotations associated with the code *loves God*:

1. "A wife who loves the Lord".
2. "Fears God".
3. "One who helps me to grow spiritually and emotionally".
4. "Religious and selfless".
5. "A God-fearing partner".
6. "Spiritual support".

Among the non-immigrants, the White participants had the following quotations connected with the code *Loves God*:

1. "Christ-follower, healthy, no tobacco/alcohol".
2. "Christ-centered".
3. "Good Christian".
4. "Religious partner".
5. "Spiritual".
6. "Life partner to share love, kids, and God".
7. "Husband must be spiritual leader and take initiative in spiritual matters".
8. "Loves his wife as God loves the church".
9. "Love God first and foremost".
10. "Spiritual leader".
11. "Love for Christ".
12. "Good spiritual partner".
13. "To help provide a loving, caring Christian home".
14. "Worship the same God together".
15. "Someone to pray and study with".

16. "God-fearing partner".
17. "Help me and the family to serve God".
18. "The priest in the family".

Native American participants had the following quotations related to the code *loves God*:

1. "To teach our children to love and respect God".
2. "Love for God and mankind".
3. "Know God and love Jesus".
4. "Faithful to God, to spouse, and family".

Good character was the fourth most frequently occurring code. Quotations related to the code *good character* included the following from African immigrants:

1. "Supportive and responsible".
2. "Patient respects me".
3. "Respectful".
4. "Honesty and trust".
5. "Honor, respect, cherish".
6. "Supportive, tenacious, humble and respectful".
7. "Selflessness".

Among the non-immigrants, White participants said the following quotations related to the code *good character*:

1. "Productivity, honesty, and motivation".
2. "Someone who is honest and is always there for you".
3. "Gives me respect as an individual, is honest, and shows accountability".
4. "Respectful and honest".

5. "Truth and sharing of responsibilities".

Some quotations associated with the code *good character* from Native American participants included the following:

1. "Honest, remain faithful to the church".
2. "Abstain from illegal drugs and drinks".
3. "Respectful" and "Teach our children to love and respect God".

The code *common value* was associated with the following quotations among African immigrant participants:

1. "Keep family customs and values". "Share my faith and beliefs".
2. "Provide spiritual support".
3. "Teach children values".

Quotations linked to the code *common values* from non-immigrant White participants were the following:

1. "Christian values".
2. "He needed to be of the same faith".
3. "Spiritual leader in the home".
4. "Share similar religious convictions".
5. "Good spiritual partner".
6. "We are a team. Our goals are relatively aligned and we choose to work together to achieve these goals".
7. "Worship the same God together".
8. "Share interests and religious beliefs".
9. "Share some of my interests and have a sense of humor".

The following quotations which are related the code *common values* were from the Native American participants:

1. “Spiritual leader of the family”.
2. “Same religion”.
3. “Share common goals and enjoy spending life together”.

Similarities between African Immigrant Couples and Non-immigrant Couples

The researcher entered data about responses to Question 1 in the Marital Expectations Questionnaire for 87 couples into Atlas Ti. However, some spouses did not answer Question 1, and the response for that spouse was entered as “No response”. The similarities among African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples were identified by searching through all the frequently occurring codes, in descending order, outlined in the previous section. The codes were: *Caring and Nurturing*, *Loving*, *Friend*, *Good Character*, *Good Communication*, *Loyalty*, *Loves God*, *Long-lasting Relationship*, *Raise Children Together*, *Romantic Partner*, *Common Values*, and *Joint Decision-Making and Teamwork*.

The similarities related to the code *Caring and Nurturing* between African immigrant couples and U. S. born couples were the following: across both groups the couples associated *Caring and Nurturing* as a source of support for spouses. There was also a high agreement about *Caring and Nurturing* within the couples. The code *Loving* also had high level of agreement within couples. Similarly, the code *Friend* had a high level of agreement within couples from the two groups. For the code *Good Communication*, similarities were identified between U. S. born couples, and where there was intermarriage between a U. S. born spouse and an immigrant spouse. This was true for immigrants from Africa and other parts of the world, such as Europe, Asia, and other Latin American countries.

Although the code *Loyalty* was identified across both the African immigrant couples and the U. S. born couples, fewer African immigrant couples used quotations which could be classified under that code. Although the code *Loves God* occurred frequently among the individual participants, the code agreement within couples was low. This was similar across both the African immigrant couples and the U. S. born couples. The code *Raise Children Together* was observed equally across gender between the two groups. However, in both the African immigrant couples and the U. S. born couples there was a low code agreement within couples. This was similar for African immigrant couples and U. S. born couples.

Differences between African Immigrant Married Couples and Non-immigrant Married Couples

Although the code *Caring and Nurturing* occurred frequently and the code agreement were similar between the two groups, it appeared that the quotations associated with each group were different. For example, among African immigrant couples the code *Caring and Nurturing* was associated with care of the spouse and children, supporting the spouse and children, as well as care, support, and showing respect for the extended families. On the other hand, the code *Caring and Nurturing* among U. S. born couples focused on the nuclear family. It included having the spouse as the protector and provider to the family, showing kindness and appreciation to each other, sharing in taking care of the children's finances and upbringing, and helping around the house.

Another difference was identified in the code *Friend* between African immigrant couples and U. S. born couples. Although the code was identified as frequently occurring similarly between the two groups, the quotations linked to its use were different. African immigrant couples described the qualities of a friend in their quotations, while U. S. born couples used the word friend or best friend.

Although the use of the code *Good Character* was identified as occurring frequently across both groups, there were gender differences in its use. The difference was that among African immigrant couples there was less code agreement within couples, as husbands used the code more. Among the U. S. born couples, the use of the code was evenly distributed between genders. Consequently there was higher code agreement within U. S. born couples. The code *Good Communication* was another code in which there were differences between African immigrant couples and U. S. born couples. Among the African immigrant couples more husbands stated quotations related to *Good Communication* than the wives. This led to a low within couple code agreement. Conversely, there was a gender balance in the distribution of the code among U.S. born participants, leading to high code agreement level within couples.

African immigrant couples had no code agreement on the code *Loyalty*. U. S. born couples had a high code agreement for Loyalty. All the couples, except one, who had the high code agreement, were from Utah. For the code *Long-lasting Relationship*, there was not a single code agreement among the African immigrant couples. Among the U. S. born couples, all but one couple with a high code agreement resided in the Pacific Northwest. The code *Romantic Partner* occurred more frequently related to quotations from African immigrant couples, and there were high code agreements within couples. This did not occur among the U. S. born couples. The code *Common Values* occurred in U. S. born couples, especially among the Native American couples, and there was code agreement within couples. This did not happen among African immigrant couples. Although the researcher identified *Joint Decision-Making and Teamwork* as the least occurring code among all participants, there was high code agreement within African immigrant couples. This did not happen among U. S. born couples.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples. There were three questions asked in the mixed methods research. The first two questions were answered using quantitative research methods, and the third was answered through qualitative approaches. Regression analysis indicated that there was a significant relationship between marital expectations (measured with the MEQ) and marital satisfaction (measured with the RAS) among African immigrant participants. There was no relationship between marital expectations (measured with the MEQ) and marital expectations (measured with the RAS) among the U. S. born married participants. There was no relationship between marital expectations (measured with the RPS) among either African immigrant or U. S. born married participants. MANOVA revealed the existence of significant differences based on immigrant status, between marital expectations and marital satisfaction. This indicated that there were differences between African immigrant and U. S. born married participants. The qualitative results confirmed the existence of these differences. The quotations provided for each of the groups illustrated these differences. Some differences were based on context, some on gender, and others on values.

CHAPTER V DISCUSSION

This mixed methods study investigated the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant and United States born married couples. Marital expectations were measured using the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ). The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) (Hendrick, 1988) and the Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS) (PAIRS Foundation, 1993) were used to measure marital satisfaction. Marital expectations were measured using the MEQ. The first section contained four open-ended questions and responses to these provided the qualitative data. The second section of the MEQ collected data on the level of agreement with the 10 statements about marital expectations using a five - item Likert scale. The third section collected data rating the 10 marital expectations according to importance. Lastly, the fourth section collected demographic data. The Relationship Assessment Scale consisted of seven items, which were scored from one to five. However, items 4 and 7 were reverse scored (Hendrick, 1988). This instrument measured global relationship satisfaction. The Relationship Pleasure Scale consisted of six items. The first five items had five options, while the last had six options. The Relationship Pleasure Scale measured a snapshot of relationship pleasure and satisfaction.

Quantitative Findings

Regression analysis revealed that a significant relationship existed between marital expectations (measured by MEQ) and marital satisfaction (measured by the RAS) among African immigrant married participants. There was no relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction, as measured by the RPS, among African immigrant married participants. There was no relationship between marital expectations (measured by the MEQ) and marital

relationship, (measured by the RAS) among U. S. born married participants. Additionally, there was no significant relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction (measured by the RPS) among U. S. born married participants.

Quantitative findings for regression analysis were significant for African immigrant married participants. There was a significant relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction as measured by the RAS. MANOVA overall model also showed significant differences in marital expectations (measured by the MEQ) between the African immigrants and the non-immigrants. Follow up univariate ANOVA tests indicated that the tests were only significant for marital expectations (measured by the MEQ) and not for marital satisfaction (measured by the RAS or RPS) for U.S. born and African immigrant married participants.

These findings could be related to the structure of the MEQ which is based on the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations. The model has fundamental principles centered on the expectations individuals have in the marriage, in the family of origin, in the institution of marriage, and in the image of the ideal partner. African immigrant participants have expectations based on their cultural values, which are related to the institution of marriage. When sub-Saharan Africans marry, the individuals accept that this will be a life-long relationship. Although the partners may not be satisfied with every aspect of marriage, they know that ending the marriage affects many other people besides the marital partners. Before the marriage occurs, various members of both extended families are involved in negotiations for *Lobola* and other rites. The kinship is built through these activities long before the marital partners settle into their new home.

Additionally, gender roles are well-defined. The male is responsible for male-related duties such as being the bread winner, although women also participate in this role. The husband

is the head of the household, although he consults with the wife when major decisions are made. Although the African immigrant sample was not typical of traditional sub-Saharan people, some of them still held opinions that could be compared with those held by their counterparts in their home countries.

On the other hand, the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations might not capture the marital expectations of U.S. born married participants because it considers the other expectations, besides the individualistic nature of those possessed by married individuals. This theory used Indian married couples when it evolved. Indian cultures are collectivistic, similar to sub-Saharan African cultures. The researcher developed the Marital Expectations Questionnaire based on the Epigenetic Model of Marital Expectations. This might explain why the findings for U.S. born married participants were not significant for either the regression analysis or the MANOVA for marital expectations. The researcher failed to identify any previous studies to corroborate the findings in this study.

The differences between sub-Saharan African marriages and American marriages were elucidated by the findings in this study. Socio-cultural factors such as *Lobola*, polygamy and polygyny, and early marriage for young girls to older men contribute to gender imbalance in marriages. Differences such as gender imbalance among sub-Saharan African marriages, the involvement of extended families in the negotiations, problem-solving in families, and the lack of unilateral decision-making within families were illustrated in this study. On the other hand, the importance of communication, caring and nurturing supported the findings from previous studies about the importance of these attributes in marriages (Barich & Bielby, 1996; Cramer, 2006).

Qualitative Findings

Qualitative analysis of data established the existence of similarities and differences in marital expectations between African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples. Regression analysis established a significant relationship between marital expectations (measured by the MEQ) and marital satisfaction (measured by the RAS) among African immigrant married couples. MANOVA also showed significant differences between African married immigrant and U. S. born married participants. However, when these results were examined in conjunction with the qualitative results, they provided a greater understanding of the differences in marital expectations between the two groups.

The four themes that emerged during qualitative data analysis will now be explored. The four themes are: Care and Support, Love and Affection, Commitment, and Shared Values. These themes emerged from analysis of codes. The researcher identified codes through semantic analysis, and codes also emerged from analysis of quotations from the participants. At times more than one code emerged from a single quotation. For example, the quotation “Helping each other with household and family matters” was associated with the codes *Caring and nurturing* and *Friend*. The researcher identified that both codes fell under one theme, Care and Support. Conversely, some quotations could be linked to more than one theme. For example, the quotation “Have children, especially boys, take care of the children, be hospitable, have sex whenever I like” had four codes associated with it. These were: *Caring and nurturing*, *Good character*, *Raise children together* and *Romantic partner*. Themes that emerged from these codes were “Care and Support” (from the codes *Caring and nurturing*, and *Raise children together*), and “Love and affection” (from the code *Romantic partner*).

Care and Support

Cramer (2006) investigated couples involved in romantic relationships. He found that emotional support broke down into care and listening. He suggested that care is the emotional support that was mostly related to marital satisfaction. This quality in a marital relationship was captured in the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ) both in the qualitative and the quantitative sections. In the qualitative section, responses to question 1 (What expectations do you have of a marital partner?) provided the quotations some of which ended up under the theme Care and Nurturing. Similarly, the quantitative section of the MEQ measured the responses to items 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Participants were asked to indicate the level of agreement with particular statements, by selecting one of the following values: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Item 3 stated, “Companionship is necessary for married couples to be happy.” Item 5 said, “The couple should have equitable distribution of household work.” Item 6 stated, “Marriage is a means of financial security for the couple.” Item 7 stated, “Emotional security is a by-product of the marriage.” Finally, Item 8 said, “Marriage provides children with care and training for social environments.” Results from the quantitative section of the MEQ showed a significant relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction among African immigrant married couples. These findings are supported by Cramer’s findings about the relationship between care and marital satisfaction.

The code *Raise Children Together* under the theme Care and Support was identified by most African immigrant couples, and there was high level of agreement within couples. This confirmed findings by Timaeus and Reymar (1998), Basu (2000) and Mbiti (1969) that children are highly valued in sub-Saharan marriages and contribute to their stability. From the life experiences and observations of the researcher as a native of sub-Saharan Africa, it appears

children constitute one of the expectations within marriages of sub-Saharan Africa. If the couple is able to have children this fact acts as one of the stabilizing factors.

Love and Affection

The theme emerged from the following codes in the qualitative data: *Romantic Partner*, *Loyalty*, and *Loving*. It was also captured from the two marital satisfaction questionnaires used in this study (the RAS and RPS). It is also captured in the MEQ. The Marital Expectations Questionnaire is based on the Marital Expectations Model (Juvva and Bhatti, 2006). The codes that emerged during data analysis are consistent with expectations from the model. The marital expectations that emerged from the codes were also consistent with the Interdependence Theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). This theory states that individuals create and maintain relationships based on the anticipated good outcomes they expect as benefits from relationships.

Because of the triangulation of data from three sources, and also from discussing emerging codes and themes with three other researchers, verification occurred. *Loyalty* emerged as a code for one of the marital expectations. This was particularly true of couples in Utah. This research was conducted in Salt Lake City, which is the headquarters of the Mormon faith in the United States. It is difficult to say if this prompted some participants in this region to talk specifically about loyalty as an expectation as they were residing in an area where some Fundamentalist Mormons practice polygamy. These findings support those of Whisman, Dixon, and Johnson (1997) in a review of ethnographic studies from over 160 countries worldwide which suggested that infidelity was the single most common cause of marital dissolution. On the other hand, according to the General Conference of Seventh – Day Adventists (SDAs) (2008), DSAs believe that marriage is for life, unless adultery occurs. Consequently, they view loyalty as important, especially when they perceive the presence of threats in the environment.

Despite the findings of previous research that indicated that polygyny is still prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa (Timaues & Reymar, 1997; Cook, 2007), the African couples did not specify loyalty as an expectation. It might be possible that they felt insulated from polygyny because it is not legal in the United States, and it might also be because 95% of the sample were practicing Seventh-Day Adventists (SDAs). Seventh-Day Adventists do not espouse plural marriage; they lead a life of temperance which includes abstaining from immoral living, tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy eating habits (Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, 2008).

Commitment

This theme emerged from the following codes: *Long-lasting Relationship*, *Good Communication* and *Joint Decision-Making and Teamwork*. The essence of this theme was captured both through the responses to the qualitative question (What are your expectations of a marital partner), and from the MEQ, the RAS, and the RPS. It appears from this study that good communication contributes to a long-lasting relationship and the smooth functioning of a team. Findings from a cross cultural study demonstrated the existence of a strong association between communication behaviors and marital satisfaction (Rehman & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2007). The findings from the current study are supported by Rehman and Holtzworth-Munroe.

Shared Values

The final theme emerged from the following codes: *Loves God*, *God Character*, and *Common Values*. The codes were captured from responses to the qualitative question, as well as from the quantitative data collection instruments. These were the Marital Expectations Questionnaire (MEQ), the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), and the Relationship Pleasure Scale (RPS). The primary researcher developed the MEQ from Marital Expectations Model

(Juvva & Bhatti, 2006). The model is applied to the development of marriage, from its inception and through the different stages. It takes into account the environment in which it occurs, and this includes the values of the participants.

The theme Shared Values is quite appropriate in this sample because their common religious beliefs can transcend any differences they might have, based on race, ethnicity, and customs. When children are born into a Seventh – day Adventist home, they are taught similar religious beliefs which might be held in higher esteem than other local customs and beliefs. The norms are dictated by what SDAs believe. Their beliefs influence who they marry and who they associate with. In short, most Seventh – day Adventists use their beliefs to guide their everyday lives. This sample exhibited very similar shared values based on their beliefs.

The Migration Systems Theory (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino & Taylor, 1993) becomes operational with respect to African immigrant married couples. This theory explains the intense exchange of goods, capital, and people between countries. There are sending countries (i.e. sub-Saharan Africa), and receiving countries (i.e. the United States). Most of the participants had left sub-Saharan African countries to get advanced degrees at a private university in the Midwest. Some were professionals who had left their countries of origin to seek better lives and opportunities in the United States. The demographic results in this study were supported by Hagopian, Fordyce, Johnson, and Hart (2004). As a sub-Saharan African native it is easy for the researcher to understand some of the participants' experiences. It is also easy to understand the experiences of almost all the participants, as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is important for researchers to be aware of and state their philosophical position (Hanson et al., 2005). Being a member of each of the groups described above facilitated access to the desired population samples.

Summary to Integrate Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

It is necessary to integrate the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study since it was a mixed methods research design. Although the researcher found a significant relationship between marital expectations and the RAS among African immigrant, but not among U.S. born married participants. These results alone did not explain the source of these differences. Similarly, despite the fact that overall models for the two MANOVAs to see if there were differences between marital expectations and marital satisfaction using the RAS and the RPS for African immigrant and U.S. born married participants showed significant differences in marital expectations, the results did not elucidate the source of these differences.

Through the use of qualitative data, the sources of the differences were highlighted. Some differences were due to deeper meanings attached to the words used the participants. Other differences were related to customs and cultural practices which were dissimilar among the different groups.

Although the sample had differences identified earlier, they also had similarities. Some of the similarities were related to expectations held by participants, simply due to the fact that they are actors in the universal institution of marriage. Other similarities were due to the participants' shared religious beliefs as Seventh – day Adventists. Consequently, integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled the researcher to have a deeper understanding of the sources of the differences between African immigrant and U.S. born married participants. The quotations enabled the researcher to to give voice to the participants, so that the readers could have snapshots of how the codes emerged.

Limitations of the Study

Every effort was made to control for threats to external and internal validity. However, some limitations do exist in this study. Firstly the population sample is almost homogenous – the sample consisted of 95% Seventh- Day Adventists. Although the total sample size was 209 individuals, the generalizability of the findings will be limited to Seventh-Day Adventists. The final sample consisted of 200 participants. Only 43 were African immigrants, compared to 157 United States born participants. This is a limitation in that the groups are not equal, and this could affect the statistical analyses. Challenges were apparent in identifying a sample that included African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples in this study. Replications of this study with a more diverse (religious beliefs, ethnicity, cultural, geographic regions) sample may yield more generalizable findings to United States population. Replications of this study in sub-Saharan Africa may also yield findings that can be more generalizable to sub-Saharan African countries.

Another limitation was due to the procedures in distribution of questionnaires to participants at the data collection sites. Due to the need for anonymity, after completing filling in the questionnaires, each participant placed them all in an envelope and sealed it before placing the envelope on a table. This prevented the primary researcher from checking questionnaires for accuracy and completeness at the site. This procedural oversight resulted in a number of incorrectly or incompletely filled – out questionnaires. Some data could not be used where the participant had more than one response missing in a section. Where only one response was missing in a section data imputation was conducted. Some participants did not provide responses to question 1 (What are your expectations of a marital partner?). In that case, despite the fact that

both spouses had participated in the study, those with no responses to question 1 were excluded from the qualitative data analysis.

Self-report instruments pose another threat to internal validity. During the process of data collection the researcher relies completely on the honesty and accuracy of the participant in responding to the question. It is possible that participants may respond in a manner that enhances social desirability; consequently participants might respond in a manner that does not reflect the truth (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Despite this awareness of the limitation, the researcher used three self-report instruments to collect data.

Implications for Practice

The United States continues to be host to immigrants, especially from sub-Saharan African countries, where most of the countries have failing economies and resulting brain drain (Hagopian et al., 2004). Additionally, minorities will be the majority by the year 2020 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Due to these findings, it becomes more important for counselors, counselor educators and counselors-in-training to become very competent in multicultural counseling skills and not pay lip service to multicultural competences. The American Counseling Association (ACA) provided ethical guidelines for multicultural competences in the ACA Code of Ethics (2005). Similarly, the Council for Associated Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) Standards 2009 stipulate the standards to be attained by institutions in their syllabi, manpower, students, and facilities before they can be accredited for the first time or for re-accreditation.

Findings from this study will assist counselors, counselor educators, and counselors-in-training to understand how marital expectations are related to marital satisfaction among Seventh-Day Adventists in this country. This denomination is one of the religious minorities.

Secondly, counselors, counselor educators and counselors-in-training will be able to understand some cultural aspects related to marriage and marital expectations among African immigrant married couples.

Implications for Research

This study was exploratory in nature and the significant findings can act as a guide for future research. This study was conducted using a mixed methods research design, which is one of the newer models used in counseling literature. It would be beneficial to replicate this study using a more diverse (religious beliefs, immigrant status, ethnicity, culture, geographic region) population sample. Similarly it would be beneficial if this study could be replicated in a sub-Saharan African country. These approaches would reduce threats to external validity of the studies.

To reduce threats to internal validity, the psychometric properties of the Marital Expectations Questionnaire would need to be validated. A large population sample (about 250 couples) would be identified and recruited to participate in the study. From the results of the quantitative data the Alpha reliability and the split-half reliability of the MEQ would be conducted. This would then serve as a validated instrument to study the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction.

Previous research has shown relationships between communication and marital satisfaction, infidelity and marital satisfaction, care and marital satisfaction, and forgiveness and marital satisfaction. The only literature on marital expectations and relationship satisfaction has used dating couples who were in college as convenience samples. It is important to use married couples to study the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction. A hope of this study is that it has contributed to the knowledge on the relationship between marital

expectations and marital satisfaction for African immigrant married couples and United States born married couples. Another hope is that this study will raise the interest of clinicians and will contribute to the area of the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction, as well as the use of mixed methods design in counseling research.

Conclusion

This study explored the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction African immigrant and U. S. born married couples. The study utilized mixed methods cross-sectional research, quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis to investigate the research questions. The researcher identified a significant relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction (measured with the Relationship Assessment Scale) among African immigrant participants. There were significant differences between marital expectations and marital satisfaction based on immigrant status between African immigrant and U. S. born married participants. The researcher also identified qualitative similarities and differences among African immigrant and U.S. born married couples.

APPENDIX A: LETTER TO FAITH-BASED LEADERS

Research on Marital Satisfaction

My name is Evadne Ngazimbi, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education Program, College of Education at the University of Central Florida in Orlando and a Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselor. I am conducting my dissertation study, under the supervision of Dr. Andrew P. Daire, Associate Professor in the Counselor Education Program at UCF, on *the Relationship between Marital Expectations and Marital Satisfaction between Married African Immigrant Couples and United States-born Married Couples*. The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples. This study will focus on adult (18 years of age and older) couples who are African immigrants and United States-born married couples. Because you are a faith-based leader with a large population of African immigrants in your congregation, I am writing to ask for your support in helping me to identify couples who may be willing to participate in this research.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Also, this is an anonymous study so no identifying information will be collected from you and all the data collected will be kept confidential. The participants will be given an envelope containing Consent to Participate in Research form and three data collection instruments: (a) Marital Expectations Questionnaire, (b) Relationship Assessment Scale, and (c) Relationship Pleasure Scale. The total time required to respond to the three questionnaires will be approximately 25-30 minutes.

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board. Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF IRB office, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-

3246, or by campus mail 32816-0150. The hours of operation are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday except on University of Central Florida official holidays. The telephone numbers are (407) 882-2276 and (407) 823-2901.

If you are interested in assisting in this valuable research project:

We will schedule a date and time for data collection that will occur at your facility or church;

I will provide you a letter to read to your congregants informing them of the study;

I will provide copies of the letter with a flier on the back for potential participants to pick up if they are interested; and

I will be present at your facility or church with copies of all materials and will facilitate the data collection. Please contact me at (208)760 7981 so we can further discuss your participation. Also, I will be calling you in approximately one week to follow-up regarding your assistance.

Evadne E. Ngazimbi, LPC, NCC

Counselor Education Program

Dept. of Child, Family, &Community Sciences

University of Central Florida

Orlando, Fl 32826-1250

Phone (407)823 0077

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Dr Andrew P. Daire, PhD, LMHC, NCC

Associate Professor, Counselor Education

University of Central Florida

Orlando, FL 32816-1250

Phone (407)823 0385

E-mail: adaire@mail.ucf.edu

APPENDIX B: LETTER TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Letter to Potential Participant

My name is Evadne Ngazimbi, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education Program, College of Education at the University of Central Florida in Orlando and a Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselor. I am conducting my dissertation study, under the supervision of Dr. Andrew P. Daire, Associate Professor in the Counselor Education Program at UCF, on *the Relationship between Marital Expectations and Marital Satisfaction between Married African Immigrant Couples and United States-born Married Couples*.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married couples and U. S. born married couples. This study will focus on adult (18 years of age and older) couples who are African immigrants and United States born married couples. I am asking for your participation in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. Also, this is an anonymous study so no identifying information will be collected from you and all the data collected will be kept confidential. You and your spouse will be given an envelope containing a Consent to Participate in Research Form and three data collection instruments: (a) Marital Expectations Questionnaire, (b) Relationship Assessment Scale, and (c) Relationship Pleasure Scale. The total time required to respond to the three questionnaires will be approximately 25-30 minutes.

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board. Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF IRB office, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246, or by campus mail 32816-0150. The hours of operation are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm,

Monday through Friday except on University of Central Florida official holidays. The telephone numbers are (407) 882-2276 and (407) 823-2901.

If you are interested in participating, I will be collecting data here at Andrews University Church on 11/08/08 at 3.30 PM. It is preferred if you and your spouse can attend but you can participate without your spouse. I will review this information prior to start of data collection on 11/08/08.

Regards,

Evadne E. Ngazimbi, LPC, NCC

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Phone (407)823 0385

E-mail: adaire@mail.ucf.edu

APPENDIX C: MARITAL EXPECTATIONS STUDY FLYER

Married Couples aged 18 and older

WE NEED YOU!

You are invited to participate in a study on

MARITAL EXPECTATIONS

AND

MARITAL SATISFACTION

This study will focus on married couples who are either U. S. born or African Immigrants

You will complete three questionnaires for 25-30 minutes

There is no compensation for participating in the study

Date and time will be announced

If you are interested, please contact:

Evadne E. Ngazimbi (208) 760-7981

Dr Andrew P. Daire, (407)823 0385

Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education Associate Professor,

University of Central Florida,

University of Central Florida

Department of Child, Family, and

P. O. Box 161250, Orlando,

Community Sciences

FL 32816-1250

P. O. Box 161250,

Orlando, FL 32816-12

Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board. Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF IRB office, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-

3246, or by campus mail 32816-0150. The hours of operation are 8:00 am until 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday except on University of Central Florida official holidays. The telephone numbers are (407) 882-2276 and (407) 823-2901.

APPENDIX D: NON-MEDICAL WAIVER OF CONSENT FORM



Informed Consent for an Adult in a Non-medical Research Study

Researchers at the University of Central Florida (UCF) study many topics. To do this we need the help of people who agree to take part in a research study. You are being invited to take part in a research study which will include about 200 people. You can ask questions about the research. You can read this form and agree to take part right now, or take the form home with you to study before you decide. You will be told if any new information is learned which may affect your willingness to continue taking part in this study. You have been asked to take part in this research study because you are a married person. You must be 18 years of age or older to be included in the research study and sign this form.

The person doing this research is Evadne Ngazimbi of the Counselor Education Program, College of Education, University of Central Florida.

Because the researcher is a Doctoral Student, she is being guided by Dr Andrew P. Daire, a UCF faculty supervisor in the Counselor Education Program, Department of Child, Family, and Community Sciences.

Study title: Exploring the Relationship between Marital Expectations and Marital Satisfaction between Married African Immigrant Couples and United States – born Married Couples.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationships between marital expectations and marital satisfaction between African immigrant married couples and U.S. – born married couples.

What you will be asked to do in the study: You will be asked to fill out the following questionnaires: a) **The Marital Expectations Questionnaire**, which asks about your background information and marital expectations; b) **The Relationship Assessment Scale**, which asks about your relationship with your spouse; and c) **The Relationship Pleasure Scale**, which asks about the quality of your relationship with your spouse.

Voluntary participation: You should take part in this study only because you want to. There is no penalty for not taking part, and you will not lose any benefits. You have the right to stop at any time. Just tell the researcher or a member of the research team that you want to stop. You will be told if any new information is learned which may affect your willingness to continue taking part in this study.

Appendix D

Location: Since this study will take place at a number of different sites, you will be informed of the location where this study will occur.

Time required: If you agree to participate in this study, you will need to come only once. If you only participate in filling in the questionnaires, you will need 25-30 minutes to complete filling in the questionnaires.

Risks: Anticipated risks are minimal and might include feelings of discomfort when reflecting on your relationship. Should you experience such feelings, please let me know. I have a list of marriage and family counseling agencies that I can refer you to in your area.

You do not have to answer every question or complete every task. You will not lose any benefits if you skip questions or tasks. You do not have to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

Benefits: One benefit you may get from this study is the awareness of your expectations about marriage. If you experience any feelings of discomfort, please let me know. I have a list of marriage and family counseling agencies I can refer you to in your area.

Compensation or payment: There is no compensation or other payment to you for taking part in this study.

Anonymous Research: The questionnaire part of the study is anonymous. The researcher will do all in her power to ensure that no one who is not associated with the study will be exposed to information in the questionnaires.

Results: After the dissertation is published, if you are interested in the results you can find them in the results section of the dissertation. Dissertations can be found online under Dissertation Abstracts. Interested participants can also contact Evadne Ngazimbi to obtain the results.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: Evadne Ngazimbi, Graduate Student, Counselor Education Program, College of Education, (407) 823-2104 or Dr. Andrew Daire, Faculty Supervisor, Department of Child, Family, and Community Sciences at (407) 823-0385 or by email at adaire@mail.ucf.edu.

IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

APPENDIX E: THE NGAZIMBI-DAIRE MARITAL EXPECTATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

The Marital Expectations Questionnaire

Evadne Ngazimbi, M.Coun., and Andrew P. Daire, Ph.D.

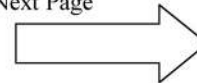
Section I

Please tell us a little about the expectations you have in and for your marriage.

1. What expectations do you have of a marriage partner?

2. Describe your perceptions of the marital expectations your parents had for each other.

Next Page



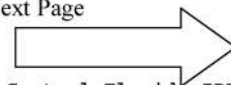
Appendix E

3. Briefly describe the similarities and differences between your relationship/marriage and that of your parents.

Similarities

Differences

4. How does meeting the expectations of your spouse promote happiness in your marriage?



Appendix E

Section II : Marital Expectations Questionnaire

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale below:

Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree(D), Neutral(N), Agree(A), and Strongly Agree(SA)

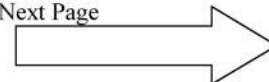
	SD	D	N	A	SA
1. Love and affection are key for a marriage to work					
2. Sex and intimacy are important for a happy marriage					
3. Companionship is necessary for married couples to be happy					
4. For both partners to be happy, there must be joint decision-making within a marriage					
5. The couple should have equitable distribution of household work					
6. Marriage is the means for financial security for the couple					
7. Emotional security is the by-product of marriage					
8. Marriage provides children with care and training for social environments					
9. Couples should share the same beliefs about morals and/or religion					
10. One of the most important functions of marriage is to establish and maintain a home					

Section III

- Please rank the following marital expectations according to how important you feel they are to you by placing 1 in the blank space for the expectation most important through 10 for the least important expectation for you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ Love and affection | ___ Financial security |
| ___ Sex and intimacy | ___ Emotional security |
| ___ Companionship | ___ Care and socialization of children |
| ___ Joint Decision-making | ___ Moral and/or religious agreement |
| ___ Equitable Division of household work | ___ Establish and maintain a home |

Next Page



Appendix E

Section IV Demographic Survey

Please check the box that best describes you.

1. I am a/an
 African immigrant Not an immigrant
 Other immigrant (Specify)_____

2. What is your ethnicity?
 White/Non-Hispanic Hispanic/Latino Black/Non-Hispanic
 Native American Asian American Other (Specify)_____

3. On a scale of from '1' to '5', with '1' being 'Not at all' to '5' being 'Very well', to what extent does your spouse share your cultural beliefs? Please circle your response.
1 2 3 4 5
Not at all Slightly Fairly Well Very Well

4. Please identify the area of the US in which you live
 Midwest Northeast
 Southeast Southwest
 West _____Other (Specify)

5. I have been married for _____years (if less than 1 year, use months)

6. Including this marriage, how many times have you been married? _____

7. How many children are in your household? _____

8. In the space(s) below, please write the number of children for each age range:
____0-4 years ____5-9 years ____10-14 years
____15-18 years ____Over 18 years

9. Years of education completed (e.g. 12th Grade =12, Associates degree =14) _____

10. What is your religious affiliation?
 Baptist Catholic
 Evangelical Christian Mormon
 Protestant Seventh Day Adventist
Other (Specify)_____

11. What is your age? _____years.

End.



APPENDIX F: THE RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT SCALE

RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT SCALE

Please mark on the answer sheet the letter for each item which best answers that item for you.

How well does your partner meet your needs?

A	B	C	D	E
Poorly	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Extremely Well

In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Unsatisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Average	More Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied

How good is your relationship compared to most?

A	B	C	D	E
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent

How often do you wish you hadn't gotten in this relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations:

A	B	C	D	E
Hardly at all	Slightly	Average	Reasonably	Completely

How much do you love your partner?

A	B	C	D	E
Not much	A Little	Average	Moderately	Very Much

How many problems are there in your relationship?

A	B	C	D	E
Very Few	Few	Average	Many	Very Many

Hendrick, S. S. (1988). A generic measure of relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 50, 93-98.

APPENDIX G: THE RELATIONSHIP PLEASURE SCALE

Relationship Pleasure Scale

How well is your relationship meeting your needs in each of the areas which are important for intimate, close relationships? How much pleasure and satisfaction are you getting from each of the resources of happiness?

Place a check mark (✓) in the box that best fits your response. **Please Note: Only the last item has six options.**

Resources of a Relationship	None	Much too Little	Some	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	All I've ever dreamed of
1. Sensuality (touch, smell, five senses)						
2. Sexuality (passion, lust, tension release)						
3. Intellectuality (sharing ideas, interests)						
4. Emotionality (confiding feelings)						
5. Friendship/Trust /Shared Interests (activities to do together)						
6. What has Been Built Together						

(children, friends, family, home, acquisitions, property)						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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APPENDIX H: APPROVAL LETTER



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901, 407-882-2012 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Notice of Expedited Initial Review and Approval

From : UCF Institutional Review Board
FWA00000351, Exp. 6/24/11, IRB00001138

To : Evadne Ngazimbi

Date : October 30, 2008

IRB Number: SBE-08-05883

Study Title: **Exploring the Relationship Between Marital Expectations and Marital Satisfaction Between Married African Immigrant Couples and United States -Born Married Couples**

Dear Researcher:

Your research protocol noted above was approved by **expedited** review by the UCF IRB Vice-chair on 10/29/2008. **The expiration date is 10/28/2009.** Your study was determined to be minimal risk for human subjects and expeditable per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.110. The category for which this study qualifies as expeditable research is as follows:

7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

A **waiver of documentation of consent** has been approved for all subjects. Participants do not have to sign a consent form, but the IRB requires that you give participants a copy of the IRB-approved consent form, letter, information sheet, or statement of voluntary consent at the top of the survey.

All data, which may include signed consent form documents, must be retained in a locked file cabinet for a minimum of three years (six if HIPAA applies) past the completion of this research. Any links to the identification of participants should be maintained on a password-protected computer if electronic information is used. Additional requirements may be imposed by your funding agency, your department, or other entities. Access to data is limited to authorized individuals listed as key study personnel.

To continue this research beyond the expiration date, a Continuing Review Form must be submitted 2 – 4 weeks prior to the expiration date. Advise the IRB if you receive a subpoena for the release of this information, or if a breach of confidentiality occurs. Also report any unanticipated problems or serious adverse events (within 5 working days). Do not make changes to the protocol methodology or consent form before obtaining IRB approval. Changes can be submitted for IRB review using the Addendum/Modification Request Form. An Addendum/Modification Request Form **cannot** be used to extend the approval period of a study. All forms may be completed and submitted online at <http://iris.research.ucf.edu>.

Failure to provide a continuing review report could lead to study suspension, a loss of funding and/or publication possibilities, or reporting of noncompliance to sponsors or funding agencies. The IRB maintains the authority under 45 CFR 46.110(e) to observe or have a third party observe the consent process and the research.

On behalf of Tracy Dietz, Ph.D., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 10/30/2008 08:58:44 AM EST

IRB Coordinator

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