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Personality Factor Interactions in Relationship Satisfaction

A doctoral dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree Doctor of  
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by

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### Abstract

Self-report ratings of the five factors of personality and a measure of relationship satisfaction were obtained from 60 males and 76 females (*self*). Subjects also rated their partner on the five factors and estimated their partner's relationship satisfaction (*other*). Both main effects and interaction effects of personality traits on relationship satisfaction were assessed. The analyses were performed separately for male and female respondents. For each gender, multiple regression analyses were used to assess main effects and interaction effects of personality traits on relationship satisfaction. Evidence of previously unidentified interactions between certain pairs of personality traits was found. This suggests that the interaction between couples' traits represents an unexplored and potentially useful component of relationship satisfaction.

*Keywords:* personality, relationship satisfaction, marital satisfaction, statistical interaction

### Introduction

The question of what makes for a good marriage has been answered historically with varying advice. While some advice may be apt in certain situations, words of wisdom regarding this topic do not have scientific grounding, as they are mainly subjective interpretations. Feelings about the person or people in question are the guiding principles behind advice about a given relationship. Contradiction, rather than consensus, often marks opinions about relationships. Should “birds of a feather flock together” or do “opposites attract”?

The rate of divorce in the United States has stabilized at around 50 percent, despite the widespread initial exuberance of newlywed couples (Goldstein, 1999). Why is there a contrast between couples’ beliefs in the longevity of their relationships and reality? What attracts us to one another initially has a great deal to do with surface or demographic similarity (Langhorne & Secord, 1955). As time progresses in a relationship, deeper personality aspects of each partner become more salient. Individuals in relationships must learn to understand and calibrate their personalities in conjunction with one another as they navigate inevitable conflicts and disagreements. An empirical understanding of how personalities interact within close relationships will help us to better predict if a given couple will, indeed, stay together and can lead to more effective couples therapy interventions.

At their core, close relationships and marriages are about a dynamic interaction between and within individuals’ personalities. Which important aspects constitute a personality is a question that, up until fairly recently, has been answered subjectively.

Through theories of meaning in language, philosophers and psychologists have been better able to empirically operationalize an objective and multifaceted measure of personality. A predominant way to think about personality is to view it as comprised of five main factors (Tupes & Christal, 1961). Furthermore, measures of personality based on these five factors reflect that personality stabilizes with age (Terracciano, McCrae & Costa, 2006). These same five factors also encompass components of personality across many diverse cultures (McCrae & Costa, 1997).

In addition to validating five-factor measures of personality, researchers have studied the association between individual factors and measures of marital satisfaction. The most commonly identified factors are as follows: *Neuroticism/Emotional Stability*, *Extraversion/Introversion*, *Openness to Experience*, *Agreeableness/Antagonism* and *Conscientiousness* (McCrae & Costa, 1985). *Neuroticism* consistently has been found to correlate negatively with relationship/marital satisfaction (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000a). Generally, the other four factors correlate positively with satisfaction, although many studies have found varying degrees of the strength of these correlations (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). One issue with relating individual factors of personality with relationship satisfaction is that any individual factor reflects only one part of a whole personality. Because each factor is orthogonal as far as others, it follows that each would correlate with different aspects of relationship satisfaction. Further, in marital studies, two entire personalities are interacting, represented by a multitude of combinations of ten distinct factors.

While previous research has addressed the issue of interaction, it has done so in a fundamentally incomplete sense; for example, previous research has included only individual

correlations between a single personality factor (e.g., *Neuroticism*) and relationship satisfaction. What has been missing is a measure of the *interaction* between any or all of the five factors, when looking at the relationship between personality and relationship satisfaction. True statistical interaction may be assessed by including a specific product term in a multiple regression analysis of the data. Computing the co-occurrence of two (or more) variables and controlling for their individual effects on the criterion variable is the way to determine if a statistical interaction exists (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003). Without implementing a multiple regression analysis, we can only know about single factor correlations with relationship satisfaction, and nothing about how these inevitably interact. The five factors which comprise personality never exist independently, so studying their interaction is essential.

Currently, only one pilot study, conducted by this author, has addressed the interactive aspects of personality as they relate to relationship satisfaction (Margines, 2007). Reanalyzing archival data from a largely heterogeneous and intermixed dating and married sample yielded strong, although arguably diminished, effects. However, certain interactions in this analysis showed promise in terms of significance. Obtaining a more homogeneous sample, specifically where there was a meaningful minimum to the duration of the relationship, is crucial. Recent research suggests that the three-year mark for relationships, independent of marital status, represents a meaningful segment of time in terms of relationship dynamics; couples who had been together for one to three years were found to be significantly happier than those who had been together for four to six years (Musick & Bumpass, 2006).

The purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between personality and relationship satisfaction through a multiple regression analysis to more aptly and accurately provide an understanding of the relationship between these constructs. The current analysis serves to establish the utility of studying the interactive components of personality as they relate to relationships. Using some of the pre-Bonferroni corrected significant interaction-pair findings of the pilot study as hypotheses, this analysis further explores whether the observed effects are, indeed, significant. Some questions that this study addressed are as follows: (a) Do pairs of personality traits interact with respect to relationship satisfaction. (b) Will collecting a sample of individuals (ratings themselves and their partners) with a specified minimum length of relationship duration provide a more meaningful way to relate the two constructs? (c) Do different levels of pairs of personality traits (e.g., low and medium, medium and high, high and high) interact to yield higher or lower levels of relationship satisfaction than would have been predicted by only observing single personality factors correlating with relationship satisfaction?

## **Methods**

### **Participants, Design and Sampling Procedures**

The sample included 142 participants: 63 males and 79 females. Of the 63 males, 60 identified themselves as “heterosexual” and three as “homosexual.” Among the females, 76 identified themselves as “heterosexual” and three as “homosexual.” The mean age of male participants was 35.47 years ( $SD = 11.88$ ). Among the females, the mean age was 35.17

years ( $SD = 12.76$ ). Because of the low number of participants identifying themselves as “homosexual,” no statistical analyses were performed with their data.

Subjects were required to have classified themselves as having been together with their current partner for three or more years. Snowball sampling represented one means of finding participants. This writer also requested participation of students at graduate schools in the United States, as well as their help in recruiting other participants that they know who would fit the criteria. Because individuals who defined themselves as having been in their current relationship (married or not) for at least three years, it was likely that these individuals knew others like themselves. Another sampling method came through recruitment of participants from the internet, which provided a broad forum for finding participants who were qualified for this study. The survey was hosted online and participants were required to be 18 and over.

The study employed a correlational non-experimental design with all participants completing the same testing battery. The independent variables were the personality trait levels on each of five factors across both the self- and partner-ratings using a five factor personality inventory, based on a list of 40 unipolar adjectives, the 3M-40, which robustly assesses five personality factors (Saucier, 2002). So, an individual provided both ratings for himself or herself and his or her significant other—for a total of ten independent variables. Research has suggested that ratings from others correlate significantly with self-ratings (Watson, Hubbard and Wiese, 2000a). The criterion variable is relationship satisfaction, assessed using the short form of Funk and Rogge’s (2007) Couples Satisfaction Index

(administered both in self and partner forms), which has both robust convergent validity and construct validity with larger, previously established, scales.

### **Instrumentation**

**3M-40.** The personality inventory used was the 3M-40 (Saucier, 2002), a five-factor based index, with 40-items, each represented on a 9-point scale. It includes the 40 most salient items from a larger index of 100 adjectives (Goldberg, 1992).

Subjects completed the inventory in both a *self*-form and a *partner*-form, corresponding to their personality assessment and their assessment of their partner using the same set of adjectives. These items are designed to give valid and reliable indicators of both a person's self- and partner's personality. Saucier (2002) emphasizes, “3M40 showed predictive validities comparable to those [with far more items] of comparison Big Five marker sets” (p. 28). Since values on both sets of the five factors, for the self- and partner-rated forms were obtained, there were ten total distinct factor measures.

Reliability represents another issue. The 3M-40 inventory is derived from larger lists of adjectives (Goldberg, 1992; Peabody, 1987) yet is able to “advantageously maximize the reliability and brevity of a [five factor] measure” (Saucier, 2002, pp. 10-11). The internal consistency of the scales on the 3M-40 ranged from .70 to .89 (Saucier, 2002). While some data suggest that personality becomes stable at around age 30, “Personality traits are indeed enduring dispositions. . . The present analyses of retest interval confirmed earlier findings that stability decays slowly with the passage of time” (Terracciano et al., 2006) others argue stability might occur after age 50 (Ardelt, 2000; Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000). The nature of



the construct “personality” implies by its very definition that it is relatively unchanging, or reliable. Inextricably, reliability and validity are linked in the study of personality.

**Couples Satisfaction Index.** The next portion of the battery involved the Couples Satisfaction Index (Funk & Rogge, 2007). This 4-item scale represents a modern refinement of previous, longer and more widely-used scales such as Locke and Wallace’s (1959) Marital Adjustment Scale (MAT) and Spainer’s (1976) Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS). The CSI has high internal consistency ( $\alpha = .94$ ), strong concurrent reliability with the MAT ( $r = .88$ ) and the DAS ( $r = .87$ ). The CSI yielded one score with regard to satisfaction within the relationship, where a higher score is indicative of more relationship satisfaction. Participants again rated themselves and their partners. While research about the accuracy of partner ratings on the CSI is unavailable, this data nonetheless provides insight into the perception that participants had about their partners and their relationships.

**Demographic questionnaire.** The demographic questionnaire consisted of standard background questions including age, gender, ethnicity, birth order, relationship status, and education.

### **Data Analysis**

Multiple regression analyses were performed between certain pairs of the five factor scores (from the 3M-40 measure) across both the self- and other- ratings, and the criterion variable, relationship satisfaction (from CSI scores) to assess whether interaction was indeed

present. To assess for interaction, scores of each of the factor traits were standardized, and pairs were multiplied (Jaccard & Turrisi, 2003). The following pairs were tested as hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* There will be an interaction between males' and females' levels of *Openness* in relation to male relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 2:* There will be an interaction between males' and females' levels of *Conscientiousness* in relation to male relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 3:* There will be an interaction between males' *Agreeableness* and females' *Conscientiousness* in relation to female relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 4:* There will be an interaction between males' *Neuroticism* and *Extraversion* in relation to male relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 5:* There will be an interaction between males' *Neuroticism* and *Agreeableness* in relation to female relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 6:* There will be an interaction between males' *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* in relation to female relationship satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 7:* There will be an interaction between females' *Openness* and *Agreeableness* in relation to male relationship satisfaction.

Each of the seven hypotheses was tested twice: once according to responses from male subjects about themselves and their partners, and once according to responses from female subjects about themselves and their partners. Female and male participants' data were first divided into separate sets and subsequently tested in the context of each of the seven

hypotheses. The interaction of different pairs of personality traits, with respect to measures of relationship satisfaction, was the subject of each hypothesis.

## Results

### Statistical Procedures

Initially, single factor correlations were explored between ratings of personality traits and relationship satisfaction. While self-ratings of personality traits by themselves did not significantly relate to ratings of self-rated relationship satisfaction, subjects' ratings of their partners were strongly related.

In the male sample, ratings of female partners' levels of *Openness* ( $p < .01$ ), *Agreeableness* ( $p < .01$ ), and *Conscientiousness* ( $p < .01$ ) were significantly and positively related to males' self-rated relationship satisfaction ( $R^2 = .421$ ). In the female sample, ratings of male partners' levels of *Neuroticism* ( $p < .05$ ), *Openness* ( $p < .01$ ), *Agreeableness* ( $p < .01$ ), and *Conscientiousness* ( $p < .01$ ) were significantly and positively related to females' self-rated relationship satisfaction ( $R^2 = .559$ ).

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to evaluate whether a statistical interaction was present in linking the constructs of personality and relationship satisfaction. Pairs of personality traits would have to affect one another with respect to relationship satisfaction to conclude that statistical interaction was indeed present. Two of the seven hypotheses (one and six) exhibited significant interactions among the pairs of traits.

*Hypothesis 1.* The female sample exhibited a significant interaction between the variables ( $p < .05$ ,  $R^2 = .144$ ). Females' ratings of their own levels of *Openness* and their

ratings of their male partners' levels of *Openness* interacted, with respect to females' perceived ratings of their male partners' levels of relationship satisfaction. In that sample, similar levels of *Openness* (i.e., both high or both low) interacted positively in the context of relationship satisfaction, and disparate levels of *Openness* interacted negatively, in relation to the criterion variable.

*Hypothesis 6.* In the female sample, again, there was a significant interaction between the variables ( $p < .05$ ,  $R^2 = .429$ ). Medium values of both females' ratings of their male partners' *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* interacted to produce higher levels of females' self-rated relationship satisfaction ratings. There was a parabolic drop-off for other combinations of levels (e.g., high and low, or middle and low) of the personality traits, with respect to female relationship satisfaction (see Table 1; see Figure 1).

### Post-Hoc Analyses

Another analysis was conducted to further understand the question of whether interactions were present in linking the constructs of personality and relationship satisfaction. Every possible permutation of personality pairs of male and female *self-* and *partner* ratings was run against ratings of both male and female relationship satisfaction. Of 180 total possible pairings, nine would have been expected by chance alone to show significant interactions at the .05 level if a Bonferroni correction were not applied. Nearly twice as many, 17 did.

A ranking procedure that produced tritiles was applied to the 180 possible pairings above to find combinations of pairs of traits that yielded the highest levels of relationship

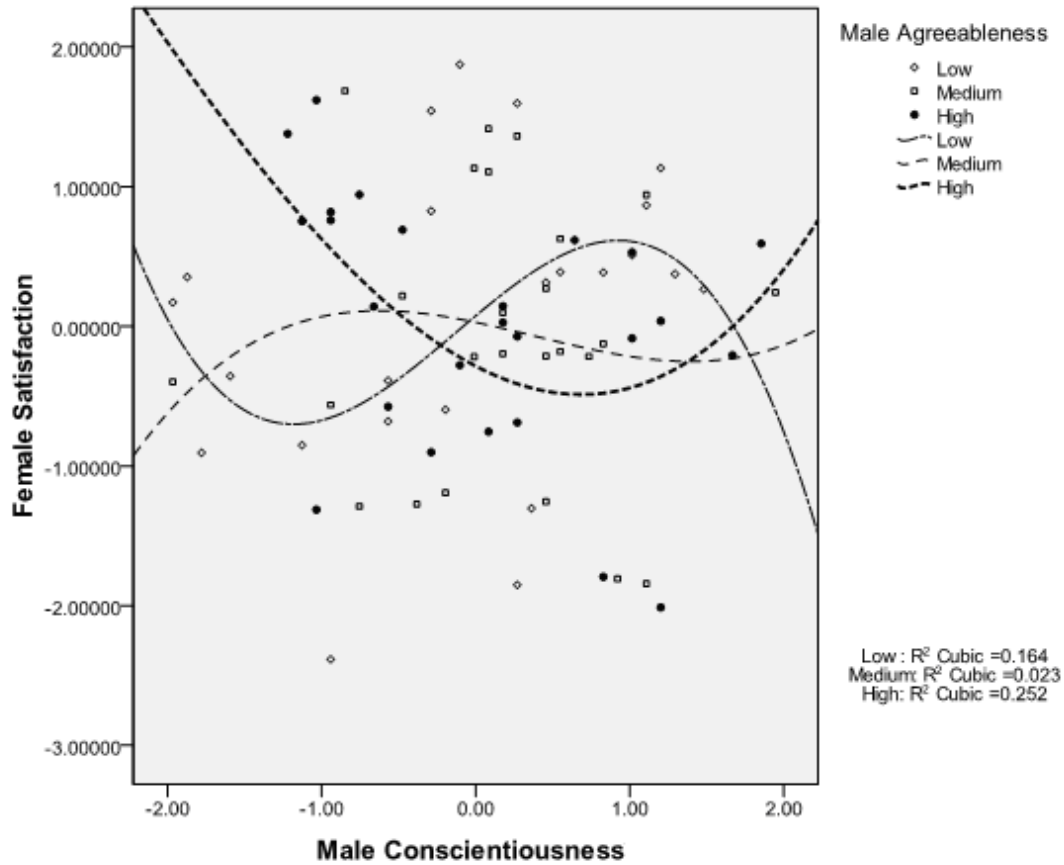
satisfaction. For males, highest levels of relationship satisfaction occurred when they rated their own levels *Conscientiousness* high, as well as their female partners' levels of *Conscientiousness* high; when they rated their own levels *Agreeableness* high, and their female partners' levels of *Openness* towards the middle; and when they rated their own levels *Agreeableness* high, as well as their female partners' levels of *Agreeableness* high.

Table 1

*Interaction in Levels of Female Relationship Satisfaction*

		Low	Medium	High
		Male agreeableness (rated by female)		
		Low	Medium	High
Male	High	1.15	-0.71	-0.44
Conscientiousness	Medium	0.65	0.52	-1.19
(Rated by female)	Low	-1.8	0.19	1.61

*Note.* The 3x3 matrix shows cell means for pure interaction, based on low, medium, and high levels of two personality traits. The number in each box represents the deviation from a baseline (no interaction) at the intersection of different levels of each trait.



*Figure 1.* Graph of Cubic Trends at Three Levels of Male Agreeableness. The curved lines of the graph denote low (1), medium (2), and high (3) levels of female ratings of their male partners' Agreeableness, with respect to females' self-ratings of Relationship Satisfaction. The horizontal axis represents female respondents' ratings of their male partners' levels of Conscientiousness. The differences between the curvature of the lines represents the interaction between Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. (If the lines were parallel, this would have meant that no interaction was present between the personality traits.)

Among female respondents, highest levels of relationship satisfaction occurred when they rated their own levels of *Neuroticism* high, and their male partners' levels of *Openness* high; when they rated their own levels of *Openness* low, and their male partners' levels of *Extraversion* towards the middle; and when they rated their own levels of *Openness* low, and their male partners' levels of *Agreeableness* towards the middle.

When observing the intersection of the highest or lowest satisfaction in either male or female pairs, it is important to remember that what is true for these samples may not generalize to the whole population. For instance, females who rated their levels of *Neuroticism* low might be more toward the middle in terms of the general population. Therefore, which pairs are most or least satisfying might be different in a universal sense.

## Discussion

### Discussion of Hypotheses

The construct of personality trait interaction, with respect to relationship satisfaction, was supported by significant findings within two of the hypotheses and significant interactions among many of the other possible pairs of personality traits. One possible reason why more hypotheses were not significant is that they were derived from a previous reanalysis of archival data from Watson, Hubbard, and Weise (2000a, 2000b), which included a mixture of newly dating couples from a university and married couples from a church. Besides the fact that they measured dyads, those researchers' bimodal sample of



couples was demographically very different from the sample of individuals analyzed in the current study.

Prevailing ideas about similarity as a predictor of relationship satisfaction are questionable when integrating this researcher's findings. Indeed, "birds of a feather" was the tenor of a study which found that similar "personality and emotional experience" related to "better relationship functioning" in newlywed couples (Gonzaga, Campos, & Bradbury, 2007, p. 47). However, another study actually found that 12 years into a marriage, personality similarity, as measured by the Five Factor model, "predicted more negative slopes in marital satisfaction trajectories" (Shiota & Levinson, 2007).

The manifestation of different personality trait interactions in the present study also suggests that similarity can actually be detrimental to relationship satisfaction. When considering *Neuroticism*, for example, females who rated themselves as "high" and their male partners as "low" were more satisfied than were females with any other combination of *Neuroticism* across the two partners.

Widespread significant interaction among pairs of personality traits clearly demonstrates the merit of analyzing such interactions, as opposed to checking only for single trait correlates. While these traits are orthogonal, as they relate to each other in the context of personality, this analysis has shown that they commonly affect one another in relation to another construct: relationship satisfaction. With significant interactions so widely present in pairs of traits, it is vital to check for interactions of personality traits in future research.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Participants rated themselves and their partners. Thus, the partner rating is based on the respondent's perceptions. Generalizing the results of this study to a couple who each provided self-ratings would not be appropriate. The degree to which a person is able to accurately rate his or her partner (that is, to approximate what his or her partner's self-rating would be) inevitably includes some unexplained variation. We cannot know if this variation is constant across raters and their ratings. For example, if individuals with higher ratings of *Neuroticism* provide lower than average ratings of their partners' *Extraversion* ratings, such disparity can lead to shifts in the data that would not be evident in the battery included in this study. Orthogonality of ratings on the five factor measures cannot be assured across partners.

### **Future Directions**

Replicating the current study with couples providing self and other ratings represents an opportunity to better understand the generalizability of these findings. Where dyads' similar ratings (on personality trait and/or relationship satisfaction levels) would lend support to this research, a disparity in ratings could lead to better insight about matching new couples or ameliorating potential couple conflict for existing ones.

A sizable homosexual sample could provide new insights into what personality trait interactions would be more important for that population. Having participants provide both self- and partner ratings to check for accuracy and even establish where bias or unexplained variation might be occurring would be additionally helpful. Even though the Big Five factor structure has been replicated across many different cultures, more diversity would add

credence to this research and further validate important linkages between personality and relationship satisfaction.

Another potential area of improvement to this study would be refining the criterion variable so that it better measured relationship satisfaction, without the being influenced by more general life satisfaction. A purer measure of relationship satisfaction would add more credence to this model, and strengthen its internal validity. Additionally, by applying the analysis of this study, there would be more information to uncover about the dynamics of personality trait interactions as they related to more general measures of life satisfaction.

Building a model that would incorporate all of the nuances about interaction of personality traits as predictors of relationship satisfaction with potential partners represents an important application of this data. The debate of “birds of a feather” or “opposites attract” not only pursues the wrong answer, it is the wrong question in a realm that is as deep, nuanced, and complicated as the people it attempts to describe.

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APPENDIX A

Literature Review

Better understanding personality and relationship/marital satisfaction through the use of deeper statistical analysis could represent a potentially important contribution to research, with respect to both constructs. The proposed research will investigate whether interactions among personality variables influence relationship satisfaction. Obtaining a less heterogeneous sample (than what this writer had previously analyzed) may increase the potential statistical power and may make a case for broadening this type of analysis in the future. This review is comprised of several sections which describe the necessary foundations to justify the current research proposal. In the first section, "Personality," the theoretical and practical aspects of the Five-Factor Model of personality will be discussed. Next, the five factors of personality will be described and a case will be made for the stability, validity, and universality of the construct. The second section, "Marital Satisfaction," will cover representative research on establishing correlations between the constructs of marital satisfaction and personality. Next, a summary of the literature discussed will be included, followed by a section in which the terms used in this study will be defined. Lastly, the research hypotheses will be presented.

### **Personality**

The first section of this literature review will discuss the construct of personality. Particularly, the historical refinement of measuring personality and the development of a five factor personality index will be explored. Furthermore, the five factors of personality will be described in detail.



### **Toward an Objective, Valid, and Reliable Measure of Personality**

In the nineteenth century, Sir Francis Galton boldly proposed that personality was an entity that could be studied and measured through science: “The powers of man are finite, and if finite they are not too large for measurement” (Galton, 1884, p. 179). The finite boundaries, he explained, are contained within human language:

I tried to gain an idea of the number of the more conspicuous aspects of the character by counting in an appropriate dictionary the words used to express them. Roget’s Thesaurus was selected for that purpose, and I examined many pages of its index here and there as samples of the whole, and estimated that it contained fully one thousand words expressive of character, each of which has a separate shade of meaning, while each shares a large part of its meaning with some of the rest. (p. 182)

The adjectives that humans use to describe themselves represent the relevant set of what is meaningful in personality. Words that best capture the meaning of personality are the ones that people tend to use the most. Galton’s reasoning suggests that personality descriptors, as well as the flavor of their connotations, cover the breadth of traits in a given language. If people create their own language to convey meaning and use it accordingly, that which is meaningful must be encoded within the language.

Galton’s intuitions were later validated by the actual compilation of a list of personality-describing words, which Allport and Odbert created in 1936. These researchers waded through the lexicon to find thousands of words that referred to personality. After searching through two large English dictionaries, the list they compiled consisted of 17,953

words. Subsequently, they reduced this list to 4,500 adjectives, which they felt best exemplified traits, or relatively unchanging descriptors, of personality.

Cattell (1943) empirically built upon the work of Allport and Odbert by developing scales based on the latter's trait lists, as well as on his own interjecting concepts from psychopathology. The result was 171 primarily bipolar scales that Cattell later honed into 35 clusters of related items. Empirically, Cattell's contributions represented a major step, because he used statistical analysis to formulate and validate these clusters. Cattell (1945) produced rating scales based on clusters that were subsequently analyzed using an oblique rotational procedure, which yielded 12 oblique factors. Using an orthogonal rotation, which increases the stringency for weeding out potential overlapping factors, other researchers have found that there are five distinct personality factors, which have been reliably replicated (e.g., Norman, 1963; Tupes & Christal, 1961). Other researchers, who used other trait sets, found a convergent five factor structure when applying similar statistical analyses (e.g., Borgatta, 1964; Digman & Inouye, 1986; McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1987). The fact that different pathways of research have arrived at a strikingly similar five factor personality structure lends credence to the model.

### **The Five Factor Model of Personality**

The five factors of personality are, semantically, representations of traits that every person possesses along a spectrum. In order of greatest to least prominence, they are as follows: (1) *Neuroticism* versus *Emotional Stability*, (2) *Extraversion* (also known as *Surgency*) versus *Introversion*, (3) *Openness* (also sometimes called *Intellect*), (4)

*Agreeableness* versus *Antagonism*, and (5) *Conscientiousness*. (For short, the factors are referred to by one end of the continuum: *Neuroticism*, *Extraversion*, *Openness*, *Agreeableness*, and *Conscientiousness*). While the labels that different researchers give these traits may vary, the concepts they represent are highly consistent (McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1987). Some researchers have argued for the inclusion of a sixth factor, *Honesty*, claiming that, while it is not as robust as the rest, it may be statistically on par with the *Intellect* factor (Ashton & Lee, 2001). Alternately, Eysenck (1981) argues that there are only three main factors. However, while some dissent among researchers is found, the most dominant perspective is that five factors of personality exist (McCrae & Costa, 1985). These factors are described below.

**Neuroticism.** The *Neuroticism* factor accounts for the largest portion of the five factor personality structure, embodying a person's propensity to encounter psychological distress or to experience negative emotions (Costa & McCrae, 1988). A relatively high amount of *Neuroticism* is present with most psychological diagnoses. Some characteristics that exemplify the *Neuroticism* scale include "anxiety," "hostility," "depression," "self-consciousness," "impulsiveness" and "vulnerability" (Goldberg, 1981). *Neuroticism* routinely has been found to negatively correlate with measures of marital satisfaction. *Emotional Stability* represents the opposite of *Neuroticism*.

**Extraversion.** The next highest ranking factor is *Extraversion*, which is broad and comprised of an individual's experiencing joy and pleasure and engaging in his or her social

world. Some characteristics that exemplify the *Extraversion* scale include “warmth,” “positive emotions,” “I talk to a lot of different people at parties,” “I start conversations,” and “I feel comfortable around people” (Goldberg, 1981; McCrae & Costa, 1988).

**Openness.** The *Openness* factor concerns the spectrum of practical to artistically-minded people. People who are open are engaged with their feelings, ideas and understanding of the world. On the other end of this scale, individuals who are less open tend to dislike and/or not understand abstract ideas very well, and they typically agree that they do not have a good imagination (Goldberg, 1981).

**Agreeableness.** The fourth factor, *Agreeableness*, measures an individual’s value in getting along with others. People who are agreeable tend to be more popular, gaining the favor of others with relative ease; those who are less agreeable, or antagonistic, might be better suited for activities in which an objective perspective is more valuable. Some items that represent the *Agreeableness* factor include “trust,” “tolerance,” and “warmth” (McCrae & Costa, 1988).

**Conscientiousness.** *Conscientiousness*, the final factor, is comprised of items that are related to the level of striving for organization and achievement. Items, such as “I like order,” “I am always prepared,” and “I follow a schedule,” represent individuals high in *Conscientiousness* (Goldberg, 1981).

Goldberg (1992) developed a 100-item “markers” scale to assess the five factors of personality in an efficient format by paring down the thousands of words in language to the ones that are best correlated with each factor. Further refining this list, Saucier (1994, 2002) produced the “mini-markers,” a list of 40 adjectives that represent a simplified list of “optimally robust” (1994, p. 506) items.

### **Validating the Five Factor Measure**

The question of the generalizability of an index measure of personality is vitally important, both to the measure and to the study of the personality construct in general. To make the argument that a certain construct captures personality, this construct must apply robustly to individuals across time and across the diversity of cultures.

In refining the five factors, researchers sought to understand the factors’ applicability to non-English speakers and people outside of the United States. Translating their inventory into different languages, McCrae and Costa (1997) administered their Five Factor NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PIR) to several cultural groups. They chose German, Portuguese, Hebrew, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese as the languages to use because these six represented a diversity of demography with respect to culture, linguistic family, and socioeconomic status.

Each of the above languages has different linguistic foundations. Similar to English, German comes from the Germanic branch of the Indo-European family. Portuguese also comes from this family, but it is from the Italic branch. Hebrew, an ancient language, is a Hamito-Semitic language. Chinese is part of the Sino-Tibetan family. The final two, Korean

and Japanese, are not usually classified as coming from language families, but they share linguistic features with other world languages.

While the first three languages, German, Portuguese and Hebrew, are tied to Judeo-Christian roots and culture, the next three are not. The Chinese, Korean, and Japanese languages come from countries with Buddhist and Confucian traditions, which differ sharply from the monotheistic tenet of the former groups.

Furthermore, people who speak the Eastern languages tend to be more collectivistic, while those who speak the Western languages tend to be more individualistic. The variable of individualism-collectivism is well-researched, with “overwhelming evidence indicat[ing] differences in basic psychological processes between collectivistic and individualistic contexts” (Kagitcibasi & Berry, 1989, p. 516). On a scale of one (collectivistic) to ten (individualistic), the following countries ranked as follows: South Korea (3), Japan (4), Portugal (5), Israel (6), West Germany (8), and the United States (10) (Trandis, 1994, as cited in Diener et al., 1995). Therefore, the researchers clearly had a diversified sample to compare. From the results of their study, McCrae and Costa (1997) concluded the following:

The cross-cultural and cross-language similarities in the structure of the NEO-PIR seen in these samples are in many ways remarkable. More-or-less literal translations of items selected in the American samples worked quite well in different cultures, without the need for extensive revision or adaptation...A model of personality rooted in English-language trait adjectives could be meaningfully applied not only in a closely related language like German but also in such utterly distinct languages as Chinese and Korean. (pp. 514-515)

McCrae and Costa's findings show the robustness of the five factor model of personality in its universal application. That highly varied cultures loaded similarly on these factors suggests that this measurement index is universal and objective.

### **The Measure Across Time**

To assert that a measure of personality is truly valid must mean that it is relatively unchanging—reflecting a trait rather than a state. Variance among items or measures would suggest that situational variables, which do not reflect underlying states, were being measured. Furthermore, if personality were found to be largely inconsistent across cultures, then research conducted on personality would be highly questionable and limited. Alternately, changes across time could mean that personality may change or develop as different stages of life progress.

Using data from a longitudinal medical study, researcher Finn (1986) compared a well-normed instrument measure of personality, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) from three different age groups. Through comparison, he wanted to test if personality changed at different rates throughout time by comparing differences in measures. Men were tested on 15-item factor scales on an initial and 30-year follow-up. His three groups included young (17-44), middle-aged (45-59) and old (60-85) male participants. As expected, a fair amount of sample attrition occurred within the 30 year period between the first and second measures. However, Finn found no statistical differences between the “completers” and “non-completers.” He concluded the following:

The results of this study yield support for the hypothesis...that the development of personality traits over a life span follows a positively sloped, negatively accelerating function. This theory implies lower retest stability among younger age groups...when stability coefficients were corrected for internal consistency there was even more support for the major hypothesis. (p. 816)

While Finn's work functions as solid initial evidence about the stability of personality, there are some limitations as well. He used the MMPI, a personality measure that is synthesized differently than a five factor measure. Also, his study only included men, and therefore, results very well may not generalize to women's personality stability characteristics. Finally, his measures only include a self-rating; social desirability, faking good, or other reasons could have potentially confounded subjective ratings.

Acknowledging this potential shortcoming, Costa and McCrae conducted a subsequent study that included multiple self-ratings and ratings of others among a sample of spouses across a six-year period (1988). Using their five factor-based NEO Personality Inventory, they asserted that, "If personality is truly stable, spouse ratings should predict self-reports across an interval of 6 years as well as they predict concurrent self-reports" (p. 854) In other words, the authors argued that, if personality is stable, the measure should be consistent over long periods of time. Evidence supported their assertion, and Costa and McCrae concluded the following:

The failure to find clear maturational changes is particularly striking in view of the large samples used...the analyses of retest stability provided unequivocal evidence for the stability of individual differences. All five of the major domains of normal



personality showed stability in self-reports of men and women across the adult age range; spouse ratings confirmed this stability for Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness. (p. 862)

The stability of the spouse measure clearly buttresses Finn's (1986) work in showing that even another rater's ratings of a person stay consistent over time. Clearly, the five factor personality measure has face validity in capturing human traits, and trait measurements are constant over time. More recent literature also gives support to these findings. The most current debate about stability concerns whether its highest point is reached around age 30 (McCrae & Costa, 2003; Terracciano et al., 2007) or after age 50 (Ardelt, 2000; Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000). A meta-analysis by Terracciano et. al. (2007) found that on median rank order consistency for respondents age 30-50 was robust ( $r = .79$ ), for individuals who were aged 50-65, it was slightly higher ( $r = .82$ ).

### **Marital Satisfaction**

Earlier, the following question was posed: In marital relationships, do birds of a feather flock together or do opposites attract? Research shows much stronger support for the former. People overwhelmingly tend to pair with similar partners. Some of the traits that make people similar include physical characteristics, age, ethnic origin, religion, socioeconomic status, intellectual and cognitive variables, personality traits and social attitudes (Buss, 1985). Thiessen called this overwhelming bend toward similarity "assortative narcissism" (Thiessen, 1979 as cited in Buss, 1985, p. 47). It is important to note that these

research findings only concern initial matching and may not generalize to relationship satisfaction as relationships progress.

Personality traits also represent important criteria when people declare what they would like in a partner. When asked in a free-response form what they wanted in a potential spouse, personality traits were consistently at the top of both men's and women's lists (Langhorne & Secord, 1955). The personality traits "kindness" and "understanding" ranked as the first items on both men's and women's lists.

Botwin, Buss and Shackelford (1997) studied which personality characteristics are important in a mate, using both dating and married samples. They collected self-, partner-, and independent interviewer reports using Goldberg's (1983) five-factor measure in adjective form, as well as a demographics questionnaire, which included items such as age, height, weight, political beliefs, verbal SAT scores, and alcohol use. Married couples also were required to fill out a short marital satisfaction questionnaire. Dating couples needed to have been together for at least six months, while married couples were required to have been married for less than one year.

At the factor level, Botwin et al. (1997) found that both sexes most highly valued the traits *Agreeableness* and *Intellect-Openness*. Women were found to be more "exacting" or "extreme in their desires" (p. 129) than were men in terms of their rating of an ideal partner. In terms of similarity, all groups preferred partners who had personality characteristics similar to their own. Interestingly, when the ratings of their partners were compared to their ratings of an ideal mate, individuals tended to get what they wanted. Of the four sub-samples, only dating men's partners did not embody their ideal partner. The similarity between actual

partner-ratings and ideal partner-ratings was highest for the *Surgency* and *Intellect-Openness* factors.

For the married sample, Botwin et al. (1997) used hierarchical multiple regressions to find correlations between partners' self-rated personality scores and marital satisfaction scores. They found "significant main effects of participants' partner's personality on marital satisfaction, but the discrepancy scores between partners' personalities and their mate's ideal for each factor of personality did not contribute any unique variance above and beyond the partner's personality scores" (p. 128). So, even though there is this strong relationship between actual partner-ratings and ideal partner-ratings, the amount of difference between an individual's actual personality and his or her partner's ideal rating does not seem to matter. *Agreeableness* had the strongest correlation with marital satisfaction items across both men and women. *Emotional Stability* (or *Neuroticism*, in inverse form) and *Intellect-Openness* ranked next highest, followed by *Conscientiousness*.

Clearly, personality factors play a central role with respect to marital satisfaction. While people may selectively sort according to similarity on a number of more surface-level demographic characteristics, personality dynamics and interactions have a greater stake in determining the actual quality of romantic relationships.

The study by Botwin et al. (1997) is just one of several important studies that demonstrate correlations between some or all of the five factors of personality and marital satisfaction. Their finding that *Neuroticism* is correlated with less satisfaction for both partners does not hold across all studies, however. Some studies have found that the female's (but not the male's) level of *Neuroticism* correlates with the satisfaction of both partners

(Geist & Gilbert, 1996; Newton & Kiecol-Glaser, 1995). Karney et al. (1994) actually found male partners' *Neuroticism* as positively correlated with marital satisfaction. Finally, in a meta-analytic review of longitudinal marital studies, Karney and Bradbury (1995) found no gender differences between any of the personality traits.

Given the inconsistencies in the research regarding *Neuroticism* and the little research that has been conducted with the other factors, Watson, Hubbard, and Weise (2000) sought to better understand the link between all of the five factors and relationship/marital satisfaction. These researchers also included measures of Positive and Negative Affectivity—a behavioral index related to *Neuroticism* that Watson and others had formulated through earlier research (Watson & Clark, 1984, 1997b). In their 2000 study, Watson et al. used two samples, dating couples and married couples, and had each individual fill out both self- and other-five factor ratings using the NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992), as well as their measures of Affectivity.

Furthermore, for each group, (Watson, Hubbard, & Wiese, 2000) the researchers used a battery of several different measures to arrive at a single measure of the dependent variable, relationship/marital satisfaction. In the dating group, participants first filled out a 25-item SMU Relationship Questionnaire, which was created by Watson and Assenheimer (1991). On this measure, 16 items relate to intimacy and 9 to conflict. The conflict measure was reverse-scored. Then, the dating group completed a Dyadic Adjustment Scale that was modified for use with non-married couples (Spainer, 1976). These measures were combined into an aggregated index of relationship satisfaction.

The married couples group also filled out several measures. First, they completed the popular and well-established (e.g. Eysenck & Wakefield, 1981; Karney et al., 1994; Newton & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1995) Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; Locke & Wallace, 1959). This 15-item index includes eight items which assess convergence across common domains of conflict, six items which address solving this conflict, and one item that appraises marriage quality. The married couples also completed the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983). The researchers only regarded the first five items of this test, which included statements about the marriage (e.g., “My relationship with my partner makes me happy”) measured on a seven-point Likert scale. Both the third and fourth scales administered to married individuals were derived from the above-mentioned SMU Relationship Questionnaire for use with the married sample. Similarly, the scores on these four measures were combined to produce a single aggregate measure of marital satisfaction.

Results indicated that the married couples demonstrated better convergence in their self- and other-ratings than couples in the dating sample. It is important to note that the two samples used in this study (dating and married) differed significantly. Couples in the dating sample had been dating for an average of 18 months, while the married sample couples had been married for an average of 17 years. Therefore, these results were to be expected, since married couples tended to know each other for longer periods of time, and therefore, presumably knew each other better. Furthermore, because of the large discrepancy in length of relationship between the dating and married groups, the potential for cohort differences existed, which may have affected the results. Citing previous research findings (Karney & Bradbury, 1995, 1997; Newton & Kiecolt-Glaser, 1995), Watson et al. (2000) noted that

“predictor variables might correlate differently with satisfaction at different stages in a relationship” (Watson et al., 2000, p. 419). (However, if personality stays relatively constant over time, cohort differences should represent less of a potential confound.)

The researchers found no significant correlations between corresponding five factor measures across couples in the married sample; the orthogonal tenets of the factors were manifested among these individuals as expected. In the dating sample, however, there were significant correlations for measures of *Extraversion* and *Openness*, although these correlations tended to be low. Marriage sample correlations ranged widely from -.06 to .23. Therefore, the researchers concluded that “assortative mating” or the concept of “bird[s] of a feather flock[ing] together” on the basis of personality traits was a dubious claim. By the same token, the weak correlation also would not substantiate the contrasting position of “opposites attract.” Where correlations did seem to appear across couples was with respect to their ratings of satisfaction within the relationship. Predictably, both correlations were positive, with married couples at a .62 and dating couples at a slightly lower .44.

Within the context of participants’ self-rated five factor personality traits and with respect to relationship satisfaction, Watson et al. (2000) observed significant correlations in half of these figures across married and dating couples. *Neuroticism*, as a trait, negatively correlated at the  $p < .01$  level to women’s satisfaction across both the married and dating samples. Men’s self-rated *Neuroticism* scores, conversely, did not correlate with satisfaction across either sample. Self-rated *Extraversion* positively correlated with relationship satisfaction at the  $p < .01$  level for both men and women in the married sample, although it only correlated at the  $p < .05$  level in the dating sample for men. *Openness* did not

significantly correlate for either gender in both samples. *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* correlated with relationship satisfaction at the  $p < .01$  level across both males and females in the dating samples. Only men's self-rated *Agreeableness* correlated with relationship satisfaction at the  $p < .05$  level in the married sample.

When individual's partner ratings were analyzed in relation to satisfaction, the list of important traits changed somewhat. Most notably, in the married sample, when one partner's ratings of his or her spouse's five factor traits were correlated with the original partner's marital satisfaction, ratings of *Agreeableness* and *Conscientiousness* became significantly correlated with satisfaction with respect to both partners' ratings of one another's traits. Also, women's ratings of their husbands' level of *Openness* correlated with relationship/marital satisfaction at the  $p < .01$  level, even though *Openness* had not shown to have a significant relationship with the dependent variable previously.

Furthermore, remarkably consistent significant correlations were found between the Positive and Negative Affectivity scores and relationship satisfaction across couples in both samples. Watson et al. (2000) indicated that Positive and Negative Affectivity scores correlate strongly with *Neuroticism* (and possibly *Extraversion*); these scores are likely to correlate with other five factor trait scales as well. Nonetheless, these scales established further the powerful link between personality and relationship satisfaction. Encouraged by the strong correlations between affectivity and relationship satisfaction, Watson et al. called for others to study this construct in relation to marital satisfaction.

### Personality Factor Interaction

Trying to better understand the findings of Watson et al. (2000), this writer has sought to elaborate on these correlations by applying a multiple regression statistic to link five factor personality traits and relationship satisfaction. Understanding how each personality factor within an individual correlates with stated levels of marital satisfaction can be enlightening, although certain limitations exist. Individuals' traits, as pluralistic interactions, determine how individuals come to be in and/or act within a situation or environment. Within a relationship, these interactions are compounded further. When couples interact (in the colloquial sense), their personality traits also are interacting, both intra- and inter-dynamically.

This writer contacted Watson and asked to reanalyze the data from Watson and associates' 2000 data. Watson agreed, yet he transmitted the data for both the married and dating couples without distinguishing between the two samples. Despite the heterogeneity of the data, this writer applied a multiple regression statistic to the set to see if there were personality interactions that occurred above and beyond single regression correlates. In order to complete this, each couple's two five-factor scores were put into a series of 25 pairs and tested for correlation with the male and female relationship satisfaction scores for each person for a total of 50 scores. So, an example for a pair would be as follows: male's *Neuroticism* score and female's *Conscientiousness* score as independent variables, and female's relationship/marital satisfaction score as a dependent variable. The previously calculated single factor correlates were then paired out to check for the interaction that the two together potentially produced. So, however much information male *Neuroticism* alone



and female *Conscientiousness* alone might predict regarding the dependent variable was removed statistically in order to strictly yield the interactive effects of the variables. Note: the *Neuroticism* trait was negatively coded in this analysis because of its widespread evidence of its negative correlation with relationship/marital satisfaction (Watson, Hubbard, & Weise, 2000).

This writer did, in fact, find that there were pairs of personality traits across couples that interacted in relation to relationship/marital satisfaction in the reanalysis of Watson et al.'s 2000 data. Self-reported levels of *Openness to Experience* in both the male and female partners interacted to predict significantly higher levels ( $p < .05$ , two-tailed) of males' relationship/marital satisfaction. Similarly, high levels of *Conscientiousness* in both partners interacted to predict higher levels of males' relationship/marital satisfaction.

Also from Watson et al.'s 2000 data, males' levels of *Agreeableness* and females' levels of *Conscientiousness* interacted in relation to female relationship/marital satisfaction ( $p < .05$ , two-tailed). However, after using a Bonferroni correction for this large sample of fifty pairs, all three of the above pairings only approached significance.

Other pairs of traits also approached significance. Males' *Neuroticism* and *Extraversion* interacted with respect to male relationship/marital satisfaction. Females' *Neuroticism* and *Conscientiousness* interacted in relation to females' relationship/marital satisfaction. Another pair, females' *Neuroticism* and males' *Conscientiousness*, reacted in relation to females' relationship/marital satisfaction.

It is important to note that, in research concerning personality and marital satisfaction, samples vary greatly in terms of relationship/marital length. Researchers have recorded

averages of six months, 18 months, and three years, among other lengths of relationships (Botwin et al., 1997; Watson et. al, 2000). Minimum amounts of time seem to have been arbitrarily chosen, with no justification referenced from the literature. From Watson et al.'s (2000) results, showing the significant disparity in personality preferences and satisfaction between dating and married samples, clearly there is a reason for choosing a sample with respect to relationship duration. Recent research of Musick and Bumpass (2006) makes a case for using a three-year minimum when studying couples' characteristics (irrespective of marital status), based on a meta-analysis of marriage across many studies, as well as their own research found that couples who had been together 1-3 years were significantly happier than couples who had been together 4-6 years.

Besides using a meaningful minimum time for studying couples, a linking of the measures of Personality and Marital Satisfaction with respect to interaction seems to also be a missing element from the literature. Personality is made up of distinct, orthogonal factors. The subsequent study of personality, as it relates to relationship/marital satisfaction, consists of correlating these single factors with the level of satisfaction within a given relationship.

It is not possible to make a case for interactive effects through the traditional study of personality and relationship/marital satisfaction. So, while the factors *Extraversion* and *Openness* might both independently correlate positively with relationship satisfaction across studies, their effects in conjunction are unknown. Perhaps highly extraverted people who are unbound in their *Openness* to experience are overbearing and annoying, and therefore not as satisfying to their relationship partners.

Clearly, a study of true statistical interaction is necessary to best understand how distinct personality factors (which never exist alone) affect relationship satisfaction. Jaccard and Turrisi (2003) explain, “An interaction effect is said to exist when the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable differs depending on the value of a third variable” (p. 3). In this case, the “independent” and “third” variables would both be personality factors. So, we can understand how one’s partner’s high levels of *Extraversion* and *Openness* together might either diminish, synergistically work to increase, or simply not affect one’s relationship satisfaction.

### **Summary of Review of Literature**

The study of the five factor personality measure and marital satisfaction has been extensive. Previous research has examined different aspects of the relationship between the two constructs, including measurements of a couple’s time together, marital status, and the match between participants’ current mate and ideal partner. However, without including statistical interactions between the personality factors as a means of relating the two measures, these analyses have been fundamentally incomplete. If the construct of personality is inherently an amalgam of traits, then considering the interaction between the personality factors is necessary if one is to accurately capture the relationship between personality and another given factor (such as relationship satisfaction). The essence of personality lies in both distinct traits and the complex interaction between them. Employing a multiple regression analysis and using pairs of traits represents one way to account for the interaction between

personality factors, which can then allow for a more accurate study of the correlation between personality and relationship satisfaction.

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APPENDIX B

Adult Consent for Participation

I understand that this study involves research that will be conducted by Eddie Margines, M.A, doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University in Los Angeles, California. I have been asked to participate in this study because I am over 18 years old, and currently in a close relationship that has lasted at least three years.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between personality and close relationships. I understand that while this study will not benefit me personally it may provide information that will contribute to knowledge in the realm of these subjects. I understand that my participation in this study will involve the completion of demographic, personality and relationship questions. I am aware that my involvement will take approximately twenty minutes of my time. The survey will be completed online. At the conclusion of the study, I will have the opportunity to enter my email address to participate in a raffle for \$100.

My participation in this study is voluntary and I may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without any consequences. My identity and responses on the questionnaires will be kept in strict confidence and will not be released to anyone without my separate written approval. All information about me will be protected to the limits allowed by law.

Only the principal investigator, Eddie Margines, M.A., and the research supervisor, Nicholas Noviello, Ph.D., will have access to the data collected. The data collected will be destroyed within four years of your authorizing this consent form.

The answering of some questions on the questionnaires may make me feel uncomfortable. If this occurs, or if I have any further questions, I may contact the principal investigator, Eddie Margines, M.A. at emargines@alliant.edu and/or research supervisor Nicholas Noviello, Ph.D., at Alliant International University, 1000 S. Fremont Avenue. Unit 5, Alhambra, CA 91803; phone: 1-626-270-3303. If I would like a referral for psychological help, the principal investigator will assist in giving one and any psychological services will be provided to me at my own expense.

I have read this form and understand what it says. I am 18 years of age or older and agree to participate in this research project.

I requested a summary of the results of this study when it is completed. I may be contacted at \_\_\_\_\_ to receive a summary of the results.

I am not interested in receiving a summary of the results of this study.

APPENDIX C

The Big Five Mini-Modular Markers (Self-Rating)

**How Accurately Can You Describe Yourself?**

Please use this list of common human traits to describe yourself as accurately as possible. Describe yourself as you see yourself at the present time, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you are generally or typically, as compared with other persons you know of the same sex and of roughly your same age.

Before each trait, please write a number indicating how accurately that trait describes you, using the following rating scale:

---

INACCURATE.....ACCURATE

Extremely...Very...Moderately...Slightly.....Slightly...Moderately...Very...Extremely

\_\_\_\_\_ ? \_\_\_\_\_  
 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7..... 8..... 9

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___ Absent-minded	___ Efficient	___ Nervous	___ Sociable
___ Assertive	___ Emotional	___ Nonconforming	___ Sympathetic
___ Anxious	___ Fearful	___ Organized	___ Talkative
___ Cautious	___ Fretful	___ Perfectionistic	___ Tolerant
___ Cold	___ Harsh	___ Philosophical	___ Unconventional
___ Complex	___ High-strung	___ Playful	___ Unenvious
___ Conventional	___ Indecisive	___ Quiet	___ Unexcitable
___ Critical	___ Intellectual	___ Reserved	___ Unintellectual
___ Demanding	___ Kind	___ Sentimental	___ Unreflective
___ Disorganized	___ Meticulous	___ Shy	___ Withdrawn



APPENDIX D

The Big Five Mini-Modular Markers (Partner-Rating)

### How Accurately Can You Describe Your Partner?

Please use this list of common human traits to describe your partner as accurately as possible. Describe your partner as you see him/her at the present time, not as you wish to him/her be in the future. Describe your partner as he or she is generally or typically, as compared with other persons you know of the same sex and of roughly his or her same age.

Before each trait, please write a number indicating how accurately that trait describes your partner, using the following rating scale:

INACCURATE.....ACCURATE

Extremely...Very...Moderately...Slightly.....Slightly...Moderately...Very...Extremely

\_\_\_\_\_ ? \_\_\_\_\_  
 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7..... 8..... 9

___ Absent-minded	___ Efficient	___ Nervous	___ Sociable
___ Assertive	___ Emotional	___ Nonconforming	___ Sympathetic
___ Anxious	___ Fearful	___ Organized	___ Talkative
___ Cautious	___ Fretful	___ Perfectionistic	___ Tolerant
___ Cold	___ Harsh	___ Philosophical	___ Unconventional
___ Complex	___ High-strung	___ Playful	___ Unenvious
___ Conventional	___ Indecisive	___ Quiet	___ Unexcitable
___ Critical	___ Intellectual	___ Reserved	___ Unintellectual
___ Demanding	___ Kind	___ Sentimental	___ Unreflective
___ Disorganized	___ Meticulous	___ Shy	___ Withdrawn

APPENDIX E

Couples Satisfaction Index (Self-Rating)

Answer the following questions from the perspective of YOURSELF.

1. Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Not at all TRUE	A little TRUE	Some- what TRUE	Mostly TRUE	Almost Completely TRUE	Completely TRUE
2. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX F

Couples Satisfaction Index (Partner Rating)

Answer the following questions from the perspective of YOUR PARTNER.

1. Please indicate the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

	Not at all TRUE	A little TRUE	Some- what TRUE	Mostly TRUE	Almost Completely TRUE	Completely TRUE
2. I have a warm and comfortable relationship with my partner	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. How rewarding is your relationship with your partner?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX G

Confidential Demographic Questionnaire

1. Gender  Male  Female
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_
3. Your Partner's Age \_\_\_\_\_
4. Marital Status  In a Relationship/Not Married  
 Married  
 Divorced
5. Did your parents divorce?  Yes  No
6. Length of Current Relationship  Years  Month(s)
7. Do you and your Partner Cohabitate (live together)?  Yes  No
8. What is your sex?  Male  Female
9. What is your partner's sex?  Male  Female
10. Do you have children?  Yes  No
11. What is your highest level of education?  
Grammar school:  Associate Degree:   
Some high School:  Bachelor's Degree:   
High School Graduate:  Graduate Degree:   
Some College:
12. How many siblings do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Were you  an only child  
 the oldest of 2 or more children  
 the youngest of two or more children  
 none of the above (a middle child)
14. What is your political affiliation?  
 Democrat  Republican  Independent  
 Green Party  Other
15. How long have you lived in the United States?  Years



APPENDIX H

Description of the Study

Everyone has ideas about what personality characteristics work together in our close relationships. Certain people's personalities just seem to be optimized for relationships. On a broader level, there are combinations of personality characteristics that complement each other between people.

By using Psychological tests of Personality and Relationship characteristics, we can begin to take a look at how these two qualities are related across many individuals. We will also have a short demographic questionnaire to see if those variables figure into the overall equation in a meaningful way.

You will have the opportunity to apply for a raffle to win a \$100 prize. Your participation is entirely at will, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Thank you so much for your time and participation; it is greatly appreciated!

Click to participate in this study.

Eddie Margines, M.A.  
emargins@alliant.edu

APPENDIX I

Online Participant Recruiting Notice

Would you like to help us learn more about the link between personality and relationship satisfaction? If you are interested in participating in a research study, are over 18 years old, and have been in your current relationship for three years or more, you will be asked to complete brief questionnaires relating to personality, relationship satisfaction, as well as some background information about you. Please [click here](#) to continue: