2010-07-06

Negative is Not the Absence of Positive: The Relationship of Daily Positive and Negative Processes to Outcomes in Newlywed Marriage

Jacqueline Blue
University of Miami, jperry@miami.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_dissertations

Recommended Citation
https://scholarlyrepository.miami.edu/oa_dissertations/449

This Open access is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at Scholarly Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Open Access Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Repository. For more information, please contact repository.library@miami.edu.
NEGATIVE IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF POSITIVE: THE RELATIONSHIP OF DAILY POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PROCESSES TO OUTCOMES IN NEWLYWED MARRIAGE

By

Jacqueline L. Blue

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Coral Gables, Florida

August 2010
NEGATIVE IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF POSITIVE: THE RELATIONSHIP OF DAILY POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PROCESSES TO OUTCOMES IN NEWLYWED MARRIAGE

Jacqueline L. Blue

Approved:

Kent Burnett, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of
Educational and Psychological Studies

Terri A. Scandura, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School

Blaine Fowers, Ph.D.
Professor of
Educational and Psychological Studies

Debbiesiu Lee, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of
Educational and Psychological Studies

Jean-Philippe Laurenceau, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology
University of Delaware
This study simultaneously examined the relationship of daily positive processes, daily negative processes, and the relative impact of each on marital satisfaction and likelihood of divorce in newlywed couples over time. Within six months of marriage, 120 newly married couples were asked to complete measures of relationship quality as well as daily diaries for 21- consecutive days to assess several positive and negative processes (i.e., positive and negative affect, positive and negative behaviors, and responsiveness of partner to attempts of social support and capitalization). This study used a dyadic path analysis in a structural equation modeling framework to examine the hypothesized relationships between positive and negative intra- and interpersonal processes and subsequent marital outcomes over time. Results supported the idea that positive processes within marriages are indicative of marital satisfaction and divorce proneness, over and above negative processes. Overall, the findings of this study contribute to the marital literature in that they provide further evidence that both positive and negative processes should be considered when looking at predictors that contribute to marital outcomes.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIST OF FIGURES</strong></td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIST OF TABLES</strong></td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 BACKGROUND: THE INFLUENCE OF POSITIVE VERSUS NEGATIVE PROCESSES ON</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 METHODS</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 RESULTS</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 DISCUSSION</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

| FIGURE 1 | .............................................................................................................. 52 | 52 |
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 1</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 3</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 4</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 5</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 6</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE 7</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Introduction

Positive psychology is the study of the impact of positive experiences and individual traits on quality of life. This movement was created in response to a broad focus in the social sciences on pathology, or a, “disease model of human functioning,” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Although past research on relationships has revealed a pointed focus on negative factors that destroy relationships (Bradbury, Fincham, & Beach, 2000; Bradbury, Rogge, & Lawrence, 2001; Gable & Reis, 2001; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Rodrigues, Hall, & Fincham, 2006), recent research on relationships has mirrored the trend in positive psychology by evidencing a greater focus on factors that enhance relationships (Gable & La Guardia, 2007; Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000; Gable & Reis, 2001; Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006; Langston, 1994; Reis & Gable, 2003). An understanding of the relevance of positive experiences and individual traits in relationships is important since all individuals engage in interpersonal relationships. These relationships may be with family members, friends, co-workers, or casual acquaintances. One of the most commonly studied and intriguing of these is the intimate relationship of marriage.

It is both interesting and ironic that the vast body of research that purportedly has focused on marital satisfaction and stability over the past few decades has focused largely on negative factors leading to marital dissatisfaction and instability (Bradbury et al., 2000; Fincham & Beach, 2010; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Rodrigues et al., 2006). This negative focus also has been evident in theoretical models of marriage, which attribute marital outcomes such as divorce or dissatisfaction, to frequency and intensity of conflict, as well as communication patterns in the context of conflict.
Only recently has the impetus for the study of positive factors, as opposed to or in addition to negative ones, been a focal point of marital satisfaction research (Gable & La Guardia, 2007; Gable et al., 2000; Gable & Reis, 2001; Gable et al., 2006; Langston, 1994; Reis & Gable, 2003).

The current study has been guided by the aforementioned movement toward investigation of positive factors related to marital outcomes. Past studies within the growing literature on positive factors related to marital outcomes have been characterized by methodological limitations such as cross-sectional designs, simplistic data analysis, and samples restricted to undergraduate students (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Furthermore, both positive and negative predictors have rarely been investigated concurrently making it difficult to establish the predictive strength of negative factors compared to positive ones (Karney, 2010). This study utilized a longitudinal framework with a community sample of newlyweds to foster a clearer understanding of the role of positive factors involving domains of affect, behavior, and interpersonal interactions, in the presence of corresponding negative factors on marital satisfaction and stability.
Chapter 2: Background: The Influence of Positive versus Negative Processes and Marital Outcomes

Several theories of marital change have been proposed and studied. A common theme throughout these theories is the importance of negativity, specifically how damaging it can be in a relationship. Huston and colleagues (2001) reviewed studies associated with marital change related to the interaction between partners and noted four frequently cited models. These models are the Emergent Distress Model (Caughlin & Huston, 2006; Clements, Cordova, Markman, & Laurenceau, 1997; Clements, Stanley, & Markman, 2004; J. M. Gottman, 1993; Gottman, 1994; Huston et al., 2001), the Disillusionment Model (Clements et al., 1997; Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Kayser, 1993), the Enduring Dynamics Model (Caughlin, Huston, & Houts, 2000; Huston & Houts, 1998; Karney & Bradbury, 1997), and Accommodation Models (Huston, 1994; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Waller & Hill, 1951). Other models of marriage exist, however, these models do not specify the process by which marriage changes and thus will not be discussed.

Theories of Marriage and Marital Development

According to the Emergent Distress Model, change in the relationship is due to negative behaviors that occur during conflict (Caughlin & Huston, 2006; Clements et al., 2004). Relationships are assumed to begin on a positive note, with high levels of attraction, love, and commitment (Clements et al., 1997). However, over time the relationship declines as a result of the expression of negativity (Huston et al., 2001). The way in which negativity is expressed is the most important component in this theory (Clements et al., 1997). Another proposed model, of a similar nature, entitled the
Cascade Model of Divorce has also received attention in the literature (Gottman, 1993; 1994). The Cascade Model describes divorce as a sequential process, starting with a decline in marital satisfaction and resulting in thoughts about ending the relationship, separation, and finally divorce. Maladaptive expression of negativity is also emphasized in this model as playing an important role in the downfall of the relationship.

Gottman (1994) reported that antagonistic negativity, as seen in the Cascade Model, is expressed as one of four types: criticizing, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling. This type of expression of negativity, in turn, becomes cyclical in nature. The expression of negativity leads to an overall decline in satisfaction, which then leads to the partner being more likely to express negativity again, and so on, until the relationship reaches its demise (Clements et al., 1997; Gottman, 1994; Huston et al., 2001).

Empirical evidence, however, found that only a small percentage of variation in overall marital satisfaction was the result of these types of negative behavior (Bradbury et al., 2001). Despite these findings, the Emergent Distress Model continues to be a mainstay in the relationship literature. In addition, research related to this model continues to focus solely on how to handle and manage relationship conflict and does not consider the positive elements that may be related to the decline in marital satisfaction (Caughlin & Huston, 2006). According to this model, positive factors are only considered as reasons why one chooses to marry, as opposed to the rationale for success in the marriage (Clements et al., 1997).
The Disillusionment Model proposes that partners in a relationship idealize one another, potentially creating a false perception of who their partner truly is (Huston et al., 2001). This model states that the idealization that occurs in the relationship is based largely on imagination leading one partner to form a false positive impression of the other (Huston et al., 2001; Murray, Bellavia, Rose, & Griffin, 2003; Waller & Hill, 1951). Amidst the idealization, individuals also act in ways to support these beliefs, giving their significant other a favorable impression of themselves (Huston et al., 2001; Waller & Hill, 1951). Couples who engage in this type of behavior subsequently put aside any differences or ideas that do not match the impressions they have formulated about their partner. To overcome these discrepancies, partners engage in exaggerated affection and intimacy to quell fears of any actual problems in the relationship (Huston & Chorost, 1994; Huston et al., 2001). After time, however, disillusionment becomes unavoidable as the fantasies a partner has created are consistently proven wrong (Waller & Hill, 1951).

Karney (1997) defined disillusionments as the ratio of positive to negative interpersonal events. Additionally, Kayser (1993) defined it as an overall loss of love and closeness, under the assumption that these two elements were present since the onset of the relationship. Divorce is then predicted to result for those couples who eventually become disillusioned with their partners (Huston et al., 2001). Although this model discusses declines in marital satisfaction as a result of the loss of idealized partner manifestations, currently there is little research to support it. It is important to note that a loss of idealization does not equal a loss in positive behaviors or affect, but rather a gain in perception of reality.
Another general model of marital change over time is the Enduring Dynamics Model (Caughlin et al., 2000), also referred to as the Perceptual Problems Model (Huston & Houts, 1998) or the Maintenance Hypothesis (Karney & Bradbury, 1997). This model differs from the two models previously discussed in that the demise of the relationship does not happen during the marriage per se, but instead is attributable to the principles established during the courtship. More specifically, courtship is the time in which partners gain realistic views of one another’s strengths and limitations. As a result, couples have a clear understanding of who their partner is prior to the marriage. If the behaviors and patterns were problematic during the courtship, these difficulties will likely persist into the marriage ultimately leading to divorce (Caughlin & Huston, 2006; Huston & Houts, 1998; Karney & Bradbury, 1997).

Empirical support for this model found that conflict prior to marriage is positively related to conflict during marriage (Huston & Houts, 1998). Studies have also found that high marital satisfaction after ten years of marriage is preceded by high satisfaction during the courtship period (Clements et al., 2004). Although it appears that the Enduring Dynamics Model is able to account for satisfaction or lack thereof during marriage, it is less able to predict divorce (Caughlin & Huston, 2006).

The Accommodation Model suggests that problems occur in a marriage due to life events and cycles. According to this model, couples attempt to adjust to or overcome the problems as they adjust to one another (Caughlin & Huston, 2006; Huston, 1994; Waller & Hill, 1951). Throughout this adjustment phase, the couple may experience high conflict and negativity at times (Caughlin & Huston, 2006). The Vulnerability-Stress-Adaptation Model (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), a variant of the Accommodation Model,
points to problems arising not only in the marriage, such as hurtful behaviors exhibited
by a partner, but outside of the marriage as well, such as overall economic difficulties
(Caughlin & Huston, 2006). This model proposes that the ways in which partners adapt
during stressful time periods determine how the relationship will fare. Furthermore, the
enduring vulnerabilities that each partner brings into a marriage (e.g., attachment and
personality traits) combined with the stress of a situation and the ability for the couple to
adapt, account for variations in the stability and quality of a marriage over time. Couples
with fewer enduring vulnerabilities will adapt more effectively; therefore, declines in
affectionate behavior or positive affect will be temporary. The opposite is true for
couples with higher levels of enduring vulnerabilities (Caughlin & Huston, 2006). It is
the couples with more enduring vulnerabilities who will eventually divorce due to the
inability to adapt well to stressors.

Overall, the aforementioned models of marriage do not account fully for the
potential role of positive predictors in how marriage may change over time. The focus is
on negative predictors and how harmful each is to marital outcome as opposed to the
strengths that may exist between couples as they relate to marital outcomes.
Unfortunately, none of the previously described models are able to account for all of the
developmental changes that occur in marriage. Furthermore, no single explanation can
describe a developmental course that will hold true for all couples (Rogge & Bradbury,
2002). Thus, researchers are tasked with identifying additional processes occurring in
marriage that may lead to satisfaction and likelihood of divorce.
Factors Associated with Marital Satisfaction and Divorce

A significant amount of literature has looked into what factors lead to marital satisfaction. In an attempt to consolidate findings related to marital stability and satisfaction, Karney and Bradbury (1995) performed a meta-analysis reviewing 115 marital studies to date. These researchers noted several limitations within the romantic relationship literature including: the absence of true longitudinal research and the over-reliance on cross-sectional methods; lack of accounting for contextual factors such as children or number of previous marriages; marital duration; developmental stage of marriage; and, problems with analysis of data. Despite these limitations, several factors were consistently related longitudinally to relationship satisfaction or dissatisfaction in couples. For example, positive behaviors, such as expressions of affection, exhibited by both husband and wife led to greater satisfaction. Similarly, higher levels of education, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and extraversion and marrying at an older age also led to greater marital satisfaction in couples. In contrast, factors resulting in less marital satisfaction were negative behaviors, such as criticizing one’s spouse, exhibited by either partner, high levels of neuroticism, unhappy childhoods, and stress (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Neff & Karney, 2007).

Similarly, much work has been done in terms of looking at factors that lead to divorce (Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Christensen & Walczynski, 1997; Noller & Feeney, 2002; Notarius, Lashley, & Sullivan, 1997; Rodrigues et al., 2006; Rusbult, Bissonnette, Arriaga, & Cox, 1998). The majority of these studies have examined the impact of an increase in, or the presence of, negative factors or sociodemographic circumstances. Some of these factors overlap with indicators related to satisfaction such
as age at marriage (Bumpass, Martin, & Sweet, 1991; DeMaris & Rao, 1992; Heaton, 2002; Rodrigues et al., 2006; Tzeng, 1992) and education (Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Bumpass et al., 1991; Kurdek, 1993; Orbuch, Veroff, Hassan, & Horrocks, 2002). Findings related to income have been mixed (Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Cutrona et al., 2003; Heckert, Nowak, & Snyder, 1998; Kurdek, 1993; Orbuch et al., 2002; Rodrigues et al., 2006; Rogers, 2004) with no clear understanding as to what definite role income may play in marital dissolution. Premarital cohabitation has been found to be a major risk factor for divorce (Amato, 1996; Bumpass, Sweet, & Cherlin, 1991; DeMaris & Rao, 1992; Heaton, 2002). Violence within the marital couple has also been shown to present a risk for divorce (Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007; Rogge & Bradbury, 2002). In addition, psychopathology, such as anxiety and mood disorders, has been demonstrated to influence marital outcomes (Karney, 2001; Kurdek, 1998).

Personality traits, specifically neuroticism, have often been linked to marital dissatisfaction and higher rates of divorce (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Kurdek, 1993). Neuroticism is the tendency to experience and express negative affect or distress (Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Rodrigues et al., 2006; Watson & Clark, 1984). Karney and Bradbury (1995) cite neuroticism as having the strongest empirical support of all factors contributing to marital dissolution. Further, in a separate investigation, an intrapersonal model helped to explain much of the relationship between neuroticism and marital satisfaction. Neuroticism was found to be directly related to initial marital satisfaction, but not associated with the trajectory of marital outcomes over time (Karney & Bradbury, 1997). Neuroticism has also been found to moderate the
impact of depressive symptoms on marital satisfaction (Davila, Karney, Hall, & Bradbury, 2003; Karney, 2001).

In general, many indicators have been examined in an attempt to gain a better understanding of the individual differences in the success or demise of couples. The volume of research, however, makes it difficult to develop one overall model of marital change. Rodrigues et al. (2006) maintain the “first step in integrating existing research and exploring mechanisms is to define the relationship between intrapersonal (sociodemographic and individual difference) variables and relationship-process variables” (p. 103). The field of relationship science may profit from the development of a theory of close relationship functioning that incorporates a diversity of important interpersonal processes and influencing factors (Reis, Collins, & Berscheid, 2000). Although the present study does not aim to propose a new model of marriage, the goal is to highlight additional predictors related to better understanding marital outcomes and the investigation of the relative contribution of both positive and negative predictors simultaneously. Researchers have recently emphasized the importance of looking at positive processes, as well as negative, in marital outcomes (Fincham, Stanley, & Beach, 2007; Reis & Gable, 2003).

Affect, Behavior, and Responsiveness

It is difficult to understand the potential processes leading to marital satisfaction or likelihood of divorce without having a clear depiction of the intra- and interpersonal components that exist within a relationship. Some of the most commonly studied relationship factors are affect, self and perceived partner behaviors, and responsiveness.
A Two-Dimensional Approach to Emotion and Behavior. Affect, an intrapersonal factor, is often discussed in terms of positive and negative. Positive and negative daily affect has been intensively studied in recent years. Much of this research has focused on delineating affect not as a bipolar construct (e.g., a single dimension of valence from positive to negative) but as a two-dimensional and bivariate one (Watson & Clark, 1984; Watson & Tellegen, 1985; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999; Zevon & Tellegen, 1982). High positive affect (PA) is reflected in adjectives such as excited and enthusiastic or high levels of positive engagement with one’s surroundings. Conversely, low PA is related to lethargy, sadness, or disengagement with one’s surroundings (Tellegen & Watson, 1999; Watson et al., 1988). In contrast, high negative affect (NA) largely reflects feelings such as distress or anxiety, while low NA reflects a state of feeling calmness and tranquility (Tellegen & Watson, 1999; Watson et al., 1988).

Positive affect is believed to be a signal from a behavioral approach system (BAS) that is engaged when individuals are pursuing a perceived reward or desired outcome in the environment (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999; Carver & White, 1994; Watson et al., 1999). Negative affect is believed to be a signal from a behavioral avoidance or inhibition system (BIS) that is engaged when individuals are avoiding a perceived threat or undesired outcome in the environment (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999; Carver & White, 1994; Watson et al., 1999). Thus, affect can be conceptualized as a signal of perceived progress with respect to two broad classes of goals: approach/appetitive (desired) outcomes versus avoidance/aversive (undesired) outcomes. Therefore, one way of approaching the study of marital relationships is to a) identify relationship processes and
behaviors that appear to be associated with positive, approach-related affects separate from those associated with negative, avoidance-related affects and b) to examine the links between these approach and avoidance relationship processes and marital outcomes.

A two-dimensional approach to conceptualizing emotional processes can also be applied to the understanding of close relationship functioning. Dissatisfied with the sparse volume of research related to positive relationship processes, Reis and Gable (2003) have proposed a significant line of research based on the principle that positive and negative interpersonal processes are functionally independent. They argue that “happiness [is] not simply the absence of distress and distress [is] not simply the absence of happiness” (p. 131). Based on research in other areas such as emotion (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999) and motivation (Carver, Sutton, & Scheier, 2000; Elliot & Church, 1997), Reis and Gable (2003) highlight positive, approach-oriented processes such as intimacy, affection, and shared fun.

Given this relatively recent line of inquiry, it is reasonable to develop several questions regarding marital relationships. If negative interactions within couples lead more often to divorce, what is the role of high or low levels of positive interactions? That is, in the presence of emotional and behavioral negativity during partner interactions is the marked absence or presence of emotional and behavioral positivity associated with couple distress or marital satisfaction?

**Empirical Evidence for Positive Emotion and Behaviors in Interpersonal Relationships.** In a line of work examining the stability of marital interaction over time, positive affect was found to be a stable predictor of marital stability or dissolution and
dissatisfaction over time (Gottman, Coan, Carrere, & Swanson, 1998). Gottman (1993; 1994), in an investigation of stable versus unstable unions, noted a ratio of approximately five positive interactions to one negative interaction occur during the course of a conflict in relatively well-adjusted couples. He reported that when the balance of this ratio shifts and more negative interactions take place than positive, the couple becomes less stable and more prone to divorce. Interestingly though, the positive behaviors noted in the aforementioned studies occurred in the context of a conflict or attempted resolution of a conflict. More recently a call has been made to consider the impact of positivity on marital outcomes outside of problem-solving scenarios and conflict (Bradbury & Karney, 2004; Fincham, 2003).

Huston and Vangelisti (1991) also detected a link between expression of affection and marital satisfaction. Huston and Chorost (1994) further demonstrated that expressions of affection by a husband were found to buffer the effect of a husband’s negativity on the wife’s marital satisfaction. This evidence demonstrates that it is not negativity alone that may have a detrimental impact on marital satisfaction, but whether negativity takes place in the absence of positive affect and behaviors. Despite this illuminating finding, limitations were present in the two aforementioned studies. Spousal outcomes were reviewed separately in both studies and this is problematic in that the outcome measures between husband and wife were most likely positively correlated. Regression was used in these studies and does not adequately account for this, as the assumption of independence would be violated should both outcomes be analyzed
simultaneously (Cook & Kenny, 2005; Kenny, 1995). It is unknown whether the findings would be replicated should both partners’ predictors and outcomes be analyzed in the same model.

Another study also considered the impact of behaviors from a two-dimensional approach on marital satisfaction. Declines in marital satisfaction over time were found to be linked to low levels of positive behaviors and high levels of negative behaviors (Filsinger & Thoma, 1988). This study is not without potential limitations though. First, couples assessed in this study were unmarried initially, which makes these findings less generalizeable to a married population. Secondly, positive behaviors were coded based on a problem-solving discussion, which means that although behaviors were looked at from a bivariate perspective, the positive behaviors were captured within a negative context.

Moreover, it has been demonstrated that positive affect and interactions or behaviors taking place during a conflict are not the only ways that positive processes lead to marital satisfaction. The additive effect of daily positive interactions over time may contribute to overall stability and satisfaction as well (Driver & Gottman, 2004; Fredrickson, 2001; Reis & Gable, 2003). This idea has been referred to as an “accumulation bias” (Reis & Gable, 2003). Typically, daily positive events occur more often than daily negative ones. Cross-sectional studies, those classically used in relationship research, only look at the impact of events at one time point as opposed to the total effect of positive events over the course of time. The results often lead to the misleading conclusion that positive events mean less in the overall satisfaction of a relationship (Reis & Gable, 2003). Similarly, Karney and Bradbury (1995) revealed
commonly used data collection methods that were less than satisfactory in terms of assessing daily couple interactions. They suggested looking at daily interactions over the course of time to help advance the science of marriage.

Based on this idea, Reis and Gable (as cited in Reis & Gable, 2003) conducted studies revealing married couples’ positive and negative daily behaviors contributing independently to marital well-being. Each individual completed daily diaries to monitor self-reported positive and negative behaviors, as well as perceived partner behaviors (e.g., criticism or affection). The positive behaviors were found to have the greatest bearing on marital satisfaction. Another study demonstrated a similar finding in that couples who engaged in daily positive behaviors reflecting affection in the first two years of marriage were less likely to divorce years later (Huston et al., 2001).

Previous research has highlighted the importance of considering intrapersonal factors from a two-dimensional appetitive framework when looking at marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. However, missing from these studies is a simultaneous examination of interpersonal processes also occurring within a married couple and how this influences marital satisfaction. A discussion of the impact of two-dimensional interpersonal processes and the relationship these processes have to marital satisfaction are presented here.

Positive Relationships Processes and the Role of Responsiveness. Intimacy and affection are two ways in which approach motivation, or appetitive behavior processes, can be evidenced in relationships (Reis & Shaver, 1988). Maintaining close relationships with others is considered an innate human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The Intimacy Theory is one model that depicts intimacy as an interpersonal process between
two individuals leading to a feeling of closeness (Reis & Shaver, 1988; Reis & Patrick, 1996). Intimacy is described as a transaction that requires a disclosure of a self-revealing nature from one individual and response to the disclosure from a partner. How the individual perceives their partner’s responsiveness (i.e., verbal validation, caring, etc.) will determine if intimacy builds. Perceived positive partner responses create greater intimacy.

Recently, perceived partner responsiveness has been shown to be more important for creating intimacy than observed partner responsiveness (Reis, Clark, & Holmes, 2004). Another study demonstrated that perception of partner responsiveness was a central component to determining the creation of intimacy (Laurenceau, Barrett, & Pietromonaco, 1998). Other findings also suggest that perceived partner responsiveness mediate the effects of self-disclosure on intimacy (Laurenceau, Barrett, & Rovine, 2005). Since developing and maintaining closeness between individuals is an innate human motivation (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and intimacy is considered to be a way of creating connectedness or closeness with another individual, it is reasonable to assume that married couples would attempt to create other scenarios in which they feel close to their partner. Partners who engage in these types of positive behaviors (e.g., partaking in activities their spouse enjoys, being thoughtful or affectionate) more often on a daily basis, may in fact be more likely to have a more satisfied marital relationship over time (McAdams & Vaillant, 1982). These couples may also be less likely to divorce even when negative behaviors are simultaneously occurring. There are many factors that determine individual interpretations of their partner’s behavior, however, these go beyond the scope of the current study (see Reis et al., 2004 for a review).
Partner responsiveness in relationships can also be seen in the concepts of social support and capitalization. Reis and Gable (2003) noted that social support, although proven repeatedly to be a central predictor of well-being, is not necessarily a positive or appetitive process. When an individual turns to another for social support it is typically in relation to a problem or conflict, not a positive event. Additionally, in providing the social support, the focus of the support is of a negative nature and once the problem abates, the individual experiences a sense of relief, not a sense of excitement or enthusiasm per se (Reis & Gable, 2003).

In contrast to social support, capitalization is an appetitive process where one individual shares positive events and situations with another. Research has indicated that if the partner responds in an optimistic nature, this boosts the positivity of the experience for the individual beyond the original positivity of the event (Langston, 1994). A review of this dynamic has highlighted that those individuals who engaged in this process more often reported higher levels of life satisfaction, individual well-being, and increases in positive affect (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004; Langston, 1994).

This concept was broadened when an investigation of capitalization responses and relationship well-being was demonstrated to be functionally independent of negative event disclosures (social support) and relationship well-being (Gable & Reis, 2006). Relationship satisfaction was predicted by responsiveness to capitalization attempts for both men and women more so than perceived responsiveness to social support attempts. Additionally, a study looking specifically at perceived and actual responsiveness within partner interactions, found that relationship well-being was related to both the amount of responsiveness one provides, as well as perceived responsiveness from their partner.
(Maisel, Gable, & Strachman, 2008). Interestingly, responsiveness behaviors were also found to be more closely associated with outcomes related to the positive disclosures as opposed to negative disclosures.

If the process of capitalization leads to increased relationship satisfaction, more attempts at capitalizing by both partners should also lead to higher levels of marital satisfaction over time, above and beyond what would be expected from social support attempts. Recently, one study demonstrated the positive impact of capitalization attempts on relationship well-being as well as the connection between positive perceived partner response to capitalization attempts on relationship well-being (Gable et al., 2004). Furthermore, another study revealed that ratings of perceived responsiveness to a positive event disclosure, similar to a capitalization attempt, better predicted relationship well-being and health than did responsiveness to a negative event disclosure, similar to a social support attempt (Gable et al., 2006). However, Gable et al. (2006) also noted the importance of replicating these findings with other romantic couples outside of a college dating sample and with a daily experience measure on the day the event occurs. Nevertheless, these findings highlight the potential importance of perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts leading to greater marital satisfaction and less likelihood of divorce, over and above perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts.

**Hypotheses and Overview of Study**

The purpose of the current study was to further examine the overarching hypothesis that everyday positive relationship processes contribute to the health and successful maintenance of newly formed marital relationships above and beyond the
contribution of daily negative relationship processes. That is, positive processes (i.e., positive affect, self and perceived partner ratings of positive relationship behavior, and capitalization) above and beyond corresponding negative relationship processes and ratings of marital satisfaction at the first time point of investigation (Time 1), will have a significant influence on marital satisfaction and divorce proneness at the second time point of investigation (Time 2; approximately 15 months later). Specifically, it is hypothesized that:

- 1. Higher ratings of average daily positive affect at Time 1 will predict significantly higher ratings of marital satisfaction and significantly lower ratings of divorce proneness at Time 2, above and beyond average daily negative affect and marital satisfaction at Time 1.

- 2. Higher levels of average perceived partner positive behaviors at Time 1 will predict significantly higher ratings of marital satisfaction and significantly lower ratings of divorce proneness at Time 2, above and beyond average negative perceived partner behaviors and marital satisfaction at Time 1.

- 3. Higher levels of average self-reported positive relationship behaviors at Time 1 will predict significantly higher ratings of marital satisfaction and significantly lower ratings of divorce proneness at Time 2, above and beyond average self-reported negative relationship behaviors and marital satisfaction at Time 1.

- 4. Higher levels of capitalization attempts at Time 1 will predict significantly higher ratings of marital satisfaction and significantly lower
ratings of divorce proneness at Time 2, above and beyond social support attempts and marital satisfaction at Time 1.

- Higher levels of perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts at Time 1 predict significantly higher levels of marital satisfaction and significantly lower ratings of divorce proneness at Time 2, likelihood to divorce, above and beyond the level of perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts.

Examining these hypotheses further extends the relationship literature by considering both negative and positive corresponding intra- and interpersonal processes simultaneously over time, a comparison not often examined in past research (Karney, 2010). This study also seeks to provide additional support for the utilization of a two-dimensional approach of interpersonal processes when investigating the relationship between predictors and marital outcomes. This is accomplished by attempting to demonstrate that each process functions and contributes to marital satisfaction and likelihood to divorce. Moreover, it is expected that the positive domain will predict satisfaction and stability of marital relationships, above and beyond the negative processes.

The fact that the present study utilized a community sample of newly married couples, in contrast to college students engaged in romantic relationships, allows the findings to be more generalizable to a larger subset of individuals. The relatively homogenous nature of a newlywed sample provides a clearer picture of what may be happening for couples at this developmental stage of their relationship. As mentioned previously, much of the relationship literature has sampled from married couples with
variable lengths of marriage (Karney & Bradbury, 1995) making it difficult to interpret
the findings in relation to other couples at various stages of marriage.

Furthermore, this work employs several methodological advances in relationship
science (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). The longitudinal nature of this work allows for a
developmental perspective on how the predictors are relating to the outcomes over time,
which is not possible with cross-sectional designs (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).
Additionally, the use of daily diary methods to assess the processes under investigation is
less prone to retrospective and other memory-related biases when compared to global
self-report methods (Bolger & Schilling, 1991). The use of electronic PDAs, as opposed
to paper and pencil, also allows for greater confidentiality and ease of response (Bolger,
Davis, & Rafaeli, 2003; Laurenceau & Bolger, 2005). Moreover, the positive predictors
in the study were each collected outside of conflict or a conflict-oriented task, which
speaks to the recent call made by researchers to study the impact of positivity in the
absence of conflict in marital relationships (Bradbury & Karney, 2004; Fincham, 2003).
Chapter 3: Methods

Participants

This study was part of a larger, two-year longitudinal investigation of newlywed couples including three assessment periods over approximately 15-month intervals. Participants in the larger investigation were 120 newly married couples (120 husband–wife intact pairs) from Miami-Dade County, Florida. Each couple had been married for no more than six months when they began the study. Descriptions of the study were mailed to local newlywed couples listed on the Miami-Dade County marital registry. Interested participants were instructed to contact the lab directly or to return a postcard with their contact information. Inclusion criteria consisted of couples who (a) did not have children from current or previous relationships, (b) spoke English in the home, (c) did not have plans to move from the Miami-Dade area within the next two years, and (d) couples in which one or more partners had not been previously married. These criteria allow for a relatively homogeneous sampling of couples at a similar developmental point in their relationship and are consistent with prior newlywed marriage research (e.g., Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Couples received $200 over the course of two visits for their participation in this portion of the study.

The present study sample consisted of 120 couples who participated in the first assessment (Time 1). All available follow-up data at the second time point (Time 2; approximately 15 months later) were used for all couples. At the second time point, couples either attended another in-person laboratory visit or received questionnaires through the mail, which were completed and mailed back in self-addressed, postage-paid return envelopes. The mean age for men at the time of the first time point was 27.99 (SD
= 5.09, range 18-47); the mean age for women was 26.39 ($SD = 4.66$, range 17-37).

Diversity breakdown of the sample included: 54.2% Hispanic, 28.3% European American, 9.2% African American, 2.1% Asian Pacific Islander, 5.4% Other. At the initial lab visit, participants were married for an average of 4.37 months ($SD = 1.56$) and had been romantically involved with their partners for an average of 29.06 months ($SD = 29.04$).

Materials and Procedure

After being screened for eligibility through a telephone interview, newlywed couples were invited to the laboratory to complete the study. Couples were interviewed to obtain informed consent and demographic information. Participants were then taken to separate rooms where they independently completed a shortened version of Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS-7; Sharpley & Rogers, 1984) at both Time 1 and 2 and the Marital Status Inventory (MSI; Weiss & Cerreto, 1980) at Time 2, as part of a larger set of questionnaires. Upon completion of the questionnaires, couples came together to engage in four laboratory communication tasks as part of the larger study. At the conclusion of the communications exercises, each partner was provided with a PDA (Handspring Visor™ Platinum). Participants were instructed to keep a daily recording of their relationship-related experiences on the PDAs, once in the evening (i.e., approximately one hour prior to going to sleep) for a total of 21 consecutive days.

Participants were then trained in the use of the Experience Sampling Program (ESP; Feldman Barrett, 2000; Feldman Barrett & Barrett, 2001) for PDAs running the Palm OS®, which was the software used in the daily diary. The training session
consisted of a review of basic ESP diary entry procedures on the PDA (e.g., use of the stylus in responding to questions). To ensure participants understood the training, they were then led through a trial of the diary protocol. The ESP program was programmed to assess a range of questions regarding daily occurrences and interactions each partner experiences, including the assessment of daily positive and negative relationship behaviors.

**Daily-Diary Measures**

Each partner completed the diary on his or her respective PDA device once daily for 21 consecutive days. Participants began a trial by powering on the device and following the directions on the initial display screen (e.g., “Tap here to begin”). They were then guided through the questions for the trial (see Appendix A for diary items specific to the current study). In addition to reporting on affect, both partners reported on their relationship behaviors, the perception of their partner’s behaviors, capitalization and social support attempts made, and responsiveness to capitalization and social support attempts made.

**Daily Affect.** Items tapping emotions related to positive and negative affect were assessed. Responses measuring positive affect included, “How excited did you feel today?”, “How elated did you feel today?”, and “How passionate did you feel today?” Responses measuring negative affect included, “How anxious did you feel today?” and “How distressed did you feel today?” Each response was recorded on a 7-point Likert scale. The scaled ranged from 0 (“none at all”) to 6 (“an extreme amount”), with higher scores indicating greater reported affect.
**Positive Relationship Behaviors.** Items assessing the frequency of positive relationship behaviors occurring in the marital relationship that were either self-initiated or partner-initiated were assessed. These items were adapted and designed to measure intimacy or loving behaviors demonstrated by romantic partners as suggested in several other relationship studies (Laurenceau et al., 1998; Lemieux, 1996; Reis & Shaver, 1988). Positive behaviors were selected that would suggest potentially gratifying experiences within the relationship (e.g., “My partner complimented me”). A 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 times a day to 5 or more times a day was utilized to measure daily rate of occurrence for the behaviors. Frequencies of each positive relationship behavior for a participant were averaged to create an aggregate daily positive behavior score denoting the degree to which individuals self-reported and perceived their partner engaged in these behaviors. Reliability of the positive behaviors was obtained by creating a 21-day mean for each item, for each participant, and calculating coefficient alpha for the scale item means. Self-reported positive behaviors reliability was 0.91 for husbands and 0.90 for wives.

**Negative Relationship Behaviors.** Items assessing the frequency of negative relationship behaviors occurring in the marital relationship that were either self-initiated or partner-initiated were assessed. Items were tailored to correspond to behaviors measured in other studies that examined relationship discord or threatening behaviors displayed by intimate partners (Gottman, 1999; Rusbult, Olsen, Davis, & Hannon, 2001). Negative behaviors indicating punishing or threatening experiences within the relationship (e.g., “My partner “snapped” at or yelled at me”) were included. A 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 times a day to 5 or more times a day...
was utilized to measure daily rate of occurrence for the behaviors. Frequencies of each negative relationship behavior for a participant were averaged to create an aggregate daily negative behavior score denoting the degree to which individuals self-reported and perceived their partner engaged in these behaviors. Reliability of the negative behavior variable was obtained by creating a 21-day mean for each item, for each participant, and calculating coefficient alpha for the scale item means. Self-reported negative behaviors reliability was 0.89 for husbands and 0.88 for wives.

**Capitalization and Social Support Attempts.** Daily items assessing an attempt to share a positive or negative daily event with a partner were recorded. Responses measuring capitalization attempts (e.g. “What was the most positive thing that happened today?” and “Did you tell your partner about this event?”) and social support attempts (e.g. “Did you tell your partner about any of the troublesome things that happened today?”) were recorded as either a yes or no response.

**Perceived Partner Responsiveness.** Daily items assessing feelings about how responsive their partner was during the day in relation to the capitalization and social support attempt were recorded (e.g., “my partner reacted enthusiastically to my good event” and “my partner was supportive and reassuring to me regarding these negative event(s)”). Perceptions of partner behaviors were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to 6, with higher scores reflecting a more positive perceived partner response.

The diary items are considered to be assessing within-person change as opposed to between person differences. Based on this fact, reliability for each predictor was calculated using the generalizability theory (GT) framework (Cronbach, Gleser, Nanda,
& Rajaratnam, 1972). This allows each item to be broken down into multiple components of variance in contrast to simply between or within-group or true and error variance. Cranford et al. (2006) demonstrated the usefulness of this framework in determining reliability for three-item measures detecting within-person change over a 28-day period.

Cross-sectional Methods

**Marital satisfaction and divorce proneness.** At approximately each annual assessment period, marital outcome measures within the larger questionnaire set were completed. Relationship satisfaction was measured with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale-7 (DAS-7), a short form of Spanier’s original Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Sharpley & Rogers, 1984; Spanier, 1976). The DAS-7 questionnaire assesses degree of marital satisfaction across aspects of marital interaction and one global item of “overall happiness”. The items were rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (Always Disagree) to 5 (Always Agree) or from 0 (Never) to 5 (More often). The global happiness item was rated on a scale from 0 (Extremely Unhappy) to 6 (Perfect). A sample item includes rating the amount of time spent, “Calmly discuss something together”. Inter-item reliability for this measure was 0.71 (Time 1) and 0.69 (Time 2) for husbands and 0.74 (Time 1) and 0.73 (Time 2) for wives.

Another relationship outcome measure administered during the second annual assessment period was the 11-item Steps Toward Divorce (STD), an adjusted version of the Marital Status Inventory (MSI) (Weiss & Cerreto, 1980). The Steps Toward Divorce instrument measures the presence or absence of thoughts and behaviors known to likely
predict marital dissolution. The STD questionnaire includes items assessed on a 3-point scale (1 = Never, 2 = Once, 3 = More). Sample items include, “I have thought of divorce or wished that we were separated, usually after an argument or other incident,” “I have made specific plans to discuss separation or divorce with my spouse,” and “I have made inquiries about the steps involved in divorce proceedings.” Cronbach’s alpha for this measure at Time 2 was 0.77 for husbands and 0.87 for wives.
Chapter 4: Results

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses utilizing Mplus statistical software (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2004). Figure 1 depicts the generic model format for each hypothesis. Models were estimated corresponding to each hypothesis positing that early positive relationship factors significantly influence later marital satisfaction and divorce proneness, over and above negative relationship factors. Prior to analysis, the data were screened to determine that each variable upholds requirements for multivariate normality, kurtosis, and skew.

Due to the nature of the hypotheses, an actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) framework was employed (Cook & Kenny, 2005; Kashy & Kenny, 2000; Kenny, 1996; Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). This model is used when analyzing dyadic relationships or groups and to capture the interdependence of outcomes between members of the couples within a path modeling context. An actor effect takes place when an individual’s score on a predictor variable impacts the same individual’s outcome variable score, whereas a partner effect takes place when an individual’s score on a predictor variable impacts their partner’s outcome variable score (Kenny et al., 2006). Outcome measures in the current study (e.g., DAS and STD) between husband and wife are positively correlated within and between partners. However, more commonly used analyses such as ANOVA or multiple regression assume independent observations for the outcomes and as such would be considered inappropriate when analyzing marital outcomes between husband and wife. Violation of the assumption of independence in outcome scores often leads to inaccurate test statistics, degrees of freedom and subsequently, measures of statistical significance (Avivi, Laurenceau, & Carver, 2009;
In APIM, the couple is the unit of analysis, not the individual (Kenny, 1995; Kenny et al., 2006). The APIM allows for husband and wife scores to be retained individually but considered as nested within the dyad or in this case, married couple (Cook & Kenny, 2005).

Negative binomial regression was utilized in the statistical analysis when modeling the outcome variable divorce proneness (STD), which is a count variable. Count variables produce scores that can never be negative and tend to be positively skewed. Using Ordinary Least Squares regression analysis (OLS) is not appropriate for a count variable due to these reasons, as it would violate the assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity or errors. However, by using negative binomial regression, a generalized linear model is implemented which can create a linear relationship, instead of a nonlinear relationship, between a count outcome variable and predictors (Coxe, West, & Aiken, 2009). Due to the use of a generalized linear model, model fit is denoted by a measure of deviance as opposed to a chi square measure of model fit in OLS. It should be noted that the use of negative binomial regression results in findings in which the predictor and outcome are calculated on different metrics based on the natural logarithm transformation involved. As such, results were converted to create rate ratios to make the findings more interpretable.

Poisson regression is often thought of as another analysis that can also be used for count outcome variables. Poisson regression assumes equidispersion, or variance of a distribution being equal to the mean. Count variables often have a high number of 0 counts which may lead to overdispersion which is when the variance of a distribution greatly exceeds the mean. In the case of the count variable outcome measure used in this
study (STD), there is a high likelihood that in a set of newlywed couples more individuals will have made 0 steps towards divorce. Due to this high number of zeros, it is likely that the assumption in Poisson regression of equidispersion will be violated. Negative binomial regression accounts for this violation because it assumes that the variance of the distribution and the mean will be different. Further, although the coefficients estimated in Poisson and negative binomial regression are similar due to the only difference between the two models being variance, negative binomial regression remained a better analysis for this study. If overdispersion did exist in the model, Poisson regression would estimate artificially low significance test findings and confidence intervals that are too narrow, ultimately biasing tests of significance (Atkins & Gallop, 2007).

Figure 1 presents a generic APIM-based path diagram for testing each hypothesis that Time 1 positive predictors for both husband and wife (actor, partner, or both effects) are significantly linked to marital satisfaction and divorce proneness at Time 2, over and above negative predictors. Both husband and wife positive and negative predictors were entered simultaneously since actor and partner effects cannot be evaluated unless both are present in the model (Kashy & Kenny, 2000; Kenny et al., 2006). In Figure 1, actor effects represent an association between an individual’s predictor and their own marital outcome over time. The actor paths are represented by the solid bolded lines. Partner effects represent an association between an individual’s predictor and their partner’s marital satisfaction over time. The partner paths are represented by the dotted bold lines. The predictor variables differ depending on the specific hypothesis (e.g., affect versus behaviors). Initial levels of marital satisfaction for husband and wife were controlled for in the model as well. These paths are represented by the grey solid lines. The predictor
variables were allowed to correlate in each model so that actor effects could be estimated while controlling for partner effects and vice versa. The residuals of the outcome variables were allowed to covary to account for the interdependence not explained by the APIM (Kenny et al., 2006).

Although not specific to my hypotheses, gender differences can be directly examined in this kind of path modeling. The effects for the husband and wife need to be in the same model to discern any gender differences. By constraining an effect for the husband to be equal to the corresponding effect for the wife, the model gains a degree of freedom, which also leads to a change of fit in the model. The change in $\chi^2$ is also approximately distributed with degrees of freedom equal to the difference in degrees of freedom between the two models. To evaluate the tenability of the constraint, a non-significant difference in $\chi^2$ between an unconstrained model and a constrained model is evidence that the constraint is consistent with the data, indicating similar effects for husband and wife. However, when a significant difference in $\chi^2$ does exist between a model with the same constrained paths between husband and wife predictors and outcomes compared to a model free of constraints, it is evident that a gender difference exists. Any gender differences demonstrated during analysis are referred to later in the Results section. A model with constrained paths is also a more parsimonious model in that less parameters are needed to model the data than otherwise.

The decision was made to constrain both the partner and actor effects of any predictor that demonstrated significance or marginal significance up to $p = 0.099$ in the unconstrained model of all the hypotheses. As such, each hypothesis was first tested without constraints to determine consistency with the data. Upon demonstrated model fit
to the data, testing of a model with constraints based on the aforementioned data analytic strategy was performed. Constraints were applied starting with the marital satisfaction outcome (DAS) and after model fit was established, constraints were then also applied to the divorce proneness outcome (STD). Additionally, interactions were explored between the positive and negative factors for each set of predictors. However, no significant interactions between positive and negative factors between and across partners emerged and as such, interactions will not be mentioned further.

Descriptive statistics of each variable used to test the hypotheses are provided in Table 1. Table 2 highlights the correlations between the predictors and the marital outcomes. Tables 3-7 reflect the findings for each hypothesis demonstrating the comparison between the positive and negative predictors on marital outcomes.

Positive and Negative Affect

The first hypothesis stated that higher ratings of average daily positive affect would predict significantly higher ratings of marital satisfaction and lower ratings of divorce proneness across time, over and above ratings of average daily negative affect. With respect to marital satisfaction and divorce proneness at Time 2, a model was run in which all actor and partner effect paths were estimated without constraints, \( Deviance = 2379.34 \). Husband and wife actor and partner effects of daily positive affect on marital satisfaction were constrained to be equal with no significant decrease in model fit, \( \Delta \chi^2 (2) = 0.85, p = 0.65 \); husband and wife actor and partner effects of daily positive and negative affect on divorce proneness were also constrained to be equal and resulted in no
significant decrease in model fit, $\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 4.90, p = 0.30$. The difference between the unconstrained and final constrained model was not significant, $\Delta \chi^2 (6) = 5.75, p = 0.45$.

As can be seen in Table 3, hypothesis 1 was partially supported as a significant partner effect emerged for daily positive affect on marital satisfaction. Specifically, the more positive affect one reports, the higher their partner’s marital satisfaction ($B = 0.88$, $SE = 0.36$, $\beta = 0.21$, $p = 0.02$). However, a significant actor effect also emerged for daily negative affect on likelihood to divorce where the higher one’s report of daily negative affect, the more divorce proneness an individual reported ($B = 0.42$, $SE = 0.17$, $\beta = 0.68$, $p = 0.01$; $e^{0.42} = 1.52$). More specifically, for each one-unit increase one had in negative affect, the same individual was 52% more likely to make steps towards divorce. Thus, the hypothesis that daily positive affect will predict higher ratings of marital satisfaction and lower ratings of divorce proneness, when simultaneously compared to daily negative affect, was only partially supported.

*Positive and Negative Behaviors*

Hypothesis 2 stated that partner perceived positive behaviors would lead to significantly higher ratings of marital quality and lower ratings of divorce proneness across time, over and above partner perceived negative behaviors. The model was fit to the data where all effects were unconstrained, $Deviance = 1947.72$. The following effects were significant in this model and subsequently constrained: husband and wife actor and partner effects of perceived partner positive and negative behaviors on marital satisfaction, $\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 6.60, p = 0.16$, and husband and wife actor and partner effects of
partner perceived positive and negative behaviors on divorce proneness, $\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 2.59, p = 0.63$. The difference between the final constrained and unconstrained model was not significant, $\Delta \chi^2 (8) = 9.19, p = 0.33$.

With respect to perceived partner positive behaviors on marital satisfaction, a significant actor effect was demonstrated (see Table 4). Specifically, the higher the perceived partner’s positive behaviors, the higher one’s own marital satisfaction ($B = 1.37, SE = 0.66, \beta = 0.78, p = 0.04$). A significant partner effect emerged for perceived partner negative behavior on divorce proneness, where each one unit increase in perceived partner negative behavior one had, it was 10% more likely for the partner to report steps towards divorce ($B = 0.96, SE = 0.40, \beta = 1.01, p = 0.02; e^{0.96} = 1.10$). Additionally, two more significant effects also emerged. The more perceived partner positive behaviors, the less steps towards divorce one’s partner made ($B = -0.48, SE = 0.16, \beta = -1.03, p < 0.01; e^{-0.48} = 0.62$). Specifically, for each one unit increase in perceived partner positive behaviors one had, there was a 38% decrease in steps towards divorce for the corresponding partner. Moreover, there was an actor effect reflecting that with each one unit increase in perceived partner positive behavior an individual had, there was a 42% increase in steps towards divorce made for the same individual ($B = 0.35, SE = 0.16, \beta = 0.83, p = 0.02; e^{0.35} = 1.42$). This finding ran counter to the hypothesis and it should be noted that a large zero-order correlation exists between the predictors of husband and wife perceived partner positive behaviors ($r = 0.72, p < .005$). Problems with predictor multicollinearity may explain the unexpected result, as it appears to be an artifact based on the zero-order correlation between perceived partner positive behavior.
and divorce proneness (see Table 2). Hypothesis 2 was supported for both marital satisfaction and divorce proneness despite the additional counter finding.

Self-reported positive behaviors on marital outcomes were predicted to be significant, over and above negative behaviors, in hypothesis 3. The corresponding model was fit to the data where all effects were unconstrained, $Deviance = 1857.38$. The following effects were significant in the model and subsequently constrained to be equal: husband and wife actor and partner effects of self-reported positive and negative behaviors on marital satisfaction, $\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 2.46, p = 0.65$, and husband and wife actor and partner effects of self-reported positive and negative behaviors on divorce proneness, $\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 4.98, p = 0.29$. The difference between the final constrained and unconstrained model was not significant, $\Delta \chi^2 (8) = 7.44, p = 0.49$.

A significant actor effect was found between self-reported positive behaviors and marital satisfaction (See Table 5). Specifically, the higher one’s self-reported positive behaviors, the higher one’s own marital satisfaction ($B = 1.12, SE = 0.40, \beta = 0.27, p < 0.01$). A significant partner effect was also found, with each one unit increase in self-reported positive behaviors an individual had, there was a 42% decrease in steps made towards divorce for the corresponding partner ($B = -0.53, SE = 0.14, \beta = -1.09, p < 0.001; e^{-0.53} = 0.58$). However, a significant partner effect also emerged where for each one unit increase in self-reported negative behavior one had, the corresponding partner was 2.85 times more likely to have made steps towards divorce ($B = 1.05, SE = 0.42, \beta = 0.78, p = 0.01; e^{1.05} = 2.86$). A significant actor effect was also demonstrated that ran counter to Hypothesis 3, where for each one unit increase in self-reported
positive behaviors one had, the same individual was 34% more likely to have made steps towards divorce ($B = 0.29, SE = 0.15, \beta = 0.54, p = 0.05; e^{0.29} = 1.34$). A high zero-order correlation between self-reported husband and wife positive behavior was present ($r = 0.61, p < .001$) and may have resulted in suppression. One indication that this is an artifact is the zero-order correlation between self-reported positive behavior and divorce proneness (see Table 2). Overall, there is evidence suggesting hypothesis 3 was supported for both marital outcomes despite the contradictory finding likely due to predictor multicollinearity.

**Capitalization and Social Support Attempts**

Hypothesis 4 stated that capitalization attempts would predict higher levels of marital satisfaction and lower levels of divorce proneness when simultaneously compared to the impact of social support attempts on marital outcomes. The data were consistent with an unconstrained model using these factors, $Deviance = 729.37$. Based on the aforementioned decision rule regarding constraining, the following factors were constrained: husband and wife actor and partner effects of capitalization attempts on marital satisfaction, $\Delta \chi^2 (2) = 8.23, p = 0.02$, and husband and wife actor and partner effects of capitalization attempts on divorce proneness, $\Delta \chi^2 (2) = 0.84, p = 0.66$. As demonstrated, however, the constrained model was significantly different from the unconstrained model when constraining the effect of capitalization attempts on marital satisfaction across male and female partners. This suggests that equating some of the effects across husband and wife results in worse fit and should not be retained. To determine if any constraints on marital satisfaction were suitable, only actor effects of capitalization on marital satisfaction were constrained, $\Delta \chi^2 (1) = 6.83, p = 0.01$. The
Only partner effects of capitalization on marital satisfaction were then constrained, $\Delta \chi^2 (1) = 6.94, p = 0.01$. Again, the model was statistically significant and as such was not retained. Based on these results, it was discerned that when constraining effects on marital satisfaction, the model did not fit the data due to gender differences. Thus, the final model included only the following constraints: husband and wife actor and partner effects of capitalization on divorce proneness.

As detailed in Table 6, the more capitalization attempts the husband made, the higher marital satisfaction both he and his wife reported (Husband actor effect; $B = 9.02$, SE = 2.45, $\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$; Husband partner effect; $B = 9.32$, SE = 4.22, $\beta = 0.41$, $p = 0.03$). A significant actor and partner effect also emerged for divorce proneness. Specifically, for each additional time an individual made a capitalization attempt, the same individual was 77% less likely to have made steps towards divorce and for each additional time an individual made a capitalization attempt, the corresponding partner was 76% less likely to have made steps towards divorce (actor effect; $B = -1.47$, SE = 0.72, $\beta = -0.69$, $p = 0.04$; $e^{-1.47} = 0.23$; partner effect; $B = -1.44$, SE = 0.64, $\beta = -0.79$, $p = 0.02$; $e^{-1.44} = 0.24$). Hypothesis 4 was supported for both marital outcomes.

*Perceived Partner Responsiveness to Capitalization and Social Support Attempts*

The final hypothesis proposed that perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts would lead to higher levels of marital satisfaction and less likelihood to divorce, over and above perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts. An unconstrained model with all husband and wife actor and partner effects of
perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts and perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts on both marital satisfaction and divorce proneness was run. The unconstrained model was fit to the data accordingly, \textit{Deviance} = 1863.64. Based on path significance, the following effects were constrained to be equal: husband and wife actor and partner effects for both perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization and perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts on marital satisfaction, \(\Delta \chi^2 (4) = 8.58, p = 0.07\), and husband and wife actor and partner effects of perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts on divorce proneness, \(\Delta \chi^2 (2) = 2.55, p = 0.28\). The resulting final model was not significantly different than the unconstrained model, \(\Delta \chi^2 (6) = 11.13, p = 0.08\).

A significant actor effect emerged for perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts on marital satisfaction (see Table 7). Specifically the higher one’s perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts, the higher one’s marital satisfaction (\(B = 1.33, \text{SE} = 0.63, \beta = 0.21, p = 0.04\)). No significant effects were found for divorce proneness in this model. Thus hypothesis 5 was partially supported in that the effect of perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts on marital satisfaction was significant over and above perceived partner responsiveness to social support attempts.
Chapter 5: Discussion

This study contributes to the growing body of research on romantic relationships that focuses on the role of positivity in relationship outcomes. Specifically, within a longitudinal framework, both daily positive and negative predictors were concurrently examined in relationships to outcomes in a sample of newlywed couples. This study sheds light on the potential power of using a two-dimensional approach for predictors when looking at marital outcomes in that the presence or absence of positivity appears to play a significant role in understanding change in marriage above and beyond the effects of negativity.

*Positive and Negative Affect: Hypothesis 1.* With respect to hypothesis 1, a positive association emerged when reviewing the impact of positive affect on marital satisfaction. In other words, the more an individual reported experiencing average daily positive affect early in marriage, the higher the partner’s marital satisfaction 15 months later. This extends previous findings on the link between positive affect and marital satisfaction found by both Gottman (1998) and Rogge & Bradbury (1999) because positive affect was assessed separate from a conflict context in the present study.

When examining the impact of affect on the likelihood to divorce, a positive association emerged for negative affect indicating that the more one reported experiencing daily negative affect, the more likely the individual was to report thinking about or taking steps towards divorce. This finding of negative affect linked to one feeling less sure of the marital relationship is not surprising, especially in light of past findings. As mentioned previously, the one predictor across the scope of the relationship
literature that was found to consistently predict relationship outcomes of satisfaction and divorce was neuroticism (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), defined as an individual trait with the tendency to experience and express negative affect (Karney & Bradbury, 1997; Rodrigues et al., 2006; Watson & Clark, 1984). Although some research found that neuroticism was not associated with marital outcomes over time (Karney & Bradbury, 1997), the current study highlighted the impact it may have when looking specifically at a couple’s likelihood to divorce. It should be further noted that negative affect was the only predictor that demonstrated significance above the corresponding positive or approach-oriented predictor on a marital outcome in the present research.

Positive and Negative Behavior: Hypotheses 2 and 3. Findings in the current study supported the expected relationship between perceived positive partner behaviors and both greater marital satisfaction and less steps towards divorce. These relationships remained significant even after controlling for variance in marital outcomes accounted for by perceived negative partner behaviors. More specifically, higher levels of average daily perceived positive partner behavior early in marriage predicted higher levels of marital satisfaction 15 months later. Additionally, a negative relationship emerged demonstrating that the more perceived positive partner behavior one reported, the less steps towards divorce one’s partner made approximately one year later.

Another positive relationship also emerged in which perceived negative partner behavior was linked to greater steps towards divorce. This finding highlights the importance of comparing both approach and avoidance predictors in the same model as each demonstrated significance in the presence of the other. Additionally, an unexpected positive association was demonstrated between higher perceived positive partner
behavior and steps toward divorce. This final finding may be indicative of problems with predictor multicollinearity, as there was a large correlation between the husband and wife perceived partner positive behaviors ($r = 0.72$), or this finding may be due to a more fundamental relationship between attitudes and behavior, such as acceleration of positive behavior in the wake of a decision to take steps toward divorce. Despite this seemingly counterintuitive finding, one that is worthy of future investigation, hypothesis 2 was supported for both marital satisfaction and divorce proneness.

The prediction of self-reported positive behaviors leading to an increase in marital satisfaction and a decrease in likelihood to divorce, over and above self-reported negative behaviors was also supported. A positive link was shown emphasizing the impact of higher levels of self-reported positive behaviors and an increase in marital satisfaction. Higher levels of self-reported positive behavior were also linked to a decrease in a partner’s likelihood to consider divorce. Increased self-reported negative behaviors were also linked to increased steps towards divorce, despite being in the presence of positivity. It appears that when looking at self-reported and perceived partner behaviors, both positive and negative behaviors may bear significant weight on the likelihood for a relationship to dissolve.

Another unexpected finding, similar to the one observed in the second hypothesis, was found when examining self-reported positive behaviors and divorce proneness. An increase in self-reported positive behaviors was positively linked to an increase in report of likelihood to consider divorce. Again, the high correlation between self-reported positive behaviors by both husband and wife may be leading to problems with predictor multicollinearity ($r = 0.61$), which could partially explain the finding, or the finding may
be the result of a more fundamental relationship between acceleration of positive behavior in relationship to the decision to take steps toward divorce.

Overall, perceived and self-reported positive behaviors were linked to marital outcomes. The present findings are largely consisted with those demonstrated by Gable (2003) as well as those of Huston and colleagues (2001). Similar to Gable’s results (Reis & Gable, 2003), the current study also revealed the independent contribution of positive and negative daily behaviors to marital well-being, with positive behaviors outweighing negative ones in married couples. Further, Huston et al. (2001) showed that newlywed couples who engaged in daily positive behaviors reflecting affection in the first two years of marriage were less likely to divorce years later. Although this study did not follow the newlywed couples for many years, the finding of increased positive behaviors in relationship to a lower likelihood to divorce indicates the importance of assessing daily positive behaviors link to marital outcomes.

However, as noted earlier, perceived and self-reported negative behaviors were also found to influence divorce proneness. This supports past findings in marital research that also illuminated the impact of negative behaviors on marital outcomes (Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Neff & Karney, 2007). Despite the connection of perceived and self-reported negative behaviors to divorce proneness, neither was indicative of marital satisfaction when concurrently examining the impact of positive behaviors. This may be especially important to consider when looking at marital satisfaction in nondistressed couples, such as those in the current sample, versus distressed couples as even nondistressed couples can benefit from understanding how and why they remain satisfied in their relationship (Maniaci & Reis, 2010).
Capitalization and Social Support Attempts: Hypothesis 4. Frequency of capitalization attempts made by husbands early in marriage was positively linked later in marriage levels of marital satisfaction and decreased levels of steps towards divorce for both the husband and the wife. Frequency of social support attempts made was not significantly linked to marital outcomes. Hypothesis 4 was supported. However, while examining these constructs it became evident that a gender effect was occurring based on the inability to maintain a model in which husband and wife effects of capitalization on marital satisfaction were constrained to be equal due to a change in statistical significance between models.

Given past findings in the relationship literature, it is not surprising that a gender effect arose when examining husband and wife predictors impact on marital outcomes (Gable et al., 2006; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Huston & Vangelisti, 1991; Huston & Chorost, 1994). In one study when a gender effect was discovered, it was hypothesized that the emergence of gender findings may be related to how men and women view relationships and the way each is expected to respond to one another (Gable et al., 2006). The impact of a husband’s responsiveness may be more meaningful in a relationship based on the idea that the female partner is typically more inclined to invest in relationship maintenance behaviors and when the male partner does instead, the experience bears greater weight for both partners (Gottman & Krokoff, 1989; Huston & Chorost, 1994). Despite the presence of a gender effect, this hypothesis was supported for both marital outcomes indicating that attempts at capitalizing on positive events may be more impactful for relationship outcomes than attempts at soliciting social support over a negative event.
Responsiveness to Capitalization and Social Support: Hypothesis 5. With respect to hypothesis 5, perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization attempts was positively linked to marital satisfaction. More specifically, when an increase in perceived partner responsiveness was reported, an increase in marital satisfaction for that individual was also reported. This replicates past findings of perceived responsiveness to positive event disclosures relationship to relationship satisfaction (Gable et al., 2006). However, the present study utilized a newlywed sample as opposed to a college dating sample. It also extends Gable’s (2006) past research in that responsiveness and positive event disclosure was captured on a daily basis versus a simulated positive disclosure conversation in a laboratory setting.

Interestingly, there were no demonstrated links between divorce proneness and perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization or social support attempts. Thus, hypothesis 5 was only partially supported. Past research has not explicitly looked at the relationship between perceived partner responsiveness to attempts at connectedness on likelihood to divorce. It is unclear whether a relationship exists here or not. However, based on the present study findings, as well as past findings related to marital stability, future evaluation of this relationship is recommended.

Synopsis of Findings

Overall, the presence of positive predictors outweighed the effects of the presence of negative predictors in all the hypotheses related to marital satisfaction. Based on the findings in the current study, it appears that it may not be the presence of negativity that most greatly effects marital satisfaction but whether or not positivity is also present.
Furthermore, it is important to note that since initial marital satisfaction was taken into account, daily positivity appears to be uniquely contributing to marital satisfaction over one year later. The impact of this additive effect of positive predictors over the course of a few weeks appears to support the idea of “accumulation bias” presented earlier (Driver & Gottman, 2004; Fredrickson, 2001; Reis & Gable, 2003). The present findings may indicate the importance of capturing positivity over time to establish an appreciation for its impact on marital outcomes.

Conversely, the effect of positivity on divorce proneness was mixed across the types of predictors. Both positive and negative predictors were demonstrated to be as important as the other for self-reported and perceived partner behaviors on likelihood to divorce. In the case of affect on predicting steps towards divorce taken, only negative affect was linked to marital stability. However, a negative relationship emerged between capitalization attempts and steps towards divorce and no relationship emerged for the relationship of perceived partner responsiveness to capitalization or social support attempts on likelihood to divorce. Based on the present study findings, it is unclear how important the presence of positivity may be in the context of a couple choosing to dissolve their marriage. Clearly, this topic merits a closer look in future research.

**Strengths and Limitations**

It is important to note that this study is not without limitations. First, the measurement of thoughts and behaviors related to divorce proneness, STD, raises some questions. As an outcome variable, it is positively skewed with many zeros in terms of no steps towards divorce reported approximately one year after marriage for this sample
of newlywed couples. This study controlled for baseline satisfaction, as everyone likely has some level of satisfaction at the first time of measurement and again at the second time point. It may be possible that more time is needed to adequately gauge the predictive nature of positivity on likelihood to divorce, or that likelihood to divorce as an outcome does not come into play for many couples within the first two years of marriage. Future studies may benefit from gathering information from newlywed couples over a longer period of time when also measuring marital stability in the form of divorce proneness.

Second, it may be possible that the reason why positivity was demonstrated to outweigh the impact of negativity when looking at marital satisfaction is that newlywed couples may be more likely to feel positively towards their partners this early in their relationship. Higher ratings of marriage tend to occur during the first few years, with a decline in marital outcomes becoming more present the longer the marriage exists (Kurdek, 1998). Taking steps toward divorce indicates dissatisfaction with the marriage, a negative construct, and the length of time assessed in this study may not be allowing for enough elapsed time for couples to begin negatively evaluating their spouse to the degree of ending the marriage.

The use of daily diary methods to assess the predictor variables in this study is both a strength and limitation. Although daily diary methods have been noted to be the best way to capture daily interactions between partners (Bolger et al., 2003), it is still a self-report method in which biases may exist. Method variance may inflate the findings among the variables. Despite explicit statements to each partner about the inability for
their partner to review their daily diary answers after completed, social desirability and concern over their partner’s evaluation of their answers, may have led couples to inflate the positive daily predictors and deflate the negative daily predictors.

Furthermore, it is also difficult to tease out the effects of some of the predictors given the high correlations between them. The surprising positive associations for self-reported and perceived partner positive behaviors on steps towards divorce, may be directly related to how correlated each positive predictor was between partners. However, separating the analyses precludes examination of the interactions that may be occurring between predictors, which was one of the primary strengths of the study.

In spite of the previously mentioned limitations, this study utilized methods that have been suggested as the most useful and sound approaches to analyzing romantic couples. The methodological strengths included conduct of a longitudinal study with a community sample consisting of newlywed couples with no former marriages or children. The relatively homogenous nature of this newlywed sample provided a clearer picture of what may be happening for couples at this developmental stage of their relationship. Furthermore, by using an APIM model as well as structural equation modeling, the data were more consistent with how processes interact and occur within a couple as opposed to looking only at individual partners and the subsequent outcomes.

Relation to Current Theories

This study further extends the relationship literature in several ways. Additional support was demonstrated for the use of the two-dimensional approach of positive and negative relationship variables on marital outcomes, as negative and positive predictors
contributed independently to marital satisfaction and likelihood to divorce in the present study. More generally, the current study is consistent with the current trend in relationship research to examine the extent to which the positive domain contributes independently to the overall stability of marital relationships, above and beyond the negative processes. Specifically, both positive and negative intra- and interpersonal predictors should be considered when attempting to conceptualize changes in marriage over time. The previously mentioned models of marriage that focus mostly on negative factors related to marital discord might better capture how marriages change over time if they better took into account the concurrent effect of positivity.

For example, the Emergent Distress Model (Caughlin & Huston, 2006; Clements et al., 2004) suggests that change in the relationship occurs based on negative behaviors exchanged during conflict. However, this study suggests that the daily accumulation of positive behaviors may be more telling in terms of marital satisfaction and likelihood to divorce. Adding the two-dimensional focus to the model may better account for those couples who remain satisfied versus those who end in divorce. Additionally, the Disillusionment Model suggests that the loss of idealizations of the partner is what leads to divorce, and Huston et al. (2001) noted that couples who divorced within the first two years of marriage indicated a decrease in responsiveness by their partner. However, it is unclear if this responsiveness is related to a positive event disclosure or a negative one. A two-dimensional approach when conceptualizing responsiveness in marital change may better account for marital outcomes in this model, especially since this study and others have demonstrated that responsiveness to a positive disclosure is more closely linked to marital satisfaction (Gable et al., 2004; Gable et al., 2006).
It may be important to consider reviewing these models at different developmental time points in a marriage. Although positive and negative predictors seemed to both influence outcomes in newlywed marriage, what possible role does positive predictors play in a couple after they have a child? The presence of positive predictors may play a protective role in how well the couple adjusts after the addition of a child. Future studies may wish to explore this idea further.

*Future Directions*

More recently, Reis (2002; 2007) encouraged researchers in relationship science to move towards not only a cumulative, but also a collective practice across disciplines. This perspective is in response to fostering research and attention towards the development of a positive relationship science. In the March 2010 issue of the *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, relationship researchers came together to discuss ways in which to join positive psychology and positive relationship science literature (Caughlin & Huston, 2010; Fincham & Beach, 2010; Karney, 2010; Maniaci & Reis, 2010; Walker & Hirayama, 2010). The simultaneous study of appetitive and avoidance predictors on marital outcomes was repeatedly listed as an important element in this union in that if two separate dimensions exist for relationship predictors, it is crucial to study these predictors at the same time (Caughlin & Huston, 2010; Maniaci & Reis, 2010). Although the current study moved in the direction of practicing this, replication of these findings is necessary. Maniaci and Reis (2010) illuminate that looking at both positive and negative predictors at the same time is not a replacement of the existing literature focusing on the impact of negativity on relationship outcomes, but an augmentation of what has already been shown.
The findings in this study also suggest that strength based approaches for marital counseling interventions may be effective for couples. For example, if couples learn how powerful their perceived responses are to their partner’s disclosure or the impact of exchange of positive behaviors, they may learn how to support and encourage one another in a new way. Seligman (2005; 2006) has successfully worked towards empirical validation of a strengths based approach in clinical work with a depressed population. The same idea may be useful in relationship research if a couple can learn to look at their current strengths and/or enhance their strengths through awareness of how they respond to and validate their partners. Although interventions in marital counseling were not reviewed here, findings indicate the importance of not only diminishing negative intra- and interpersonal processes but also increasing positive ones.

**Conclusion**

The present study has contributed to the growing literature on the relationship of positive or approach-oriented variables to marital outcomes. One of the most significant contributions was the demonstration of the importance of positive relationship processes compared to negative ones in the prediction of marital satisfaction and divorce proneness in early-stage marriages. In closing, this study provides a compelling demonstration of the importance of assessing both positive and negative predictors simultaneously when studying marital outcomes.
Figure 1. Actor and partner effects for APIM model of positive predictors on marital outcomes over and above negative predictors for husbands and wives.

H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; Pos = positive predictors, Neg = negative predictors. Effects for Time 2 DAS were controlled for by Time 1 DAS.
Table 1

*Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HNA</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNA</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNB</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNB</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPB</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPB</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPNB</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPNB</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPPB</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPPB</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSS</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCAP</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCAP</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-SS</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-SS</td>
<td>5.57</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-CAP</td>
<td>5.87</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-CAP</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>26.23</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>25.56</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSTD</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSTD</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; NA = negative affect; PA = positive affect; NB = self-reported negative behaviors; PB = self-reported positive behaviors; PNB = perceived partner negative behaviors; PPB = perceived partner positive behaviors; SS = social Support attempts; CAP = capitalization attempts; P-SS = perceived partner response to social support attempts; P-CAP = perceived partner response to capitalization attempts.
### Table 2

*Correlations Between Predictors and Marital Outcomes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1 Predictors</th>
<th>Time 2 Marital Outcomes</th>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNA</td>
<td>-0.121</td>
<td>0.258*</td>
<td>0.028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNA</td>
<td>-0.195</td>
<td>0.301**</td>
<td>-0.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA</td>
<td>0.378**</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.374**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>-0.144</td>
<td>-0.126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNB</td>
<td>-0.163</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>-0.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNB</td>
<td>-0.230</td>
<td>0.299**</td>
<td>0.073</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPB</td>
<td>0.449**</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.312*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPB</td>
<td>0.381**</td>
<td>-0.194</td>
<td>-0.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPNB</td>
<td>-0.218</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>-0.081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPNB</td>
<td>-0.212</td>
<td>0.237*</td>
<td>-0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPPB</td>
<td>0.357**</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPPB</td>
<td>0.190</td>
<td>-0.019</td>
<td>0.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS</td>
<td>0.331**</td>
<td>-0.151</td>
<td>0.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSS</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCAP</td>
<td>0.533**</td>
<td>-0.409*</td>
<td>0.936**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCAP</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
<td>0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-SS</td>
<td>0.389**</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.453**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-SS</td>
<td>0.269*</td>
<td>-0.196</td>
<td>0.315*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-CAP</td>
<td>0.479**</td>
<td>-0.060</td>
<td>0.388**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-CAP</td>
<td>0.326**</td>
<td>-0.321</td>
<td>0.269*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; NA = negative affect; PA = positive affect; NB = self-reported negative behaviors; PB = self-reported positive behaviors; PNB = perceived partner negative behaviors; PPB = perceived partner positive behaviors; SS = social support attempts; CAP = capitalization attempts, P-SS = perceived partner response to social support attempts; P-CAP = perceived partner response to capitalization attempts. 
*p < .05. **p < .01.*
Table 3

Marital Outcomes on Average Daily Negative and Positive Affect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>STD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNA</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNA</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.21d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPA</td>
<td>0.49a</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.12e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>0.88*b</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>-0.13f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; NA = negative affect; PA = positive affect. Same letter subscripts indicate constrained paths across husband and wife effects. Interdependence accounted for by allowing errors for all outcomes to covary. *p < .05. **p < .01.
### Table 4

*Marital Outcomes on Average Daily Perceived Partner Negative and Positive Behaviors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Husband</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th>Wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td>DAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E. β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E. β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPNB</td>
<td>-1.11&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 0.70  -0.52&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; 0.40  0.68</td>
<td>-0.41&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt; 0.65  -0.04</td>
<td>0.96&lt;sup&gt;f&lt;/sup&gt; 0.40  1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPNB</td>
<td>-0.41&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt; 0.65  0.77</td>
<td>0.96&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; 0.40  0.32</td>
<td>-1.11&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 0.70  -0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPPB</td>
<td>1.37&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; 0.66  0.78</td>
<td>0.35&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt; 0.16  -0.26</td>
<td>-0.35&lt;sub&gt;d&lt;/sub&gt; 0.62  -0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPPB</td>
<td>0.35&lt;sub&gt;d&lt;/sub&gt; 0.62  -1.13</td>
<td>-0.48** 0.16  -0.23</td>
<td>1.37&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; 0.66  0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>0.31** 0.10  0.37</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>0.43** 0.12  0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; PNB = perceived partner negative behaviors; PPB = perceived partner positive behaviors. Same letter subscripts indicate constrained paths across husband and wife effects. Interdependence accounted for by allowing errors for all outcomes to covary.

*<sup>p</sup> < .05. **p** < .01.
Table 5

*Marital Outcomes on Average Daily Self-Reported Negative and Positive Behaviors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HNB</td>
<td>-0.84 &lt;a&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNB</td>
<td>-0.82 &lt;b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HPB</td>
<td>1.12 &lt;**c&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPB</td>
<td>0.63 &lt;d&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>0.25 &lt;**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; NB = self-reported negative behaviors; PB = self-reported positive behaviors. Same letter subscripts indicate constrained paths across husband and wife effects. Interdependence accounted for by allowing errors for all outcomes to covary.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 6

Marital Outcomes on Average Daily Social Support and Capitalization Attempts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSS</td>
<td>-1.79</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.37</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSS</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCAP</td>
<td>9.02**</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>-1.47*</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCAP</td>
<td>-6.06</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-1.44*</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.42**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; SS = social support attempts; CAP = capitalization attempts. Same letter subscripts indicate constrained paths across husband and wife effects. Interdependence accounted for by allowing errors for all outcomes to covary. *p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 7

Marital Outcomes on Perceived Partner Responsiveness to Social Support and Capitalization Attempts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Time 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>STD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-SS</td>
<td>0.58&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 0.74 0.08</td>
<td>0.75 0.56 1.05</td>
<td>0.21&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt; 1.05 0.02</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-SS</td>
<td>0.21&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt; 1.05 0.04</td>
<td>-0.77 0.48 -1.48</td>
<td>0.58&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt; 0.74 0.09</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HP-CAP</td>
<td>1.33&lt;sup&gt;*c&lt;/sup&gt; 0.63 0.21</td>
<td>-0.29&lt;sub&gt;e&lt;/sub&gt; 0.23 -0.44</td>
<td>0.87&lt;sub&gt;d&lt;/sub&gt; 0.58 0.10</td>
<td>0.07&lt;sub&gt;f&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP-CAP</td>
<td>0.87&lt;sub&gt;d&lt;/sub&gt; 0.58 0.16</td>
<td>0.07&lt;sub&gt;f&lt;/sub&gt; 0.28 0.13</td>
<td>1.33&lt;sup&gt;*c&lt;/sup&gt; 0.63 0.19</td>
<td>-0.29&lt;sub&gt;e&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-0.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDAS</td>
<td>0.30&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt; 0.09 0.34</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WDAS</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td>0.37** 0.11 0.35</td>
<td>--- --- ---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. H = husband; W = wife; DAS = measure of marital satisfaction (DAS-7); STD = measure of steps towards divorce; P-SS = perceived partner response to social support attempts; P-CAP = perceived partner response to capitalization attempts. Same letter subscripts indicate constrained paths across husband and wife effects. Interdependence accounted for by allowing errors for all outcomes to covary.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
References


Appendix A

Daily Diary Items

Positive Affect

1. How EXCITED did you feel today?
2. How ELATED did you feel today?
3. How PASSIONATE did you feel today?

Negative Affect

1. How ANXIOUS did you feel today?
2. How DISTRESSED did you feel today?

Positive Relationship Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Partner Positive Behaviors</th>
<th>Self/Partner-Reported Positive Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My partner told me that he/she loved me.</td>
<td>1. I told my partner I loved him/her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My partner was physically affectionate toward me.</td>
<td>2. I was physically affectionate toward my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My partner complimented me.</td>
<td>3. I complimented my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My partner did something thoughtful for me.</td>
<td>4. I did something thoughtful for my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My partner tried to make me feel wanted.</td>
<td>5. I tried to make my partner feel wanted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My partner did things with me that I really enjoy.</td>
<td>6. I did things with my partner that he/she really enjoys.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Negative Relationship Behaviors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Partner Negative Behaviors</th>
<th>Self/Partner Reported Negative Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My partner criticized me.</td>
<td>1. I criticized my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My partner &quot;snapped&quot; at or yelled</td>
<td>2. I &quot;snapped&quot; at or yelled at my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at me.</td>
<td>3. I was inattentive and unresponsive to my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My partner was inattentive and</td>
<td>4. I intentionally ignored my partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unresponsive to me.</td>
<td>5. I tried to tell my partner what to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My partner intentionally ignored</td>
<td>6. I was inconsiderate or selfish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My partner tried to tell me what</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My partner was inconsiderate or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selfish.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Capitalization Attempt**

1. What was the most positive thing that happened today?
2. Did you tell your partner about this event?

**Perceived Partner Responsiveness**

3. My partner reacted enthusiastically to my good event?

**Social Support Attempt**

1. Did you tell your partner about any of the troublesome things that happened today?

**Perceived Partner Responsiveness**

2. My partner was supportive and reassuring to me regarding these negative event(s)?