MARITAL ADJUSTMENT TEST (MAT)

Reference:


Description of Measure:

A 15-item scale that measures marital satisfaction. It was initially used to differentiate well-adjusted couples from distressed (unsatisfied) couples. The 15 items are answered on a variety of response scales.

Abstracts of Selected Related Articles:


The present study took a critical look at a central construct in couples research: relationship satisfaction. Eight well-validated self-report measures of relationship satisfaction, including the Marital Adjustment Test (MAT; H. J. Locke & K. M. Wallace, 1959), the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; G. B. Spanier, 1976), and an additional 75 potential satisfaction items, were given to 5,315 online participants. Using item response theory, the authors demonstrated that the MAT and DAS provided relatively poor levels of precision in assessing satisfaction, particularly given the length of those scales. Principal-components analysis and item response theory applied to the larger item pool were used to develop the Couples Satisfaction Index (CSI) scales. Compared with the MAS and the DAS, the CSI scales were shown to have higher precision of measurement (less noise) and correspondingly greater power for detecting differences in levels of satisfaction. The CSI scales demonstrated strong convergent validity with other measures of satisfaction and excellent construct validity with anchor scales from the nomological net surrounding satisfaction, suggesting that they assess the same theoretical construct as do prior scales. Implications for research are discussed.


Principal axis factor analysis with varimax rotations of data for 149 wives and 157 husbands indicated that the instrument is an internally consistent measure of marital adjustment, and that this general aspect consists of two separate components--sexual congeniality and compatibility.

This study examined the relationship between couples' network interdependence and marital quality in a sample of 347 couples that were recruited at the time of their first marriage. Husbands and wives completed separate, self-administered questionnaires at home. Analyses are based on data collected at the time of marriage, at the first anniversary, and at the second anniversary. Results indicated that after marriage, husbands' and wives' friend and family networks became increasingly interdependent. Moreover, the interdependence of the friend and family networks at marriage predicted wives' marital quality at the first anniversary, whereas wives' marital quality at the first anniversary predicted the interdependence of the friend network at the second anniversary. No significant longitudinal relations were observed for husbands.

**Scale** (also available at [http://www.familynow1.com/reviews/lockewallace.htm](http://www.familynow1.com/reviews/lockewallace.htm)):

(note: points for scoring are here included in the scale)

1. Check the dot on the scale line below which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, of your present marriage. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage, and the scale gradually ranges on one side to those few who are very unhappy in marriage, and on the other, to those few who experience extreme joy or felicity in marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>0</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>35</th>
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<td>Very Unhappy</td>
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<td>Happy</td>
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<td>Perfectly Happy</td>
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State the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your mate on the following items.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always Agree</th>
<th>Almost Always Agree</th>
<th>Occasionally Disagree</th>
<th>Frequently Disagree</th>
<th>Almost Always Disagree</th>
<th>Always Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Handling Family Finances</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Matters of Recreation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>4. Demonstration of Affection</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Friends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. When disagreements arise, they usually result in:

- husband giving in
- wife giving in
- agreement by mutual give and take

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

- All of them
- some of them
- very few of them
- none of them.

12. In leisure time do you generally prefer:

- to be "on the go"
- to stay at home

Does your mate generally prefer:

- to be "on the go"
- to stay at home?

(Stay at home for both, 10 points; "on the go" for both, 3 points; disagreement, 2 points.)

13. Do you ever wish you had not married?

- Frequently
- occasionally
- rarely
- never

14. If you had your life to live over, do you think you would:

- marry the same person
- marry a different person
- not marry at all

15. Do you confide in your mate:

- almost never
- rarely
- in most things
- in everything
Scoring:
The scoring rubric (points for each response) is included in the above scale, but should not be included when giving the scale to respondents. The scores for all 15 items should be added up together. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.