THE EFFECTS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON
MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG CHRISTIANS IN NAIROBI: A CASE OF
KILIMANI, NAIROBI WEST, KAYOLE AND KITENGE LA WARDS

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THE EFFECTS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON MARITAL SATISFACTION AMONG CHRISTIANS IN KILIMANI, NAIROBI WEST, KAYOLE AND KITENGELA WARDS IN KENYA

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Doctorate of Clinical Psychology

Summer 2017
STUDENTS’S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University - Africa in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed_________________________ Date ________________________

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This dissertation has been presented for examination with our approval as the appointed supervisors.

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ABSTRACT

Personality Traits have been found to be a major contributor in marital conflicts due to their effect on interpersonal interactions of a couple within marriage. However, few studies have been done in Kenya to examine the effect of personality traits on marital Satisfaction. In this study, two standardized self-report questionnaires, the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS and The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) were used to assess Personality Traits and to measure marital satisfaction. The scores from the questionnaires were then correlated in order to determine the relationship between Personality Traits and Marital Satisfaction.

The findings show that there was a significant positive correlation between Agreeableness r (78 ) = 0.201, p < 0.05) and Openness r (78 ) = 0.215, p< 0.05) and Marital satisfaction, while Neuroticism was found to be significantly negatively correlated with marital satisfaction r (78 ) = -.228, p= .029). The significance was at 0.05 level (1 tailed test).There was a non - significant correlation (p = ns) between Extraversion, Conscientiousness and marital satisfaction. This implies that the two traits did not significantly influence marital satisfaction.

The study recommends clinicians incorporate the use of personality assessments during their work with couples so as to identify and reinforce the valuable traits identified in this study, and use them to enhance marriages of their clients. Another recommendation was to identify components of church enrichment programs for use in couple therapy.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0 Introduction

Divorce often has devastating effects on the well-being of both the involved couple and their offspring (Amato, 2000; Amato & Sobolewski, 2001; Fagan & Churchill, 2012). The increasing numbers of divorce cases and couples separating have called for the need to study the factors that increase levels of marital satisfaction, as this would result in fewer divorces. Suggestions have also been made that the church has not been spared as the divorce rate is the same or higher for those attending church as those outside religious circles (Barna Group, 2008). As the numbers of clients seeking therapy for marital problems continue to rise, clinicians grapple with the challenge of finding “a winning formula” for marital bliss. Despite studies having indicated that pre-marital education may increase levels of marital satisfaction and commitment, as well as reduce the odds of divorce by 31% (Scott, Johnson, Amato & Markman, 2006), the remaining 69% facing the likelihood of marriages ending in divorce presents a worrying predicament for clinicians, who would prefer to eliminate these possibilities totally. In order for this to become possible, research needs to look beyond the already known causes of divorce to uncover other causative factors that are responsible for this alarming phenomenon.

Various studies have shown that similarity in personality between couples is associated with lower rates of divorce (Acitelli, Kenny & Weiner, 2001; Russel & Wells, 1991) as well as initial attraction (Klohnen & Luo, 2003). Similarity between partners also contributes to increased feelings of being understood in a relationship,
as well as relationship satisfaction (Murray, Holmes, Bellavia, Griffin, & Dolderman, 2002).

Couples in which both partners are from the same country have much lower odds of divorcing than those where partners are from different Western countries (Cao, Fragniere, Gauthier, Sapin & Widmer, 2010). Given that similarity between partners is an important factor for marriage stability and duration, the knowledge of characteristics of partners before starting relationships could be useful for guaranteeing more successful relationships.

Theory and research suggest that personality traits are related to marital satisfaction (Aristide et al., 2016). These personality traits tend to affect interpersonal relationships (Ganiban et al., 2009) and subsequently influence how couples interact with each other within a marriage. These interactions would then have a direct effect on the level of satisfaction these couples experience within their marriages. Ganiban et al. (2009) state that individuals tend to seek out others who have similar personalities as friends and mates, which results in creation of a platform for interactions that reinforce the expression of their own personality.

These interactions can have either negative or positive outcomes on marriages and therefore, it would be of great benefit to be able to reliably predict the occurrence of divorce based on personal and couple characteristics. A meta-analysis by Bar-Haim, Lamy, Pergamin, Bakersman - Kranenburg and van Ijzendoorn (2007) indicated that highly anxious individuals consistently demonstrate an attentional bias for threat related cues than non-anxious individuals. The implications of Bar-Haim et al. (2007) findings is that within the context of relationships, heightened anxiety may
cause people to be overly attentive to signs of rejection and criticism, so more likely to perceive relationships as punishing. They are also more likely to withdraw emotionally and behaviorally from the relationship. These findings by Bar-Haim et al. (2007) confirm that personality characteristics seem to reflect individual differences in the sensitivity of environmental cues as well as the interpretation of those cues. Thus, personality is expected to affect behavior in interpersonal situations (Ganiban et al., 2007). The Jewish and Christian sacred texts both include the stories of Job, Hosea, Abraham and Jacob which depict tensions and strife experienced by couples and how they endured and stayed married due to commitment to the relationship.

Personality is a set of enduring characteristics that affect behavior and perceptions (Ganiban et al., 2009), and include stable and enduring traits that reveal themselves in various situations (Najarpourian, et al., 2012; Shahnazari, et al., 2013). Personality is usually divided into five factors called the Big Five which are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism (McCrae, 2002). Each of the Big Five factors have facets or dimensions within them that are described as follows:

Agreeableness: Warm, friendly and tactful, with an optimistic view of human nature and get along well with others.

Conscientiousness: Desire to do a task well, efficient and organized.

Openness: Active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, preference for variety and intellectual curiosity.

Extraversion: Sociable, talkative, assertive and excitable.
Neuroticism: Anxious, hostile, depressed, impulsive, self-conscious and vulnerable. Evidence from a study (McCrae & Costa, 1997) which was done with German, Portuguese, Hebrew, Chinese, Korean and Japanese samples suggests that the five factor structure of personality is common to all humans and is universal across language and culture.

Gonzaga, Campos and Bradbury (2007) state that personality traits are stable characteristics of enduring vulnerabilities or strengths of individuals. Gonzaga et al. (2007) state that these vulnerabilities or strengths are adaptive processes observed during emotional and relational experiences with other individuals. It is therefore imperative that traits of individuals will have an effect on the quality of their relationships. These effects may be in the form of how the individuals think and feel about their relationship.

This research studied personality traits among Christian individuals and how these traits affect perceptions of marital satisfaction, with a view to inform couple therapy.

1.1 Background of the Study

Shackelford and Stone (2007) define marital satisfaction as a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person. The greater the perceived benefits, the more satisfied one is with the marriage and the marriage partner, while if the costs a marriage partner inflicts on a person are greater, the less the satisfaction. Despite the definition of Hendrick and Hendrick (1997) being almost two decades old, it offers a straight forward explanation of marital
satisfaction as simply the happiness and contentment that individuals experience in their marital relationships.

Researchers have interchangeably used the terms marital adjustment, marital satisfaction and marital happiness to refer to marital quality (Shahnazari et al., 2013). Marital satisfaction can be affected by patterns of interaction between spouses, with patterns like demand and withdrawal being most related with marital dissatisfaction. Shackelford and Stone (2007) describe demand/withdrawal as a pattern where one partner criticizes and nags the other about change, while the other evades confrontation and discussion, and thus the couple’s conflict remains unresolved. Karampatsos (2011) claims that personality plays a role in marital communication and conflict resolution, while Shackelford et al. (2007) note that the level of marital satisfaction of an individual seems to be related to the personality characteristics of their spouse. Individuals with higher scores on Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness and lower scores on Neuroticism tend to have greater marital satisfaction.

Several studies on the relationship between personality and marital satisfaction have been done in various parts of the world. Amiri, Farhoodi, Abdolvandc and Bidakhavidid (2011) in their study on the relationship between the Big Five Traits and marital satisfaction among 50 couples from the University of Tehran and Allame Tabatabayi University in Tehran found that neuroticism had a negative correlation with marital satisfaction. The same study found that the other four factors namely Openness, Agreeableness, Extraversion and Conscientiousness were positively correlated with marital satisfaction. Buss (1991) study on the role of
personality in predicting anger upset on 107 couples within a county in the United States of America found that spouses low on Agreeableness and low emotional stability were most likely to cause anger and conflict within their relationships. Similarly, Heaven et al. (2006) studied the link between Big Five personality factors and perceptions of conflict communication patterns within 79 cohabiting couples in Sydney Australia. The study found that the presence of Neuroticism in men was the highest predictor of couple’s negative perceptions of communication patterns, while Conscientiousness was a predictor of the destructive demand withdraw pattern among the couples.

Other studies on the topic include Watson et al. (2000) who studied the role of positive affect and marital satisfaction among 74 married couples and 136 dating couples in Iowa USA. The findings confirmed that positive affect significantly correlated with relationship satisfaction. Antonioni (1998) in his study on the relationship between the Big Five and conflict management among 351 students in USA found that individuals with higher scores on Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and lower scores on Neuroticism tend to have greater marital satisfaction, more effective marital communication and are better at successfully resolving conflicts in a healthy manner. Chen et al. (2007) study among 66 couples in Japan found that the personality traits of one partner affected the marital adjustment of the other partner. In the above study, a husband’s neuroticism was linked to the wife’s marital dissatisfaction, while the wife’s extraversion was related to the husband’s marital satisfaction.
Other studies on personality and marriage from various global regions included Igbo et al. (2015) who conducted a study in Nigeria on the relationship between duration of marriage, personality traits, gender and conflict resolution strategies of 100 couples. The study found that the Big Five Personality traits determined the couples’ conflict resolution strategies as one’s personality determined what strategies they would adopt during a conflict. Williamson et al (2012) study among 41 couples in China found that Chinese couples displayed more negative communication behavior towards their spouses than the comparative group of 50 American Couples. Consequently the study found that the Chinese couples due to their negative communication behavior reported lower relationship satisfaction than the American Couples. Aristide et al. (2016) in their study on the relationship between compatibility and marital satisfaction among 184 Italian couples found that partners’ compatibility scores were similar to their similarities in Big Five Personality Factors. Couples with high compatibility scores reported high marital satisfaction. O’Rourke et al. (2011) conducted a study in Canada among 125 older couples on personality traits as predictors of marital satisfaction with findings suggesting that higher levels of extraversion as well as Openness within a couple are predictive of marital satisfaction. Another study in Canada by Bouchard et al. (1991) with 446 couples indicated that personality traits contributed to the prediction of marital adjustment for couples.

Individuals with higher Neuroticism, low on Agreeableness and Openness were reported by spouses as being neglectful, dependent, possessive, condescending, jealous, unfaithful, unreliable, self-centered, sexualizing of others and abusive of
alcohol (Shackelford et al., 2007). Therefore it seems that the personality characteristics of each spouse contribute greatly to either marital satisfaction or dissolution of the marriage (Karampatsos, 2011; Shackelford et al., 2007).

The above information therefore indicates that knowledge of how personality traits affect marital satisfaction is necessary for clinicians and the practice of psychology. Most of the studies that have been done by family researchers on marital quality have paid too much attention to conflict and too little attention to positive interpersonal processes such as ability to forgive and sacrifice, despite existing evidence revealing that spouses who have poor relationship skills experience negative outcomes in their marriage (Fincham, Stanley, & Beach, 2007). Bradbury and Karney (2004) argue that prior research has not paid sufficient attention to the roles of positive affect in marriage. In the African context specifically, few studies have been done on the effect of personality traits on marital relationships. This is despite the fact that studies done on the topic in western countries (Aristide et al. 2016; Fowers et al. 2008) as well as in the middle east (Amiri, Farhoodi, Abdolvand & Bidakhavidadi, 2011) and China (Williamson et al. 2012) have found that personality traits are a major indicator of the quality, satisfaction and long term outcomes in marriage.

Amiri et al. (2011) in their study in Tehran suggest that there is a meaningful negative association between the personality factor Neuroticism and marital satisfaction; as Neuroticism increases, marital satisfaction decreases.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Studies over the last few years have found that worldwide, approximately 45% of marriages end in divorce, with the United States of America having the
Family scholars document predictors of divorce as: marrying as a teenager, poverty, unemployment, low education level, cohabitation, having a pre-marital birth, step children, race differences, being in a second marriage and growing up without two parents (Bratter & King, 2008; Brown & Lin, 2012), domestic violence, frequent conflict, infidelity, number of perceived relationship problems, weak commitment and low levels of love and trust between couples (Amato & Hohmann-Marriot, 2007; Hall & Fincham, 2006). Individuals named problems that contributed to their divorce as lack of commitment, infidelity and conflict (Scott, Rhoades, Stanley, Allen & Markman, 2013).

Despite the fact that the divorce rate in Kenya may not be as high as in the United States, Kenya has its own story of marital distress. The 2009 Kenya National Bureau of Statistics report on Marital Status Statistics in Kenya indicates that in 2009, within a total population of 38,412,088 Kenyans, 212,972 (about 7%) were divorced and about 355,018 (about 9%) were separated. This worrying statistic indicates that approximately 15% of marriages in Kenya have broken down. The Business Daily, a Kenyan Research Publication by Ipsos Synovate (2015) reported that between 2010 and 2015, a total of 1246 divorce cases were filed at The Nairobi Milimani Law Courts. The figures have increased annually from 101 case in 2001 to 369 in 2008, 270 in 2013 with a slight dip to 245 in 2014. By the first half of 2015, there were already 123 divorce cases filed. The Business Daily (22 September 2015) identifies the top four reasons why marriages in Kenya are failing as “Infidelity, cruelty, polygamy, and lies about money” (p 30).
This study investigated how personality traits come into play in marital relationships to either promote or negatively affect marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya. The findings will assist to inform clinicians on practices that promote marital stability and satisfaction, and thus reduce the incidences of divorce in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of personality traits on perceived marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards Kenya. As a practicing Christian, the researcher has often encountered many debates about the divorce rate within the church with unsubstantiated assertions from Christian quarters that there are fewer divorces within the church population. These assertions have thus inferred that Christians are more satisfied with their marriages. Despite the persistent debates, the researcher did not find any scientific studies on this topic. Therefore a study on marital satisfaction within a Christian population will lay a foundation on future studies on the state of marriages within the church.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following Research questions:

(i) What is the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards in Kenya?

(ii) Which specific traits contribute to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

(iii) Is Marital Satisfaction influenced by Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination?
1.5 **Specific Objectives**

(i) To determine the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards in Kenya.

(ii) To identify specific traits that contribute to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

(iii) To evaluate if Marital Satisfaction is influenced by gender, age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination?

1.6 **Significance of the Study**

This study may be of great value to clinicians practicing couple therapy as it identified potential areas of conflict in marriage that are related to personality traits, and predict the likelihood of divorce. This may enhance clinicians’ ability to assist couples who are experiencing marital problems, as well as assist those intending to get married to maximize on the positive traits and modify the negative traits, so as to ensure positive outcomes in their marriages. If clinicians can have a better understanding of the combination of personality traits most likely to influence clients’ marital satisfaction positively, they will be better placed to select effective interventions during couple therapy.

The study also generated evidence to inform the Christian church about the state of marriages within the church membership, since the current assertions that Christians are happier in marriage and have lower divorce rates is based on heresy and not research.
1.7 Justification of the study

The study is important because despite a significant number of marriages in Kenya ending up in divorce, no study has investigated whether personality traits maybe a key factor in these divorce incidents. The reasons given for marriage breakdown in Kenyan articles and reports cited at the beginning of this Dissertation do not include personality traits. Since studies in other global regions have shown that personality traits do influence outcomes of marriage, this study shed light on the impact of these traits on marriages in Kenya. The findings of the study will be key in assisting clinicians to be better placed to assist couples once they have the insight.

The study shed light on the interplay of personality traits and dynamics within marriages, which is of great value in marital therapy.

The study also shed light on whether Christians have happier marriages and lower divorce rates and thus laid the foundation for future research on the effect of spirituality on marriage in Kenya.

The reason for choosing Christians for a study on effects of personality on marital satisfaction is because of the unsubstantiated reports from Christian quarters about fewer divorces within the church and thus implied marital satisfaction in this population. Given that personality traits are universal across all human beings, it will be important to study the effect of these traits on marital satisfaction among the Christian population. In addition, some studies have classified spirituality as a personality trait (Piedmont, 2001, 2005; Saroglou, 2010). Piedmont (2001, 2005) measures spirituality through a trait based taxonomy that views spirituality as a motivational trait. (Piedmont, 2005) views spirituality as a construct of one’s
personality along the lines of the Five Factor Model and describes spirituality traits as involving a seeking, curious attitude towards the transcendent, and religiosity traits as involving a dutiful faith involvement. Piedmont (2005) found that spirituality and religious scales tend to correlate with the Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness domains of the Five Factor Measure of Personality.

The Christian faith claims that when one becomes a follower of Christ, they abandon and die to their old nature and take on Christ like character attributes or traits.

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” 2 Cor 5:17 (New Revised Standard Version).

According to Phil 2: 3 - 4 (New Revised Standard Version), these character traits are humility and selflessness, which are demonstrated by esteeming others above oneself, while putting others’ interests above one’s own. The ability to forgive, both a Christian virtue and a personality trait has been linked to marital satisfaction and is considered foundational for a successful marriage (Fincham & Beach, 2010). This implies that for Christians, previous personality traits are replaced by new traits. Studies have also indicated that there is a positive correlational relationship between spirituality and marital satisfaction (Demaris, Mahoney & Pargament, 2010).

The reason why this study has 50% male and 50% female participants is because there is evidence from research albeit older work, (Amato & Rogers, 1997) that there are gender differences in the way men and women experience marriage as well as in perceptions of marital problems. The study by Amato and Rogers (1997) found evidence indicating that men normally report less marital problems due to the fact that husbands do not closely monitor and interpret the state of their marital
relationships like wives do. Due to lack of monitoring, husbands will most likely underestimate the number of problems generated by their wives, and will also report more problems as having been caused by themselves than by their wives. Amato and Rogers (1997) further revealed that men are less likely to report on their wives’ contribution to marital problems especially on matters related to emotions like anger, mood and being easily hurt.

This study correlated personality traits with levels of perceived marital satisfaction. The use of the term perception is key in this study because the data collection methods that were used were self-report questionnaires rather than the researcher’s actual observation. As expected in self-report studies, the information collected depends on the individuals’ perception, while also various studies have shown that individuals’ views about the quality of their marriage are subjective to factors unique to the individual (Amato & DeBoer, 2001). Wilcox and Nock (2006) argue that spouses who believe in the institution of marriage have higher quality and satisfying marriages due to their religious orientations that support marriage and are less tolerant of exiting. Such spouses also have a more altruistic mindset that makes them less self-centered and pre-dispose them to have modified positive perceptions towards their marriages. Wilcox et al. (2006) attribute this marital happiness to decreased monitoring of how the marriage serves their own interest, as well as having less annoyance when their spouses engage in self-serving behavior. Fowers, Fisiloglu and Procassi (2008) in their study about the effects of positive illusions in marriage, cite (Fowers & Applegate, 1996), who suggest that individuals who have positive illusions about marriage tend to have unrealistically positive views of their
marriage itself. Fowers and Applegate (1996) studied a national sample of 500 couples in the United States of America and found that all the individuals who reported being satisfactorily married also had idealistic distortion scores, and that all of them indicated an unrealistic perception of their marriage and spouse. These results by Fowers and Applegate (1996) suggest that being satisfied with one’s marriage may require one to see it in an unreasonably positive way.

1.8 Assumptions of the study

1. That all human beings irrespective of their religious, socioeconomic and cultural orientation fall within the Five Broad Personality trait dimension.

2. That personality traits as tested by the big 5 will represent stable characteristics of the participants in this study.

1.9 Scope of the study

The scope of the study was limited to three church denominations within the Nairobi and Kitengela areas and included only Christians who are Kenyan by nationality, had been married for a minimum of four years, and were in monogamous marriages. Nairobi and Kitengela areas were chosen because of their urban multi-cultural setting in Kenya and therefore eliminating intervening variables that would have influenced the results obtained in a more rural part of Kenya, given that there are 42 tribes in 42 different rural areas, and 70 distinct ethnic groups in Kenya (Kenya Demographics Profile, 2014). Due to urban migration for work and resettlement to Nairobi and Kitengela, the 42 tribes are well represented in these two towns thus samples drawn from the three church denominations will be representative of the Christian population of Kenya.
The four year inclusion criteria is important because research findings indicate that majority of marriages are stable and report highest levels of marital satisfaction during the initial four years, followed by a decline after the fourth year when the “honey moon phase” comes to an end (Anderson, Ryzin & Doherty, 2010; Dush, Taylor & Kroeger, 2008; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010; Lavner, Bradbury & Karney, 2012). The “honeymoon phase” effect is explained by Aron, Norman, Aron and Lewandowski (2002) who state that marriages go through a “typical honeymoon then years of blandness” pattern. Aron et al. (2002) explain that in the first few years of marriage partners have unrealistic positive perceptions and expectations of their spouse but within few years, the reality of their partner’s flaws dawns on them, causing them to feel disillusioned and dissatisfied. Kurdek (1998) refers to this decline as “the honeymoon is over” effect. Amato and Hohmann-Marriott (2007) observed that marriages that appeared to be happy over the first 4 years divorced after 5 years, possibly due to the “honeymoon” effect.

A study of 232 newlywed couples found that the mean pattern of change over the first 4 years of marriage was one of decline (Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). Evidence from (Mac Donald & Rose, 1999; Weinstein, 1980) shows that nearly all couples overestimate the durability of their existing satisfied feelings at the start of their marriage. These couples have biases that enhance their odds of staying in their relationship and underplay how affected they would be by their partners negative behavior (Green et al., 2013). They also believe that their partners will rarely make mistakes (McNulty & Karney, 2004). After the fourth year of marriage, when reality sets in, the marriages that have not ended in divorce stabilize after this initial
disillusionment as a result of an adaptive interaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). In order to ensure that the reports of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are objective and realistic, the study only included participants who had been married for four years and above to avoid the “honeymoon effect” “coloring” their personality interactions.

1.10 Limitations

The fact that the study population was derived from Christians in a church setting may have predisposed participants to under report any marital problems so as to feign desirable personality traits and to portray themselves as “righteous.” This is due to fear that their pastors or fellow congregants may find out that they have conflicts in their marriages. Individuals tend to alter their behavior to what is considered “acceptable” within specific environments (Tangney, Stuewig & Mashek, 2007), in this case participants may feel that they are expected to be seen as having the Christian virtues of gentleness and patience within their marriages.

1.11 Delimitations

To address the above limitation, the researcher ensured that no telephone contacts and names of participants were indicated on Questionnaires so as to ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality.

1.12 Definition of Terms

Marriage: “A social construct in the form of a formal union of a man and woman typically recognized by law, by which they become husband and wife” (Psychologydictionary.org, 2015).

Marital Satisfaction: a mental state that reflects the perceived benefits and costs of marriage to a particular person (Shackelford & Stone, 2007).
**Personality**: “A pattern of unique characteristics and relatively permanent traits that give both consistency and individuality to a person’s behavior (Feist & Feist, 2009).

**Personality Traits**: are stable characteristics of behavior or enduring vulnerabilities of strengths of individuals (Gonzaga, Campos & Bradbury, 2007).

**Christian**: A person who adheres to Christianity (follower of Christ), an Abrahamic, and monotheistic religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ (Pargament & Mahoney, 2005).

**Perception**: Mental processes by which intellectual, sensory, and emotional data are organized logically or meaningfully (McGraw - Hill Concise Dictionary of Modern Medicine, 2012).

1.13 **Summary**

Chapter one gives an overview of the research problem as a study on the effect of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards Kenya. It also justifies the study and outlines the benefits to be accrued from doing the research. The scope, limitations and delimitations of the study are also discussed. Chapter two will review relevant literature that has been written about this topic, while at the same time demonstrating the gaps in studies of personality traits and marriage. The chapter will also discuss the Theoretical Orientation and illustrate the Conceptual Framework to be utilized to effectively answer the research questions in this study.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Most of the studies that have been conducted on personality and marriage found that certain Personality traits influence outcome and quality of marriage, with the most notable of these studies including:

Amiri et al. (2011) study of 50 couples in Tehran, Aristide et al. (2016) study of 184 Italian couples as well as a meta-analysis of 150 studies on threat biases in anxious individuals done by Bar-Haim et al. (2007). Others studies that also found that certain Personality traits influence outcome and quality of marriage included Fowers et al. (2008) study of 163 Turkish and American Couples, a longitudinal study of changes in marriage satisfaction of American Couples from wedding date to four years later (Karney & Bradbury, 2004), as well as Karney and Bradbury (2000) study on newlywed American couples on attribution trait behavior in marriage.

The findings of these studies demonstrated the relationship between personality and marital quality. Most of these studies were aimed at studying specific relationship and individual characteristics that predict divorce: Gonzaga et al., (2007) study on 66 dating and 172 married multi-racial couples in America, Igbo et al. (2015) study among Nigerian Couples and Williamson, Nguyen, Bradbury and Karney (2015) study on 431 multi-racial couples in America, while others studied personality pathologies and how they affect relationships (Bouchard, Sabourin, Lussier, & Villeneuve, 2009; South, Kreuger, Johnson & Lacono, 2008; South, Turkheimer, Oltmanns, 2008; Stroud, Durbin, Saigal, Knobloch - Fedders, 2010).
2.2 Theoretical Orientation

Since personality traits are key variables of interest in this study, the theoretical orientation of this paper was based on Trait Theory, as well as Interpersonal Theory which are key personality theories (McLeod, 2014). The Interpersonal Theory inspired by Harry Stack Sullivan (1953) considers the manner in which behavioral interactions between partners are linked with relationship quality and stability (Humbad et al, 2010), and seeks to understand personality from an interpersonal or relational context, explaining that personality is shaped by interactions with other people. In this particular study, the Interpersonal approach considers the manner in which behavioral interactions between partners are linked to relationship quality and stability. For example, emotional distress and interpersonal hostility are associated with reduced marital quality and relationship distress (Donellan, Assad, Robins, & Conger, 2007; Humbad, Donnellan, Iacono, & Burt, 2010; Whisman, 2007). In addition, the Interpersonal Theory of Personality (Carson, 1969) proposes “complementarity” as the extent to which each partner’s actions elicit specific actions from the other. This theory sees social interactions as reciprocal since during dyadic interactions, the behavior of one participant impacts upon the other.

Trait Theory also called Dispositional Theory, studies human personality from a trait perspective. The trait theorists that greatly influenced this research were Raymond Bernard Cattel (1905 – 1998), Gordon Allport (1897 -1967), Hans Eysenck (1916-1997) and Henry Odbert (Barenbaum & Winter, 2008). Cattell is credited with building on the factor analysis work of Allport and Odbert (1936) to develop the 16PF Questionnaire (Cattell, Eber & Tatsouka, 1970), and also credited as being the
first to propose a hierarchical multilevel model of personality organization. Cattel laid the foundation for Goldberg (1981) to develop The Big Five model of personality, a widely used personality inventory, and the tool that will be used to measure personality traits in this study.

Trait Theorists are interested in the measurement of traits, which they assume are relatively stable over time, differ among individuals and influence behavior. According to Trait Theorists, traits can be used to reliably define people, and vary along a continuum of two opposite extremes, for example friendly versus unfriendly.

This particular study concerns itself with traits that affect perceptions of marital satisfaction levels like anxiety, interpersonal style and other traits (Kilmann, Finch, Parnell & Downer, 2012; Saavedra, Chapman & Rogge, 2010).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The Conceptual Framework of the study is based on the Big Five Model of Personality (Goldberg, 1981) as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: How personality traits affect marriage (Webbo, 2017)
2.4 Empirical Literature Review

Influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction

According to Erik Erickson’s Psychosocial Theory of Personality (Sokol, 2009), personality develops as human beings progress through various hierarchical stages of life. Stage progression is governed by maturation, and as the individual interacts with society, the personality develops. Erickson’s theory explains that each stage of development comes with a crisis arising from physiological maturation, social and environmental demands made on the individual (Erikson, 1963). The crisis is an emotional conflict and a turning point that must be addressed. How an individual resolves the crisis results in a successful or unsuccessful outcome, giving rise to positive or negative personality attributes. These attributes then define an individual’s behavior throughout their lifespan (Sokol, 2009).

Sigmund Freud’s Psychosexual Theory suggest that personality development is a result of a struggle between three instinctual drives operating in human beings, the Id, Ego and Super Ego (Lapsley & Stey, 2011). The interplay of conflicts between these drives during early development result in one of the drives becoming the dominant foundation of the individual’s personality and behavior. According to Freud (1949) the first five years of a child lay a base for the personality, and the mother–child relationship as the first intimate relationship. These two processes as described by Freud (1949) initiate human beings into a lifelong process of mutual adaptation between the child and its intimate relationships and the broader social environment. Freud (1949) talks about the Id which is always in pursuit of pleasure irrespective of the demands of reality but regulated by the Ego which results in more reasonable and
reality controlled behavior. The Super Ego guides an individual’s pursuit of idealistic and perfectionist goals, thus governing morality and conscience.

The above two theories of personality explain the basis upon which personality develops into observable traits, which remain stable throughout an individual’s life. Some of these traits that develop from rational and reality controlled behavior play a part in future relationships like marriage. For instance, when faced with conflicts within a marriage, individuals with Ego regulated behavior will tend to have traits that promote more effective marital communication skills (Amiri, Farhoodi, Abdolvande & Bidakhavidid (2011), Buss (1991), Heaven et al. (2006) and Watson et al. (2000) and are better at successfully resolving conflicts in a healthy manner (Antonioni, 1998).

Further to this, the intrapersonal approach to understanding marital distress postulates that personality attributes and traits of individuals involved in marriage shape the qualities of their relationship (Kelly & Conley, 1987), and can have a great impact on the success or failure of the relationship (Hanzal & Segrin, 2009). According to Kiesler (1983), dominance pulls submission, submission pulls dominance, hostility pulls hostility and friendliness pulls friendliness.

Contemporary approaches that seek to understand the individual factors associated with marital quality and stability see personality traits as predictors of marital outcomes (Donellan, Assad, Robins, & Conger, 2007: Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Robins, Caspi & Moffit, 2000). Past research points to personality traits as being associated with mate selection, relationship satisfaction and marital stability. (Donellan, Conger & Bryant, 2004). The assumption here is that
personal dispositions are related to both day to day interactions as well as to dyadic adaptations to external stressors (Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Such day to day interactions may give rise to conflicts due to break down of communication between the spouses. A strong association has been found between marital communication and marital satisfaction (Burleson & Denton, 1997; Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999; Hess & Coffelt, 2012; Rehman et al., 2011; Rehman & Holtsworth - Munroe, 2007). When one partner’s style of dealing with conflict is incompatible with that of the other, stress, conflict and dissatisfaction emerge in the relationship. Such a relationship will be marked by demand/withdrawal patterns of conflict with one partner becoming more demanding as the other person withdraws (Caughlin & Vangelisti, 1999) as well as competitiveness and conflict avoidance. On the other hand, relationships where partners have positive and constructive styles of conflict resolution are more often associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction (Mitnick et al., 2009; Schudlich et al., 2011; Schwarzwald et al., 2008; Segrin et al., 2009). Such relationships show patterns of ability to effectively communicate goals and feelings during the course of an interaction. They also display emotional skills such as ability to identify and express emotions, empathy and being able to manage challenges (Cordova, Gee & Warren, 2005).

Many studies have shown that an individual’s traits are associated with their own relationship satisfaction (Robins et al., 2000; Watson et al., 2000) with certain personality factors being associated with relationship quality (Cooper & Sheldon, 2002; Karney & Bradbury, 1995). Specifically, individuals with high levels of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness report having higher levels of relationship
satisfaction (Decuyper, De Bolle & Defryut, 2012; Dyrenforth et al. 2010; Heller et al. 2004; Malouff et al. 2010; Neyer & Voigt, 2004). This implies that the absence or presence of positive/negative personality characteristics contribute to the acquisition, development and maintenance of stable marital relationships. Watson et al. (2000) states that people who are more agreeable, less neurotic and more open to experience are preferred by most people, while people who are disagreeable, neurotic and low in conscientiousness are at elevated risk of divorce as they often create hostile, dissatisfying relationships (Watson et al., 2004). Luo et al. (2008) in their study among couples in China confirmed that self and partner characteristics were independent predictors of satisfaction, meaning that both partner’s personal attributes determine marital happiness.

Research indicates that partners who reflect large discrepancies on personality variables seem to foster incompatible relationship perspectives, leading to marital distress (Blum & Mehrabian, 1999; Gattis, Berns, Simpson & Christensen, 2004; Kurdek, 1991; Marioles, Strickert & Hammet, 1996). The Spousal Discrepancy Theory in marital dissolution studies suggest that large partner discrepancies on individual difference variables are risk factors for relationship distress (Kurdek, 1993) due to the failure of partners to resolve their personality differences (Huston & Houts, 1998; Prosky, 1991).

Relationship literature finds evidence that similar people tend to become romantically involved (Decuyper et al., 2012). Kurdek’s (1993) five year longitudinal study showed that individuals who became unstable or ended in divorce were more varied on traits, interdependence and spousal discrepancy measures. An example of
similar personalities attracting is the finding by Lavner, Lamkin, Miller, Campbell and Karney (2015) that women with higher levels of leadership/authority were married to men with higher levels of total narcissism, while men higher in total narcissism and leadership authority were married to wives lower in agreeableness. This is because since narcissistic individuals value self-oriented qualities like ambition and confidence rather than caring, considerate qualities in their ideal romantic partner (Campbell, 1999), they then partner with other narcissistic individuals. Other findings that the similarity “birds of a feather flock together” approach on Personality similarity between partners is associated with marital satisfaction include (Anderson, Keltner, & John, 2003; Blum & Mehrabian, 1999; Caspi & Herbener, 1990; Cottrell, Neuberg & Li, 2007; Gaunt, 2006; Luo & Klohn, 2005; Gonzaga et al., 2007; Luo et al. 2008, Robins et al., 2000; Russell & Wells, 1991). Gonzaga et al. (2007) suggests that being similar to a partner seems to have positive effects on relationship functioning as couples with similar personalities share more similar emotional experiences during interactions. Similar emotional experiences lead to more successful interactions between couples. This suggests that personality similarity is important for relationship success.

There are however contrasting results from other research on the complementarity “opposites attract” approach which suggest that relationships based on complementarity end in marital stress or divorce (e.g., Berscheid & Regan, 2005; Glomb & Welsh, 2005). Rosowsky et al., (2012) in support of the adage that “opposites attract” found that husbands’ satisfaction was higher when his Agreeableness scores differed with those of their partner. Rosowsky et al. (2012)
explain the findings as caused by the fact that people high in Agreeableness are more emotionally responsive, trusting, and selfless and tender minded. Thus a complementary relationship which provides a balance in the marriage exists between a less emotionally responsive spouse and one with a greater need to please. Rosowsky et al. (2012) also found that wives had greater marital satisfaction when their Conscientiousness differed with that of their husbands, specifically if the husband had a low Conscientiousness score since high scorers are workaholics, perfectionists with obsessive - compulsive tendencies. Lavner et al. (2015) in their study on narcissism and marriage state that narcissistic individuals may seek partners who are pliable, willing and able to bend to the needs and desires associated with narcissistic individuals’ self-absorption.

**Personality traits and marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction.**

Available literature shows that positivity as a trait contributes to marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 2000; Neff & Karney, 2005). This is because couples who are able to acknowledge their partner’s faults while maintaining positive views of their marriage have more stable satisfaction over time and are less likely to divorce in the early years of marriage (Fowers, 2008). Such couples have overly positive views of their relationships and so report more relationship satisfaction as they tend to see each other in idealized ways and describe their relationships as near perfect (O’ Rourke & Cappeliez, 2005), which in turn buffers the relationship (Murray, Holmes & Griffin, 1996). This positivity affects marriages and intimate relationships, contributing to stability and increase in marital satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 2000; Neff & Karney, 2005). Positive illusions about one’s partner and the
relationship helps partners communicate in a positive manner as it facilitates relationship enhancing attributions and help each other accept dissimilarities, conflicts and doubts (McNulty & Karney, 2004; Murry & Holmes, 1997; Murray, Holmes & Griffin, 1996).

Overall, research suggests that personality factors such as Agreeableness and emotional stability are key for relationship satisfaction, relationship stability and low level of conflict between couples. (Caspi & Goldberg, 2007; Ozer & Benet-Martinez, 2006; Robert, Kuncel, Shiner). Agreeableness has been found to facilitate romantic relationships as individuals high in these trait readily experience positive emotions such as joy (Donellan et al. 2004; Karney & Bradbury; Robins et al., 2000, 2002). Pernovic (2007) reports that agreeable people have better relationships than antagonistic people because they are more trusting hence less likely to see signs of rejection in their partners. They are also warm, likeable, and emotionally supportive and nurturing which means they experience less conflict (Bono et al., 2002). Agreeable individuals also tend to maintain positive relationships with others and engage in social behaviors that facilitate intimacy such as forgiveness (Branje, van Lieshout & van Aken, 2005; Jensen- Campbell & Graziano, 2001; Steiner, Allemand, & McCullough, 2012).

Conscientious individuals are better at controlling impulses and typically follow norms and rules (John & Srivastava, 1999). Positive associations have been found between extraversion and relationship satisfaction (Dyrenforth et al. 2010; Malouff et al. 2010) which may be due to the tendency of highly extraverted individuals to have high levels of positive effects (Fleeson, Malanos & Achille, 2002;
Lucas & Diener, 2001) and being social, active and joyful in interactions with others (John & Srivastava, 1999). Extraverts also use more constructive coping mechanisms such as problem solving (Carver & Connor - Smith, 2010) and are able to maintain a positive affect balance (Lischetzke & Eid, 2006)

A Recurrent research finding in personality and marriage studies has been that Neuroticism appears problematic to relationship satisfaction and marital stability (Barelks, 2005; Belsky & Hsieh, 1998; Karney & Bradbury, 1995; Kelly & Conley, 1987; Kurdek, 1993; Schmitt, Kliegel & Shapiro, 2007). Both cross sectional and longitudinal research indicates a negative association between Neuroticism and marital satisfaction (Bouchard, Lussier & Sabourin, 1999; Caughlin, Huston & Houts, 2000; Kelly & Conley, 1987). Individuals high in this trait have negative affect (Ormel & Wohlfarh, 1991), susceptibility to mood inductions (Gross, Sutton, & Ketelarr), 1998, passive coping (Watson & Hubbard, 1996) and preferences for negative stimuli (Rusting & Larsen, 1995). These negative emotions cause individuals to exhibit criticism, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling, behaviors that Gottman (1994) identifies as detrimental to relationships. Such individuals are more physiologically reactive and are more likely to escalate negative affect during marital conflicts and thus lowering satisfaction within their marriages (Gottman, Coan, Carrere & Swanson, 1998). They react to and interpret the behaviors of their partners in a negative light and this perceive and magnify relationship difficulties. Social Learning theorists explain this effect by suggesting that negativity and marital dissatisfaction form a circular causal system: Negativity decreases spouse’s level of satisfaction which in turn increase spouses’ negative behavior towards each other.
Negative affect like contempt and disgust have been found to predict future episodes of marital distress and negative affect reciprocity (Gardner & Wampler, 2008).

Gattis et al. (2004) found that spouses’ Neuroticism was higher in distressed couples who sought counseling than in non-distressed couples. Findings from a meta-analysis by Heller, Watson, and Ilies (2004) indicated that neuroticism was the personality trait most strongly associated with marital satisfaction, while Karney and Bradbury (1995) reported that 10% of all variance in marital satisfaction can be attributed to Neuroticism. Whisman et al. (2006) found that greater marital discord is associated with lower Agreeableness and higher Neuroticism.

Yousef et al. (2006) in his study on personality characteristics and marital satisfaction found that Neuroticism showed a negative correlation with marital satisfaction while Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness indicated a high positive relationship with marital satisfaction. Similarly Rajabi and Nabgani (2008) found a negative correlation between Neuroticism and marital satisfaction but a positive correlation between marital satisfaction and traits of Extraversion, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness. Costa and McCrae (1992) found that Conscientiousness is a positive predictor of marital satisfaction as individuals high on this trait tend to strive for achievement, are dutiful, self-disciplined, hardworking and reliable. Conscientiousness has also been associated with mate desirability, relationship quality, marriage stability (Gattis et al., 2004; Roberts & Bogg, 2004; Robins et al., 2000) faithfulness (Orzeck & Lung, 2005), satisfaction (McCrae et al., 1998), conflict (Bono et al., 2002).
Dyenforthe et al. (2010) found that Emotional Stability, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness seem to be the “Big Three” personality traits statistically predicting marital satisfaction as individuals with these “Big Three” are more willing to invest in and commit to their intimate relationships. As a result of this, they maintain a good relationship with their partners (Lodi - Smith & Roberts, 2007; Roberts & Wood, 2006). Watson and Humrichhouse (2006) found that spouses who had low levels of Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness reported decreases in marital satisfaction over the first two years of marriage, while Donellan and colleagues (2004) found that wives’ Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness were each positively correlated to marital satisfaction.

The Vulnerability Stress Adaptation Model of marriage (Karney & Bradbury, 1995) describes the adaptive processes that directly affect how marital satisfaction changes over time. The VSA model posits that individuals bring stable characteristics called enduring vulnerabilities to married life. These characteristics include personality traits, attachment styles and education levels. Couples then use adaptive processes to understand and negotiate stressful events like workload, finances, health and so forth. Such adaptive processes include solving problems as well as how one explains the other spouse’s behavior. Karney and Bradbury (2000) explain that these adaptive processes are driven by spouse characteristics like cognitive styles, personality traits, childhood experiences as well as stressful circumstances outside of the relationship. According to the VSA model (Karney & Bradbury, 1995), differences in how spouses react to the stressors and negative behaviors of the other spouse vary due to individual personality, as well as vulnerabilities associated with
childhood experiences. Thus how spouses adapt to and view the stressors, as well as their existing internal vulnerabilities will result in either increase in marital satisfaction or marital dissolution since they will inform their interactions with their spouses.

Research has linked the trait of insecurity within the marriage with distress (Mondor, McDuff, Lussier & Wright, 2011). This is because high attachment anxiety individuals rely on hyper activating strategies like energetic attempts and demands to gain greater proximity, support and love. Yet at the same time, due to their anxieties, they have low confidence that these will be provided. The individuals with high attachment avoidance traits tend to deactivate their attachment needs by inhibiting proximity seeking and trying to handle stress alone (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). All the above negative emotions and negative interaction cycles of distressed couples represent a struggle for attachment security, as well as attempts to cope with separation distress (Johnson, 2004). In the above studies, anxiety traits were found to be distinct characteristics of distressed couples and predictive of marital dissatisfaction.

Gerris et al. (2014) found that the personality of both spouses contribute to trust within their relationship. The trait of Agreeableness influences the degree of trust both partners perceive from each other. Specifically, men who had higher scores in Extraversion and Agreeableness had higher trust in their wives, while wives who had higher scores in Agreeableness and Conscientiousness had higher trust in their husbands. More studies have found that Agreeableness and Conscientiousness are strongly associated with infidelity as individuals high in these traits are higher in
relationship exclusivity so less likely to be unfaithful, while Neuroticism, and Extraversion are associated with infidelity (Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Egan & Angus, 2004; Schmitt, 2004). The premise here is that individuals engage in infidelity because something is wrong with their relationship (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Glass & Wright, 1985), with Prins et al. (1993) suggesting that dissatisfaction in the primary relationship increases the desire for involvement in extra dyadic relationships. Glass and Wright (1985) found a negative correlation between marital satisfaction and infidelity. A study by Shackelford, Besser and Goetz (2008) found evidence that own and spousal personality may predict which marriages are likely to have infidelity and which are likely to remain faithful. Shackelford et al. (2008) found that partners who have disagreeable (low on Agreeableness) and unreliable (low on Conscientiousness) spouses are less satisfied with their marriage, which raises the probability of infidelity. Individuals who are have low Conscientiousness and low Agreeableness scores both have impulsive tendencies and inability to delay gratification, which have been found to predict infidelity (Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Schmitt, 2004; Schmitt & Buss, 2000). The findings by Shackelford et al. 2008) suggest that a personality style marked by impulsivity, low dependability and low reliability may tend to carry over into the sexual sphere. Possibly impulsive individuals are more likely to act on sexual opportunities when they arise, as opposed to less impulsive ones who have the predisposition to resist sexual opportunities. Alternatively, impulsive individuals may have a higher sex drive and so seek out extramarital outlets more than less impulsive individuals. Shackelford et al. (2008) sees another explanation for infidelity of impulsive individuals as being
that such individuals exude more sexuality and thus elicit more frequent sexual advances from others.

Studies have also found that genes and environment influence personality, and consequently influence marital quality (Spotts et al., 2004). In some studies, wives’ genes and personality were linked to their own marital satisfaction, as well as linked a husband’s personality to the wives’ quality of marriage. Genetically influenced personality differences may have effects on the quality of an individual’s interpersonal style and skill, and subsequently impact the quality and process in marriage. Each spouse’s negative personality trait will produce negative marital behavior, and subsequently affect the other spouse’s level of affection and marital satisfaction, as well as increase conflict, which consequently influence the atmosphere of the entire relationship. Similarly, one spouse’s characteristics are capable of influencing the atmosphere of the entire relationship (Spotts et al., 2005). Spotts et al. (2005) calls this phenomenon unique environmental influences since these experiences are influenced by factors that include schools attended, cohabiting partners and spouses and are unique to these couples.

Another aspect of personality includes personality disorders which give rise to interpersonal dysfunction that affects marital quality. Narcissism in particular has been linked to several behaviors that may interfere with romantic relationships including vengefulness (Brown, 2004), domineering and vindictive behavior (Ogrodniczuk, Piper, Joyce, Steinberg & Duggal, 2009) and interpersonal aggression (Reidy, Foster & Zeichner, 2010). Narcissistic personality disorder is associated with causing distress in a significant other (Miller, Campbell & Pilkonis, 2007), as
narcissistic individuals have been shown to have low levels of relationship commitment (Foster, Shrira & Campbell, 2006) as they over value physical enjoyment while undervaluing emotional connection.

Factors related to Marital Satisfaction

According to longitudinal studies, specific relationship characteristics that predict divorce (a common result of marital dissatisfaction) include domestic violence, frequent conflict, infidelity, number of perceived relationship problems, weak commitment and low levels of love and trust between couples (Bratter & King, 2008; Brown & Lin, 2012; Hall & Fincham, 2006). In relation to the issue of conflict, a study in Nigeria (Igbo, Awopetu & Ekoja, 2015) on the relationship between duration of marriage, personality traits, gender and conflict resolution, revealed that personality traits and gender had a significant correlation with duration of marriage. This is because traits were found to impact conflict resolution strategies of spouses. Igbo et al. (2015) state that marriage as an institution was instituted by God to be a union of love, happiness, enjoyment and performance, but the inability of spouses to exhibit some or all of these traits incapacitates the partners in marital relationships and thereby lead to conflict situations. They further state that different individuals depending on their gender, personality traits and duration of marriage tend to use different strategies to resolve conflict including avoidance, giving in, standing their ground or even collaborating. Igbo et al. (2015) thus conclude that personality differences will therefore influence the conflict strategies spouses adopt in conflict situations. This article corroborates Ogunleye and Olawa (2013) study that found that there is a relationship between the Big Five personality factors (Neuroticism,
Extraversion, Openness, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness) and conflict management strategies.

The above two studies also noted that gender plays a role because some traits are associated with males while others are associated with females. Males are often linked with dominance, aggression and confrontation while females are associated with non-violence, soothing and compromise, which all translate into different conflict resolution styles (Igbo et al., 2015; Ogunleye & Olawa, 2013). The above studies by Igbo et al. (2015) and Ogunleye and Olawa, 2013) are of importance in this current research as they have similarities in that the three studies having been conducted on African populations, and all three also study the effect of personality traits and some demographic factors on marital satisfaction. A further similarity is that Igbo et al. (2015) quotes religious influence of a “good” marriage as initiated by God. These studies done in Africa lend a basis for mitigating cultural biases in this current study. Boerner et al. (2014) study on the role of positive and negative characteristics on marital satisfaction found differences among genders with men having higher marital satisfaction then women. Other studies (Bulanda, 2011; Cohen et al., 2009; Windsor & Butterworth, 2010) on the same factor of gender and marital satisfaction yielded similar results of men having higher marital satisfaction then women. These results appear to be explained by prior studies that document that men are less likely than women to notice and respond to marital difficulties (Carstensen et al., 1995). Other explanations on why women report less marital satisfaction given by Jackson et al. 2014) in their meta-analysis include the unequal distribution of power within marriage. This inequality translates into wives performing a disproportionate
amount of household tasks (Baxter, 2000), child care (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010) as well as providing an inequitable amount of emotion work through supporting husbands and managing the emotional climate of the relationship (Loscocco & Walzer, 2013).

Despite the findings that personality traits constitute the resources that spouses bring to their relationship in order to produce good marital quality, their effects may be different for men and women (Iveniuk et al., 2014). Husbands’ traits appear to be more consequential for wives marital satisfaction as the effects of negative traits on conflict were found to be larger for women than men (Eldridge & Christensen, 2002; Gottman, 1994). This is because men are advantaged in wealth and power so are able to resist women’s demands for change and even withdraw from negotiations (Carstensen et al., 1995; Gottman, 1994). Men also resist demands for emotional restraint or demands to take care of spouses with physical and mental health problems, which creates conflict (Christakis & Allison, 2008). Botwin et al. (2006) found that husbands’ traits’ may be more important for marital quality than those of wives, as women prefer Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Agreeableness. When husbands lacked those traits, women are more likely than men to report marital dissatisfaction. Women are also more likely than men to be happy with male partners who have high positive emotionality while high positive emotionality in wives has no effect on conflict for men (DiStephano & Motl, 2009). Women also show stronger physiological emotional reactions to marital conflict than do men (Kiecolt - Glaser et al., 1997; Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001). Negative personality traits may contribute to marital conflict, but perspectives on gender and
marital quality suggest that the effects of negative traits on conflict may be larger for 
women than for men (Eldridge & Christensen, 2002; Gottman, 1994). At some point 
in the relationship, one partner may desire change from the other, but because men 
are typically advantaged in wealth and power they are better able to resist women’s 
demands and to withdraw from negotiations, thereby precipitating conflict 
(Carstensen et al., 1995; Gottman, 1994). In terms of health, husbands may therefore 
resist demands arising from their partner’s poor physical or mental health, such as 
demands for emotional restraint around a person with poor mental health or demands 
for taking care of an individual with physical health problems (Christakis & Allison, 
2008). Similarly, literature on personality and relationship quality suggests that 
husbands’ traits may be more important for marital quality than wives’. Botwin et al. 
(2006) found that women are more likely than men to prefer socially desirable 
personality traits in their partners (i.e., Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, 
and Agreeableness) and that, if their partner was lacking in any of these traits, women 
were more likely than men to report dissatisfaction with the relationship. Women are 
also more likely than men to be happy with male partners who have high positive 
emotionality (DiStephano & Motl, 2009). However in the case of personality 
disorders, wives’ narcissistic tendencies have been found to be more detrimental in 
marriage (Floyd & Markman, 1983) despite the fact that males have overall 
narcissism scores than females (Grijalva et al., 2015). This may be explained by the 
assumption higher levels of narcissism in men are seen as normal since men 
characteristically have higher levels of narcissism, while in women this is seen as a 
negative trait.
Age has been found to also influence relational interactions as postulated by Reed and Carstensen (2012) who refer to a “positivity effect” that supports an age related trend that favors positive over negative stimuli in cognitive processing. This positivity effect, highly active in older individuals causes one to be oriented towards positive moods and emotions during contexts that demand emotional regulation in contrast to younger adults. Reed and Carstensen (2012) further state that older adults have a cognitive processing approach that favors emotion regulatory goals related to wellbeing even during interpersonal interactions. Similarly Landis et al (2013) study among German and Swiss Couples found that older spouses were quite satisfied with their marriage in comparison to younger ones as the older spouses have subjective perceptions of positive support from their partners even where it is actually less. The study found that one partner’s positive perceptions of their partner’s support led to satisfaction with the marriage of both partners. Landis et al (2013) explain this as caused by the fact that older adults have greater value for intimate partner support as this period of their life is characterized by retirement, death of friends and family as well as health problems which leave the spouse as the most available source of social support. These positive perceptions that develop among these older spouses keep the marriage stable. Other studies found that in comparison to middle aged married individuals, older couples showed a reduced conflict potential and more sources of pleasure (Levenson et al., 1993) and that older adults are experts in regulating their own and partner’s emotions in social interactions. These efforts of defusing negative interactions are often reciprocated in positive behavior by their partners (Fingermann & Charles, 2010). This phenomenon of defusing negativity and the resulting positive
reciprocation by partners creates and sustains older adults’ positive perspectives about their relationship referred to by Reed and Carstensen (2012) as a “positivity effect.” In support of this reciprocity phenomenon, it has been found that individuals are influenced by their partner’s coping strategies (Kraemer et al, 2011).

Research has found that late life marriages of older individuals have low conflict and high positive effect compared to younger couples (Carstensen et al., 1995, Gagnon et al., 1999; Smith et al., 2009). This is because the personality traits of older adults are typically more stable than the traits of younger persons (Turiano et al., 2012) despite the fact that declines in health and functioning may affect marital roles requiring spouses to take on new responsibilities. (Christakis & Allison, 2008; Pinquart & Sorensen, 2011).

Marital duration has been found to impact marital quality as studies indicate that marital partners mature developmentally in different ways and the context of marital relationship changes over time (Berscheid, 1998; Parke, 1998; Shiota & Levenson, 2007). This is because couples who have been married for shorter durations are likely to face transitions, challenges, and external demands that are different from those faced by longer married couples who have had more time to attempt to reconcile personality and interpersonal style differences. Hafner and Spence (1988) found that different psychological characteristics predicted the level of marital satisfaction as a function of marital duration. Other studies indicate that some late life marriages show conflict due to poor physical health which makes it difficult to manage marital obligations (Booth & Johnson, 1994; Joung, van de Mheen, Stronks, van Poppel, & Mackenbach, 1998). Similarly, mental health difficulties
cause marital challenges as partners’ emotional states become more volatile (Gagnon, Hersen, Kabacoff, & Van Hasseslt, 1999). Long term marriages have also been found to display a struggle between sameness and difference within the marital dyad, with marriages perceived as highly satisfactory after many years being able to embrace sameness (“birds of a feather”) and difference (“opposites attract”) Rosowsky et al., (2012). The study by Rosowsky et al., (2012) supports the two clichés above and also indicates that “sameness” and “difference” are likely to support marital satisfaction in the long run when couples are able to balance between the two by celebrating the similarities and embracing the differences. Even in relationships where there are personality disorders, the duration of marriage has been seen to have an effect as Lavner et al. (2015) found that wives’ narcissism was associated with worse changes in marital quality over time, which implies that negative effects of certain personality characteristics may only emerge as time passes, despite the traits being present early in marriage.

Very few studies have focused entirely on the role of personality traits in marital satisfaction. Fincham, Stanley and Beach (2007) argue that family researchers need to give more attention to studying the effects of positive interpersonal processes on marital quality and stability rather than only focus entirely on effects of conflict. Fincham et al. (2007) suggest that spouses who have poor relationship skills experience negative outcomes in their marriage.

In the Kenyan context specifically, the Literature review did not reveal any studies that have been done on the effect of personality traits on marital satisfaction. This is despite the mentioned studies done in other countries on the topic indicating
that personality traits are a major factor in the quality, satisfaction and long term outcome in marriage. Since personality traits are factors universal in human beings, it would be reasonable to imply that marriages among church attending Christians probably go through personality trait related marital challenges similar to those among the secular population. The existence of speculation that the divorce rate is lower among church going Christians than within the secular population has been based on the view that the Christian faith, just as is the case with other religions and spirituality, is a moderator of conflicts within marriages. Feldhann and Whitehead (2014) give the divorce rate among church going Christians as between 15 - 20% despite the absence of adequate scientific studies to investigate the accuracy of these claims. The existing studies include Vaaler et al. (2009) who found that more religious Christian couples because of their religious values are less prone to divorce as they enjoy higher marital satisfaction, face lower likelihood of domestic violence and perceive fewer attractive options outside the marriage than their less religious counterparts. The religious values of these individuals are inspired by the Bible as their authoritative guide in marriage for example biblical instructions to be “faithful in marriage” (Exodus 20: 14; Deuteronomy 5: 18).

This Dissertation will shed light on the validity of the claims that the divorce rate is lower within Church populations.

2.5 Summary

Despite the existence of many studies on the influence of personality traits on marriage quality and outcome, there is no apparent published evidence of research on this topic in Kenya. This has resulted in conflicting reports on the rate and reasons of
divorce in Kenya. Given the wide use of Trait and Interpersonal Theories in couple therapy to address conflict and improve communication, it is imperative that this study be done in order to evaluate the effect of personality traits on marital outcomes. This will enable the clinicians to incorporate relevant interventions during couple therapy so as to promote increase in marital satisfaction and subsequently reduce divorce rates in Kenya.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the methodology that was used in conducting this study. It highlights the research design, the population under study and how the sampling was carried out. Finally the chapter addresses the data collection techniques and methods of data analyses used and at the same time discussing the ethical considerations undertaken.

3.2 Research design

The study used a correlational study design because the objective was to study the relationship between personality traits and perceived marital satisfaction among Christians. An experimental design is not appropriate because no variables will be manipulated by application of any kind of treatment; neither can a case study work because this is a study on general personality traits as a whole in a general Christian population, and not a detailed analysis of an identified specific trait in an individual or smaller group.

3.3 Population

The population studied was church going Christians who lived with their spouses, and had been married for four years or more. Research findings indicate that majority of marriages are stable and report highest levels of marital satisfaction during the initial four years, followed by a decline after the fourth year, after which couples either divorce or adapt. (Anderson, Ryzin & Doherty, 2010; Dush, Taylor & Kroeger, 2008; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010; Lavner, Bradbury & Karney, 2012). The
participants were required to have been in a monogamous marriage. Five churches namely, African inland Church, Kilimani, African Inland Church, Kitengela, Nairobi Chapel Ngong Road, House of Grace Church Langata and Divine Word Parish Kayole were identified for the study

3.4 Sampling method

Purposive sampling was used to select 150 participants by going to five Christian churches in Nairobi and Kitengela comprising of three different denominations. The sample size was based on numbers used in similar studies done previously (Amiri et al. 2011; Gonzaga, Campos & Bradbury, 2007; Williamson et al. 2012) had 100, 182 and 132 participants respectively. It therefore appears that a sample of 100 and above is considered an adequate sample in studies on the effects of personality on marital satisfaction.

Christians comprise of 83% of the Population in Kenya, out of which 47.4% are Protestants while 23.3% are Catholics (Kenya Demographic Profile, 2017).

Conservative Christians tend to favor traditional churches like the African Inland Church (AIC), while the liberal ones attend the more modern charismatic churches represented here by the Evangelical churches. Because of its uniform presence in all regions of Kenya, and uniform doctrine, the Catholic church in Nairobi tends to represent the diversity of Kenyans from the various regions.

Sampling from these three denominations ensured that the sample is representative of the married Christian population in Kenya.

Fifty participants were selected from the more traditional African Inland Church, 50 from a Catholic Church and 50 from modern and liberal Evangelical churches. The
researcher needed 120 participants but issued 150 questionnaires to make provision for spoilt ones.

Kenya comprises of 42 tribes, scattered in various regions of Kenya, but migrating to the capital city Nairobi and its environs like Kitengela Town for economic/work activities. Sampling in Nairobi and Kitengela ensures a representative sample of the tribes. Seventy Five of the participants were male, and the rest female to ensure that gender variances in perceptions of marital satisfaction were accounted for.

Announcements were made during church services and an invitation flier given at the door of the church. Those who responded to this call and met the inclusion criteria formed the study sample and were requested to meet with the researcher during upcoming couple enrichment meetings at their church so as to fill the research questionnaires.

### 3.5 Inclusion and exclusion

Some 150 participants who were over 18 years old and currently married for four years or more were selected. Of these, 75 were female and 75 male. They were all in a monogamous marriage and none were separated or divorced.

### 3.6 Data Collection Methods

The study used Questionnaires to collect data. This was a suitable method due to the large number of participants required for the study. The use of questionnaires for this study was suitable due to the availability of Standardized Tests that measure personality traits and marital satisfaction. These tools have been used in many similar studies and found to be valid and reliable as measures of those variables.
3.7 Measurement Instruments

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Two Standardized Tests, The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) and The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS; Spanier, 1976) were used as the data collection tools.

The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS; Spanier, 1976) a 14 item scale, is the most commonly used measure of marital functioning in social and behavioral research literature. It has been used in over one thousand empirical studies (Glenn, 1990; Spanier, 1985; Touiliatos, Perlmutter, & Straus, 1990). The RDAS provides a multidimensional view of marriage in which subjective satisfaction ratings are measured through self-reports of observable behavior and events. The RDAS has been used successfully in various cultural settings including Brazil (Hollist, Falceto, Ferreira, Miller & Springer; 2012), Turkey (Fowers et al., 2008) and Romania (Turliuc & Muraru, 2013). The RDAS has scores ranging from 0 to 69. Scores of 47 and below are indicative of marital distress while 48 and above indicate marital satisfaction.

The Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) is a well validated approach to measurement of personality traits (McCrae & Costa, 1997). It comprises of 44 questions that assess five broad trait dimensions; Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness. The BFI has been used successfully with samples of diverse cultural backgrounds in studies in various countries including Iran (Amiri et al., 2011; Najarpourin et al., 2012; Shahnazari et al., 2013), Nigeria (Igbo et al., 2015; Ogunleye & Olawa, 2013) and in a study of 56 nations in North...
America, United States, Mexico, South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, South and East Asia, Oceania, Middle East and Africa (Schmitt, Allik, McCrae, Benet-Martinez, 2007).

Strengths of the BFI include the ability to differentiate between normal and abnormal personality by effectively picking out personality, mood and anxiety disorders (Costa & McCrae, 1992b). Costa and McCrae’s (1992b) measure of the Big Five Traits breaks down Neuroticism into six facets: anxiety, hostility, depression, self-consciousness, vulnerability and impulsiveness. In McCrae’s model, these facets indicate a higher order construct that indicate that individuals who score high on Neuroticism are more likely to experience a variety of problems including negative moods manifested through anxiety, depression, irritability, fear. Further evidence indicates that neurotic individuals are likely to be especially affected by negative life events, vulnerable to stress disorders and to have bad moods linger (Suls, Green, & Hills, 1998). Creed, Muller and Machin (2001) stated that neurotics show greater distress and depressive symptomology following stressful life events such as unemployment. On the other hand, individuals who score high on the Extraversion scale tend to experience positive emotions, are less dysphoric and less introspective (Watson & Clark, 1997). Further to all the above, a study by (Kotov et al., 2010) found that common mental disorders are strongly linked to personality and have similar trait profiles. The ability of the Big Five Inventory to capture mood disorders is key in this study as it will further expose the aspects of personality that are influenced by mood in Neurotic individuals, which in turn would affect perception of marital satisfaction.
Another strength of the BFI is that it has been translated and used successfully in various languages (McCrae & John, 1992) and has been found to generalize across all cultures (McCrae & Costa, 1997; Pulver, Allik, Pulkkinen, & Hamalainen, 1995; Salgado, 1997; Schmitt et al., 2007). Each of the Big Five Traits are assigned a score ranging from 1 to 5 then added up. The trait with the highest score is considered to be the personality of the respondent.

3.7.2 Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire was designed by the Researcher to capture the sociodemographic data of the respondent. The questionnaire requested information on age, gender, marriage duration, number of children, denomination and knowledge of own and spouse’s personality. This information was needed in order to answer objective three on sociodemographic factors that affect marriage satisfaction.

3.8 Validity and Reliability of the BFI and RDAS

The RDAS has been found to have a Cronbach’s alpha (reliability) of .90. In terms of discriminant validity, the RDAS has been found to successfully differentiate between 81% of distressed and non-distressed cases (Assari, Moghani, & Tavallaii, 2009; Turluc & Muraru, 2013).

The coefficient alpha reliability of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) in measuring Personality Traits is .83 (Naumann & Soto, 2008).

3.9 Administration of the Instruments

Fliers inviting congregants to participate in the study were given at the Church doors of the five selected churches. Announcements were then made by the Pastor/Priest during the church service on two consecutive Sundays inviting
congregants to participate in the study. Those interested in participating were informed that the researcher would meet with them during upcoming marriage enrichment meetings.

On the appointed date, the details of the study were explained to participants, and after signing consent, each participant was issued with questionnaires to fill. The questionnaires were stapled together and each set numbered from 1-150, with 75 of them marked with an “M” to indicate male and 75 marked “F” for female to ensure that the numbers for each sex are adhered to. The Consent form was attached on the first page, followed by the demographic questionnaire and the RDAS and BFI Questionnaires. The researcher and research assistant were at hand to assist and answer questions. After the participants finished filling the questionnaires, they were collected for scoring.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in this study included discussing the purpose of the study with the participants. The participants were also told of their rights which include the right to withdraw from the study any time they chose. They were assured of confidentiality and anonymity as their questionnaires would be assigned numbers rather than names. It was confirmed to them that the questionnaires would be stored in a locked desk drawer in the researcher’s office with no access to other persons. The researcher then sought and received informed consent from the participants through a signed form.
To ensure the above ethical standards were met, the research assistants involved in the study were trained by the researcher on how to handle the participant’s information with care and respect. The research assistants also signed confidentiality agreements. The information obtained from the participants was not used in any way that could cause the reputation of the participants to be adversely affected.

3.11 Permissions required

Authority to conduct the study was issued by the United States International University - A Institutional Review Board. Permission to conduct research was also sought from NACOSTI and a permit was granted for the same. The researcher also sought permission to conduct research at the five Churches through a letter to the respective Churches explaining the purpose of the research. The leadership then granted permission to conduct the research.

There is no permission required for the use of the two standardized tools used in this study as they are freely accessible on the internet for non-commercial use.

3.12 Data analysis methods

Both the Big 5 personality Inventory and the Revised Dyadic Adjustment scales have manuals with scoring instructions which were used to score and interpret the scales. After scoring, the questionnaires were then classified into 2 groups according to those falling above the 48 cutoff point of RDAS and those falling below 48. Scores below 48 indicate marital distress.

Questionnaires that were incomplete were discarded leaving 111 usable ones. After scoring the questionnaires, the data from the questionnaires was entered into
two separate excel spreadsheets under various categories indicating the demographic information and the individual scores of the two instruments. Participants Big Five Traits scores and their corresponding RDAS scores were entered into two spreadsheets which were then compared and double checked to ensure the information was similar and any errors corrected.

The data was then entered into SPSS and analysis was done to produce graphs, chi square scores, tables and charts required. The scores were then analyzed using SPSS to find the needed correlations between individuals’ personality traits and their perceptions of marital satisfaction, and the findings were then used to answer the research questions

3.13 Summary

Chapter Three describes how the actual study was conducted and the research methods that were used. The population targeted to answer the questions in this study were Christians from different denominations, who were found within church congregations, and thus the sample was drawn from five Christian churches in Nairobi.

The chapter discussed the suitability of the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI) and The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) to effectively study the two variables of personality traits and marital satisfaction, which are the focus of this study. The chapter will also indicated how correlations, chi square tests, graphs and tables were used to show the relationship between personality traits and perception of marital satisfaction, and in doing so answered the research questions in this study.
The chapter finally discussed key issues of permission and ethical considerations that must be considered in all research, outlining how each of the above issues were handled in this specific study.
CHAPTER 4
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of personality traits on perceived marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards in Kenya. It further examined which specific traits influenced marital satisfaction. The study also investigated if marital satisfaction was influenced by other socio-demographic factors such as Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination.

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. The data were collected, cleaned and then analyzed in response to the research problems outlined in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. Two main goals defined the collection and analysis of the data; one, there was need to measure personality traits of the respondents and second, to measure the marital satisfaction of respondents so as to correlate the two variables.

4.2 Study tools

The tools used to measure the variables of Marital Satisfaction and Personality Traits have been outlined below:

**Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI)**

Personality traits in this study were measured using the Big Five Personality Inventory (BFI), a 44 item scale with a selection of responses on a Likert scale. Each questionnaire had a number assigned to it and each participant was instructed on how to answer the 44 questions. A BFI scoring manual was used to score the questionnaire as per the scoring instructions outlined in the manual; each of the 5
responses on the Likert scale are assigned a value ranging from 1 to 5. The scores of each participant for the 44 items on the BFI were added up, with scores for each trait being tallied separately. This clearly showed traits in which an individual had high or low scores. The scores for each trait were then entered into SPSS to form part of the research data set.

**Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)**

Marital satisfaction was measured using the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS), a 14 item scale with Likert scale responses. Each participant was instructed on how to answer the 14 questions. The RDAS scoring manual was used and the scores of each participant entered into SPSS to form part of the research data set. The RDAS questionnaire was appended to the Big Five Questionnaire.

**Demographic Questionnaire**

The sociodemographic details of the participants were captured using a demographic Questionnaire. The questionnaire had 6 questions about gender, age, duration of marriage, number of children, denomination and if participants knew their own and spouses personality. Participants were required to fill in answers or tick answers as appropriate.

**4.3 Organization of Data Analysis**

In this chapter, the data are presented systematically beginning with the response rate followed by a description of the Demographic information. These will be presented in form of tables and bar graphs where applicable. Further analysis intended to answer each research question will then follow.
4.4 Response rate

A total of 150 questionnaires were administered to church members of three Christian Church denominations namely; Catholic, African Inland Church (AIC) and Evangelicals. Some 39 questionnaires were discarded due incomplete sections. The remaining 111 questionnaires were used for analyses representing a response rate of 74%. This was an acceptable response rate as the study had proposed 40 participants from each denomination.

4.5 Denominations

The respondents comprised of three denominations, Catholics, AIC and Evangelicals. Out of the respondents interviewed, 33.3% (37) were Catholics, 31.5% (35) were AIC, and 35.1% (39) were Evangelicals. The proportion of the denominations was balanced.

4.6 Gender

Of the total respondents, 54% (60) were female, and 45% (50) were male. One respondent did not specify their gender. The proportion by gender was balanced.

4.7 Age

The participants’ ages were grouped as shown in Figure 2 below. The range was between 26 years and 75 years old. The mean age was 44.9 years (SD= 10.8 years).
The results showed that many of those sampled 45% (50) had 2 children, 23.4% (26) had 3 children, and 13.5% (15) had 4 children, while 5.4% (6) had no children.

4.9 Marriage Duration

When asked how long they had been married, the results showed that the participants had been married for varying durations. About a quarter of the participants (23.4%) were married for 6-10 years, a further 18% were married for 16-20 years and 16.2% were married for 21–25 years. The percentages of marriage duration of the participants are shown in Figure 3 below.
4.10 Big Five Traits

Each of the 44 questions on The Big Five questionnaire assesses one of the Big Five Traits. After scoring, the results yield a distribution of the individuals’ traits. Ideally each participant would normally have each of the five Traits in various proportions, with the dominant trait having the highest score. The sample in this study appeared to have a representation of all five personality traits within the 111 participants. However, the traits of Agreeableness and Openness appeared to be more dominant within the sample.

As shown in Table 4.1 below, the proportions of the traits represented within the sample were presented using means with standard deviations in parenthesis:

Extraversion 29.2 (5.4), Agreeableness 37.9 (5.3), Conscientiousness 37.3 (5.1), Neuroticism 19.7 (5.7) and Openness 37.4 (5.1).
Table 4.1: Distribution of Big Five Traits

4.11 Marital satisfaction

The RDAS scores of the participants for each of the three RDAS components Consensus, Cohesion and Satisfaction were added up and the total used to determine marital distress or satisfaction. Scores of 48 and above indicate Marital Satisfaction while 47 and below indicate marital distress.

The distribution of marital satisfaction among those sampled indicated that about 70% (78) of the participants had marital satisfaction while 30% (33) had marital distress.

4.12 Data Analysis

The Data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed on the basis of each of the three Objectives of the study. The analysis is presented below by Objectives.

4.12.1 Influence of personality traits (Big Five) on marital satisfaction

The first objective of the research was to determine the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya. This was investigated by correlating the Big Five Personality Traits and Marital satisfaction as shown in Table 4:2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean N=111</th>
<th>Std Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(At 0.05 significance - 1 tailed Test)

Table 4.2: Correlations for the Big Five and Marital Satisfaction

Agreeableness \( r (78) = 0.201, p < 0.05 \) and Openness \( r (78) = 0.215, p < 0.05 \) were significantly correlated with marital satisfaction. Conversely, Neuroticism and marital satisfaction were significantly negatively correlated, \( r (78) = -0.228, n = p < 0.05 \). The significance was at 0.05 level (1 tailed test).

4.12.2 Specific Traits that contribute to marital satisfaction

The second objective of the research was to find out if there are specific personality traits that are associated with marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction? In order to determine this association of specific personality traits with marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya, a correlation was conducted between specific personality traits and marital satisfaction. This analysis specifically targeted the 78 participants found to have marital satisfaction. A chi-square test analysis was also done to confirm the contribution of specific traits in marital satisfaction. The analysis is shown in Table 4.3 and 4.4 below.
Contribution of specific traits to marital dissatisfaction

Of the 111 participants, 78 had marital satisfaction. Within this group, the personality Traits represented were 33.3% (26) agreeableness, 29.5% (23) Conscientiousness, 26.9% (21) Openness, 5.1% (4) a combination of Agreeableness and Openness, 3.8% (3) Agreeableness and Conscientiousness and 1.3% (1) combination of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness Traits.

Within the 33 participants who had marital distress the traits represented were Openness 33.3% (11), Agreeableness 30.3% (10) Conscientiousness 27.3% (9), Agreeableness and Conscientiousness 6.1% (2) and Conscientiousness and Openness 3.0% (1).

A correlation was done between those with marital dissatisfaction and their respective personality traits indicated that (p = n.s). All the factors therefore make no significant unique contribution to the prediction of marital dissatisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A/C/O</td>
<td>Ag/Co</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Distress* Personality cross tabulation
Table 4.3 above shows the personality traits represented among the participants who had marital distress as well as the non-distressed participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chi-Square Tests</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>5.167*</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>6.621</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 8 cells (57.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .30.

Table 4.4: Chi Test - Distress* Personality cross tabulation

The Pearson chi-square value is not significant at 0.05 level since $\chi^2 (N =111) = 0.523$, $p > 0.05$ implying that the proportion of personality traits is not significantly different for those that are distressed and those not distressed.

4.12.3 Relationship between of socio demographic factors and marital satisfaction

The third objective of the research was to find out if marital Satisfaction is influenced by Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination? The contribution of each of the above factors to marital satisfaction is analyzed below.

**Marriage duration and Marital Satisfaction**

There was a non-significant correlation of $r (78) = -0.049 (p = ns)$ between Marriage duration and distress.
Age and Marital Satisfaction

There was a non-significant correlation of $r (78) = -0.026 (p = ns)$ between Age and distress.

Number of children and Marital Satisfaction

There was a non-significant correlation of $r (78) = 0.095 (p = ns)$ between number of children and distress.

Gender and Marital Satisfaction

Chi-square test for independence was used to determine whether there was any relationship between marital satisfaction and gender. This was to find out the proportion of either gender that had the highest marital satisfaction. This depicted that 33.3% of the females interviewed were distressed while 66.7% had marital satisfaction. Among the Male participants, 26% were distressed while 74% had marital satisfaction. Analysis done indicated that the Chi square values between gender and marital satisfaction were not significant at 0.05 level since $\chi^2 (N = 78) = 0.569, p = ns$) This indicates that gender and marital satisfaction are not dependent on each other as shown in Table 4.5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Distress</th>
<th>Non Distress</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>p- value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIC</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.521a</td>
<td>0.771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelicals</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Distress</th>
<th>Non Distress</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>p- value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.129a</td>
<td>0.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| N of valid cases | 111 |

Table 4.5: Gender, denomination and marital satisfaction chi square
**Denomination and Marital Satisfaction**

Chi-square test for independence was used to determine whether there was any relationship between marital satisfaction and denomination. This was to find out the proportion of either denomination that had the highest marital satisfaction. This depicted that of the Catholics interviewed, 27% were distressed while 73% had marital satisfaction, and Evangelicals had 28.2% distressed while 71.8% had marital satisfaction while AIC had 34.3% distressed while 65.7% had marital satisfaction.

Analysis done indicated that the Chi square values between denomination and marital satisfaction were not significant at 0.05 level since $\chi^2 (N = 78) = 0.771$, $p= ns$ between denomination and marital satisfaction as shown in Table 4.5 above.

**4.12.4 Analysis of the components of Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS)**

The RDAS measures adjustment of couples to their relationship in which case higher level scores of adjustment above a cut off level of 48 indicate no marital distress and thus marital satisfaction, while 47 and below indicates marital distress.

The three main components of the RDAS are: Consensus, Cohesion and Satisfaction.

A correlation of the three components of the RDAS and marital satisfaction was done and the analysis is presented in Table 4.6 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>RDAS</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.767</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>0.840</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Correlation of the RDAS and marital satisfaction
Consensus, Satisfaction and Cohesion positively correlate with satisfaction $r(78) = 0.839$, $p < 0.05$, $r(78) = 0.767$, $p < 0.05$ and $r(78) = 0.840$, $p < 0.05$ respectively. Correlation between independent variables is not too high (above 0.7) hence all variables are retained. The model explains 100% variance in Satisfaction. This is a very high significance ($p < 0.0005$).

**Contribution of each independent component of the RDAS**

Part correlation coefficients shows that, Cohesion $(0.373*0.373=0.139)$ indicating that cohesion uniquely explains 14% variances in total perceived Satisfaction, while Consensus uniquely explains $(0.343*0.343=0.1176)$, 11.8%. Variances in total perceived Satisfaction explains $(0.277*0.277=0.077)$, 7.7% of unique variability in total perceived Satisfaction. Our model, therefore explains (R=1) 100% of the perceived variance in Satisfaction. Of these three variables, Cohesion makes the largest unique contribution (beta=0.456) although Consensus and Satisfaction also made statistical significant contribution (beta=0.429) and (beta=0.335) respectively. Significant associations were found between the components and marital satisfaction as demonstrated in Table 4.7 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>Part</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>0.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td>0.451</td>
<td>0.373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7: Coefficients of the RDAS and marital satisfaction
4.13 Summary

Chapter four presented the results of the data analysis in this study. The information was presented in the form of bar graphs and tables.

The analysis found that 70% (78) of the participants had marital satisfaction while 30% (33) had dissatisfaction. A significant positive correlation was found between Agreeableness and marital satisfaction while Neuroticism was found to be significantly negatively correlated with marital satisfaction. The five personality traits were found to make no significant unique contribution to the prediction of marital dissatisfaction individually.

A Chi Test indicated there was no significant difference between the proportion of personality traits of both distressed and non-distressed individuals. Similarly, correlations done between marriage duration, age, and number of children and marital were not significant. The three components of the RDAS were found to be significantly positively correlated with marital satisfaction with Cohesion making the largest unique contribution, followed by Consensus then Satisfaction.

Further analysis done to establish relationship of marital satisfaction and factors of Gender and denomination found that the relationships were not significant.

Chapter Five will present the discussion and implications of the results tabled in this Chapter.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the study as well as present the interpretation of these findings in light of existing literature. The chapter will also provide conclusions and make recommendations for future practice and research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

This study was guided by three research questions. The first question was to find out the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction. The study results showed that there was a relationship between personality and marital satisfaction. The second question examined the specific traits that influenced marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The findings are that specific traits such as Openness, Neuroticism and Agreeableness significantly influence marital satisfaction, while extraversion and conscientiousness did not significantly influence marital satisfaction. On the third question of whether Marital Satisfaction is influenced by Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination, the results showed that all the five factors do affect marital satisfaction.

5.3 Discussion of Results

5.3.1. Discussion on the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction

The results of the first research question showed a relationship between personality and marital satisfaction. This relationship was true despite people being of different religious denominations. This finding is consistent with similar studies in the US, Turkey, China and even the Middle East. A study by Aristide et al. (2016) done
in Italy showed that couples with high compatibility have higher levels of marital satisfaction and partner attractiveness. Energy, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Openness and Agreeableness were found to be related to a couple’s compatibility in this study. Another study by Fowers et al. (2008) in the US and Turkey showed that individuals who possess a positive trait tend to have positive illusions of self, their spouses and marriages and thus have higher marital satisfaction than those who have negative traits. Similar results were obtained by Williamson et al. (2012) in China and Amiri et al. (2011; 2014) in Tehran, Middle East who found that Neuroticism and Negativity were important predictive factors of marital satisfaction. It would thus appear from all above findings that personality traits are a major indicator of the quality, satisfaction and long term outcomes in marriage.

Despite the implications of the above findings on marriages and personality traits, few studies have been done on the topic in Africa. The researcher did not find any study done in Kenya, and therefore conducted the study with the objective of investigating how personality traits either promote or negatively affect marital satisfaction within a Kenyan context.

5.3.2. Contribution of RDAS factors to dissatisfaction.

The results of this present study indicated that the largest contribution to distress was attributed to lower scores of Cohesion. This factor of Cohesion is defined by how well and often a couple is able to engage in activities and projects together, have an exchange of ideas as well as calmly discuss issues. It appears that the absence of ability by couples to have teamwork, common interests and peaceful discussions would reflect in marital dissatisfaction as it implies lack of common interests and
vision. According to Scorsolini - Comin and Dos Santos (2012), when there is agreement and flexibility, a couple will be cohesive.

Consensus also contributed substantially to distress within this sample as this factor involves couples being able to have common values in key areas like religiosity and conventionally acceptable behavior, as well as agreement in major decisions, and agreement on levels of affection displayed within the marriage. Having different values and being unable to agree on major life decisions is likely to promote conflict and therefore leading to marital dissatisfaction. Scorsolini-Comin and Dos Santos (2012) indicate that married people with greater Consensus tend to have a more harmonious life with few conflicts; they state that this implies happiness due to adopting strategies like flexibility when it comes to issues that may bring conflict. Scorsolini-Comin and Dos Santos (2012) state that when there is Consensus, a couple will be cohesive.

It would appear from the analysis that low scores on the factor of general satisfaction with the marriage did not make a major contribution to distress in the relationship. This factor rates how satisfied they are within the relationship as far as stability of the marriage and regulation of conflict is concerned. It appears from this study that it is expected that couples will have conflicts often, irritate each other and even at times regret having married their partner and yet not have an adverse effect on their marriage. This confirms Shackelford and Stone (2007) assertions that the concept of marital satisfaction may not necessarily be measured by lack of satisfaction in facets of a marriage. This is because the RDAS is a self-report of participants’ satisfaction with different facets of their marriage and so making it
possible that lack of satisfaction in some relationship factors may not lead to distress. Thus as seen in this research, the RDAS factor of general relationship satisfaction may not impact marital satisfaction as satisfaction may be present in some aspects despite the couples experiencing distress.

5.3.3 **Big Five Traits and Marital Satisfaction/dissatisfaction**

The correlations between the Big Five factors and satisfaction were significantly positive with the exception of Extraversion and Neuroticism, which were negatively correlated with marital satisfaction. As Extraversion and Neuroticism increased, marital satisfaction decreased. A significant positive correlation between Agreeableness and Openness and marital satisfaction was observed. The relationship between Conscientiousness and marital satisfaction was positive although it did not reach significance. Therefore, the study found that the Big Five Traits do influence marital satisfaction as the presence of three of the factors (Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness) increased marital satisfaction while two (Extraversion and Neuroticism) resulted in a decrease in satisfaction. This finding agrees with findings by Amiri, Farhoodi, Abdolvandc and Bidakhavidid (2011), Buss (1991), Heaven et al. (2006) and Watson et al. (2000) that individuals with higher scores on Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and lower scores on Neuroticism tend to have greater marital satisfaction, more effective marital communication and are better at successfully resolving conflicts in a healthy manner (Antonioni, 1998).
5.3.4 Discussion on specific traits that contribute to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction

In order to determine the influence of specific personality traits to marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya, a correlation was done between participants’ marital satisfaction and their respective personality traits.

Openness and Agreeableness

These two traits were found to be positively correlated with marital satisfaction. Openness and Agreeableness made a significant contribution to the prediction of marital satisfaction, with Openness making the strongest unique contribution to explaining marital satisfaction/distress when the variance explained by all other variables in the model are controlled for. The above findings are to be expected in that the Big Five factor of Openness has facets that include being open to experiences, adventurous, imaginative while facets of Agreeable are being trusting, cooperative, sympathetic and thus easy to get along with. These attributes are likely to promote a positive and harmonious relationship. This is similar to findings by Shackelford et al. (2007) that individuals with higher scores in Neuroticism, low on Agreeableness and Openness were reported by spouses as being neglectful, dependent, possessive, condescending, jealous, unfaithful, unreliable, self-centered, sexualizing of others and abusive of alcohol.

Neuroticism

In this study, Neuroticism was found to be significantly negatively correlated with marital satisfaction; the more a participant scored in this trait, the more the reduction in marital satisfaction. This is in line with the perception that facets of
Neuroticism which include anxiety, depression, anger, irritability and panic are not conducive to a positive outcomes in relationships. This finding is confirmed by studies by Karney and Bradbury (1995), Bradbury and Karney (2004), and Shackelford et al. (2007) which found that individuals with higher Neuroticism, low on Agreeableness and Openness were reported by spouses as being neglectful, dependent, possessive, condescending, jealous, unfaithful, unreliable, self-centered, sexualizing of others and abusive of alcohol. Similarly, Amiri et al. (2011) in their study in Tehran suggest that there is a meaningful negative association between the personality factor Neuroticism and marital satisfaction; as Neuroticism increases, marital satisfaction decreases. Similar studies found that individuals with higher scores on Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness and lower scores on Neuroticism tend to have greater marital satisfaction, more effective marital communication and are better at successfully resolving conflicts in a healthy manner (Antonioni, 1998).

**Conscientiousness**

There was no significant correlation between Conscientiousness and marital satisfaction. The facets of this trait include orderliness, dutifulness, hardworking and cautiousness. Despite these being good attributes for an individual to possess in daily tasks of living, their contribution to marital satisfaction is minimal. Karney and Bradbury (1995) found no relationship between this trait and marital satisfaction.

**Extraversion**

There was no significant correlation between Extraversion and marital satisfaction.
Despite its facets being cheerfulness, warmth and positive emotions, attributes perceived to be valuable in relationships, Extraversion did not appear to make any significant contribution to marital distress. This may be due to overlap with other independent variables in the model or possibly this may be explained by the fact that despite cheerfulness, friendliness and excitement appearing to be good attributes to possess, one may still be laid back, reserved, prefer to stay away from crowds yet have other qualities that would be conducive to marital satisfaction. The converse is also true as one may be warm, friendly and excitement seeking yet be irresponsible, careless and break rules or distrust others. These findings are consistent with results from other studies that indicate that although Extraversion is associated with positive emotions (in contrast to Neuroticism), no consensus exists as to whether this trait is beneficial to marriage. Cross sectional studies have found links between husbands’ Extraversion and low marital satisfaction (Lester, Haig & Monello, 1989) and a longitudinal study which found that higher husband’s extraversion predicts divorce (Kelly & Conley, 1987). Other studies also reported that there was no relationship between Extraversion and marital satisfaction (Bouchard et al., 1999; Donnellan, Conger & Bryant, 2004; Dyrenforth, Kashy, Donnellan, & Richard, 2010; Gattis, Berns, Simpson & Christensen, 2004; Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

In this study, there were no single traits that was found to single handedly contribute to marital dissatisfaction. Chi-square test showed that both the distressed and non-distressed participant groups had a diverse distribution of the five traits among them in different proportions. However, the differences in the traits of the two groups did not reach a level of significance.
5.3.5 Discussion on whether Marital Satisfaction influenced by Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination?

Age and distress

The results showed that there was a small negative correlation between Age and marital satisfaction, however, the correlation $r = -0.026$ was not significant and age was thus found to only explain 0.07% of the variance in distressed participants. This contrasts with Jalovaara (2002) who argues that older partners who have lived together for many years consider divorce a higher cost due to the intangible marriage related investments they have made, including presence of children and so prefer not to separate. This current study found that older people living together reported more marital distress than the younger ones. This could possibly imply either that as people grow older, the flaws of their partners increase with age, or the realities of their characters become evident. Even so, since they are older, they are more tolerant and still stay married despite the challenges. On the other hand, it could be that younger people are still in the early years of marriage and have not reached the levels that would cause severe distress as in the U-Shape; it could also mean that more younger people bail out of marriage earlier at signs of distress meaning that only the older ones who are more tolerant stay in distressful marriage. Research occasioned by this demographic shift has revealed a generally positive picture of late-life marriage; low conflict and generally high positive affect compared to younger couples (Carstensen et al., 1995; Gagnon et al., 1999; Smith et al., 2009). Similarly, Dabone (2014) asserts that older people are mature in understanding unlike young married people who are quick to react and vindictive and that older married people have learnt how
to accommodate and appreciate partner weaknesses. Carstensen et al. (1995) also found that older unhappy couples who had stayed together for long periods were less likely to engage in sequences in which one spouse’s neutral affect was reciprocated by the other spouse’s negative affect unlike in younger couples. This finding suggests that these older couples may have learned to “leave well enough alone” by staying in affectively neutral interactive sequences which also includes avoiding escalation to negative affect.

The personality traits of older adults are typically more stable than the traits of younger persons (Turiano et al., 2012).

**Marriage Duration and distress**

Correlations done between Marriage Duration and distress indicated that there was no correlation between the two factors. These findings appear to contrast with findings of Umberson et al. (2005) and Peleg (2008) that marital quality tends to decline over time and is impacted by marital duration. The findings of this current study indicates that there are couples who are still married but in distress which may imply that they have learnt how to manage the distress. This may be explained by the couples having found an equilibrium and learnt how to deal with the shortcomings of their spouse and also due to the tolerance and maturity that comes with age. It is possible that the benefits of staying in the marriage outweigh separation and thus the couples resign themselves to stay together in peace despite the distress. Furthermore, the church does not view divorce positively, which means that for one to continue as a member of the church, they need to stay within their marriages despite the dissatisfaction.
Gender and Distress

About 55% (60) of the participants were female of who 67% (40) reported that they were satisfied. Of the 45% (50) male participants 74% (37) reported that they were satisfied. This would suggest that men report more marital satisfaction than women. However analysis indicated that the gender differences in marital distress were not significant.

Denomination and Distress

Of the three denominations in the study, 31.5% (35) belonged to AIC and 65.7% (29) reported that they were satisfied, while 33.3% (37) were Catholics and 73% (27) reported that they were satisfied. Of the 35.2% (39) Evangelicals, 72% (29) reported that they were happy. This indicates that a higher population of the satisfied were Catholics (73%), followed by Evangelicals (72%) and the least was AIC at 65.7%. However analysis indicated that the relationship between denomination and marital satisfaction was not significant.

Number of children and distress

The analysis indicated that there was no correlation between number of children and Satisfaction.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1. Conclusions to the influence of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya?

This study confirmed that personality traits do affect marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Generally, a large percentage of the participants reported that they were satisfied. This may be explained by both Big Five Traits and the religious factor
as previous studies on the effect of religion on marital satisfaction have indicated that couple who were religious had more stable marriages. Piedmont (2005) found that spirituality and religious scales tend to correlate with the Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness domains of the Five Factor Measure of Personality, which tend to increase marital satisfaction.

Both the tools used in the study had parallels in traits for example consensus in the RDAS which is similar to Agreeableness, a trait that indicates the levels of cooperation which would then lead to consensus in key issues within the marriage in key values. As far as the effects of personality traits on marital satisfaction are concerned, the analysis investigated how participants Big Five traits would translate into participants’ Consensus and Satisfaction scores on the RDAS. This would imply that individuals who possessed certain traits would either have difficulty or find it easier to demonstrate consensus and satisfaction within their marriage.

5.4.2. Conclusions on specific traits that contribute to marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

Among this Christian population, Openness, Neuroticism, and Agreeableness were found to contribute to marital satisfaction. As Openness and Agreeableness increased, marital satisfaction increased while as Neuroticism increased, satisfaction decreased. Extraversion and Conscientiousness did not significantly contribute in marital satisfaction.

The Christian faith claims that when one becomes a follower of Christ, they abandon and die to their old nature and take on Christ like character attributes or traits “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away;
see, everything has become new!” 2 Cor 5:17 (New Revised Standard Version).

According to Phil 2: 3 - 4 (New Revised Standard Version), these character traits are humility and selflessness, which are demonstrated by esteeming others above oneself, while putting others’ interests above one’s own. The ability to forgive, both a Christian virtue and a personality trait has been linked to marital satisfaction and is considered foundational for a successful marriage (Fincham & Beach, 2010). This implies that for Christians, previous personality traits detrimental to marital satisfaction are replaced by new traits. Studies have also indicated that there is a positive correlational relationship between spirituality and marital satisfaction (Demaris, Mahoney & Pargament, 2010).

Parallels between the Big 5 Traits and the factors measured by the RDAS

An interesting finding about this study is that despite the fact that the Big Five and RDAS are normally used to measure two very different constructs, namely personality traits and marital satisfaction, they seem to have parallels and relationship in the attributes they measure. The components of the RDAS Cohesion, Consensus and Satisfaction could easily be related with the factor of Agreeableness whose attributes include being able to trust others, warm and making others feel welcome, cooperation and tender mindedness. In the RDAS, partners who are warm towards each other will listen to each other and cooperate in sharing ideas and so are able to do things together and get along. According to the RDAS, attributes that make up Cohesion include the ability of participants to engage in activities and meaningful discussions together.
Similarly, the Big Five trait of Neuroticism has attributes of hostility, depression, anger and agitation/anxiety, which are the opposites of Cohesion and Consensus. This implies that marriages with adequate levels of shared activities and discussion would have high cohesion meaning that they spend substantial amounts of time doing things together and share their views and ideas substantially. This implies that couples wishing to increase marital satisfaction would need to do pursue activities out of the home together often as well as consult each other during decisions as well as learn conversational skills that will ensure that they listen to each other calmly when conflicts arise.

According to the RDAS, marriages with marital satisfaction, have the component of Satisfaction and Stability which means that the participant and their spouse do not consider separation as an option for their marriage or even regret being married despite having the attribute of Conflict. Conflict is assessed by evaluating the number of times the participants quarrel with their spouse or get on each other’s nerves.

Since the highest scores are given for responses like “never” and “rarely” while answers in the affirmative were given lowest scores, the higher the scores by participants, the greater the stability in their marriage. This implies that marriages which do not consider separation as an option and prefer to work at getting along, rather than resigning themselves to feeling that the marriage is bad and so to be regretted, have higher satisfaction. This would mean that clinicians need to incorporate techniques that build tolerance, perseverance and activities that build relational value and pleasant feelings between couples.
From the analysis, it appears that Cohesion did not contribute much to marital satisfaction as the correlation was 0.84. This implies that couples having low Cohesion but with high Satisfaction and Consensus scores would be still have marital satisfaction. This is consistent with Scorsolini-Comin and Dos Santos (2012) who indicate that married people with greater consensus tend to have a more harmonious life. The attributes represented in Consensus are:

**Decision making**

Question 3: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in making major decisions.

Question 6: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in making career decisions.

**Values**

Question 1: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in religious matters

Question 5: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in conventionality (correct or proper behavior).

**Affection**

Question 2: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in demonstrations of Affection

Question 4: Indicate the extent of agreement between you and your partner in sex relations.
5.4.3 Conclusion on if Marital Satisfaction is influenced by Gender, Age, duration of marriage, number of children and denomination?

The study found that socio-demographic factors of Age, Duration of marriage, Number of children, Gender and Denomination do not influence marital satisfaction. Despite the fact that denomination did not affect marital satisfaction, this study implies that there is a large number of Christians who are satisfied with their marriages as majority of the sample was satisfied. The factor of religiosity comes into focus here as the high number of participants with marital satisfaction implies that this population comprised of individuals who had positive attributes in their marriages, and thus less distress. This would mostly confirm the unsubstantiated assertions by Amato et al. (2006) that there are less divorces in the Church due to higher marital satisfaction as a result of better conflict resolution possibly as a result of attending pre-marital counseling.

This study recognizes the fact that some other factors may have influenced the high levels of marital satisfaction within this study. There is a possibility that being religious may not necessary mean that the participant has developed Christian virtues parallel to Openness, Agreeableness that would lead to marriage stability. Greater marital satisfaction among the Christian population could be as a result of perception. Wilcox and Nock (2006) argue that spouses who believe in the institution of marriage have higher quality and satisfying marriages due to their religious orientations that support marriage and are less tolerant of exiting. Such spouses also have a more altruistic mindset that makes them less self - centered and predisposes them to have modified positive perceptions towards their marriages. Wilcox et al. (2006) attribute
this marital happiness to decreased monitoring of how the marriage serves their own interest, as well as having less annoyance when their spouses engage in self-serving behavior.

Fowers, Fisiloglu and Procassi (2008) in their study about the effects of positive illusions on marriage, cite (Fowers & Applegate 1996), who suggest that unrealistically positive views of one’s marriage result in positive illusions about marriage itself. The factor of under reporting negative personality qualities due to the fear of being viewed unfavorably as a Christian may have also affected the score of marital satisfaction favorably. Individuals tend to alter their behavior to what is considered “acceptable” within specific environments (Tangney, Stuewig & Mashek, 2007). In the present study, participants may feel that they are expected to be seen as having the Christian virtues of gentleness and patience within their marriages. Previous studies were done among secular populations who had no need to feign positive attributes. For instance, Fowers et al. (2008) in their study conducted with American and Turkish couples on positive marital illusions and culture confirm Kagitcibasi’s (2005) concept that respondents from individualistic and competitive societies like in the United states do not have any problem with reporting negative views of others. This is in contrast to individuals from societies that are interdependent for example traditional and religious communities who report their relationship positively due to conformity to family expectations. Similarly, a study by Fischer and McNulty (2008) in Ohio found that several couples reported having lived with each other before marriage. In a religious sample, such admissions would not be done.
The researcher however is convinced that given the available research on influence of religiosity on marital satisfaction, the secular world may have some things to borrow from Christian marriages.

5.5 **Recommendations for further research**

It is recommended that research be done with a secular Kenyan population as well to see if the findings will be similar as the secular population has no motivation to feign good behavior. On the other hand, previous research has found that couples who were religious had better conflict resolution, positivity, selflessness and patience, factors which have been found to strengthen marriage.

It may therefore be beneficial to do further research on the effect of religiosity and spirituality on marital satisfaction within the Kenyan population so as to identify the value of religion in enhancing marriage quality.

This will determine if there is value in incorporating the client’s spirituality during marital therapy to enhance positive outcomes.

There is also need to study the various denominations in Kenya to find out how their individual doctrines impact marriage quality, with the objective of evaluating doctrines that would improve future clinical practice in the area of marriage.

5.6 **Recommendations for future practice**

Given the findings of this study that personality traits do influence marital satisfaction, it would be highly beneficial for clinicians working with couples to make it standard procedure to do a personality test as part of the routine during intake during pre-marital counseling as well as during marriage therapy with distressed married couples.
Other researchers have also recommended that clinicians need to be aware of couple characteristics at the start of therapy so as to tailor interventions to client issues.

Dalgeish (2015) states that understanding emotions and anxieties that affect interpersonal functions makes therapeutic interventions like Emotionally Focused Therapy more effective in individuals who have higher levels of attachment anxiety and low emotional expression. South et al. (2008) found that personality disorders were likely to be associated with misconception, poor communication as well as verbal and physical aggression. Because these behaviors cause conflicts in the marriage, individuals with pathological personality features have high likelihood of being unhappy in marriage. Fischer and McNulty (2008), Karney and Bradbury, 1995 and Javanmarda et al (2013) recommend that clinicians use interventions aimed at reducing Neuroticism and its effect on the marriage as their studies identified Neuroticism as a great predictor of marital dissatisfaction.

All the above researchers recommend that personality traits be central to analysis and be targets for interventions in relationship counseling. The BFI should be administered and analyzed to give a profile of the clients so as to be able to identify the traits that have contributed to their marital distress, or likely to do so. This will assist to isolate the factors and have treatment goals aligned to behavior modification to correct the offending traits or reinforce the traits that have been found to promote marital satisfaction.

This research indicates that Catholic and Evangelical participants in this study appear to have higher levels of marital satisfaction. Clinicians can endeavor to study the doctrines of these two denominations as well as study their marriage education
programs so as to draw parallel practices that can be used within therapy to enhance marital satisfaction. However, the process of adopting the outcomes for use within the secular populations will need to be done. Amato et al. (2006) confirms that pre-marital education reduces divorce by 31%. This confirms that adopting pre-marital counseling with all couples within the church and outside may improve the marriages and thus reduce the divorce rate.

It is further recommended that counseling should be given to both spouses as working with one spouse may not give a complete and accurate picture of the individual’s traits. Studies by Watson et al, (2000) and South et al (2008) recommended that clinicians incorporate both spouse’s during personality assessment, rather than relying on an individual’s self-rating. Clinicians working with Christians encourage both spouses to attend counseling together when problems arise.

This study also recommends that all clinicians acquire multicultural competence to be able to work with Christian and other spiritual populations. Karampantsos, J. M. (2011) recommends that because spirituality is important to religious individuals and has also been found to improve marital satisfaction, clinicians should acquire the skills and incorporate use of client’s spirituality during marital therapy. This recommendation needs to be emphasized in the Kenyan context as currently, Christians tend to rely more on counseling from their spiritual leaders as most counselors are seen as “secular” by this population. This is because few clinicians have acquired the competencies to be able to work with clients who struggle with marital problems yet are at cross roads due to their faith teachings.
Clinicians working with Christian couples need to incorporate the use of the RDAS which is an indicator of marital quality. Kamp Dush et al. (2012) and Amato et al. (2007) in their research findings indicate that Egalitarian marriages where decisions and responsibilities are shared have the greatest likelihood of success in the long term. The two studies recommended that clinicians identify the components that need to be enhanced to ensure marital satisfaction. The RDAS is a valid measure of cohesion and decision making within a marriage.

5.7 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the findings of the study on the effect of personality traits on marital satisfaction among Christians in Kilimani, Nairobi West, Kayole and Kitengela Wards Kenya. The chapter also synthesized the findings in order to find the implications of these findings for future practice and research. The discussions in the Chapter went deeper into the specific factors that affected marital satisfaction and what should be done to ensure that the findings are relevant in practice. The findings revealed that a relationship does exist between personality traits and marital satisfaction in the population studied. The study also found that socio-demographic factors of Age, Gender, Marriage Duration and Denomination did not influence marital satisfaction.

The study points out that there is a possibility that the high percentage of satisfaction within this population maybe as a result of “feigning good” due to the fear of being viewed as “Un Christian” if one reports having negative traits. However, the study is also cognizant of the possibility that this population may also possess
special attributes taught by Christianity that would promote satisfaction as there are several studies that indicate that this is a possibility.

The findings also point to the indication that couples who have had premarital counseling have more stable marriages. The findings were based on studies (Amato et. 2006) on pre-marital programs which established that during these programs, couples learnt skills to handle inevitable negatives in marriage while protecting positives and thus reducing distress. The study also indicated a gap requiring future research on the level of divorces within the Church setting, as well as a study on which specific factors taught in pre-marital education within the church lead to the high number of satisfaction within the Church.

The chapter concluded that the effects of personality traits on marital quality are quite significant and thus no clinicians should overlook administering personality and marital satisfaction assessments as part of the intake routine. This will assist to identify and reinforce the traits identified in this study as able to enhance marital quality and incorporate them within the treatment plans. If Clinicians are able to adopt the above actions within their practice, the desired goal of reducing the rising numbers of divorce in Kenya may be achieved.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX A

USIU – A INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

22nd July 2016
USIU-A/IRB/17/S11
Roselynne K. Webbo,
Reg No. 638834,
Doctor of Psychology,
Email: rwebbo@yahoo.com

IRB-RESEARCH APPROVAL.

The USIU-A IRB has reviewed and granted ethical approval for the research proposal titled 'The Effects of Personality Traits on Marital Satisfaction Among Christians in Kenya'. The approval is for six months from the date of IRB. Please submit a completed copy of the study to the IRB office, soft copy is acceptable.

You are advised to follow the approved methodology and report to the IRB any serious, unexpected and related adverse events and potential unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.

Should you or study participants have any queries regarding IRB's consideration of this project, please contact irb@usiu.ac.ke.

Dr. Carol Watson,
Chair | IRB | USIU-Africa
cwatson@usiu.ac.ke
Office 20 3606 303 Cell+254 70101 7099

CC: Research Office
APPENDIX B

DRAFT LETTER TO CHURCH OFFICIALS

Dear Pastor,

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON PERSONALITY AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

I hereby request permission to undertake the above research at your Church as part of the requirements for my Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

My interest in the study is to find out how personality influences marital satisfaction among the Christians in Kenya. This is of interest to me as to date, no research has been done to see if Christian marriages are affected by individual personality traits. This is so despite the fact that many studies in the secular world have confirmed that indeed certain personality traits lead to positive outcomes like marital satisfaction, while other traits lead to negative outcomes like marital dissatisfaction and even divorce.

The objectives of my studies are to find out:

1. What is the influence of personality traits on perception of marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya?

2. Which specific traits contribute to perceptions of marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction?

3. How can the understanding of the relationship of personality and marital satisfaction contribute to therapeutic practice?

This study will inform Counselors during pre-marital and couple counseling to assist clients identify the traits that promote marital satisfaction and build on them, while working on minimizing those Traits that may lead to marital dissatisfaction.

Ethical considerations of confidentiality will be observed and the findings of this study will also be presented to your Church leadership to inform them on what the study revealed and the implications of the findings for marriages.

It is my humble hope that you will grant me permission to carry out this study at your Church.

Yours Sincerely.

Roselyinne Kyambi Webbo, Doctorate Candidate.
APPENDIX C

DRAFT FLYER INVITING PARTICIPANTS

RESEARCH ON PERSONALITY TRAITS AND MARITAL SATISFACTION

Do you have 30 minutes to spare and participate in a worthy cause?

The above research will be conducted at the Church during the month of July 2016.

The purpose of the research is to study the effects of personality Traits On Marital Satisfaction.

All information received in this study will be kept confidential and privacy will be maintained during the research.

YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IF YOU MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA

- 18 years old and above.
- Married for four years or more.
- Married to one partner.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Either:

1. Register at the desk outside the church and leave your telephone/email address so the researcher will contact you directly and arrange for a meeting.

   Or

2. Contact the Researcher on the telephone number and email address given below.

Roselynne Kyambi Webbo

Tel: 0725834474

Email: rwebbo@yahoo.com
APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I am Roselynne Kyambi Webbo), a student at United States International University-Africa, where I am pursuing a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. As part of my degree requirements I am completing a research study and I would like to include you in the study. My research supervisor at USIU-A (Dr Michael Kihara, Program Director - Psy & CJS) may be contacted by email at (mkihara@usiu.ac.ke) or phone (+254 20 3606558) if you have any questions at any time.

Your written consent is required to participate so that I can confirm that you have been informed of the study and that you agree to participate. You are free to decline or discontinue your participation at any time during the study if you wish to do so. All information obtained in this study will be kept confidential; a number will be assigned to any research forms to ensure your privacy is protected. Your name or identify will not be given in any report or publication.

The purpose of the research is to find out how personality influences marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya. You will be asked to complete two forms answering questions about your personality and marital experiences. This is not an exam or a test, there is no deception in these questions, and there are no right or wrong answers, simply answer the questions as honestly as you can. The questionnaire forms should take approximately 30 minutes but no longer than about 45 minutes to complete in one sitting.

The outcome of the information obtained during this research will be summarized and utilized in my research study. Participant names will not be utilized, as shown below a number will now be assigned to all other documents to ensure your identity is kept confidential during and after this study is completed.

By signing below, I consent to participate in this study.

___________________________________  ____________
Signature of Participant                Date

___________________________________  ____________
Principal Researcher                   Date

Participant Number to be used on all other documents: ______________
APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer the following Questions by filling the blanks or ticking where appropriate

1. What is your age_______?

2. What is your gender? Male _____ Female_______

3. How many years have you been married _________

4. Do you have children: Yes _____ No______? If yes how many? ___________________

4. Do you know your personality? Yes______ No________

5. Do you know your wife/husband’s personality? Yes______ No____

6. What is your denomination?
   a. Catholic_____ b. AIC_____ c. Evangelical/ Baptist/ Pentecostal/ other specify _______
APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF FORM

Dear Participant:

Thank you for participating in this research study. The purpose of this study is to find out how personality influences marital satisfaction among Christians in Kenya. Your participation will help inform Counselors during pre-marital and couple counseling to identify the traits that promote marital satisfaction so as to build on them, while working on minimizing those Traits that may lead to marital dissatisfaction.

In the event you have any distressful reactions or concerns regarding the questions presented to you in this study, you may want to seek counseling for support. The following counseling centers are provided in the event you wish to seek support:

1. Amani Counseling Centre: Tel: 020 600267
2. Oasis Counseling Center: Tel: 0725366614

If you have comments or questions at a later date, you may contact me at email or phone noted below, or you may reach my thesis supervisor at USIU-A (Dr Michael Kihara) at (mkihara@usiu.ac.ke) or (+254203606558). Once again thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Roselynne Kyambi Webbo
Tel: 0725 834474  Email: rwebbo@yahoo.com
APPENDIX G

The Big Five Inventory (BFI)

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree strongly 1</th>
<th>Disagree a little 2</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree 3</th>
<th>Agree a little 4</th>
<th>Agree strongly 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I see Myself as Someone Who...

____ 1. Is talkative
____ 2. Tends to find fault with others
____ 3. Does a thorough job
____ 4. Is depressed, blue
____ 5. Is original, comes up with new ideas
____ 6. Is reserved
____ 7. Is helpful and unselfish with others
____ 8. Can be somewhat careless
____ 9. Is relaxed, handles stress well
____ 10. Is curious about many different things
____ 11. Is full of energy
____ 12. Starts quarrels with others
____ 13. Is a reliable worker
____ 14. Can be tense
15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker
16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm
17. Has a forgiving nature
18. Tends to be disorganized
19. Worries a lot
20. Has an active imagination
21. Tends to be quiet
22. Is generally trusting
23. Tends to be lazy
24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset
25. Is inventive
26. Has an assertive personality
27. Can be cold and aloof
28. Perseveres until the task is finished
29. Can be moody
30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited
32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
33. Does things efficiently
34. Remains calm in tense situations
35. Prefers work that is routine
36. Is outgoing, sociable
37. Is sometimes rude to others
___ 38. Makes plans and follows through with them
___ 39. Gets nervous easily
___ 40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas
___ 41. Has few artistic interests
___ 42. Likes to cooperate with others
___ 43. Is easily distracted
___ 44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

Please check: Did you write a number in front of each statement?
APPENDIX H

Big Five Inventory – Scoring Key

Instructions for scoring: Key items that are bold, italicized, and underlined (e.g., E) should be reverse scored.

To reverse score an item, change 1 to 5, 2 to 4, 4 to 2, and 5 to 1.

After reverse scoring, find the total score for E (Extroversion), A (Agreeableness), C (Conscientiousness), N (Neuroticism), and O (Openness).

Important note: Please be sure to submit original responses on each item to the Psi Beta spreadsheet. So please do NOT report reverse-scored data, just original responses made by your participants.

__1 Is talkative E
__2 Tends to find fault with others A
__3 Does a thorough job C
__4 Is depressed, blue N
__5 Is original, comes up with new ideas O
__6 Is reserved E
__7 Is helpful and unselfish with others A
__8 Can be somewhat careless C
__9 Is relaxed, handles stress well N
__10 Is curious about many different things O
__11 Is full of energy E
__12 Starts quarrels with others A
__13 Is a reliable worker C
__14 Can be tense N
__15 Is ingenious, a deep thinker O
__16 Generates a lot of enthusiasm E
__17 Has a forgiving nature A
__18 Tends to be disorganized C
__19 Worries a lot N

__23 Tends to be lazy C
__24 Is emotionally stable, not easily upset N
__25 Is inventive O
__26 Has an assertive personality E
__27 Can be cold and aloof A
__28 Perseveres until the task is finished C
__29 Can be moody N
__30 Values artistic, aesthetic experiences O
__31 Is sometimes shy, inhibited E
__32 Is considerate and kind to almost everyone A
__33 Does things efficiently C
__34 Remains calm in tense situations N
__35 Prefers work that is routine O
__36 Is outgoing, sociable E
__37 Is sometimes rude to others A
__38 Makes plans and follows through with them C
__39 Gets nervous easily N
__40 Likes to reflect, play with ideas O
__41 Has few artistic interests O
__20 Has an active imagination O

__21 Tends to be quiet E

__22 Is generally trusting A

__42 Likes to cooperate with others A

__43 Is easily distracted C

__44 Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature O
APPENDIX I

RDAS-Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

Name_____________________   Date__________________ Session # ____________

Most people have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Always Agree</th>
<th>Almost Always Agree</th>
<th>Occasionally Agree</th>
<th>Frequently Disagree</th>
<th>Almost Always Disagree</th>
<th>Always Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Religious matters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Demonstrations of affection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Making major decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sex relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Career decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>All the Time</th>
<th>Most of the Time</th>
<th>More often than not</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How often do you and your partner quarrel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

123
9. Do you ever regret that you married (or lived together)?

10. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves"?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every Day</th>
<th>Almost Everyday</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Less than once a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a month</th>
<th>Once or twice a wk.</th>
<th>Once a day</th>
<th>More Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

12. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

13. Work together on a project

14. Calmly discuss something