11-1-1985

Comparison of Attitudes Between Premaritally Pregnant Couples and Non-Premaritally Pregnant Couples

Ed Northam
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Comparison of Attitudes Between Premaritally Pregnant Couples and Non-Premaritally Pregnant Couples

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Counseling and Guidance

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Ed Northam

November 1985

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Theses Committee Name	Department
Scott Harrington	CASE
Gale Gleason	CASE
Gwen Weber Burch	UNMC

Robert Butler
Chairman

11-26-85
Date

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Clinical practitioners have indicated a concern for couples who have married because of pregnancy. Some would suggest that whatever relationship problems brought them in for counseling can often be traced back to unresolved feelings about the reason for marriage. These feelings and the marriage option following pregnancy frequently become the focus in marriage counseling. Often, when these feelings and attitudes remain unresolved, divorce or discontinuance of the relationship follows.

Premarital pregnancy trends presented in Census Statistics (1984) indicate that among women who first married between 1965 and 1979 at ages 14 to 29, 24 percent either had a baby before marriage or were pregnant when they exchanged vows. In comparison, less than 12 percent of those of similar ages who married between 1935 and 1949 wed under such circumstances. This 100 percent increase accounted for 3.75 million couples between 1965 and 1979.

The limited research reported on marriage as the selected option to premarital pregnancy concluded these couples had a divorce rate twice that for the population as a whole (Christensen & Meissner, 1953; Christensen & Rubenstein, 1956; and Burchinal, 1959). With the divorce rate in 1955 being 2.3 per 1,000 and

increasing to 5.3 per 1,000 in 1979, extrapolation suggests that premaritally pregnant couples would have a divorce rate of 4.6 to 10.6 per 1,000. With the current trend of one half of all marriages ending in divorce, the issue of premaritally pregnant couples seeking marriage as an option is certainly an area needing study.

Statistics describe the quantitative aspects of decisions made by individuals. They do not describe the social and environmental factors, learned sex roles, feelings, beliefs, etc., that are an integral part of the decision making process. Ultimately it is this process that is of interest to the helping profession.

Perhaps premaritally pregnant couples who marry and ultimately seek counseling regarding their marital relationship would be better served if more knowledge was available concerning such situations. For example, are there attitude differences unique to couples who become pregnant and then marry? Are these attitudes different, in unique ways from the attitudes of couples who marry and then become pregnant? What are the ramifications of these differences, if any, for those in the helping profession?

Statement of Problem

Is there a difference in attitudes about one's marital relationship between couples who choose marriage because the wife was premaritally pregnant and those who choose marriage

when pregnancy is not present?

Review of Literature

Reported research into the attitudes of premaritally pregnant couples compared with those of traditionally married couples has not been found by the investigation of this author. The investigation consisted of doing both an Eric and Social Sciences computer search using the stem words forced marriage, shotgun wedding, premarital pregnancy, pregnancy, marriage and attitudes.

The only research that hints at the subject of attitudes was done by DeLissovoy (1973). In his research he identifies seven areas of adjustment within the relationships of high school married couples: Spending family income, Religious activities, Social activities, Mutual friends, In-law relationships, Child training, and Sex relations. Pre and post interviews were conducted to obtain information pertaining to these areas of adjustment which showed that couples who chose marriage because of pregnancy and were pregnant at the time of marriage had the poorest opportunity for a successful marriage.

Through the use of pre and post interviews Burchinal (1965) concluded that "...premarital pregnancy, youthfulness, and school dropout would probably serve to intensify conflict in a traditional middle social class milieu" (p. 251). Burchinal's (1965) paradigm of Marital Competence and Satisfaction is a hypothesized relationship between thirteen characteristics and outcomes of

youthful marriages. In the paradigm, premarital pregnancy results in the "poorest" chance for success in youthful marriages.

There is a paucity of published research with regard to the attitudinal factors of premaritally pregnant couples. What has been published is generally directed at high school youth and the environmental factors that affect such relationships. Of the numerous articles researched on this topic, only one addressed the issue of the effects of premarital pregnancy on marriage.

Dame, Finck, Mayors, Reiner, and Smith (1966) attempted to answer the following questions: "Why in a period of increasing sophistication about sex and contraception did these women become pregnant? Why did these couples choose marriage as their solution to the problem?" (p. 468). Their conclusions suggest that the individuals rebellious attitude and distorted family dynamics result in an "unconscious collusion" (p. 473) on the part of the couple in forming the relationship in this manner. An example of this collusion is "where the female is attracted to her husband by his remoteness, which resembled her father's and by his expression of the rebellion that she had repressed in herself. He responded to her social poise and compliance and took pleasure in instigating her rebellion against her mother in the belief that he had liberated himself from the domination of his parents" (p. 473).

In a review of research on Forced Marriages, Hepworth (1964) postulates that the corrosive factor in forced marriages has to do with the freedom-of-choice complex. Stated briefly, the complex

suggests how a daughter may rebel against parental prohibition by arranging her marriage through the act of pregnancy. This assertion of rights by the daughter is contradictory in that her assertion results in a forced situation thereby invalidating the freedom being sought.

He further describes the males' response as being tied to the complex. The males attitude toward the female, once pregnancy is indicated and marriage is the chosen option, begins to take on negative distortions. Love and respect are replaced with the obligation or unconcern.

The behaviors that frequently present themselves in these marriages are devaluation of the partners and extramarital involvement on the males part. The female usually assists the male in his devaluation of her by locking into a self-depreciating attitude, and to cater excessively to her partner's desires in an attempt to gain his acceptance.

In view of the little reported research identified in this exploration of literature, the following specific questions were formulated: 1) What type of parental upbringing did the individual's have and what are the individual's social mores and religious ideals? How are they similar or unlike those of their spouses?; 2) What are the individual's views on parenting, finances, and willingness to work through the differences?; 3) What perceptions do the individuals have toward their parents and in-laws? How do they

think their parents and in-laws feel towards them?; 4) How has marriage and possibly the presence of children affected the individual's lives outside of marriage?; 5) How do the individuals rate trust, communication, and the affectional and sexual components of their marriage?

Hypotheses

With these questions regarding attitudes toward marriage in mind, the following hypotheses were developed:

1) There will be no significant attitudinal differences, as determined by the Couples Attitude Survey (CAS), between couples who chose marriage following pregnancy (PP) and those couples who chose marriage where pregnancy was not present (NP).
2) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between males and females in the PP group.
3) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between the males and females in the NP group.
4) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between males in the PP group compared with males in the NP group.
5) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between females in the PP group compared with the females in the NP group.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Population and Sample Used

The population studied consisted of two groups. One group was identified as non-premaritally pregnant (NP) and consisted of couples who were not pregnant at the time of marriage. The couples from this group consisted of students enrolled in Masters degree programs in Counseling and Social Work at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The second group was identified as pre-maritally pregnant. It consisted of couples who were pregnant at the time of marriage. Couples from this group were recruited from various community agencies that provided counseling for these couples or they were obtained from my personal knowledge of their being pre-maritally pregnant.

A sample of 30 couples for each group was obtained. The range of years married for the NP group was from 2½ months to 32 years. The mean years married for this group was 11.3 years. For the PP group the range of years married was 3 months to 26 years with the mean being 8.1 years.

The following situations were observed: 1) The anonymity of all participants was ensured by assigning code numbers to identify the class or community agency where survey results were obtained;

2) Communication between myself and survey participants was made through a contact from the community agency or a professor from the chosen class in order to further ensure client confidentiality.

Instrumentation

There are instruments in print such as the Marriage Adjustment Inventory, Manson and Lerner (1962) and the Marriage Expectation Inventory, McDonald (1972) that elicit valuable information about the relationships being studied. However, none was considered comprehensive enough to acquire information from the areas thought to be relevant to this research.

This led to the development of the Couples Attitude Survey (CAS) (see Appendix A). This survey utilizes forty-eight items representing five major scales: Inculcated Values (IV) including parental upbringing, social mores and religious ideals; Personal Ideals (PI) e.g. parenting, finances, and willingness to work through differences and strive for mutually determined goals; Family Relationships (FR) consisting of acceptance of couple by in-laws and in-laws by couple; Behavioral Transition (BT) including effect of children on the relationship, perceived constraints of marriage on lifestyle, etc.; and, Spouse Relations (SR) i.e. attitude towards reasons for marriage, trust, communication patterns, affectional and sexual components.

The format for the five scales consisted of items stated both positively and negatively. This was done in an attempt to reduce

the likelihood of mind set. Further checks are provided by six distortion items. These items are framed in grandiose manner such that consistent high scores on all six items would indicate the possibility of faking by the respondent.

The response format utilized the Likert scale. Two responses for each item were required. One response indicated the importance of that item's content to the respondent's relationship. Therefore, a respondent finding the content of the item not to be important to their relationship would respond by marking the unimportant choice on the scale. The other response identified the respondent's agreement about that statement as it relates to the respondent's perception of their marital situation. Therefore, a respondent finding the content of the item to be true for their relationship would mark the strongly agree choice on the scale (see Appendix A). Additional information obtained on the survey form includes age of respondent, number of years married, and number of children.

Procedures

Responding to the survey was voluntary. Respondents involved in marriage therapy were given the survey by a therapist without contact between researcher and respondent. Surveys from respondents in classroom settings were distributed and collected by the researcher without any involvement (other than knowledge and consent) of the course instructor. In the class setting, identification

of the respondent was by a precoded survey form ensuring anonymity of the respondent. All surveys were distributed with a cover letter (see Appendix C) expressing gratitude for involvement, restating confidentiality of results, and information where research results could be obtained if desired.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Method of Analysis and Assumptions

The rationale of using a Likert scale for the testing of attitudes is clearly presented by Kerlinger (1964). He states: "One item is the same as any other item in attitude value. The individuals responding to items are "scaled"; this "scaling" comes about through the sums (or averages) of the individuals responses" (p. 484). Kerlinger goes on to say that summated rating scales are prone to response set variance.

With regard to this study, it is the individuals we are attempting to scale in order to determine if there was a difference between groups. To compensate for the possibility of response set, positively and negatively loaded items along with the random placement of items throughout the survey were utilized.

Data were tabulated by obtaining a raw score total for both the importance and extent conditions for each scale and for each subject. Negatively framed item scores were transposed prior to obtaining the total raw score. For example, a score of 1 on a negatively loaded item became a 3; conversely, a score of 4 on a negatively loaded item became a score of zero. Subject raw scores, by scale, were tabulated according to sex and group. Mean scores for each scale were generated for males, females, and couples for each group.

Hypothesis number one, which stated there would be no significant difference in attitudes between the PP couple and the NP couple, was tested by obtaining a mean score for each scale, i.e. DS, IV, PI, FR, BT, and SR, from the total raw scores of the 30 males and 30 females included in each group. These two mean scores for each condition (importance and extent) were then tested for significance by using a t-test (two-tailed) for independent sample means. This procedure was consistent throughout the testing of the remaining four hypotheses with the exception that there were only thirty total raw scores per group since gender comparisons rather than couple comparisons were being made. The two-tailed t-test of means for independent samples was conducted using the software package, "Statistics with Finesse" by James Bolding (1984) which was used on an Apple II E computer. The level of significance was established at .05.

Assumptions

One assumption was made regarding the NP group, i.e., those couples marrying where premarital pregnancy was not present. The NP group consisted of married persons seeking Masters degrees in counseling. It was assumed that their attitudes about marriage and family relationships would be similar to the attitudes of all couples who marry where premarital pregnancy is not present.

To test that assumption, a group of ten couples who were not premaritally pregnant were randomly selected from private

counseling agencies. LIke the experimental group, these ten couples were also in the process of receiving marital therapy. Scores for this group were computed in the same manner as noted previously and statistically compared (using a t-test of means) against a randomly selected group of ten couples from the original NP group. Additional information gathered from the 10 couples currently receiving therapy consisted of income level and educational attainment.

Presentation of Results

The findings for each hypothesis are presented in the tables which follow: The data in Table 1 summarize the findings related to hypothesis one. The mean scores for the combined sexes for each couple in each group are presented for both conditions on all six scales.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and t-scores for the PP and NP Couples on the CAS

		Groups				
		PP(N=60)		NP(N=60)		
Scales	Conditions	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
D	Importance	10.15	3.04	11.40	3.02	2.26*
	Extent	9.00	3.66	12.68	3.91	5.32*
IV	Importance	9.58	3.08	12.55	2.27	6.00*
	Extent	12.57	3.36	15.20	2.26	5.03*
PI	Importance	20.55	3.83	20.47	3.40	- .12
	Extent	23.85	3.42	24.85	4.19	1.43
FR	Importance	17.62	3.19	19.12	3.63	2.40*
	Extent	20.75	4.36	24.17	3.34	4.81*
BT	Importance	16.50	2.96	16.77	2.89	.49
	Extent	18.73	3.35	20.38	2.54	2.62*
SR	Importance	20.73	3.76	21.77	4.20	1.42
	Extent	26.38	5.06	26.35	5.99	- .03

*$p < .05$

The data indicate significant differences in attitudes between PP couples and NP couples on the importance and extent conditions of the Distortion, Inculcated Values, and Family Relations Scales. Additionally significant differences exist on the extent condition of the Behavioral Transitions Scale.

The data in Table 2 summarize the findings related to hypothesis two. Males from the premaritally pregnant group are compared with females of the same group. Comparisons for each condition on all six scales are presented.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations and t-scores for Males and Females of the PP group on the CAS

		Groups				
		Males PP(N=30)		Females PP(N=30)		
Scales	Conditions	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
D	Importance	10.17	3.54	10.13	2.49	- .04
	Extent	7.30	3.05	10.70	3.47	4.03*
IV	Importance	9.53	3.16	9.63	3.06	.12
	Extent	13.00	3.96	12.13	2.64	- .99
PI	Importance	20.57	3.89	20.53	3.83	- .03
	Extent	23.73	3.90	23.97	3.01	.25
FR	Importance	18.43	3.24	16.80	2.96	-2.03*
	Extent	20.23	4.78	21.27	3.91	.91
BT	Importance	16.17	5.20	16.83	2.85	.61
	Extent	18.87	5.24	18.60	3.51	- .23
SR	Importance	21.83	4.53	19.63	2.41	-2.34*
	Extent	27.30	4.96	25.13	4.68	-1.74

*$p < .05$

The data indicate significant differences in attitudes between males in the PP group and females in the PP group on the extent condition of the Distortion scale and the importance condition of the Family Relationship and Spousal Relationship Scales.

The data in Table 3 summarize the findings related to hypothesis three. Comparisons here are the differences between the sexes comprising the non-premaritally pregnant group. Again, each condition for all six scales is presented.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations and t-scores for Males and Females of the NP group on the CAS

		Groups				
		Males NP(N=30)		Females NP(N=30)		
Scales	Conditions	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
D	Importance	12.00	3.52	10.80	2.31	-1.56
	Extent	14.40	3.95	10.97	3.07	-3.75*
IV	Importance	12.40	2.27	12.70	2.29	.50
	Extent	14.90	2.32	15.50	2.19	1.02
PI	Importance	20.63	3.87	20.30	2.91	- .37
	Extent	25.57	4.31	24.13	3.54	-1.40
FR	Importance	20.07	3.58	18.17	3.48	-2.08*
	Extent	23.43	3.09	24.90	3.46	1.73
BT	Importance	17.27	2.65	16.27	3.07	-1.34
	Extent	20.97	3.79	19.80	2.23	-1.28
SR	Importance	22.70	4.82	20.86	3.17	-1.72
	Extent	27.20	5.67	25.50	6.26	-1.10

*$p < .05$

The data indicate significant differences in attitudes between males in the NP group and females in the NP group on the extent condition of the Distortion Scale and the importance condition of the Family Relations Scale.

The data presented in Table 4 represent the findings between the males from both groups. The data again present each condition for all six scales.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations and t-scores for Males of the PP group and Males of the NP group on the CAS

		Groups				
		PP (N=30)		NP (N=30)		
Scales	Conditions	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
D	Importance	10.17	3.54	12.00	3.52	2.00*
	Extent	7.30	3.05	14.40	3.95	7.78*
IV	Importance	9.53	3.16	12.40	2.27	4.03*
	Extent	13.00	3.96	14.90	2.32	2.26*
PI	Importance	20.57	3.89	20.63	3.87	.06
	Extent	23.73	3.83	25.57	4.31	1.74
FR	Importance	18.43	3.24	20.07	3.58	1.85
	Extent	20.23	4.78	23.43	3.09	3.07*
BT	Importance	16.17	3.07	17.27	2.65	1.48
	Extent	18.87	3.23	20.97	3.79	2.30*
SR	Importance	21.83	4.53	22.70	4.82	.71
	Extent	27.63	5.20	27.20	5.67	- .30

*$p < .05$

The data indicate significant differences in attitudes between males in the PP group and males in the NP group. These areas of significance are on the importance and extent conditions of the Distortion and Inculcated Values Scales. The data also indicate significant differences on the extent conditions in the Family Relationships and Behavioral Transition Scales.

Table 5 includes data comparing females from each group on both conditions for all six scales.

Table 5

Means, Standard Deviations and t-scores for Females of the PP group and Females of the NP group on the CAS

		Groups				
		PP (N=30)		NP (N=30)		
Scales	Conditions	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
D	Importance	10.13	2.49	10.80	2.31	1.07
	Extent	10.70	3.47	10.97	3.07	.31
IV	Importance	9.63	3.06	12.70	2.29	4.39*
	Extent	12.13	2.64	15.50	2.19	5.37*
PI	Importance	20.53	3.83	20.30	2.91	- .26
	Extent	23.97	3.01	24.13	3.54	.19
FR	Importance	16.80	2.96	18.17	3.48	1.63
	Extent	21.27	3.91	24.90	3.46	3.81*
BT	Importance	16.83	2.85	16.27	3.07	- .74
	Extent	18.60	3.51	19.77	3.24	1.33
SR	Importance	19.63	2.41	20.83	3.12	1.66
	Extent	25.13	4.68	25.50	6.26	.25

*$p < .05$

The data indicate significant differences in attitudes between Females in the PP group and Females in the NP group. These areas of significance are in the importance and extent conditions of the Inculcated Values Scales and the extent condition of the Family Relationship Scale.

The data from the comparison of attitudes between 10 randomly chosen couples from the NP group and 10 non-premaritally pregnant couples presently receiving counseling indicate significance in only one instance (see Appendixes D through H). Significance was found on the Family Relations Scale, extent condition in the comparison of attitudes between Males and Females in the group of couples currently receiving counseling. A t-value of 2.4028 was obtained (see Appendix E). Data concerning income and education indicated that the average salary of the couple currently receiving counseling was $35,000. Nine out of the ten couples had college degrees.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Despite the one case of significance found in the comparison of attitudes between 10 randomly chosen couples from the NP group and the 10 couples currently receiving counseling, it is not sufficient enough to reject the assumption that the couples comprising the NP group would have attitudes not unlike those of all couples who marry where pre-marital pregnancy is not present. The additional information gathered from these 10 couples receiving counseling (income and education) suggests that they are comparable with students in graduate degree programs, in that 9 out of the 10 couples have college educations. The average salary for this group ($35,000) may be high for graduate students but that may be due to their not yet having established themselves in the work force.

Data relevant to hypothesis #1 (see Table 1) from the distortion scale indicate that the NP couple was significantly more likely to see and report their relationship as being ideal than was the PP couple. An example of this would be in their responses to item #5, "Our marriage is perfect in every way."

NP couples were significantly more likely to report that their inculcated values were a strong influence on their decision to marry. An example of this would be their responses to item #2, "My religious upbringing was a major consideration in my decision to marry." These type of values were also identified as being

significantly more important to NP couples than to PP couples.

The NP couples were more likely to have more favorable relationships with their family and in-laws than did the PP couples. The NP couples also considered these relationships to be significantly more important than did the PP couples. An example of this attitude is portrayed by item #13, "I appreciate the attitude and support we have received from our in-laws."

The NP couples reported the behavioral transitions that occurred in their relationship as being more positive than did the PP groups. An example of this can be illustrated by item #36, "I wish my spouse were more careful when it comes to managing our money."

There were no significant differences reported between PP couples and NP couples in the areas of personal ideals, spousal relations and the importance factor of behavioral transitions.

The areas of significance relevant to hypothesis #2 (see Table 2) as indicated by the distortion scale indicate that the female was more likely to report her relationship in a favorable light than was her male PP couple counterpart. Conversely, the male was much more likely to view family and spousal relationships as being important than was the female spouse. All other scales revealed no significant difference between the males and females within the PP group.

Looking at hypothesis #3 (see Table 3) the males in the NP

group were more likely than the females to report their relationships in a favorable manner, according to the distortion scale. The male was also more likely than the female to view family relationships as being important. No other areas of significance were indicated between males and females of the NP group.

The results relevant to hypothesis #4 (see Table 4) indicate that according to the distortion scale, males in the NP group considered both the extent as well as the importance of their relationships as being more idealistic than did the males of the PP group. The males in the NP group also report that their inculcated values were more important and had more influence in their decision to marry than did the males in the PP group. Family relationships and behavioral transitions were reported as being significantly more positive by NP males than by PP males.

The data for hypothesis #5 (see Table 5) indicate females of the NP group reporting their inculcated values as being significantly more important and as being significantly more evident in their relationship than did the females in the PP group. The results also indicate that the females in the NP group report their family relationships are significantly more positive than are those of the females in the PP group.

Discussions and Conclusions

While this study identifies several areas regarding differences in attitudes expressed by couples, which have clinical ramifications

for the profession of marriage counseling, several limitations must be taken into account when interpreting the results. For example:

1) A population was not identified from which any kind of random sampling could have been done. Specific groups were identified as either pre-maritally or not pre-maritally pregnant couples and responses to the survey were on a voluntary basis.

2) No instrument was available which was viewed as comprehensive enough to provide data relevant to the questions raised. Therefore, a survey instrument (The Couples Attitude Survey) was developed to conduct the study. The study is to be viewed as a pilot study in this area of couple's attitudes. Validation of the instrument will be required prior to further research.

Regardless of the above limitations, the null hypotheses generated for the purpose of this research were rejected. This rejection resulted in conclusions about the research as follows.

Regarding Scale 1 which has to do with faking and distortion, every hypothesis, except hypothesis 5, was rejected because of the significant difference obtained on at least one of the conditions (Importance or Extent). Males of the NP group had higher mean distortion scores than did their female counterparts, yet the reverse tended to be true for the PP group. Also, the mean scores for males in the NP group were higher than the mean scores for their male counterparts in the PP group. The same observation holds true

for the mean scores for couples in the NP group when compared to their couple counterparts in the PP group. The tendency for these higher mean scores to reflect scores of approximately 1.9 (where a score of 2 means important or indifferent) on a Likert scale range of 0-4 suggests that couples in the PP group tend to view such ideal conditions of marriage as less important and, in fact, are less apt to be present in their marriage than was the case with NP couples.

Practitioners might want to explore the meaning of such a posture by those males (especially) who marry once pregnancy has occurred. While it is conjecture, perhaps these males are experiencing remorse; perhaps they regret their circumstances; perhaps they don't even want to think ideally of their relationship for various reasons. It would seem appropriate to collect clinical data which could provide interpretative material to such profiles.

The study provides significantly different data on both conditions of the IV Scale for three of the five hypotheses, as can be seen in Tables 1, 4 and 5. As a couple, the NP couple had higher mean Inculcated Value scores than did the PP group. This also holds for males in the NP group as compared to the males in the PP group, and also for females in the NP group compared with the PP group females. It appears that such data might indicate that premaritally pregnant individuals and couples do not have as strong a set of personal values as do non-premaritally pregnant individuals and couples. Some reasons for this may be due to the

family structure, role modeling, and learning on the part of the pre-maritally pregnant individuals.

The lack of significance reflected by the PI scale on any of the 5 hypotheses may indicate that all individuals experience the ideals that they live by in similar ways. It is also possible that the items for this scale were not sensitive enough to identify differences which may, in fact, exist.

Significant differences in scores for the FR scale were found within all 5 hypotheses on either the importance or extent conditions. NP couples had higher mean scores on both conditions. This was also true for NP males in contrast to PP males and for NP females in contrast to PP females. Clinicians may wish to inquire as to what problems may be present in PP couples that have to do with the extended family. In contrast to prevalent social beliefs, this research suggests it is the NP male who sees family relationships as being more important, not the female. This also holds true for the PP couple. A possible explanation may be that males hold family relationships as a high priority but do not emphasize such issues because of the common notion that this is the "woman's domain". Another possibility may be that because of some guilt concerning the premarital pregnancy, men overcompensate when reporting the importance it really has in their life. Regardless, this area appears to be a fertile area for further research.

Significant differences on the extent condition of the BT scale

indicate that NP couples had higher mean scores than did PP couples, as did NP males in comparison to PP males. This area may be of importance to clinicians in that the PP males' and couples' lower scores may indicate specific areas of turmoil for the couple and more especially for the male. One possibility is that the PP couples may not wish to make an issue of things like financies, friends, and domestic issues since they did become premaritally pregnant and chose to marry.

The area of significance on the SR scale was on the importance condition comparing males and females in the PP group. The higher mean score for males may mask some guilt about not wanting to be in the relationship and only being there because he "had to," although given the data on the distortion scale, this observation is open to conjecture. Whatever the reason, more specific clinical data may contribute to the reasons associated with this data.

Suggestions and Implications for Further Research

The significance obtained on the family relations, inculcated values and behavioral transitions scales suggest that there is a possibility that couples who marry when pregnancy is present have a less positive attitude about these areas of their relationship than do non-premaritally pregnant couples. Further research may inquire into this to see if this assumption is valid; and, if it is, what this less positive attitude is attributed to and what effect it has on the relationship.

Another area that may be of interest to further research is the apparently consistent pattern of a 4 to 6 point difference in mean scores between the importance and extent condition on the spousal relations scale. This difference is present in both groups in all the hypotheses (see Tables 1 through 5) suggesting both groups report the content of those items comprising the spousal relationship scale may be present in their relationships even though they may not see them as highly important.

Summary

This initial look into the question of a comparison of attitudes between premaritally pregnant couples and non-premaritally pregnant couples was prompted by the personal experience of the author having seen couples who married when pregnant have certain consistent stages and experiences in their relationships. A review of the research in this area was undertaken to determine if these patterns were specific to pre-maritally pregnant couples.

The literature revealed little except for research that indicated pre-maritally pregnant couples were more likely to divorce than were non-premaritally pregnant couples. Nothing was found in the literature regarding differences in attitudes about the couple's relationship and their relationship with families and in-laws.

A next step was to identify an instrument which could be used to assess suspected differences. A review of available survey instruments failed to identify one considered comprehensive enough

to assess those condsiderations deemed important. The Couples Attitude Survey (CAS) was then developed and administered to both premaritally pregnant and non-premaritally pregnant couples.

Two groups were identified. Students currently enrolled in a Masters degree program in either counseling or social work constituted the non-premaritally pregnant (NP) group (N=30). Couples obtaining counseling from private counseling agencies, and who were premaritally pregnant (PP) made up the premaritally pregnant group (N=30).

Five hypotheses were generated:

1) There will be no significant attitudinal differences, as determined by the Couples Attitude Survey (CAS), between couples who chose marriage following pregnancy (PP) and those couples who chose marriage where pregnancy was not present (NP).
2) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between the males and females in the PP group.
3) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between the males and females in the NP group.
4) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between males in the PP group compared with males in the NP group.
5) There will be no significant difference, as determined by the CAS, between females in the PP group compared with the

females in the NP group.

These were tested for significance using a t-test (two-tailed) of means for independent samples. The findings resulted in each of the hypotheses being rejected.

The data indicate differences in attitudes between premaritally pregnant couples and non-premaritally pregnant couples in the areas of inculcated values, family relations, behavioral transitions, and spousal relations. These findings suggest the need to collect clinical data for purposes of providing meaningful interpretation to these attitudinal differences. They also indicate the need for refinement of the CAS and further research utilizing randomness and a more representative sampling from the total population. Finally it provides informative data to clinicians providing therapy in the area of marriage counseling to clients.

References

Bolding, J. (1984). Statistics with finesse (computer program). Fayetteville, AR.

Burchinal, L. (1959). Comparison of factors related to adjustment in pregnancy-provoked and non-pregnancy-provoked youthful marriages. Midwest Sociologist, 21, 92-96.

Burchinal, L. (1965). Trends and prospects for young marriages in the United States. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 27, 243-254.

Census: Fourth of brides pregnant or unwed mothers from 1965-1979. (1984, April). World Herald, p. 1.

Christensen, H.T., & Meissner, H.H. (1953). Studies in child spacing: 111-premarital pregancy as a factor in divorce. American Sociological Review, 18(6), 641-644.

Christensen, H.T., & Rubenstein, B.B. (1956). Premarital pregnancy and divorce: A follow-up study by the interview method. Marriage and Family Living, 18(2), 114-123.

Dame, N.G., Finck, G.H., Mayors, R.G., Reiner, B.S., & Smith, B.S. (1966). Conflict in marriage following premarital pregnancy. Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 36(3), 468-475.

DeLissovoy, V. (1973). High school marriages: A longitudinal study. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 35(2), 245-263.

Hepworth, D.H. (1964). The clinical implications of perceptual distortions in forced marriages. Social Casework, 45, 579-585.

Kerlinger, F.N. (1964). Foundations of behavioral research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Manson, M.P., & Lerner, A. (1962). New line marriage adjustment inventory. In O.K. Burros (Ed.). (1970). Personality tests and reviews, (p. 69). Highland Park, New Jersey: Gryphon Press.

McDonald, P.J. (1972). Marriage expectation inventory. In O.K. Burros (Ed.). (1978). Eighth mental measurements yearbook, (p. 479). Highland Park, New Jersey: Gryphon Press.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, (1984). Statistical abstract of the United States: 1985, 105, 36 Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

COUPLES ATTITUDE SURVEY

I.D. No._____ Sex_____

Date_____ Age (Optional)_____

Years Married_____ Number of Children_____

Directions: In the left hand column please indicate the level of importance you attach to each statement as it applies to your attitude regarding that item. In the right hand column please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the item. Items which do not apply, simply indicate NA in the right hand column (e.g., item #7).

Key:

0 = unimportant
1 = little importance
2 = important
3 = some importance
4 = highly important

Key:

0 = strongly disagree
1 = disagree
2 = indifferent
3 = agree
4 = strongly agree

SAMPLE ITEM

_____ 1. We never argue about money. 1. ____

In the above example, if you consider the item to be of much importance, place a 4 in the left blank. If you strongly disagree with the statement and you do argue about money, place a 0 in the right blank.

Complete the following items accordingley.

____ 1. I am determined to work with my spouse to achieve the goal we each strive for in our marriage. 1. _____

____ 2. My religious upbringing was a major consideration in my decision to marry. 2. ____

____ 3. My parents are resentful concerning our decision to marry. 3. ____

____ 4. My friends from before my marriage have remained close to me following my marriage. 4. ____

_____ 5.	Our marriage is perfect in every way.	5. _____
_____ 6.	Sometimes I think I married hastily and for reasons I would consider differently now.	6. _____
_____ 7.	My spouse and I often disagree concerning how we should discipline and, in general, parent our children.	7. _____
_____ 8.	My parents have been "model" inlaws regarding our marriage and accepting my spouse.	8. _____
_____ 9.	I am willing to do whatever it takes to resolve our differences.	9. _____
_____ 10.	My parent's values have helped me to see the importance of loving and marring one person.	10. _____
_____ 11.	I never thought my spouse would be as different from me as I'm finding out he/she is.	11. _____
_____ 12.	Our differences in religious beliefs cause disunity in our marriage.	12. _____
_____ 13.	I appreciate the attitude and support we have received from inlaws.	13. _____
_____ 14.	The values I obtained from my parents differ considerably from those held by my spouse.	14. _____
_____ 15.	Our marriage relationship is not one of total harmony.	15. _____
_____ 16.	I am able to trust my spouse completely.	16. _____
_____ 17.	Having children has/will cause(d) some real strain in our marriage relationship.	17. _____
_____ 18.	Getting married has resulted in my becoming much more aware of how different we really are.	18. _____
_____ 19.	Our decision to marry was highly acceptable to my parents.	19. _____
_____ 20.	Getting married has made me all too aware of how different we really are.	20. _____
_____ 21.	I dislike the way my spouse's parents seem to dictate the way things should be in our marriage.	21. _____
_____ 22.	My spouse's parents are the ideal inlaws.	22. _____
_____ 23.	I feel isolated since becoming married.	23. _____
_____ 24.	We seem to relate less effectively now than before we were married.	24. _____

_____ 25.	I am finding that our dreams and goals no longer seem important to my spouse.	25. _____
_____ 26.	Becoming pregnant brought added meaning to our relationship making our marriage evern more significant.	26. _____
_____ 27.	I have trouble believing everything my spouse tells me.	27. _____
_____ 28.	My decision to marry was strongly influenced by the crowd I ran with.	28. _____
_____ 29.	My sexual need, thought different, is responded to indifferently by my spouse.	29. _____
_____ 30.	We not only believe but use very similar parenting practices.	30. _____
_____ 31.	My friends that I had before marriage have more or less dropped from my life since marriage.	31. _____
_____ 32.	My spouse expresses affection in ways that I like and consider most appropriate to our relationship.	32. _____
_____ 33.	The circumstances leading up to and surrounding our marriage were exactly what I hoped for.	33. _____
_____ 34.	My marriage is not meeting all of my needs.	34. _____
_____ 35.	My spouse's parents are accepting and supportive of our marriage.	35. _____
_____ 36.	I wish my spouse were more careful when it comes to managing our money.	36. _____
_____ 37.	Marriage has opened up a whole new world of possibilities for me.	37. _____
_____ 38.	I am satisfied with how my spouse and I communicate.	38. _____
_____ 39.	I think my decision to marry was due to social pressure	39. _____
_____ 40.	My spouse and I do not agree how affection should be displayed in our marriage.	40. _____
_____ 41.	My spouse is totally open and honest with me.	41. _____
_____ 42.	My inlaws, though they never say so, really resent our decision to marry.	42. _____
_____ 43.	Our sexual relationship is mutually satisfying and continually improving.	43. _____

_____	44. I am willing to work at resolving the differences I have with my spouse.	44.	_____
_____	45. I think my parents unfairly blame our marital problems on my spouse.	45.	_____
_____	46. Managing money has presented no problems for either of us.	46.	_____
_____	47. I have discovered many new and interesting aspects about my spouse since being married.	47.	_____
_____	48. My sex life is not everything I would like it to be.	48.	_____

Appendix B

The following items comprise the distortion scale (DS) on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 5	Item 15
Item 22	Item 34
Item 41	Item 48

The following items comprise the inculcated values (IV) scale on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 2	Item 12
Item 10	Item 14
Item 28	Item 39

The following items comprise the personal ideals (PI) scale on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 1	Item 7
Item 18	Item 9
Item 20	Item 11
Item 30	Item 25
Item 44	Item 36

The following items comprise the family relations (FR) scale on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 8	Item 3
Item 13	Item 21
Item 19	Item 42
Item 35	Item 45

The following items comprise the behavioral transition (BT) scale on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 4	Item 17
Item 26	Item 23
Item 37	Item 31
Item 47	Item 46

The following items comprise the spousal relations (SR) scale on the CAS.

Positively Loaded	Negatively Loaded
Item 16	Item 6
Item 32	Item 24
Item 33	Item 27
Item 38	Item 29
Item 43	Item 40

Appendix C

University of Nebraska at Omaha

College of Educatic
Department of Counseling (402) 554-27.
and Special Education (402) 554-22(
Omaha, Nebraska 681b.

Dear Participant:

Thank you for agreeing to respond to the Couples Attitude Survey. This effort will enable us to gather information intended to provide counselors and other human service workers with a better understanding of your experiences. Hopefully we will then be able to assist future couples in their adjustment to marriage.

Please note we have assigned you an identification number to assure confidentiality. You are the only one aware of how you responded unless you request sharing of this information with others. A list of names is being used only for making certain who has completed the form.

Please note the directions. Should you have any questions, please ask.

A copy of the final report will be on file in the Counselor Education Office at UNO. You may read and discuss that any time, if you wish.

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Ed Northam

Ed Northam, Graduate Student

Robert Butler

Robert Butler, Professor
Counselor Education

lpl

Appendix D

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for NP Group Couples and Counseling Couples on the CAS.

		Groups				
		Control (N=20)		Counseling (N=20)		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
DS	Importance	10.70	1.81	10.40	3.05	.37
	Extent	11.40	3.42	11.20	3.16	.19
IV	Importance	11.85	2.48	11.90	2.81	- .05
	Extent	14.85	2.21	13.80	3.17	1.21
PI	Importance	20.10	3.60	20.75	3.08	- .61
	Extent	24.70	4.65	24.45	4.63	.17
FR	Importance	18.65	3.45	19.65	3.82	- .86
	Extent	23.30	3.66	23.00	3.54	.26
BT	Importance	17.35	2.85	18.00	3.37	- .65
	Extent	19.25	3.55	18.25	2.90	.97
SR	Importance	20.80	3.41	20.35	4.20	.37
	Extent	25.45	6.03	24.70	6.44	.38

*$p < .05$

Appendix E

Table 7

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for Males and Females of the NP Group on the CAS.

		Groups				
		NP Males (N=10)		NP Females (N=10)		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
DS	Importance	10.60	2.12	10.80	1.55	.24
	Extent	12.20	3.33	10.60	3.50	-1.04
IV	Importance	11.50	2.68	12.20	2.35	.62
	Extent	14.20	2.44	15.50	1.84	1.34
PI	Importance	19.50	3.66	20.70	3.62	.73
	Extent	25.50	5.19	23.90	4.15	- .76
FR	Importance	18.60	3.60	18.70	3.50	.06
	Extent	22.40	2.84	24.20	2.25	1.57
BT	Importance	17.20	1.99	17.50	3.63	.22
	Extent	19.80	4.52	18.70	2.36	- .68
SR	Importance	20.90	3.81	20.70	3.16	- .12
	Extent	24.90	6.47	24.50	6.75	- .13

*$p < .05$

Appendix F

Table 8

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for Males and Females of the Counseling Group on the CAS.

		Groups				
		Counseling Males (N=10)		Counseling Females (N=10)		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
DI	Importance	10.40	2.32	10.40	3.78	.00
	Extent	11.70	3.13	10.70	3.27	- .69
IV	Importance	11.60	2.84	12.20	2.90	.46
	Extent	13.70	3.33	13.90	3.18	.13
PI	Importance	20.00	2.75	21.50	3.34	1.09
	Extent	25.30	4.30	23.60	5.02	- .81
FR	Importance	19.50	3.69	19.80	4.13	.17
	Extent	21.30	2.95	24.70	3.37	2.40*
BT	Importance	18.50	3.37	17.50	3.47	- .65
	Extent	18.10	2.48	18.40	2.37	.22
SR	Importance	21.40	4.35	19.30	3.97	-1.12
	Extent	24.80	6.34	26.10	4.72	.52

*$p < .05$

Appendix G

Table 9

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for NP Group Males and Counseling Group Males on the CAS.

		Groups				
		NP Males (N=10)		Counseling Males (N=10)		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
DS	Importance	10.60	2.12	10.40	2.32	.20
	Extent	12.20	3.33	11.70	3.13	.34
IV	Importance	11.50	2.68	11.60	2.84	- .08
	Extent	14.20	2.44	13.70	3.33	.38
PI	Importance	19.50	3.66	20.00	2.75	- .34
	Extent	25.50	5.19	25.30	4.30	.09
FR	Importance	18.60	3.60	19.50	3.69	- .55
	Extent	22.40	2.84	21.30	2.95	.85
BT	Importance	17.20	1.99	18.50	3.37	-1.04
	Extent	19.80	4.52	18.10	3.48	.94
SR	Importance	20.90	3.81	21.40	4.35	- .27
	Extent	24.90	6.47	24.80	6.34	.03

*$p < .05$

Appendix H

Table 10

Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for Females of the NP Group and Females of the Counseling Group on the CAS.

		Groups				
		NP Females (N=10)		Counseling Females (N=10)		
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	t
DS	Importance	10.80	1.55	10.40	3.78	.30
	Extent	10.60	3.50	10.70	3.27	- .06
IV	Importance	12.20	2.90	12.20	2.35	.00
	Extent	15.50	1.84	13.90	3.18	1.37
PI	Importance	20.70	3.62	21.50	3.34	- .51
	Extent	23.90	4.15	23.60	5.02	.14
FR	Importance	18.70	3.50	19.80	4.13	.64
	Extent	24.20	2.25	24.70	3.37	- .39
BT	Importance	17.50	3.63	17.50	3.47	.00
	Extent	18.70	2.36	18.40	2.37	.28
SR	Importance	20.70	3.16	19.30	3.97	.87
	Extent	24.50	6.75	26.10	4.72	- .61

*$p < .05$